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**84. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen**

January 20, 1817, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

My dear Child,

Last Wednesday I gave Lapoque, a carrier of Agen, a package of seven letters addressed to you. One of them is for you. You will understand that it is independent, so to speak, of our ordinary correspondence concerning the interests of our dear convent.

In addition to the practice of an annual letter written to me by each member of the community individually, for which each one will receive a reply proportioned to her needs, I believe it would be useful in the beginning for the principal administrators to write to me from time to time on how they are discharging their various duties and what difficulties they may be encountering. The rules they have on hand and the replies to be received would quickly complete their formation. You see that I am not seeking to shirk any of my responsibilities. With a little care in the case of letters which are not urgent, we may be able to avoid mail charges by looking for an unofficial carrier.<sup>1</sup> The other day the mailman calculated with one of my household helpers that I had spent more than 200 francs this year on postage, and this too at a time when my harvest<sup>2</sup> was next to nothing.

Mlle M. - - - is to make her final decision only on the Feast of the Purification. I am more and more satisfied with her. She acts with prudence rarely found in someone her age. She is also talented. I hope she will make a good subject.

I believed your Forty Hours Devotion was taking place during Shrovetide.<sup>3</sup> It is altogether conformable to the mind of the Church and of the Rule to make of these three days a period of abstinence, with the fast on Monday and Tuesday somewhat mitigated. I say "mitigated" because you may be obliged to designate these days for various gatherings of the very young, and a number of them may have to speak a great deal.<sup>4</sup>

Your last letter gave me occasion to write rather forcefully to Father M. - - -<sup>5</sup> Be calm, all of you. Have no other desire than the fulfillment of the will of God. I am not at all chagrined at the delay you have suffered respecting the Orphelines. The spirit of the Institution will benefit by this delay if, as I hope, you know how to make the most of it.

I am astonished that Sister Saint-Vincent needs an assistant, considering she has so few pupils. It might be advantageous under the circumstances to train Sister Aloysius. I am waiting to hear from her before writing to her. Maintain the young women sodalists who intend to become religious in their good dispositions. It may be suitable to form a type of Third Order, but the time is not yet ripe for this. I hope not to lose sight of it.

I am your father and theirs in Jesus and Mary.

Joseph Chaminade<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Letter no. 61, n. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Of grapes (see letter no. 37).

<sup>3</sup>The three days preceding Ash Wednesday, characterized in various places by carnival licentiousness.

<sup>4</sup>The idea seems to be that the very young, *la tendre jeunesse*, may have to be assembled on carnival days to keep them from harm, and that some of the sisters may have to exert themselves considerably to keep them entertained.

<sup>5</sup>Without a doubt Fr. Mouran, who was urging the acceptance of Bishop Jacoupy's offers.

<sup>1</sup> See letter no. 75, n.3.

*This same day Father Chaminade wrote to the Bishop of Agen on the subject of the Orphelines. Confirming the fears of Father Chaminade, in his January letter Bishop Jacoupy had asked him "to transform the Daughters of Mary into Orphelines or Daughters of Saint Joseph." But he had not been long in detecting the difficulties he faced and had abandoned the idea of his own accord. Only then did Father Chaminade reply. Here he shields himself from the reproach which might be leveled at him for founding a new Order instead of reestablishing one of the many swept away by the revolution.*

### **85. To Bishop Jacoupy of Agen**

January 20, 1817, Bordeaux

Rough copy by David Monier, Agmar

Your Excellency,

I would have answered your letter of January 6 without delay if I had not seen in it the express invitation to think about the matter. In fact, the matter seemed to allow for reflection, so I merely acted according to your kind invitation. I am informed today that in your wisdom Your Excellency has reached a decision and that the question of the house offered to the Institute of Mary is settled. We must believe God has willed it so, and that God will be glorified thereby.

At first sight it had appeared to me it might be a great and perhaps dangerous temptation for the saintly Daughters of Mary to propose to them the renunciation of a tried vocation and of their Institute in view of the advantages they might find in spacious premises, whatever advantage this might offer from the human point of view. I meditated upon this mission before the cross, since God had willed that Your Excellency should not place me under orders but should leave me free to decide for myself. Try as I would, the answer in my conscience always appeared to be negative. Meanwhile, however, the Holy Spirit has inspired Your Excellency to decide differently.

Now that I find myself relieved of doubt thanks to the disposition of Providence, it appears easier to express the thoughts which heretofore seemed inexplicable even to me. Your pastoral solicitude for your city of Agen must have led you to desire to preserve the religious establishment of the Orphelines, and I recognized the tenderness of the shepherd in his eagerness to provide for it. On the other hand, in transferring your hopes for the maintenance of this house to the worthy Daughters of Mary, Your Excellency has given them a very evident token of the value you attached to their enlightened piety and to their zeal, which is so pure. However, the moment it was decided that the work for the orphan girls could be done only by the Institute called Saint Joseph, to be able to transform the Daughters of Mary for the proposed work either their vocations must have been delusions up to that point or there would be no distinction between religious vocations.

While I was considering the situation of the Daughters of Mary in this unexpected change, a very serious and unavoidable side effect struck me more than anything else. This was the necessity of erasing the traces of the affections contracted from their foundation and of giving them entirely new ones for the Institute of Saint Joseph, totally unknown to them. The impressions to be produced would always have had the very great disadvantage of not being the first ones.

Now I willingly suppose the merit of this Institute in itself is greater than that of the Daughters of Mary. In fact, it may be said that the Institute of Saint Joseph had a prolonged period of high performance and that the Institute of the Daughters of Mary is only beginning to prove itself. In such a case, which is to be preferred?

This would have been a permissible question before the love of the latter Institute had burst forth, but it cannot be put to the saintly Daughters whose hearts have already declared themselves. The human heart strengthened by faith is like a bronze plate which is to be engraved.

Before beginning we may debate the design, but once the chisel has bitten deep into the plate it cannot take on any other designs, or it will always do so poorly.

If I were asked today why a new Institute has been preferred to so many others which have been tried and tested, I would answer that the history of the Church attests that this has always happened after the storms which at various times have overthrown the Institutes. I should answer also that all those most holy confessors and pontiffs who were impelled by the needs of the faithful either to accept already existing Rules or to write new ones agreed, independently of each other, in giving new Rules. Finally, even those Rules themselves which in some Institutions were issued under a former name are nonetheless new in their essential aspects.

The reason for this procedure is not a mind for novelty in a religion which proscribes novelties, but rather the new relationship which the enlightenment and the times to be sanctified have with the Institutes suited to offer this sanctification. A new Institute is adapted to the times, the places, and the circumstances. It has no need of what depended upon the outdated customs of the former Institutes, but it does need everything that takes into consideration the customs of the day and was not found in the former Institutes. The Spirit of God does not suffer the least change in all of this but shows that its influence is universal, knowing how to reach all people despite the diversity of minds and manners in different periods of history.

The dying out of the Ladies of Saint Joseph, a current proof in point for Agen, is one example in a thousand of the difficulty of reviving the former Institutes, and beyond a doubt if they had become Orphelines otherwise than by a holy inspiration of God, the Daughters of Mary would be on the same road to extinction. Ordinarily God does not restore dead people to life under our very eyes. In the same way extinct corporations do not naturally return to life, and if one among them truly came to life again—that is, to be reanimated with its original zeal—it would set the world to wondering, for this would mark a sort of miracle. God forbid that the Daughters of Mary would abandon their intention of embracing the counsels of perfection to which they have bound themselves, and this also for the sake of quarters better suited to certain conveniences. Their establishments will develop when it pleases God to have it so, and in the place that God's providence will appoint. Let them prove and steel themselves in the virtues set before them; God will make use of them when he has tried them in conformity with his plans.

I will nonetheless go on requesting for the devout Daughters of Mary a long continuation of Your Excellency's blessings.

Please, Your Excellency, accept the assurance of my submission to your orders and of the profound respect with which I am your . . .

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*Father Chaminade continues to train the community in the practice of the virtues proper to its mission and to instruct it upon the various points concerning its Constitutions. These are the rules he laid down for the admission and examination of the postulants and for the practice of the apostolate among the young sodalists. The style again indicates the pen of David Monier; the last lines alone are in Father Chaminade's handwriting.*

## **86. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon**

February 26, 1817, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

Probation. The Mother Superior must first of all hold to regulations, however rigorous they may seem to be. Afterward she is to consider whether her special rules do not authorize her to grant some modifications. Even should it seem she is not expressly so authorized, in an unforeseen case or in extraordinary circumstances she has a general discretionary power, to be used for the benefit of the convent and the spiritual welfare of her Daughters.

Whether the superior grants the foreseen modifications for which she is authorized by her official rules of conduct or whether she makes use of her discretionary power, she is to do so only after due deliberation. This deliberation indispensably involves seeking the counsel of God at the foot of the Cross with becoming humility, resignation, and determination. This done, the decision is to be entered in the Mother Superior's record and submitted shortly to the director, their spiritual Father.

The admission of a subject to the novitiate before the full probation depends upon the rules just explained. It is very difficult to judge such a case from a great distance. The considerations which have determined the length of the period of probation are of great importance to the Institute. Constancy and a true vocation must be assured on the part of the candidates, and their health must be strong enough to meet the requirements of the Rule. One of the points regarding health is that candidates must be not subject to nervous attacks, to hysterics, or to melancholy, diseases which often grow worse. Families often conceal these, and the afflicted themselves know little about them; they have had some fainting fits, they have not felt well, etc. The time of probation and its apparent severity will prevent the convent from making harmful mistakes and the candidates themselves from believing to be a vocation what at times is nothing more than a concealment of their infirmities from the rest of the world.

Retreat of three or five days. The curtailing of the retreats is likewise linked with the above-mentioned principle—that is to say with the regulations, their exceptions, and the directives given to the Mother Superior in the Instruction addressed to her in particular. Her discretionary power also exerts some influence under the above-mentioned conditions. But the reliable testing of subjects deserves prime consideration, any inconvenience being preferable to the misfortune of introducing into the budding Institute insufficiently tried subjects who, making profession while already lax in their observance of the Rules, may never know any other type of life and conduct.

Otherwise there is no objection to the postulant making the same retreat as the novices. The confessor of the latter should know their spiritual needs.

Parlor. However interesting Sister N. - - 's<sup>1</sup> work may be, we cannot hope to safeguard this convent in particular, except to the extent that we hold to the principles governing the Institute itself. On this subject you may reread the first part of chapter 3 of the *Grand Institut* from Article 29 to Article 37, and add to it section 3, paragraph 1 of the General Regulation regarding the parlor, from Article 172 to Article 187.

It does not seem proper to alter these rules because of a few private considerations which some day pupils may be interested in making, even though they turned to the advantage of religion. The Mother Superior will find it within her discretionary power to grant exceptions from strict supervision, in very rare cases and for a very short time.

Moreover, the Mother of Instruction<sup>1</sup> may make it a rule in parlor visits to explain the principles in general, as she does in the Sodalities, and to refer to their directors those who are of a difficult and anxious disposition.

Most dangerous of all, as the Mother Superior believed, would be to dispense with the services of the sister listener.<sup>2</sup> The Rule does not favor any dispensation of this type.

Do not be afraid, my dear Child, that you will vex me with your letters, however frequent they may be. Rest assured that I always receive them with the same pleasure and the same interest.

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<sup>1</sup> Judging from the next letter, it seems there is a question of special guidance requested of Mother Thérèse by the sodalists and that Fr. Chaminade had misgivings, not so much because of this religious as of the community in general.

<sup>1</sup> Mother Emmanuel.

<sup>2</sup> A sister appointed to be present during visits received by another sister in the parlor.

I had a private session with my secretary yesterday to answer various seemingly serious questions which you addressed to me several days ago. I was unable to finish, so I am sending you as much as I have completed.

I greet all our dear Daughters with fatherly affection.

Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.<sup>3</sup>

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*In letters to individuals, Father Chaminade insists upon these parlor regulations, in his opinion essential for preventing the introduction of serious abuses into the budding community. This letter is in the handwriting and the style of David Monier.*

### **87. To Mother Thérèse, Agen**

March 6, 1817, Bordeaux

Original, Arch. FMI

My dear Daughter,

I am answering your letter of March 1 which I received with those of your Mother Superior and of Sister Emmanuel.

You must have believed the manner in which you prepared the children for their first Communion and instructed the young women who would have to examine this first religious act by themselves is in accord with the ends of the Institute. But I see from all your letters that into this work of charity has crept the practice of granting private interviews for the purpose of facilitating the examination of conscience and giving rules of conduct.

This procedure, although it may be useful to the young women who request it of you if prudently used, is foreign to the works of charity admitted by the Institute. It is contrary to that wise reserve which must be practiced so the holiness of the convent will be preserved intact. It would be more in place among the duties of the women of the Sodality, who should be wisely initiated into this detail work. God will raise up those who as are equal to the task, and even if it pleases God not to do this for the present this would not be a sufficient reason for exposing a number of Christ's spouses to danger through this contact.

Mother Superior's discretionary power extends for the time being to permitting the fulfillment of present engagements and even, for serious reasons, to authorizing similar interviews with new arrivals. But she must judge the reasons and the need for them; she must supervise their consequences or have them supervised, listen to reports on them, etc. I have now written about this at sufficient length. The manner of disengaging yourself from present commitments without prejudice to the edification which had been their aim will be explained to you later.

Meetings with a small group fall within the objectives of the Institute. This type merits attention. A word apart and at the end of the meetings is not to be refused. A more specialized instruction to a small number may still be granted. But familiar conversations and confidences from which the public and the sister listener are excluded cannot be sanctioned by any rules for religious.

The inclination grace may be encouraging in some of the young women brought back to God, and which may be drawing them to religious life, will not be snuffed out by the mere fact that they have a confidante who is not a religious. Moreover, this is less a question of attracting a great number than of admitting only solid vocations. You will find the explanation for this in your regulations.

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<sup>3</sup> See letter no. 75, n. 3.

It would be a pleasure for me to see the time no longer devoted to dangerous and too-detailed dealings with outsiders being used to form and perfect the inhabitants of the convent, to thoroughly teaching them the statutes and regulations of the Institute according to their condition and capacity.

It is God's will that we will be brought to a halt from time to time on our way to heaven, in order to ensure our subsequent progress and to leave no legacy of evil behind.

My dear Daughter, seek your consolations in God alone, for God alone should be the object of your love and of your hopes. I ask God to confer upon you an abundance of his holy blessings.

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

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### **88. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen**

March 6, 1817, Bordeaux<sup>1</sup>

Copy, Agmar

My dear Child,

In answering your letter of the 28<sup>th</sup> of this month,<sup>2</sup> I believe I have taken care of what remained to be said about the preceding ones.

You asked me for the means of training yourself to obey, and Providence is coming to your aid on the occasion<sup>3</sup> of the private and confidential interviews with those outside. My dear Child, the consolation which you and your dear Daughters Emmanuel and Thérèse found in this type of occupation caused you to become attached to it, and now it is necessary for you to withdraw from it first, and for your above-mentioned Daughters to do so afterward. This must all be done with prudence, while safeguarding the ways of salvation upon which some outsiders have entered and without in any way damaging the edification which works of this kind have procured.

Measures must even be taken to enable the work to be continued by the most religious women of the Sodality. I must give you some details on all of this with a view to your motives and your conduct.

I am going to enter upon them. . . .<sup>4</sup>

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*This letter sets forth the spirit which characterized Father Chaminade's Sodalities, in contrast with that of a former sodality founded before the Revolution.*

### **89. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen**

March 19, 1817, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Child,

I have just sung the High Mass, in which I offered you and all your dear Daughters to the Lord through the mediation of our common Father, Saint Joseph.

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<sup>1</sup> The date is doubtful.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. Chaminade no doubt wanted to write "of the last month."

<sup>3</sup> The meaning, no doubt, is that Providence is coming to your aid by furnishing you an opportunity to obey whenever there is a question of private and confidential interviews with those outside.

<sup>4</sup> The rest of the letter is missing.

I have received the trunk containing the very pretty ornaments for the altar. You must have received their measurements, for they fit perfectly. I deeply appreciate all the marks of attention given to me by the members of your dear convent—I was going to say, of the convent of my heart. By the way, for quite a while now, I believe, I have never given the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament without asking Our Lord to lavish blessings upon all of you.

I must reply to Mlle de Lachapelle<sup>1</sup> that her group cannot be united with what is known as the Sodality of or the sodality instituted by Saint Angela. I doubt very much that the reestablishment of these young women's sodalities as they were in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century will succeed. Be that as it may, the sodalities of Saint Ursula have nothing but the name in common with those of the Blessed Virgin.

In the Rule of Saint Ursula, the assemblies of various kinds whose purpose is to present aspirants, have them go through scrutinies, and provide for sundry needs are called sodalities. "General assemblies" are obligatory only twice a year; "executive meetings" every two months; "those of the Mother Superior" and of her Assistants to consider current business are set for every two weeks; sectional meetings<sup>2</sup> are every two months. The purpose of all this was to provide "governesses, mistresses, admonitors," etc., who almost individually watched over the morals of the associates. It was a police system.

In place of a secret police system, Marian Sodalities set up an active and direction communication of the Christian virtues, mutual instruction, and cooperation in the various activities and their intelligent apportioning. The other was a sodality of leaders who wanted to govern and guide. This one today is the sodality of those who are guided. One was a schooling in the virtues, so to speak, while the other is their rapid communication by the "contagion of example," if we may use this expression.

I am replying to our new Sister Saint-Joseph so she too may have her short letter. You or she might send back a copy, which I could add to the part of the regulations it explains.

I am in heart and in affection your Good Father in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

G.-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. I made two parcels of my latest batch of letters to our dear convent, one for you and the other for Father Mouran. I did not notify you in advance, but I assume all must have reached you.

I realize I have not given you an answer on the vital subject of the repairs. However, you will surely not take any important action until after Easter. I will return to this later. The mail is ready to leave.

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*This note deals with Father Chaminade's effort to recover the patrimony which furnished him with the necessary canonical title for his ordination.<sup>1</sup> Four of the six Chaminade children<sup>2</sup> had inherited a share in the title to this house. François had inherited the business also, but he went bankrupt and the house was sold to pay his creditors.*

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<sup>1</sup> The Ursulines had an establishment at Condom, where Mlle Charlotte de Lachapelle lived (see letter no. 70); this is the reason for this consultation.

<sup>2</sup> The danger of confusion is more apparent in French, where the word *congregation* means both a Sodality and an ordinary meeting.

<sup>1</sup> See *Apostle of Mary*, 1910, 6:60-61.

<sup>2</sup> There were 13 children, but only 6 reached maturity. Of these only 4 received an inheritance because Jean, the oldest, had already died when the parents divided their estate, and Blaise was unable to inherit because before the Revolution he had taken solemn vows as a Franciscan Recollect. Because Louis had died intestate in 1808, his share of the estate was divided among François, Lucrèce, and Guillaume. Because François kept the house, the others received a mortgage on it as their share instead of cash.

**89a. To M. Véchambre, Attorney at Law, Périgueux**

April 14, 1817

I have learned from my brother who is here that his house has been sold, so I believe the amount of my own and my sister's mortgages may soon be recovered. Will the 30-day legal notice of the auction bring us the advantage of a settlement out of court among the creditors according to art. 749 of the code of procedure, which is truly well-intentioned but which, as I know, is not always favorable? If no agreement is reached, will the court recognize the creditors' claims in the order of priority? If so, please be very punctual in producing the titles. Either outside court or legally, I again empower you to do whatever you judge to be appropriate to my interests. I will appreciate your informing me from time to time of how things are progressing. Rest assured of my sincere gratitude and of the sentiments of respect with which I am most sincerely. . . .

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*This letter deals with the purchase at auction of the house located at no. 1, Rue de Lalande, adjoining no. 2, which contains the room in which Father Chaminade died. The house was eventually resold, leaving no. 2 and no. 3 alone to constitute the present property of the Madeleine.<sup>3</sup> The "imprudence" referred to would be that of exposing himself to the obligation of paying the sum of 1,800 francs a second time, due to the fact that all the mortgagees would not have been satisfied.*

**89b. To M. David Monier, Counselor at Law, Bordeaux**

Thursday Morning, April 27, 1817, Bordeaux

My dear Friend,

Very promptly at four o'clock this afternoon, as expressly agreed, the creditors of the house of Lafaye are to meet at the home of M. Despiet.<sup>1</sup> All the papers are to be made out. I will be there with funds to sign whatever is in order. One of the creditors claims that without being imprudent, I could not as yet turn over some 1,800 additional francs. I have read no document. In other words I have, so to speak, never yet busied myself with this matter. Your presence or that of M. Perès will be indispensable. It would be better still for both of you to be there. The session will not be long. Please have the necessary information passed on to M. Perès. Your very truly,  
Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

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*This note refers to the same purchase. Father Chaminade forwards the balance due while calling attention to a possible expense which he had made in the course of the negotiations and for which he may be entitled to a reimbursement, according to the letter received from M. Perès.*

**89c. To M. David Monier, Counselor at Law, Bordeaux**

April 19, 1817

My dear Friend,

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<sup>3</sup> For a ground plan of nos. 1, 2, and 3, Rue de Lalande see *Apostle*, 1914, 10: opp. 177.

<sup>1</sup> The spelling in the official documents.



I am much more than overburdened. I am sending you the wherewith to pay the balance of the account. You will notice that I am entitled to a refund for one of the items listed in the account of the payments I have made. M. Perès spoke to me of one amounting to some 60 francs. The letter, which must be among the papers and with the account of the expenditures, mentions it.  
Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade

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*In this letter Father Chaminade had to settle a delicate case, that of a religious sister of whom a chance confessor required an obedience incompatible with the rights of her superior.*

## **90. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen**

April 19, 1817, Bordeaux  
Original, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

You were truly in a troublesome position concerning Sister Anne. God willed to have you preserve your customary prudence. You had hardly any means better calculated to help you than to take time for reflection and for consultation.

I imagine that after mature reflection Father Pass[enaud]<sup>1</sup> would have withdrawn his request of his own accord. In any case, you must answer him with the regard and respect which are his due, even if he happens to be mistaken and to persist in his error. “When a religious is living in a house under the Rule and obedience, the promises to follow the advice and counsels of any other than the superiors are plainly a breach of order, a preparation for and frequently an imminent danger of a convent schism, which often has far-reaching consequences. Furthermore, a person acts in this way only in the face of some great and certain danger to salvation, such as that of heresy, of separation from the Church, etc.”

Recourse to examples occasionally found in the history of the Church of the baneful results of such conduct is useless. It is equally useless to look for the possible effects of such a standard. A sailor aboard ship who would take it upon himself to follow the signals of another vessel would be thrown overboard because of the danger and trouble he would unquestionably be causing.

To say the person requesting this promise is otherwise prudent accomplishes nothing. This very request is lacking in real prudence, for it amounts to an intention of placing a person between two promises and possibly between two opposing commands.

Let us try, my dear Child, to draw a practical lesson from the disagreement with which you were afflicted in this instance. The lesson to be drawn is that we must not always yield to our desire to put the wisdom and charity of a great preacher to a test in the confessional. This may even be a temptation in which thoughtlessness and a certain pride concur at times with hoped-for delight in hearing things well said. Confidence in the one who knows us better, constancy in the practices by which he gradually trains us, setting aside all personal preferences and what seems to be such—these are the surest means of salvation.

Another lesson for the heads, the directors of monastic institutions, is that ordinary and extraordinary confessors should be chosen from among the priests who best understand monastic life and its rules; and among these those are to be preferred who know the Institute and spirit of the respective Congregations.

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<sup>1</sup> Jean-Pierre Gabriel Passenaud, according to Jules Andrieu, *Bibliographie Générale de l'Agennais* (Paris-Agen: Picard-Michael et Médan, 1887), born in Toulouse in 1770. He preached the Lenten series in the cathedral of Agen in 1817. See letter no. 97a, n. 1.

The rules I have just recalled are to be found here and there among your Regulations. I do not know whether the study of them is being pursued, but I am very eager to convince myself that it is. This would be, for example, if in case of doubt you mentioned which text of the Constitutions or of the rules is the cause of the perplexity or which offers the solution of the difficulty.

I recommend particularly, my dear Child, that you console our Sister Anne in the trouble which has overtaken her. We can only praise her conduct in the midst of it. This embarrassment must have disturbed her. God has permitted it so it may turn to her sanctification. Let us remain faithful to God, and he will bless all our days. This is what I ask of him for all our sisters, and in particular for you, my dear Child in Jesus Christ.

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. I received a letter from Father Mouran dated April 11. I will answer it in time, if it is at all possible. Work here has neither respite nor end. When you pay my respects to him, please tell him his hopes are very flattering and that I would gladly see them realized.

In my letter I spoke about throwing a man overboard and now, on second thought, I am afraid someone may wrongly find in this an occasion for scandal, a thing to be avoided. Here, then, is the explanation of the allegory—of course, not for you, my Child, for doubtless you know it, but for whoever does not. The convent is our boat, the sea is the secular world, the strange ship is the plan which Father Pass[enaud] is making or can make for himself on the ways of perfection. We must not doubt that like us, this worthy minister is moving across this dangerous sea toward eternal salvation, but his ship is necessarily following a route different from that of other ships which have the same objective, and it is not proper for the passenger of another ship to induce him to follow any route other than the one of the ship in which he is traveling. This is enough, I believe. I will answer your other questions at another time.

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*Because of a recent, more accurate determination of its date as the latter part of April 1818, letter no. 91 of the French edition will be found in its chronological place after letter no. 97a.*

*In July 1817, Father Chaminade was able to go among his Daughters and to have the happiness of definitively establishing their Institute by receiving their religious vows with the consent of the bishop. After his stay at Agen, Father Chaminade cannot help expressing his satisfaction with "the little convent."*

## **92. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen**

August 9, 1817, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

I am taking up my pen less to answer your last letter than to let you know I am not forgetting you.

I am greatly pleased with everything about the little convent. Even the two penitents who had caused me some anxiety are the object of my fatherly solicitude, as are all the others. Their submission tells me we are going to have in them two true Children of Mary, but I would not be doing them any good by prematurely removing the dressing from the wounds of their souls. They were both serious cases, especially Sister Saint-Joseph. Incidentally, how is her physical ailment? She is of an age capable of recovering from any illness, if she has goodwill. We must take advantage of this for her welfare.

I was so satisfied that I began work on the "Consummation Virtues." If you will set to work with renewed fervor, you will make progress even against wind and high water and reach your goal.

One means of advancing in the virtue of silence and of recollection is to maintain ourselves humbly in the presence of God, and to ask God interiorly to rid the powers of our soul of every sentiment foreign to his glory and to the love which we have vowed to him.

My work is still on the increase. With the grace of the good Master who sends it, I hope to get through all of it. Pray for your Father, that he may assure his own salvation while working at that of others. May Heaven's most abundant blessings ever descend upon you and on all of our dear Daughters.

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. Sister Saint-Joseph would have done well to write a short letter to her mother, who is justified in complaining about her silence.

I will note for you without delay the order I have put in the file of the professions.

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*M. Lapeyre is a sodalist. The purpose is to negotiate the transfer to Father Chaminade of the titles to three chapels he intended to use for the meetings of the Sodality in Auch, which he hoped to found during a visit to that city. The "de Batz, Esq." referred to in the letter is Caspar-François de Batz, a cousin of Adèle's father. These chapels, however, were never acquired by Father Chaminade.*

## **92a. To M. Lapeyre, Judge of the District Court at Auch**

August 16, 1817, Bordeaux

My counsel, to whom I had passed the papers concerning the chapel and the annuity, was not able to give me an answer as soon as I would have wished. His reply, just received, matches my expectations in part, at least. This is his opinion.

There is no objection to having the transfer of the chapel or of the three chapels made exactly as it was by M. Lodoyer to M. de Batz, and by the latter to Mlle Socadaux, namely by a deed under private seal. My counsel decided to draw up the deed in due form. It remains only to copy it in duplicate on stamped paper. This you will kindly do when you have agreed to its terms. Regarding the date, my counsel believes it should be the date on which the agreement was made during my stay in Auch. This is, I believe the - - -. The copies on stamped paper duly signed will be forwarded to me, and I will return one signed by me to be kept by Mlle Socadaux.

The donation of the annuity<sup>1</sup> can offer greater difficulty, because donations<sup>2</sup> must be made in the presence of a notary, and they must be accepted expressly in person or by means of a notarized procuration.<sup>3</sup>

Could the object of the annuity not remain as it is until our next meeting? The matter of the annuity to be transferred will not prevent the chapels, which are independent from it, from reaching their destination. The Sodality will be established, and if God gives us the opportunity or

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<sup>1</sup> See letter N.A. Od, n. 3, on annuities in France at that time.

<sup>2</sup> Namely, of titles.

<sup>3</sup> In an autograph marginal note Fr. Chaminade replaces the two following paragraphs by these words. "I have substituted for what follows the advice to make a bequest to me in the form given on the reverse, the date to be that of its actual transmission." Here is the form on the reverse: "Adding to my will . . . [the date]" or "Addition to my will" "I give and bequeath to Father - - - the perpetual cash-endowed annuity to which I am entitled from M. Bourgade . . . and I revoke any disposition I may have made to the contrary."

the time the annuity will reach its set destination later. Meanwhile we would continue to do as we have been doing. It would be used manually<sup>4</sup> according to the intention of Mlle Socadaux.

Possibly a means other than donation will be found. I hope for this. I do not know why I am averse to this type of conveyance, but because this does not hinder the essential object, we must take our time.

\* \* \*

### **S. 92a. Text of the Legacy**

*Here is the text of the legacy "in the form indicated on the reverse of the letter," as mentioned in note 3 above.*

Between the undersigned Mlle Jeanne-Françoise Socadaux, owner, inhabitant of the city and commune of Auch, and M. Joseph Guillaume Chaminade, priest, canon of the metropolitan church of Saint André in Bordeaux, it has been agreed as follows.

The forenamed Mlle Socadaux sells, cedes, and transfers by these presents to the said M. Chaminade, who accepts at his own risk, peril, and fortune and without further guarantee on the part of Mlle Socadaux than those contained herein,

Three buildings and a yard, all contiguous, formerly a dependency of the church of Saint Orent of the town of Auch, one of the buildings bearing the name of Chapel of Saint Marguerite and the third the title of Our Lady of Good Hope; the yard to the north of said chapel of Our Lady of the Conception where the chapel of Saint Vidal formerly stood. The items mentioned are bounded on the east by the garden of the priory of Sarrony, on the north starting from a building called the Saint Orent barn, to the public road, the chapel formerly dedicated to Saint Joseph, on the west by the cloister of Saint Orent, and on the south by the buildings of the ancient priory. The present sale also includes the following.

