

First Developments of the Two Societies

April 1820 to November 1822

At the beginning of 1820, Father Chaminade judged the time had come for the Daughters of Mary to consider a new foundation in Tonneins, located between Bordeaux and Agen. He was yielding to the earnest request of a rich man of the locality, M. Faure de Lacaussade, director of the tobacco factory, and promised him a convent for this small, half-Protestant town, poorly supplied with the means needed for any religious progress. The acquisition of the building was delicate—it was important not to spread the news of the purchase prematurely for fear of serious opposition. David Monier had gone to Agen around Easter to dispose of the convent of the Augustinians; he had to stop in Tonneins on his way and come to an understanding with M. de Lacaussade.

136. To M. Faure de Lacaussade, Tonneins

April 3, 1820. Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

[With inserts from S. 136]

Monsieur,

Courage! Our work may meet with opposition but it will succeed, and its success will be greater and more certain to the degree that we have had opportunities to manifest our confidence in God.

It is good that the acquisition is in the names of Mlle de Trenquelléon and Mlle Yannasch. On his return, if he is not already in Tonneins, Brother David will be able to bring you the authorization in due form.

If he were at Tonneins, but without it, he could write to Agen and send the form with your address; you would have it in a couple of days, and then you could go ahead. With this same mail I am writing to Mlle de Trenquelléon and asking her to comply with what Brother David says or writes.

This young woman, Mlle Yannasch, one of the purchasers, is the one I would wish to name as superior to your new establishment, at least in the beginning. Her name in religion is Thérèse. She is a person of great merit whom the good God seems to be reserving for great things. Furthermore, her physical beauty, enhanced by a rare modesty, good education, and prudence, emphasizes her qualities of mind and heart and makes her very capable of conducting things. At least, this is my hope. Until now I have kept her employed in insignificant matters and, in a way, as a subordinate. She is 25 years of age. Until she is needed in Tonneins, I have designated her for a very delicate undertaking. She will soon leave for Villefranche.¹ Mother Thérèse is not the one to be sent to Tonneins when the acquisition is being completed. That calls for an altogether different type of person, with more of a nature for tackling difficult matters.²

I am not writing Brother David partly because of lack of time, but more because there is no need for it. Would you have the kindness to show him this letter? If he is still in that city, our good Mother Superior of Agen will communicate to him the few words I will write to her.

Please accept the assurance of my sincere and respectful attachment.

¹ A reference to the merger of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Villefranche with the Daughters of Mary, a union desired by their founder, Saint Emilie de Rodat. "Father Chaminade," Adèle wrote to Mother Emilie, "tells me that around Easter or thereafter one of us could visit you, and then one of you could come to Agen" (March 1). To which Emilie de Rodat answered on April 1, "Now that the beautiful season is at hand, we are expecting you every day." But on April 5 Adèle wrote that Bishop Jacoupy objected to the trip. Providence had other designs, and each of the two congregations was to follow its own way.

² Doubtless the General Steward, Mother Saint-Vincent.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. Just as I was about to mail this letter, I received one from Brother David in Agen. He praises the acquisition in Tonneins and adds, "But it does not seem that M. de Lacaussade wants to take the purchase upon himself unless he has a guarantee. He spoke to me of the Good Mother at Agen; I thought on the contrary that this Good Mother and the others would be fully occupied with their new enterprise and that the desired secrecy prevented me from mentioning it."

Monsieur, why hesitate to proceed? The letter I am sending to Mother de Trenquelléon is in an envelope addressed to the woman in question, who will carry it. Come to an understanding with him; either way, the risk is the same. A little more trust in the Lord; this is God's work.

* * *

David Monier, Father Chaminade's secretary, joined invaluable qualities of zeal and skill in handling matters with faults which would try Father Chaminade's patience many times. This letters give us an idea of the difficulties and problems caused by the character and habits of this former lawyer.

137. To M. Faure de Lacaussade, Tonneins

April 17, 1820, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

I thought Brother David was in Tonneins from the first or second day after Easter.¹ I am concerned because I have not heard anything and because he has not yet arrived in Bordeaux.

Finally on Saturday evening, I learned from his letter of April 13 that he will be in Agen for the entire week.

In his turn, Brother David is surprised at not having received any letter from you. However, he did not write to delegate the necessary authority to you to settle the acquisition, fearing I might have done so from here.

I ask you to come to an understanding with Brother David. I approve in advance everything the two of you will agree on. Do not hesitate to take the initiative, if you believe this is necessary. It seems dangerous to me that you have mentioned the names of the religious before the settlement of the contract. Mme V. - - -, realizing the plans for her house, may well be unwilling to sell to us. A somewhat similar case came to my attention some time ago. You have at least 24 hours to designate the names of those for whom you are buying the house; then the contract is closed, and the seller may no longer do anything about it.

Doubtless, you certainly know a lot more than I about matters of this kind. Brother David is perfectly at home handling these things, and I am glad to say so.

If you seem certain of this acquisition, we will never forget—and neither will the religious sisters—that you have lent your name to the transaction only to prevent the project from falling through. But we have all accepted the obligation of seeing to it that your name is not compromised in any way.

I hope to learn by the next mail and upon Brother David's return of the happy conclusion of this matter.

If I had heard about all these delays in the last mail or in this one, Brother David would have received a request to go to Clairac, which is only 2½ miles from Tonneins, to look over the former abbey. The new owner seemed disposed to give it to the Institute for, etc.¹ I will come

¹ Easter fell that year on April 2.

¹ Some years later, M. Greprière de Moncroc did in fact call the Society of Mary to Clairac (1837), where it conducted a *collège* and a boarding school until 1903.

back to this another time and will ask your advice then. For the time being, let us focus our attention on Tonneins, for we have already done so much.

I ask you to send this letter on to Brother David and to believe me, etc. . . .

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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138. To M. David Monier, Agen

May 6, 1820, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

I have a letter from M. de Lacaussade, my dear friend, in which he very forcefully expresses his amazement at not seeing you and especially at not receiving a single word from you. He was expecting you on April 29, as you had informed me through the Mother Superior of Agen. You have set the date of your departure from Agen three times. Consequently, I wrote to Tonneins three times, not wanting to write you in Agen because I believed my letters would not reach you there. You have a number of clients here who are finding it very difficult not to murmur. Several seem in great need of your presence, especially M. Moreau and M. Laroque.

As for me, I neither know what to say nor what to think. If matters of great consequence are detaining you, why not tell me about these? Why have you allowed me to go on speaking, ever since Easter, as though you were always just about to arrive?

Be kind enough to let me know your plans which will not change, and rest assured of the true devotedness of your friend.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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In Agen Adèle's health has begun to cause worry, and Father Chaminade intervenes to moderate through obedience the zeal of his collaborator. For the time being, he forbids her all work.

139. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

May 29, 1820, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

[With insert from S. 139]

My dear Child,

You did well to accept Mlle Virginie Drenne. She will be a boarder within the community. She seems to wish to follow the exercises with the postulants, so there are no complications so far. When she comes, suggest she do just that. If she would aspire to anything else, which I doubt, let me know. However, do not have her undergo any of the trials of the postulants unless she expressly wishes to. As a result of the latest favors from Saint Joseph, I am able to guarantee you 3,000 francs. These are not the 3,000 of Sister Anne, but what is the difference?

The temporary suspension of your occupations will do more good to your soul than to your body. This is a special disposition of Providence from which you must profit. You are not very accustomed to the habit of the interior exercise of the love of God, of mental prayer, of spiritual reading, etc. Well, now you have a valuable opportunity to train yourself little by little in these matters, taking care, however, not to tire yourself. Feed your heart continually, but prudently.

If Father Mouran or Father Laumont can get you a work entitled *Of the Knowledge and Love of the Son of God, Our Savior*, by Fr. Saint-Jure of the Society of Jesus, you will find great spiritual profit there. You will also find short and varied exercises in the love of kindness, of benevolence, of desire, and of preference and contrition. You will find a rich expression for your conferences. I presume this work will be found in the library of one of the two seminaries or in the bishop's library.

As for the choir recitations, you may assign them to anyone you wish, whoever comes first, reserving for yourself the recitation of the last prayer.

When your health has been fully restored, let me know through one of the Mothers. I prefer to be informed by one of them rather than by you.

Tell Sister Sacré-Coeur, please, to inform me about Sister de l'Assumption regarding her religious conduct and her health from the time of her leaving the convent until the present.

The boarding school here directed by the Institute of Mary—or the Little Society, as it is called—employs a young woman who seems destined for you. Because I have known her only a very short time, I thought I should test her here before recommending her to you. She is not wealthy, but she has always had enough talent and energy to earn money for herself and others, first as an assistant teacher of a small boarding school and then for five years as the only teacher in a small village in Périgord. She has given it all up in order to enter the religious state. It is now indifferent to her whether she is a Companion Sister or what she calls a “Lady of the Choir.” I will return to her on another occasion. Her life is very edifying.

Courage, my dear Child! Let us take care that while we are working at the sanctification of others, we do not forget our own!

Receive now, with all our Daughters, my paternal blessing. I give it to you with a great outpouring of tenderness.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. There will be many opportunities to communicate with Bordeaux after the fair to be held at Agen. Sister Sacré-Coeur can write and tell me everything she thinks will interest me.

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This note shows the constant solicitude of Father Chaminade for the work of the little Auvergnats. He refers to notes prepared by Father Collineau, in view of sustaining and developing this charitable work. Here are the principal passages.

Work of the Young Auvergnats. What does this work call for at the present time?

1. Bringing together all the registers of the names, dwellings, etc., from the time the catechism instructions were started.
2. Making a statement containing an account of everything that has been received and spent.
3. Calling the council without delay. Stating simply
 - (1) that 18 children have made their first Communion. Some of these have returned to their hometowns with sentiments of piety, and some of them are still persevering. Five have stopped coming to catechism instructions, no doubt due to not corresponding with grace but also due to not having found support for their goodwill in frequent Confessions.
 - (2) That the entire winter at least 80 children were counted at the instructions. Sometimes there were as many as 100.
 - (3) That until the month of May, the number was at least 45 or 50.
 - (4) That lack of funds and lack of confessors have been obstacles to the greater progress and consolidation of the work, as well as to a more rapid advance in piety. At the present time 9 of these children—three have made their first Communion and six are preparing for it—have been

deprived of their confessor, who has been named pastor far from Bordeaux. This type of obstacle cannot be overcome without first finding funds to continue despite all difficulties and to provide a more solid development over the winter.

Finally, I ask for a general assembly of those who have shown interest in the work by contributing gifts. I want them to know the council has met and to understand the matters discussed in council. I also want to stimulate their interest in seeing the work prosper.

* * *

140. To M. David Monier, Bordeaux

June 5, 1820, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Friend,

You have forgotten Father Collineau's notes, which were on my desk. Look for them. I am going to see the council members, and I will call them together when I have everything, or just about everything, ready.

Tonight do not forget to bring the lists of the Fathers of Families. It seems important that we will quickly make a copy of the rules for the Fathers of Families in the way we have determined. After that, we will have some good people to make copies. Think of three leaders.

Paternal and friendly greetings.

G. Joseph Chaminade

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Mlle Charlotte de Lachapelle has been mentioned several times in the preceding letters. Father Chaminade continually encouraged her in her aspirations. In 1820, following changes in her family, he believed it was his duty to counsel her no longer to delay her retirement from the world.

141. To Mlle Charlotte de Lachapelle, Condom

June 15, 1820, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch FMI

My dear Daughter,

I am very pleased that the ties which still bind you to the world will soon be broken. Your brother is to be married. You will be disengaged from every promise. You will be free, free to fly to your beloved solitude, free to run in the paths of God, free finally to consecrate everything you have received from the generous hand of Providence to the glory of Jesus and Mary. From the time you were a sodalist, you could doubtless have considered yourself a Daughter of Mary. Today you are actually going to receive this noble quality by the state of life you are embracing. Even the world will know you only as a Daughter of Mary.

My dear Daughter, you are going to enter the convent at a time when you become very essential to the Institute of Mary. The transfer of the Daughters of Mary to the former convent of the Augustinians and the new foundation of the fine convent of Tonneins need subjects, and subjects already trained, so to speak. Take then, my dear Daughter, a firm and determined stand. The devil will not have any trouble finding new motives for postponing your final retirement from the world. All reasoning must stop once the great Master calls. What have the parents of Sister des Anges gained? They have endlessly postponed her entrance to the convent, and she is dying among them with bitter regrets.

May the Lord, my dear Daughter, grant you courage and strength!

G. Joseph Chaminade

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S. 141a. To Father Barrès, Vicar General

June 17, 1820, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

I would like to have a brief interview with you at some time before 6 or 7 o'clock this evening. I tried unsuccessfully yesterday evening. If you have reason to go to the convent of the Sacred Heart, I would be greatly obliged if you were to stop here in passing. Or tell me at what time I can have the honor of an interview with you at your residence.

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

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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A young novice of the convent of Agen is hesitant about her vocation and asks herself whether she may not be called to the Carmelite Order. She consults Father Chaminade.

142. To Sister Célestine, Agen

July 11, 1820, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Daughter,

You have done well to open your heart concerning your vocation. Perhaps you might have saved yourself a great deal of worry had you done this sooner.

You tell me that before entering the convent of the Daughters of Mary, you felt the desire to be numbered among the Daughters of Saint Thérèse. The holiness of that state of life frightened you somewhat, so you then believed yourself more fitted for the former life. Your desires for the Carmelite life still spring up more or less strongly, so the choice between the two causes you turmoil.

But my dear Daughter, have you truly examined the desire you have for the Carmelite life? Have you compared the two states to see what they have in common and what is particular to each? Is what is particular to the one and distinguishes it from all other religious Orders what you desire? It seems the only thing you have especially noted in the Carmelites is the holiness of their state, but do you really have a correct idea of that holiness?

The Institute of Mary and the Reform of Saint Thérèse both seek to bring their subjects to the highest perfection, but by different means. The Institute of Mary shows us, or rather points out, the path we must follow to go to God and to unite ourselves with God. The Reform of Saint Thérèse makes known more particularly the way by which God comes to his creature and communicates himself to her. In each you see the same end, the same perfection, the same holiness, but the manner of offering this is very different.

In the Institute of Mary, illusion is hard to come by and is soon noticed, while in the Reform of Saint Thérèse, the devil can more easily take the form of an angel of light.

In the Institute of Mary, fervent leaders with the Rule in hand can easily lead its members to perfection. In the other, it is an almost irreparable evil not to find among the leaders souls who have already attained high perfection and have experienced divine communications.

In the Institute of Mary, the light of direction in spiritual ways is communicated to the subjects more by leaders and superiors than directly by God in prayer. The opposite is the case in the Carmelite life, and it is because of this that I say illusion may more easily slip in.

In the Institute of Mary there are no long prayers, either vocal or mental, but a great deal of work, sanctified by recollection and a religious silence. In the Reform, there are long Offices and long meditations, solitude, etc. Each is essential according to the design for sanctification offered by the Holy Spirit.

In the Institute of Mary, to the idea of personal sanctification is joined effective work toward the sanctification of the neighbor, while in the Reform of Saint Thérèse, a person is useful to religion by the prayers recited for the conversion of sinners and the perseverance of the just.

In the Institute of Mary life is apostolic, while in the Order of Carmel, it is solitary.

In both there is a tender devotion to the Blessed Virgin, an entire devotedness to her worship. There is a difference on this point only because the Institute seeks to propagate this devotion and to make known as much as it can the grandeurs of Mary.

My dear Daughter, I did not intend here to make a perfect comparison between the two Orders. I only want to place you in a position to settle with intelligence, and to read in your heart, the question of your vocation. Possibly you do not fully understand certain points of this letter, but these can be explained to you in the convent.

Perhaps you may wish I would not let you make your own choice, but make it for you. Well, here is my first thought on reading your letter. What signs are here of a vocation to the Carmelites? What tastes, what attraction do you manifest for mental prayer and for a solitary life? What operations of the Spirit of God have suggested such a vocation? To speak frankly, my dear Daughter, I have seen nothing of this kind in the brief notes which some of your leaders occasionally give me. On the contrary, several times I thought the Good God had granted you a great grace in having you enter a convent of the Daughters of Mary, where you could correct certain defects which would certainly have caused your loss in the world, and I admired God's designs of goodness in associating you with the apostolic works of the Daughters of Mary, even while leaving to you the occupations in which you are best capable.

I desire that this letter may put an end to all your uncertainty. If you remain in the convent, you may keep this letter. On the contrary, if you are to leave you will need to give it to the Good Mother.

It is very possible that the desires you now experience of entering Carmel do not come from God. They may rather be mere suggestions to prevent you from embracing the state for which those interested in you noticed, or thought they noticed, signs of vocation—suggestions to enter the other, for which no signs of a divine calling were evident, with the result that perseverance will be out of the question.

May the Lord shower upon you the lights of his Spirit and the anointing of his grace!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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The preceding letter was accompanied by a note addressed to Adèle.

143. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

July 12, 1820, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

[With insert from S. 143]

My dear Child,

I still continue to feel something of the shock my health experienced some time ago, but nevertheless I have reason to believe there will be no more harmful results.

On Brother David's return, I will take care to settle the date of my trip to Agen. This should take place as soon as possible. The prospect of renewing the novitiate is very good. Do not determine the renewal of your vows until the time of your transfer and of my trip is settled.

May the Lord grant you strength and courage!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. M. Marty has written to me. I will tell you about this at some other time.

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The new works which were being multiplied in no way lessened Father Chaminade's solicitude for the older ones. The Miséricorde continued to be the object of his attentive care—in 1820 he had just given a series of instructions there to prepare its directresses to make religious vows.

In this same year, Mlle Rondeau, founder of the Miséricorde at Laval established according to the plan of the one in Bordeaux, obtained from Marie-Thérèse the services of one of the directresses to introduce in her undertaking the spirit of the one in Bordeaux. Mlle Laure de Labordère (1789-1867), a niece of Mlle de Lamourous who would succeed her as superior, was appointed for this task. At her departure Father Chaminade traced out for her detailed rules for her interior and exterior conduct, rules well chosen to reassure this generous but timid soul; he sent these to her after her arrival in Laval.

N.A. 143-2. To Mlle Laure de Labodère

Before July 13, 1820, Bordeaux

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Copy, Agmar 218.2.31

Mlle Laure neither could nor should have made the commitment which she believes now obligates her. Even if she made it, as has been stated, she is completely dispensed from it.

She was told not to make any such gesture in the future without the express permission from the Mother General or from me.

May her guardian angel accompany her and protect her from all harm.

Let the past be forgotten from the moment of her departure.

* * *

144. To Mlle Laure de Labordère, Bordeaux

1820, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. of the Miséricorde

[With insert from S. 144]

(1) You will make no general or extraordinary Confession; you will accuse yourself of no serious sin of your past life under the pretext of greater self-revelation.

(2) When in doubt about whether you have confessed a sin of your past, do not accuse yourself of it now.

(3) Be convinced that you have not willingly entertained evil thoughts unless freely consenting actions have followed. Under no pretext must you accuse yourself of impure thoughts, still less explain them in the confessional. }

(4) Always preserve the peace of your soul. Always go to God with a complete simplicity. Despise and reject everything that might trouble you.

In all your uncertainties over your interior conduct, make up your mind promptly to do what you would counsel another to do.

In all your uncertainties about the running of the external matters of the house, follow the ordinary counsels of Mlle Rondeau if matters are pressing. If matters are not pressing and if their settlement allows time to write to Bordeaux, to the Good Mother or to your Good Father, do not seek counsel from any other source. If you are uncertain about whether matters are pressing or not, then take whatever counsel you can obtain at the time.

In all cases, be careful to write to the Good Mother about whatever is happening, whether about yourself personally or about other community members, or about others who have relationships of some importance with the establishment.

Remember that you are not an orphan and that you are not an emancipated child, but, etc. Take particular care of Marinette.¹ Watch particularly over her spiritual advancement, that she may become filled more and more with the spirit of the state she has embraced.

You are leaving only by obedience, and I hope you will act only by the spirit of obedience, even in giving orders. You will gather the abundant and delicious fruits of obedience. I promise these to you in the name of the Lord, whose place I take toward you, even though I am not worthy.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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144a. To Mlle Laure de Labordère, Laval

September 14, 1820, Bordeaux
Autograph, Arch. of the Miséricorde

My dear Child,

Your new confessor gave you an answer which was wise in itself; but he does not know you. For the most part, the rules I gave you are applicable only to you. In giving them to you, I had, or should have had, only you in mind. If you were to continue to address yourself to the same confessor, I would be happy to write to him, and I am bold enough to believe we would soon be in complete agreement.

Concerning yourself, I owe you no explanation, for any explanation would be harmful to you. A general proof that these rules are good for you is the good results they are producing.

I said a few words to Father Baret, who came to see me before his departure for Laval, and he seemed to understand the way in which you are to be guided.

Serve God, my dear Child, with all confidence in God's great mercy and in the simplicity of your heart. Carefully set aside—even forget, if possible—anything which might trouble the peace of your soul and harm the total abandonment you owe to God's mercy.

Furthermore, observe all your rules! Do not fear to observe them to the letter. If you are to fail, I would prefer to see you fail by excess in observing them than by the defect of wanting to limit their application.

May the peace of the Lord be always with you!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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S. 144a. To M. David Monier

October 5, 1820, Bordeaux
Autograph, Agmar

¹ Daughter of the Miséricorde who accompanied Laure de Labordère to Laval.

If M. Lassime will accept 5,000 francs in payment and allow the interest to accrue, he can have the amount in cash tomorrow. Because the loans mature later than I thought, I will make all the arrangements. One-half the interest demanded by M. Lassime will be used to discount the notes.

My dear Friend, I ask you to tell M. Lassime to make up his mind and not to wait until it is too late. It is now 4 o'clock; if M. Lassime has not seen you or if he has retired, please call him.

I am at your service,

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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As he had given Adèle reason to hope in his note of July 12, Father Chaminade went to Agen near the end of August to direct the annual retreat and to preside at the transfer of the community to the convent of the Augustinians. He had the joy of leading the first group of his Daughters to Tonneins and settling them in the house M. de Lacaussade had prepared.

For Father Chaminade this trip was the occasion of an important decision; responding to the entreaties of the Sodality which had just been organized in Agen, he promised to send some religious from Bordeaux to help the Sodality and to open free schools there. Back in Bordeaux, after having given renewed strength to his sons through the exercises of the retreat, he told them of the new mission destined for several of them. At the close of the retreat, he invited Archbishop d'Aviau to bless his children.

145. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux

October 23, 1820, Saint-Laurent

Autograph, Agmar

Your Excellency,

The Little Society of Rue des Menuts has the very great favor, which Your Excellency will remember, of receiving your blessing at each close of the annual retreat. The work of spiritual renewal will finish tomorrow morning, but no one will leave before going to your feet to obtain the desired blessing. Will Your Excellency please honor us by indicating the hour for presenting this little flock to you?

Please accept, Your Excellency, this new token of my religious attachment and my respect for you, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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In the margin of this letter Archbishop d'Aviau wrote, "I will go." The following morning he actually came to Saint-Laurent, celebrated Mass, and blessed the community.

Here is a short note belongs relating to the purchase of house no. 2 (today no. 4), Rue de Lalande, the one in which Father Chaminade lived and died. The deed of sale, agreed to by M. Lassime for the price of 12,000 francs, is dated May 5, 1819 (see Apôtre de Marie, vol. 10, p. 398.)

The recommendation which follows discusses the vocation of the young religious of the boarding house on Rue des Menuts.

146. To M. David Monier, Bordeaux

October 25, 1820, Saint-Laurent

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Friend, I am sending you 2,000 francs for M. Lassime as follows: 25 louis of 47 fr. 20; 14 louis of 47 fr. 20; 6 louis of 23 fr. 55; 4 and 5 franc pieces. Do what is necessary for M. Lassime and Mme Eyquem.

Tell Brother Auguste, please, to make it a point of seeing that all our young people are reasonably occupied. Boredom and idleness must be feared.

Long live Jesus! Long live Mary!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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Charged to prepare for the move to Agen, David Monier went ahead of the community. Soon after, Father Chaminade could tell him of the departure of the religious who were to open the first primary school of the Society of Mary. (Regarding the school of Agen, see The Spirit of Our Foundation, vol. 3, nos. 244, 350, and following.)

147. To M. David Monier, Agen

November 19, 1820, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

[With insert from S. 147]

My dear Son,

Because of a lack of time I will answer your letter briefly, omitting expressions of mere sentiment, reflections, etc.

I have just received the solemn vows of Brother Laugeay.¹ And I am keeping the document, signed by all those present at the ceremony.

I am adding Brother Mémain to the names of Brothers Laugeay and Armenaud. All three will leave tomorrow, Monday. They will sleep at Verdélais. The day after tomorrow is the Feast of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin. It is possible they will reach Agen on Wednesday evening.

M. Menville had already loaded his trunk when your letter arrived. His aptitudes must not be judged by the letter he wrote to M. Dardy; the latter was indiscreet in showing it. M. Menville can be most useful to him if he knows how to approach him. I did not insist with M. Dardy that he take him on. Every time he told me M. Menville could do the job, I always stated for him the precautions he would need to take, etc. Moreover, he will do as he sees fit. The young man will leave, just as he asked me to. It is only after M. Dardy's letter in reply to M. Menville that the latter left M. Godon.

If M. Dardy has lost two boarders, it is not because of the teacher or of the letter. The loss predates the letter, and M. Dardy blames only the poor atmosphere in the convent. M. Dardy thereby proves the flimsiness of the charge.

I hope it will not be difficult for you to persuade His Excellency the Bishop, whose indisposition I deeply regret, that M. Dardy is here only a borrowed name,² but one transparent enough to reveal the true face. Moreover, the good reasoning of His Excellency the Bishop, which I was unable to make out, will rather bring about his neutral attitude toward us, and this will not be difficult. Nevertheless, a beginning must be made.

Courage, my dear Son. I must now close. I have been interrupted nine or ten times in writing this short letter. The best to you! May the peace of the Lord be with you in all you do!

¹ Named director of the new community.

² For the opening of a school at Agen. M. Dardy was a sodalist who kept a small boarding house next to the Refuge, which the Daughters of Mary had left and in which the new community was to be installed.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. Brother Laugeay is to obey you.

* * *

N.A. 147-2. To the Prefect, Department of the Gironde

November 30, 1820, Bordeaux¹

Printed in Volume 8-2.

Copy, Agmar 218.2.17

Monsieur Prefect,

The young layman who approached you last year in the interest of the young Auvergnats was ordained a priest during the Ember Days of September. This most interesting work of mercy languished during the time he spent in the seminary. It did survive, thanks to the visits he paid to these poor children and to the enthusiasm of the catechists and of their assistants. The subscription brought in a negligible amount.

A dedicated group contributed funds, so there was no deficit. In spite of Father Collineau's long absence and the multiplicity of my own occupations, our books are in order and up-to-date and ready to be shown to the head of the agency. As soon as you set the date, Monsieur Prefect, I will consider it an honor to invite the respectable members who compose the agency.

The secretary is absent, but I believe he will return in less than two weeks.

Even though the work of the young Auvergnats has been stagnating, we found to our satisfaction that several of the children, instructed in Bordeaux, went to make their fortune in Paris and were remarkable among the Savoyards for their instruction and good conduct.

I am with the deepest respect, Monsieur Prefect, your most obedience and humble servant.

* * *

Here are two short notes of direction for Mlle Laure de Labordère, to be read with profit by timid souls.

148. To Mlle Laure de Labordère, Laval

December 8, 1820, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. Of the Miséricorde

My dear Daughter,

Everything seems to conspire to prevent me from writing to you. I will tell you in a few words—yes, words written in haste, but reflected upon and meditated upon for a long time. No Confession, either general or extraordinary. Follow the rules I have given you. Serve the Lord in liberty, in the peace and joy of your soul.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

149. To Mlle Laure de Labordère, Laval

End of December, 1820, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. of the Miséricorde

¹The original is in the archives of the department of the Gironde.

My dear Daughter,

I bless the Lord for having granted you peace of soul. Have you not remarked that you experience trouble and alarming fears only when you do not observe your rules with simplicity and when you do not go to God with complete confidence? So take care! Simplicity and confidence—oh, the two beautiful sentiments!

I learned with pleasure that you are devoting yourself a little more to mental prayer, following the advice of your confessor. Continue! This exercise will be very beneficial to you. I would have advised it a long time ago, if you had not been so troubled.

With great tenderness, I am giving you my fatherly blessing.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

At the end of 1820, a question arose concerning Bro. Jean Lalanne's ordination. He had entered the seminary of Bordeaux a few months earlier, as had been required previously in the case of Father Collineau. Again, the superior of the Grand Seminary demands the full application of the rules governing clerics of the diocese. Father Chaminade writes to the archbishop.

150. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux

December 11, 1820, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

Your Excellency,

In the midst of numerous obligations, I am coming to open my heart to you. I was quiet enough regarding Brother Lalanne, for I believed the same thing would happen in his case as had happened to Father Collineau and that in the course of the school year, he would be raised to the priesthood, as you had the kindness to promise me. Just the other evening, I learned he will not be called to the subdiaconate at the time of the next ordinations.

Could it be that this young religious has made himself unworthy, before or since his entrance into the seminary? If this is so, I would be greatly obliged if you will inform me. Nothing of the kind has come to my attention, although I am a close observer of what happens in the interior of the community.

What seems to dispel this fear is the knowledge that the superior of the seminary told Father Collineau that Your Excellency might supplement the regular ordination by a small extraordinary ordination during Lent.

Give me, I ask of Your Excellency, the consolation of knowing what you have decided in this matter. I will make use of the information you will have the kindness to give me only in the way that will be agreeable to you. If there is nothing to be said against the young religious, what inconvenience would there be in his promotion to the subdiaconate at Christmas? All the seminarians are expecting it. Everyone will be puzzled if he is deprived of a favor which has been expected by everyone.

With the most profound respect. . . .

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

Jean Lalanne had in no way lost favor. On the contrary, his conduct at the seminary had been edifying. But the seminary rules won out, and he received the subdiaconate only on April 7,

1821, at ceremonies the Saturday before Passion Sunday. Here is a brief sketch of Jean Lalanne, whose figure so often appears throughout the course of Father Chaminade's correspondence.

Born in Bordeaux in 1795, after brilliant studies at the *lycée* there Jean Lalanne first followed a medical career. But little by little, under the influence of Father Chaminade, who had directed him since he was 12, his soul turned completely toward God. On May 1, 1817, he offered himself to his director to labor with him at apostolic works. At that time Father Chaminade confided to him the mission he had received at the feet of Our Lady of the Pillar and enlisted him in seeking collaborators. On October 12, 1817, the first members of the Society of Mary began what might be called their novitiate. On September 5, 1818, Jean Lalanne and several of his colleagues took perpetual vows of poverty, chastity, obedience, and stability and that of teaching the faith and Christian morals.

He was successively professor in the boarding school of Sainte-Marie in Bordeaux, superior of the seminary of the Madeleine (1825), principal of the university *collège* of Gray (1826), and director of the schools at Saint-Remy (1830), Bordeaux (1832), and Layrac (1835). Having imprudently thrown himself into debt, in 1845 he obtained permission to separate himself temporarily from the Society of Mary, while keeping his religious vows until he was free from financial embarrassments. He then went to Paris, where the archbishop confided to him the direction of the ecclesiastical section of the Ecole des Carmes, known today as the Institut Catholique. Through him, the Society of Mary was introduced into Paris in 1852 at the Institution Sainte Marie on Rue Bonaparte, then later in 1855 at Collège Stanislas.

The direction of Collège Stanislas was the great work of his life. He devoted 15 years to this (1855-71). He then used the strength of his vigorous old age, first to launch Institut Stanislas in Cannes (1871) and then to visit as Inspector the houses of secondary education of the Society of Mary (1876). On one of his visits at Besançon, he suffered a stroke while reciting his breviary. He died a few days later in sentiments of the most filial abandonment to the most holy will of God in the arms of Father Simler and Father de Lagarde. His mortal remains rest in the cemetery of the Society of Mary in Courtefontaine, at the foot of the cross.

Jean Lalanne was gifted with a brilliant intelligence, an enterprising mind, and a courageous will. These precious gifts permitted him to render the greatest service to the Society of Mary during the entire course of his long life. However, on several occasions the ardor of his imagination drew him into vexing adventures. What always saved him was a profound spirit of faith which he had learned from Father Chaminade, his filial confidence in the most holy Virgin which made him keep his Act of Consecration on his breast until his death, and finally his attachment to the Society of Mary, of which he had been the first member and which he always tenderly loved. "I have been born of her," he wrote. "My existence in the spiritual and religious life is linked with hers. To separate myself from her, that would be death" (1837). The most touching humility comes from this disposition, after his lapses, as when he wrote his admirable letters of repentance to Father Chaminade, or when at the General Chapter of 1876 he got on his knees, an old man of 80, to publicly ask pardon of his brothers for the bad example he had given.

Father Chaminade particularly cherished him as the firstborn, and in spite of passing misunderstandings, Father Lalanne returned this esteem with an affection as faithful as it was deep. In his office and in the place of honor, he placed the beautiful portrait of Father Chaminade which is today in the room of the Superior General. When in his old age he turned the conversation to Father Chaminade, it was always with emotion that moved even to the point of tears. Educator emeritus, in great measure it is to him that the Society of Mary owes its traditions in matters of education. Under the direction of Father Chaminade, it also owes the first drafts of its *Formulary of Prayers* and of its Constitutions.

* * *

Two months after the opening of the school at Agen, Father Chaminade was already obliged to send aid. This is the obedience he gave to Bro. Bernard Gaussens; this is the first of these which has come down to us.

151. To Bro. Bernard Gaussens, Bordeaux

February 5, 1821, Bordeaux
Autograph Rough Copy, Agmar

Obedience

Our Son, Brother Gaussens, will go to Agen as soon as possible, by boat or on foot, and will place himself immediately under the obedience and at the disposition of Brother Laugeay, head of the institution of the free primary schools of this city, according to the information given to him. This will be without prejudice to the obedience which he owes to our Son, Bro. David Monier, during the time the latter is in Agen replacing us. Brother Gaussens will request from the business manager of the Little Society whatever is necessary for his journey and on his arrival will place whatever remains into the hands of his new superior.

Given on the day and in the year herein mentioned, under our seal and signature and countersigned by our secretary.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

*

Three of the founders of the school at Agen—Bro. Bernard Laugeay, Bro. Jean Armenuaud, and Bro. Bernard Gaussens merit a mention here.

Bro. Bernard Laugeay, born in Bordeaux in 1796, had joined the Sodality of the Madeleine in 1817. Learning of the existence of the Little Society, he asked to join and was received at the house on the Impasse de Ségur on August 15, 1818, on the eve of the opening of the first retreat of the Society of Mary at Saint-Laurent.

Such was the virtue of this young man that Father Chaminade, his director for some time, did not hesitate to admit him immediately to perpetual vows with the founding members of the Society of Mary on September 5, 1818. After two years (1820), Brother Laugeay was sent to Agen to open the first school of the Society of Mary. His success was so complete that Father Chaminade saw in it an indication of Providence to direct the apostolate of his children to this line of work.

After opening a second school in Villeneuve (1823), he formed part of the small group who introduced the Society of Mary into Alsace at Colmar (1824). Then he was successively charged with the foundation of the schools of Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines (1828), Brusque (1842), and Cordes (1844). To him we owe the first method of teaching of the Society of Mary, called the “Old Method” (1824).

Brother Laugeay left the reputation of an admirable religious by his goodness and his devotedness, his polite and pleasant manners, his spirit of faith and of penance, his devotion to the Eucharist, and his filial piety toward the most blessed Virgin. (See *Spirit of Our Foundation*, nos. 409 and 550).

*

Bro. Jean Armenuaud and his brother Louis Armenuaud, who can no more be separated in history than they were in actual life, were born in Saint Loubès near Bordeaux in the last years of the 18th century. After a youth spent in the performance of good works, they joined the Sodality of Bordeaux. The minutes of the Sodality Council of 1817 show Bro. Jean-Baptiste Bidon presenting “a letter of the brothers Armenuaud, probationers, which breathes sentiments of the most fervent piety.” Soon after, they were admitted among the number of sodalists, “on condition” the minutes say “that one of

them comes each Sunday to Bordeaux for the meeting of the Sodality and that they continue to care for the children they are instructing.” The fervent young men were ripe for religious life. Thus in 1818 we see Jean, the elder brother, making the retreat of the foundation of the Society of Mary, followed in 1820 by his brother Louis.

After a short period of probation in the schools of Agen, the brothers were sent by Father Chaminade to Villeneuve-sur-Lot, where together they were to spend their lives. Jean arrived first in 1823, followed in 1826 by his younger brother Louis, to whom he immediately gave the office of director and under whose obedience he lived until he died. For nearly half a century, it was an edifying spectacle to see these two religious, brothers by nature as well as by grace, working with equal ardor at the work confided to them. Jean died on January 19, 1862. Louis lived until October 30, 1879. The people of Villeneuve felt honored in erecting a mortuary chapel to the memory of the two brothers, and with them to all their colleagues, bearing this inscription, “To the Brothers of Mary, three grateful generations.”

*

Bro. Bernard Gaussens is held in grateful memory because of the precious services he rendered during an active career of more than 50 years. He was born in 1795 in Branne, near Bordeaux, to a very honorable family. After completing his classical course of study when barely 16, he joined the army, took part in the Spanish wars, and returned to his country with the rank of officer. When in 1819 Father Chaminade came to Libourne to organize the Sodality, Bernard Gaussens was among the first to be inscribed, and for him as for so many others the Sodality was the preparatory stage for religious life. He joined the members of the Little Society on Rue des Menuts in 1820 and made his perpetual vows in 1821.

He took part in the foundation of the first primary school in Agen (1821) and then became an assistant to the group sent to Saint-Remy (1823). There, as Head of Instruction, he gave greatly appreciated pedagogical conferences to the teachers of the region assembled for retreat and was placed in charge of the first normal school (1824). Brother Gaussens then opened the normal school of Courtefontaine (1829). After new service in Agen and Saint-Remy, for 16 years he assumed the direction of the important school in Colmar (1840-50). He then returned to the Midi, where after several years as head of the boarding school in Moissac, he was the first Inspector of the province (1859). This continued until his death on September 15, 1873, the Octave of the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin. The Society of Mary owes several of its first classics to him, including *Syllabaire*, the *First Readings*, and the *History of the Church*, among others. Father Chaminade praised Brother Gaussens when he wrote, “Loyalty, sincerity, and disinterestedness make up your character.”

All his life, Brother Gaussens kept something of his military background. He had an upright gait, a military bearing, and the habit of using few words. Under the influence of grace his character, naturally fiery, had quieted down, and he had become kind, affable, and obliging. He was always neatly dressed and had distinguished manners which won him the esteem of teachers and pupils alike. In addition, his conversation was witty and interesting, gladdening both heart and mind at the same time.

As he knew how to command, he also knew how to obey. “You ask me,” he wrote to the Good Father during his last years, “if my age and my infirmities permit me to go to live in Moissac. This request, my Good Father, afflicts me, because it places me face to face with an option, a choice which obedience might have spared me. What is it that consoles a religious, if it is not obedience?” . . . “For obedience,” he declared, “I would willingly give up my life.” It can easily be said that he observed this vow to the letter, for afflicted with long and painful infirmities, he was admirable in his courage to carry out his duty to the end. “Only at the very end of his life,” wrote Fr. Jean Chevaux, “did he consent to leave to others the care of visiting the most distant establishments.” He continued the inspection of the houses located around Bordeaux and there, more than once, was slowed by fatigue and illness.

One day, while he was confined in one of our houses, a priest of the Society of Mary gave him a few words of encouragement. The priest happened to pronounce the name of the most holy Virgin, whom he had so long and so deeply loved and served. "Oh yes!" he exclaimed quickly, "I love the Blessed Virgin. It is for her love and for her service that I entered the Society of Mary. I owe her everything—my vocation, my perseverance, all my confidence. As long as we love the Blessed Virgin, we fear nothing, we are resigned to everything, we are faithful to our vocation. Oh! If all our young religious truly understood what it means to be a child of Mary!" And in thus pouring out his heart, he gave free reign to his tears.

"Today," concluded Father Chevaux, "we cannot doubt that Brother Gaussens is enjoying the reward promised to those who have endeavored to spread the cult of our good Mother. *Qui elucidant me, vitam aeternam habebunt* [the one who makes it clear to me will have eternal life]. (Circular, May 26, 1874).

* * *

The following letter shows Father Chaminade anxious about the finances and the health of the Daughters of Mary at Agen and Tonneins. M. de Lacaussade was something of a doctor. Thus, Father Chaminade shows great confidence in his experience, and even more in his devotedness.

152. To M. Faure de Lacaussade, Tonneins

March 11, 1821, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

Monsieur,

Since your last letter, I am holding at the disposal of your son-in-law a bag of 1,200 francs. He did not come to my house. I hope to be able to notify him. Your good mother had the kindness to give me his address.

I have just received word from Brother David that he no longer has any hope of securing the resources to pay back the 8,000 francs he borrowed for our small convent in Tonneins. One of these resources was the payment for objects sold by Mme Yannasch in Auch. The notary of this small town was recently in Agen, and he said either to the women or to Brother David that as yet you have done nothing against the buyer. We have only until April 9 to pay this 8,000 francs. I would be very glad if M. Bienassis did not take the 1,200 francs, especially if he is not in a hurry for them, for this would be a small portion of the payment.

But borrowing to pay debts is a sad method which must be resorted to only in serious circumstances. I believe we should busy ourselves seriously with liquidating the debts of the establishment at Tonneins, as we have just done for the establishment of the Daughters of Mary in Agen. I am aware that they still owe money to the establishment at Bordeaux, which helped them to pay their debts.

Brother David has almost finished in Agen. At least it seems he can now absent himself without any inconvenience. Between him and the Good Mother Thérèse, we should try to find a way to prudently reach a complete release from debt.

In Agen there are several excellent religious who are ill and who are not recovering. There is one who is only 21 years of age; it is believed she is consumptive. Perhaps you could succeed in curing her? I have little confidence in the Agen doctors, but I have a great deal in you. If you help her out of this trouble, I will have Mother Emmanuel come to Tonneins, for she has ailments that often make us fear for her life. As a reward for all your good services, I will leave her in Tonneins long enough to furnish everything necessary for the education of the young women and also to give new energy to your Young Women of Tonneins. She is able to do both. The young 21-year old can become a valuable subject. It does not seem she is directed carefully.

Her zeal made her reach beyond her limits; she spoke with too much ardor and for too long a time at meetings.

Here we are in the Lenten season. Several times I have wished to write to Mother Thérèse on the precautions to be taken so that the fast and abstinence of Lent do not harm the health of the religious. I cannot do so today. I will be greatly obliged to you as a matter of conscience to arrange with Mother Thérèse whatever dispensations may be necessary. I am granting everything you judge to be necessary. I am with respectful devotedness, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I have heard several times that there is jealousy at Tonneins concerning the free primary schools established in Agen.

* * *

In the preceding postscript we notice Father Chaminade's intention to extend the benefit of free schools to other cities. The success of the one in Agen was complete. His thought appears more clearly in the next letter, where there is already a question of acquiring a second house in Tonneins for a school run by the Little Society. This project, however, was not realized.

153. To M. Faure de Lacaussade, Tonneins

March 20, 1821, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

Monsieur,

I will honor the debt of 1,200 francs. You may dispose of it in favor of Mme Laparre. I am also preparing to honor the 8,000 francs borrowed for Tonneins, but we must work seriously to free this establishment.

I have just spoken about this to M. Bienassis. I told him that truthfully, this is the first project of the establishment. I had counted him among the subscribers, but I told him he could be more useful to us by assisting us to offer subscriptions to the most important residences in a region covering three to four leagues. He is the one who could make these houses known to us, etc. He promised me almost everything, but not until after Easter, at the time of his return to the Haut-Pays. He is to see you when passing this way, to take counsel with you, etc. I am proposing that he exhort you to give the example of a substantial subscription. I am certain that in the paternal exhortation you give him, you will do everything your zeal and prudence suggests. As I told him, he may have a particular interest in the education of his daughters because, as soon as we have an assurance of freedom from debt, we will continue the work of repairing and adding to the convent. We must try to draw every possible advantage from it, for the service not only of the city but of the entire country.

Concerning the house for sale at 8,000 francs, Brother David said nothing to me about it, doubtless because of the worry over making the first payment. Moreover, he might have done better than keeping quiet about it. The Master for whom we are working has inexhaustible treasures. We must not tempt him, but it would not be tempting him to undertake what accords with his views.

We must make sure this house would be large enough for seven or eight religious, for the schools, and for the Men's Sodality. Among the religious there should be at least one priest, whose quarters must be more comfortable and larger than those of the superior. A priest will be a prime necessity, and he will not lack work, as it is very easy to foresee. However, at the present time I am not promising a priest. It will also be good to see if this house can be enlarged, either by some new acquisition or by construction. I am taking it for granted that this one already has a garden.