1. A 15-foot right of way on the grounds of the ancient church of Orent, starting from the portal which is north facing the vacant lot between the house of Dupeyron, wine merchant, and M. Gelart, innkeeper, this right to expire of the church ceases to be a place of worship.

2. The right to possess in common with the heirs and representatives of the late Jacques Lodoyer, architect, former owner of the items to be sold, the grounds of the ancient cloister and cemetery of Saint Orent, without the power to erect or to allow to be erected any structure, except the right of old lights and openings as reserved in the original title.

3. All other rights and privileges, both active and passive, described in the said original title without any guarantee, however, on the part of the seller.

The items described above, belonging to and sold by the forenamed Mlle Socadaux, who had bought them from M. Gaspard-François de Batz, proprietor, inhabitant of the town of Auch, by private contract, in duplicate, in said place on October 31, 1810, and signed by de Batz and Jeanne-Françoise Socadaux, the elder; said deed was registered in Auch on January 14, 1811 by J. B. M. Vidault, who received 88 francs.

The items that were sold had belonged to M. de Batz, who had purchased them from the late M. Jacques Lodoyer, architect, inhabitant of the town of Auch, by another private contract in duplicate, in the said town, on 35 thermidor in the year 8, signed de Batz, son, and Lodoyer, registered at Auch on April 19, 1810, by J. B. M. Vidault, who received 76 francs.

The said late Jacques Lodoyer had obtained all the above items along with others at a national auction sale.

The forenamed Mlle Socadaux delegates the said M. Chaminade to manage and pay this annuity, beginning on January 24, 1818, to the heirs and representatives of the

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<sup>4</sup> By receiving the yearly allowance directly from the person in whose name the annuity is drawn up.

late Jacques Ledoyer in a single payment, yearly on June 24, the capital being claimable if the annuity is not paid for three consecutive years. This will be executed by the forenamed M. Chaminade, who agrees to it, in such a fashion that Mlle Socadaux and M. de Batz, its author, can in no way be inconvenienced in the future either by the 100 franc annuity or by the principal, should it become claimable.

If the aforementioned chapels would no longer be used for worship, M. Chaminade will have the right if he sees fit, at his own wish and without guarantee, to return to the said M. Lodoyer all the items transferred and sold, just as the said M. Lodoyer had consented to the sale on 25 thermidor of the year 8 to M. de Batz without recourse or redress against the latter or the present seller.

As title to the property, the forenamed Mlle Socadaux has given to M. Chaminade, who acknowledges its receipt, both the bill of sale with the personal signature of M. Lodoyer made in favor of M. de Batz on 25 thermidor of the year 8 and that of October 30, 1810, de Batz to Socadaux, along with other related documents. The sale will go on public record as soon as one of the parties requests this; however, the costs will be charged to M. Chaminade.

For the execution of these presents, both parties have complied with all the rules and regulations.

In duplicate, at Auch, the - - - of July, 1817.

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*Overburdened with work, Father Chaminade left the letters from the convent long unanswered. To his ordinary occupations had been added serious concern with a new foundation, that of the Society of Mary. He took the first step in this direction on October 2, 1817. Only later was he able to resume his correspondence with Agen and dictate this letter to David Monier.*

### **93. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen**

October 15, 1817, Bordeaux

Original, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

I am devoting this letter to the various needs of the little convent about which you or your dear sisters have been seeking advice since August 28. I will add some advice regarding your personal direction, if time permits. In my reply to the little convent I am including your requests under date of September 25 and the letter of Sister Saint-Vincent which I had requested. However, I will deal with Sister Saint-Joseph only incidentally, leaving her needs, which are so great, to special correspondence.

1. The 11-year-old girl of good extraction who with the approval of her mother is offered for your acceptance a year from now may well serve, as you have believed, as the nucleus of the group of young postulants who have been belaboring your mind and heart. But you were correct in observing that this would mean more work for our sisters and that recollection might suffer as a result. Still, these do not need to be reasons for abandoning the enterprise. But it would be better to begin with a small number of subjects and not with just one, for the simple reason that with several there would be mutual support and encouragement, whereas one single child would increase the work of our sisters and would not succeed as well. Should you find an occasion to group together four subjects, do so. Then the small rules governing their exercises, recreations, and studies would be useful and easily drawn with only a few changes from the regulations of the novices and those of the schools. It would almost suffice merely to refer to them.

I do not believe we should neglect already very pressing needs in order to provide in some way for those of the young postulants, although we will have to come to these eventually. The Institute would be incomplete if this work were not developed someday.

2. The 14-year-old daughter of the mason who wishes to enter the convent as a Companion Sister<sup>1</sup> cannot do this as such, for one of your letters informs me that you have enough Companion Sisters and are unable to receive others. To accept this one as destined for the rank of the Mothers would perhaps be opposed to the rules of humility to which her heart must conform. The danger to her salvation is great, very great indeed, should her vocation fail to prove itself, and greater still should she remain faithful in all respects except that of humility, which is the basis of the religious state. Once the young postulants begin to be trained, could we not have this candidate join them even as a companion? It would be good to give this matter mature consideration. For the present, the admission of this child to have her live together with the older ones has its evident disadvantages. Her piety must be maintained. God will not try her beyond the limits of her strength. Let us lend ourselves to the work of God with suitable prudence.

3. A sister turn-box attendant is another object of zeal to be accepted.<sup>2</sup> What you have learned about her disposition concerning works of charity doubtless recommends her, but she is a servant girl at present. How could she be received? I believe such a subject could be received only in a capacity similar to that which she has in the world—that is, she would come as an outsider to take charge of the turn and would not form part of the monastery. She should not be preferred to any other errand-girl, except by reason of her piety and her known virtue. She herself is not to prefer the turn to any other employment, except as an opportunity to work still better in the way of salvation. Moreover, you must examine whether it would not be preferable to admit a Companion Sister because the power to appoint them to outside occupations is provided by the Rule. If I am not mistaken, your idea was to grant asylum to another pious soul and, not being able to do so inside the community for lack of need or suitability, you wished to place her where she could stay. Perhaps it is better to wait for an increase in the number of subjects, in virtue and in the means for the attainment of the goals determined upon; after that, outside and accessory sisters will come soon enough.

4. The women who came to Sister Saint-François, in being given bread by her in their distress and exhorted to do good and avoid evil thereby have had an opportunity to know who the God is who feeds people and accepts them as children. They must have said, “This is the God Sister Saint-François is praising.”

So the work was good in itself. I had the opportunity to say this in some letters of direction; but it is not one which fits in well with the spirit of the Institute.

If we devote ourselves to winning back wayward women, so-called “polite society,” which has its sense of decency, will shun us. The small number of degraded women alone will be left to us. Remember, my dear Child, what I have already told you. The Institute has practically none of the things it would need to accommodate public penitents, repentant women, etc. There is no reason to oppose such women’s attendance at public instructions, if this does not conflict with established policy. May God touch and enlighten them! But you, who are a teaching association, should avoid taking care of such women. Would you admit these to a school for young women? What fathers and what mothers would send their children to it? You are such a school. You will destroy it if you invite to it those who are shunned by respectable people.

A spectacular work, my dear Child, is not so valuable as works unobtrusively performed. In the Institute there is no question of reforming one or several public sinners, but of attracting and reforming the world, which is going almost completely astray.

The first time I had to speak of wayward women who had approached the convent, I said God had permitted this, and God would justify it. But I add with reason that if it happens again,

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<sup>1</sup> See letter no. 74.

<sup>2</sup> See letter no. 74, n. 3. This original reads *un autre sujet de zèle*. Thomas Poitier translated this as “another zealous subject,” which would normally be expressed by *sujet zélé*. In view of the observation toward the end of the paragraph that “If I am not mistaken, your idea was to grant asylum, etc.,” this proposed subject for the religious life seems to have been considered an object of their zeal.

respectable women will no longer come near the convent and young women of good parentage will blush to be seen there.

Famine and the scarcity of bread are the motives which have excused this act of charity, but we must remember that there are no virtues which, for lack of prudence, cannot have dangerous effects.

5. Regarding Sister Saint-Esprit, who has become a cross sent to the convent by the Lord, I have no doubt about all the charity of the sisters toward her in their prayers as well as in their support of her affliction. But you must avoid letting her become an occasion to the public for slander and the curious inquiry into what is happening in the monastery. You must appoint another sister listener<sup>1</sup> to keep the incapacitated person from the door, but do this in such a way that the change of employment does not make her condition worse. Do not fail to make use of Father Mouran's help.

6. The meetings of the young sodalists, whose stay in the country has adversely affected them, must be activated with zeal, prudence, and perseverance. Sister Emmanuel, who is now doing this work through obedience, will one day do it through zeal. She is afraid it is a waste of time. She would prefer for her own sake to keep herself more apart from the world than this work permits, etc.

Instructions which are without results for the world are not lost. God is glorified by them. We are only the passing witnesses of the doctrine taught by Jesus Christ. We have been urged to preach, in season and out of season. It has been foreseen that the world will not always listen to us. We must nevertheless bear witness to the truth, as long as time and ability are given us to do so. God will see to the fruits in his own good time. May God not permit our negligence to be held against us! Time would be lost if we failed to give instruction. It will not be lost by the mere fact of its being poorly received or ignored by the audience.

Regarding greater separation from the world, it is not so much the body as the mind that is to be separated, although the Institute has provided for both. We must crucify ourselves in the eyes of the world in order to edify the world, and particularly by this crucifixion to become more closely united to Jesus Christ. The fear of being too long in contact with the world is good, as long as it leads us to ask for more powerful graces and tends to show us our own weakness. It must not in any way make us neglect the holy education we have undertaken to give to the world.

You, my dear Child, will uphold this education of the young sodalists and their meetings by your counsel and your wise authority.

7. The reported visit of your aunts offers nothing which may not be in harmony with the spirit of the Institute.

But you note very truly that even the appearance of favoritism would seem to be an abuse and may lead to jealousies and that, moreover, you must hold fast to the Rule. When you add that perhaps no jealousy may arise, I will agree with this also. I believe it is very likely, considering our sisters' state of piety. But I would not guarantee that requests for similar favors in the future would not give rise to this very jealousy in case of a refusal. The seed of jealousy would be sown, and who knows when and how it would become active and show itself?

Your position calls for greater discretion. God has wished to put it to the test. He will not abandon you. God has led you to tell me your natural desires, your fears with regard to following them, and to promise that whatever my decision, it will be acted upon. I do not believe you should receive your aunts in any other place than in the quarters of the day students.

8. Two of our people spoke to me of a long letter of Sister Saint-Sacrament which has come by a chance carrier.<sup>1</sup> I have not received it.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See letter no. 86, n. 3.

<sup>1</sup> See letter no. 61, n. 1.

<sup>2</sup> The following words were added later: "Just received. I will read and answer it."

9. You ask me to take an interest in a number of placements, one of which concerns a relative of Mme Ballot.<sup>3</sup> This is possible only if you send the people in person, and even then we are not always successful. The woman who wanted to enter the hospital service arrived during my absence. She did not go about this properly by herself. I gave her some advice for another attempt, but that will be more difficult.

10. With regard to Mme Ballot's relative, my dear Child, you are debating whether or not to receive her in the convent. She is virtuous, somewhat talented, but without means, and you are inquiring about a rule for you to follow. Do not overburden the convent. Do not retrench promised provisions for the needs of others. This is the first rule. As for a subject of great virtue whose vocation is exceptional, we must not take human prudence too much into account. If God inspires us for higher motives to receive her, obedience to this powerful impulse is the second rule.

11. Although I have spoken of Sister Emmanuel and of the work entrusted to her among the young sodalists, the report on the principal offices in your letter of September 17 affords me another opportunity to say a word about it. This dear sister's duty to undo the consequences of this pupil's imprudent affairs exposes her to contact with manifestations of worldly vanity which are sometimes dangerous and always disgusting. As you say, she is truly in need of God's grace. But on the other hand, how much evil she roots out, how many servants of the Lord she prepares, what families she wins and preserves from affliction! My dear Child, you should always be attentive to these apostolic efforts in order to aid whatever is good and see to it that these contacts do not lessen the love of God in the heart of this Daughter who has been charged with listening to these vanities. Whenever necessary, provide her with days of retreat and rest, short enough to allow her activities to be resumed yet long enough to enable her to fortify herself in the love of God. This is all left to your discretion. Solicitous supervision alone is obligatory. Furthermore, this function will not always have delicate and dangerous cases to handle. Beginnings are always difficult.

12. The requests for Sodalities in various localities are coming to me not only from your part of the country, but from elsewhere as well. I have drawn up instructions which may be of general application. Meanwhile, we must not cease to establish and to encourage.

13. You ask me for Manuals and for accounts. I will make use of the first opportunity to send you the former, and of the first moment available to make out the latter. I will also remember to send you the German grammar.

14. I have orders to satisfy Father Gardelles. I hope this has been done by now and that he will receive my thanks for his kindness without prejudice to what God will be pleased to grant him for his cooperation in a good work. His draft has been paid. I am herewith passing it on to you. Please exchange it for my note of indebtedness, which he is to sign.<sup>1</sup>

15. I should perhaps have let you realize how pained I was at the thought that my silence, enforced as you may well imagine, caused you to be concerned about the condition of my health. God has been pleased to grant me additional time to work in his vineyard. He will also deign to grant me the necessary strength.

16. For your further guidance in the various matters I have just touched upon, get in touch as usual with good Father Mouran so he may advise you on whatever I may not have sufficiently

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<sup>3</sup> Probably Mme Belloc is meant.

<sup>1</sup> The explanation seems to be this. Fr. Gardelles was the superior of the seminary at Agen (see introduction, letter no. 72), where Fr. Chaminade had lodged for two weeks during the visit he paid to the newly-established convent of the Daughters of Mary the preceding July (see introduction, letter no. 92). The orders to satisfy Fr. Gardelles were to compensate him for lodging. The draft was sent to Fr. Chaminade by Fr. Gardelles in lieu of direct repayment of a loan he had made to the Daughters of Mary. After repayment had been made in Bordeaux, the receipted draft was being returned to Fr. Gardelles through Adèle. At the same time, Fr. Chaminade sent her his note of indebtedness and asked her for a receipt from Fr. Gardelles in exchange for the former's receipted draft.



explained and look after anything which the haste of a correspondence of which I do not keep duplicate copies may have left faulty or not to the point.

17. For the direction of Sister Saint-Joseph, I had hoped that as requested, she would return a copy of the letters I had previously addressed to her for her particular rule of life. This omission obliges me, as far as she is concerned, to begin all over again, as I had feared, without knowing where she stands, what help she may have received, or in what way she may or may not have benefited. I know only that the rules of silence had been pointed out to her before they were made known to anyone else and that she does not seem to have so much as a recollection of them, at least if I am to believe the report she has made to me regarding her condition and the agitation with which she was afflicted.

18. To prevent a similar recurrence with regard to our other sisters, it would be good to begin a notebook in which all the letters of direction would be copied, indicating their date and the address of each sister involved. If one copy of this notebook were sent to me later, it could very often happen that I could reply to new requests made to me by a simple reference to the notebook. For this purpose the two copies would have to correspond page by page. With a little care, this would not be impossible. Begin with the oldest letters and add the rest in their respective order.

19. I would like to move on to your personal direction, but the number and variety of subjects this includes<sup>1</sup> and the particular need you may have of keeping your Rule closer to you and at hand, so to speak, requires me to do so separately.

May God grant to our dear sisters and to you, my dear Child, in particular all the blessing which you have requested from me while my letters have been so rare and so short.

G.-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P. S. Several letters enclosed here will let you know my thoughts on various subjects, particularly about Sister Stanislas. The letters cannot leave with this mail.

I have just received your letter of October 13. I will answer it soon.

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*There are also instructions in the following letter, which is also in the handwriting of David Monier.*

#### **94. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen**

December 7, 1817, Bordeaux

Original, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

Your letter of December 1 contains only four principal questions. To most of them you desire prompt answers. Your wish will be met. I am postponing the overdue letters until a later date. This is the best I can do.

(1) Mme Belloc may grant the wishes of the ladies of Puimirol. She will proceed according to the forms with which she is acquainted<sup>1</sup> and will send me the customary report.

(2) The garden and the laundry are subject to strict enclosure. This does not prevent service personnel from being permitted to enter. These two points need not bother you. The abuse of admissions constitutes your only problem. In this regard, as in many others, we must be neither too severe nor too lenient. There are some small abuses which a permanent system of control

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<sup>1</sup> The reference seems to be not to Adèle's direction, but to the present letter and its 19 topics.

<sup>1</sup> There seems to be a question of establishing a Sodality or of affiliating an already-existing one with the Bordeaux Sodality.

placed at the door would not be able to stop, while the omission of a timely glance may end by throwing the convent open to the public. First of all, you must make certain the people slipping in are not on indiscreet errands. This is the most important point of all. The second would be not to permit the number of this type of entrance to exceed those of the hired women employed to meet definite needs, but to keep it as much as possible below the number of employees. Moreover, if at times a woman makes a short trip, as you put it, to make it easier for an employee, you must presume that it is rather to help her than for any sinister motive. She is making herself useful in this way, and even if some curiosity is involved you must close your eyes to it. But take care that these same curious ones, if they are truly such, see only divine virtue. A habit is more dangerous. The one formed by the servant of Mme Belloc is an evident abuse. She can call for her mistress and wait for her at the door. I believe I have answered these same questions, nearly so at least, on a previous occasion.

(3) I do not believe it is necessary to change the ordinary confessor. There is little objection to the fact that small Confessions are made to the extraordinary confessor, when he is alone, because of worries before Communion, but there would be great risk of changing the entire aspect of a budding Institute through a new ordinary confessor. Guidance previously given would need to be renewed for everything to go well; cases would have to be recalled; some instructions issued would be hard to retrace to their original starting point. The greatest of all favors your bishop can grant us is to allow us to strengthen still further the foundations to be accepted. I will look upon this as a trial. The later it comes, the less severe it will be. The talents and the great piety of the new confessor do not diminish the danger of a new orientation of an Institute. I would write about this to His Excellency if I did not believe what I am telling you is sufficient. I am sparing the time of this respectable prelate, and I believe I should do so.

(4) I still need to reply to your<sup>1</sup> more complicated question, the one regarding the admission of the little postulant.

This particular good work, as we have stated on other occasions, is within the intentions of the Institute, but to do it in a spirit other than that of the Institute would be a very serious mistake.

Her mother asks you for admission to the interior of the community in case her daughter is ill; and you, my dear Child, are asking whether the young postulant could go to the outer parlor and be spoken to without observing the parlor regulations. Here you have three breaches made in the most delicate and essential rules of the Institute.

If the little girl and her mother ask for exceptions of this kind, they are asking for something which is against the Rule. No doubt they do not realize what they are requesting here. They are following the promptings of natural affection without thinking of the perfection which frees us from them, at least as far as what is earthly in them. And if they do not have the spirit of God, it would be useless to enter upon explanations which they would misunderstand.

The postulants, the younger as well as the older ones, are to ask for the Rule. The sisters and the Mothers are to observe it. Together they are to walk along the same path, in such a way that the false steps of some may not occasion wrongful desires and temptations for the others.

It is enough that the Rule has permitted the superior to permit passing outside the cloister when circumstances call for it. Contemporary conditions and certain considerations have required this. But this power may not be made the object of an agreement with the father, mother, or other people of the world, an agreement whose execution would then be obligatory.

It is very possible that the weakness of age and of religious motives will incline superiors in certain cases to permit one or two of the things requested, or even perhaps all three. But it is impossible to agree on granting the permission in question, and equally impossible to deprive ourselves beforehand of the power of not doing so.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The French text has *une*, instead of the *votre* of the original.

<sup>2</sup> Of refusing to grant such a permission.

This explanation is disagreeable to the world, but we do not wish to commit ourselves to pleasing the world. One of our rules is not to attract subjects by the sight of the comforts of convent life, but to allow the Spirit of God to appear.

A mother may refuse us her daughter because she would like to impose her own little rule on the convent, only to lose this same daughter because of her inability to subject to the law passions insufficiently guarded against and a world which will laugh at her. It is up to the mothers to make a choice, and we cannot flatter ourselves with the hope of finding all of them possessed of perfectly good sentiments.

It may be distressing to see a well-disposed subject upon whom God has evident designs fail to realize them, but it would be still more distressing if the apparent cultivation of wisdom would be the cause of breaking rules which, with the help of prayer and God's grace, we have judged appropriate to bring about the salvation of a great number.

I am not saying anything to you, my dear Child, about the inconvenience a single young postulant would have involved. Bearing this added burden in order to do the proposed good would have been the proper thing to do.

The regulation to be adhered to "always and everywhere," as you request, would meet with more difficulties because the regulation, even though particular, is something that must harmonize with all the rest. In such a case you should have held to provisional rules, as I wrote to you on another occasion.

One of the first articles of the Rule for the young postulants will be that "enclosure and the precaution of the parlor" are to be observed without any exception other than that of the general rule, namely, the order of the superior or other authority, which is to be received in case of need and never to be looked for or requested.

This so-called inconvenience is one of the favors of the Institute which is to be requested like the others, otherwise no one is to claim to be a postulant.<sup>1</sup> If secular people do not understand this language, well and good; but you my dear Child, and our sisters who have read the third purpose of the Institute, you will judge as I do that an agreement opposed to it damages the Rule and that a request to be made for such an agreement simply does not exist in the heart of anyone asking for admission to the Institute.

This child will be visited in the parlor like the others. If she goes out without being told to do so by the superior, this will be in order not to return.

Strangers visit the convent only with the permission of the bishop and for reasons deemed legitimate by His Excellency.

I have barely enough space left to wish you the blessing of the Lord.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. The establishment of a convent is being proposed for Auch. I am asking that it will be affiliated with yours. A few others are needed first. I do not know what actual part Mlle de Rissan<sup>1</sup> may have in it. God will bring his works to maturity in his own good time.

If the child stays with you, we will have to decide what relationship with her mother will be necessary in the interests of religion. If she does not stay, you should make it possible and easy for her to have some connection with the convent. The Good Lord will decide the rest.

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*After the sale of the house which followed the bankruptcy of Father Chaminade's brother François (see letter 116), the latter had asked Father Chaminade and his sister to let him have*

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<sup>1</sup> The French has *se dire en postulation*, which means literally "to say that one is in the condition of making a request." *Postulant* means literally "a requestor," specifically, one who requests admission to religious life.

<sup>1</sup> See letter no. 73, n.2.

*the cash which they had received in payment of their share in the ownership. Both refused to do this. The reasons for Father Chaminade's refusal are given here.*

**94a. To M. David Monier**  
**Counselor at Law, Bordeaux**  
Friday Morning, December 12, 1817

My dear Friend,

M. Lavigerie's letter settles us regarding the answer to be given to my brother. I received it at about the same time as your note. I am sending it to you with this letter. The final determining cause for not giving him these small sums, either entirely or in part, is his misconduct. Without having seen his marriage contract we can without rashness suspect its form, etc., etc. But there are many other reasons to present: (1) the needs of my sister, which are always increasing, and my resources, which are decreasing day by day. (2) Before he<sup>2</sup> made any request, we had declared to the purchaser of his house that we had disposed of these sums, he<sup>3</sup> asked to keep them and pay the interest on them. (3) My sister cannot and does not wish to give them; she tells him so herself, and he seems to recall the facts. (4) In the rules and according to the laws, my clerical title should have a tangible basis. The refusal must be excused and softened, but nevertheless allowed to show the very real regret caused by his misconduct.

I sympathize with your indisposition. I did not know about it. I will come to see you as soon as I can get away.

Could you not entrust M. Dotezac with these sums to bring them by the Limoges stagecoach?

With kindest regards,

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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*N. B. This letter, written in Bordeaux in December of 1817 was originally listed as missing (see letter no. 116). The text is given below.*

**S. 94b. To M. Véchambre, Périgueux**  
December 18, 1817, Bordeaux  
Rough Draft, Agmar

You should have received by post a notice to the effect that we were sending you a bill for the sum of 5,376 francs, 66 centimes which with the courier's signature would act as a receipt for the money which you will be refunded.

M. David Monier, our friend and a lawyer before the royal court whom you met here, is the bearer of our invoice; kindly make your payment to him. Because his travel through your city gives me an opportunity to receive some news about my brother and his family, please give our friend any information he may desire about your town; I will then be doubly indebted to you.

Also please give the bearer the remaining items in our file and your receipt for the expenses listed in your letter. I hope to have other occasions to show you our trust and esteem and also to be of service. Accept with this assurance the expression of the sentiments with which I claim the honor to be your very humble and obedient servant. . . .

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<sup>2</sup> François.

<sup>3</sup> The purchaser. He wanted Fr. Chaminade to accept a mortgage instead of cash payment.

## 94c. To M. François Chaminade, Périgueux

January 4, 1818

There is nothing suspicious in my letters. Still less is there anything indiscreet in my conduct with regard to the few things you allowed me to hear, or which I knew concerning your affairs. You have a mind embittered by your situation. This is the evil introduced by you, and you alone, into the explanations given to me. This is mainly what prevents you from looking upon what I have said, done, and wished to do as good.

It also seems to me that the same passion which has so strongly contributed to your misfortune is dominating your mind just as it did formerly, because I cannot put any other interpretation on the letters in which you tell me you have four children from your present marriage, if I compare them with the legal papers you signed for the public registry office according to the law and the instructions of the magistrates. These papers declare only one child. It does not occur to me at all that there was any intention to suppress the status of the others.

If your mind were calm and unbiased, you would not be seeing anything suspicious in my letters, but rather in this discrepancy between the public records and your own letters.

I have nothing to say about the 5,000 francs you declared as the property of your new wife, of which 3,000 were in furniture and the rest in old stock, of which she was the sole owner. You were free to do as you pleased.

However, if I find that justice allows the transfer of my own possessions to you and to yours, this same justice requires me to consider whether their destination will be reached when the amounts once received are, for want of others, in the hands of your wife and later on in those of her own children. With all my heart, I should wish that what is suspicious would come only from me, and that your reproach would have some foundation.

I could tell you a great deal about the scandal which my conduct would increase and renew if it were thoughtless and inconsiderate, but you are intelligent enough to understand it if you rid yourself of the consequences of a passion which we must lament together, you as a penitent and I as a loved one closely united to you.

There is something still more necessary to produce in you the frame of mind I would hope to find in you, namely, the destruction of the empty, self-inflicted illusion that outsiders have been able to diminish my good disposition toward you. You blame the writing I use instead of my own,<sup>1</sup> painful and humiliating questions which you say were asked, and other similar things.

You suppose my love and prudence to be very weak; the former, because it changes so easily and the latter, for handing you over to the so-called spitefulness of the world. If I truly had done this, I would accuse myself of it and make every effort to undo it. But I do believe that despite the ideas troubling you, you believe in the truth of this assertion. I am going to explain myself in order to satisfy you, if possible.

I am making use of another hand whenever I write somewhat at length, because I cannot use my own. You witnessed this, so to speak, during my [*sic*] stay in Bordeaux, and you were the first in a thousand who found this unsatisfactory.

I would have used a writer of your choice even for this letter, if you had suggested one to me, as I take it you can present only reputable ones.

Although I cannot force you to trust those I choose, I can at least ask you to believe I have given attention to the matter and that my attention may carry some weight, as opposed to vague and baseless prejudices.

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<sup>1</sup> Having his letters written by a secretary.

Even if I had made a bad choice, the terms in which I have written do not reveal anything either good or bad about the state of your affairs, and your secret has not, as your complaint pretends, been passed on to those from whom you wish to keep it.

A while ago I spoke of the disturbed state of your mind, and here we have a powerful example of this, for you complain that the “ifs” and the “buts” leave even you who have the key to our correspondence with the impression of something suspicious, and you believe that what you claim not to understand was understood by the unknown writer and amounts to an indiscretion.

Your letters have remained a deep secret like that of M. and - - - the elder, who had written to me to the same effect and in almost the same terms as those of your first letter. This fact, added to that of your mutual interest, prompted me to say I would have wished your own letter had not been anticipated by that of an intermediary, as I considered him inspired by you.<sup>1</sup>

Well, I answered this gentleman, giving him due credit for his good intentions and telling him that for many reasons I was disposed to deal with you alone. Then your first letter arrived.

Anyone else, or you yourself at another time, would say my discretion has been extreme. Your reproaching me with doing the very opposite seems to me due to your inclination to blame. I am telling you this with the same sentiments which led to me to inform myself about your needs before anyone wrote to me about them.

You seemed to have taken this investigation as another indiscretion, and wrongly so, for there is no indiscretion in asking for documents which are submitted to all requests in a public record office, where no one may be refused the right to examine them in detail.

Instead of being an indiscretion, it would perhaps have been advantageous to publish your marriage record. But this would be for you to do, and not for me to interfere.

This publication would put an end to the idea of some people that you have declared 40,000 francs as your wife’s property; that you are turning them to account secretly with the help of agents who lend at high interest rates, and your evident contentment has no other cause; and that someday you will reestablish your wife with these same funds. All these things increase the number of your enemies and must eventually lead to your complete ruin.

Leaving aside these errors, always perpetrated by public opinion, if we could return to the source of all justice and to a lively sense of religion it seems to me we should avoid many worries in this world, while assuring ourselves of inestimable resources in the next.

So, my brother, persuade yourself not to obtain for children whom the law disavows the same advantages as those enjoy who are recognized by it. This proposal is actually the result of a passion which has flattered us, but it is not something demanded by our duty. The laws which safeguard morals must be respected in their effects when we have had the misfortune of not sufficiently observing their preventive prescriptions. Persistence in this respect is regarded only as the result of an unfortunate passion. Let us go to the Good Lord with simplicity, let us recognize that we were guilty in forgetting his holy law, and let us not perpetuate our errors by transferring to disavowed children the advantages due only to those who are legitimate.

Only the sincerity and power of religion can change your heart in this case. Should this happen, you will see how differently you will speak and what new thoughts will rid you of the disorder which keeps you from seeing the intentions of others.

Dear Brother, as far as I am concerned, it seems contrary to my duties to have any of my possessions passed on to your children not acknowledged in your legal documents. It seems to me equally impossible to entrust them to the discretion of your wife, who is being well spoken of but

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<sup>1</sup> This is a particularly difficult paragraph in a letter composed by M. David, who as Fr. Lalanne put it, “has a written style as poor as his spoken style is good.” The idea seems to be that Fr. Chaminade would have preferred that this brother’s bosom friend had not taken it upon himself to write what he would learn from his brother immediately afterward, possibly because it doubled the danger of having such compromising material go astray and fall into other hands, or because he wished to emphasize his opposition to the use of any intermediary unless, as in his case, it was absolutely necessary to do so.

who lacks the legal right to exclude from anything she would receive the children I believe to be unrelated to you because they are hers.