We could arrange our subscription lists to make the subscription apply to the two establishments. If you believe this house is really suitable to our purpose, if you really want to be the temporal father of the two establishments, if you seriously wish to come to an agreement with us to help free these two foundations, I do not believe I am imprudent in promising to advance the 2,500 francs you deem necessary to conclude the acquisition of the house. I had in mind to propose some other means, but this will have to be at another time.

I now must stop, while assuring you of my respectful attachment.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

This letter is intended to sustain Mlle de Lachapelle in her vocation.

154. To Mlle Charlotte de Lachapelle, Condom

March 23, 1821, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Daughter,

I am finally coming. It is very late for your situation and very late also, I assure you, for my sentiments. Do not imagine that I have ever lost sight of you. I am your father, and you are my Daughter. Without a doubt, God has permitted this long delay to try you. There is certainly no indifference on my part.

With interest and feeling I learn, my dear Daughter, of your struggles and of the proofs of your constancy. Who can doubt your vocation? How can anyone not see that the great Master who is calling you to his service has been sustaining you for so many years through these severe trials? What counsels can I, or rather should I, give you apart from those you are likely to receive from M. Castex and from all those who possess the fear of God? Let them be the ones who help you to place all your confidence in the grace of the Lord and in the protection of his august Mother, to whom you so particularly belong. And also, without ever lacking in the respect you owe to your parents, let them help you strive more advantageously and adopt a more fervent and secure attitude. From time to time, you should tell your parents that in opposing what you look upon as your vocation, they are opposing the designs of God, and they may not use against God the very authority over you they have received from God. You should also let your counselors know how much the constraints you impose upon yourself may be harmful to your health, and that another in a situation similar to yours (Sister des Anges) died from similar things.

You might also show them that by a voluntary sacrifice, they would participate in all the good your entry into the community would bring about and in all the merits you may acquire there.

You could make these last representations especially to your aunt. If she intended to keep you near her, threatening to deprive you of some inheritance which she might be disposed to leave you, what fine things could you not say to her in reply! By the prospect of some fortune, would she wish to prevent you from fulfilling the designs of God for you? Would she want her death to prevent you from accomplishing the good with which God has inspired you? Would she not have to fear, in appearing before the fearsome tribunal, having disposed of a part of her fortune to halt the march of Divine Providence? Etc., etc.

Prudence and courage, my dear Daughter! Courageous prudence, and prudent courage! Enter more and more into the spirit of the Institute of Mary! Follow its practices as much as you can. When you enter the ark of your covenant with the Lord, may you have conducted yourself like the dove which old Noah received in the evening, glorious with the olive branch, a sign of peace and of victory or of fidelity!

Encourage M. Castex regarding the Sodality. The difficulties he is experiencing must give him some idea of the good he will do some day in Condom. I believe he is encouraging you in his turn and that he is your support and your consolation in the midst of your struggles.

My dear Daughter, let me always know everything that happens. If you leave the father you have in Condom, the good God has provided for that by giving me very fatherly feelings toward you.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

S. 154a. To M. David Monier, Agen

April 6, 1821, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

Yesterday I received your notice that 4,000 francs would be delivered by courier. I received the sum this morning. I had prepared everything. Here, in short, is how I have proceeded. I had Brother Clouzet rewrite notes maturing at different dates, 6 months being the shortest term. I negotiated these notes at 4% per annum, using neither broker nor legal paper. Because Brother Clouzet was paying 5% interest, I added 1,000 francs to the sum of the notes merely because of the difference in interest rates. If I had been loaned only 5,000 francs as I asked, the three of us—M. Lapanze, M. Rothéa, and I—would have each furnished 1,000 francs.

However, the 4,000 francs will be useful, I hope. In general, it is difficult to borrow money except at exorbitant rates. But for gilt-edged securities or a certain investment, money can easily be found and at a moderate interest. Some people are kind enough to consider my signature as a good guarantee.

It is too late to write to our good Superior, for the postman is about to pass. Please give her and her community my heartfelt paternal greetings and tell her she may accept Babet Corday as a boarding postulant. I will return to this at some other time.

Please tell Brother Laugeay and the convent no longer to address anything to M. Richon. I am forever being asked when you will return. I would have sent you an obedience long ago, but I was afraid you would not be in a receptive mood. This fear I carry about with me, for I do not know the reasons for your prolonged stay. If I had been better informed, I might have been able to help you free yourself sooner.

Brother Lalanne advanced to the sub-diaconate tomorrow.

May the Lord grant you his peace and his grace.

* * *

S. 154b. To Bro. Louis Rothéa

April 27, 1821, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

Monsieur,

I had a talk with M. Duguet about the error which slipped into our agreement. He is favorable to all our previous arrangements—that is, I would give him 114 francs for each of the 2,000 pages of fine print, and also 100 francs per sheet for each of the other 2,000 sheets; for the last 1,000 I would not pay for the composition, which he set at 30 francs.

His honesty and frankness incline me not to hold him strictly to this agreement. I suggested a rebate of 10 francs per sheet for the fine print and 7 francs 10 sols for the pages in typescript, *petit romain*, which means that I will give him 161 francs per sheet for the 3,000

sheets of fine print, and for each of the 3,000 in *petit romain* 142 francs and 50 centimes, or 142 francs 10 sols. In truth, if I had not believed there was an advantage in printing 1,000 sheets more I would not have ordered it. M. Duguet is aware that I hesitated greatly, both because the sum involved will be tied up for an unknown number of years and because the book is not exactly as I wanted it.

In any case, I want to see this thing through and to continue giving M. Duguet some work; on my behalf, make him the proposals I have suggested. If he accepts them, as I hope he will, have him correct the contract or accept the one outlined in this letter. If he refuses, which is not likely, then he can consider my offer as null and void.

P.S. If it is not too late, ask M. Duguet to include among the various prayers the apology to the Sacred Heart taken from the "Christian's Day," page 320; the only change to made is this double title, "Apology to the Sacred Heart, or Visit to the Blessed Sacrament."

I am sending a Rule of Life to M. Duguet. He can include it at the end of the Manual. I have just this moment received a note from him. He says he paid out 500 francs on Monday. I did not expect him to spend such a sum so soon; however, if he needs the money, I will see that he receives it.

* * *

The Sodalties of the Immaculate Conception were always in full activity. On April 28, Father Chaminade made a contract with M. Duguet, a printer in Bordeaux, for 3,000 copies of a new edition of the Manual of the Servant of Mary. While awaiting his annual visit to Agen, he gives Adèle directions regarding her conduct toward certain postulants.

155. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

May 6, 1821, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

[With insert from S. 155]

My dear Child,

I have no doubt at all about the good intentions of all our Daughters, and in particular of the council members. Neither do I doubt their attachment to the Institute. My knowledge of their dispositions is a constant motive for consolation and hope.

What must be done concerning Sister Elisabeth? My dear Child, we must keep this postulant until the visit I fully intend to make at the earliest possible date. Regarding her health, take all the care of a tender mother. I doubt she will be able to find a countryside where the air is healthier and more abundant. Father Mouran will tell her parents and her tutor whatever he judges proper to obtain permission to remain.

If Sister Stanislas knows how to conduct herself concerning this young woman, she may contribute greatly in the cure of what may be faulty in the attachment that scandalizes. It is to be presumed that what is faulty is no more than her very great liveliness and her excessive familiarity. Father Mouran and you, as Mother of Novices, will give her the wise counsel she needs at the opportune time. Thus she may learn the dangers of this attachment and her need to struggle with it or rather, to direct it toward God and toward all the members of the community.

I believe as you do, my dear Child, that the council requires too much perfection in subjects who ask for admission or probation. This is not done in the most perfect organizations. Defects of postulants and novices are supported, as long as they are submissive and show goodwill, and especially when they make efforts to correct themselves. Nevertheless, I prefer this exaggeration rather than the contrary defect, for it is a good omen in the early days of an institution. Experience will teach us a middle course.

I would be obliged to you if you would tell our young postulant, Mlle de Gers, that if I do not write to her, I am not thinking of her less. In fact, I could say without exaggeration that I am thinking of her even more. I would be very sorry not to see her at the time of my first visit. I certainly hope her health will improve and that the Institute will have a real support in her.

May the peace of the Lord be with you.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I am sending an obedience to Brother David. I will give an answer to the old and yet still young Sister of Charity, Marie Songe; let her wait in peace.

* * *

While providing for the progress of his foundations, Father Chaminade did not lose sight of the Sodality and the institutions which depended upon it. In May of 1821 a storm arose over the work of the young abandoned children. Directed by Bro. Jean-Baptiste Collineau, it bore appreciable fruits (letter no. 140). After Brother Collineau became a priest the work could only progress, for he no longer needed outside help.

In the spring of 1821, a young lawyer named Adolphe Dupuch, the future Bishop of Algiers, had just returned from Paris and undertook to found in Bordeaux a society of good works similar to the one he had seen in Paris. He wanted to draw children away from the direction of Father Chaminade and Father Collineau. He counted on the help of Father Barrès, and in consequence also on the archbishop, who was no longer able to personally follow the progress of events. Father Chaminade was extremely pained by this because he foresaw the difficulties ahead; in some of his letters at this time, his expression of regret is mingled with complete deference to the authorities.

The first is addressed to M. Dupuch in reply to a letter of his which ended, "I earnestly recommend to your prayers our poor children, and in particular those of first Communion age. We all recommend ourselves to the same prayers, and I in particular, more than the others, because the name of Child of Mary, which you have given me yourself, gives me rights which will always be dear to me."

156. To M. Adolphe Dupuch, Lawyer, Bordeaux

May 15, 1821, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

Monsieur,

I have honestly offered to give your Association very interesting work with the young abandoned children. This prompt concession to your very first request is not the result of indifference, but rather of the lively interest I take in your Association, in its membership and in its many valuable elements.

Your zeal has taken strides, and you have extended your views. The association of the abandoned children has enlarged itself into a more comprehensive charitable organization, and Father Collineau is no longer considered suitable to direct it. You have asked me if you may choose a new overall director, as well as particular directors. I again acceded to your request, providing your choice fell upon someone I could accept as a sufficient guarantee that the good work would continue unhampered. There was discussion especially of Father Goudelin. You know I did not hesitate regarding him and several others we discussed.

Now you propose Father Dasvin as the sole director, following Father Goudelin's refusal. I know the worth of this young priest, and I would not be able to say how greatly I esteem and

love him.¹ You add that if I find in him a sufficient guarantee, you will present his name to the archbishop and seek his appointment.

I accept as trustee of the work not only Father Dasvin, but any other director His Excellency the Archbishop would name. I have no need to examine the worthiness of the person appointed. The nomination by His Excellency of a subject not presented by me will free me from all reproach before God and others. Thus we are in full agreement.

It could happen later that you will recognize that by removing this work from the hands of Father Collineau, its founder, you have humiliated him. You had no reason to cast him aside, at least from a material point of view, and you may perhaps come to repent what you have done.

If my prediction comes true, you may be sure of the strength of Father Collineau's soul. Whatever interest he has in this work, he will remain quiet and rejoice to see the same good done by others. He will not even think of any humiliation. If His Excellency should mention this, you can reassure him of this degree of virtue. Moreover, both he and I have more good works to look after than we have time for.

I greet you very amicably.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

At the same time Father Chaminade was writing this letter to M. Dupuch, he was sending a copy to Archbishop d'Aviau.

157. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux

May 15, 1821, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

Your Excellency,

I have the honor of sending you M. Dupuch's letter, which I found yesterday evening on returning home. I am adding a copy of my answer. Anything you do, Your Excellency, will be well done. I will accept it with respect and try to carry it out faithfully.

In relinquishing this work, I need a type of security. I will find your wisdom and authority more than sufficient.

I consider as really true what I am saying about Father Collineau's virtue.

I am with the most profound respect, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

The matter had already advanced further than the archbishop had at first supposed. He answered Father Chaminade by informing him of the reasons which justified choosing Father Dasvin de Boismarin as director of the work with the children. Father Chaminade believed it was his duty to present the following explanations.

158. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux

May 16, 1821, Bordeaux

Original and Rough Autograph Copy, Agmar

¹ Fr. Dasvin de Boismarin (1785-1859), a sodalist of the Madeleine, assistant at Saint Michel in Bordeaux, devoted his life mostly to the work of the Christian Friends. As a priest he was full of zeal, but as a man of the world he was anything but an administrator, which would explain Father Chaminade's hesitation about confiding the direction of the work to him.

Your Excellency,

You are too good and too honest. You have wished me to understand the grounds for your choice of Father Dasvin as sole director of the work of the abandoned children. These few words from you are sufficient for me, that "I have named Father Dasvin director in your place."

After everything that has happened between the Government, the local authorities, and the public concerning this work, I have contracted a type of obligation, Your Excellency, as a matter of honor and of conscience. I can only surrender this work in good conscience in two ways. The first is to confide it to a director of my choice who has at hand the appropriate helpers to run it advantageously; the second is to accept blindly and with respectful submission the director you have chosen and named to replace me. In the first case, I can protect the work in the qualities of the subject I have chosen, thus making it evident that I further the work rather than abandoning it. In the second, I have this protection in your wisdom and in your authority.

You will please me, Your Excellency, by telling me positively that you have named Father Dasvin director of the Association devoted to the Work of the Young Auvergnats. This is the name given by the statutes and by the authorization of the Minister.

Your Excellency, to answer directly the observations you had the kindness to make to me, I must say that I have looked upon this cooperation of young people in good works as a valuable good. You can tell this by the fact of my listening to a proposal which, in its true interpretation, would be injurious to Father Collineau and to me. The proposal reveals a secret bias against us and destroys a real and solidly-established good, to do it over but without any genuine foundation. The proposal was made by three young men, and the one who runs everything is to leave on May 24. The latter is truly very pious, talented, and very determined to do good, but possesses a certain exaltation of mind which gives cause for grave fear.¹ Since he has interfered with our work, he has already changed plans three times. If I am not more compromised, I owe this precisely to the fear I have of the entire business which has made me act so slowly.

Concerning Father Dasvin, I have always loved him, always esteemed him, and sometimes even venerated him. But with all that, I have never thought of proposing him, and if these good young men do, it is certainly for the lack of anyone else. The advantage he may have over Father Collineau because of his age would seem to me, as I see it, only to cast doubt upon him.

In fact, there is no inconvenience at all on the side of Father Collineau. I hope his virtue will place him above the type of humiliation he is encountering. Things could be otherwise in regard to certain groups, whose esteem and confidence he certainly has. What will they think? What will the prefect think? They have all known for the past three years that I was directing this work through him, etc. What would they think if Father Dasvin were my choice? I have reason to believe it will be quite another matter if he is the choice of Your Excellency, as authority can have views or opinions that no one is authorized to question.

Your Excellency, you are of the opinion that there is no inconvenience at all, as far as I am concerned, because I happen to be in this work for the sole purpose of giving advice. No doubt this is quite true, although I do not understand it. . . . As a result, counsels would certainly not be refused, but just as certainly they would not be followed. Furthermore, soon they would not even be requested.

This letter, Your Excellency, would have taken only a few lines if respect for you had not obliged me to follow yours point by point. So that you may read it more easily, I will have it recopied.

¹ Regarding M. Dupuch, Father Chaminade judged his sodalist correctly. The ardent zeal of M. Dupuch enabled him to do great good, but not without drawing upon him many a disappointment. It is known that, named to the See of Algiers in 1838, he was persuaded to resign in 1846. He spent the last years of his life in Bordeaux, where he died in 1856.

I am with the most profound respect, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

It is evident that the choice of Father Dasvin displeased Father Chaminade, and with reason. Archbishop d'Aviau nevertheless named him and informed Father Chaminade of this in a joking way. "Now you know, Reverend Canon," he said to him, "that I have named Father Dasvin as director of the Association of the Work of the Young Auvergnats, and because you said you would be pleased to have me tell you so positively, I flatter myself that by this prompt deference I will have acquired a new right to your benevolent and wise counsel. I then remain in this confidence, my dear and venerable one, your very humble and devoted servant." Provoked by this answer, Father Chaminade had prepared rather long explanations for the archbishop, but on the following day he shortened them.

159. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux

May 21, 1821, Bordeaux

Original and Rough Autograph Copy, Agmar

Your Excellency,

With submission, I learn from your letter dated May 17 that you have named Father Dasvin as director of the Association of the Work of the Young Auvergnats. It pleases me to note that you said "positively," but not that you had done it. If I had limited myself to the formal statement of giving up this work only into the hands of a director of my choice or to your authority, I would have sufficiently manifested to you the repugnance I felt for this nomination. If you then add that in this you show deference to my wise and benevolent counsels, I imagine that you mean it as a sort of refreshment to your weariness, *Ridendo dicere verum quid vetat?*¹

In the present situation, an act of authority which renders both the directors and the former association destitute brings only some inconveniences foreign to the work. I have asked Father Dasvin to come to an understanding with you, to ask you for a way of remedying these. Regarding the intrinsic ones, I must speak no longer of them; I leave that matter to your wisdom. I am to have one less responsibility before God.

I am with the most profound respect, Your Excellency, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. Your Excellency, I believed prompt and rigorous execution might not be in your way of thinking. If I have judged correctly, I will allow things to follow their regular course, in order not to contradict you in anything. I will neither say nor do anything except according to your orders.

* * *

In fact, there was more than one inconvenience. The work undertaken by Father Chaminade had received legal existence from the Government by the ministerial authorization granted April 12, 1819. It was supported by the encouragement of local authorities and by the contributions of numerous friends. It had been functioning for three months and asked for nothing other than to continue to grow. What would become of it under these new conditions? One month had not yet passed when Father Chaminade considered himself obliged to write again about this to M. Dupuch, to the prefect, and to the archbishop.

¹"To speak jokingly is holding back what truth?" Horace, *Ars poetica*, 105.

160. To M. Adolphe Dupuch, Lawyer, Bordeaux

June 14, 1821, Bordeaux
Autograph Rough Copy, Agmar

I am very sorry you are not holding to the offer I asked Father Dasvin to make to your piety and that of your estimable associates, or at least to the part you told Father Barrès to be kind enough to take.

To break the unity of the work, to create division, is truly to ruin it. *Regnum in se divisum*, etc. [a kingdom divided against itself]. I am convinced this is not your intention, but because I witness it and am convinced of it, can I remain quiet? Can I help taking the necessary steps so that this bad result may not take place? Because you know I am genuinely pleased at the information of your association, because I am personally attached to you and you know I am edified by your piety and zeal, because I preferred to suffer rather than to compromise you in anything—would you infer from all this that I am allowing the work to be divided without doing anything about it?

No, I cannot do so, in the conviction that you will lose it without wanting to. You have already brought it a great deal of harm. I hope this friendly advice, given in a peaceful spirit, will be enough to induce you to allow things to continue as you found them.

Father Dasvin must have told you that your Association could be formed with him as sole and independent director and that with pleasure I would see the members of this charitable association busy themselves with the work with the abandoned children, but in the manner and form that had already been established. He must have told you too that if I saw your association could offer me sufficient guarantee that this good work would surely continue, I would give it over to you entirely. I do not believe I would have great difficulty either with the local authorities or with the Minister of the Interior, if I were able to speak with confidence.

The budding association must busy itself with the work of the prisons and hospitals. Do you believe it will not be obliged to follow the direction and the customs these establishments already have? Small associations with the same goals have existed for years. Would you wish your association to cause the ruin of others? No, without a doubt. Well, for the time being, why would you not reason in regard to the work of the abandoned children as you reason about the works of the prisons and hospitals?

Let us do all the good works we can, for nothing is more according to the spirit of Christianity, but let us do them with the prudence and moderation which should always accompany them.

Filled with esteem and consideration, I have the honor of greeting you.

* * *

161. To Count de Tournon, Prefect of the Gironde

June 20, 1821, Bordeaux
Autograph Rough Copy, Agmar

Monsieur Prefect,

Our interesting work with abandoned children, which this past year has had great success, it seems to me is threatened. Here are the facts. Your wisdom will judge them.

Last winter, three pious and virtuous young men were employed in this work by Father Collineau. It spread and edified everyone. One of the three, M. Dupuch, got the idea around Easter of beginning a project in Bordeaux called the Association of Charity, which would occupy itself with the abandoned children, the prisons, and hospitals. He said it would be like a similar enterprise in Paris. He came to me with his two colleagues to propose that I hand over the entire

direction of the work with the young chimney sweeps. To encourage them, I gave them hope that I would come to an understanding with you, M. Prefect, if their association functioned well. I would be especially encouraging if it had a director in whom I could have confidence. A director was chosen who was not among those I had designated. He brings together quite a group in his home. They are taught catechism, Mass is said, etc. Another group continues to frequent their usual place of meeting. As soon as I heard of this division, I wrote the enclosed letter to M. Dupuch. He has just answered me that they are not dividing the work and that working under different foundations, under another direction and with the approval of the archbishop, it is no longer the same undertaking.

Here you have, M. Prefect, one of the principal causes of the delay in uniting the Bureau. Moreover, we are heavily in debt. The tradesmen become afraid because they see the work faltering. The people who would be able to help us with their charitable gifts wonder what to do. What, then, is to be done? The archbishop looks with pleasure upon the formation of this pious association. He believes the work of the young abandoned children is necessary for its development. It would be too painful for me to do anything contrary to his views. However, persuaded that the work of the little chimney sweeps cannot be sustained if the unity of direction is destroyed, I would be led to abandon the entire care of it, although I have its interests truly at heart.

I am, M. Prefect, with a profound respect, your very humble and very obedient servant.

* * *

162. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux

June 21, 1821, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

Your Excellency,

I awaited the time when I would be obliged to write to or see the prefect personally, to acquaint him with the troubles which is now afflicting the work with the abandoned children.

Provoked by his recent letter to Father Collineau, of which Father Barrès is aware, I am sending him the enclosed answer, which I am having copied for you.

I wish you to find here the spirit of moderation, which you so well exemplify yourself, and especially the expression of a very deep respect. I will always be, Your Excellency, your most humble and very obedient servant.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

S. 162a. To M. de Lala, Sarlat

June 23, 1821, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

My dear Nephew,

I have just time enough to send you Firmin's letter; signs of hope have appeared in the last few days. Let us be patient; I will soon share some of my thoughts about his welfare, providing his conduct is satisfactory. Give my friendly greeting to Sophie.