Honest people will agree with the law in having you make the distinction. I need it myself to help you financially. Give me the means to do it and the reasonable assurance that it will not be otherwise. This will be described as doing what delicacy and honor demand. A sense of religious duty and a true conversion would add an incalculable value to this.

I have spoken to you with an open heart, as in fact I have never ceased to do. I believe you would do the same, if you made short work of the passion which has brought you to your present pass, and furthermore that in loving those who are in duty yours, you would not wish to change the law in their regard.

These are the best wishes I can offer you at the beginning of this year. I add to them also the wish to receive your answer to my desires with an open mind and complete candor.

\* \* \*

### **95. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen**

January 30, 1818, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

I am sending a letter by this same mail to Mme Lascégryve, refusing her as politely as possible the permission she has just requested of me. Without a doubt she will pass my letter on to you.

The difficulties your present quarters offer may still make you close your eyes to the abnormalities which infringe somewhat upon the rule of enclosure in the reception of Communion and the work of the sacristan. But see to it that no one abuses this tolerance.

It is absolutely essential for the novices and the young religious to study and qualify themselves for the purposes of the Institute according to their particular talents and aptitudes. But it is also quite essential for them to be occupied with manual labor, even if this is only to perfect themselves together with the rest of the community in the practice of interior silence and recollection. You have been able to notice that your Institute devotes little time to mental prayer, and yet how necessary this would be for it, if in manual labor there were not a more advantageous compensation! As you know, there are many other reasons the Daughters of Mary must bring to manual labor, but the one I have just pointed out to you is the one which always impresses me the most.

I am very sorry, dear Child, about the type of indecision in which Sister Trinité finds herself. Since reading the part of your letter in which you tell me she will not take the habit on the Feast of the Purification, I have very often recalled this passage in the Gospel, "The one who does not hate father, mother, brother, and sister is not worthy of me,"<sup>1</sup> and this other, "Let the dead bury their dead." Has she truly understood that the first step in religious life is complete renunciation of the world?

May everything in the future serve to encourage Sister Saint-Joseph, without losing sight of the observations we have made. Do not be disturbed about your answer to Father Gardelle.<sup>2</sup> There was some weakness in not frankly and submissively manifesting what had been for the moment considered more suitable.

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<sup>1</sup> A combination of Matthew 10:37, "The one who loves father, etc., more than me is not worthy of me" and Luke 14:26, "If someone comes to me and does not hate his father, etc., they cannot be my disciple."

<sup>2</sup> See letter no. 93, n. 7.

The packet of your letters has been turned over to a skipper who is very reliable. I am having someone write to him by this mail. Be kind enough to tell me when the letters have reached you. I was given complete assurance that they will not be lost.

Although it is very late and I am in a great hurry, I wanted to answer you myself.<sup>3</sup> This affords me a little satisfaction, just as does praying to the Lord to shower upon you and upon all our Children his most abundant blessings.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

\* \* \*

*Father Chaminade hurriedly answers various questions and discusses both spiritual and temporal matters, the admission of postulants and the sending of cod and rice through his maid. In the last paragraph he refers to certain good news he has for his Daughters. In his letter of March 11, however, he mentions that this news is to be conveyed to them verbally. This is the first faint indication of the "Little Society" in the process of formation.*

### **96. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen**

February 11, 1818, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

Recently I sent you 25 pounds of codfish, partly dried and partly fresh. I will charge it to your account. I have not received anything yet from our ladies in Bordeaux, with the exception of the 100 francs from Sister Sainte-Foy and 150 francs from Sister Saint-Joseph, sometime after my return from Agen. Now that I have been assured of his goodwill, I will write at once to M. Desgranges. Before his return to the novitiate, I did not know what to write to his father. I received the letter of Sister Saint-Joseph at the same time as yours. Tell her I am glad about the way things have turned out, that I will not lose sight of her, etc.

I have received Mlle de Rissan's answer. I will write to her soon.

You were right in not permitting that music practice with the young boarding school mistress in the assembly hall. I am sorry our sisters did not take your remarks or refusals in the proper spirit. Good reflections could be made regarding this small incident concerning the edification which the young woman could have drawn from the humility of the religious, as well as from the wise severity of the Rule, etc., but I am pressed for time.

Because the young woman who has applied for admission is not to come until after Easter and is to begin as a postulant, I will be able to help you with her examination. So I will add nothing further for the moment.

I heartily approve the expedience you have adopted to remedy the nuisance of the young women flocking to the parlor.

Sister Aloysius and Sister Saint-Vincent are replacing manual labor by the occupations which you describe to me in detail, but be certain they are trying to go through with them in a spirit of great recollection. Sister Saint-Esprit does not violate enclosure when she goes into the yard as portress to ask people to leave. I am hoping we will eventually find a way to remedy this problem.

At the Thursday meetings, if a woman wishes to embrace the sister she may allow it the first time, but after that let her politely and pleasantly ask these women to permit her to refuse these satisfactions and rewards for her small service, etc.

You understand, my dear Child, that I am writing to you in great haste. I am besieged, so to speak, by people and business from early morning until late at night. May the Lord be glorified

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<sup>3</sup> See letter no. 94c for Fr. Chaminade's difficulty at this time in writing letters.



because of it. The news I have for you continues to be good. There are few days on which I am not doing something for your support and your betterment. However, it is truly essential that you all work steadily to become saints. Let us advance by giant steps. Pray for your Good Father, who unceasingly asks the blessings of heaven for his children.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I am now about to go to the altar.

\* \* \*

*Father Chaminade repeats news concerning the progress of the work in which the Daughters of Mary have a part and of which they are, in a way, the foundation. From then on, in fact, he considered the Institute of Mary as forming a unit which with the aid of Mary he hopes to set against the growing efforts of impiety. The small nucleus of the Society of Mary was quietly preparing itself for its coming mission, and no doubt the good news Father Chaminade was announcing had a great deal to do with the hopes which the fervor of his first disciples permitted him to entertain.*

### **97. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen**

March 11, 1818, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

My silence is not due to illness. I have actually had a very stubborn cold, but I have not discontinued my work for this reason. Either because it has increased or because I am less efficient or because my assistants or secretaries are overworked, I am always behind in many matters.

Then too, for the past several months I have been busy with the work in which you have a part. I have news to give you about it in person. Let us take courage! Impiety is making great efforts, but God will be our protector and our help. Our divine Mother will cover us and cherish us in the bosom of her tenderness.

The essential thing is that all of you use to the best advantage the gifts of God and all of you advance in virtue, each in proportion to the strength she receives from grace.

It is to be hoped that Sister Trinité will open her eyes. God grant that it may not be too late. Let us pray for her. You may still allow her to enter the enclosure, providing she does not speak any more of the world outside than if she actually had not gone out.

As for the Tonneins establishment, you cannot take charge of it for the time being. Be thankful for the preference being given you, but let the Orphelines<sup>1</sup> go there.

I am waiting for an answer from Mlle de Rissan. I cannot make arrangements, or rather give a final word to M. Fenance, until I have received her answer. You may allow the good Sister of Charity to enter the enclosure.

I will be interested in reading the diary of Mme Belloc's trip, although I have long since given up reading the newspapers. I have a report made only of what it is absolutely necessary for me to know.

You did well in giving Father Laumont<sup>2</sup> the satisfaction of going to see some of the sick. You may do the same whenever there are any sick whom he desires to see.

If Sister Saint-Joseph takes care to cultivate well the interior sentiments of faith, hope, charity, and humility, she will win new victories every day and will end by being a good

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<sup>1</sup> The Sisters of Saint Joseph (also known as *The Orphans of Saint Joseph*, cf. letter no. 75, introduction; also letter no. 108).

<sup>2</sup> See letter no. 51, introduction.

religious. However, if she neglects the interior she will only fall and rise again, causing herself and others great trouble.

My dear Child, always take good care of your sick.

I am stopping now. I will write again at the earliest possible moment. Do not worry about anything. Keep your soul in peace. Walk in the presence of God. You must not wish to do more good than God either wills or permits. Let us put our trust in the protection of our divine Mother and her glorious Spouse, whom we rightly call our Father.<sup>3</sup> The novena to Saint Joseph begins today.

May the Lord shower you, my dear Child, with his blessings.

G.-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

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*This letter, discovered by Father Verrier with other pertinent documents, helps to correct the conjectural date of letter no. 91 of the French edition.*

### **97a. To the Mayor of Agen**

April 23, 1818, Agen

M. Mayor,

Is it possible to make use of the permission which the prefect granted to organize religious meetings for men as a means to preserve the fruits of the mission with more moderation and precautions than the Missionary Fathers have done? No announcement was made before it was submitted to you in the way in which it was believed you wished it. No act of imprudence was committed.

You desire what is good, M. Mayor, and everything that can prudently lead to it. The entire city believes this. The type of good which was proposed to you is one which will restore good morals and the religious spirit. You know the moderator who is to be at the head of it. I know you esteem his wisdom, his uprightness and his talents. Why then are you alarmed at the slightest move? Nothing essential to it will be done without your participation. In the city which you are governing you have certain people who are enemies of whatever is good; there is no doubt about this. They will be given no reasonable opportunity to grumble, no firm basis to complain. We know the circumstances today; we have studied this.

You know moreover, M. Mayor, that the projected meetings will take place in a free and independent church—the police may have their officers there at will—and never at hours when secular assemblies are neither permitted nor tolerated in public places.

It all comes down to this then, M. Mayor, that Father Mouran, who is deserving of the confidence of the Church and of the Government, may be the moderator of meetings of a religious nature for men at suitable hours in a free church and give any instructions he judges necessary, or have them given while still retaining responsibility for them.

This is by no means anything new, M. Mayor, or an institution of a kind unknown. You know history too well to be ignorant of its antiquity. Moreover, we are continually informed either through the newspapers or otherwise that similar institutions are ordinarily one of the fruits of the missions which are conducted everywhere.

The meetings of which I have the honor to speak to you are not at all the disbanded sodality, although some may believe so and perhaps tell you they are.

M. Mayor, I hope you will confidently allow the work begun with your protection to continue.

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<sup>3</sup> The allusion is to the invocation, “Saint Joseph, our Father, pray for us,” at the conclusion of the prayers of the Rule at this time.

I am with deep respect, M. Mayor, your very humble and very obedient servant.  
Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

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*The French edition includes the following letter as no. 91, assigning the possible date of July 1817 because "mention is made in it of Father Passement [sic], who had preached the mission at Agen in 1817." Recent studies and investigations by Father Verrier have yielded April 1818 as a more exact date.<sup>1</sup> No doubt this letter was written shortly after the letter to the mayor on April 23, to which he replied on the April 25 with "we cannot do this." The prefect had probably advised direct recourse to the mayor.*

**91. To M. Musnier de la Converserie**  
**Prefect of Lot-et-Garonne**  
April 25 or Later, 1818, Agen  
Original, Agmar

M. Prefect,

Using all the precautions which the prudence of the Mayor had suggested, on Sunday evening, Father Pass[enaud] announced some religious meetings for the men as a means of preserving the fruits of the mission. I was present at the announcement. There could have been nothing more prudent. M. Chaudordy, with whom I found myself, seemed satisfied with the eloquence as well as with the wisdom of the missionary.

Since then, again on Monday there was a question of this, with less detail but along the same lines. It was only pointed out that after the exercises of the mission there would be a seminarian at the rectory of Saint-Hilaire who would take the names of those who wished to take part in these meetings.

This enrollment, made very unpretentiously on the loose sheet of paper, has given offense to some people. I do not know in what manner they spoke about it to the Mayor, but this respectable magistrate has withdrawn all permissions.

It is nevertheless true, M. Prefect, that no act of imprudence or disregard has actually been committed. It is also true that not even the name of the Sodality has been pronounced. The most earnest precautions were taken to make certain these religious meetings would not seem to reestablish the disbanded Sodality, and as a matter of fact, the former one had not reappeared.

I cannot doubt, M. Prefect, that in Agen there are people opposed to whatever is good, more especially to the types of institutions which refine morals and instill religion. Your wisdom will judge whether it is proper to listen to these misgivings and to abandon every project, every effort to form these institutions, of whatever kind they happen to be.

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<sup>1</sup> A first reason to question 1817 as the date is that the original is in the handwriting of Fr. Jean-Baptiste Collineau, but the Society of Mary had not yet been established in July of 1817. Second, the footnote in the French edition is inexact; Fr. Passenaud (see letter no. 90, n. 1) or Passeneau (see the document below) did not preach the "mission" at Agen in 1817 but in 1818 in the parish of Saint-Hilaire, whose pastor is referred to in the letter. This is clear from the following document. "The mission which ordinarily takes place every seven years in the church of Saint Hilaire, founded by Mesdames Desportes and Lascombes, was given this year and began on Sunday, April 5, 1818. The priests in charge were Fr. Passeneau, who preached the Lenten series last year in the cathedral, Fr. de Saint-Pierre, who preached it this year, and Fr. Fossat of Moissac. The mission began after Vespers with a procession at which the three missionaries and the pastor of Saint Hilaire, accompanied by several priests and 20 seminarians and members of the Board of Trustees, assisted. The mayor had been invited and came with his assistants and the police commissioner, all in uniform and preceded by the banner of the commune" (Noel-Joseph Proche, *Annales de la ville d'Agen* (1789-1823), Ad Magen, publisher, p. 292). A letter of Sister Marie to Mlle de la Chapelle dated May 7, 1818, states that on the Saturday before Ascension Day, April 25, three priests were admitted as sodalists with Fr. Passeman [sic] at their head and that afterward he ascended the pulpit and paid Fr. Chaminade a charming compliment.

Your answer, M. Prefect, will clarify this for me. If you prefer a verbal answer to a written response, I will call upon you at the hour you wish to arrange for me.

I am with deep respect, M. Prefect, your very humble and very obedient servant,  
G.-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. Furthermore, M. Prefect, I will remark that these meetings would take place only in the church, for they are purely religious in character. In fact, these meetings have always been held without asking the permission of the civil administrations.

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*The following letters contain further interesting indications, either about the interior organization and works of the Daughters of Mary or about the Little Society being organized in Bordeaux.*

**98. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen**

June 10, 1818, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

I have received the beautiful veil for the Blessed Sacrament. I greatly appreciate your attention and that of our Mistress of Novices. I did not know our good Sister Sacré-Coeur had such talent for embroidery.

My sister asks you to accept her thanks for the two balls of yarn you had the kindness to send her. She recommends herself greatly to your prayers and to those of your entire community. She is almost constantly in pain.

I will not forget to have a copy of the work of her *confrère de zèle*<sup>1</sup> made for the Mother of Zeal. I am very glad that for the past several days he is beginning to put into practice his little methods. This young man has made very great progress in virtue, especially during the past two years.

I hope we have made a good acquisition in Sister Catherine. Her daily program is to be drawn up according to that of the Companion Sisters and the porter. I will make this adaptation for you and may add some points regarding her conduct in town. She should never do errands other than those authorized, never eat or drink outside the house however often she may be invited, and never pay any visit just for herself while attending to her errands. Regulate this meanwhile according to these ideas.

The Rule for the retreatants is not pressing. In the meantime, move ahead. Real attention will need to be given to it once the house is ready to receive a certain number of retreatants, and also once public retreats are conducted. These are works of great importance. It will all work out with time and patience. But I am continually returning to the first principle: let the community get along well, let the subjects be well trained, let them mature and sanctify themselves. With saints we will succeed in everything, but with ordinary or imperfect religious we will do almost nothing.

I will continue my letter for the next mail. May the peace of the Lord be with you all!

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade

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**98a. To M. David Monier, Counselor at Law, Bordeaux**

Monday, June 15, 1818

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<sup>1</sup> Fr. Lalanne, Head of Zeal in the budding Society of Mary on Impasse Ségur. See *Spirit*, no. 861.

Would M. David Monier please stop by after three o'clock this afternoon, so I may acquaint him with all my talks with M. Moreau concerning the accounts he has with him, to settle them if possible?

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade

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**98b. To M. David Monier, Counselor at Law, Bordeaux**

Tuesday, June 16, 1818

All your accounts have been accepted and signed by M. Moreau exactly as they were settled last evening. He must have informed you of this at dinner.

In the evening continue the explanation of the Little Office.

Yesterday I did not pass on to you any word for M. Lavardens. This evening read the first two or three pages of the memorandum I am sending you.

The past has been set in order with M. Moreau. We must now busy ourselves with the future. Six o'clock has just struck. I am going to the Miséricorde, returning at the latest just after seven o'clock.

Friendly greetings and peace in the Lord.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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**99. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen**

June 19, 1818, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

Sister Saint-Joseph is doing well in body and soul. I am looking forward to the time when she will be completely—and radically, if possible—cured, so she may undergo enough trials to cure her of her former whims and to train her at the same time for the Institute, if her vocation endures.

When I received your last letter I had just written to Mme de Lagrace and to Father Fenasse<sup>1</sup> about the Sodality of Auch. I suspected it was not doing well and was indicating a remedy, etc.

Regarding evening adoration, you can see by the regulations that a meditation, properly so-called, was not intended, but only an exercise of devotion and recollection in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. Consequently, it is not contrary to the spirit of this exercise to make a short meditation aloud which would benefit the outsiders present. Let them continue with it; in time we will see what the results are.

I had already had in mind that the director of the Third Order to be established would make a meditation aloud at least several evenings a week. Perhaps if there are no abuses, it might be better for the members of the Third Order to make this exercise with the entire community rather than to make two exercises of it. You will not be surprised at my “perhaps” if you recall that I told you this Rule had not been drawn up. There is no such thing as “perhaps” in a finished Rule, precisely because I would not give it if I were not convinced of the good it would produce. A lengthy examination is sometimes required to reach this conviction.

The lay religious of the Society of Mary differ in this respect from the Daughters of Mary, that they make a half-hour of meditation, properly so-called, nearly at the same time.

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<sup>1</sup> Vicar general of Auch, a devoted friend of Fr. Chaminade.

I was going to end this long letter, my dear Child, when I received the two packages of letters from the convent, one by personal delivery and the other by mail.

Sister Saint-Joseph has given me various letters these past days for several Mothers, but I am waiting for a favorable occasion to forward them without cost. Nevertheless, I will add to this one her short letter for Saint-Sister Saint-Esprit. I will try without delay to obtain consolations and help of various kinds for the brother of our Sister Stanislas. Tell her, please, to keep the promises she made to me, or rather to the Lord in my person. This is all I will say at this time.

Interior enclosures in the communities are not always locked, but it must be possible to lock them. If any are more likely to be entered by strangers, these are kept locked and master keys are given to all the religious, at least to those who are most in need of them.

As to the wooden curtain of which there is a question, it is enough for the door to be usually latched, and if on certain occasions you judge it proper, you will lock it.

It is not good for our dear Daughters to begin to murmur, to blame, etc., when some inconvenience happens to annoy them. They should be content with a humble explanation to their superior of the trouble and then wait patiently. Neither Sister Saint-Vincent nor anyone else gave me the idea of this curtain. Although not absolutely necessary, it was still very suitable. I recall having spoken of it to Mlle de Lamourous at the time of my first trip. Because the chapel is downstairs, it is much more to the purpose. But this is enough on this subject.

Despite the poverty of the community, see to it that the food is always wholesome and sufficient in quantity for young women who work and who have a great deal of speaking or singing to do. It is good for you to feel poverty, which should be very dear to you, but not at the expense of health. I refer to the observations I made to you at the time of my last visit. Furthermore, have confidence in the Providence of our Father in heaven.

Please tell Sister Saint-Sacrament for me that I do not want to hear any more about her scruples. Let her serve the Lord with confidence and simplicity. Her Confessions should be short and simple.

I will answer Sister Saint Vincent a little later.

May all our dear Daughters take courage. May they all be perfectly united with one another and with their Good Mother. The Institute is in a position to develop itself in all its parts. The devil, Mary's enemy, must be enraged; he must be trying everything to disturb, disquiet, and disunite the Daughters of Mary, who are, as it were, the foundation upon which we are building.<sup>1</sup> I wish them and you, my dear Daughter, the peace of the Lord.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. A great miracle has just occurred in the novitiate of the Jesuits in Paris through the intercession of Saint Aloysius Gonzaga. I am afraid I cannot send you an account of it before the departure of the mail. The saint's feast falls on June 21.

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**99a. To M. David Monier, Counselor at Law, Bordeaux**

Wednesday evening, July 22, 1818

My dear Friend,

I am sending you all the receipts, the insurance policy, and the accounts and assignments concerning M. Arthaud. I will owe him a quarterly payment on the first of this coming August. In counting the receipts, it seemed one was missing. Still, I am very certain of having always paid exactly, and if it is missing in the proper file it will probably be found mixed in with some other papers. Moreover, the receipts always indicate the last period for which the rent has been paid.

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<sup>1</sup> The first definitely established part of the Institute of Mary.

Do not forget the women tenants of La Rode District.<sup>2</sup> I mean the women who have an apartment in the house and not the gardener, who is in the lodge. They must be moved out with as little expense as possible. Friendly greetings.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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**99b. To M. David Monier, Counselor at Law, Bordeaux**

July 24, 1818

My dear Friend,

I have found the receipt of M. Arthaud which, judging by the number of documents, had seemed to me to be missing from its place in the file. I am sending it to you at once. Kindly have it properly filed and accept my wish for a good day, this July 24.

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. As long as three months ago, Mlle Davasse notified the women tenants to vacate. They admit it but they say it is meaningless, because she did not do it through the law.

\* \* \*

*This is a short letter of personal guidance.*

**100. To Mother Thérèse, Agen**

August 3, 1818, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Daughter,

Well, hope with unshakable confidence for everything from God, our good and tender Father. Expect nothing good from yourself. The more you know yourself, the less confidence you will have in your own strength. If the divine light became bright enough in your soul to enable you to penetrate the twofold abyss of your nothingness and your miseries, your confidence in God would be your sole support. How strong you would then be! God communicates his strength to us in proportion to the interior and heartfelt conviction of our own weakness. This conviction, my dear Daughter, is a great grace. Mistrust of ourselves which is not counterbalanced by confidence in God, but which produces despondence and discouragement, is not the fruit of true humility. At most, it could be a miserable miscarriage of it.

With regard to your Communions, follow with simplicity the advice and the orders of your confessor. Because you still have a long way to go before arriving at the perfection of your state, your confessor is able to see in your daily Communion the necessary means of advancing toward your goal. You know what the angel said to the prophet Elijah on his way to the mountain of Horeb. Peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade

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<sup>2</sup> What is meant is La Rode District Street, now Rue Seguey.

## The Beginnings of the Society of Mary 1818 to 1820

*Here are the first letters bearing directly upon the Society of Mary. On May 1, 1817, Father Lalanne had offered himself to Father Chaminade to share his life, and Father Chaminade had revealed to him the mission of Saragossa. The following October 2, five men, Jean Lalanne, Jean-Baptiste Collineau, Auguste Brougnon-Perrière, Bruno Daguzan, and Dominique Clouzet met at Saint-Laurent and decided upon the foundation of the Society of Mary, soon to be followed by Antoine Cantau, Jean-Baptiste Bidon, and Bernard Laugeay. On November 25, community life had been inaugurated in a very small house on Impasse Ségur (today Rue de Commandant Arnould). On December 11, the first private vows were professed in the sacristy of the Madeleine. Now there was a need to find living quarters to house the promising undertaking. M. Changeur, a rich merchant of Bordeaux and a member of the Sodality of the Fathers of Families, offered his help. Father Chaminade included him in the first inquiry, which brought them to the Hôtel Lognac.*

### 101. To M. Changeur

August 4, 1818, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

Monsieur and dear Son in Jesus Christ,

M. Auguste Brougnon [-Perrière] went to visit the Hôtel Lognac. From the report he brought back, this dwelling would seem to be suitable for our work.

Determine for yourself, my dear Son, if this seems to be the house destined by Providence for the Society of Mary. Hasten to lodge the Children of Mary, who are also your children, and who, as it were infallibly, will be our crown in heaven.

I am with respectful attachment, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Canon

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*While the acquisition of the Lognac property was being negotiated—a project which was not to reach a happy end—Father Chaminade directed David Monier to draw up a first draft of the Constitutions. He was also preparing the retreat for the solemn foundation of the Society of Mary, which would be crowned by the religious profession of its first members. Archbishop d’Aviau had been informed about everything. Several days before the opening of the retreat, on Thursday, August 27, Father Chaminade submitted a portion of David Monier’s work to him.*

### 102. To Archbishop d’Aviau of Bordeaux

August 27, 1818, Bordeaux

Autograph Rough Draft, Agmar

Your Excellency,

I have just finished the first copy of the *Institut de Marie*, which is to be discussed during our meeting next week.

I hasten to send it to you and will receive with deep gratitude the observations which you will be kind enough to make. Your Excellency, I desire only what you wish and in the manner agreeable to you. I have confidence that God in his mercy will accomplish the design with which he has inspired me, in spite of all my imperfections.



To abuse neither your time nor your patience, Your Excellency, I believed it is best in the copy I have the honor of submitting to you to avoid the numerous details about government contained in the fourth part. On this subject, there is nothing different from what occurs in other Societies, except what necessarily pertains to the specific plan of the Institute.

Next Saturday I will have the honor of introducing to you the men of Agen, unless they arrive late, and in that case this would be on Sunday morning. I heartily wish this entire little flock could have the privilege of receiving your blessing before they separate, but without display of any kind.

I am with profound respect, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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**S. 102a. To Bro. David Monier**

August 28, 1818, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Friend,

Can you and I meet after three o'clock to go to Canton de Rode? We will return to our respective offices as soon as possible. I have some important information for you regarding the elder M. Saverden.

\* \* \*

*The "men of Agen" referred to above are Father Mouran and Father Laumont, whom Bishop Jacoupy had permitted to take part in the retreat although without releasing them to Father Chaminade. Father Chaminade still spoke of them at the end of a note addressed to Archbishop d'Aviau on the last day of the retreat.*

**103. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux**

September 5, 1818, Bordeaux

Agmar

Today we are bringing our private retreat to a close. Sixteen men attended.<sup>1</sup> If the good spirit which animates our retreatants lasts, they all can be considered founders of the Institute of Mary. All seem entirely devoted to its support for life, although all are not bound by vows. We would have greatly desired your blessings.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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*Father Chaminade experienced great consolation on this day and the next day at another retreat preached by him and the priests from Agen at the Madeleine. He could write to M. Changeur, "Our two consecutive retreats have given me more satisfaction than work." He gave more details to Bishop Jacoupy in a letter confided to the priests of Agen. This letter is*

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<sup>1</sup> The 16 retreatants were, with Fr. Chaminade, Jean Lalanne, Auguste Brougnon-Perrière, Daguzan, Cantau, Bidon (who then took perpetual vows), Collineau, Clouzet (who took vows for three years), David Monier (who offered himself for life), Mouran and Laumont, priests of Agen who gave conferences and were affiliated to the Society; Laugeay, Armenaud, Neuvielle, Bousquet, young sodalists who became religious of the Society, and, it seems, La Pause, the "temporal father" of the Society.

*reproduced in a form which is possibly David Monier's, but whose thought assuredly belongs to Father Chaminade.*

**S. 103a. To M. Changeur**  
September 15, 1818, Bordeaux  
Copy, Agmar

The gentlemen from Agen have just left. Our two consecutive retreats have given me more satisfaction than work. It was only this morning that I had time to look over the architect's estimates. Whatever is decided, to sell or to keep this property, I believe it is urgent for all necessary repairs to be made. If you agree, Brother Brougnon will tell you what is to be done.

\* \* \*

**104. To Bishop Jacoupy of Agen**  
September 21, 1818, Bordeaux  
Rough Draft, Agmar

Your Excellency,

Your very kind letter of August 22 has had an effect, for God has been good enough to grant the wishes expressed there. The bountiful harvest which your piety was asking of him in favor of his servants has come because of your prayers. The excellent priests whom you were kind enough to send, Fathers Mouran and Laumont, have powerfully cooperated. These worthy priests will tell you everything that has happened, far better than I am able to.

The first retreat, the one intended for those destined for the Institute, was filled in solitude with a fervor men can hardly imagine. As a result, we have seen the most solid direction, from many points of view—a new constancy in work is but one example—the glory of God has not been neglected for a minute. These young men breathe only the Spirit of holy things. True workers will be found among them. These are those he is pleased to advance to the front line. They in turn are surrounded by others who long for the same happiness. In the entire multitude there will be a few missed steps, and the fire contained here will not lessen the total effect.

Concerning the second retreat, for ladies and young women, a large and lively group. The local accommodations were far too limited. The piety of Mme Belloc<sup>1</sup> and her familiar talks with the women willing to listen to her seemed to point out a way of life which was easy and full of happiness. The priests had to minister only among hearts already freed from themselves. . . .

Several believed the holy Communion of the last day may have been given to as many as 800 of the faithful in the several Masses which followed. The oratory was never empty on that particular day, from 5:00 in the morning until 9:30 in the evening, the women giving place to the men and vice versa, without the least confusion. The new admissions to the Sodality were numerous, and the total number was to be counted only in the book of God.

I am not concealing the joy I feel about all this. I am referring all the credit and merit, as I should, to that group of truly holy women God has preserved for our century and, in particular, to the spirit God has given to priests so capable of vivifying the Church. Among these last is to be numbered our venerable Archbishop of Bordeaux, who sponsors the two works I have just mentioned and who has blessed with his own hand and given the kiss of peace to the Institute resulting from the first retreat.

May I hope, Your Excellency, you will also deign to bless them in my two cooperators, Fathers Mouran and Laumont, who will represent them in your presence. Because, Your

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<sup>1</sup> She had come to Bordeaux to refresh herself with the spirit of the Mother Sodality, and as will be seen, she contributed to the success of this retreat.

Excellency, this is not only a Bordeaux institution; this is a religious institution which is being formed under your auspices for all Christian countries.

Hoping to give you in greater detail an account of my various acts and to submit them to your pastoral direction, from which they have proceeded in the first place, I ask you to be kind enough to recommend them to God in your prayers. I also ask God to determine your particular place in these works which he has been pleased to inaugurate in our day.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the personal sentiments of my respectful devotedness. Deign to unite me to yourself in the charity of Jesus Christ, our common Savior, and grant me your blessing.

With this desire I am in great humility, etc.

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*Bishop Jacoupy's answer shows us the esteem he had for Father Chaminade and his works.*

December 28, 1818, Agen

My dear and venerable friend,

I have read and reread the letter you addressed to me with the return of Fathers Mouran and Laumont, and the more I meditate upon its contents, the more I recognize the work of God. And so, continue to work without respite in order to arrive at the ends we propose to ourselves. I need ecclesiastics, as you form them, to staff my seminaries and put them on a solid footing. We will succeed, I hope, providing you train them for the sole education of the young clerics and not go to preach and confess here and there, as do our "gentlemen" priests. Pluribus intentus, etc. [It is intended for many.] I am marvelously aware of this. Be assured that those you give us will do well and that funds will come in abundance, providing we occupy ourselves solely with this great work.

My dear Friend, pardon my prolonged silence and be deeply assured that I have thought of you almost every day and all my thoughts are for you, everywhere and always. My one happiness is to see your labors prosper, helped by the prayers of good souls, by your own and of all those working with you. I hope very soon we will render thanks to God by common consent for having given us such consolation as we may desire for God's glory and the salvation of our brethren.

Be pleased to accept my friend, the expression of the sincere wishes I am offering you at this New Year, for your particular happiness and the success of your labors. I renew the assurance of my esteem for you and remain yours for life.

Jean, Bishop of Agen

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*Several letters relate to works in the prisons and with the little Auvergnats, bootblacks, and chimney sweeps. The prison work arose in the Sodality of the Fathers of Families. The work of the little Auvergnats was one of the first objects of zeal of the Little Society because, begun in September of 1818, it immediately had Fr. Jean-Baptiste Collineau, one of the first religious, as its head. These letters are composed by David Monier.*

### **105. To the Count de Tournon, Prefect of the Gironde**

August 1818, Bordeaux

Rough Draft, Agmar

M. Prefect,

Access to the prisons, it seems to me, demands two particular characteristics—reasonable ease for visitors and the security of the caretaker, who must remain responsible for the security guard.

Tickets would entirely suit the purpose, the stub remaining in the janitor's office. This measure would prevent the inconveniences connected with a sign which is not literal; and among the literal proofs, the stub is the best.

I estimate this service would require six visitors, each of whom would require a ticket. Not that the six visitors would be on the job at the same time. There would usually be only two, but each would have to keep his own sign.

The six tickets, then, cut into a single sheet, all six alike, would differ only in their numbers.

I have the honor to hand this project to you, M. Prefect; it can be varied in any other way according to your good pleasure.

In accepting the model of altering it, please be kind enough, M. Prefect, to let me know of your plans for the execution of this work, in which I have had a share thanks to your great kindness.

Once more, please accept the token of my profound respect.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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### **106. To Count de Tournon, Prefect of the Gironde**

September 20, 1818, Bordeaux

Rough Draft, Agmar

M. Prefect,

I have delayed telling you about the work among the Auvergnats because I was waiting to have definite information from Paris about Father Fénelon's<sup>1</sup> work and about that of the Savoyards, which seemed to me similar to our own.

Three motives urge me today to try the enterprise without further delay.

(1) The conviction I have that in Paris they have no written plan of work.

(2) The approach of winter, which is the time when the Auvergnats come to seek refuge in Bordeaux.

(3) The fairly precise information I obtained from a traveler who himself had been employed in the instruction of the little chimney-sweeps of the capitol.

I would only desire that the list for supervision kept in the mayor's office will be given to me in writing, as you had the goodness to promise me. This is a convenience which may save us difficult steps and long research.

I await only your response, M. Prefect, to share with you my thoughts for proper meeting places by quarters. There we can pour out the instruction of a truly religious charity.

The prison work met with only minor difficulties at the Fort du Hâ.<sup>2</sup> This is not the case for the office of the mayor. There the admission cards are still in the hands of the Assistant Mayor, who is in charge of this part of the work. His complete silence leads us to believe he sees inconveniences in the use of the cards, although you have considered them completely adequate.

The greatest inconvenience in prisons, if I may be permitted to say so, is that they renounce introducing morality, encouraging repentance, favoring the return to good, and bringing to the inmates the charm and power of religion.

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<sup>1</sup> The Abbé J.-B. de Salignac de Fénelon, (1714-93), grandnephew of the Archbishop of Cambrai, after having been chaplain to Queen Marie Leczinska, the wife of Louis XV, devoted the last years of his life in Paris to the care of the little Savoyards. Fr. Chaminade, then a student at the *collège* of Lisieux, knew him there and was honored by his friendship. In spite of the efforts of his charges, Fr. Fénelon was arrested under the Reign of Terror and died on the scaffold.

<sup>2</sup> One of the prisons of Bordeaux.

What about those in solitary confinement, those held for reasons of state, and sometimes these more or less provisional measures which an imperious need calls for, which neither the public nor even the law may notice? What person with a little education does not excuse these mistakes? What person, religiously disposed, would wish to find fault with them or harm them in any way? And still, these secret places are possible where the help of religion would be the most useful or where religion constantly should occupy itself.

But let human prudence close off these sections, if this must be. That is no reason the rest of the prisons should be deprived of good attention.

I like to believe I am fighting only imaginings and that the delay of M. Labrous in having the cards returned is caused by his numerous occupations or by the state of his health.

If the measure is equal for the prisons, the work undertaken will be strengthened and will develop much better.

Please hasten this happy result, M. Prefect, and accept my profound respect, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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**S. 106a. To M. Changeur**

October 6, 1818, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

If M. Mathieu was aware of the state of the affairs of the Lafaye heirs, he should have told you so; we would not have lost precious time.

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**107. To Count de Tournon, Prefect of the Gironde**

October 29, 1818, Bordeaux

Rough Draft, Agmar

M. Prefect,

A few moments later the letter you had the kindness to address to me was going to cross the one I had the honor of writing to you. I was in time to stop the latter.

In that letter I described the rigorous silence which the mayor's office has kept about your two works. Surely you should have received an answer.

Concerning the prisons, I told you about the evil the delay of the mayor's office caused. His office has not given permission to introduce in the department the consolations of religion, the blessings of charity, and the principles of morality.

Concerning the Auvergnats or vagabond children, I had the honor to show you that because of the silence of the mayor and because of the time of year I attempted progressive meetings of these children, and these have had better success. There were 40 at the last meeting. I had reason to believe that the following Sunday there would be 60. I took the liberty of telling you how much your presence in their midst, a solemn meeting, could produce. But I would look forward to something of this type only when there would be at least 100 present.

The first meetings were held at the Square Saint-Julien<sup>1</sup> on the premises of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. Saint Michel Parish accommodates us for the Confessions of these children. They go to Sainte Eulalie for Mass. Up until now everything has been done in order and with a good heart. I will have the honor of acquainting you verbally with new methods I am

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<sup>1</sup> Later Place d'Aquitaine, then Place de la Victoire.

developing in proportion as I succeed. These seem to be very simple. I am hopeful that actual experience will prove them right.

No doubt you have noticed, M. Prefect, how much the list sent by the mayor's office is defective and indeed practically useless. My own is already far more complete and will certainly be of greater assistance to us.

In telling you about some of my success, M. Prefect, I attribute all of it to you, as I should. I ask you to be kind enough to say a good word in favor of the work of the prisons at the mayor's office.

Please accept the assurance of my deep respect.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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*While busying himself with the interests of the convent of Agen, Father Chaminade does not fail to stay in touch with the progress of the foundation in Bordeaux. He tells it of negotiations which will result in moving to a large house on Rue des Menuts, near the boarding school M. Estebenet, a sodalist, was managing and which he was soon to leave.*

### **108. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen**

November 4, 1818, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

[With inserts from S. 108]

My dear Child,

I keep you in expectation of my letters, in the midst of all your pains and worries. Each day I have been on the verge of inviting you to thank the Lord, as well as Saint Joseph, for all the favors accorded to your brothers. Everything is finished, as it were, and still nothing is done. There is the matter of a large house and of its dependencies. The contracts have been made with the proprietors, the deeds are ready, the funds for the acquisition are practically all on hand, and still unexpected incidentals always crop up to slow and endanger things. Nevertheless, I must admit to the glory of Saint Joseph that there is no piece of misfortune which does not result in some good. Prayers continue every day, and for some time there has been an extraordinary fast each Wednesday.

Next Sunday morning a retreat for the men begins. Recommend its success to God and to the Blessed Virgin.

I will now reply quickly to all the questions you ask in your recent letters.

May God be blessed at the departure of Sister Marguerite! On looking over all that happened, including her too-hasty admission, you will gain experience. Sister Marguerite could have become a good subject. She showed several indications of a real vocation to the religious state. But she should have been tested a long while outside the community and before her admission, etc.

Sister Saint-Joseph has just lost her father. She will come into a considerable fortune. Before his death, her father had arranged to bequeath his fortune to his three children, all sharing equally. Actually she may receive from 15,000 to 20,000 francs. She also has a right to the property belonging to her mother. In two weeks she will know where she stands. She is improving day by day.

I have never had much hope that Sister Trinité would return after her first withdrawal.

Do not allow your poverty to worry you. Providence will take things in hand. What would truly cause sorrow and affliction would be the presence of sentiments which divide hearts which should be united and truly should be only one heart. Preach to your children, preach to them without ceasing this intimate union which should reign among them, which should never be

I do not say broken but even altered, no matter what the price. May each one be disposed at every instant to make the sacrifice of all her ideas, all her personal views, just as she has made the sacrifice of all her goods and all her hopes in the world, etc.

However poor you may be, see to it that the business manager never fails to provide what is necessary, whether food or clothing. See to it that the food is always wholesome. . . . Although I often make these remarks, either to you or to the business manager, let everyone know nevertheless that it is out of place for anyone in particular to disapprove, even interiorly, to remark that there is a deficiency, too much or too little. Each person is to take what is given to her while rendering thanks to God, always believing she does not deserve it, etc. . . . What a pity, if anyone ever saw the Daughters of Mary occupying themselves solely about what they have to eat or to put on . . . !

It seems that at Nérac, the Third Order is to be inaugurated right away. But some believe the Sodality would suffer from this. The Sodality is being confused with a Third Order, as the latter is being confused with the Family of Mary. Father Pouget<sup>1</sup> has the disposition of the country in sufficient measure; he is prompt and ardent.

I hope M. de Pinaux will take care of all your uncle's affairs. I hope to see him today or tomorrow. He will leave for Paris only around the 15<sup>th</sup> of this month. You may proceed with Mlle de Bernard. If she seems to be a proper candidate for the Institute, see whether she can increase the amount of her dowry and whether instead of a pension she or her parents could not make a similar arrangement with the capital.

By union and participation, you may share the prayers and good works of the Ladies of the Cross, but not by affiliation, properly so-called.

See to it that the principal women officers, just as the others, read their respective Regulations each week, all at one time or in part each day, until they know and understand them clearly. Then have them read summarily, but each person by herself. Each one can make a brief sketch of these Regulations for herself.

I am obliged to stop here. I will resume the subject at the earliest possible time. May the Lord deign to grant you, my dear Daughter, all the blessings your Father in Jesus Christ wishes for you.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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### **N.A. 108-2. To Mme Carrayon Latour**

No date, 1819, Bordeaux

Printed in Volume 8-2 and Volume 9. This is from Volume 9.

Original Agmar 218.2.14; copy Agmar 218.2.32

Madame,

Your concern for our work with the young Auvergnats prompts me to ask something more of you. Could you please recommend the project to the generosity of the Ladies of the Mission? I had intended to write to the directors, but I believe your plea would be more effective and also more swift. My letters would never have the same effect on them as your intercession.

You are aware of the sad plight of these unfortunate children. Spurned and rejected by almost everyone, they are destitute and are the victims of the vices which usually accompany that state. When the Ladies are informed of their sad condition, they will not be insensitive to their

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<sup>1</sup> Fr. Cyprien Pouget (1759-1843) was perhaps associated with Fr. Chaminade at Bordeaux from the time when together they frequented the *collège* of Guyenne. He was chosen by him in 1801 as sub-administrator of the diocese of Bazas; he was then pastor of Nérac. Later he was called by Bishop Dubourg (also a former student of the *collège* of Guyenne) to the post of vicar general of Montauban, where he died.

misfortune, and I believe their hearts will be inclined to help us retrieve them if not from their grinding poverty, at least from their eternal damnation.

I am enclosing some details about our work; your charity will know how to make the most effective use of them.

I have the honor of being most respectfully, Madame, your very humble and most obedient servant.

G.-Joseph Chaminade  
Honorary Canon

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#### The Work of the Young Chimney Sweeps of the City of Bordeaux

In the city of Bordeaux there are a great number of young Auvergnats who have had to leave their homes because of the utter destitution of their parents.

They roam the streets of our town and bemoan the harsh slavery to which their masters usually subject them.

By shining shoes on Sunday and sweeping chimneys on the other days, they manage to eke out an existence or earn the 15 francs and the ration of bread which their masters exact from them every day.

For their survival they beg from door to door for leftovers. So dilapidated are their makeshift shelters that these defy description. A mattress of straw or other rough material is their bed.

Their adversity would be less alarming if it did not place their eternal salvation in jeopardy. Intent on providing for the needs of the body, they are strangers to the helps religion has to offer, and they lead dissolute lives.

These are the unfortunate youngsters whom the work of the Auvergnats would like to help. After seeing their sad state, what true Christian could refuse to extend a helping hand? A certain number of pious people have already volunteered to give them religious instruction. Divine Providence which watches over all its children has already blessed their efforts, and this is the present situation:

1. One hour before nightfall, the young men gather in the school of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine. One hour of catechetical instruction is given, followed by a half-hour of reading the Bible and a homily. This is followed by the singing of hymns and prayers.
2. As the time for their first Communion approaches, they meet 2 or 3 times a week.
3. At times a visit is paid to their dwellings; the sick are sought out and taken to the hospital.
4. They are gathered together for the 6 o'clock Mass.

*Note 1.* It is difficult to have these children to attend these exercises regularly. The greed of their masters and their own natural light-mindedness have been serious obstacles. To overcome these handicaps, a reward of 4 or 5 sous was given after the catechism lesson. We have decided to give bread from now on, as is done in Paris. The prospect of this small bonus makes them attentive and docile and compensates them and their masters for abandoning their work one hour earlier.

Their clothing is such that in all decency, they may not approach the communion rail. They are provided with suitable clothing for their first Communion, and rosaries, medals, etc., are distributed among them.

Seventeen of the young men have already made their first Communion. More than 30 have sufficient instruction to be able to make theirs soon. However, lack of funds threatens to halt this auspicious beginning. Expenses soon outdistanced resources. Will these unfortunate youngsters have to be abandoned? We hope the good Lord will not allow this to happen and that



sensitive hearts will come to their aid; thus we will be able to bring them back to religion and to society.

*Note 2.* We can easily judge their goodwill because during the week, no bonus is given for attendance at catechism class.

*Note 3.* For a variety of reasons we have had to discontinue for some time gathering them for the 6 o'clock Mass.

\* \* \*

**N.A. 108-3. To - - -**  
May 25, 1819, Bordeaux  
Printed in Volume 9.  
Copy at Agmar 218.2.59

We, Guillaume Joseph Chaminade, priest, director of the Sodality of Bordeaux, sent as Missionary Apostolic by the Congregation of the Propagation, have had our letters reviewed and approved and the faculty accorded to us of exercising our functions throughout the full extent of the diocese by his Excellency Charles François d'Aviau du Bois de Sanzay, Archbishop and Metropolitan of Bordeaux; and also after His Excellency the Bishop of Mans will have graciously accorded us the necessary permission and faculty for what concerns his diocese.

We have taken note of the letters addressed to us in the name of Father Huard, pastor of the parish of Notre-Dame-de-la-Couture of the same city of Mans, letters seeking to use suitable means to establish a communion of good works between the sodality of Mans and that of Bordeaux, both being consecrated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Madame de Vauguyon, living in Mans and prefect of the Sodality of Ladies and Young Women of that city, having brought us the request and on her brief stay at Bordeaux having told us that each of her associates, individually and as a group, as well as she herself, ardently desire this communion of good works.

We wish to cooperate in sustaining the faith and preserving the flames of charity as much as lies in us to do so.

In virtue of the powers accorded to our mission or granted to it by general decrees, we have received and adopted the said Sodality of Ladies and Young Women of Mans, consecrated to the Blessed Virgin, Mother of God, as a daughter of the sodality established in Bordeaux for some centuries under the same title and still in existence, so that by this adoption the two sodalities together form only one family. By this same means, the above-mentioned Sodality of Mans will also be numbered among the daughters of the primary sodality of the Roman College, established under the title of the Blessed Virgin by their Holinesses Popes Gregory XIII and Sixtus V, as regulated by these same sovereign pontiffs.

In order that the association of Mans of right may be associated as sister to all and each of the other sodalities developed from the same source and which have spread through the Christian world, the Sodality of Mans, associated and adopted as said above, will be in communion of works, prayers, and merits and will participate with full equality in the partial and plenary indulgences and all other privileges granted to any of the affiliated sodalities, on condition that in everything the precepts and regulations may be observed as piety requires.

Given at Bordeaux, the - - - day of May  
the Year of Our Lord one thousand eight hundred nineteen.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

\*

*[The “definitive letter” in Latin<sup>1</sup> follows, with this addition.]*

G.-Joseph Chaminade  
Honorary Canon  
Missionary Apostolic.

We grant our approbation to the above-mentioned sodality and association.  
Mans, August 9, 1819.

Duperrius, Vicar General  
(Seal of His Excellency de Pidoll  
Bishop of Mans)

\* \* \*

**S. 108a. To the King, Paris**

January 4, 1819, Bordeaux  
Rough Draft, Agmar

Father Chaminade, Honorary Canon of the Metropolitan Church of Bordeaux, especially commissioned to the service of the auxiliary chapel in question, has the honor to explain the following to Your Majesty.

By an ordinance of November 12, 1804—21 brumaire in the year 4—the Archbishop of Bordeaux erected the chapel of the Madeleine, situated in the aforementioned city, into an auxiliary chapel for the parishes listed therein.

This ordinance, a true copy of which is enclosed, proves that the erection was approved by the prefect, that it was in answer to the desires of the faithful, and that the pastors and their assistants were consulted.

The petitioner was immediately given charge of the said oratory, and he has discharged his duties to the best of his ability. Fourteen years of experience have confirmed the usefulness of this institution. To suppress it would be to inflict serious harm upon the morale and the religion of the neighborhood of this chapel.

However, at the time of the erection it was not deemed necessary to obtain royal assent; this has just recently been brought to our attention. Sire, one word from you can remedy the situation, and only you have the authority to do this.

Under these circumstances the petitioner has recourse to Your Majesty and asks you graciously to confirm the ordinance of the Archbishop of Bordeaux dated November 12, 1804, erecting the chapel of the Madeleine as an auxiliary chapel.

The faithful and the petitioner who is their spokesman pray daily to heaven for the health and the prosperity of Your Majesty.

\* \* \*

**N.A. 108-4. To the Prefect of the Department of the Gironde<sup>2</sup>**

January 5, 1819, Bordeaux  
Printed in Volume 8-2. Copy, Agmar 218.2.11

Your Honor,

I went for the interview which you were kind enough to grant me. Unfortunately, you were too busy to give me some of your time. That the project with the young Auvergnats might not suffer from my disappointment at not consulting you personally, I took the liberty of asking

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<sup>1</sup> The Latin text is found at the end of the English letters in the printed vol. 9.

<sup>2</sup> The original is in the archives of the department of Gironde; the writing seems to be that of Fr. Collineau.

M. Tellier to show you my plans for the organization and for the subscription, and to request your orders.

As of this time I have asked no one to subscribe. Each Sunday I myself provide whatever is necessary to keep the project alive. But I believe the time has come to allow this promising project to develop.

I have asked Father Collineau, who is in charge of the young people, to give you this letter if he manages to meet you personally; he will listen respectfully to your observations.

I have asked M. Tellier to inform you of our work with the town prisons. If you can find the time in your busy schedule, I can have one of our older sodalists give you a full explanation of our work in this field.

Among the accomplishments with which your wise administration will have honored the city of Bordeaux, you will always recall with pleasure the two with which you have been kind enough to allow me to cooperate. Under your patronage, I intend to see that they are maintained.

I am with the greatest respect, Honorable Prefect, your very humble and very obedient servant.

G.-Joseph Chaminade  
Business Manager of the Seminary of Mussidan

\* \* \*

*Since January of 1819, Father Chaminade had reason to be sufficiently satisfied with each of his foundations to risk presenting them for the blessing of the Holy See. He had then to solicit favors for the Sodality. Profiting by this occasion, he sent three petitions to Rome—the first for the Sodality, the second for the Society of Mary, and the third for the Daughters of Mary. Here are these documents, which are of special interest for the history of the Sodality and of our religious families.*

### **109. To Pope Pius VII, Rome**

January 18, 1819, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

[With insert from S. 109]

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Priest,  
Missionary Apostolic by Decree of March 28, 1801,  
Director of the Sodality Erected Under The Title of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin  
in the Church of the Madeleine of Bordeaux,  
and of Other Sodalities Affiliated to the First,  
To His Holiness, Our Holy Father, Pope Pius VII.  
Most Holy Father,

The Sodalities of which the undersigned is the director, under the authority of the Ordinaries, have been enjoying for some time indulgences and privileges with which the Sovereign Pontiffs, your predecessors, have enriched them. However, the evils of the day and events only too deplorable have caused them to lose the authentic titles to the same. This is why they desire that Your Holiness will be kind enough to confirm and renew them and deign to add what present circumstances seem to require for the stability and maintenance of religious institutions of the same type.

In the year 1586, by Apostolic Decree Pope Sixtus V authorized the General of the Jesuit Fathers, at that time regularly constituted, to erect in France sodalities of different characteristics and for different conditions of life, after the model of the one which met in the central house in Rome.

It was stated there that the Rule of these sodalities would be the same as that of the Roman College, with adaptations to conditions of place and personnel, but that all in all the Sodalities would be modeled after the one in Rome, as subjects of the same leader or the daughters of a common mother.

Doubtless around the same time of the year 1586 or slightly after that, the Sodality was established in this city of Bordeaux among various classes, according to different conditions and social standing, as it was then stated.

In the year 1737 there are many proofs of its existence, and its Regulations were renewed with mention of the decree of Pope Sixtus V in 1586. It continued to exist under the same direction until the suppression of the Jesuit Order.

The Reverend Capuchin Fathers of the same city of Bordeaux took over this work at this time. The meetings were held in their church, and they were authorized by your predecessors, the Sovereign Pontiffs.

The work was not yet totally annihilated at the time of the attack directed against the monastic institutions during the French Revolution. The devoted members of this association had the constancy to maintain it intact.

The undersigned, exercising his apostolic mission in Bordeaux, joined what he has of zeal to that of the members of this association, who were surviving despite such great disasters.

Finally in March of 1803,<sup>1</sup> the Legate of Your Holiness, then in Paris, in virtue of his powers granted to the members of the Association and to those who would join them, the same favors, privileges, and indulgences attached to the said Sodality, in the same manner and the same form that they had been granted by Pope Pius VI, your immediate predecessor.

The Bull of Pope Pius VI and the list of the privileges and indulgences annexed to it were then found to exist and to be authentic in their form.

The undersigned Missionary Apostolic had extracts made of it, which he compared with the originals, and these extracts were printed in the small prayer book of the Sodality.

The troubled times which followed caused these originals to be lost, and only the extracts remain.<sup>1</sup>

During these same evil times, several sodalists had either been enticed or cast out into various distant places, although some managed to return to their native land.

The majority formed new branches of the sodality by bringing together in each place the most fervent Christians.

All longed for the moment when the Holy See, while confirming the principal dispositions which had been made by Pope Sixtus in 1586, would place the sodalities in common affiliation and in the participation of the same favors, making or keeping them as daughters of the Sodality of Rome and subject to its principal head.

While awaiting what it will please Your Holiness to grant for other places, the undersigned, Missionary Apostolic, places his humble requests before you, Most Holy Father, so it may please you to look with kindness on the sections of the flock which, in spite of his unworthiness, he has the duty to watch over and help.

He dares to hope, Most Holy Father, that it will please you

(1) To grant to the aforesaid Sodality of the Immaculate Conception, established in the Church of the Madeleine of Bordeaux, the same favors, privileges, and indulgences granted to the sodalities of which it is a continuation by any one of your predecessors, the Holy Roman Pontiffs, and notably by Popes Sixtus V and Pius VI, which were renewed and confirmed in the month of March 1803 by your Legate in France; to order that the favors, privileges, and indulgences

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<sup>1</sup> This date is incorrect. The authentic document bears the date of June 2, 1803.

<sup>1</sup> At the time of the searches of 1809, it seems the Bull and the list were thrown into the gutter with various other documents concerning the Sodality. Friendly hands drew them out, stained, and consigned them to a sealed envelope for the Ladies of the Miséricorde, where a century later in 1909 they were rediscovered. Actually, they are preserved in the Archives of the Society of Mary and are given below.

mentioned above will be recorded in a list of which the undersigned herewith submits a model. May it please you, Most Holy Father, to have added to the intervening decree, with or without modification as Your Holiness may deem advisable, that the newly-granted favors, distinguished by the asterisk, are not to be prejudicial to the former ones, but rather an addition to them.

(2) To say and to declare that the same favors, privileges, and indulgences will be of benefit, collectively and individually, to all the members of the various Sodalities affiliated to the one of Bordeaux, or which will be affiliated, and notably to the Sodalities which have spread from Bordeaux to the dioceses of Agen and Auch.

(3) To authorize the directors who will be especially given to distinct Sodalities with the approval of the Ordinaries to apply the indulgences in cases where this application is needed, as in the case with the principal director residing in Bordeaux.

(4) To declare and permit that the indulgences to be acquired and gained by the sodalists or by the faithful, in their lifetime or at the moment of death, may be applicable by way of suffrage and profitable to the faithful departed, according to the intention of the person gaining the indulgence.

The supplicant, prostrate at the feet of Your Holiness, humbly waits upon you, Most Holy Father, to grant him as well as his children, the sodalists of every age and gender, a portion of these treasures whose abundance you have in your hands. He furthermore asks for the same sodalists and himself, Most Holy Father, your Apostolic Blessing.

\*

A list of the indulgences granted to the Sodality of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin established at the Madeleine, in Bordeaux.

List of indulgences attached to the Sodality of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin, presently established in the church of the Madeleine in the city of Bordeaux. [*According to the terms of the petition, an asterisk indicates that this indulgence had not been present in the former concessions.*]

Plenary indulgences granted to the living, the dying, and the dead.

To the living. To each sodalist on the day of his reception or through the intermediary of the director, in or out of the confessional.

On the day of the week (the day of his choice) on which he has received the Eucharist and assisted during that week at one of the instructions given during a meeting.

To each sodalist, on the day indicated below and under the usual conditions:

- each day of the Roman stations according to the Roman missal
- on the Feasts of the Nativity and the Ascension of Our Lord
- on the Feasts of the Nativity, the Conception\* and its Octave, the Annunciation, and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin
- on the Feast of Saint Joseph\*
- on the day of the monthly general Communion, with the sodalists of the Madeleine or, if he is away, by receiving Communion on the indicated day in another church\*
- on the last day of each month for those who have recited daily the Little Office of their group.

To each of the faithful, sodalists or not, who will have made the exercises of the annual retreat during at least 5 days with the intention of bettering himself, and who will have participated in a general Communion on the last day.

At the hour of death. To the founders or restorers of the Sodality before the Brief of June 2, 1803, conformably to the Brief.

To the founders or restorers who promoted the Sodality before the apostolic decree became effective.\*

To both when receiving holy Viaticum if their infirmities are not a hindrance, and in case they are, on invoking orally or mentally the holy Name.

To each of the sodalists in danger of death or gravely ill who will be encouraged by the director to patience and resignation, after receiving Communion if he can and after reciting three *Our Fathers* and *Hail Marys* for the intention of the Sovereign Pontiff and of the Church, and to whom the director expressly applies the indulgence.

After death. For a deceased sodalist for whom an authorized priest will say a Mass, using one of the altars of the oratory or, if the Mass is said in any church, by a priest sodalist.

Partial indulgences of 7 years and of 7 periods of 40 days [*quarantines*], to every sodalist for each of the exercises, acts, or prayers given here:

- for each attendance at a public or private exercises of the Sodality
- for the recitation every day of the Little Office of the Immaculate Conception prescribed for the men, of the Office of the Sacred Heart of Mary prescribed for the Young Women, and for the act of acceptance of death which serves as the Office for the Mothers of Families\*
- for the nightly examination of conscience
- for having reconciled two or more enemies
- for each visit to a sick sodalist
- for having asked God to heal a sick person, for a good death,, for the terminally ill, or for the repose of the soul of a deceased person at the time the church tolls his passing
- for attendance at the church funeral of a sodalist or of any one of the faithful.

The general conditions for gaining a plenary indulgence, in addition to those indicated for the indulgences given above, are

1. to be sorry for sins, to be humble, to have recently received the sacrament of healing, and to receive the Eucharist fervently on the day someone wishes to gain the indulgence;

2. on the same day, to visit a church or oratory of the Sodality; in case there is no such church or oratory, to visit the church designated by the director; failing this, to visit the principal church of the district;

3. on the same day, to receive fervently five *Our Fathers* and five *Hail Marys* for the intentions of the Sovereign Pontiff;

4. on the feastdays of the stations of Rome, to recite seven of those prayers, as it is prescribed for these stations.

A single document appended to the petition whose object is to obtain, or to have confirmed, the above indulgences and privileges.

\* \* \*

*Then from the hand of the Archbishop of Bordeaux comes the following recommendation. "Knowing how useful for the maintenance of religion and for the increase of piety these associations are, especially under the wise direction of the Missionary Apostolic who solicits the favors here mentioned, I take the liberty of joining my humble supplications with his at the feet of Your Holiness. —Charles-Fr., Archbishop of Bordeaux."*

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### **S. 109-2. To the Minister of the Interior**

After January 19, 1819, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

The Minister's request for documents leads us to believe that Father Chaminade expressed himself poorly in his petition. His Excellency does not seem to understand that the ecclesiastical and administrative documents of 1814 validating the existence of the oratory needed only the royal sanction.

Various priests succeeded each other as directors of the oratory of the Madeleine before the Conordat. After the organization of the Church of France in 1802 and the law of germinal in the year 10, it became necessary to obtain the authorization from both powers to hold exercises of worship in this chapel. The archbishop's ordinance announcing the consent both of the Prefect to the request of the faithful interested in the continuance of this oratory and also of the three interested pastors—all this goes to prove that the preliminary conditions have been fulfilled and that only the seal of sovereign authority was missing from the legal formalities. This is the substance of the petition presented today by Father Chaminade.

There is only one possible explanation for the communication by His Excellency to the parish council and then to the municipal council, and this would be because the costs for the exercise of worship would be assumed by the parish, or in a subsidiary manner (in case the latter had insufficient revenues) by the city. This would be the situation if parish functions took place in the oratory under the authority of a pastor, just as in the case of an annex; but the Madeleine is not in this category.