* * *

S. 162b. To M. de Lacaussade, Tonneins

June 26, 1821, Bordeaux
Copy, Agmar

It was always understood that the lodge would be kept. It is to be expected that it will be of some use later, not only as a deterrent to thieves and scoundrels but as a place of rest during certain recreations. It should be remarked that any repairs which are made must not prejudice its later usefulness. Proceed, then; you could have done so without consulting me. It would have been enough to tell me that you found the repairs necessary and that they would cost 250 francs.

I wonder if her lack of experience led Mother Thérèse to have recourse only once to Mme Verdier. Suggest that she do so more frequently during her illness. If it seems serious enough, daily recourse would not be too frequent.

To give you a reply to the boarding house problem is not that simple. Should we hold out the hope that boarders will be accepted? Of course, soon, after the grape harvest.

Should we take advantage of the fine season and gather the materials? Before answering in the affirmative, I wish you could have M. David leave Agen for two or three days, if he cannot leave permanently. The cost of these short trips is minimal when someone has time to make a round trip or to use a public vehicle. I will write to him immediately after this letter, if possible. While you are there you could also discuss from every angle the plan for a boys' school. This will save me time as I wait before deciding. I will ask the Lord to bless these projects, the town of Tonneins, etc.

I have the honor. . . .

* * *

One of the most characteristic traits of Father Chaminade in his manner of handling matters is apparent; his extreme loyalty causes him to make known to his superior what he writes to others. This continues throughout his life, and it will not be one of the least to be admired in the many trials of his last years. A final letter brings an end to the conflict. Father Chaminade not only hands over to Father Dasvin the direction of the chimney sweeps, but renounces any further part in the work.

163. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux

July 7, 1821, Bordeaux
Rough Copy, Agmar
[With insert from S. 163]

Your Excellency,

I had the honor of sending you a copy of the letter I addressed several days ago to the prefect, along with a copy of my last letter to M. Dupuch. I made known to the former the intention I had of giving up all solicitude for the young chimney sweeps because the good of the work required it. My letter to M. Dupuch could only prove to the prefect that I had neglected nothing to sustain the work begun under his auspices.

The prefect replied. His answer on these two points is what might be expected from his prudence. Then, without being more anxious about what he may be thinking of the change which is taking place, I will carry out my idea and ask Your Excellency to be kind enough to grant me permission to completely abandon the cares of the work which, if developed according to my views and those of the prefect, hopefully in time would have revitalized both the children and the masters. Today, Your Excellency, I assure you that the good of the work obliges me to this stand I am taking, no less than the impossibility of meeting expenses, if the situation should continue.

I am forced to take this stand for the general good, and also because of the impossibility of making this expense. However, Your Excellency, I believe I should inform you that since last

year, I owe - - -francs which I borrowed from the Society at Rue des Menuts in order to help the young Auvergnats. I was hoping to repay this debt by reactivating the pledges which have been neglected since Brother Collineau left for the seminary. Also, I have - - -francs to pay because of the extraordinary expenses we had this year, some of these resulting from our work with the first communicants which had not been discussed with me or with Brother Collineau. Do you think, Your Excellency, that in all justice I should be deprived of resources upon which I had relied, that I should be burdened with debts; or on the contrary, do you not think these gentlemen who have taken over the work and who are now receiving the contributions, for instance the Prefect, etc., should bear these expenses? They may take all the time they need to repay the - - -francs.

Thus, Your Excellency, a word on your part will finally put an end to a discussion that has been too long and too painful. As soon as you have spoken, there will remain for us only to thank the Lord and to ask him to bless a type of good we had begun, but that our sins, without doubt, have made it impossible for us to develop.

These are my sentiments, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

What Father Chaminade had foreseen was not long in coming. The work of the young chimney sweeps languished and at one time almost completely disappeared. It was happily resumed by M. Dupuch, who became a priest in 1826, then by M. Buchot, only to return to the Madeleine around 1860.

The correspondence returns to the life of the two religious Societies. This is the last letter Father Chaminade wrote to Mlle de Lachapelle before her entry into the convent. Soon after, having gone to the lakes in the Pyrénées, she took this occasion to leave her family. Without returning to Condom, she went directly to Agen.

164. To Mlle Charlotte de Lachapelle, Condom

July 6, 1821, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Daughter,

In taking your aunt from this world, the Good God has lifted the greatest obstacle to your following your vocation. Your parents no longer have even apparent reasons to offer which might prevent you from flying to your beloved convent, where you are finally to take the title of Daughter of Mary and to become the Spouse of Jesus Christ, her adorable Son.

My dear Daughter, take this courageous and firm attitude which the slave knows how to take when he wishes to break his chains. You have been sighing long enough. Discuss with Father Castex how you can put your holy plan into effect. Your parents, moreover, had given you their consent under conditions which have been fulfilled for a long time.

May the Holy Spirit be for you, my dear Daughter, a spirit of strength and courage! May the peace of the Lord be with you at all times!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

Although the occupations of Father Chaminade were increasing on all sides, Bishop Jacoupy insisted that he occupy himself with the direction of the Carmelites of Agen. Here is his answer to David Monier, who remained in Agen for the sake of the free schools, which were being attacked by liberals there.

165. To M. David Monier, Agen

July 10, 1821, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

[With insert from S. 165]

My Dear Son,

Storms of various kinds follow one another in Agen. Can it be that Agen is a more dangerous spot on the stormy sea of this world than other places, and therefore more to be feared? Are there more dangers than elsewhere? *Spiritus procellarum, benedicite Domino* [winds of storms, bless the Lord].

Yesterday evening I was at the archbishop's palace. I learned at the door that His Excellency had just put on his cloak and was going to pay a visit to the Carmelites. I did not believe I should go in. If His Excellency of Agen persists in wanting to make me a superior for his Carmelites, the simplest and the most convenient thing would be for him to send His Excellency the Archbishop my nomination, with the request that it be passed on to me if he would judge it appropriate, etc. . . .

No doubt there was a very real good in centralizing these types of communities,¹ especially in the same city. If there is a real good, there is also a relative harm, which is also real. My already absorbing occupations are increasing every day. The respectable Carmelites of Agen will need great patience and forbearance. *Pluribus intentus, minor est ad singula sensus* [the grasp focused on many things is less directed to the particulars]. I must not suspect any jealousy in the Carmel; all its holy solitaries will doubtless see with no difficulty that I must give more time and care to the Daughters of Mary because they are an emerging Institute.

You also know, my dear Son, that I have the care of another Institute, the Miséricorde; it has a second establishment in Laval, which is becoming considerable. Mlle de Lamourous, who had been doing almost everything with the aid of counsels, has been bedridden since All Saints.

I am transforming the small country place of Saint-Laurent into a novitiate and a house for men's retreats. I am not speaking of the Sodalities, which are rapidly multiplying.

If in spite of all these good reasons and several others that you know, His Excellency the Bishop still persists, I am bowing my head and shoulders. I will accept this new burden, *jugum suave* [sweet yoke], because of the fervor of these good Carmelites.

My dear Son, yesterday I received a letter from M. de Lacaussade asking that I write to you, using his address at Tonneins. I did write on Sunday (the day before yesterday). Your letter of Sunday evening and a careful study of our situation persuade me to come to a decision regarding the proposed boarding establishment at Tonneins. I am writing to M. de Lacaussade with this post. I will copy or have copied that letter and will enclose it with this one for your guidance. Consider null and void anything in my letters to Agen or in those you will find at Tonneins which is contrary to what I will write immediately to M. de Lacaussade. I will stop for now.

I will return to you. . . .

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

Father Chaminade's attention kept returning to Tonneins, and correspondence with M. de Lacaussade continued. There was now the question of opening a boarding school for young women of the town and the region.

166. To M. Faure de Lacaussade, Tonneins

¹ The religious communities of women.

July 10, 1821, Bordeaux
Autograph, Arch. FMI
[With insert from S. 166]

In spite of my many occupations, I never lose sight of our beloved convent at Tonneins and of the projected boarding school. After mature reflection, here are my thoughts and conclusions.

1. A boarding school for young women in the convent will undoubtedly benefit both you and the convent. I mean that it will increase the esteem and consideration of the best homes from a very large section, and you can turn this to the public and religious good.

2. I have reason to hope I can supply this convent with enough good teachers to meet the parents' expectations. We still have almost a year ahead of us.

3. I cannot advance any money for the establishment of this boarding school, and here I am speaking in the name of all the establishments of the Institute of Mary.

4. Thus you must find the necessary advance to proceed according to the plans you and Brother David have agreed upon. I am saying "advance," for I willingly will assume the obligation of reimbursing you for the capital used. You believe we could manage with 7,000 francs, 2,000 in cash. I also believe this as far as the construction and repairs on the building are concerned. I have abundant proof that you know how to take things into account, but there are other expenses for the running of a boarding school.

5. I will also willingly agree to a small percentage of interest on the capital. This interest, it seems to me, would be very fair. You would not need to fear that under the pretext of doing a good work, the convent is seeking to deprive you of the rate of interest agreed upon. You would like to give it everything you have, and knowing the dispositions of your heart I do not doubt that would be a great deal. However, every agreement will always be faithfully kept.

6. If in the course of events you find yourself short of money and if I should happen to have some, this would be at your disposal, not only as payment of capital advanced but as a friendly loan.

7. With what Providence provides, the boarding school, well-established and well-equipped, will end with the liquidation of the debt of the convent itself; without this we would perhaps be obliged to take measures that would reverse all the plans we contemplated for the establishment.

8. The inconvenience you foresaw for your family in an advance of funds for the beginning of the establishment is now dissolved. The establishment itself takes care of it, and by doing so it only strengthens itself and assures itself it can settle its affairs.

9. Advances are not made all at once, but distributed over time until the enterprise is completed. Only when the books are closed is the total amount of capital fixed. This process is helpful to the donor.

However, a short written agreement must guide you from the outset. At appropriate times you may provide donors with receipts.

I am stopping now. With a person as intelligent as you, spelling out details and consequences is unnecessary. I am sending a copy of this letter to Brother David by the same carrier.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

167. To M. Faure de Lacaussade, Tonneins

July 13, 1821, Bordeaux
Autograph, Arch. FMI

Monsieur,

I have no intention of bothering you with the enticement of an interest on sums which might be lent for equipping the projected boarding school. I have only wished to remove any obstacles (1) if you had been obliged to make a loan, or (2) for yourself, if you had advanced the funds, because of certain considerations concerning your family.

I am deeply convinced that you have only good intentions, or rather intentions which seem good to you, in the decision you are making. Without judging them, I will adore the dispositions of Divine Providence. The Good God, who permits it, may have other views. It is up to me to ask God to make them known to me, so I may carry them out.

I have written few letters in my lifetime in which I have better maintained my soul in God's presence than the last one to you.

I am taking the liberty of including here a short letter for the superior. It has nothing to do with the convent; it concerns only family matters.

I have the honor of offering you the assurance of my respectful devotedness.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

At the end of July, Father Chaminade informed Adèle and M. de Lacaussade of his imminent departure for Agen. He went to visit the different communities, to give a retreat to the religious of Agen, to prepare for the opening of a school at Tonneins, and to hasten the development of free schools in Lot-et-Garonne.

168. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

July 24, 1821, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

[With inserts from S. 168]

My dear Child,

I have spoken about receiving the renewal of the community's vows only because you wanted me to. Otherwise, I would have left it for the end of the retreat. All the reasons you give me are very good. Have your renewal take place next Sunday, etc.

Moreover, (1) we will have many things to do, and it is good that during my short stay with you the community feels quite free; (2) if my visit can produce a true renewal of fervor, why toward the end of it would I not have you all renew your vows so that everyone may be renewed? Because this renewal is not a matter of rule, it would then have a more touching character. The will could only be moved by its fervor and devotedness.

To render our efforts more prompt and more enlightened, you would do well, my dear Child, to have the account ready that it is suitable you should give me regarding (1) the personal, (2) the moral, (3) the spiritual, and (4) the temporal welfare.

If Brother David had time, he could work out a form that you would only need to fill out. This form would always be with you and would serve as guide for another time.

This form is really only the repetition of those which the Mothers of Zeal, of Instruction, and of Work have at their disposal. If it is well drawn up, I will have a clear view of the good and bad qualities, the virtues and defects (I dare not say the vices) of all of the women who are under your jurisdiction. A word must also be said about all the different types of people with whom the convent has fairly frequent relationships. This list will also give me an idea of the condition of classes, the workshops of the Sodality, whether of the Ladies, the Young Women, or the Sodalities affiliated with the Sodality of Agen.

It would be good, my dear Child, for this list to be completed with whatever ideas you have about improvements, modification, change, etc.

Be sure to omit whatever personal difficulties most habitually trouble you from these notes.

I have only mentioned the temporal, but you easily understand that the report includes many points.

With such an outline, my visit would be useful to you in every respect, and we can gain time for partial or general instructions. Furthermore, with what I will add after a true examination of each point, it will be of help to me all year in my work of guidance.

I will be greatly obliged to you if you will ask Brother David to have Father Laugeay make me a short outline of the same type, for the new institution.¹

If we wish to advance properly, my dear Child, we must proceed with order. We must especially avoid advancing blindly or, as it were, simply feeling our way.

I received a short note from Brother David. The manuals left on Saturday in the care of a trustworthy boatman. They will be eight days on the way; even though the way-bill specifies seven days, the boatman asked for eight, and I agreed.

I hope to leave next Monday, July 30. It is possible that I will arrive in Tonneins by nightfall. I also hope that you will pray for the travelers. For my part, I will not cease to ask that my visit may draw down upon you all types of blessings . . .

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I wrote to the director of the Sodality in Pau, suggesting that he was to ask the parents of Mlle Figarol to allow her to come to the convent at Agen for the week during which I will be there. I am not counting on it, but if she does come, I hope she will be well received by Sister Xavier.

* * *

169. To M. Faure de Lacaussade, Tonneins

July 29, 1821, Bordeaux
Autograph, Arch. FMI

Monsieur,

I am preparing to visit our small establishments. I expect to leave next Tuesday. Perhaps I may spend the night at Tonneins. My regular visit to our beloved little convent will not take place until my return to Agen. As a result, on my way I will stay only a very short time in Tonneins.

As my traveling companion I will have only Father Rothéa, but only if his brother, a young priest, does not arrive until tomorrow. We are expecting his arrival any day now.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

Fr. Charles Rothéa arrived in Bordeaux only on August 14. He went immediately to Agen, where he joined Father Chaminade and returned with him to Bordeaux. Here is a note on this religious who played such a great role in the early development of the Society of Mary.

Fr. Charles Rothéa was the first priest to enter the Society of Mary and one of those who left behind the most blessed recollections. Born in 1791 at Landser in Alsace, he made his first studies among the Benedictines of Mariastein near Bâle, which developed his musical talent, and his theological studies in the seminary of Besançon, where he met Father Caillet. Ordained in 1816 in the chapel of the Ursulines in Fribourg, he was almost immediately put in charge of the parish of Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines in his

¹ The community of the religious who directed the primary school.

original diocese. His brother Louis acquainted him with the Society of Mary, and he entered in 1819. Father Charles did not hesitate to follow him and to leave everything, to give himself to a Society which made explicit profession of honoring and serving Mary. Father Rothéa later recalled to Father Chaminade the details of his entry into the novitiate. "You told me, my Good Father, that it was necessary to begin the novitiate at Saint-Laurent. My brother, Brother Olivier, a novice, and I went there at 9 o'clock in the evening, and we found only a little straw. Extreme poverty! Nevertheless, a joy reigned among us. We sang hymns; we were glad. We were so poor that when you came to see us, we had no chair to offer you. You sat down beside me on my trunk. You spoke to me about your ideas, and I felt consoled by them. There were only four of us, and two years later there were thirty."

In 1823, Father Rothéa was sent to Saint-Remy as chaplain of the little group, then became the director of the boarding school. There he was a model of humility and mortification, kneeling before his brothers in the Chapter of Faults to kiss their feet and spending the winter without fire despite the rigorous climate, in a room on the north side of the building. So many virtues were blessed by God. Father Rothéa had the joy of gaining for the Society of Mary such recruits as Fathers Caillet, Chevaux, and Meyer and of initiating them into religious life. In 1829 when Father Lalanne came to Saint-Remy, Father Rothéa was sent as director to Saint-Hippolyte in Alsace. There he made himself purchaser, along with his brothers Louis and Xavier. The latter was an affiliate of the beautiful house of Ebersmunster, which he had donated to the Society of Mary. From that time on he resided either at Saint-Hippolyte or at Ebersmunster, neighboring houses, working with zeal at recruitment for the Society of Mary in Alsace. Then for several years at Réalmont he was Provincial of the South of France (1853-55).

Exhausted by age, he retired to Bordeaux, the seat of the General Administration, and moved with it to Paris in 1861. He lived there a few more years, leading a life of great piety, and died March 12, 1868. He rests in the vault of the superiors, at Merles.

Father Rothéa had regular features, a ruddy complexion, and an angelic countenance, his contemporaries say, especially when he prayed. He had the sensibility of an artist and the simplicity of a child. The heart dominated in him and manifested itself by the most touching expressions, whether in regard to the Society of Mary, which he always tenderly loved, or with regard to Father Chaminade, whom he always upheld in whatever circumstances, and whom after his death he venerated as a saint. Furthermore, Father Rothéa lacked neither intelligence nor culture, and his *Letters of Direction*, addressed in 1857 to Father Guillaume, are full of the spirit of the Society of Mary. Having little aptitude for administration, as he himself admitted, he nonetheless left the impression and the memory of a venerable priest and a holy religious. Good Father Chevaux did not hesitate to call him one of the pillars of the Society of Mary, and according to the words of Father Fidon, it was he along with Fr. Léon Meyer who had the spirit of our venerated Founder in the highest degree.

However, his most eminent characteristic was an entirely filial devotedness toward the most holy Virgin. Regarding his devotion to the Blessed Virgin, a witness says it is not saying too much to call it "immense." Every day after his Mass, he ended his thanksgiving by paying a visit to the altar of Mary. Going on a walk, if a church was on the way he went in and intoned a hymn to the Blessed Virgin. When he spoke of her, said Brother Morel, another saint, his features became radiant. "Words fail me," said another religious of Saint-Remy, "to express his outbursts of joy when he sang to the Blessed Virgin while accompanying himself on the organ." When he preached about her, his look brightened, his features became impassioned, and his enthusiasm overflowed. This was the love of a child for his tenderly loved mother which passed from his heart into that of those listening to him. In retirement in Paris, he loved a large statue of the Blessed Virgin in a niche at the end of an alley in the park. Without being a work of art, this statue was charming because of the youthful features of the mother and son, which seemed to portray their love for each other. He often visited it and remained a long while at its feet, reciting his Rosary, his eyes firmly fixed on the Virgin. "What do you do there

on those long visits?" a brother once asked him. "I am visiting our establishments," answered Father Rothéa, recalling a memory of the Bordeaux Sodality. "I think now about one of our houses and then about another, and I ask the Blessed Virgin to bless them, to provide for their needs, to show herself truly their Mother, and to have her Son reign in them."

"At this time," relates Bro. Benoît Meyer, "he often came to see me at the Institution Sainte-Marie on the Rue de Monceau, and he sometimes seemed sad. He then sat at the piano, and together we sang hymns he had composed and had taught me at Saint-Remy, *Te amare non cessare* or *Memorare, O piissima*, and he would return joyful. On his deathbed, he still sang one of his preferred hymns, 'I will see her, this dear Mother,' and thus he died piously in the embrace of the Lord and his most holy mother."

* * *

This impression left by Father Chaminade's visit is according to the letters of Adèle to the superior of Tonneins.

August 4. The Good Father arrived in good health, Wednesday at four o'clock. You know us, and so you can understand our joy! But alas, he has so much to do that I am afraid all our sisters will not get to speak to him, much to their regret. I ask you to pray that this may not happen. Neither I nor any of the Mothers have as yet talked with him. He gave us a fine conference on faith and promised to give us one on mental prayer. We advance the hour for our Rosary and supper, and he gives them in the evening. He does not have a minute to himself. . . .

August 6. The Good Father's stay is really rich in graces from the peace he spreads about him, his solid instructions, the good prayers, without forgetting the little mortifications . . . because he is all absorbed, and I clearly see that he will not be able to talk to all of us individually. He is hindered by a crowd of young women who want to enter. I believe the convent is going to be full. Pray to God, dear Friend, that I may be able to direct this multitude of souls who are going to come. The Lord has great designs.

August 17. In spite of his goodwill, the endless occupations of the Good Father prevent him from leaving today. It is not because of us, for we see him only in passing, but it is for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, which is the only thing desired and sought by this holy man.

He asks me to write you to prepare your community for the renewal of vows Sunday morning and for the reception of sodalists in the evening. He will arrive in Tonneins only Saturday evening. To gain time, ask him to speak to you at the Masses, for this will take less time than conferences in the evening and he will be able to give more time to the individual interviews. Ask the Good Father to speak to you about faith and mental prayer, as these are his two most beautiful conferences.

Following the example of our Good Father, let us be all dedicated to the greatest glory of God. He was telling us that we must never do anything just to satisfy our own pleasure. Well, dear Sister, let us see the Good Father not from natural satisfaction, but only from the good that will come from it. If he does more good in speaking to others than to us, let us be satisfied with everything. He has recruited several young men for the brothers—well, should we not be glad?

We received some remarks from this Good Father. He brought us together, we Mothers of the council; he desired that we hold our councils more in the spirit of God and of faith. Pray that we may profit by his holy admonitions. He is a true patriarch.

* * *

As a souvenir of his visit, Father Chaminade left an order, dated August 17, to regulate different points regarding the holding of the council, food, and obedience. The Little Society was not forgotten during this visit, which meant new progress for it in the Agen region.

170. To M. Faure de Lacaussade, Tonneins

August 8, 1821, Agen
Autograph, Agmar
[With insert from S. 170]

Monsieur,

The Good God seems to have spared my weakness during my journey to this city, allowing me to find only reasons for consolation.

The new free primary school does not belie its reputation. I examined it in all respects. I find it receptive to some improvements, but it has no truly weak point, and its foundation is solid. All the various administrations are satisfied.

Several cities of this department are asking for a similar institution. I have the intention of consenting to their desires, but little by little and in proportion as the needed teachers are found. However, this will never be to the prejudice of Tonneins. Tonneins will always have the preference. But in the near impossibility of acquiring a locale that is necessary for this establishment, I would be obliged to accept whatever offers the municipal administration might make.

In this state of affairs, it would be wise to rent neither of the two houses you had the kindness to speak about. Will the mayor of Tonneins perhaps open his eyes in time to have the first choice?