The building was sold during the Revolution. The chaplain is responsible for the rent and for all other expenses arising from the worship. He has no salary and no parish duties. Both on a spiritual and a temporal level, this chapel is a true "special oratory"; it was labeled an auxiliary chapel or "mission" only to extend its services to the various parishes of the south of Bordeaux, where the churches are further apart.

We conclude that the faithful of the three parishes and their pastors were agreed on the usefulness and the necessity of preserving this chapel. But in the absence of all pastoral responsibility, the neighboring pastors were not obliged to any form of inspection. There was also no reason for the parishes to assume any financial obligation which their own insufficient revenues would have obliged them to refuse. Also, it would be impossible to allocate the assistance because the chapel is a service to each of the three parishes individually but not collectively, nor does it help each parish as a whole.

The priest who celebrates Mass there agrees to bear the expenses incurred by the chapel. He is bound to this service by no commitment, by no obligation other than his zeal. He will continue his work as long as he can or as he wills. The oratory is essentially his property; it is public only insofar as it opens its doors to the faithful of the neighborhood.

It is ideally situated for this purpose, and this is why it was authorized to function as an auxiliary chapel. All that is requested is the royal authorization to maintain the chapel as a special oratory, receiving the faithful for services which do not conflict with their parish activities, with no financial burden on the parish corporations. Therefore, His Excellency with the understanding of the three neighboring pastors, the opinion of the archbishop, and that of the prefect, has sufficient grounds to ask His Majesty to approve the continuance of the oratory of the Madeleine which is so useful to the faithful.

\* \* \*

### **110. To Pope Pius VII, Rome**

January 18, 1819, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

Most Holy Father,

The suppliant, while soliciting in a previous letter indulgences for the Sodalities he directs, limited himself to the indication of their affiliation and former privileges.

He said nothing and should have said nothing about the new works which have developed from the above-mentioned Sodalities or will develop from them in the near future. But he presents for your Apostolic Blessing at least two groups which have arisen in the bosom of these Sodalities, one in the city of Agen and the other in the city of Bordeaux.

The first is a group of virgins who, under the authority of a prelate who leaves no good work undone, consecrated themselves to the propagation of the faith when they made their religious vows. They have taken the name Daughters of Mary.

The Bordeaux group is made up of men who, in the same spirit as the Daughters of Mary, have followed with the same vows the same course with the variation called for by the difference of gender.

The venerable prelate of the archiepiscopal See of Bordeaux has not disapproved of this trial, which the undersigned also wishes to place before the consideration of Your Holiness.

The more particular spirit of these groups is to provide a special Head of Zeal, another for Instruction, and still another for Work, while obliging the Superior of the Society to have all the members act together along these three paths without interruption.

By his grace, God has been pleased to grant that these first efforts will produce fruits of edification and consolation.

The suppliant has believed your charity toward the faithful and in particular your concern for the Church in France would be moved by this report, and Your Holiness would not refuse to allot from the treasures placed in your hands a small portion to those who later can easily be its ornament and support.

The suppliant, prostrate at the feet of Your Holiness, humbly asks you, Most Holy Father, to be pleased to favor this holy assembly.

For these motives and others, may it please you from the abundance of your favors to grant to the men's group of Bordeaux, under the title of Children of Mary, the following plenary indulgences.

- (1) On the day of the taking of vows, for each of the subjects admitted.
- (2) On the day of the renewal of the same vows, once each year.
- (3) During the three days of the Forty Hours Devotion, which will take place in the church designated by their Superior until such time as they have one of their own, the same indulgence for the faithful who will take part in the instruction and exercises during the three days.
- (4) At the hour of death, for those of the members of the Institute of Mary who die clothed in their habit or bearing signs of their membership and in the love of their vows.

Deign, Most Holy Father, to add to these favors, and for the Children of Mary, and for the unworthy suppliant, your Apostolic Blessing.

*[The Archbishop of Bordeaux had added his recommendation to this request, in these few kind words. "In union with the suppliant, I take the liberty of humbly soliciting at the feet of Your Holiness the same favors. —Charles-Fr., Archbishop of Bordeaux."]*

\* \* \*

### **111. To Pope Pius VII, Rome**

January 18, 1819, Bordeaux

Rough Draft, Agmar

Most Holy Father,

The suppliant has described for you in a previous petition the conditions of the Sodalities which the Holy Spirit has willed to bring together in these modern times. He has left to God the glory of his work undertaken for support of fervor. This is why he did not speak of the works undertaken by the various groups.



But he cannot help saying a word about one particular group which developed from the general sodalities and which especially formed in the city of Agen.

It has been especially favored, sustained, and encouraged by the intense charity of a prelate who is zealous about all his duties and leaves no good undone for all those under his influence.

It is then under the authority and direction of this holy bishop that 30 virgins, formed originally in the heart of the Sodality, have devoted themselves to the monastic life, while adding to the three ordinary vows of consecrating themselves to the propagation of the faith.

They have taken the name of Daughters of Mary.

Even the world has felt itself moved with respect for the totality of virtues which this monastic foundation inspires at its very birth.

A Mother in charge of Zeal, a Mother of Instruction, and a Mother of Work form the division of labor for this enterprise, which is kept together by a Good Mother whom Heaven seems to have formed and reserved for giving life to this Institute.

Whatever in the former monastic Rules was holiest has been taken up as far as possible. All the merit of the director has perhaps been following the impulse given by grace to these hearts, destined for the edification of the world.

This very brief presentation of the condition of things is at least very exact. Your paternal heart, Most Holy Father, will derive some consolation from it, and your charity, stirred to action, will wish to give treasures of the Church to whoever is charged with increasing this work later.

\* \* \*

#### **N.A. 111-2. To the Prefect, Department of the Gironde**

January 18, 1819, Bordeaux

Printed in Volume 8-2.

Copy, Agmar 218.2.12

Monsieur Prefect,

In your letter of January 15 you give me permission to establish the little society which will work with the Auvergnats. The fact that you also intend to obtain government approval for my project confirms my opinion of the good principles which guide your administration, and particularly of your kindness toward the least fortunate of its citizens. I will be guided by you in all further development of the work. I can find no better way of expressing my confidence in you and the sentiments of respect with which I am, Monsieur Prefect, your most humble and most obedient servant.

P.S. Your Honor, I believe that a similar project in Paris, that of the young Savoyards, has no other support than the zeal of committed people and without approbation.

\* \* \*

*A similar request for favors follows. In this document Father Chaminade praises the fervor of the first Daughters of Mary and the holiness of their Founder.*

*Three requests were confided to Father Ripolles, pastor of Talence near Bordeaux, to be carried to Rome. The following note refers to him. The first did not work out as hoped, but the Sodality of Bordeaux was affiliated by an act dated July 4, 1819, to the Sodality Prima Primaria, which had been reestablished in all its privileges with the restoration of the Society of Jesus. The two others were crowned with success, and the pope responded with two Briefs dated May 25, 1819, granting all the favors requested. To commemorate this, the Society of Mary celebrates the Feast of Our Lady, Help of Christians on May 25.*

\* \* \*

**112. To M. David Monier, Bordeaux**

January 1819, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Friend,

I am sending you the *Vendéen*. I hope it will please you. . . .  
Number eight stands out. I would have liked to have told you about it sooner.

Our traveler to Rome is to leave after only a few days. If our requests are ready, tomorrow evening I can have them examined by the archbishop. The bad weather is delaying him. I am saying goodnight.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. Is your mind sufficiently clear and free to work on the Consummation Virtues? If you believe you can work better tomorrow here at my house, you can count on my door being open to you early in the morning, but closed to all others.

\* \* \*

*Unable to do everything himself, Father Chaminade confides several tasks to David Monier. He was asked to write out, under Father Chaminade's inspiration, the work on the Consummation Virtues which had been long planned. Father Chaminade himself is kept busy maintaining his works and providing for their extension; in the following letter we find him sustaining a religious vocation and initiating the establishment of new Sodalities.*

**113. To Mlle de Lachapelle, Condom**

January 20, 1819, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Daughter,

I received your last letter with joy. Sometimes I have been amazed to receive so few letters from you. At least you should console yourself by writing often to your sisters in Agen, who love you so much and who pray so often for you. The more they taste the pleasure of serving the Lord in the quiet of solitude, the more they pity you to be still sailing the stormy sea of this world.

I write to you now in haste, profiting by the occasion offered to me by a young man who is going to live in Condom. I have received him as a sodalist in Auch. He took part in several of the exercises of the Bordeaux Sodality and thus came to understand it well. Had I known he was to leave Bordeaux so soon, I would have instructed him even more, and I would have placed him in a position to converse more with the gentlemen of Condom. He will be able to be of some service to you. however, for he is zealous. The *collège* would be able to serve as an example to youth. . . .

I consider you as an exile, my dear Daughter, sighing until you can break all the ties which still bind you to earth and fly to the place where God calls you. Sister des Anges is still obliged to wait until Easter, from what our good superior has been telling me.

I hope to go to Agen after Easter. I would like to find you at our little convent there. May the Lord shower upon you his most abundant blessings!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. Allow Father Castex<sup>1</sup> to find here some marks of my respectful consideration. I would very much like to see him on my first journey to the Haut-Pays.

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**S. 113a. To the Minister of the Interior**

January 19, 1819, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

The Minister's request for documents leads us to believe that Father Chaminade expressed himself poorly in his petition. His Excellency does not seem to understand that the ecclesiastical and administrative documents of 1814 validating the existence of the oratory needed only the royal sanction.

Various priests succeeded each other as directors of the oratory of the Madeleine before the Concordat. After the organization of the Church of France in 1802 and the law of germinal in the year X, it became necessary to obtain the authorization from both powers to hold exercises of worship in this chapel. The archbishop's ordinance announcing the consent of both the prefect to the request of the faithful interested in the continuance of this oratory and also of the three interested pastors—all this goes to prove that the preliminary conditions had been fulfilled and that only the seal of sovereign authority was missing from the legal formalities. This is the essence of the petition presented today by Father Chaminade.

There is only one possible explanation for the communication by His Excellency to the parish council and then to the municipal council., and that would be because of the costs for the exercise of worship would be assumed by the parish, or in a subsidiary manner (in case the latter had insufficient revenues) by the city. This would be the situation if the parish functions took place in the oratory under the authority of the pastor, just as in the case of an annex; but the Madeleine is not in this category.

The building was sold during the Revolution. The chaplain is responsible for the rent and for all other expenses arising from the worship. He has no salary and no parish duties. Both on a spiritual and a temporal plane, this chapel is a true "special oratory"; it was labeled as an auxiliary chapel or "mission" only to extent its services to the various parishes of Bordeaux south, where the churches are rather far apart.

We conclude that the faithful of the three parishes and their pastors were agreed on the usefulness and the necessity of preserving this chapel. But in the absence of all pastoral responsibility, the neighboring pastors were not obliged to any form of inspection. There was also no reason for the parishes to assume any financial obligation, which their own insufficient revenues would have obliged them to refuse. Moreover, it would be impossible to allocate the assistance because the chapel is a service to each of the three parishes individually, but not collectively, nor does it help each parish as a whole.

The priest who celebrates Mass there accepts responsibility for the expenses incurred by the chapel. He is bound to this service by no commitment or by no obligation other than his zeal. He will continue his work as long as he can, or as he wills. The oratory is essentially his property; it is public only insofar as it opens its doors to the faithful of the neighborhood.

It is ideally situated for the purpose, and this is why it was authorized to serve as an auxiliary chapel. All that is requested is the royal authorization to maintain the chapel as a special oratory, receiving the faithful for service which do not conflict with their parish activities, with no financial burden to the parish corporations. Therefore, with the understanding of the three neighboring pastors, the opinion of the archbishop, and that of the prefect, His Excellency has

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<sup>1</sup> Chaplain of the hospital at Condom, a zealous priest who was directing the Sodality there.

sufficient grounds to ask His Majesty to approve the continuance of the oratory of the Madeleine which is so useful to the faithful.

\* \* \*

*But then a serious difficulty arises; the peaceful possession of the Madeleine by Father Chaminade and the Sodality is about to be contested. Because of incidents which will be referred to later (letter no. 116), ill-disposed neighbors had complained to the authorities. To end the dispute, Father Chaminade thought of asking the Government to recognize the Madeleine as an auxiliary public oratory. The investigation brought about by this request did not fail to cause him anxiety because it required help from the revenues of the church of Sainte Eulalie. Troubled, he first thought of abandoning his first request and to prevail, through the authorization of the Madeleine, in the work of the little Auvergnats, which was about to be approved by the Government. Here can be seen both the credit Father Chaminade enjoyed with various authorities and the interest he took in the poor, abandoned children.*

#### **114. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux**

February 5, 1819, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

Your Excellency,

I have just made arrangements to save you the trouble of answering the Minister on the subject of the Madeleine. I would be obliged to you not to bring up this matter for deliberation but to let it drop, at least temporarily. I will have the honor of informing you about anything of interest that may happen. On the other hand, I ask you to advise me directly about anything that may concern you, should I not know of it. There is every reason to expect these proceedings, which would be considered imprudent if they were unsuccessful, will have a happy ending. May the name of the Lord, for whose glory everything is being done, be forever blessed!

I am with profound respect, Your Excellency, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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#### **115. To the First President of the Court, Bordeaux**

No date, Bordeaux

Rough Draft, Agmar

[With insert from S. 115]

M. President,

While asking authorization of the government for the work with the young abandoned children, I requested that His Excellency the Archbishop, the First President, and the prefect be invited to the meetings of the bureau as guests of honor.

Last Thursday I went to your house, Monsieur le Premier, to pay my respects and to acquaint you with this work which the grand-nephew of the illustrious Archbishop of Cambrai has made known to all of France. I also wished to invite you for the first of the association's meetings, which will take place if the day is suitable to you on Wednesday evening at seven o'clock sharp at no. 2, Rue Lalande.

It was my intention, Monsieur, to call on you again, full of confidence in your benevolent intentions. I have asked M. Laroque to be my representative; I join my request to his and ask you to postpone the session at which his case will be appealed. His lawyer is away but hopes to return soon.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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### **116. To Count de Tournon, Prefect of the Gironde**

February 10, 1819, Bordeaux  
Autograph Rough Draft, Agmar

M. Prefect,

A very small cause has just produced amazing results. For 6 years I have been quietly exercising the functions of my ministry in the Chapel of the Madeleine, when suddenly the bell, which had been in ringing condition all this time, cracked. I was in a position to have it replaced, when some people of Rue de Lalande asked to transport both the bell and the belfry to the Rue des Carmes.<sup>1</sup> In spite of the expense I could not bear, I would have done this immediately if there had not been serious inconveniences.

The oratory of the Madeleine had been held successively by various priests before the time of the Concordat.<sup>2</sup> Following the reorganization of the Church of France in 1802 and the law of germinal in the year X, the exercise of religion in the chapel had to be regulated by the twofold authority of the Church and the State. All the formalities required by the law were fulfilled by His Excellency the Archbishop, in conjunction with M. Charles de la Croix, then prefect of the Gironde. The only thing still lacking was the seal of the sovereign authority, the lack of which I noticed only when these bell troubles began.

I am in a position, M. Prefect, to solicit this authorization from the king. I ask you to delay your answer to the petitioners of Rue de Lalande without, however, allowing the reason to be known. I would also be obliged to you to provide me with a copy of the papers concerning this matter; these can still be found in the prefect's office. I am having a new search made in the secretariat of the archdiocese. Thus, I will be ready to give you all possible information the very moment you need it.

I am with a very deep respect, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. While awaiting authorization for the work of the young abandoned children, I am more concerned with perfecting than developing it.

I happen to believe at this time, M. Prefect, that if some new contradiction about the Madeleine should arise, we can easily sustain the work of these poor children with the other advantages which the opening of this chapel to the public provides. At the same time, the authorization of the government which would associate it with this work would help the stability of the work and the quiet use of the chapel itself. Nevertheless, I do not believe the authorization I requested for the chapel will meet with any difficulty. In case of success or failure, I will report everything to you with complete confidence.

I am adding to this letter to acknowledge receiving the one you have just written to me, to accompany the copy of the letter of His Excellency and the Minister of the Interior concerning the work of the young, abandoned children. I am going to work on the Statutes, profiting from the observations you were kind enough to make. The more I think of these children, the more my heart is interested in their fate.

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<sup>1</sup> Today, Rue Canillac is behind the apse of the chapel. The transfer of the bell and belfry took place only later.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. Monsec, pastor of Sainte Eulalie, then in the power of the constitutional clergy, and his assistant, Fr. Roullier, assisted by Fr. Jaure, former beneficiary of Sainte Eulalie, and Fr. Cauderès, former pastor of Canéjan. The Chapel of the Madeleine was then the seat of the parish of Sainte Eulalie. After the Concordat it became the seat of the parish of Saint Eloi, whose church was undergoing extensive repairs. In 1804 it was transferred to Fr. Chaminade for the meetings of the Sodality.

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**S. 116a. To Count de Tournon, Prefect of the Gironde**

February 17, 1819, Bordeaux  
Autograph Rough Draft, Agmar

Conformably to your intentions and to those of His Excellency the Minister of the Interior which you shared with me in your letter of February 8, I have kept only the most important features of the Statutes of the Society which proposes to aid the young boys from Auvergne. I would like this initiative to proceed according to your wishes, Monsieur Prefect, and I am willing to take charge of the work. If the government were to authorize the project with or without modifications and also to dispense with the stamp tax on subscription sheets and application forms, the sum realized would be equivalent to several subscriptions, unless these are already exempt because of some law applying to charitable institutions and of which I have no knowledge.

You are familiar, Monsieur Prefect, with the section dealing with internal government which is well developed in the prospectus and which I declared to be optional in answer to your recommendation for brevity.

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**N.A. 116-2. To Count de Tournon, Prefect of the Gironde**

February 27, 1819, Bordeaux  
Printed in Volume 8-2. Copy, Agmar 218.2.13

Monsieur Prefect,

I have taken notice of your wishes and of those of His Excellency the Minister of the Interior contained in your letter of February 8. I have tried to limit the statutes of the beneficent society in favor of the Auvergnats to what is most basic. I would like the project to continue according to your wishes, Monsieur Prefect, and I am willing to take charge of it.

If the Government, while it authorizes the suggested project with or without changes, would have the goodness to dispense the subscription sheets and registers from the obligation of the stamp, this measure would be equivalent to several subscriptions. This privilege may have already been granted to charitable organizations under some other law of which I have no knowledge.

You have taken notice, Monsieur Prefect, of that section of the internal regulations clearly enunciated in the prospectus and which I declare to be optional after your expressed desire to see the prospectus abbreviated.

With all due respect I am, Honorable Prefect, your most humble and most obedient servant.

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**S. 116b. To Bro. David Monier**

March 3, 1819, Bordeaux  
Autograph, Agmar

We are further than ever from our objective, my dear Friend. A second letter from the Minister to the archbishop asks, in substance, that a reference be made to his first letter of January

19. We will need to consider seriously what our next step is to be. Perhaps we will have to turn to the children from Auvergne.

\* \* \*

**S. 116c. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux**

March 1819, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

Excellency,

At the request of a good number of the faithful from the parishes of Saint Paul, Sainte Eulalie, and Saint Eloi who desire a continuance of the religious services provided by the chapel called the Madeleine, encouraged by the response of the pastors and assistants of the said parishes who have been consulted on the purpose of the petition, and with the consent of the prefect of the Gironde inasmuch as he was concerned, we agreed to the wishes of the faithful and allowed them the use of the chapel by our ordinance of November 12, 1804, or 21 brumaire of the year 13.

At the same time we named as priest in charge Rev. G.-Joseph Chaminade, Honorary Canon of our metropolitan church.

You are aware, Your Excellency, that the Lord has showered blessings on the work which has been done in this oratory. The fervor of a great number of the faithful has been maintained, and many souls have been won over to virtue and faith. In order to give the oratory a firmer foundation, I believed it proper to ask the King to add his seal of sovereign authority to my ordinance.

His Excellency the Minister, the Minister of the Interior, has looked with favor on my petition. In his response he asks me to comply with certain conditions, one being the consultation of the parish council of Sainte Eulalie on the services which the chapel can render.

Concerning an estimate of the expenses incurred by the opening of this chapel, Your Excellency, our intention is not to burden the parish by asking it to supplement any lack of funds, for the revenues of the parish are already insufficient. On the contrary, the oratory is the private property of the person in charge, and he is responsible for any necessary repairs. Although I have no doubt that this is his intention, I believe it is good to mention it here.

His Excellency the Minister of the Interior seems to desire that these formalities will be taken care of as quickly as possible. The prefect of the Gironde, to whom he wrote concerning his involvement, calls on me to request a consultation with the parish of Sainte Eulalie. In his letter the first magistrate expresses himself greatly in favor of the oratory and concludes with these words, which you will find very interesting. "Apparently Father Chaminade does not ask for a new title, but merely that he keep a title which he already possesses and which was granted to him 14 years ago."

I am. . .

P.S. The meager income, although insufficient, would be a compensation. However, any donations or legacies can be accepted only by a parish.

\* \* \*

**S. 116d. To the Chair of the Parish Council, Sainte Eulalie**

March 1819, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

I was surprised at the hesitation of the council of Sainte Eulalie to call a meeting to discuss the matter proposed by His Excellency the Bishop, and so I made inquiries to obtain the

reason. I was given to understand that the archbishop's letter was not clear enough to be brought before the members of the council. Second, the topic for consideration was not stated with sufficient clarity.

Now as to the first objection, a casual glance at the law will convince anyone that the council is fully authorized to meet in response to the archbishop's letter of March 10. But to grasp the purpose of the meeting, we must read more carefully, for the letter is very succinct. I asked only one thing of the King: the assent of his royal authority to a situation which has existed for 14 years by designating the chapel of the Madeleine as an auxiliary chapel or mission, as it is stated in the constitutive ordinance. The archbishop put it this way. "Father Chaminade, desiring to giving more stability to the constitution of this auxiliary chapel, petitions the King to grant him the seal of his sovereign authority." Is the purpose not clearly stated?

The prefect of the Gironde, writing to the archbishop on the matter, saw this in the same light. I believe I can recall his exact words. "Father Chaminade is not asking for a new title, merely the confirmation of a title which has already been granted to him and of which he has been in full possession these last 14 years."

The term auxiliary chapel or mission, must be understood only according to the terms of the constitutive ordinance. This is how I have always interpreted it, and I do so now. Here is the actual text of the explanation I gave to the Minister of the Interior after my petition to the King. "From the spiritual and temporal point of view, this chapel is actually a private oratory; it was parishes of the south of Bordeaux, etc." It has never been interpreted otherwise, and I am distressed that it could have been given another meaning.

Monsieur, if you believe any other point needs clarification, in the name of our friendship and as good neighbors, have the kindness and goodwill to inform me of this. But in the absence of any obstacle, I would be greatly obliged if you would call a meeting of the council using the usual procedure.

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### **S. 116e. To the Chair of the Parish Council, Sainte-Eulalie**

March 1819, Bordeaux  
Rough Copy, Agmar

Monsieur,

I am writing to you to report what I hear in various circles and to share with you some reflections on the matter which I have made under other circumstances. You may make use of my remarks as you wish in the interests of religion, for I believe it is concerned here, as you may judge from what follows.

It is rumored that while the parish council of Sainte Eulalie concedes that my oratory is of some value to the cause of religion and public morality, it is empowered to decide either that the ordinance authorizing it must be confirmed purely and simply, or that the confirmation can be granted only on the condition that a sum of 1,300 francs will be paid annually to the council. I would perhaps never have given credence to this second alternative, had I not previously had a similar experience.

May I draw your attention to two things regarding that proposal—I mean the principles upon which it is based and the consequences it may have. To make an establishment taxable because it is useful to religion and to public morality! If payment of this kind were in fact exacted, it would meet with great public disfavor. This alone would alienate a number of people. A religious person will not accept this financial haggling over religious and moral values.

The consequences could be even more far-reaching. Suppose a tax were to be imposed on an oratory on the boundaries of the parish, even if it were less than the 1,300 francs suggested—are we to conclude that the parish itself, where the services are more varied, the space



incomparably more vast, and the attendance greater, could be subject to a proportionately greater tax by the proper authority? Protest as you will that you are unable to meet your own expenses, you will be told that if the oratory, which has but one-tenth or less of your resources, seems to you logically taxable, and you will have condemned yourself—just compare. Furthermore, it will be most natural for the parishes of Saint Paul and Saint Eloi, with a greater number of parishioners attending services at the oratory than those of Sainte Eulalie, to follow the example and to give notice that they also wish to impose a tax. Next, if you add that the oratory pays a high rent and public taxes, two types of expenses from which the parishes are exempt, the latter will be expected to contribute more, again compared to the chapel.

The conclusion to be drawn from these considerations, Monsieur, is that the imposition of a tax means closing the oratory; let there be no misunderstanding on this score. The revenues imagined by an impulsive and mischievous public amount to a wretched sum collected for the most indispensable maintenance and cleanliness of the building.

It is no secret that in the interests of religion and to help the poor, the person who cannot pay for his seat is admitted free. This practice prevails whenever tact requires it. Modes of taxation have no place in this haven of retreat. To introduce them would be to nullify the spiritual advantages, which I have found to be very real and which cannot be entirely disclaimed.

I could go on with these reflections for anyone who would be interested. To you, Monsieur, I will simply repeat: allow Christ to be adored in all simplicity where people are glad to adore him. I know the impact this recommendation will make upon your soul.

Please accept. . . .

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*While awaiting the settlement of this matter, which was settled on September 29, 1819, by the official recognition of the Madeleine as an auxiliary oratory, Father Chaminade continued to direct his various works and to answer Adèle's questions. The first part of this letter concerns a young religious who is dying of consumption; she died in a holy manner on the Tuesday after Easter.*

### **117. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen**

February 6, 1819, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

Although I am very busy, I am taking up my pen to take advantage of a conveyance going to Agen and to save you a few pennies.

If you believe Sister Elisabeth truly has a divine vocation to your holy Institute, she must be kept and granted the satisfaction of dying in the community where the Spirit of God has called her. What then should be done? We have time for reflection to foresee everything. I may possibly be there by that time.

Nevertheless, one thought I cannot help offering would be this—how did it happen that, having had so much time to examine this young woman, you did not notice she was consumptive? From what has been said to me, it seems her illness does not come from any accidents. With careful attention it should have been noticed, or at least sufficiently suspected, and thus have postponed her admission. It may be that this general mistake has been a special effect of Divine Providence.

I received Sister Stanislas' letter. May God be praised for having made her enter into the way of order and peace! I will write her and the others and look forward to hearing from them all. I do not forget them.

I very often think of the entire community and of each one of our Daughters in particular; but mainly of you, my dear Child, whom the good God wishes to make a saint. However, you must make yourself docile to the action of grace, which must abound in you and which seeks so many ways of purifying and sanctifying you. An Institute taking rise amid an overflow of iniquity and meant to present itself before a world corrupted and perverted—should it not have a saint as leader? Well, courage, my dear Child. Respond to the views of God, be faithful to grace, to your particular grace! Remember that a superior is to be all to all so as to gain all to Jesus Christ. In a way, she must no longer have a particular personality, but according to the occasion adapt now to this one, now to that one. She must bend to all characters.

Give Sister Emanuel the necessary dispensation, that she may spend Lent in good health and take good care also of the others. Should you have any doubt you cannot readily solve, it is preferable to be on the side of indulgence and to make compensation by acts of virtue.

I must stop now. I do not even have time to reread what I have written if I want this letter to leave by the present mail. May the Lord shower more and more his blessings upon you and upon your dear Daughters.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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### **118. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen**

March 29, 1819, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

[With insert from S. 118]

My dear Child,

I was on the point of writing to you when the carrier brought me your last letter. Do not be afraid to bore me with your frequent letters, even if they have no other purpose than to console or quiet you. The times are evil, and they are likely to become worse.

I had presented the Holy Father with three requests, one for the Daughters of Mary, one for what we here call the “Little Society,” and one for the Sodalties. I received notice that the Sovereign Pontiff has granted them all, but that because the approbation must be in the form of a Bull, it will take a while. If nothing goes wrong, I may even receive it before leaving for Agen.

Here we have need of great patience and constancy. Thanks be to God, we are, as it were, visibly surrounded by a kind of protection from on high. Everything is being purified, all is being consolidated in our works, even in the midst of contradictions and reverses. Let us continue to pray.

The custom of communities, even of cloistered communities, has been to open their chapels on Holy Thursday so the public may come to visit the Blessed Sacrament, etc. . . . Collections were taken up by the boarders, in the communities which had boarding schools. You may follow this general practice, taking precautions not to disturb recollection but rather favor it, whether by the interruption of all exterior functions for instructions of any type or forbidding the parlor even to yourself, except in case of pressing need or by supplementary exercises of piety, etc. The collections may be taken up by the young sodalists, who should be very decently dressed. The doors may be looked after by some respectable women who are easily able to control matters. They can be relieved in shifts. In the chapel decorations there should be nothing catering to a mere vain curiosity, etc. Regarding the collections, come to an understanding with Father Mouran about their use. He could say a word about them himself to His Excellency the Bishop. The needs of the institution and the chapel repairs are very real, but these must be presented with prudence if you make that decision. Formerly there were some churches where the men or women collectors said nothing. Admittance to the church is to end at nightfall, and the doors are to be closed. Perhaps it might even be suitable to place the Blessed Sacrament in the

tabernacle, to be exposed again early on Good Friday. The sodalists may be invited to carry candles, vases of flowers, or candlesticks. Let each object bear the name of the person who offers it, so everything may be returned without confusion. Because the chapel is small and the entrances are somewhat inconvenient, the community must sing nothing or do anything unusual which might attract too great a crowd.

Allow Sister Appolonie to continue her practices, but let her always take the necessary precautions to miss as rarely as possible the exercises either of the novitiate or of the chapel.

With respect to Sister des Anges, my dear Child, continue with the program you have outlined. Be a real support to the young workers you spoke of; encourage and instruct them. The Spirit of the Lord will help you find a way to satisfy the desire God has inspired in them.

I cannot find the uncle of the young woman you sent to me. She cannot enter any community, and serious disadvantages will result if she is sent to the Miséricorde. I will place her in a boarding establishment for three months; at the end of that period, we may be able to do something for her.

I wish you, my dear Child, and all our dear Daughters the abundance of heavenly blessings.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. Here I am making good for having omitted the acknowledgement of my reception of the box of prunes and thanking you for it. I am making constant use of it.

\* \* \*

### **S. 118a. To Father Ripolles, Pastor, Talence**

April 15, 1819, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

Your short note of March 13, coming from Rome and of which you sent me a copy, contains two remarks and three direct questions. I will reply to them.

First Remark. It says that the indulgences—that is, those that are requested—can be delivered only by the secretary in charge of the briefs. This means an expense of 100 francs for each of the three briefs I am requesting.

Answer. In France, we make no essential difference between rescripts, briefs, bulls, and other apostolic letters. We consider them at their face value, irrespective of their name, providing they come from the Sovereign Pontiff and deal with spiritual things. This is why in carrying out an assignment in France, it does not matter whether faculties were granted by rescript, brief, etc.

However, the regulations of the Roman chancelleries and secretariats may have decided otherwise. The banker charged with making the demand must deal with these Roman regulations. We must trust in his ability. We depend entirely on his competence as he follows the immediate procedures. However, we will ask the banker to observe the strictest economy because of the poverty of the petitioning Orders and because their support and encouragement are very useful to the church.

Second Remark. In Rome, it is the opinion that the Sodality of Bordeaux does not possess the privileges *ab antiquo* [from time immemorial] because we have no proof that the confirming brief is registered with the mother sodality, as are those of other sodalities.

Answer. The brief in question is dated June 2, 1803, and was granted by a legate *a latere* [who did not have direct authority] in virtue of his special powers, *re speciali auctoritate concessa*, as it is stated in the Brief. It is an established principle that the letters apostolic delivered by legates *a latere* are not null if they have not been formally made public in Rome according to the Roman protocol. This would be contrary to the nature of the legation, to the needs of the matters the legation is to treat, and to the understanding between respective

sovereigns. To check on the authenticity of the brief, a person simply consults the register of the legation; usually the original stays in France, while an authentic copy may be in Rome. Now the brief concerning the Sodality of Bordeaux can be found in register no. 2, page 509 according to a note added at the time of its proclamation by the legate Caprara or by his secretary.

Furthermore, it could be affirmed that the registration of briefs granting favors is an external formality and is practiced in the case of briefs of a spiritual nature from the Sovereign Pontiff. To omit the registration is not to invalidate the concession which is granted. However, ever since registration has been obligatory, any non-registered letter is regarded with some suspicion and even doubt regarding its authenticity. However, for letters which antedate or postdate the ruling, omitting the registration has no effect on the privilege solicited providing the authenticity of the letters can be demonstrated.

None of the privileges granted by Saint Peter and by his more immediate successors were registered, nor were those that were accorded during the captivity of the Sovereign Pontiffs. Those granted by legates *a latere* or by others were registered only very recently, etc. Yet the status of the various churches and societies of the faithful throughout the centuries has not been questioned because of this omission. Concerning those sodalities said to be affiliated to the Roman sodality, they are probably of recent origin and have appeared only after the ordinance. Earlier sodalities must not be dismissed on this account.

However, if my answers are considered merely as comments on the Roman decision, well and good; but should the authenticity, the seniority, and the legitimacy of the favors which the Sodality of Bordeaux has been enjoying for more than two centuries be attacked, I do not doubt that the theologians and the cardinals will side with it. I come now to the more direct questions which are directed to me.

First Question. Your banker in Rome wants to know the year, the month, and the day of the meeting of the Sodality of Bordeaux to see if it might be affiliated to that other sodality already affiliated to that of Rome, the mother of all sodalities.

Answer. The sodality in Rome has been declared the mother of all sodalities, and it is considered essential to recognize this title and to respect it. Moreover, this has been a condition imposed on all sodalities of that nature so that it is not only a matter of custom but also a duty to recognize this maternity. However, many sodalities, offshoots of the Roman body, were born at almost the same time, some only two years later. I should perhaps give the two dates that concern the Sodality of Bordeaux, the first referring to its actual creation and the other to its confirmed affiliation. I will explain these dates; the first would be the birth of the Sodality on December 5, 1584, and the other its confirmation on January 7, 1587.

1. The Bull *Omnipotentis Salvatoris nostri* published by His Holiness Pope Gregory XIII on September 5, 1584, which is considered to have established the sodality of the Roman college, authorizes the institution not only of school sodalities but extends to all the faithful under the care of the Jesuit Fathers “sodalities or confraternities of persons outside the college and even of the devout faithful in Christ of the said Society.”<sup>3</sup>

2. The Bull of His Holiness Pope Sixtus V, the one who extended in a special manner the sodalities and their indulgences to the kingdom of France, is generally given the date of 1586 (this date is found in all the books outlining the practices of the sodality), but in the new edition of the collected bulls (vol. 1, p. 169 *ff.*) it bears the date January 7, 1587. This bull authorizes the Fathers called “of Jesus” to found in France sodalities among various categories of people, much like those attached to the religious house in Rome. They will have the same rules as those of the Roman college with the adaptations required by the customs, the conditions, and the status of the persons. “These sodalities will be attached to those of Rome as offshoots of the same head and daughters of a common mother.”

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<sup>3</sup> *Sodalitia sue confraternitates externorum dicti collegii nostril, ac etiam aliorum Christi fidelium Societatis praedictae devotorum.*

Affiliation in this case results from its constitution and not from a subsequent registration. The Sovereign Pontiff who created these sodalities expressed himself as follows. "We, therefore, raise these confraternities or sodalities to a very worthy rank, so that both students and also other faithful Christians may be encouraged to become members of such sodalities, and we confer all and every indulgence and privilege, plenary or other, both on the forenamed primaria and also on all the individual colleges or houses of the said Society."<sup>4</sup>

From time immemorial the two bulls we are concerned with have been presented to the faithful of Bordeaux as certain titles, approved by their bishops and sanctioned by the civil authorities. Ever since that time, which antedates any person's memory, the sodalities have functioned on the strength of these titles. The only argument which could be adduced as proof that the approval of the Bordeaux sodality, which is lost in the mists of time, does not date from the primitive title is that the Jesuits were not established in the city at the time of the two bulls of 1584 and January 7, 1587. But this objection cannot be put forward because our chronicles inform us that the Jesuit Fathers were established in Bordeaux in 1573, with the active cooperation of the General of the Order. Our historians also record that when the Company of Jesus suffered suppression and exile, it found itself spared these trials in Bordeaux and Toulouse so that the sodalities were centered in these towns, the more important being Bordeaux. It is a fact that since the Bull of Pope Sixtus V on January 7, 1587, and until 1763 when the Company was dispersed, the sodality of Bordeaux flourished without interruption. Several religious of the Company residing in Bordeaux maintained the piety and the practices of the sodalities. With the years, the number of affiliates diminished very little. Several of these religious and some of their sodalists were still living in 1785 when, as we know, the Bull of His Holiness Pope Pius VI granted the same privileges and indulgences to the Capuchins of the city. This leads us to talk of this bull of Pius VI and address the question raised by the banker in Rome.

Second Question. Someone would like to know the year, the month, and the day on which the bull of confirmation was published, and also if it was sealed with lead or with the fisherman's ring, and this in order to avoid 24 years of research!

Answer. The petition which was sent mentions that the bull was destroyed during the public disasters of those last years. It was impossible, therefore, to note the month or the year or any other particular, and it was in order to replace it that the petition was sent. We find a quotation from this bull but not the date in the petition which was sent to the Cardinal Legate in France (1803) and also in the cardinal's answering brief. The petition asked for the same benefits, privileges, and indulgences which His Holiness Pope Pius VI of happy memory had granted to the sodality which had been established in the former convent of the Capuchins, under the title of the Immaculate Conception. It was a successor to the sodality of the Jesuit Father, as we have already stated. The Archbishop of Bordeaux seconded this petition. The Cardinal Legate responded as follows: "In virtue of the special apostolic authority graciously granted to us by His Holiness Pope Pius VII, we impart these indulgences to you, some of which were granted by Pope Pius VI of sacred memory in the usual manner and form to the aforementioned pious association."<sup>5</sup> In the margin we read, "Having read the present letter, we agree that its provisions will be put into practice in our diocese."<sup>6</sup> At the bottom is the great seal of the legation, and on the right the registration mark, L 2:509, meaning page 509 of the second register of the legation.

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<sup>4</sup> *Ipsas confraternitates seu sodalitates condignis titulis extollimus. . . ut igitur tam scholars quam caeteri Christifideles eo promptiores ad ejusmodi sodalitia ingredienda reddantur, nos omnes et singulares tam plenarias quam alias indulgentias et privilegias tam dictae primariae quam singulis aliis in quibusvis dictae societatis collegiis vel domibus impartimus. . .*

<sup>5</sup> *De speciali apostolic auctoritate a SSo Pio PP. VII nobis benign concessa indulgentias de quibus in precibus alias a Sancta memoriae Pio PP. VI concessas introscriptae piae unioni iisdem modo et forma communicamus. Sig. J.-B. Card. Leg.*

<sup>6</sup> *Visis praesentibus litteris ut in nostra diocese suum sortiantur effectum annuimus. Burdigalae 7 junii 1803. Sig. Card. Fr. Arch Burdig.*

This clear mention of the bull of Pius VI is attested to by the petition, by the legate *a latere* and by the Archbishop of Bordeaux. But the date and the nature of the seals are unknown, and the bull itself has been lost.

Third and Last Question. Should the letters apostolic contain the old statements in full, or is it sufficient to mention that all the indulgences granted by former Sovereign Pontiffs are confirmed? Will the three briefs contain the same statement?

Answer. (1) For the brief concerning the sodality, it is desirable that the statements will be given word for word and in full. However, this does not prevent introducing it with “while confirming all the indulgences granted by previous Sovereign Pontiffs” and adding the statements verbatim.

(2) Concerning the brief authorizing the grouping of some men in Bordeaux under a stricter rule, no general statement can be expected. The petition asks for indulgences in four explicit cases and for a group apart from the sodality. There is nothing to confirm or renew; the Pontiff is asked to grant four favors.

(3) The same applies to the women’s group at Agen. It seems to me fitting that the three conclusions reached in the three petitions would appear in the three briefs. The third petition, which has just been answered, would lead someone to believe that the interested party had not bothered to read the others. He is hereby encouraged to read them and to obtain in due form whatever concession he is able.

P.S. April 15, 1819 [*in Father Chaminade’s hand*]

Reverend Pastor, here are the answers to the questions sent by your friend from Rome. If in your opinion they are satisfactory, please send them on immediately to avoid unnecessary delay in the concessions we are seeking. With only a moment’s reflection, a person concludes from this answer that the sodality of Bordeaux and its affiliates are linked to the ancient sodality of the Roman college, thanks to the brief from Cardinal Caprara of June 2, 1863, which merely gives or transfers the indulgences granted to the sodality of the Capuchins of that town and thanks also to the fact that the sodality of the Capuchins was the same as that of the Jesuits. The brief of the Capuchin sodality is lost, as also the copy which I myself sent to the Cardinal Legate. However, the authenticity is proven by the excerpts, by the petitions, and by the existing brief from the Cardinal Legate which is so often quoted in new petitions address to the Holy Father, and also in my reply to the questions. Only the dates are uncertain. If the loss of the brief granting the transfer of the sodality of the Jesuits to the Capuchins and the uncertainty of the dates are still a problem, Reverend Pastor, then you could ask that everything contained in the petition will be granted as new favors, as if a union never existed, but establishing *de facto* this union to the old sodality of the Roman college and to all its affiliates, etc.

Now as to the other two petitions, the ones from the religious group of men in Bordeaux and that of the religious women in Agen, they present no difficulty, and it is to be supposed that their study and response will not be as expensive as for the sodalities; no research is needed, no proof of affiliation required, the time needed is so short, etc.

I close, Reverend Pastor, with a prayer that you redouble your efforts. I hope the favors from our Sovereign Pontiff will contribute to the growth and stability of these three institutions which already show such tangible and gratifying results.

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*To gain a better idea of the multiplicity of Father Chaminade’s occupations at this time, here are the principal passages of a letter to the pastor of Libourne and to the diocesan missionary, who was then preaching a retreat in this city. Asked to come in person to preside at the establishment of a Sodality, Father Chaminade was forced to postpone his journey until the*

*following month and in the meantime to give his instructions in writing. These instructions are preceded by the following lines, in the handwriting of David Monier.*

**119. To Father Rouquet, Pastor of Libourne  
And Father Maurel, Diocesan Missionary**

April 9, 1819, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

[With insert from S. 119]

Reverend Fathers,

Because I cannot write to you separately because of the work of the moment,<sup>1</sup> you will permit me to make this a joint letter. Thus I can avoid saying the same things twice. Moreover, whether I express my sentiments of respect jointly or separately, you will be convinced that they are sincere and the result of the most profound esteem.

I come now to the charitable gesture which has moved both of you, Reverend Fathers, to wish to associate me with your present work. I feel the importance of making permanent the fruits of your mission if at all possible, and I would consider myself happy to be able to help in some way. As soon as I received your two letters, I went to the archbishop's residence to receive the counsels or orders he might be pleased to give me. The need of new converts is not to be doubted, but it is no easy matter to obtain them. Your letters were read with attention, but nothing conclusive has as yet been decided. By way of recapitulation, it has been said that two or three days of reflection would be necessary and that I should make a summary of the entire matter to be given to His Excellency. This is why this letter will not be mailed before having been submitted to him.

The hope you had that I would go to Libourne on the second or third day after Easter, or that we would obtain the transfer of Father Goudelin, was not and cannot be realized. The events of Holy Week, the numerous Paschal Confessions, and the works undertaken here drive us unrelentingly. You will easily understand that we are not permitted to risk the salvation of several by giving up their spiritual direction, once it has begun and is almost completed. Father Goudelin, in particular, preached the Lenten sermons at the church of the Sainte-Croix in this city. I do not know when he completed them. His great zeal caused him to undertake a retreat at the same time. He has his duties as chaplain of the deaf and the service of instruction. The Confessions of the people take up all his free time, if he has any. The archbishop cannot dispense with this ecclesiastic.<sup>2</sup>

My time, if I must speak of it, is no less occupied than his. You will then want to believe that in spite of the best goodwill, it is absolutely impossible to give either Father Goudelin or me a new appointment in the next two weeks and after the feasts.

We must insist upon asking for grace, and only for grace from on high. May the good God see the dispositions of the hearts you have touched; may God strengthen them and sustain them by his grace!

I have proposed to the archbishop to send you an assistant later on in the person of a worthy priest whom I believed is sufficiently free with his time and means. He lacks neither piety nor zeal. But the least busy here are excessively so, and my wishes in this last regard could not yet be realized.

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<sup>1</sup> The letter is dated on Good Friday.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. Goudelin, former prefect of the Sodality (1818) received Holy Orders, joined the diocesan Missionaries of Bordeaux, and became chaplain of the Institution for the Deaf. Then in 1822 on the advice of Fr. Chaminade, to whom he was closely devoted, he agreed to succeed the celebrated Fr. Sicard as head of the Royal Institute of the Deaf of Paris. In 1824 he returned to Bordeaux to direct the diocesan Missionaries, and in 1832 he entered the Society of Jesus, in which he died in 1863.

In the reflections which have come to me since, it seemed to me the Sodalities you are so correct in wanting to establish would not have greater success with my presence or that of Father Goudelin, since that grace has called you to prepare for them.

We will want to organize them definitively one day and to confirm them in a constant and solid direction. However, to make this organization fruitful we must first test the zeal and learn a little of its strength. Until then, everything is preliminary.

Here is how I would proceed. Toward the end of the mission, one or two of your exercises may serve to announce to the faithful the necessity or the very great need of their remaining united, in order to keep themselves on the right path. They will find in union the power Jesus Christ has promised to those who gather in his name.

We must forget nothing which can make people realize the importance of such a union. We must take it for granted that God will inspire several with these designs and the zeal to carry them out. This is what happens almost all the time. It is good for these measures to be proposed by the same lips which have touched their hearts. You can then suggest they keep themselves united for all exercises of piety, prayers, religious instruction.

I will gladly devote my first free moments to such an essential work, and I will cooperate in its definitive organization, according to the needs of persons and places.

Your zeal and your experience will make up for what I cannot foresee here. I pray to God that he will preserve this new flock in its fervor, so by its constancy the glory of religion may be procured.

After you have suggested this first step, it might be good to inscribe in different registers those who present themselves. This inscription should include the name, the age, the profession, and the address of each one. Have a separate register for the men and for the women of the Sodality. Each of the registers can have two sections: the Fathers of Families separate from the Young Men, the Mothers separate from the Young Women.

There will, therefore, be two registers and in each register two sections, one for the older sodalists and one for the younger. In the section for the Fathers of Families will be inscribed all those who are or have been married, also the bachelors over 36 years of age. In the section for the Young Men will be the names of all those who are admitted between the ages of 16 and 36. The Mothers of Families are the married women of whatever age and spinsters over 30 years of age. In the second women's section will be all the Young Ladies between 14 and 30 years of age.

The men of both sections will appoint a leader and two assistants. There is one leader for both sections and one assistant for the Fathers of Families and one for the Young Men. The same procedure will be used for the women's sections. The leaders must accept their responsibility with their whole heart; they must not lack prudence and not allow anything that might give rise to censure or protest on the part of the authorities. The meetings are concerned only with religious matters. If you can accomplish all this, then have the men and the women meet on different days every two weeks for a pious reading and for mutual encouragement. The Sodality could also agree to attend Sunday Mass, at which the more fervent could proclaim their unity at the communion rail.

The biweekly meetings could take place until Pentecost, at which time I think I could pay them a visit, although I am not yet able to determine the exact date. Meanwhile, Father Maurel and I will meet and plan for all exercises of piety, prayers, and religious instruction.

I thank both of you especially, Messieurs, for having thought of my having a share in this excellent undertaking. The good God will lovingly overlook my insufficiency. You are planting; you wish for Apollo to do the watering, and God will give the increase. The blessing of our venerable prelate inspires me with the fondest hope in this.

From the bottom of my heart, I join you, and I am your humble associate in Jesus Christ.

G.-Joseph Chaminade



*Father Chaminade was preoccupied mainly with the progress of his Little Society. Now established close to M. Estebenet on Rue des Menuts, it had not yet obtained from the rector of the Academy the right to open an educational institution, but it had good reason to believe it would not have to wait much longer. Father Chaminade asked himself how the new boarding school would relate to M. Estebenet, for the latter continued to function on Rue des Menuts, contrary to what the Little Society had expected when it acquired the property (see letter no. 198.) This note shows Father Chaminade sounding out M. Estebenet on this point.*

**120. To M. Estebenet, Head of the Boarding School in Bordeaux**

April 20, 1819, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Friend,

Yesterday I waited for you all evening to continue our conversation of the day before.

I do not understand what advantage you or the Little Society would find in opening schools on Rue Leyteyre.<sup>1</sup> On the contrary, I see rather large outlays for an establishment which has only a very slight connection with either of our two institutions.

The big difficulty of finding in town a large place with a spacious garden, as you understand the term, may well lead you to a closer examination of the one being offered to you near the church of Saint Seurin.

Furthermore, I do not see that you have any pressing need to change your residence. If your eagerness had as its motive to give the Little Society better means of developing itself, the difficulty could be remedied for a long while by the construction of a workshop at the end of the lots, or still better at the end of your garden.

I will try to see you this evening after supper. I would be obliged if you see to the necessary papers with the observations you have made.

I greet you cordially.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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*A month later Father Chaminade had some good news for Agen.*

**121. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen**

May 25, 1819, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

I cannot yet tell you definitely the time of my trip to Agen. The important matters which require my presence are progressing well enough. Several are soon to reach their conclusion.

The head of the Little Society<sup>1</sup> has just received his authorization from the university, after eight months.

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<sup>1</sup> Another part of the Rue des Menuts.

<sup>1</sup> M. Auguste Brougnon-Perrière (1792-1874), born in Bordeaux, professor at the *collège* of Figeac and then in Bordeaux at the school of M. Estebenet, entered the Sodality of the Madeleine early and was one of the first members of the Society. He was the first director, first at the Impasse Ségur, then at the Sainte-Marie boarding school. In 1826 he added the post of Third Assistant. He left the Society of Mary in 1832, relieved of his vows by Archbishop de Cheverus, but he always remained friendly with Fr. Chaminade and with his former associates.

The work of the young Auvergnats has just been approved by the Government. God wishes to sustain us by the abandoned children and the chimney sweeps. I will explain this little mystery to you, if by this time you have not heard about it.<sup>2</sup>

There is a great likelihood—another mystery—that it is you yourself who are delaying my departure a little, and here is how. One of the finest dwellings, perhaps truly the finest, is for sale. I am thinking of making it a convent of the Daughters of Mary. I have hopes, but little more. It has twice the space of the Agen convent and is in the center of the city. I recommend this matter to your prayers, as all others, and I mean the prayers of the community. You have a direct or an indirect interest in all these matters.

I am hoping, my dear Child, that my letter will find you all back to your normal condition of health.

Ask Father Mouran if there may be some young convert<sup>1</sup> able to teach a small Latin class. We would be in need of such a person if we want to look after everything.

May the peace of the Lord be with you and all your dear daughters!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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**N.A. 121-2. To - - -**

May 1819, Libourne

Printed in Volume 9.

Copy at Agmar 218.2.57. See below, Agmar 218.2.58

We, Joseph-Guillaume Chaminade, priest, named Missionary Apostolic by letters of the Congregation for the Propagation, our letters having been reviewed and approved and faculties having been benevolently accorded us to exercise our functions in the diocese of Bordeaux by His Most Reverend Excellency, Archbishop Charles François d'Aviau de Sanzay, metropolitan of the said diocese, have arrived in the city of Libourne in order to support as much as lies in us the piety of a great number of the faithful;

and we have judged it expedient to erect, as we do hereby erect in this city, a group of the Sodality, under the invocation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, under the special title of the Immaculate Conception. We have received and adopted this Sodality as daughter of the sodality erected from time immemorial and reestablished several times, and which subsists under the same title in the city of Bordeaux, in such manner that the two sodalities will form one single family.

By this means, the association of Libourne, in keeping with the decrees of the sovereign pontiffs, desires to be and is hereby numbered among the daughters of the primary sodality of the Roman College. This latter was itself established many centuries ago by the sovereigns pontiffs Gregory XIII and Sixtus V. In this way, [the Sodality of Libourne] has the same right of being acknowledged as sister of all the sodalities arising from the same source and spread throughout the universe.

This new fraternal society, being in communion of prayers and merits, will also have equal part in all the indulgences, both partial and plenary, and in all the privileges imparted to the above-mentioned primary sodality, or to the Sodality of Bordeaux or to other sodalities affiliated with it, by observing in all things the established rules, as piety requires.

Given at Libourne

the - - - of the month of May

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<sup>2</sup> There is a question of the authorization of the Madeleine, which was not yet settled.

<sup>1</sup> That is to say, postulant, who may have tried religious life while working in the boarding school on Rue des Menus.

in the Year of Our Lord eighteen hundred nineteen

G.-Joseph Chaminade  
Missionary Apostolic

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**N.A. 121-3. To - - -**

1819

Printed in Volume 9.

Copy at Agmar 218.2.58

We, Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, priest, director of the Sodality of Bordeaux, having been sent by the Congregation of the Propagation as Missionary Apostolic, have had our letters reviewed and approved, and in keeping with the faculty accorded us of exercising our function throughout the full extent of the diocese by His Excellency Charles François d'Aviau du Bois de Sanzay, Archbishop and Metropolitan of Bordeaux, have come to the city of Libourne upon the request made of us to support, as much as lies in us, the faith and piety of a great number of the faithful, and to erect a sodality and to associate it with all the sodalities of the same kind.

In virtue of the faculties accorded our mission or attributed to it by general decrees, we have judged it proper to erect, and we do hereby erect, to exist forever, a sodality under the invocation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, under the special title of the Immaculate Conception; [we do this] in favor of the petitioners and of all the faithful who will hereafter join with them and will have been admitted to pronounce the same consecration in honor of the Blessed Virgin.

We receive this sodality and adopt it as a daughter of the sodality erected many centuries ago in the city of Bordeaux and which continues to exist there under the same title, so that the two sodalities will form one single family.

Moreover, by this means the association of Libourne, in keeping with the decrees of the Sovereign Pontiffs Gregory XIII and Sixtus V, will be numbered among the daughters of the primary sodality of the Roman College which was established by the same sovereign pontiffs many centuries ago under the same title of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Similarly, it is by right associated as a sister to all and each of the other sodalities arising from the same source and spread throughout the universe.

Thus, this new fraternal society, being in communion of prayers, good works, and merits, will share with complete equality in all the indulgences, partial or plenary, and all the privileges which may have been granted to the above-mentioned primary sodality, or to the Sodality of Bordeaux, or to any of the other affiliated sodalities; provided that the precepts and regulations will be observed in all things as piety requires.

Given in the Year of the Lord 1819

*G.-Joseph Chaminade*

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*Among several others also written by David Monier, here is a letter of affiliation to the Sodality. Father Chaminade's zeal was great for the multiplication of Sodalities; more than 50 during his lifetime were affiliated to the Sodality of the Madeleine in this way.*

**122. To Father Huard, Pastor  
Notre Dame de la Couture, Le Mans**

June 25, 1819, Bordeaux  
Rough Copy, Agmar

Reverend Father,

The letter you paid me the honor of writing on May 19 reached me in its own good time. Mme de Vauguyon, who was kind enough to deliver it at the time of her stop in Bordeaux, was notified that I could not answer it as soon as I would have liked. But this respectable woman was also able to describe for you all the joy which your plan and hers gave me concerning the proposed union between your sodalities and ours.

From the interview I had with her and also from the contents of your letter, it seemed to me that the Society confided to your care in the city of Le Mans has not emanated from the Roman Sodality or from its daughters, who had the same privileges and could share theirs with those who desired affiliation.

The sodalities I am speaking of go back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The sovereign pontiffs had their motives for uniting the faithful in each city or town into sodalities and placing these in reciprocal communication with the mother Sodality, which is close to the Holy See.

The piety which has led your women to come together intimately has had its first reward because I consider it an evident effect of grace that you and the good lady of Vauguyon have been moved to request association with the privileges of a Sodality you had never heard of.

As for me and the Sodality I direct here, I look upon it as a great favor from heaven that members have been sent who have been manifestly influenced by grace. In this manner Saul was sent to Ananias. Only one point may be lacking in the comparison, namely that we have not become saints, as Saul and Ananias did.

With these views and in obedience to God, I grant you affiliation to the fullest extent I can.

My powers being subordinate to the Ordinary in each location, my affiliation should have been accorded only after the authorization of His Excellency the Bishop. I desire that His Excellency pardon me if I have forestalled his orders, and that he will ratify what circumstances seem to require. If the Bishop of Le Mans does not ratify it, I would consider the affiliation null and void. Nothing is of any value except in the order of the mission instituted by Jesus Christ.

While humbly awaiting what it will please His Excellency to order, I take this occasion to recommend the Sodality of Bordeaux and its minister to your most fervent prayers. I am addressing mine to heaven for you, Reverend Father, as well as for the flock entrusted to your care, and I am in Jesus Christ and Mary,

Very truly yours,  
G.-Joseph Chaminade

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### **S. 122a. To the Bishop of Le Mans**

June 25, 1819, Bordeaux

Having been entrusted with an apostolic mission by a decree of March 28, 1801, I had to limit my sphere of action because of my weakened condition. My activity did not range beyond the former diocese of Auch and those of Bordeaux and Agen. It was never my intention to extend my mission territory as far as Mans. However, one of the pastors under your jurisdiction asked me in his letter of April 19 to affiliate a sodality of his parishioners, of which he is the director, to the similar Sodality in Bordeaux which is in my charge. While I could not proceed with this affiliation in my capacity as director of the Bordeaux group, I could do so in virtue of the apostolic mission confided to me. I thought any such action on my part, taking place in your diocese, might be null and void unless it were done under the conditions imposed upon me by the

Roman sodality. My letters patent as missionary are worded in part as follows: “appointed the same [G.-J. Chaminade] Missionary Apostolic, however, under the direction and dependence of the Ordinary of the diocese in which he will conduct his mission; he will obey him at all times and will obtain the faculties from him before engaging in his mission. . . .”<sup>7</sup>

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**S. 122b. To Madame Vauguyon, Le Mans**

June 25, 1819, Bordeaux

Rough Draft, Agmar

When I promised on the occasion of your travel through Bordeaux to give you an answer about the affiliation which your zeal suggested and which your worthy pastor so ardently championed, I could foresee neither the work overload which awaited me nor the difficulties inherent in the proposition.

The absence of a new sodality foundation in Libourne, the accumulation of tasks I met upon my return, and the usual long litany of troubles hindered me from devoting myself ostensibly to the affiliates of Le Mans, although I had them constantly in mind. The object of my love also became the object of my constant solicitude. I was afraid that after all this time my letters to you would no longer find you at Barèges, so I believed it best to wait either for your return or for a word. I was rewarded with the latter in the form of your interesting letter of June 6, to which I am now replying. I hope your charity will overlook my delay and understand that it was completely against my will. I can expect no less from a soul whom grace seems to have chosen to accomplish great deeds.

Let me tell you in two words what troubled me the most about your affiliation. I do not believe it can take place regularly without the express approval of the Ordinary. This is due to the conditions imposed upon apostolic missions and to the concessions granted by the Roman court to sodalities. The letter from your worthy pastor may be official because of the signature of the secretary of the Bishop of Le Mans, but it does not mention the bishop’s approval of your petition. For this reason I have been of the opinion for some time that at your next interview, you would take it upon yourself to see to this matter. There has been so much delay already that you would harm your cause by waiting any longer.

I have therefore decided to proceed in virtue of the authorization granted by the saintly Bishop of Bordeaux in what concerns this diocese. As to the affiliation in the diocese of Le Mans, I leave that up to the will and approval of your bishop. At the same time, I most humbly ask his pardon for this type of involuntary anticipation, which was due to an excess of zeal on my part. I enclose a letter to your pastor, to whom I should have written long ago, and I ask you to make more eloquent excuses than I can. I trust in your prayers, and I invoke the Divine Son through his Mother Mary to bless you and your pious friends.

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**S. 122c. To Madame Vauguyon, Le Mans**

June 25, 1819, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

Agenda

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<sup>7</sup> “. . . eumdem (G.J. Chaminade) deputavit missionarium apostolicum sub directione tamen et dependentia ordinarii loci in quo per eum missions fieri contigerit, cui omnino parere debet ac veniam prius una cum facultatibus ab recipere.”

1. The rest of the 1,000 francs to M. Mathieu (Elisabeth) of December 1, 1817, paid for the third trimester on June 12, 1819: 25 francs.
2. Auguste Sainte Maris of Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, no. 72, Rue des Trois Conils.
3. Sodality of Bazas; see Brother Collineau's letter.
4. A convent founded at Villefranche de Rouergue in Querci by M. Marty, the principal of the *collège* of that town. See the letter from the superior of the Daughters of Mary, Agen, June 4, 1819.
- 4a. Apostolic Brief.
5. Write to M. Capdeviele, Pontac near Pau . . . the Bishop of Agen . . . M. du Jardin . . . Mme de la Grâce . . . M. le sup. Fedas . . . Izambert in Libourne . . . to M. Sav. Giraud, lawyer in Libourne . . . to Mlle Lachapelle; to Condom; to M. de Rivière; to Mme Varenne in Saint-Etienne; books from Saintes Anges for Auch; to Mme Fedar.