I hope we will go to Tonneins on August 16 to spend the night.

I have seen to it that Sister Cathérine's elder sister stays in the convent; the younger sister will be lodged in town and put to the test.

Please accept, Monsieur, my respectful and friendly greetings.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P. S. Brother David offers you a token of his devotion.

M. Lacoste will take care of your bills. I will see to it that you receive your answer, if he does not give it to me in time for me to forward it to you before my departure. M. Lacoste is very busy.

* * *

Father Chaminade took this offer of free schools strongly to heart. When Brother David informed him that "the General Council of the department had put him in charge of all the primary education in the department of Lot-et-Garonne," he was delighted and gave his instructions on this subject to his representative. He was of the opinion of not accepting any schools immediately and then, progressively, only the schools of the four principal cities of the department: Tonneins, Nérac, Marmande, and Villeneuve, and to begin with this last one, where arrangements were most advanced.

171. To M. David Monier, Agen

August 27, 1821, Bordeaux
Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

Courage! In wishing you courage, I am inviting myself also to take some.

Providence is offering us a charming course. Let us fight for the glory of Jesus and Mary! May the spirit of religion be propagated and sustained, at least in our unhappy country. However, we must be on guard for the devil's ruses, so jealous is he when it comes to the glory of our august Patroness.

You have done well in accepting the four principal cities for our institutions successively, and not all at the same time.

Marmande will not be ready to receive us for some time. I spoke about this with the sub-prefect at the time of my stay in this city. Whatever desire he or the pastor seemed to have, he did not believe he could come to any agreement with you when you stop there on our return from Bordeaux. I hope it will be easy to persuade Nérac to wait, even if it would be ready to receive us, which I have some reason to doubt.

Everything is ready in Villeneuve, even the furnishings; it is the *collège* of the area. It seems to me this is where we should begin, but not before All Saints Day. Your plan for beginning everywhere at the same time¹ is ingenious, but it would surely make us fall into the snares of the enemy. For the six postulants, let us follow the course we have agreed upon, accelerating or slowing it according to the greater or lesser degree of their success.

Our four young religious² need to make the retreat, both for their spiritual and their bodily health. They are awaiting it and desiring it, etc. . . . From now until All Saints Day, we can prepare subjects who will rival those of Agen in holiness.

According to these considerations, see what you should do and say to sustain whatever good dispositions you find. People with good sense will not be surprised that we are taking charge of these establishments only one at a time.

I am sending you a copy of the Statutes of Father Mertian.¹ It seems to me the schools of the Daughters of Mary have been spoken of far too often. I would have preferred that while waiting for them to develop on a larger scale, we would have formed the teachers and lay supervisors. It would also have been desirable for all of these to have tried our method of instruction and education with the young women who came first. The good reputation of the method could have grown gradually. I believe we must hold to this *usque ad tempus* [up to a point in time].

An act of charity and religion has been changed into an act of inconsistency, or at least of great imprudence.² *Inimicus homo hoc fecit* [a malicious man did this]. Our good religious did not know how to answer the questions put to them. From there, confirmation. . . . It would be useless for me to answer. I must limit myself by saying that neither the Institute nor its spirit have been outraged in any way. Whatever the case may be, I will write a few words to the penitent religious to delay her entrance into her humble retreat. The people of Agen have very fiery heads.

The best people have great trouble defending themselves against their imagination.

I am stopping now and embracing you tenderly.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

172. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

August 28, 1821, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

I do hope my visit has done some good for our beloved convent. But now we must see how to sustain it. The means to this are (1) a great regularity, (2) conferences to the community, which you will prepare especially by means of prayer, (3) assuring yourself that all your

¹ With the aid of postulants recruited in Agen. Fr. Chaminade speaks of six who will be received into the novitiate of Saint-Laurent in August.

² Of Agen.

¹ Founder of a Congregation of brothers in Alsace, which will be referred to later (letter no. 176).

² See the following letter.

Daughters make mental prayer, and (4) giving me accurate information about all our beloved Daughters, particularly if there is any noticeable change in them, either toward good or to the contrary. When you see that this may result in a great advantage for some, you might suggest they write to me.

I have learned that already our simple act of charity and religion toward Mme Champié is being misrepresented. I am writing to her to postpone her entering the retreat which had been granted her in the convent. The reason I am giving her is our intention of doing something better for her, inspired by her sentiments of penitence.

May the Lord grant the prudence and strength of soul needed for the proper direction of your community! I ask him to shower his blessings upon you and your beloved Daughters.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

S. 172a. To M. de Lacaussade, Tonneins

August 28, 1821, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

In spite of my straitened circumstances and the fact that in view of your generosity, I did not expect another bill, I will accept and pay your bill for 500 francs. On my trip to Verdélais I was unable to obtain a preacher for your parish. I will try again at the very first opportunity. I must also make greater efforts to obtain a loan, either in Paris, Bordeaux, or some other commercial center; this is a delicate matter.

The sub-prefect of Marmande received me with great courtesy and assured me of his protection for all our establishments in the territory under his jurisdiction. He would have liked to have a system of free elementary schools set up in Marmande. There is a building which is not bad, but it will require extensive repairs for which there are no funds at the present time. It seems he will try to raise money by subscription; he will be the first to contribute.

In the last two mail deliveries, Brother David informs me that the general Council of the department has put us in charge of all the elementary instruction in the department of Lot-et-Garonne. Brother David committed himself, to begin with, for the four chief towns: Agen, Villeneuve, Nérac, and Marmande. Several council members petitioned for their hometowns. It grieves me not to see Tonneins on the list; we have been negotiating for over a month now. I would really like to see Tonneins receive the preference. I am merely giving you a general idea, for I myself do not know all the details. The minutes of the meeting are not yet available. My information is based on some notes taken.

P.S. I am pressed for time so that I cannot write to the convent, but I am keeping it in mind.

* * *

In the schools of the Society of Mary everything was happening as Father Chaminade had foreseen. Villeneuve alone immediately obtained religious, a priest for the collège (Fr. Jean-Baptiste Collineau) and three others for the communal primary schools.¹ In September, after having regulated everything in the Haut-Pays in the name of Father Chaminade, Brother David returned to Bordeaux. Upon his return, Father Chaminade gave a short order to direct the

¹ The Society of Mary kept the direction of the work only until 1827, but it directed parishes, then free schools until 1903.

Daughters of Mary in the formalities for the time of entry of the postulants. This does not have any special interest; therefore, here is only the letter which accompanied it.

173. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

September 21, 1821, Bordeaux

Original, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

I have many things to say to you, but little time to explain myself on each point. I do not know how far I will get in this letter, but nevertheless I am making a beginning.

1. For some time you have been receiving the furniture of subjects who intend to enter your Institute. Most of the time, no itemized list of the various pieces has been made. Even if there were such lists, if they are only mere notes they would prove nothing when questions arise as a result of women leaving. And the trouble becomes more serious when parents, tutors, or heirs become involved. On certain occasions I have noticed that the houses of the men were forced to give up more than they had received, and even then this did not satisfy all the pretensions of the claimants. It may be that the same thing has happened to you. In any case, it is only too possible that it can happen in the future if matters are not put in good order.

The remedy for all this is to make a double list between yourself, my dear Child, and every one of the postulants or others who bring in personal effects. There are some who bring in so little that it may be counted as nothing. But even then, if it may be foreseen that they or their parents may show any interest in the matter, it would be best to do as I have just stated.

You will need to begin your lists with those involving the greatest number of items or those of the greatest value, without regard to their date of entry or their worth.

The ruling I am now giving you about this matter dispenses from making such lists those who have made a will, for you know the state of their property. Some have given their furniture to some of our sisters. Others have arranged only for what their natural heirs might legitimately demand.

Never, in spite of all precautions, will anyone foresee all possible contingencies. This is what we must realize; so in regard to furniture coming from so many different hands, my objective has been to avoid, in the greatest number of cases, discussions, scandals, the lack of charity, and sometimes the hatred that claims give rise to every time accounts to be rendered are not clear and precise. Support me in this matter.

2. The admission of outsiders on various days at different hours and for different reasons would end by entrapping you in a disorder and in a series of inconveniences you could no longer avoid. Thus I have believed it is necessary to issue an ordinance, and I leave it to you to carry this out.

I know very well that I have approved most of these entries, but this fact takes away neither their inconveniences nor their danger. I see the evil, and I am trying to remedy it without wishing to accuse anyone.

3. The propositions relative to Condom which refer so strongly to the personal matters of our Sister de l'Incarnation need to be developed and matured.

It could be that Providence destines us for the performance of new forms of good works in this particular country. Let us begin or let us continue to make ourselves its instruments when and how God may desire.

4. I would like to answer the letter from Mother du Sacré-Coeur as much because of what concerns her as of the other views she proposes to me, but time is so short. She must strengthen herself in the way God has opened for her by his grace. As for the subject matter, it is a subject for prayers and meditations. If God does not come to our help we work in vain, the prophet has said. The word of God will always be true, in the least things as in the greatest. Let us ask for God's help, and let us not cease to do this.

5. It seems to me it is important that the stable destined for the cows, and which M. David put up, should be covered all the time. By using it, we can tear down the temporary stable under the infirmary, which renders useless this summer house and its original purpose.

6. I am writing to Sister Thérèse de Saint-Augustin, and this is about all I can do for this time.

May the God of peace and of mercy grant you his blessings!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

S. 173. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon

September 21, 1821, Bordeaux

I, Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Missionary Apostolic approved by the Ordinary, Superior of the Institute of Mary, To our Daughters of the aforesaid Order who are established in the city and diocese of Agen, Peace and mercy in the Lord.

Following the protests which have been made to me concerning various articles of furniture which certain members bring with them into a house of the Order when they enter as postulants or novices, and on the return or restitution of these same items when the occasion presents itself, I have believed it useful to make the following regulations, applicable to the house in question.

Article 1. A house may not receive any furniture or movable property from a postulant, a novice, or any other candidate admitted on probation unless an inventory in duplicate is made, one copy to be kept by the Mother Superior and the other by the candidate who brings in the aforementioned furniture.

Article 2. The inventories in duplicate of the furniture and movable property of those candidates who were admitted before these presents and which were not drawn up will be drawn up at the latest within the week following the reception of the present ruling; the Mother Superior will acknowledge receiving said regulation.

Article 3. A candidate who is withdrawn by her parents or who leaves of her own volition if she has come of age, and for whatever reason, will take along all the belongings she brought with her. She will acknowledge receiving these at the bottom of her duplicate inventory, which she will then surrender.

Article 4. Any monies the candidate may have brought will be noted in the inventory, and restitution will be duly made of the amount along with the rest, except for the amount agreed upon for room and board covering the duration of her stay in the house.

Article 5. Those candidates who declare that they have made their wills with the provision "that their heirs will have right to their movable property, either on the word of Mme de Batz de Trenquelléon or without inventory," or who would otherwise have disposed of the said furniture on behalf of one or more residents of the convent, are alone dispensed from the obligation of making a duplicate inventory and of leaving a copy with the Mother Superior.

Article 6. The Mother Superior of the convent of Agen is charged with the execution of this order.

Done at Bordeaux on September 21, the year 1821.

* * *

The following letters return to the Little Society and the signs of its vitality in Bordeaux. Its developments called for new resources, and Father Chaminade would have been deeply troubled if he had not placed all his confidence in Providence. On September 24, we see him

turning to his faithful old friend, M. Lapause. This wealthy man had already rendered notable services to the budding Institute. Since the previous spring, he had been affiliated and lodged with the community on Rue de Menuts. He placed at Father Chaminade's disposal the income from the vines he owned at Saint-Loubès, to the north of Bordeaux. Often he saved Father Chaminade great embarrassment. Here is one case.¹

174. To M. Lapause, Saint-Loubès

September 24, 1821, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

Monsieur and very dear Son,

The pressing need for the small reserves you have kept in the country is finally upon us. I am sending our good brother, M. Bidon, to obtain them. I hope you will have no anxiety about them. Whatever may belong to the Institute is secure, but especially when the great and good Master, in whose immediate service they are used, has a hand in the matter.

I am, Monsieur and very dear Son, yours very truly in the hearts of Jesus and Mary.

*

[Here is the answer from M. Lapause.]

Our Good Father in Jesus Christ,

I am sending you through our very faithful Brother Bidon the small reserve I have in the country, which amounts to 2,000 francs. When someone has the Good God and your prudence as security, certainly there is no cause for anxiety. There still remains what gold I have in our house in Bordeaux, 1,116 francs, which will serve to clear my liabilities and cultivate my land immediately after grape harvesting time. May God be blessed for everything, and may he be merciful to us. Our Good Father in Jesus Christ, I have the honor of being, with the most profound respect, very humble and very obedient servant.

P.S. As I pray to God every day for you, I hope you are not forgetting me in your prayers.

*

Bro. Jean-Baptiste Bidon (1778-1854) is one of the most congenial characters of this period. Born in Bordeaux to an honest workman's family, he had learned the cooper's trade. In 1801 he joined the Sodality of the Madeleine and remained one of its most zealous members. In fact, he was named honorary prefect. To him especially was entrusted the care of the young artisans of the Sodality. The wars of Napoleon obliged him to join the army of Italy, where he was taken prisoner by the Austrians; but in campaigns as in captivity, he sighed for the hour when he would again be in the midst of his beloved Sodality. After returning to Bordeaux, he again placed himself under Father Chaminade's direction and was soon admitted to private vows (1815), a prelude to his later religious life. In fact, he was one of the seven founders of the Society of Mary, which he never ceased to edify by his high degree of virtue.

Brother Bidon, "the faithful Bidon" as he was sometimes called, was the confidant of Father Chaminade in temporal matters, and in this capacity he spent the greatest part of his life in Bordeaux. He never left the city except to found and direct the school at Clairac (1837-41) in a region that was Protestant to a great extent, where nevertheless from the very start his virtue won him the respect and veneration of everyone. Father Chaminade had recourse to him for the most delicate tasks. Thus in

¹ Concerning M. Lapause, temporal father of the Society of Mary, see *Messenger of the Society*, III, p. 431.

1840 he was appointed to accompany the group of Daughters of Mary called to the foundation of Olmeto in Corsica. On his return from this trip, Brother Bidon was sent to the novitiate of Sainte-Anne, where he spent his remaining years.

He was a profoundly humble religious, mild and even-tempered, of an amiable character, always ready to render service and prompt obedience. When the first apostolic laborers of the Society of Mary left for America in 1849 a superior, having jokingly asked Brother Bidon, then 70 years of age, whether he felt himself disposed to accompany them, the old man, thinking he was receiving an order, immediately began to prepare for departure. His life was a continual prayer, and it was commonly said that he never interrupted his dialogue with God. In his last years, bent with age, he could walk only with the aid of a cane, but even then he did not consent to remaining inactive. He still had his small tasks to do, errands to look after, notes to take, services to render, etc. The rest of his time was devoted to pious reading, to the saying of the Stations of the Cross, saying the Rosary, or reciting the Breviary, kneeling in his bench before the Blessed Sacrament. "This wise old man of our Institute, perhaps the only one," wrote Father Lalanne, "who in the midst of so many shocks never faltered," died quietly assisted by Father Simler, then a young priest who has preserved a precious recollection for us (Circular no. 31).

* * *

S. 174a. To Father Barrès, Bordeaux

October 1, 1821, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

I have the honor of offering Father Barrès the sincere testimony of my deep respect and of remarking that I would have dissuaded the Fathers of Families from writing that letter if the bishop had not seemed inclined to support them by allowing them to hope for a fixed date on which to visit the prisons.

G.-J. Chaminade

* * *

The annual retreat of 1821 was at Saint-Laurent, as in preceding years. The religious of Agen took part. They brought with them six postulants, already mentioned.¹ The retreatants

¹ Biographical notes. Among these six postulants, the first to come from our schools were Antoine Bartayres (1804-72), who took part in the foundation of Colmar and for nearly 50 years filled the post of head sacristan of the church of Saint Martin, always acquitting himself with a prudence, a modesty, an admirable activity and making the sacristy of Colmar the best in all of Alsace. Jean-Baptiste Constant (1804-26) was part of the first group sent to Saint-Remy, where he died soon after. Pierre Mazières (1805-87) was director for many years of various schools in the south and died at the Madeleine in Bordeaux. From 1835 to 1840 Jean Coustou directed the schools at Colmar, where he left the Society of Mary; he had published a very good course in penmanship.

Fr. Ignace Mertian (1766-1843), to whom Father Chaminade directed Bro. Rothéa, was originally from Ribeauvillé, in Alsace. He was a professor of mathematics at the royal *collège* of Colmar when the Revolution began. He took the constitutional oath of the clergy but retracted almost immediately. Named pastor of Bergheim in 1814, he took in hand (1819) the direction of the Congregation of the Sisters of Providence of Ribeauvillé, a post left vacant by the death of his brother, Fr. Bruno Mertian (1768-1819), who had been superior since 1817.

The Congregation of the Sisters of Providence, founded in 1783 at Molsheim and transferred in 1808 to Sélestat, had just established itself in Ribeauvillé and then comprised about 100 sisters. It later enjoyed great development in Alsace.

At this time, Fr. Ignace Mertian had the idea of founding a Congregation of brothers to look after the schools in Alsace. Thanks to the support of the Prince of Croy, Bishop of Strasbourg, who had just been named Grand Almoner, on December 5 of that year he obtained a royal ordinance authorizing the Congregation of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine of the diocese of Strasbourg. But from the start, he felt himself taxed beyond his strength and had recourse to Fr. Chaminade, whom he had heard about through the Rothéa family. First he confided to Fr. Chaminade

numbered 32 in all. On the evening of the closing day, as usual Father Chaminade invited the Archbishop of Bordeaux to bless the Little Society. From the following document we see that in the beginning the religious of the Society were called "Children of Mary" and the Society itself, "Society of the Children of Mary." It was thus the counterpart of the Daughters of Mary.

175. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux

October 22, 1821, Saint-Laurent

Original, Agmar

Your Excellency,

The Children of Mary have just renewed their spiritual life by the holy exercises of retreat. Before returning to their exterior duties, they ardently desire again to obtain the blessing which your pastoral charity grants them each year. They ask you kindly to designate the moment, the hour when they will be able to assemble at Your Excellency's feet. The retreat will close tomorrow, and then they can come at your bidding.

The number of the associates has continued to increase during the past year, but the various works have developed in even greater proportion. Some new Sodalities have been organized; in older ones the membership has increased. Primary schools in a neighboring department were put under our direction; 300 to 400 children this year were brought up in the spirit of our holy religion, and a still greater number will be ready to receive the same type of advantage in the years to come. These are things which from the religious point of view seem to us to point up the goodness of God toward the enterprise which I have believed to be according to the designs of Providence for our times.

Now the Children of Mary and their director wish to assure the continuation of this work in the same spirit as it had when it began, namely, with the blessing of heaven and that of the archbishop, who is our shepherd on earth.

Deign to accept, Your Excellency, my profound respect and religious veneration.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. Your Excellency deigned last year to give to the Children of Mary a very great token of kindness in granting them a visit and the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice at the very location of their retreat. They do not dare to ask the same favor, but they would receive it with very great joy.

[Archbishop d'Aviau wrote on this letter, "I went on October 23."]

* * *

Two days after the close of the retreat, Father Chaminade gave the following obedience, important as much because of the work itself which the Society of Mary was assuming, as because of the influence it would have on the Society of Mary in regions far removed from the place of its origin.

176. To Bro. Louis Rothéa, Bordeaux

October 25, 1821, Bordeaux

Autograph Rough Copy, Agmar

the formation of his subjects (1821) and later turned the entire project over to him (1826). The Congregation of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine, united to the Society of Mary, disappeared after some time and was reconstituted in 1843 with the support of Fr. Louis Mertian, brother of Ignace and Bruno. It is known today under the name Brothers of Matzenheim.

Our dear Son in Jesus Christ, Bro. Louis Rothéa, will go to Ribeauvillé, department of the Upper Rhine, with the shortest possible delay to exercise the functions of Master of Novices under the direction of and in obedience to Father Mertian, founder of the Brothers of the Free Christian Schools in Alsace.

If the concession which we made last April 10 of this dear Son to Father Mertian was so painful to our heart, how much more so does it become today, when it is actually taking place. And not only for us, but also for all his colleagues. We are considering only the interest of the glory of God and of the most holy Virgin, our august Mother and Patroness, and we desire that he will be at the disposal of Father Mertian for 18 months from the day of the concession, last April 10.

We permit him to make use of the conveniences of stagecoaches or other vehicles. We even desire that he will use them, at least as far as Besançon. We leave him perfectly free for the remainder of his long journey to do as his wisdom and love of poverty may suggest. We dispense him from all customs in the matter of diet which would be contrary to those his Rule prescribes for him, whether during his travels or during his stay in Alsace. But we recommend that in using this dispensation, he will always remain in close touch with the spirit of the Institute of Mary.

We will be free from our promises only next October 10, 1822. Our dear Son will try to obtain from Father Mertian some days of grace, to have the time to come to the annual retreat, which all the members of this religious Society are accustomed to make. Given in Bordeaux in our novitiate at Saint-Laurent on October 25, 1821.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

This note discusses the acquisition of the library of Father Conne, a former Franciscan, the librarian of the houses of his Order at Toulouse and Bordeaux before the Revolution and then professor of morality on the faculty of theology of Bordeaux (1742-1825). Father Conne was a lover of books. His library was composed of valuable books acquired as a result of the dispersion of the libraries of religious houses at the time of the Revolution, numbering 12,000 volumes. Father Chaminade understood what an amount of work would be required of his growing Society in obtaining such an acquisition; lacking the necessary resources, he hesitated to profit from the occasion.

177. To M. David Monier, Bordeaux

October 27, 1821, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

I do not know whether you attribute to timidity my indecisiveness in buying the library of the venerable Father Conne. To bind ourselves in our present circumstances to the extent of 12,000 to 13,000 francs, with interest to be paid, seems to me somewhat untimely. As things are at present, I believe I would have trouble finding even the 3,000 francs needed as the initial cash payment. In the supposition that Father Conne would have accepted the four offers I was making him, the friends of the Institute would have gone into debt, as I had reason to hope, for the good of religion and of the Institute.

Assure this good priest of my sincere regrets.

In examining this matter before God I had other ideas, and one was only to accept the offer on the conditions I pointed out to you yesterday. But there is no sense in speaking of them here.

May the peace of the Lord be always with you.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

[The acquisition of the library was completed the following November 5, but delivery of the books took place only later and after many incidents (see letters no. 220 and no. 222).]

* * *

Father Chaminade continues to interest himself in his nephew, Firmin de Lala, a pupil in the boarding school on Rue des Menuts.