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*During the summer Father Chaminade informs Count de Tournon about the progress of the work among the little Auvergnats.*

### **123. To Count de Tournon, Prefect of the Gironde**

July 7, 1819, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

M. Prefect,

I owe you an account of the work among the young Auvergnats, which you proposed to us some time ago and which you have accorded a very special protection.

The most advanced of these children, to the number of 12, were soon found sufficiently instructed to be admitted to their first Communion. The ceremony took place on June 24, the Feast of Saint John, and to the edification of the faithful present. These children have contracted a holier alliance than before, with good morals and the virtues of their peculiar condition. According to the first prospectus of the Institution, it seemed fitting to clothe these children suitably for this feast and according to the modest traditions of their state. Their example has not been without fruit. Several of their companions who had remained apart came closer. The actual number of the children under our instruction and under our general care is about 80. It can easily be doubled.

But to meet the expenses of this work, it would be useful to give greater life to the provisions authorized by the laws. This is what urges me, M. Prefect, to request of you two favors in the interest of these adopted children.

First, that you would be kind enough to sign the official proceedings in the official Register, where the names of the benefactors are to be inscribed according to Article 6 of the Book of Regulations.

Second, that you deign to permit the favor that your authorization to be so kindly given will be inscribed on the Register, which is going to be opened after the formality of the said signature.

Your administrators, M. Prefect, like to see you direct the good work by your instructions and control them by your example. Religion, which makes it a duty for me to bless those who govern us, is here joined to our natural satisfaction in blessing the administrators who are the cause of our prosperity.

Please accept the renewal of the profound respect with which I pray you to believe me, etc. . . .

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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*This letter written during his trip to the Haut-Pays is evidence of the special devotion he had to Our Lady of Verdélais. As a child, through her intercession he had been miraculously cured of a wound in his leg which had been considered incurable. With the hope of returning the sanctuary which had been devastated by the Revolution to its former splendor, he cherished the thought of confiding its care to the members of his Little Society. On several occasions in his correspondence we find traces of his zeal for the restoration of Our Lady of Verdélais, and if he did not see his sons installed at Verdélais, he had the consolation of seeing another Society of Mary in charge of restoring this place of pilgrimage (see Apôtre, XVII, p. 1). In this letter there is a question of a visit to Verdélais, undertaken at the order of the archbishop, to study the possibilities of a restoration of the church and convent.*

#### **124. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux**

July 24, 1819, Agen

Original, Agmar

Your Excellency,

My departure took place on July 20, as I had told Your Excellency. I arrived the same day at Our Lady of Verdélais. There I followed the intentions of Father Barrès<sup>1</sup> and your last instructions, while making an early visit to the church and to the former convent. The day was too short to allow me to examine everything in great detail, but I gained a sufficiently clear idea of everything to form a definite opinion.

I believe the church and that part of the convent which has not been broken up can still be restored, although neither can be finished without considerable expense.

The body of the church is solid. It seems to have been built to last for centuries. It is not quite the same with the cloister sections. These have suffered greatly and are so far gone that they will fall to pieces completely unless repairs are undertaken soon. I do not intend to speak about the various needs of the workmen to be involved.

I believe it is important to note two things in particular, the veneration of the faithful for this church and the greater or lesser possibility of obtaining provisions for the service it is rendering.

The veneration of the people for the Most Holy Virgin's miraculous image has not diminished, if I am to believe the most credible reports. All attest that pilgrimages come there from great distances, that they are continual and would become much more frequent if the faithful who undertake them were assured of always finding there a minister of the altar and the holy sacrifice of the Mass. To satisfy their devotion, several of those who come are obliged to wait an entire day, and sometimes longer. The important thing would be to assure the service by establishing religious men near the church who would receive the pilgrims and who would make sure to provide a holy priest. I have reason to believe a section of the Little Society would soon be able to supply these needs.

The first thing to do would be to make certain of suitable accommodations. It is not impossible, I am told, to acquire the former convent and its dependencies, although the property belongs to a widow and her children. Their properties are burdened with debts. The cultivation and care of their debts in Verdélais are so burdensome that they seem to have abandoned them altogether. The necessary and careful maintenance of these places, and especially of those destined to afford shelter to the pilgrims, cannot be assured except as a work of God and by God's servants. These must be found. I will have the honor of discussing this with you, Your Excellency, after my return.

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<sup>1</sup> Vicar general of Archbishop d'Aviau.

His Excellency the Bishop of Agen received me with his customary kindness. He eagerly asked me for news about Your Excellency, and he listened with a very marked interest to the little I could tell him. He was also pleased to hear about the strengthening and progress of the Little Society.

I am about to take a trip as far as Auch, and I will not delay placing myself more closely under your direction and awaiting your commands. It is a real comfort on this trip and in the labors of my ministry to be able to offer you the homage of the respect and deep veneration with which I am Your Excellency's very humble and very obedient servant.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. Your Excellency, deign to permit that Father Barrès will find here the tokens of my respectful remembrance.

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*In the autumn of 1819 the situation of the Little Society in regard to M. Estebenet was still awaiting a solution. This was even more untenable because the two boarding schools had the same yard for the recreation of the pupils. Because talks on the subject yielded no result, Marie-Thérèse de Lamourous was given the task of finding a settlement.*

### **125. To Marie Thérèse de Lamourous, Bordeaux**

October 14, 1819, Saint-Laurent<sup>1</sup>

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Child,

Happy feastday.<sup>2</sup> You will not be forgotten tomorrow at my Mass.

Your mind must have been very preoccupied because you did not see that M. Estebenet does not propose any way of negotiating matters. Rather, he suggests conditions even worse than the state of uneasiness and suffering he is presently causing us.

How could we obtain rental for a year, since last year he refused to grant it?

The Little Society will prefer to suffer injustice and to await the order of Providence for deliverance, if you cannot find any other way out of the difficulty.

M. Estebenet's conduct leads us to believe that for the last five or six months, in one way or another he has only been trying to avoid the issue. Are the propositions he last made to you not just one more proof of the fact?, etc. . . .

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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### **126. To Marie Thérèse de Lamourous, Bordeaux**

October 15, 1819, Saint-Laurent

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Child,

With deep sincerity, the Little Society has accepted His Excellency the Archbishop as arbiter and judge in its dispute with M. Estebenet. But because in bringing this matter before His Excellency's court M. Estebenet does not explain himself clearly, it would be advisable for His Excellency to require from him a clear written statement or promise that he will abide by his

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<sup>1</sup> Fr. Chaminade was at Saint-Laurent for the annual retreat of the Little Society.

<sup>2</sup> The next day was the Feast of Saint Thérèse, patron of Marie-Thérèse.



decision or that of his Council. Everything which has happened seems to indicate that this measure is necessary.

I ask you, my dear Child, to proceed carefully with this matter. I ask you to inform the members of the Council and obtain their decision as promptly as possible, after you have obtained his word of honor from M. Estebenet in a clear and written statement.

You do not seem to believe, my dear Child, that M. Estebenet did an injustice in forcibly obtaining the upper hand regarding the site under dispute, if he was renting it. But have you not noticed that Ahab did not make himself forever odious for having wished to obtain for nothing the vineyard of Naboth? Scripture says twice in succession that he wanted to give him a better vineyard in exchange or its equivalent in money. This piece of ground is for us the heritage of Jesus Christ and should be used in conformity with his views. The Little Society can certainly suffer injustice patiently, and even should suffer it, but it should never approve it.

M. Estebenet was at the retreat exercises before dinner, but he did not stay for dinner.

The retreat is progressing nicely.

You may show my letter to His Excellency or to anyone who would find it useful. May the peace of the Lord be always with you all, and may God's holy will be done!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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### **127. To Marie Thérèse de Lamourous, Bordeaux**

October 19, 1819, Saint-Laurent

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Child,

I am sending you your notes, drawn up in the form of a transfer a Father may make of his property to his Children. As you will see, I have left the board and lodging at 100 pistoles<sup>1</sup> for the reason that (1) M. Estebenet had accepted this rate, as your notes indicate, as you described things to me, and as I accepted them. All of this occurred before you received M. Estebenet's letter asking for 1,500 francs. (2) M. Estebenet is acting and wishes to appear to act as a father does toward his children, as is proper. Without a doubt a father must be prudent in his commands, but also generous and not too calculating regarding his own interests. It is surprising that he does not show that tenderness which places the welfare of his children before his own advantage.

I had the agreement recopied by M. Brougnon-Perrière because there are a few erasures in the original, but mainly for the sake of an intelligent understanding of the arrangements we made for him and without him. He is to sign the official copy.

Your notes say nothing of M. Estebenet's small garden, but he knows and I have said to him myself that we include it in the transfer of the establishment, even though we are not speaking directly about it.

When M. Estebenet has signed, my dear Child, have the goodness to notify the archbishop and Father Barrès. If you also notify me, I will inform the entire Little Society about it, so that all may go to embrace him at the first retreat exercise at which he is present.

I would also be greatly obliged to you if you would offer His Excellency the homage of my respect, if you would tell him I have received from the prefect my royal ordinance which confirms the recognition of the church of the Madeleine as an auxiliary place of worship or as a public oratory.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 1,000 francs. There was a question of board and lodging for life. The payment of this 20 years later was the occasion of difficulties between Fr. Chaminade and his assistants.

<sup>2</sup> The ordinance dated September 29, 1819, Fr. Chaminade had given up using the work of the Auvergnats to have the Madeleine authorized and had followed up the first negotiation, which resulted in a happy conclusion.

Receive for yourself, my dear Child, the assurance of the sentiments of respectful  
tenderness of your good and old Father.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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### **128. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux**

October 23, 1819, Saint-Laurent

Rough Copy, Agmar

Your Excellency,

Only yesterday evening did I receive the agreement with M. Estebenet, given by him in a  
postscript.

On October 17, all the provisions of the agreement between M. Estebenet and the Little  
Society were written, checked, dated, and signed by Mlle de Lamourous in M. Estebenet's  
presence. On the same day, Mlle de Lamourous notified me of the fact. I agreed to everything  
without exception or reserve. M. Estebenet wrote to Mlle de Lamourous, only after serious  
reflection, that he believed the board and lodging could not be less than 1,500 francs in the case  
of a separation.

In his postscripts to the writing of the terms of agreement, M. Estebenet asks 2,000  
francs.

For three weeks, M. Estebenet has continually changed his demands. What he says one  
day, he contradicts or modifies the next. Soon we will have no idea of where we stand.

To avoid these changes, Mlle de Lamourous has checked, in his presence and with him,  
the principal points of their agreements. Now it is only a matter of putting these in writing.

I desire, Your Excellency, that we hold to the last notes of October 17, checked, signed,  
and made known to the various parties concerned. Let the agreement be drawn up as M.  
Estebenet prefers, but nevertheless within the meaning of the notes. If Father Barrès wishes to  
take the trouble of doing the editing himself, to have us come together and sign the document, I  
would be greatly pleased.

I am, etc. . . .

G.-Joseph Chaminade

\* \* \*

*Finally agreement was reached with M. Estebenet in a contract signed October 29, 1819,  
and the Little Society advanced. The time had arrived for the preparation for Holy Orders of one  
of the religious, Jean-Baptiste Collineau.<sup>1</sup> Father Chaminade wished to keep this young man near  
him and to train him himself in the virtues and knowledge of the ecclesiastical state, according to  
the special needs of the work he had destined for him; but this was not the idea of the superior of  
the Grand Seminary, Father Carbon, who was opposed to any and every exception. Because of  
this, a memorandum by David Monier accompanies the following letter, given less for the interest  
in the matter itself than for its various details.*

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<sup>1</sup> Biographical note. Jean-Baptiste Collineau, 1796-1852, born in Bordeaux, entered the Sodality of the Madeleine, of  
which he was prefect in 1818. As one of the first members of the Society of Mary, he was sent to Villeneuve-sur-Lot in  
1822 as director of the *collège* of this small town. Returning to Bordeaux in 1827, he collaborated in the Sainte-Marie  
boarding school, preaching and fulfilling alongside Fr. Chaminade the functions of First Assistant. He left the Society  
of Mary in 1832, relieved of his vows by Bishop de Cheverus, who named him Honorary Canon, then pastor of Saint  
Louis Church of Bordeaux. He always remained devoted to Fr. Chaminade, to whom he administered the last  
sacraments. He died in Beirut while on a journey to the Holy Land.

## 129. To Father Barrès, Vicar General of Bordeaux

November 18, 1819, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

[With insert from S. 129]

Reverend Father,

I was getting ready to come to see you when the Secretary of the Institute of Mary brought me the report I have the honor of sending to you. I was not expecting it. This morning, moved by grace, he believed it was his duty to suspend all other work. He wrote to me. He arrived almost at the moment of my departure for the archbishop's palace. I listened to the reading of what he had written. I noticed he had included about the same observations I thought of making to you by word of mouth, but with an order and a method which I would never have been able to put into a free conversation. I immediately had it copied and set about my ordinary occupations.

The report may have been strengthened by other very powerful considerations. Other works may also have been discussed with greater interest—for example, the little Auvergnats, in which Father Collineau has great influence (although he is not its head). But the report says enough about it; the difficulty here is the opposition of the superior of the Grand Seminary.

A talented young man, 25 years of age, presented himself this morning, desiring to leave the world . . . etc. The men's retreat seems to have developed in him the idea of a religious vocation.

Our young director of the Sodality is well.<sup>1</sup> There is a question of finally determining what feasts or devotions will take place in the annex, where the meetings are being held.

Before proposing a list of these to His Excellency the Archbishop, I will write about it to the pastor of Libourne.

I am happy in the thought that your solicitude about Verdélais remains unabated.

I am with profound respect, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. As I was wrapping the memorandum, I noticed that a number of mistakes had slipped in because of the haste with which it had been copied. It would have been shorter if the author had had more time to write or to copy it. In any case, he was in a good frame of mind when he wrote it.

\*

### *Memorandum on the Collineau Matter*

*It seems we are again calling into the question of ordaining Brother Collineau while dispensing with the seminary, except for the retreat of those to be ordained. There are three answers to this question—one is sufficient it is a good answer; if each one is good, all three will be useful. Here they are; you be the judge.*

*The first two answers are very similar to the ones that satisfied one of the most saintly persons of the Church. In the Church we must be faithful to tradition and have the support of an authority for everything we do.*

*To those who wished to exclude him from the sanctuary, Saint Athanasius used to say, "The thing has been decided with justice and wisdom." It is fitting that a third answer could be given here without scorning in the least that of Saint Athanasius. The candidate for ordination has been dispensed from the seminary requirement and assigned by the same authority to certain tasks which it would be highly inadvisable to abandon. We will go into more detail about these three answers and perhaps also say a few words*

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<sup>1</sup> Fr. Charriez, assistant pastor in Libourne.

*about the motives or the more erroneous pretexts for reopening the discussion of a topic which has already been judiciously decided and which cannot now be debated with seriousness and propriety.*

*(1) The matter has been decided.*

*The authority of the bishop is all that is needed to confirm this statement. He took it upon himself to make this decision, to give this promise, and this promise was accepted with confidence and respect. What the pontiff says comes from God, according to our belief. A promise of this nature is its own guarantee, and I wonder if those who would see it revoked have considered the consequences. Circumspection is recommended, even if the reasons were weighty and clear. Any countermanding on the part of authority is like taking one stride forward but slipping back two on treacherous ground, or even falling on our face. The harm done is more serious when the authority is a holy one. They seem to want the very wisdom of religion to be fickle and subject to the foibles of the day.*

*The same mistake was made by a priest who was well on his way to sanctity, for he was a companion of Saint Bernard. After the holy sacrifice, this cleric announced to the assembly the effects of a loaf he had just blessed and had distributed—nothing less than the healing of all the sick who would partake of it. And the priest who acted as his deacon added, “Those who eat of it with the required dispositions, that is, those required by the rule of our faith.” “Even without these dispositions,” interjected Saint Bernard, full of the Spirit of God.*

*For the sake of argument, let us suppose that His Excellency had told Brother Collineau that he would be admitted to the priesthood and that his deacon, who was let us say as holy as Saint Bernard’s, adds these words to the promise. “If Brother Collineau observes the other conditions and spends the required time in the seminary.” However holy this deacon may be, he still insults the hierarchy, the authority and the sanctity of the pontificate. Let us excuse him because of the purity of his intention, but we are convinced that Saint Bernard would repeat, “It will be done.” Isaac refused to retract the blessing he had given to Jacob; once the edict has been pronounced, it is carried out.*

*Although it is pointless now to add anything to my first answer, may I say that the vicar general remembers the promise made by His Excellency and can testify to it. Furthermore, the matter was referred to the council, and the decision of the council upheld the promise. Finally, it can be stated that the candidate was examined by the council with the purpose of studying the exemption of which he would be the beneficiary. For the rest, it is for others to state if this examination was satisfactory.*

*After all this, if the only person who could change anything refused to take part in the examination and the decision, common sense ordains only one thing—this individual should be returned to the administration as a whole and be given the pastor’s crook.*

*If it were true that the opponent to the ordination of Brother Collineau had announced to the seminary that he would have the decision rescinded—no one thinks so or can believe that it is—this would be all the more reason not to retract it, in order to bring back to the observance of his Rule the one who should give the example of obedience, for the present and future edification of the seminary and for the dignity of authority which in these matters is not sufficiently respected.*

*Now to my second answer. The question had been decided justly and wisely. Let us make no mention of the religious instruction or morality of the candidate. That is not under attack. In this case, justice and wisdom were served by complying with Church regulations and with what was fitting in the circumstance. Can the Church authorize the ordination of a well-known candidate who has not spent any time in the seminary? We must answer in the affirmative if we read church history. However, there have been abuses; some were ordained without sufficient examination. These two reasons make seminaries necessary.*

*Now, does it follow that where no abuses are to be feared and in a very special and well-known case, must we proceed as if there were abuses or a strong presumption that they existed? In sound logic, in physics, in any discipline, we can say that when the*

*cause is removed the effect disappears. No law can have greater extension than its cause. The defect of a shared administration lies in that it can be based on different principles because all power tends to consequences. But to wish the director of a seminary to reverse the decision of an archbishop is to carry too far the causes for which it has been established.*

*What circumstances warranted the dispensation from the rule obliging formation in a seminary? These are of three kinds; at least, I do not find any more in this case. First the case where the person lives in a religious house that is recognized as regular. Second, when the person has professed publicly for a time or for a lifetime complete faith in purity and in the apostolic life. Third, when the various needs of the church make it imperative to protect solid vocations and, on a lower plane, not to reduce to the same level the numerous but different designs of Providence. Let us summarize these three types of circumstances.*

*(1) Basically, even in those dioceses where greater insistence has been placed on a seminary formation prior to ordination, certain houses of comparable regularity and strictness replaced the seminaries. Proof of all this is found in all Orders, regular, cenobite, and ascetical, the world over, even in France as long as they had the protection of the law. With all the more reason, the reestablished Orders, although less numerous since the recent persecutions, enjoy the privilege. Does the one who has bound himself by strict vows need to set them aside in order to follow a mitigated rule? No one will take offense if we point out that there are houses where the rule is the same as in the seminaries, yet is somewhat more austere. This is not a reflection on the regularity of seminaries; it is an admission that houses do exist which are just as perfect, or more so.*

*There is no reason why a religious should be taken from his monastery, his life and his desert, and placed in a seminary. There is no reason to deprive him and his Order of his priesthood because he has had no seminary training. I could cite here those Orders which do not have the same austere life yet have the same Father; I mean all the Orders of Saint Benedict. I dare think, no one will deny this principle. But it will be asked, to what house is the person in question attached? The opponent of the ordination can say no more.*

*(2) The only answer he deserves is that it is not his right to judge such institutions, or to ask that they defer to him. He may be told that the archbishop has read the rules and statutes of that house, has approved its purpose, and has agreed above all to see it in operation before applying for the authorization of the Holy See. He did so, convinced that it would be wiser to draw up a tried and more perfect statute than to be forced to apply later for corrections which, although proper, would weaken his authority.*

*The archbishop was good enough to bless the first religious grouped around him not once, but at intervals, repeatedly. He visited the house of Institute and gave it his blessing. He urged them to multiply like the wheat of the Lord. Because the Institute could not progress without the abundant graces of Jesus Christ, the archbishop added his appeal to that of the Order at the feet of the Holy Father, to solicit the salutary blessings and privileges which were subsequently granted. Finally, a chapel and the Holy Reserve were granted to the new Order and are standing proofs of the archbishop's approval. One word may be sufficient here. Are those to whom the Holy of Holies and a sanctuary are entrusted worthy to keep and guarantee the regularity and the conduct of the one they choose as a priest for this sanctuary?*

*As I have said, this is all the Reverend Superior of the seminary needs to know. I should have said that he was not to share the secret which he had confided to the prelate who pronounced judgment by his actions—having recourse to the Holy Father, granting holy concessions and privileges to both persons and cloisters. Ever since, this house where the pontiff himself spent time, which he approved and blessed, has become a holy place. There is only one way to degrade this new nursery of militants destined for the sanctuary: to accuse them of lapses in faith or morals, after which it would be concluded not that Brother Collineau must go to the seminary, but quite the opposite, that he and those like him are to be barred from it. If the house has been blessed and chosen by our venerable prelate, if it has not deteriorated, if there is hope that religion will be consoled*

*and ardently defended by its images, God willing, it must be held in just as high esteem as the seminary. When the authority has decided in this way for one to be ordained, the same authority must not be disputed.*

*We have seen that the decision was made with justice and wisdom; but another thought strikes me here! How can someone doubt that a decision made by His Excellency the Archbishop, with the advice of his council and after an extraordinary examination of the facts, is one of justice and wisdom? I catch myself committing a serious fault, which I humbly confess, in attempting to answer such a strange question. After the prelate, his council, the examination and the decision, who is holy enough to wish the decision to come from someone else? After the prelate has joined his voice to the petition addressed to the Holy Father, proclaimed the house and its purpose worthy of a blessing, and set up a sanctuary for the Most Holy, who would dare say that the house does not have the qualifications of a seminary?*

*(3) There is a third answer, and here it is. On the strength of the promise that Brother Collineau would be admitted to Holy Orders without being obliged to spend more than the ordination retreats in the seminary, he was given charge by the same dispensing authority of certain works which may not be abandoned without disastrous consequences. Among other things, Brother Collineau is in charge in the Bordeaux area of the work named after Father Fénelon. This enterprise was authorized by the prefect of the Gironde, by the mayor of the town, and by an ordinance of the king and has been placed in the care of a bureau of which the archbishop is president. This work entails a civic and a moral responsibility. Brother Collineau is charged with the management of the work, and if he is forced to go to the seminary, the work will collapse. On the other hand, both he and his Order will be punished by being refused ordination if he does his duty and remains at his post.*

*In the second place, when the promise of a dispensation from the seminary was given, another work was submitted for the archbishop's approval, and the question of the seminary is not foreign to it, as I will explain briefly.*

*One of the boarding establishments most highly rated by the citizens of Bordeaux for the quality of education it provides to young people from good families had to close its doors under circumstances which only Providence could control. This was a blow to religion which seemed inevitable, since the land did not belong to the school. Every imaginable sacrifice was made by the Institute, but to no avail. The Society to which Brother Collineau belongs was in a position to prevent or to repair the harm by sacrificing itself for the public good; it had three days in which to decide. The archbishop was chosen as arbiter, and he asked the Society of Brother Collineau to make the necessary sacrifice. The Society accepted and obeyed. One of the seminaries of Bordeaux chose this occasion to entice away one of the professors of the school; the Society of Brother Collineau again was resigned to this loss for the good of religion, although it was very painful. But then it became necessary to fill the position from subjects of the Society, and on the promise that he would be dispensed from the seminary, Brother Collineau was sent to fill the gap . . . his course on the classics is on the curriculum.*

*If the decision regarding the seminary is retracted, then the judgment rendered by the arbiter, the archbishop, must also be rescinded, for to tell a Society to do something and then to withdraw the means is neither just nor wise nor an act of religion.*

*Our three responses have been made; let us look at the objections, the subject of my last article.*

*Under what pretext can someone repudiate a decision which bears the stamp of justice and wisdom, one called for by the circumstances?*

*First Objection. Exceptions are harmful to a rule. They weaken it; they make it less important.*

*Answer. This objection goes counter to general experience, which says that exceptions confirm the rule, and this is true. Why is this? Because the rule results from a just cause; only when the cause is unjust is there an exception. Therefore the exception fortifies and confirms the rule. Now the general purpose of a seminary is to safeguard the doctrine and the morals of those*

*destined for ordination. This is a just cause, and we must not deviate from it lightly.*

*Now if faith, doctrine, and morals are guaranteed to the person who stays in a house that is well reputed, whose public practices are the same as those of the saintly deacons of the early church, whose way of life is that chosen by so many religious to ordain them at various times, then to insist on the necessity of a seminary formation is to misconstrue and to weaken the purpose. To refuse to admit the just exception is to reduce a rule to a whim; it is no longer a principle of life.*

*Second Objection. The seminarians in turn will begin to grumble, to complain, and to emancipate themselves.*

*Answer. Must the mutterings of the evil-minded be quieted by injustice to the others? Could this be truly effective? Protests will not be voiced by one who has been taught respect for the decisions of sacred authority; they will give weight to the accusation that the pupil's sin is on his master's head. Is the remedy preventive or coming too late? Let the teacher not attack what he should respect and what he teaches others to respect. "They will protest," it is claimed. The answer to this is very simple: equal opportunity to those of equal right, justice to whom justice is due. Let them perform similar or equivalent deeds; if they are dealt with unjustly, they can complain not about the justice done to others but only about the injustice done to them.*

*It is said that they will complain? But many will rejoice because God has humbled them, just as I have blessed the Lord who has asked me to justify his work and in this trial to accuse only my own unworthiness. They will slacken in their submissiveness? If they have been poorly instructed and trained, yes—but instructed by the superior, the very one we are challenging! I guarantee the contrary, for it must not be imagined that I have anything against him except a burst of zeal that led to a slight intolerance in my regard. I can respect someone whose only fault is the degree of high-mindedness and virtue he brings to his office.*

*I trust that with some reflection he will see the justice and the wisdom of the decision he was unable to shake, and which cannot be altered.*

\*

*Father Chaminade was not successful, but Jean-Baptiste Collineau was obliged to face only a minimum presence at the seminary—that is to say, at least several months before he received Holy Orders. Nevertheless, the first educational work of the Little Society, the boarding house on Rue des Menuts, was in full swing. Fearing the religious might allow themselves to be absorbed in exterior occupations, Father Chaminade, who neither could nor wished to give them complete Constitutions at this time, determined at least to settle precisely the religious exercises to which they were to devote themselves. Fortunately, this first regulation has been preserved for us; it is reproduced here according to the original copy in the Archives of the Society of Mary.*

## **The Rule of the Religious of Mary**

Agmar

1. Each exercise of piety and each class will be preceded by the *Come Holy Ghost* and a *Hail Mary*. Each period of study or manual labor will be preceded by the little prayer, "My God, I love you with my whole heart," etc.
2. At the end of each exercise, whether spiritual or intellectual, the *Sub tuum* and the *Fiat Laudetur*.
3. At each hour during the day and when awakening during the night, "May the Father, Son and Holy Spirit be glorified," etc., is to be said.
4. Every day at three o'clock in the afternoon, the short ejaculatory prayer will be said, standing, in whatever place we happen to be, kneeling only on Fridays.

5. Exercises in the chapel will begin three minutes after the sound of the bell. The prayer leader makes the Sign of the Cross and the prayer begins. He will also give notice of the hour of closing. Five minutes before the end of the meditation, he will say, "Let us conclude," etc.

6. Outside the time of recreation there will be no speaking unless necessity requires it, and then it must be brief and in a low tone of voice. The same rule of silence is to be observed on the streets.

7. The Grand Silence, which is prescribed from the time of night prayer until after the next day's Morning Prayer, must be strictly observed. Speaking is to be only with God.

8. The religious will always recall that in all their actions they must observe silence, modesty, exactitude, humility, politeness, mildness, kind attention, renunciation of their own will, prompt and blind obedience, and a great charity toward their neighbor, above all toward their brothers.

9. They must equally seek to perform their actions with the sole view of pleasing God and not to gratify their passions or their self-love, to please others, or to satisfy their own will.

10. No occupation or employment to which a person has not been assigned may be begun up unless permission has been requested and obtained.

11. Great care will be taken to place each object back in its proper place after it has been used. In study, for example, books, copybooks, pens, etc., will not be left on the tables. In the dormitory, clothing will not be left on the beds, chairs, etc.

12. No object whatsoever, even a book, papers, etc., will be disposed of except when permission has been asked.

13. Recreation after dinner will never begin except after the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

14. Spitting will not be permitted in any room of the house.

15. The time reserved for walks will serve to have interviews with the Head of Zeal in what concerns his spiritual direction. Most of the time, these interviews will bear upon the meditations, the examens, the virtue someone wishes to acquire, the vice being confronted and the reception of the sacraments, as likewise upon anything which might tend to be an obstacle to his spiritual advancement or harmful to the peace of his soul.

16. Twice a week there will be a half-hour conference, and once an hour of explanation of the diocesan catechism.

17. After the evening class, the teachers will go to the chapel to adore the Blessed Sacrament and say the *Salve Regina*, in common, as much as possible. Then they will go to the study room.

18. On Saturday at the end of the evening class, 20 minutes will be given to the reading of the Gospel of the next day and to making some reflection on it.

19. At the recreations of the children there will always be a supervisor, two if necessary.

20. Great care will be taken by each teacher to profit by all the occasions which present themselves to inspire his pupils with the love of the Blessed Virgin, to have them know of the advantage of consecrating themselves to her service, of devoting themselves to her worship, inspiring them with a great confidence and a great devotion to this tender Mother, being careful never to act alone in whatever he undertakes, but only by implicit trust in this powerful protector.

21. Each person goes to Confession on Fridays, immediately after the evening class.

22. All failings against the present Regulations will be accused at the Chapter of Faults.

23. Every Wednesday, the Chapter of Faults will be held after night prayer. On every first Wednesday of the month, chapter takes the place of the couple [Chapter of Faults].

24. Once each month, an entire day of retreat will be made in common. A free day will be chosen for this, as much as possible on the occasion of a feast of the Blessed Virgin.