178. To M. François de Lala, Sarlat

November 1821, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. Of the de Lala Family

My dear Nephew,

You have interpreted me well. I have remained silent so long because I had nothing good to say to our dear Firmin. It would have cost me too dearly to speak of the evil I saw. At last I can give you real consolations.

After the very strong letter you wrote us, to Firmin and to me, he changed a little so that after a few days the teacher who was most in despair about him said to me joyfully, “Your nephew is doing well, really well . . .” I did not think of writing to you so soon—I wanted to see if this good would truly last. I have since looked into it several times, and I see the good is really continuing. I have reason to believe he will succeed and will fulfill his duty, as we hoped he would.

The classical year began November 4. I went to the boarding school yesterday evening to learn about him. I also talked to his confessor. All the teachers are satisfied. The pupils who are back to school say, “Firmin has converted . . .,” so greatly have then seen him change. What contributed greatly to his change of heart is his confessor, one of the teachers at the boarding school.

My sister joins me in offering you and your wife the tokens of a tender friendship.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

Mlle Charlotte de Lachapelle was going to receive the habit on the Feast of the Presentation, November 21, 1821.

179. To Sister de l’Incarnation, Agen

November 18, 1821, Bordeaux

My dear Daughter,

Although I am pressed for time in order to close the men’s retreat successfully [Sodality retreat at the Madeleine] and with many other things to do, I nevertheless do not want you to receive the holy religious habit of the Daughters of Mary without receiving a short letter from me, truly your Father. This is not exactly an answer to your letter. I have the intention of coming to that later. I only want to tell you to have courage, to open your heart. Can there be a vocation more tested and more certain than yours? Do you not have the assurance that the divine Spouse, to whom you are to unite yourself irrevocably, will accord you all his friendship and, in consequence, his superabundant graces so that you can be inviolably faithful to him? But are you feeble in health? Be it so, but your divine Spouse deigns to will it that way. Too much fear of responding to his voice would displease him. I will explain this point of view, which is so reassuring, to you at another time and at greater length.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

This note, written soon after, is addressed to the convent of Agen as a fatherly encouragement.

180. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

December 4, 1821, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

[With insert from S. 180]

My dear Child,

I take up my pen to write you and to give you a small sign of life. The press of affairs is still far from diminishing, but things are moving along here very well nevertheless.

Tell all our beloved Daughters—and you may easily assure them of this—that I bear them all in my heart, that I offer them to the Lord. I have a great desire that they all will make great and rapid progress in the virtues of their holy state, and especially in the spirit of mental prayer.

I am determined to take all types of means to free myself sufficiently in order to spend more time with you this year and not to leave you without making provision so that each one will progress, as is to be expected, according to the measure of grace she has received. Although this measure is not equal for all, it is nevertheless very great for each of the Daughters of Mary.

My dear Child, receive in greatest abundance the blessings of the Lord. May these, through you and by you, spread to all of our beloved Daughters!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I was about to seal this letter when I received the enclosure. My dear Child, see what you can answer this young woman. I have informed her through her brother that she should correspond with you from now on. I know nothing more about her than what is contained in that letter—that she is not from Marsillac where she is living with her father, that she works in a tax bureau, but at Gap. Only after a lengthy correspondence, I suppose, will you know what to do. In the district of Gap there are many young women who are well off and who lean toward the religious life. We must not dismiss them too hastily.

* * *

The Little Society was going to have its second priest in the person of Fr. Jean Lalanne. Father Chaminade sent this note to the seminary to make arrangements for his first Mass.

181. To Bro. Jean Lalanne, Bordeaux

December 11, 1821, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

I highly approve that you will say your first Mass at midnight on Christmas Day at Rue des Menuts, and without any pomp directed toward your person. Let there be no other preparation but that relative to the solemnity of the feast and the mystery commemorated.

If it is customary to leave the seminary on Saturday evening, the day of ordination, if the superior has nothing against it, I will be glad to have you spend Sunday and Monday in retreat at

Saint-Laurent to prepare yourself for your first Mass. The novices no longer come to the Madeleine on Sundays, but Father Rothéa says Mass for them.¹

You will be able to say another Mass in the morning on Christmas Day at the Madeleine, at which you will be assisted as at the one at midnight.

You will be able to receive Communion on Sunday and Monday, as your devotion will suggest.

M. Fleury, your supposed brother, will receive the holy priesthood in Paris at the same time as you receive it in Bordeaux. His vocation seems so certain that I am hoping the Archbishop of Paris will grant him his *exeat*. Pray for him.²

Submit the contents of this note to the Reverend Superior. Do only what may be agreeable to him. If he approves, you will inform Brother Auguste and Brother Clouzet regarding whatever may concern each of the two houses.³

In communicating to you the character of the holy priesthood, may the Lord deign also to give you its spirit!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

182. To Bro. David Monier, Bordeaux

End of December, 1821, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

A pleasant greeting to my dear Son David. I am exhorting him to continue his editing, in order to bring to fruition as much as possible whatever concerns our free primary schools. I can answer my Agen mail only by the carrier on Friday. There is no hurry about the delivery of the library. We can wait for drier weather. Still, we must not lose sight of it. Father Conne's 89th year is marked by new degrees of infirmity.

Father Laugeay's letter may be sent to our small community on Rue des Menuts.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

Pressed to introduce the Society of Mary in Alsace, Father Chaminade intended before everything else to establish serious houses for formation in Bordeaux. He acquaints Bro. Louis Rothéa in Ribeauvillé with his plans.

183. To Bro. Louis Rothéa, Ribeauvillé

December 17, 1821, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

My dear Child,

It seems to me that 4,000 francs which your father would willingly set aside in favor of the Institute would be used with greater advantage to free us here or to make some necessary acquisitions.

At this time I am in the act of acquiring the large house next to the church of the Madeleine.¹ With this house, we have nearly everything that will be needed for this

¹ Fr. Charles Rothéa was then a novice at Saint-Laurent.

² This postulant, about whom we have no further information, never entered the Society of Mary.

³ Brother Auguste was director at Rue des Menuts and Brother Clouzet at Saint-Laurent.

establishment. I believe I have made the plan known to you. So that we can go to Alsace, we must consolidate here and increase our members. The large house I have just spoken about will be destined especially for the studies of the young religious. Theological conferences will begin in the community on Rue des Menuts so our young theologians will not need to go to the seminary. Patience!

The novitiate at Saint-Laurent is doing well. On Sundays no one ever comes to the Madeleine now, either in the morning or the evening. We have all the church services there. Your brother does not cease to bless God for having led him to the Institute. I am asking him to keep you informed about all the details which might interest you. Even though he is in the novitiate, he can take notice of many things. Furthermore, I have kept nothing hidden from him. Our confidence is reciprocal.

My dear Child, fulfill your functions well. You must be all the happier in your little mission, for it comes all the more to you from God. It seems completely divine, so to speak. Apply yourself without ceasing to grow in the preparation virtues.

In your turn, you may begin to be strong in the consummation virtues so the old self may be immolated, to the end that you may have the happiness of living at some time the life of the new self. I extend my arms toward you as if to embrace you and press you tenderly to my paternal heart.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

Father Chaminade answered Father Mertian, who was already speaking of the merger of his two Orders with those of Father Chaminade.

184. To Fr. Ignace Mertian, Ribeauvillé

December 17, 1821, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

Reverend Father,

The letter I had the honor of sending to you through Brother Rothéa was only a letter accompanying an obedience. It contained nothing essential, as far as I can remember. In it I gave you an account of some preparations for the obedience I am giving him with this letter, which may have surprised you. It is evident, Father, that there can be no complete union between the Daughters of Mary and the Sisters of Providence. Just see for yourself, before God, whether without making any change in the Constitutions of either, there could be a real alliance and a dependence. The Daughters of Mary, for example, would bring up, form, govern, withdraw, dismiss, etc., the Sisters of Providence, always with the agreement of the superior and the Sister Visitor. Perhaps everything might go well while you are still living, for in a way you are training them, you are supervising them, etc. Your zeal, your prudence, and your activity are the mainspring which produces such a well-regulated and edifying activity. But the way I see the matter, the operation and support of the work of the Sisters of Providence would be just one of the duties of the Daughters of Mary. These are only general observations, for I am not at all concerned about the details, the Rule of Life, and the way of observing it. See for yourself. Make a type of inquest *de commodo et incommodo*.¹

¹ No. 8 and no. 10, Rue Lalande, now demolished, which were successively the ecclesiastical novitiate of the Society of Mary until 1861 and the residence for chaplains of the Madeleine. See *Apôtre de Marie*, 10, p. 391.

¹ "Concerning what is comfortable and uncomfortable (unsuccessful)." The union was not to be; the goals and means of the two Institutes were too different.

At another time I will talk to you about the brothers. In the meantime, if I have need of other information, have the kindness to send it to me yourself or through Brother Rothéa.

Are you still intending to go to Paris next spring? If you do, it may be possible that I could join you there. Until then, we might prepare whatever in the end we may need to settle. We might also make sure that the Prince of Croy,¹ now the Grand Almoner, would be in Paris at the same time we are. According to the ordinary order of things, we are to work separately, each in his proper field. Providence, which first brought us together, without a doubt has more extensive views in the matter. Let us try to know and to second them.

I am with respectful attachment, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

Correspondence with Agen was not being neglected.

185. To Mother Saint-Vincent, Agen

December 20, 1821, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

[With insert from S. 185]

My dear Daughter,

Follow your brother's advice. Write off that debt of 4,500 francs by selling the claim you have in Paris.

I have no recollection of Rosine Malespine, and still less of having accepted her.

You are correct in fearing to see subjects enter if it will be difficult to dismiss them once it is recognized that they have no vocation or, which is about the same thing, once it is assured that they are not good material for the Institute. If I had known that Sister Angélique was the same person as the one who had a four-day crisis because her taking the habit was postponed, I would have spoken differently while I was with you. Last month I would not have favored receiving her as a novice. I wish that when I am consulted about a subject, clear explanations will be given. I had declared some time ago, both to Sister Angélique and to all the Mothers of the council, that she was not a fit subject for your community. Only through indulgence did I consent to grant her a short time of trial to see if the illness would return, thinking she might not yet be cured. It would not require that much to dismiss a postulant, or even a novice. I wish for firmness in dismissal and quite an amount of facility in granting permission to enter when subjects show goodwill and otherwise seem to have the required good qualities. We can repeat the tests, even for as long as a year. This should be done only for some subjects who combine very good qualities with defects they have difficulty correcting, but these are rare. The Mistress of Novices speaks from her very good heart rather than from her judgment.

Sister Suzanne, I imagine, is the real sister of Sister Catherine. Now, why keep such sick people? Your convent is not a hospital for incurables. In case we have been mistaken or deceived, as in the present case, let us take the measures dictated by charity and prudence before any dismissal. That is fine, but we must also seriously take care to rid ourselves of such subjects.

I should have said to the Good Mother what I am telling you here, but this letter will not be for you two alone. You should make use of it, moreover, only to the extent that she wishes.

May the Lord, my dear Daughter, shower blessings upon you.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

¹ The Bishop of Strasbourg.

The preceding note was included in a letter to the superior.

186. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

December 20, 1821, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

[With insert from S. 186]

My dear Child,

I am permitting you—but only for this year—to sing Lauds after Matins on Christmas night. May you all have a very abundant share in the innumerable graces of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ! To prepare yourselves for this solemnity, try to enter into the dispositions of the Blessed Virgin and Saint Joseph, who took five days on their way to Bethlehem.

I will write to Tonneins, to Mother Thérèse on behalf of Sister Ursule and perhaps also to the latter. I enclose Brother David's answer in the case of Sister Cathérine. It is good.

I may have been careless while answering Mother Saint-Vincent. If you believe I said too much, keep it to yourself. Just answer her about the 4,500 francs.

Father Mouran's observation to the effect that Rosine Malespine would be exposed in the world should be taken into consideration. If the subject is truly good, if she has a vocation, and if the reasons for which she would be exposed in the world do not become harmful to the community she must be admitted, even if she has nothing.

Do not be afraid of being in want of subjects, and of good subjects, for the Companion Sisters. Patience! This reminds me to send you a copy of a letter one of our good novices, a young theologian, wrote to his older sister who was to join the Sisters of Charity. A little courage, my dear Child, and firmness!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

January 10, 1822, is the date of two letters from Bro. David Monier's pen; only the end of the first and the postscript of the second are from Father Chaminade. One is addressed to the novices and the other to the Companion Sisters of Agen, answering their good wishes and greetings for the New Year.

**186a. To the Novice Sisters of
The Daughters of Mary, Agen**

January 10, 1822, Bordeaux

Original, Arch. FMI

[With insert from S. 186]

My dear Daughters,

I bring you all together in my offerings to God, as you have been united in expressing your good wishes to me. My paternal affection bears equally upon each and every one of you. If God deigns to hear me, there will not be any among you who will not one day be in heaven among the virgins who will accompany the divine Mary and who will cast their crowns before the Lamb. Your Institute is the way which is to lead you there. In the Institute, the preparation virtues are what has formed great saints elsewhere. The virtues of purification are proposed to the predestined; the third order of virtues, the virtues of consummation, are the virtues of Jesus Christ and of Mary.

Do not let the grandeur of these views astonish you. They are the views of God, who by his grace will give you what is needed to carry them out. Trust in grace. It has brought you to where you are, and it will there reveal to you its light and its sweetness, a foretaste of what is being prepared for you in heaven. Live in humility, in obedience, and in struggle, glorifying God both interiorly and exteriorly.

As I have promised, my dear Daughters, I will come to strengthen you and to help you, according to the strength God will deign to grant his unworthy minister who burns with zeal for God's service and charity for the souls capable of honoring God. Let us adopt this sign of union: "Glory to God in the highest and peace upon the earth to all those who are of good will."

Mlle Gayet acted wisely in choosing to become a Sister of the Presentation and to prepare for her acceptance.

I say this again in my own hand. From the bottom of my heart, I ask God that this year and for the rest of your days he may shower you with his ineffable blessings.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

**186b. To the Companion Sisters of
The Daughters of Mary, Agen**

January 10, 1822, Bordeaux

Original, Arch. FMI

My dear Daughters,

I receive with satisfaction your New Year greetings and the ardent wishes you express for my welfare. I offered you all to Jesus Christ and to the divine Mary on the first day of the year. I have asked of them, for you all and for each one in particular, all the graces you need. I asked both for your known and your unknown needs, for everything that the mercy of God could grant you. If my prayers are accepted, you will advance more than ever along the path of salvation. Your Mothers and Superiors will have only to approve you and then remain silent.

So that this may happen, my dear Daughters, doubtless the grace of God is necessary, but the assistance of your goodwill is also necessary. Make the firm resolution to follow the inspirations of your Institute and the admonitions of your superiors without hesitation, without reserve, for the love of Jesus Christ and because the will of this divine Master is that we will be guided by his representatives.

You ask for my prayers for the purpose of obtaining many virtues—a greater humility than in the past, the practice of obedience, a love for labor, respect for your Mothers, union among yourselves, and the mutual support of your characters. Why would I refuse you, when you all and each one of you has the same rights upon me that a daughter has upon her father? I am the mediator between you and Jesus Christ, just as Jesus Christ is the mediator between us and his eternal father. My dear Daughters, I then grant you the prayers you request.

According to your request, there are six virtues, six qualities to obtain. Then unite your prayers to mine with fervor, and Heaven will not be unmoved. We will follow the order which I indicate. We will begin on Monday, January 14, and finish on Saturday, and on the next day, Sunday the 20th, you will try to receive Communion and you will return thanks to God. For my part, I will not forget to say my prayer, according to the same intention: Monday the 14th, for greater humility; Tuesday the 15th, for the practice of obedience; Wednesday the 16th, to obtain the love of labor; Thursday the 17th, for the maintaining of respect toward the Mothers; Friday the 18th, for union among all of you; Saturday the 19th, for mutual endurance of your defects; and Sunday the 20th, thanksgiving and holy Communion.

As a result, you will take care to maintain the growth in virtue which God has given to each.

I pardon you from the abundance of my heart for past faults, and I count on your resolutions to do better in the future. If you are faithful to this agreement, my dear Daughters, I am authorized by our divine Master to promise you infinite blessings. I am doing this with all the joy of a fatherly heart.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. Regarding prayers and practices for each of seven days, (1) the prayer of Saint Bernard, the *Memorare*, and three *Hail Marys* in honor of the three relationships of the august Mary with the adorable Trinity, (2) two acts of each virtue, corresponding to the day, and (3) several acts of the virtue of the day. I am taking note of everything so that I myself may know what to do each day.

* * *

The reputation of the schools of Agen is already spreading beyond the department of Lot-et-Garonne. The sub-prefect of Lectoure, department of Gers, has asked Father Chaminade to open a similar school.

**187. To Vicomte de Lastic,
Sub-prefect of Lectoure**
January 12, 1822, Bordeaux
Rough Draft by David Monier, Agmar

Monsieur Sub-prefect,

I am very appreciative of all the kind things in your letter of December 30 concerning the free schools.

I can only second your desires for a similar institution for the citizens under your charge. I see no immovable obstacles in the way; your wish speaks for itself. Your name, M. Sub-prefect, and your rights to public esteem would receive the highest endorsement from me. Nevertheless, I am very glad to have the occasion to recall Father Eliçagaray, as you wished. His kind attentions flatter me—I can refuse him nothing.¹ But it is true that I did not have the opportunity to see him at the time of his last stop in this city. He was not feeling well and stayed only a short time. I was not told of his arrival soon enough. For a number of reasons, I was not able to come to his house until just after he left. However, it is sufficient for me to know that he holds this close to his heart, just as you do, M. Sub-prefect. I do not lose sight of this fact.

I am not yet free from administrative responsibilities in the Lot-et-Garonne. The decisions of the councils are not final, for we still await some answers from the Ministers. I must hold to my promises.

But supposing I am finally free from my promise concerning the Lot-et-Garonne, it does not seem your city is in a position to furnish a suitable setting. This is always a condition for holding assemblies of the children. The professors would also need living space. Space needs for the classes turn out to be greater than is generally thought. A 50 to 60-foot classroom is not too large. It would be full and would need to be furnished. Two other classrooms half as big would also be needed. The method we follow calls for three different rooms so the teaching can be easily heard, faster and without breaks.

¹ Fr. Eliçagaray (1760-1822) originally from Bayonne, fled to Spain during the Revolution. He returned to France under the Directory and under the Restoration was named to the Royal Council of Public Instruction. At that time he was busy visiting the universities in the south of France.

If other necessary conditions are not met by the commune and its financial aid, it is likely help could come from some of those fine women who are always seeking good to do. I would consider it an honor to be of any assistance to them.

You can see from these few words, M. Sub-prefect, what would need to be done. More than anything else, your influence and example can obtain the desired help for your people.

Good schools will be a source of prosperity for the state, the pledge of public tranquility, and the assurance of happiness for families in the days just ahead. But I do not need to point out to you their true usefulness, for the care you have taken to bring them about tells us your thoughts as well as your love for good institutions.

Please accept, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

This letter returns to matters in Alsace.

188. To Bro. Louis Rothéa, Ribeauvillé

January 25, 1822, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

[With insert from S. 188]

My dear Child,

I speak again to you, and if I do not write more often or at greater length, you know the reason. All hesitation would cease and I would hurry to you if you had some serious personal trouble. A tender and altogether fraternal affection will follow you wherever you happen to be, even if you are on the other side of the world. Its constancy and permanence are assured by our enduring friendship.

Father Mertian seemed surprised to be receiving so few letters from me, but if he is willing to reflect a little, he will see that it was not necessary for me to write more. He was also surprised that your obedience was for only one year. You did not remember that the short letter which you carried gave him the reason for that. While writing it, I kept in mind both his request and my answer. I kept account of the matter from day to day. You know I keep a copy of all letters that refer to some agreement because I am deeply interested in fulfilling my part exactly. We must give him no anxiety in this matter. What type of relationship would we have if some doubt or mistrust arose concerning the frankness and loyalty of our promises?

An alliance with the Institute of Mary, whether it be with the brothers whose novitiate you are directing or with the Sisters of Providence, is a very serious matter. I may also say it is especially difficult and delicate because of the distances involved and the two languages spoken in Alsace. But because I am aware of the very great good for religion which could result from a union, I do not refuse if it is possible to come to an agreement which would give us the necessary freedom to do real good in these provinces, according to the spirit of our Institute. I am so certain that we have found the means of restoring Christian morals, of propagating the spirit of religion, and of opposing with strong barriers the seductive and corrupting torrent of philosophism that I would never suffer it to be denatured or even weakened. The most simple approach would be to merge the Institute of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine and the Sisters of Providence with the Institute of Mary and charge the latter with the task of realizing, in its own way, the ends and purposes of the two other Institutes.

Father Mertian seemed inclined to give his Institute of brothers to the Brothers of the Christian Schools. It is not up to me to say anything for or against this plan. Father Mertian must know his own mind for the Institution he founded. He must know the interior and exterior regimen of these respected brothers. We neither can nor should we think he can determine all the

serious consequences of a union without a careful examination of the entire question. It seems a little strange that to attract these brothers to Alsace, Father Mertian should have acted in the manner he did. I believe I am completely indifferent to what course he will decide to follow. May the will of God be done, and may God's greatest glory be obtained! When I permit myself for a moment to imagine this union as an accomplished fact, I experience some joy from the point of view of grace. From the natural point of view, I fear more than I desire that Father Mertian is leaving the entire matter in our hands. You doubtless understand that from the moment the union of your brothers with the Brothers of the Christian Schools is completed, your mission will cease, and you will have as much pleasure in returning as we will have in receiving you.

Your brother has surely spoken to you about the Ligorists. The little I know about them comes from excerpts taken from the writings of their Founder, who was beatified. If they are truly religious and if they are ready to give up their philosophical system, I would accept them with pleasure into the Institute. It is said that the writings, and especially the system that appears under his signature, are not really his. In any case, I want no systematization, especially not in the field of ethics.

Your brother will answer the various points you bring up in your interesting letters. What he will surely not tell you is that fervor reigns in our little novitiate. Oh how I wish, my Child, that you also will grow in the practice of the religious virtues! How I desire you to become a saint! Let us count as identical the expressions "saint" and "Child of Mary"! May the paternal blessing I am giving you here with a full heart produce this happy effect!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. The printed information about the Constitution of the Society which I permit you to give to the two worthy ecclesiastics you mentioned is to be understood in this sense, (1) that they themselves are not to pass it on to others and (2) that they are to make no copies of it. They may keep it for several days and consider it, and if they should wish to give us their opinion of it in writing, we would be very grateful.

* * *

Here is a sample of the correspondence of Father Chaminade regarding the affiliation of the Sodalties. We note the role assigned to the director; the Sodality is to be the work of the sodalists themselves. This is the condition of their vitality.

**189. To Father François Foziède,
Director of the Sodality of Pau**

February 10, 1822, Bordeaux

Rough Draft, Agmar

[With insert from S. 189]

I have the satisfaction of sending you here the documents relative to the founding and affiliation of the Women's Sodality of your city, consisting of (1) the letters of founding and affiliation; (2) the nomination of Mlle de Courrèges as prefect; (3) a general instruction, such as has been used until today; (4) the duties of the sodalists; and (5) your brief of nomination, subject to the authorization of the Ordinary.

Apart from the enclosed conditions, I must warn you particularly in regard to two things. The first is that in the meetings of similar Sodalties, you are to be only the moderator, the counselor, the director, to prevent evil and promote good, without taking any part in anything concerning civil engagements. The second relates to the formula you are to apply to each new member before his reception, the indulgences granted by the Bulls of the Sovereign Pontiffs.

As part of the second step, Reverend Director, the candidate will come to you for Confession. She will make a general Confession of all her failings, followed by an act of sincere contrition. Then as you bless her, you will pronounce the words, "By the authority vested in me, I hereby empower you to share in all the graces, privileges, and indulgences which the Apostolic See has granted to our pious association, in the name of the Father, of the Son, etc."

I ask you kindly to, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

S. 189a. To Mlle de Courrèges, Pau

February 10, 1822, Bordeaux

Rough Draft, Agmar

My dear Daughter,

For I may call you that the moment you become the head of one of our Sodalities; I have no doubt that you will perform your functions as prefect to the general satisfaction. The goodness of Our Lord is my assurance, and his grace will never be lacking when you need it to promote his own work. Be faithful to it, my dear Daughter. I will recommend this intention especially to Our Good Lord. From the bottom of my heart I ask him to give you every blessing.

* * *

This letter shows the intimacy of Father Chaminade's family life. Father Chaminade had his sister Lucrèce (1759-1825) with him. She had been widowed after a year of marriage to M. Laulanie, a lawyer in the parlement. She kept house for Father Chaminade and shared his works of zeal and charity. François de Lala sends them a bag of chestnuts and a turkey stuffed with truffles, specialties of Périgord. Father Chaminade thanks him but uses the occasion to give a lesson of Christian life to Firmin de Lala, his grandnephew, who had left the boarding school on Rue des Menuts and returned to his family.

190. To M. François de Lala, Sarlat

February 15, 1822, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. of the de Lala Family

My dear Nephew,

I am deeply ashamed always to be obliged to excuse my long delays in answering your letters. What is to be done? I have to make up my mind to accept this shame, although it is often difficult, particularly regarding those I especially care for like you, Sophie, Firmin, and although I have never seen her, Mlle Mondesse and several others living elsewhere.

Whether from your complaints or from the stirring of his own conscience, the boatman of Libourne saw to it that I received the bag of chestnuts you had the goodness to send me. I also received the turkey stuffed with truffles in good condition, the one you put on the coach for me. We have given it all the honors it deserved. We ate it with gratitude and in memory of you.

I hope Firmin will keep the promises he made to me, and we will see a man and a Christian in him yet. I would like him someday to tell me honestly what he understands of being a man and a Christian. Could it be that we would both see such important things in the same manner?

I offer you the assurance of all my affection.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. My sister always joins me when I send you regards. The same to Sophie, Firmin, and Mlle Mondesse.

* * *

Here are two letters addressed to Agen, remarkable for their advice concerning certain difficult subjects.

191. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

March 19, 1822, Bordeaux
Autograph, Arch. FMI
[With insert from S. 191]

My dear Child,

Today we are celebrating the feast of our glorious patron Saint Joseph. In spite of the pleasant and sometimes the unpleasant occupations of this feast, I want to write you a few words. I hope to speak longer for you before the good God than I will speak to you in this letter.

I am exactly of the same opinion as the council. Several times I have been on the point of writing the same thing to you or to Mother Thérèse; I was absolutely against any other decision. I did write to her, but I was not at all pleased with the answer she gave me, I believe, through Mother Thérèse. Write to Mother Thérèse that she must tell her, as gently as possible, that she is free, that she can put off the habit and withdraw. Send Sister Angélique only after Sister Ursule has left. Should the latter remain in Tonneins, Sister Angélique must have no dealings with her. You have made the correct decision in the case of Mlle Latourette. You may admit the young woman temporarily, since she appears to interest you so much. You can tell me more about her soon.

We must never drive to the limit those who get excited and fly into a tantrum in time of temptation or crisis. When they are calm, we must speak to them seriously and make them understand that the Institute cannot keep such subjects. If they wish to leave as a result of this declaration, saying they cannot hold back, the doors must be opened for them. On the contrary, if they say these crises will not happen again and they will control themselves, etc., it is necessary to wait, but to promise them trials. At a new crisis, the same representations, the same liberty, etc. If they promise again, patience until the third crisis. But when the third crisis has passed, then no more grace.

The motive for patience comes from the fact that in their times of crisis, most people preserve enough liberty to master themselves, at least at the beginning of the outbursts. I know several people who cured themselves by certain restrictions imposed on them by me or other experienced people. Some who experienced distressing crises have admitted to me that they maintained their liberty, that they were not angered over such conditions, and that there were even sport or malice involved.

According to these principles, you can come to a decision in the case of Sister Rose and others of the same type. These people must be clearly persuaded that their superiors know their tricks or, if they prefer, the wiles of the devil who is tempting them.

You will be able to make an application of the same principles to Sister Angélique. Melancholy characters can be corrected, especially in the early stages. I have already had experience of this. But they must have a certain strength of soul and great confidence in their guides. In the first place, they must be clearly instructed about their trouble and persuaded that their cure depends on them.

Today's feast now calls me to the church. Furthermore, the mail is about to leave. I will not forget our dear Daughter Thérèse of Saint-Augustin.

May the peace of the Lord be ever with you!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I am not rereading what I have written. I have received the box of prunes with gratitude.

* * *

192. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

March 22, 1822, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

I am returning to your recent letters. I preferred to answer them myself rather than leave them to M. David. Answers are hardly needed by the time he is ready to give them.¹ Regarding Mlle Gayet and all those who have similar defects, it is necessary to be careful not to antagonize them. The energy must proceed from them, so to speak, to correct themselves. This must not be an energy imposed upon them, but one inspired by the love of obedience. No outside effort truly corrects them; they must do this themselves. To this end, they must know their defects, the influence these have upon their bodily health, and the way they must go about the task of gaining mastery. I am not certain who will need greater patience, the superiors or the subjects.

My dear Child, while rereading the little you tell me about Sister Félicité, it seems to me that you and the Mistress of Novices should accustom yourselves, as Saint Thérèse did, to know characters well, their defects and the remedies for the same. If you do not succeed in this or succeed only poorly, then you might consult me.

I will say only one word about rebellious characters. Ordinarily they are this way only because they do not find in themselves the energy which activates, urges on, or excites them, etc. If little by little, you could lead them on to act only by faith, to live only by faith! Faith is in us a powerful source of energy.

I cannot understand why Mother Saint-Vincent should find fault with Sister de l'Incarnation, who devotes one hour each day to a correspondence prompted by zeal. I imagine this is doubtless because she is still in the novitiate. In general this reason is good, but it may well not be applicable to this sister, who has already been the treasure of several novitiates and who is a novice, so to speak, only as a matter of form and through humility. Furthermore, this correspondence, prompted solely by zeal, is entirely within the spirit of the Institute. When the novices are truly zealous, when they have enjoyed great consideration in the places they come from, their correspondence may become very useful, even more than if we wait until they are professed religious. It is easy to guess the reason. I follow this manner of proceeding for the men, but it is necessary to take care not to act awkwardly.

There can be only usefulness from the correspondence at intervals of the Companion Sisters with their parents, providing all these letters are inspired by zeal. There would be few letters which would not produce great good if their writer would have the holy motives of charity.

May the good God, my dear Child, make you very wise and prudent!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

S. 192a. To Bishop Croÿ Solre of Strasbourg

¹ He is so tardy with correspondence.

March 23, 1822, Bordeaux ¹
Autograph, Agmar

In the midst of your exalted and important functions, will Your Excellency remember his friend from Bordeaux, from Gascony? Oh, how grateful I am to you for having given me permission to enter the Institute of Mary, which was born actually on the banks of the Garonne. I can find no words to adequately express my joy, and I owe it all to you. When will I see the good which is being done in the land of the Garonne also being accomplished in the Rhine country? You are familiar with the work that is being done at Ribeaupillé and the progress of the new novitiate. The purpose of this letter is not to give you details, which only Father Mertian should share with you.

A worthy priest who told me that he was your protégé while he was in Paris and who is actually preaching the Lenten sermons at Notre Dame in Bordeaux has visited me in my solitude. I do not understand the impulse which led him to offer to carry one of my letters to you. I cannot believe that he wanted a recommendation to Your Excellency from someone as insignificant as I am. I was very happy to oblige because this gave me an opportunity to express to you my hearty and well-deserved thanks and my deepest gratitude.

* * *

S. 192b. To Bro. David Monier, Agen

April 4 1822, Bordeaux
Autograph, Agmar

I, Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, priest, Honorary Canon of the metropolitan church of Bordeaux, residing at no. 2, Rue de Lalande, do ratify and confirm everything that has been done to date by my proxy who is named below for the establishment, the administration, and the curriculum of the free schools set up in the town of Agen in the house known as the Refuge, department of Lot-et-Garonne, after I personally visited the said schools and found them conformable to my designs.

As in the past, I again appoint as my general and special proxy with the power of attorney M. David Monier, lawyer, to whom I delegate the power to act in my name and to do what is necessary and appropriate to give the aforementioned schools the greatest stability and proficiency possible, and also to found similar establishments in the towns of Marmande, Nérac, and Villeneuve-sur-Lot, also in all the other cities and chief towns designated to him by the civil authorities, to see that each and every one of these establishments will be administered from a central location according to the same principles and under a unified command.

To this end, he is to address to His Majesty Our King and to all those who hold delegated authority and enjoy his trust and who would be acquainted with the fact the petitions, memorandums, Statutes, and the articles of the Rule required for the purpose mentioned above, giving details, developing the principles if necessary, even consenting to any modifications and submitting to any condition which could be imposed for public order and safety. Also, if necessary, to accept the assistance either of the local authorities, of the administration of the department, or again of all people disposed to further this kind of work.

Meanwhile, to take any provisional measures which the circumstances may dictate. To petition His Majesty for the edict necessary to erect the institution in question, and by reason of all the foregoing, of the circumstances and consequences, to draw up and sign all documents, agree to all conditions, submit all proposals, set up residence, and in general do everything that I

¹This is an autograph rough draft by Fr. Chaminade; but the author is really Louis Rothéa. It is included here because it contributes to an understanding of his spirit.

would do myself, forbidding to him only the substitution of promising, etc. . . . obliging, etc. . . . giving up, etc. . . .

Done at Bordeaux under my personal seal this April 4, 1822.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

In the spring of 1822, seeing the novitiate full of good subjects, Father Chaminade consented all the more willingly to pursue the matter of the free schools. He had been asked to open them in various places, even beyond Lot-et-Garonne. He then charged Brother David to go to these places and negotiate the successive acceptance of the various schools which had been requested. He also confided to him the care of preparing a brief account of the Institution of Free Schools which could be presented for royal approbation without raising the difficulty of the religious character of the teachers. Brother David left for Agen in early April and stopped at the office of M. Lacoste, Counselor of the Prefecture and a devoted friend of the Institute.

The next letters show how Father Chaminade, not without difficulty, followed and directed the overtures of his representative. Brother David was more clever at beginning an enterprise than in maintaining it; in the face of difficulties, he became troubled and discouraged.

193. To Bro. David Monier, Agen

April 16, 1822, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

[With insert from S. 193]

My dear Son,

I will not tell you the pleasure your letters cause me, not only because they give news about matters which interest me but just because they are your letters. But let us proceed to business.

The newspapers were doubtless mistaken in stating that the mayor of Villeneuve was in Paris, in the Chamber of Deputies, since you last met him in Villeneuve.¹ There was nothing happening in that town [remark of Bro. David], and let us hope this has now changed. It was then very essential for you to be there. It is said that it would be up to us to give them a principal for their school. I believe they are correct, and I would be greatly in favor of giving them Father Collineau. He is suited for the post, and it is better to deprive ourselves, even to hamper ourselves, so Villeneuve will be well provided for. I see very few serious reasons against, but all types of reasons for this move. If you do not see any more inconveniences than I, you may arrange the matter. Nevertheless, I need not tell you it is important for the merchandise to be given at its true value.

The demand by the convent for a loan of 4,000 francs to help pay the 8,000 francs to the American leads me to believe that those 8,000 francs are due immediately, that all formalities have been completed, etc; otherwise you could have borrowed from various funds, for instance 1,000 francs which would have been repaid if in the interval the convent had received nothing which could be used as a refund.

I understood that you were going to discuss the matter of approbation for the Institution of the Free Schools with M. Lacoste, the provisional prefect. The little plan based on your given authority¹ seems clear to me—Agen the center of the Institution, and Bordeaux the center of the direction. But the Institution probably should not be confined to the department of Lot-et-Garonne. You may believe it is suitable to make mention of the requests from various

¹ M. Vassal de Montviel, Deputy of Lot-et-Garonne.

departments and particularly from the sub-prefect of Lectoure, department of Gers.² Glory to Agen, to its worthy prelate, to the prefect, to the mayor, to the General Council of the department! It would be very fine if M. Lacoste found his true place there.

It is very surprising that with 9,000 francs we do not dare to undertake a work calling for 12,000 francs. But I must bring an end to my remarks, for they may be looked upon as those of a man who is no longer of this world and who cannot form for himself an idea of the progress of matters.

I want to keep thinking the debt at Agen is a little increased by what M. Laugeay would have thought useful and convenient. Nevertheless, the thing must be thoroughly examined. . . .

The frost here has done great harm, especially in Saint-Laurent. It is said Mélac has suffered next to nothing.

We must always put a good face on things and not let anyone notice our trouble, as befits people who are wise, discreet, and well-intentioned.

The good God always desires to test our confidence in him. Concerning the last bill for 1,000 francs which fell due last February 28, I came to see a way of paying it only on the eve, February 27. The 1,000 francs were charged to me only an hour-and-a-half before payment. The Good God did not act in the same way with regard to the 3,000 francs I must pay to the Messieurs Lassime on May 5. He has just sent them to me by a person whom I would have believed it my duty to give money to, rather than to ask for some.

In spite of this lack of funds, I am almost determined to arrange for a dormitory for the novitiate at Saint-Laurent. I see all sorts of reasons for this. Only our lack of funds argues against it. I gave up the idea of having one built over the storage shed. I would like to have the older part of the building raised, the part which comprises the kitchen, the parlor, and my room, length 63 feet, width 20 feet. Building over the shed would end by costing more and would offer no advantages—it would deprive the house of garrets, pantries, etc. By raising the house itself, we would have exactly the opposite results.

At the end you say, “The Constitution of the Institute did not receive a smiling welcome. . . .” From this sentence, I understand nothing else than, having spoken to the prefect of our desire to have the institution at Agen approved, you also talked about its dependence on the Institute.³ However the case may be, let us work only for the glory of God and for the support of religion, according to whatever measure of wisdom the Holy Spirit inspires us with and without our awaiting the approval of others. In choosing us as instruments of his mercies, the Good God arranges all for our own salvation, and this is the main reason for this continual alternation of trials and consolation, of successes and reverses.

I must leave you now. I desire for you, my dear Son, the twofold peace which Our Lord Jesus Christ wished to his disciples on the day of his resurrection.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I have the honor of greeting M. and Mme Lacoste and their entire family.

* * *

194. To Bro. David Monier, Agen

April 18, 1822, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

² See letter no. 187.

³ Fr. Chaminade intended to have approved not the Society of Mary itself, but only the work of the free schools.

I have no further observations about Villeneuve. You have done well to replace the officers of the Men's Sodality. May this renewal bring about a revival of zeal and fervor. Please be the interpreter of my sentiments, both with the officers and with the entire Sodality.

More and more I feel the necessity of spending some time at the convent of the Daughters of Mary, almost solely occupied in forming and instructing, in reforming abuses, dispelling illusions, etc. Patience! Always patience!

Mlle Rangouse, called Sister Anastasie, has just written me by this mail to ask permission to come to the convent from time to time during her stay with her parents. She does not give me her new address. I would have answered her directly if she had taken this precaution. I will be obliged to you if you will let her know about it and that, furthermore, although I am convinced she would not abuse the permission, I cannot go against the orders I have just given. Nevertheless, during her absence I permit her to come once to the convent of Tonneins to see the Good Mother Thérèse and to receive her counsels.

Nothing extraordinary here. The elder Brother Rothéa gives evidence to many of the anxiety in Alsace over not having received an answer to Father Mertian's propositions.

Several young priests are asking to enter the Institute of Mary. I have accepted one definitively, along with a young man who is highly praised. The *exeat*s and replacements are not easily obtained.

I wish you, my dear Son, a great increase in this beautiful life of faith which the Children of Mary should live by. Our young religious in general are still truly novices from this important point of view.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

195. To Bro. David Monier, Agen

April 26, 1822, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

[With insert from S. 195]

My dear Son,

I have not written to you these last few days because I thought you had left Agen last Monday, as you told me you would. I have nothing to say about Villeneuve. Do for the Sodality what your wisdom suggests.

If the Mother Superior has signed only what I agreed upon with Larodère,¹ I do not see where the inconvenience to your arrangement of the classes is coming from. But as we have seen, it is evident that the facilities are too small, either for the schools or for the Sodalities. So we may have peace and order, we should reserve the large parlor for the Ladies of the Retreat. In case of need, the Third Order may be added, for its meeting times do not conflict with the Ladies. In the meantime, and always with patience, if we must have schools built, workshops and large halls for the young people's Sodality and for the meetings of the young people of the Grand Catechism, we will have to do what we can.

However difficult M. Larodère's character may seem, I believe we can succeed in getting along with him concerning the part of the convent he occupies. We would need to agree on seeming to have obligations toward him and would have to be willing to make sacrifices at the same time. We can control carefully the sacrifices already made, and almost certainly as a result of this we will have the opportunity to develop the greater part of the convent's works in good order.

¹ Apparently a matter of vacating a part of the convent which was still occupied by a troublesome tenant.

Try to determine clearly all the characteristics of the place which would work against regularity and what changes may be made. As far as possible, none of the activities of the community should be hampered; *omne violentum non est durabile* [each and every violent attack is not burdensome]. We must not lose sight of the fact that facilities large enough for a sizable community are needed. Having arranged everything, you will inform me at the time of my first visit, and I will see to it that all the necessary and possible changes are made.

For the time being, I see there is nothing to expect from the convent for the other institutions. On the contrary, it would need help—but I suppose that with prudence it could take care of itself.

I am returning to the subject of M. Larodère. I would wish that without seeming to have great need of his place and especially without seeming to be in a hurry, nevertheless he could be persuaded to move elsewhere. If I tried to do this last summer, it was only a matter of respect and also, without doubt, of a type of prejudice against him caused by the small suit he filed against the Good Mother. I do not believe that with this place, we will be dispensed from building, but it is evident that we will not be in a hurry, that, etc. . . .

You speak to me, my dear Son, in a very alarming manner about the free schools for boys. But I can say nothing about generalities. They give us no clue about how to remedy the evil—or rather all the evils, the disorders you have witnessed. It is because of a double evil—or rather, an entire variety of evils—that the disorder in the Agen institution makes you forget about the disorders of the establishment at Alsace. It would seem rather that you should have more understanding about how to prevent these disorders in the future. If we delay answering any longer, it is to be presumed that the enterprise will fail and with it, a certain number of others.

Necessity obliges me to stop here. I will return later to what you say about the pupils to be sent.¹ Nothing is pressing in this matter. I embrace you tenderly. Take care not to be too busy, but take all the more care not to be discouraged. I note with pleasure that you need to pray, providing while having recourse to prayer, you not set down your arms . . . I embrace you tenderly.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I am surprised that you said nothing about the approbation, which is so essential. I do not have the time to reread my letter.

* * *

196. To Bro. David Monier, Agen

April 30, 1822, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

[With inserts from S. 196]

My dear Son,

I will dispense with any remarks, which would be useless anyway, on the necessity under which you labor of waiting for the prefect. I understood you to say that with a loan of 4,000 francs until August the convent would be able to repay, although with difficulty, what is owed to the American woman.

The father of M. Dûnes, the deacon, came to Bordeaux. Nothing new of a serious nature occurred, but I judged it best that the son leave with his father; both were happy with my decision. I immediately informed Father Mouran and asked him to communicate with the archbishop, etc. My letter arrived at Agen before the young man had rejoined his family. His

¹ A reference to the postulants from Agen, destined for the novitiate at Saint-Laurent.

Excellency must have been relieved to find that you knew nothing of the story behind this candidate.

You say there is no management in the free schools. Each person in them does and orders as he pleases. Here you have the evil, or the source of the evil. But is this not the management you have created? If this management has broken down, if each person does and orders as he pleases, can you not straighten what has become crooked, check the abuses, and restore the management to its original energy? Can you not work out a method to bring them back to the point from which they moved away? Is there incapacity or lack of docility in the subjects? If they have made mistakes, if they have made indiscreet and enormous expenses, doubtless we must bear with them, but should they not be punished? If the subjects are unruly or recalcitrant, can they not be replaced? But it is difficult for me to believe this of them. If you do not believe you have enough authority to correct everything, why do not you tell me in all simplicity to order or to forbid this or that thing? After having regulated everything, if you fear the rule coming directly from you is not sufficiently respected, why do not you have it sent to me in order to give it an appropriate sanction? If you are about to leave—well, at the time of your arrival, tell me all about it. You should know my intentions.

It is very difficult to understand, my dear Son, why you should have been told only the day before yesterday about a building to be put up against the wall and even on the wall of enclosure? Is it not possible they were afraid of your keenness and told you about the evil only after it had gone to an extreme? Whatever the case may be, we must doubtless bring to the situation all the disposition still possible, always with wisdom and moderation.

In your account of this new obstacle, you could have skipped the part played by M. Larodère.

Let us do what we can, but always with patience, always with submission to the dispositions of Providence.