It would be good for each person to read, from time to time, his small retreat book and also for him to have a small passbook in which to keep a record of his daily faults.

A. M. D. G. & M.



[For the greater good of God and Mary]

\* \* \*

**N.A 129-2. To Father Charrier, Pastor of Monségur**

November 19, 1819, Bordeaux<sup>1</sup>

Printed in Volume 8-2 and Volume 9. This is from Volume 9.

Copy, Agmar 218.2.15; copy Agmar 218.2.61

My dear Son,

Yes I carry the Sodality of Libourne and its zealous director in my mind and in my heart.

If I am sometimes tardy in answering letters not of an urgent nature or which are only to give me information on what is transpiring, you must not presume any lessening of affection. You have too good a spirit to fall into such an error.

If in certain cases you judge that a letter from me, addressed either to the Sodality of Men or to the Sodality of Ladies and Young Women, might be necessary to support one of your ideas, I would lend myself willingly despite my occupations.

I am writing to the pastor to ask his advice on determining the feasts or devotions to be put into the appendix for the Sodality.

I am writing to M. Savinien Giraud, secretary of the council, to authorize the members of the council to meet once or twice without your being present. You will be notified in advance. You have only to answer; that would suffice. Do not inquire into the reason; you will soon know. This should not be mentioned to the pastor.

I am very well satisfied with your proposal for nourishing the assemblies of the Ladies with matters both useful and agreeable.

I embrace you affectionately, my dear Son, in the sacred hearts of Jesus and Mary.

Bordeaux, November 19, 1819

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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**N.A. 129-3. To Father Charrier, Director of the Sodality, Libourne**

December 1, 1819, Bordeaux

Printed in Volume 8-2 and Volume 9. This is from Volume 9.

Copy at Agmar 218.2.16; also at Agmar 218.2.60<sup>8</sup>

My Esteemed Colleague,

I have sent you by mail, in a single bundle and prepaid, two packets of formulas for the Feast of the Conception of the Most Holy Virgin. These formulas are part of the instructions that came from Rome. There are others for other feasts during the year; we will speak of them in due time. As for those that are already printed, you will find one hundred copies in each of the two packages I mentioned. You will need to share them between the Sodality of Ladies and Young Women and the Sodality of Men. I foresee clearly that there will not be enough for everyone, but I am not able to send you more. The other affiliated Sodalities have experienced the same shortage, or almost so. However, if the people to whom you distribute them use them carefully, everything should work out. They can be loaned or copied; several members may come together

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<sup>1</sup> The original is in the presbytery of Monségur.

<sup>8</sup> Original at the rectory of Monségur (Gironde). Handwriting of David Monier, except last postscript in Fr. Chaminade's handwriting.

to have them read aloud, or to read them, at the time of the recitation of the Our Fathers and Hail Marys.

The intent of the general moderator of the Sodalities is that throughout the Christian world, affiliated Sodalities will have uniform practices of piety. This is a praiseworthy desire; we certainly should be obedient to it. We begin with the formula set for the day of the Conception.

For a long time we have taken care that the conditions for obtaining indulgences will not be poorly or incompletely fulfilled. Otherwise, a person would not actually gain the indulgence. The condition for the prayers is not only that they will be said, but also that there will be an effusion of the heart and warmth of devotion, *devotas preces effundere*; the formula we have sent has for its object to dispose the heart toward this effusion.

Mary was freed from original sin. Everyone else, on the contrary, bears its stain and experiences its consequences. What losses has this original sin caused us? The author of the formula lists six types, and each of these is an occasion for invoking the Immaculate Virgin. This formula seems equally suited to helping us to sense the full extent of our ills, bringing us to confidence in this holy Virgin, who was freed from the common fate in view of her divine maternity.

The *Our Fathers*, 6 rather than the 5 which are the more ordinary condition, have been increased by one to ask spiritual aid for Our Holy Father the Pope. I believe I have mentioned this elsewhere.

Be sure to omit nothing that might arouse fervor, so that this time the indulgence may be easily gained and be truly plenary.

To these wishes which my heart expresses I add that of asking the Lord to accord all his blessings to you and to the segment of the flock you direct.

G.-Joseph Chaminade  
Honorary Canon

P.S. I am including two circular letters which I addressed, one to the Ladies, the other to the Men of the Sodality. The same letters have been sent to all the affiliated Sodalities dependent on Bordeaux.

P.S. I have received no answer to the letter I had the honor of writing to the pastor of Libourne. Because there is so little time, I believe that this year and provisionally he wishes the patronal feast to be celebrated with addition of the Octave. In that case, the general Communion of the Ladies would take place on the first day, and that of the Men on Sunday. Arrange matters with him and assure him of my respectful attachment.

I am sending to your address the circular for the prefects of Men and of Women so they might receive them from your hands. The treasurer can reimburse you for the small postal costs.

\* \* \*

**S. 129b. To M. de Lacaussade, Tonneins**

December 13, 1819, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

Monsieur,

While I have no intention of prying into the state of your fortune or of your bank account, I wish to consider here the importance of the establishment in question. Given the country and the religions, which are in many respects opposed to ours, the enterprise is not an ordinary one, however simple it may seem at first glance. At stake is the salvation of the country, at least of those faithful who have not renounced their faith. It means that in this country the Church will move toward a decisive victory over the errors of our estranged brethren. I do not say we must

venture without sluggishness, but I do say that we must outdo ourselves and measure our efforts by the needs and the advantages of success. I believe that what I say is God's truth.

On the basis of these facts, it seems to me that you must do two things. First, at the proper time allocate 3,000 francs with no strings attached. If you were to abstain, too many would follow your example. Secondly, use your influence to obtain from the monies pledged the sums most urgently needed. It is better to make sacrifices than to allow the project to stagnate.

Now if, as I am given to understand, this last suggestion is not necessary and if the pledges and the monetary gifts are sufficient, then naturally your unconditional subscription could be deferred; you may even be the last to contribute if your influence is such that everyone has fulfilled their pledges.

I do not intend to develop a financial plan, but I think I get the general idea, especially when a man of your stature is involved. I wish the funds needed to rebuild the house of God were not already tied up, but it has never been my policy to build reserves at a time when eloquent ruins do not allow us to put off the work for another day. However, whenever it is necessary, one project will come to the help of another. This is another reason we need not worry unduly in our undertakings.

I regret the length of some of these details. I wish I could say to you, as the apostles did to the first Christians, that God is our help and our strength, and the rest is nothing. I pray that God will give you courage, just as God has given you the inspiration to embark upon this project. I pray for you and your town.

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*[Extract from the first part of the letter to M. de Lacaussade.]*

He praises his prudence, is satisfied with the premises, does not approve the repairs made by the proprietor, and finds them useless.

What about the secrecy to be maintained until the operation is concluded and the necessary funds obtained? The secrecy is enjoined upon us by the compromise which made it all possible, but which does not exclude a later unveiling. The funds are not to come from a founder; he has launched many an enterprise, but the stream must not be congested.

A compromise is necessary, and it is to be followed by an appeal to all zealous souls and by trust in Providence. For his own security and in order to stay within his means, he reserves the right to withdraw within the first three months. Funds will be sought once we are in control of the property. If Providence does not intervene, the deal will not proceed.

\* \* \*

### **S. 129c. To M. de Lacaussade, Tonneins**

Bordeaux, January 3, 1820

Copy, Agmar

Your last letter convinced me that the proposed project no longer created any difficulty between us, that it was now up to you. Your last letter also proves that you wasted no time but expedited everything with praiseworthy prudence. In spite of the preliminary planning, we should expect something to go wrong somewhere. Now to my mind, nothing has gone amiss in the most essential part. I mean, your opinion of the quarters which you still claim to be sufficient and nicely located.

I note also that the price and the terms are not quite the same as first quoted. On the whole, I find something good and something bad in the new proposals. I leave it up to you to get the best possible deal. However, here are the points upon which I want you to insist.

The cost. It would be preferable to pay half in two years and the rest in four. The buyer should have the option of paying it all sooner, after proper notice, provided each payment amounts to not less than one-fourth of the total. I think you see the advantage of that condition, and I need not explain. Under the above terms, the first payment should be made after more than one year because we would see to the cleaning and the necessary repairs to the edifice immediately after occupancy.

If the terms of the sale, with the above proviso, and the inspection by a third party do not seem feasible to you, then abandon the project. I do not believe your trip to Agen would help. A comparison would be of no use because the quarters presently occupied by our ladies is not the model we should follow. They are on the verge of leaving it for another which has just been purchased. This is the former convent of the Augustinians with its adjacent gardens and fields. In the house everything remains to be done, even the chapel or oratory, but we are about to see to it. As for you, keep working at the rest homes.

Concerning the project I mentioned to you on how to create enthusiasm with the help of our Divine Master, I merely want to be sure that my plan is not revealed too soon; this means the bill of sale, a private agreement, stipulates that the public contract will not come into effect before three months, an interval which will allow me to make all necessary arrangements. Also the secretary of our Sodalities is about to leave for Agen and less important points, and both coming and going he will spend at least half a day in our town. Arrange with him whatever is most advisable. I told him to be perfectly frank with you about my attitude, and I do not doubt that between you, you will forestall any future trouble. Give me all the facts so that an unflinching decision can be made and a review of the case would be superfluous.

I am sending you through the secretary a little parcel which your mother sent me, knowing that I was sending someone to the high country. I also profit by this opportunity to give you my very best wishes for health and happiness during the new year, a happiness which we find in the bosom of God in this world, just as it is promised to us in the next. May God bless your project.

\* \* \*

*Father Chaminade needed to direct his sons not only in the acquisition of the religious virtues, but also in the exercise of their various functions, and to this effect he acts as mediator with the business manager of the boarding house on Rue des Menuts, Bro. Louis Rothéa.*

Bro. Louis Rothéa is one of the most congenial figures of those early days. He was the instrument chosen by Providence to bring the Society of Mary to Alsace and through Alsace to Franche-Comté, America, and Austria.

The Sodality was the bait God made use of to draw him to religious life. Having joined the Sodality in 1817, he immediately placed himself under the direction of Father Chaminade and was admitted to the novitiate of the Society on August 15, 1819. In 1820 he made perpetual vows and gave himself to the Founder without reserve.

The following year, because Fr. Ignatius Mertian, founder of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine of Alsace, had asked Father Chaminade for a religious to initiate his novices into religious life, Bro. Louis Rothéa was assigned this delicate mission. He spent an entire year in Ribeauvillé, wearing the costume of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine and known under the name of Brother Ignatius.

While carefully acquitting himself of his task, during that time he prepared for the entry of his own Society of Mary into Alsace. He was not alone in pleading this cause with Father Chaminade. His two brothers joined him, Father Charles, pastor of Saint-Marie-aux-Mines, whom he had just won for the Society (1821) and Xavier, who was to join the Society as an affiliated member. "Alsace," he wrote, "altogether devoted to the Blessed Virgin, was a predestined land for an Order consecrated to Mary. It would become the nursery of the Institute." Subsequent history would verify the truth of these words. In fact, from the year 1822 on, the first postulants from Alsace, won to the Society

by Brother Rothéa, walked the 250 leagues which separated them from Bordeaux and presented themselves to Father Chaminade for admission to the novitiate of Saint-Laurent. This was the beginning of a stream of vocations nothing could stop and which still, after a century, continues to support the Marianist Family.

In the same way, Father Chaminade could no longer delay responding to the call of Alsace, which came in the voice of Father Maimbourg, pastor of Colmar. In 1824, Bro. Louis Rothéa left Bordeaux with the blessing of Father Chaminade to open a school in Colmar. This school, the first of the Society of Mary in Alsace, was also to be the most prosperous. Fifty years later, in 1874 when the religious had to leave Alsace, it had more than 1,000 pupils, divided into nearly 20 classes.

From this time on, under the direction of Father Chaminade Brother Rothéa worked with a new ardor at the development of his religious family in Alsace. In 1826, with Fr. Ignace Mertian, he negotiated the merger of the Institute of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine with the Society of Mary and the donation to the latter of the important house of Saint-Hippolyte. His care then opened the schools of Ammerschwir (1826), Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines, Ribeauvillé (1827), Ebersmunster (1833) in the former abbey bought with funds from his family, Soultz (1835), Kaiserberg (1836), and Wattwiller (1839).

In 1841, worn out by age and austerities, he retired to Ebersmunster, where he died May 2, 1844. Father Chaminade mourned him as a well-beloved son. He wrote to Father Meyer, "He was well aware of how much I was attached to him, and I have always believed our truly religious attachment was mutual." Bro. Louis Rothéa rests in Ebersmunster not far from his brother Xavier and from their venerable father, Louis Rothéa, both of whom also ended their lives in the abbey which they had obtained for the Society of Mary.

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*Although gifted with aptitudes and special understanding in economics, Bro. Louis Rothéa had a great deal to learn from his contact with the long experience of Father Chaminade. He had even more need of wise counsel because the Little Society lacked funds and had to be administered with the greatest prudence. Having rendered an account to Father Chaminade and having asked him for some advice, on January 7, 1820, he received this answer, written by Father Chaminade. Note the prudence and experience of the former business manager of the collège of Mussidan. Brother Rothéa's letter is included to provide a clearer idea of the importance of Father Chaminade's answer.*

*Reverend Director,*

*1. Conformably to the desire you have expressed to me, I am occupying myself with a financial plan for the year 1820. However, to do this work according to the Rule, I would have need of the following information and explanations.*

*2. When should the Little Society pay back the 1,811 fr. 15 which it borrowed from you? When would it be convenient to return the 1,250 francs which M. Monier advanced?*

*3. On last December 10, the Little Society paid 850 francs to complete the sum total of two notes contributed in favor of M. Larrieu. Is this sum redeemable, or must it be applied to its respective account?*

*4. It would be suitable to take in the year's supply of fat. This is the best time for it. Two hundred fifty pounds would be needed, and these could cost 180 to 200 francs. I am placing this sum on the list of general expenses for the current month of January.*

*5. The property of Mellac—M. Auguste's personal property which he donated to the Society—would actually need 3,000 to 4,000 vine props. Is it proper to buy them? For the time being, I am also placing this sum on the same list.*

*6. Nearly all the constructions, repairs, and other changes which were indispensable for the new establishment are completed. Nevertheless, 7 more desks are needed in the study room of the pupils, which would bring the total to 252 francs. Would*

*it not be suitable to delay this expense, which would have to be met immediately, until the month of April?*

*7. It has been agreed with the butcher and the two bakers who serve the house to pay them every two months. Could we not now inform them that we will pay their bills only from one trimester to another? In the same way, we can settle the accounts of the grocers, MM Loutit, Cantenat & Co., every six months. Regarding workers in general, it is hardly possible to determine the dates for payment. Some want immediate payment, while others are willing to grant credit for six months to a year.*

*8. The payments to be requested from the parents of the boarders do not go beyond 1,000 francs for the present month. Of this sum, 650 francs have just been received, and for the moment these are the only available funds in the treasury.*

*9. Is it suitable to send exactly at the beginning of each semester the pupil's accounts to the parents to demand payment of the sums owed? It seems to me this is in the interest of the Society, especially at the beginning, to send them only at the end of each semester.*

*10. According to the statement, unpaid debts, herewith included, amount to 8,864 fr. 08. At least two-thirds of these should be paid in the course of the present month.*

*11. and 12. To bring order to our finances, I propose borrowing 6,000 francs without delay, to make provision for the payment of bills in the coming months of September, October, and November, when the greatest number of postulants pay.*

*13. In all large establishments it is customary to take a general inventory. We propose to do this as soon as time will permit. For the regularity of our accounts, it would be necessary for me to know the exact value of Mellac's property, of the Chartrons house, and of Rue des Menuts with its yard.*

*M. Director, here you have the observations I believed it my duty to submit to you. I am with respect, your very devoted child.*

*Bordeaux, January 5, 1820  
Rothéa*

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### **130. To Bro. Louis Rothéa, Bordeaux**

January 7, 1820, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Child,

You must have already noticed how well-founded my fears were, how correct I was in wanting strictness of finance and economy. I will make a few reflections on the new statement you had someone give to me, ending with a few rules which must be strictly observed.

1. The financial projection is made up of what we are to receive and what we have to spend, period by period, long or short, according to the will of the person who makes up the account, but always in such a way that the receipts come before the expenses.

Here is the projection I am asking for.

On the bill of the boarding house, you have the dates when the payments of the pupils will be due.

You have a list of the expenses involved in the accounts of the times which have preceded you, or you may be able to foresee these.

State what you will have to spend and how you will provide for it, by your receipts and not by your borrowing. These last come to the rescue of ruined finances and are not part of well-kept finances.

2. The sum of 1,811 fr. 15, borrowed on one side and that of 1,250 francs on another have been momentary resources which it was necessary to consider as sacred. The requests on this matter and the delays allowed destroy the possibility of further loans.

3. The sum of 850 francs for MM. Larrieu, if they received it, is no longer redeemable, and if they do not receive it it is redeemable, but only on the condition of its being applied to the first need.

*Note.* You say “805 francs to complete,” etc. But you were asked for “875 francs to complete,” and the inaccuracy, although slight, must be noted.

4. There must be no storing of goods when money is lacking, in such a way that the answer to this article depends upon the account to be given about the finances.

5. The same with regard to Mellac which, furthermore, needs to be seen and should have a special account. The property is beautiful, but after what I have seen and heard about it, it is sorely in need of repairs. On the first good day I am free, I will go to see it again. Perhaps I will take along someone better versed in farming than I, and then I will have something definite to tell you. In the meantime, count it as “0.”

6. This great number of repairs on Rue des Menuts was ill-considered and indiscreet. There were no deliberations about them. Their cost was not considered in advance. The resources on hand were not known. Neither was it known whether there was enough to cover the repairs. Nothing must be done if you have no money.

7. In well-regulated establishments, in the matter of pay the law is laid down for suppliers and workmen, but with you it is they who lay down the law. If you were current, you would have to pay them and employ others, but with a better understanding.

8. At the beginning of the month, you say you have no more than 50 francs to wait for, since that is what remains of your 1,000 francs. This is what I call leaving the establishment in a desperate situation.

9. When anyone is sent among the pupils to gather tuition when there is no need for it, it does not matter whether this is done at the beginning or at the end of the semester. When there is a need for it and the matter is seen that way, this is always bad. This state of affairs calls for deliberation as to its suitability, or the opposite. Of itself, the matter is totally indifferent.

10. The ease with which debts are contracted is a radical vice in any administration. It means acting with no consideration for the results, and a person is soon lost.

11. To consider borrowing 6,000 francs to pay a bill of 8,164 in a month when there is nothing coming in, is not good financing. Add new, unwise expenses to what will be lacking, and at the end of the month the same condition will remain, plus a debt of 6,000 francs.

12. Is the loan payable in September, October, and November, nine, ten, and eleven months hence possible? If it is, does the condition of the receipts warrant this? Does it offer security? Of what is the greatest number of boarders who then pay composed? What does it produce?

13. A general inventory of the furniture must have already been made. The new objects brought in must have been already entered, no matter what value is given to them.

As to the property of Mellac, the house of the Chartrons, and the one on Rue des Menuts, these are declared for the sake of remembering and are without value.

Results. All your requests do not meet my desires to have an exact account of the receipts and the corresponding dates, as well as of the heaviest expenses, to be made subordinate to the income.

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#### Temporary Regulations for the Business Manager [*Econome*]

Art. 1. No one will make an expense except the business manager.

Art. 2. He will not be permitted to order anything unless he has authorization.

Art. 3. He will be duly authorized only by the decision of the council.

Art. 4. The quantity of expenses which can be permitted for each month will be determined in detail by the council. A copy of what has been decided upon by the council will be given to the business manager, who will not go beyond the amount set by the council, in the case where the superior would not be present.

Art. 6. A more extensive ruling will be made for the portions of the expense which may require it, but in the meantime, every expense is to be subject to the above ruling.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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*As he was sending these regulations to Brother Rothéa, Father Chaminade informed David Monier about this and indicated to him the measure he had taken to secure its observance.*

**131. To M. David Monier, Bordeaux**

January 7, 1820, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Friend,

How is your health these days? In spite of my ever-increasing burden of occupations, I am answering a long letter from Brother Rothéa about his administration or control of the finances. I am adding a short and temporary ruling for the business manager. For the time being, I am not saying more.

I am writing to Brother Auguste so he will order the transcription of this ruling in the Council Register, unless he or some other member of the council, including the secretary, has some important observation to make beforehand. In this way, you will see everything. I desire this ruling to have the force of law.

I wish you better health, and especially fervor in the service of our good Master.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

\* \* \*

*Having given David Monier the task of writing out the rules for the business manager of the Little Society, Father Chaminade instructs him in this matter.*

**132. To M. David Monier, Bordeaux**

January 19, 1820, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Friend,

Take notice of the order that it is suitable to give to the Rules for the Business Manager of the Little Society and of the written answer that must be given to Brother Rothéa.

The office of Business Manager is that of a head. (1) He is a General Head, and all the members of the Society must be subject to him when there is a question of matters coming under his jurisdiction. (2) All the brothers employed in the service of the community must be subject to him and always ready to carry out his orders. There is no evidence that even the idea of this exists in the community.

In the matter of the Business Manager, not only in his management of things but as a moral and religious virtue, several have a very poor idea of it, perhaps even none at all, from which several disorders arise, as much in the matter of expense as in religious conduct.



A rule of conduct for the Business Manager in the Institute should include some items for his personal direction in the very spirit of the Institute. In this he would find, at the same time, motives for encouragement.

I will try to come see you this evening. May the peace of the Lord be ever with you!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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**S. 132a. To M. David Monier**

January 26, 1820, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Friend,

How is your health?

I am enclosing the letter from M. de Lacaussade; you could answer by the noon mail. I am afraid I will not be able this morning to attend to the business of the settlement. I must spend the morning at many other things. In any case, I will see you before nightfall, and I will not leave you until everything is settled.

Brother Collineau's ordination date has been fixed.

Receive here a completely paternal blessing.

\* \* \*

*The projected regulations for the Business Manager of the Society of Mary was not drawn up. By way of compensation, a special Regulation for the Business Manager of the boarding school of Rue des Menuts, worked out by David Monier, was entrusted to Brother Rothéa on February 16, 1820, and sanctioned by Father Chaminade. Other detailed regulations were being prepared, always upon the indications and under the supervision of Father Chaminade, as is shown by this note addressed to the director of the boarding school.*

**133. To Bro. Auguste Brougnon-Perrière, Bordeaux**

February 16, 1820, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Child,

I am sending you the Regulations for the Prefect of Discipline, the nomination of the above-mentioned prefect, and of the subordinate officers with my short order for the carrying out of the same.

You will easily understand that several other small regulations are to go along with this main one, but there are others still more pressing.

You will recognize the handwriting of our good secretary. I had charged him with this editing of the regulations, in accord with the views of administration I have already told you about. He understood clearly what I was asking, so that after mature examination I determined that he should carry it out.

The approbation and the present regulations are only temporary. Perhaps trying them out will give us useful observations and in time serve to improve upon them. You will not find here policies concerning the moral conduct of the pupils. In fact, it seems to me more suitable to leave this to the prefect of studies.

As a reward for his good work, I have charged M. David with drafting the rules for the prefect of studies. I knew Father Lalanne had left some notes on this subject. If I am not

mistaken, tell him, if you will, to let M. David know about them. M. David can himself tell me about them, if they deviate too much from my original plan and if our work has further need of modification.

I intend to give M. David a mission in a very few days. Tell Brother Rothéa to make the best of this short delay to hold sufficient interviews to acquaint himself thoroughly with the duties of the prefect of discipline.

*Ad majorem Dei gloriam, Virginisque Deiparae!*

[For the greater glory of God and the Virgin Mother of God!]

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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*David Monier's mission was a trip to Agen in view of the transfer of the community of the Daughters of Mary from the Refuge to the convent of the Augustinians, recently acquired by the Institute. This letter concerns the direction of religious communities, and the postscript indicates the progress of the Little Society.*

### **134. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen**

February 18, 1820, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Child,

You must have experienced a terrible shock at the departure of Sister de l'Assomption.<sup>1</sup> All the more so because of the circumstances which accompanied it—the eight days' delay she so touchingly asked for and the great tender-heartedness of the Mistress of Novices!

This young woman must not be forgotten. It seems there was a sort of complication of maladies with her—temptation, exaltation, imagination—but it would be good to study which of these was dominant. Her greatest trouble, it seems to me, was being dominated by her imagination. This type of imagination gives rise to inexpressible spells of fervor or to frightful temptations. I am afraid our good Sister Sacré Coeur [Mistress of Novices] did not know her well enough, for she might have prepared her for the temptations which were almost certain to arise.

The tenderheartedness of Sister Sacré-Coeur is good in a Mistress of Novices, but she must be careful that it does not become excessive. After having pleaded the cause of her novice with a lively interest, she should have humbly bowed her head and interiorly adored the dispositions of Divine Providence when she heard a decision announced which went against the wish of her heart. I have reason to believe she has not truly repented having too freely followed her sensibility and especially having let it burst forth. Although I do not and should not approve the eruption of her sensibility, I grant that the occasion was very thorny and that her good heart made her see a type of harshness in the Mothers who refused to grant the eight days of grace. This fault, I hope, will do her good. She is certainly able to draw profit from it.

I neither blame nor approve the severity of the two Mothers. I am not sufficiently informed to know whether they based their decision upon very natural and human reasons or only upon principles of faith and in its light. In communities it is a great evil when the heads make more of the judgments of natural and too-human prudence than of the decisions of supernatural and entirely divine prudence. Let us never forget this beautiful saying, "The just one lives by faith."

I pity Sister Saint-Sacrement. I will include her in the Forty Days or Penance of the Ninivites.<sup>2</sup> You do the same. Recommend her also to Father Mouran and to his sister. Let me

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<sup>1</sup> This refers to a novice who, showing signs of mental trouble, had to be sent away.

<sup>2</sup> An allusion, it seems, to a pious practice for Lent, about to begin. See the postscript.

have news about her from time to time. The Good God will let us know the remedy for her trouble. On my first journey to Agen, we will redouble our efforts.

Our good secretary is well again, and although encumbered with writings of all kinds, I am going to have him leave. On the notes I will give him, I will decide with you the repairs which will need to be made for the transfer of the community. Because we will make only the most urgent repairs, I hope the transfer will be possible shortly after Easter and that I can be there at that time.

Courage, my dear Child. It seems I am forgetting you in speaking to you about others and not about yourself. If I seem to forget you in what I write, I do not forget you before God and the most blessed Virgin. In all that refers to instructions to be given, hold fast to what I have already written you on the subject, and if there is some difficulty, take it to Father Mouran.

With effusion of heart, I wish you the peace of the Lord.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. You must have received two dozen Manuals. Brother David will be provided with an obedience for Sister Saint-Vincent to go to see the Augustinians, if there is some need for it.

The Little Society and the boarding school on Rue des Menuts preoccupy me. There are around 80 mouths to feed. Everything goes well. We have been doing a great deal of work since the last retreat. Father Collineau is now sub-deacon. In case the Forty Days has not been reprinted at Agen, I am sending you a sample copy.

\* \* \*

*This is one of the rare letters of Father Chaminade to his family which have been preserved. Among the 13 children of Blaise Chaminade and Catherine Béthon, 7 died in infancy. Of the six who survived, four gave themselves to the service of God: Jean-Baptiste to the Jesuits (1745-90); Blaise to the Franciscans (1747-1822); Louis, the director of the seminaries of Mussidan and Bordeaux (1758-1808); and Guillaume-Joseph. Lucrèce (1759-1826) married M. Laulanie but died childless. Only François had children.*

*François Chaminade (1755-1844), Father Chaminade's older brother and an inhabitant of Bordeaux, had 8 children from his two marriages to Marie-Soulignac of Saint-Rome and Cécile de Lancel. These were Jean-Baptiste; Rose, who married François Lavergne; Sophie, who married François de Lala; Jules; Victor; Céline, Blaise; and Marie, who married M. Faure and then M. Rastouil.*

*François de Lala (1777-1846), husband of Sophie Chaminade to whom the following letter is addressed, was established in Sarlat (Dordogne). He had one son, Firmin de Lala (1804-83), who was a pupil in the boarding school on Rue des Menuts and from whom descended a large family (see Apôtre, June and October, 1929). We owe most of Father Chaminade's family letters to the kindness of the de Lala family, currently living in Bordeaux.*

*Jules Chaminade (1809- ?) was a postulant at Saint-Laurent in 1822, made his profession in 1824, and acted as secretary to Father Chaminade from 1826 until 1829; he left the Society of Mary after 1830 and died on the island of Martinique.*

*Victor Chaminade (1814-77), a postulant in 1824, returned to Périgueux and established himself in Bordeaux during the last years of Father Chaminade's life.*

**135. To M. François de Lala, Sarlat**

March 7, 1820, Bordeaux

Autograph, Archives of the de Lala Family

My dear Nephew,

I have received all your messages and your last letter even today. This will serve as an answer to all of them.

I decided to see M. the Premier<sup>1</sup> and give him your letter while asking him to delay the matter referred to in it. Because you requested me to take notice of it myself, I entrusted your package to my counselor and private secretary, that in a few words he might tell me what I needed to do and say. I am including his answer here. If you were a stranger to me or if I did not wish you to gain experience, I would have said nothing which would cause you pain. The premier has received your package today.

You would like to see me pastor of Sarlat.<sup>2</sup> I thank you for your good intention, as well as for the kind offers you make to me. When you come to Bordeaux and observe my situation firsthand, you will realize how impossible it would be for me to accept a pastorate, and all the more so in another diocese.

Firmin has been accepted into the House of Education, no. 47, Rue des Menuts under the conditions I had requested and had proposed to you. It would be useless for me to propose having more similar favors granted to anyone other than Firmin. We do for a nephew who is loved and who makes himself worthy of being loved what we would not do for others. The high rate of this tuition must make you realize that everything is well taken care of and that only the children of rich families are there. I am enclosing in this letter a portion of the prospectus.

I have taken information about the price of the hoop-wood.<sup>3</sup> A master cooper told me it was very expensive at this time, and that the present was a favorable time for the sale of this commodity. He thought you could get 40 to 50 francs per 1,000. He promised me to go to the exchange and to inquire more exactly about the market price. I will also enclose his answer in this letter, if it comes in time for this mail.

I am thanking you in advance for the bag of chestnuts you had the kindness to send to me. My sister joins me in embracing you, as well as Sophie and Firmin.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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<sup>1</sup> The First President of the Court of Appeals.

<sup>2</sup> Subprefecture of the department of the Dordogne, where some of the Chaminade family lived.

<sup>3</sup> Chestnut tree branches, split in two, from which coopers make hoops. The Sarlat region is rich in chestnut trees.