Before the Revolution, the Ursulines of Périgueux experienced the same inconvenience. They wanted to oppose it but had to yield. As you are well aware, I know very little about the civil laws, but here is what I think. (1) We must make use of all the right of opposition we may have, only after we have had the best counsels of the city, and we must make these widely known. (2) We must see if we cannot prevent the harm, whether we may not be able to raise a wall of enclosure in this part or at least put up an opposing wall. (3) If our rights are questionable, then we must try to come to an agreement. (4) If these neighboring buildings were not very advanced, we might suspect they have been undertaken only to oblige the religious to buy, at a great price, what they might have had for 3,500 francs.

How many pupils are there who are ready to come to Bordeaux as postulants? I have never believed there might be more than two or three. I do not understand that if they lacked absolutely everything, more than 100 francs per head and possibly far less would be needed to make ends meet. Here, we are truly in difficulty here. I have not begun the building at Saint-Laurent, for the expenses frighten me. I want to be forced by necessity; then without fear, I would go ahead.

I have just received good news from Colmar and from Paris. So far I have gone over the report only rapidly and have not yet had time to reread this letter. Thus I am far from being able to give you this news by the present mail. Even though I foresaw the expense, I find that as soon as I lay down this pen, I must send 600 francs to cover it.

You are probably reserving for yourself the pleasure of surprising me agreeably with the approbation of our Institutions.

May the peace of the Lord be always with you!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

In the meantime, Father Chaminade was receiving excellent news from Alsace. On the one hand, Father Mertian urged him to consent to the merger of their Orders; on the other hand, Fr. Louis Maimbourg, pastor in the city of Colmar, expressed the desire to have the Daughters of Mary for a boarding school and some religious of the Society of Mary for the communal collège.

Fr. Louis Maimbourg (1773-1854), a native of Ribeauvillé, ordained in 1796 in Lucerne by the Nuncio Gravina, secretary of Bishop Saurine and Canon of Strasbourg (1803), pastor of Obernal (1811) and of Colmar (1814), honorary Vicar General of the Upper Rhine (1827), played a primary role in the Church of Alsace for half a century. A man of superior ability, he exercised an almost episcopal influence in the Upper Rhine and, in the familiar expression of Fr. Louis Rothéa, “held all the authorities of the department in his pocket.” He had an intimate relationship with Father Chaminade from this time on. The Society of Mary was introduced and developed in Alsace thanks to his collaboration. “Of all the good I was able to do in Colmar,” he declared to a religious of the Society of Mary, Bro. Jacques Thomann, a few days before his death, “what gives me the greatest joy now is to have introduced the Brothers of Mary. Your Founder was a man enlightened in the ways of God, an incomparable director of souls. He was a saint, and he formed saints” (see *Apôtre de Marie*, 16, p. 231).

* * *

197. To Fr. Louis Maimbourg, Pastor of Colmar

May 9, 1822, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

[With inserts from S. 197]

Reverend Father,

The information Father Rothéa gave me about the letter you sent to him gave me real pleasure. In spite of my desire to have the Institute of Mary render service in Alsace—throughout Alsace—I feel a secret reluctance to start foundations so far away from here without help, without support, especially foundations involving religious women. The style of the proposal and the frankness you assume in your letter embolden me a great deal. In you, our establishments would have, I have no reason to doubt, a steadfast protector. I am going to propose with simplicity some reflections on certain points in your letter.

1. I am very glad Father Mertian promised you brothers for the opening of classes. I will see to it that your Christian schools get along well. This part of the undertakings of the Institute of Mary gives me great consolation. The good God is showering very abundant blessings on these budding institutions. The method we follow attains a double objective which we propose to ourselves, instructions and moral and Christian education. I am sure you know of my rapport with Father Mertian. With little or no apparent shifting, the two institutions actually form only one. Father Mertian will continue to be the superior of the novitiate and of all the schools to be opened in Alsace. Our union would have already been consummated some time ago if my private secretary had not been so busy and if, when the moment of union was almost at hand, I had not been obliged to send him to the prefect of the Lot-et-Garonne. The General Council there had petitioned and granted funds for several new establishments. But here the following words may be applied, *non est periculum in mora* [there is no danger in delay].

2. I will never consent to send religious sisters, if the Sisters of Providence would have to suffer as a result. From your description of the situation, I conclude that in Colmar you have a system of Christian schools for young women and that you have entrusted the direction to these nuns rather than to the Sisters of Providence, who run schools of this type. The distinction may appear metaphysical, but I deem it extremely important.

If the German sisters have a true religious spirit and if they comply with the Method in their work, there is nothing to prevent them from entering the Institute of Mary as Companion

Sisters, as we say. The same thing could happen to the French nuns, if they had that calling and no irrevocable commitments. If they did enter, it is likely that they would not stay in Colmar but would be dispersed among other communities.

I believe your German sisters and our French sisters would not find themselves too uncomfortable if they were together at Colmar and I were to appoint a superior of German origin. I speak of a woman who is well-liked and regarded by both religious and the public. It is said that God fashioned her with great generosity, whether in her physical beauty, in her solid and general common sense, or in the kindness of her heart. Her virtue far surpasses her natural qualities. She is presently superior of the convent of Tonneins. Her German mother spends her time in prayer and is living in seclusion in the convent of Agen; she has no responsibilities.

Reverend Father, you apparently wish the first foundation to be made a league from Colmar. That seems to be out in the country. I want whatever you want, because I am persuaded that you want only the greatest good after having thoroughly examined and sought it out. In the country, who will be their chaplain and confessor? In the country, what will the religious sisters have to do? In the country, no Sodality, no Third Order, no schools, no workshops, etc. No meetings of any kind. The most they could have would be a boarding school or a novitiate, and what expenses would need to be made if it is a boarding school! Would it not be better as a beginning to make these expenses in the city—for example, to enlarge if possible the house occupied by the Sisters of Providence? The more room you give them, the more they can do good to the different classes of people, to groups of women, from childhood to the most advanced age, from beggars to the most advantaged—and all with order and without confusion. The good fortune of founders is sufficient, with your protection, to go ahead. Let us recognize, nevertheless, all that Providence reserves for an establishment in which all the members breathe only for its glory! What further benefit there would be if the *collège* would be directed by religious of the same Institute!

2. We have a small number of good religious who could provide the needed help; we hope to have more soon. Here is what could be done. (1) M. Baumlin, principal; (2) the seminary of Strasbourg would provide the teachers we need. This would enable us to get through the first year. I know that M. Baumlin turned down the position as principal of the *collège*, that he has been ill and is looking forward to his retirement. However, he might accept if he were to enter the Institute because then (1) I would give him a good vice-principal who could become principal in a short time; he is too young to be appointed now. (2) M. Baumlin could retire in Bordeaux when the time came. When he knows more about the Institute, he will see that in Bordeaux he will find everything that he needs.

As far as personnel to be obtained from the seminary of Strasbourg is concerned, that should not be too difficult, whether on the part of the worthy superior who directs the house or of the Prince, your Bishop, who would gladly approve anything we could do for that important portion of his diocese.

Here you have, Reverend Father, the few reflections your letter suggests to me. They will be greatly enhanced by those you will be kind enough to make. You are too discerning not to see the happy results these first establishments will bring about for all of Alsace. I am as yet taking on no obligation, but I will willingly do so with you when the proper time comes. My correspondence in Alsace has made me realize your great merits.

I am with profound respect, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

At the same time he was arranging for the introduction of the Institute of Mary in Alsace, Father Chaminade did not believe he should allow the opportunity of installing his religious in the sanctuary of Verdélais to slip by. Archbishop d'Aviau had just acquired the church and the

former convent of the Célestines with the intention of making of it a house of retreat for aged priests of the diocese (see letter no. 124). So through the mediation of Father Barrès, vicar general, Father Chaminade was making known his humble and confiding offers to this effect.

198. To Father Barrès, Vicar General of Bordeaux

June 3, 1822, Bordeaux

Autograph Rough Copy, Agmar

Reverend Father,

I am taking the liberty of placing in this envelope unsealed the letter I am addressing to the archbishop.

If the proposition I have the honor of making to him coincides with your views, I ask you to seal the envelope, give it to him, and assist with reasons of your own. You will not be leading His Excellency into error by presuming for him all the most favorable reasons. Might it be supposed, for example, that an Institute which devotes itself in such a particular manner to the Blessed Virgin will always make the greatest effort to honor her in one of her most distinguished sanctuaries in the diocese in which it was born?

If His Excellency and you have agreed upon some other plan, I ask you to have the kindness to return my letter, and I will no longer speak of the matter.

I have learned that the trustees of the city parishes and, perhaps even the pastors themselves have murmured against the archbishop's order for the deduction of one-sixth of their revenue. I have not read the order, but if it refers to Verdélais, in accepting our services His Excellency would have a motive for lowering his expectations without appearing to go backward. The trustees seem to consent willingly to 1/12 or even to 1/10. However poor we may be, we would be saddened by the prospect of supporting this effort through a dependency on the other churches. We would doubtless receive the offerings given there, but only those inspired by piety. If the good God asks this work of us, we will willingly undertake it, for we have no fear that Providence will ever fail us.

I am going to make the necessary repairs to the Madeline with this same confidence. I am seeking to carry out, little by little, the project of a mission house you once had the kindness to speak to me about. I am also going to have new buildings put up in the country,¹ for we no longer know where to put the beds. May religion always continue to bring about new triumphs in our unhappy country. This is the sole desire of my heart! I am with profound respect, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

199. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux

June 3, 1822, Bordeaux

Autograph Rough Copy, Agmar

Your Excellency,

For some time now I have been habitually occupied with the idea of the former splendor of Verdélais, of the need to restore it, and of my duty to offer you to this effect the services of the Institute of Mary, however feeble these may be.

Before making the acquisition of this former monastery, you smiled at the plan I presented to you.¹ As I have since come to believe you had other views, I no longer dared to speak to you about it. Now if I were to consult only my actual means, I should continue to hold

¹ Saint-Laurent.

¹ In 1819.

myself apart from this enterprise. For the moment I can only offer you two priests, and even this hampers my own operations. They are both good religious—one of them you could name as officiating pastor and the other as assistant. The younger of the two priests has already exercised the holy ministry, both as assistant and as pastor. This is Father Rothéa. In addition to that, he knows how to play the organ. In Verdélais, he could train a few in this art. To help the singing and give the exercises of religion at least an initial dignity, they could bring along two young postulants, both very pious and with good voices. I have reason to look forward to an increase in the number of subjects. I also have confidence that Our Lord will send us still greater means to have his august Mother duly honored.

Your Excellency, if you see no rashness in the enterprise I have the honor of suggesting here; if the mediocrity of our forces and of our means does not alarm you; and furthermore, if you are willing to second our efforts with your protection, I will have the honor of seeing you and discussing with you and Father Barrès the best way promptly to carry out our plans. *Ad majorem Dei gloriam Virginisque Deiparae* [for the greater glory of God and Mary].

I am with the most profound respect, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

The project did not happen; apparently the archbishop's advisers were opposed to it. The older of the two priests proposed by Father Chaminade seems to have been Father Bouet, an old friend and spiritual son of Father Chaminade who had become a Trappist at Santa Susanna in Aragon and who had been expelled from his monastery by the revolutionary government of Spain. Father Bouet had just returned to Bordeaux (see letter no. 208). He is referred to in the following letter, which shows us the progress made by the Little Society and permits a glimpse of Father Chaminade's hopes for the future. These manifest blessings of Providence justify his founding projects.

200. To Bro. David Monier, Agen

June 7, 1822, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

[With insert from S. 200]

My dear Son,

My pleasure over the news of the dispatches from Villeneuve is completely tempered by the inconceivable delays involved in this matter. Doubtless we must have patience, but we must also remain alert so as not to let any other establishment work its way through the same methods, if this is possible. Will the prefect's decree not cause new delays? Nothing is begun yet, and undoubtedly nothing will begin until after the contract is awarded.

I imagine then, my dear Son, that you are suffering from all the delays which you find yourself unable to prevent and that you suffer even more because your absence hinders other matters which are still more important, at least in their totality. Father Mertian is highly irritated at not having even an answer. Does he perhaps consider himself compromised in the matter? I have certainly tried to make excuses for the first delays, but how can I excuse their interminable prolongation? The disorder of our administration will always be evident no matter what precautions we take to hide it. . . .

When can I leave on my journey to Agen and the Haut-Pays? I cannot yet settle on a date. I have at least three other things which must be settled: Verdélais (this has come up again), the

raising of the novitiate buildings, which I have finally arranged, and the beginning of a community at the Madeleine.¹

The tenant of the house on Rue de Lalande has just left, while the one at the Montesquieu² has nearly decided to leave, too. We have honored all the notes that were outstanding, but there are large gaps to be filled; but there is Tonneins, but. . . ; everything must be provided for before I leave, if at all possible.

It may be that if you come quickly, I may free myself promptly enough. Is it possible for me to lodge at the Grand or the Little Seminary despite the priests' retreat which may well coincide with my stay in Agen? Father Maurel³ would surely like this coincidence.

I am planning to take Father Caillet along. He is now here in the novitiate. Father Caillet is that old friend of Father Rothéa, director of the seminary of Porrentruy, whose name has come up several times among us. His Excellency the Bishop, Prince of Bâle, has given him to us only with great regret. He has reason to regret this, for he is a good priest, a completely formed religious.

Fr. Joseph Bouet, the Trappist, is here. A Spanish Trappist, Brother Macaire, has just arrived also. Both are going to enter the novitiate. I will prepare their letter to the Holy Father for the necessary dispensations. They will give up their Trappist habits as soon as the petition has been mailed by the archbishop. Both are holy religious and have a pleasing holiness. Father Bouet is subject to a nervous condition. The brother has a genial disposition which makes him capable of many things. Moreover, he is in good health.

We have reason to hope for several other good subjects. There is especially one in the diocese of Bayonne, a young pastor, Father Boutoey, whom I desire very much. The better he is, the more His Excellency makes difficulties. He has good reason to.

My writings increase every day. Pray to the good God for the one who loves you as a tender father.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. M. Trocard would like to obtain all the information possible on Pierre Coulet the younger, farmer, of the parish of Sauvagnac in the canton of Roque, department of Lot-et-Garonne. Sauvagnac is at most two leagues from Agen. M. Mouran, to whom I extend my hearty greetings, will easily be able to render this simple service.

I wanted to write to the superior of Agen, but the Verdelaï problem took up all my time. I will not forget her or all my dear Daughters. I hope to be able to send them a few good candidates. My respects to M. and Mme Lacoste and their fine family.

* * *

201. To Bro. David Monier, Agen

June 11, 1822, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

I have just opened a roll of papers sent here from Villeneuve to be given to Brother David, Inspector of the Free Christian Schools. The roll contains (1) the plans for the establishment; (2) an extract of the deliberations of the council of the commune; (3) a letter from the assistant to the mayor. The mayor has left for Paris.

¹ See letter no. 198.

² Doubtless intended to replace the boarding school on Rue des Menuts, which had become too small.

³ Missionary of Bordeaux and great friend of Fr. Chaminade, who directed the priests' retreats in Agen.

The assistant mayor's letter explains his purpose in sending the papers to you. And he adds, "The present and indispensable need of a principal for our school remains the same. At the time of your last interview with him, M. de Vassal told us of his worry about this. When he left, he asked me to remind you again of his entreaty; he was still cherishing the hope you would make every effort to secure someone fully capable of filling this post. Before telling him of your solicitude, I will wait until you are kind enough to tell me what you have done in this matter. Please accept, etc. Darfeuille, Assistant."

The extract from the council's deliberations raises to 13,700 francs the funds needed to complete everything according to the first estimate, including obtaining all necessary objects for furnishing the house. I am not sending you a copy because you must have seen it, at least in the package sent to the prefect. I wanted only to have you take notice of the estimate.

When I took up my pen, my dear Son, I thought of writing you a long letter. Now I see myself obliged to end at the very moment I was planning to continue. . . .

They are asking for a principal. I had already offered you Father Collineau. Well, what do you think? They have been asking now for nine months, and for that long they have been going back on their word. . . . They are haggling over the matter. . . . Someone from Villeneuve entered my room as I was undoing the roll. He said to me that the administration had allowed a principal to leave because they did not want to negotiate with him according to his capabilities. In short, although I have spoken from time to time of Father Collineau's taking over the *collège* in Colmar, offer him for Villeneuve if you see (1) that everything is being done honestly; (2) that he can do good there, that is, that he will already be master of the situation and that he can select his own teachers; and (3) that the archbishop agrees we can have the services of some of the teachers from his seminary until we can replace them with religious. I made the same condition for Colmar. It will create no difficulty, as far as I can see. . . .

May this incident not detain us in Agen. We can handle it as well from here, and perhaps even better. May I lodge in the Grand or the Little Seminary? I must now come to a close. May the Lord shower his blessings on you, on my four children of the schools, and upon all my Daughters.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

Other serious matters were pressing in Alsace. Under the influence of the Rothéa brothers, Alsace insisted Father Chaminade give his attention, his zeal, and his experience to this province. Since February 22, Father Mertian and Father Fréchar, another founder of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine in Lorraine, had been preparing a very detailed plan for the merger of their Institutes with the Society of Mary; on this point, see the Life of Father Chaminade. Without approving the most influential principles behind this plan, Father Chaminade believed the merger was possible and even close at hand. He gave Brother David the task of answering; but Brother David had left for Agen, taking with him Father Mertian's letter and Father Chaminade's notes. In each of his letters, Father Chaminade urged Brother David not to defer his answer, but nothing was done. Then Father Chaminade wrote to Alsace.

202. To Fr. Ignace Mertian, Ribeauvillé

June 18, 1822, Bordeaux

Rough Draft, Agmar

Reverend Father,

I am altogether ashamed not to have answered you concerning the propositions you have taken the trouble to offer me. I had originally answered each article immediately, at least in substance, and you would have been satisfied a long while ago had my private secretary not taken

our correspondence along when he left on an urgent mission. He took it to write out my answer on the way and to prepare for a union, but any number of difficulties kept him from this. I hope to see him soon, and this is the very reason which prevents me from leaving on my own annual round of visits.

I am pleased that this unavoidable delay will have no ill effect, since everything is to be submitted to the Prince's¹ approbation and His Excellency is to be in Strasbourg only at the end of August.

Our schools in Agen are becoming better and better. The effect I desire in such establishments is being visibly realized. The 500 children who attend them are becoming little apostles for their parents. Those of the common people who are most misled, who no longer practice their religion, at least give these establishments indications of real esteem.

You have promised brothers to Father Maimbourg for Colmar for the reopening of classes. I want the schools of this capital city to be equipped exactly like ours so they can serve as models for the rest of the diocese. A novitiate cannot be a normal school. If young religious are employed after their leaving the novitiate, they are soon bewildered. They must be trained under old masters in the schools already in full operation and well-staffed. If we do things only by halves, there is no use giving ourselves all this trouble. With imperfect institutions, we will never succeed in attracting all the country children in the place where they are formed. From this lack will result the mediocrity of their influence for the correction of the people's morals, and the Institute of Mary will not be attaining its goal in one of its principal fields. Oh, what deplorable consequences! I believe we should not, at first, concentrate on the multiplication of establishments but rather in building really good ones.

Considering these things, Father, do not you believe it is wise to choose the best subjects in your novitiate and send them to me? I will keep them in the novitiate only as long as they need to rest and perhaps receive some instruction regarding their state, and then I will send them to Agen without delay. There they can be trained in what they will need to do thereafter. If you happen to have any doubt as to the correctness of your German reading lists, they could bring some along and we would try to correct them and adapt them to the general Method. In order to lessen the cost of the trip, they could travel on foot, or at least for part of it. That would be a kind of small trial for them. I will be obliged to you if you spare me all possible expenses.

I am with profound respect, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

[Father Chaminade took the initiative and wrote Father Fréchal at the same time he wrote to Father Mertian.]

*

Dom Joseph Fréchal (1765-1849) the last Benedictine of the famous abbey of Senones where he had made his profession in 1790, exercised an active ministry during the Terror at the peril of his life in the parish of Colroy (Vosges), where he was later named pastor. By 1817, he was preoccupied with the training of Christian teachers. He came to work closely with Fr. Ignace Mertian of Ribeauvillé. He even sent the latter some well-disposed young men for his Institute. Encouraged by Father Mertian's success, he founded the same type of Institute under the name of Brothers of Christian Doctrine of Nancy, which he established in Vézelize (1821). He obtained government authorization for this Institute on July 17, 1822. The work was interrupted by the revolution of 1830 and reestablished in 1833 by the Baillard brothers, whom Father Chaminade knew, and transferred to Sion-Vaudémont. After some misadventures in which the work of the Baillard brothers was ruined, the Brothers of the Christian Doctrine of Nancy returned to

¹ The Prince of Croy (1773-1844), Bishop of Strasbourg from 1819 to 1823.

Vézelize to their founder (1846). Their congregation grew and exercised a fruitful apostolate until 1903.

203. To Dom Joseph Fréchar, Pastor of Colroy

June 18, 1822, Bordeaux
Autograph Rough Copy, Agmar
[With insert from S. 203]

Reverend Father,

I am altogether disposed to support you in the establishment of a novitiate of the Brothers of the Christian Schools for the vast diocese of Nancy. Christian schools directed according to the method adopted by the Institute of Mary and conducted by its religious destined for this good work are a powerful means of reforming the people. The children there generally make such rapid progress and become so docile and Christian that they carry the good odor of virtue and religion into their respective families.

The children become apostles to their parents, as it were, and their apostolate always produces some happy fruit. This is what makes me call the schools a means of reforming the people.

Brother Rothéa has spoken to me several times of your views on this, and very recently he wrote to me that you wanted to get in direct contact with me through correspondence. This is what induces me to let you know of my sincere disposition of obliging you and of entering into a common plan of action with you.

We have very few available subjects at the present time, but while awaiting the moment when we are completely stabilized, Providence may send us a few. I will be greatly obliged if you let me know in detail all your views in this regard as well as the means presently at your disposal. I will make it my duty to answer you in complete frankness. If I would be obliged to oppose some of your ideas, I hope you would see in this only the most sincere desire to realize the good you yourself propose.

I am with respect, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

In the same mail, Father Chaminade wrote to Father Maimbourg with the possibility of a foundation of the Daughters of Mary in Colmar. He did not even despair of being able to furnish a principal, providing the rest of the personnel could be supplied by the major seminary.

204. To Fr. Louis Maimbourg, Pastor of Colmar

June 18, 1822, Bordeaux
Autograph Rough Copy, Agmar

Reverend Father,

What you foresaw has happened. Our correspondence simplifies our ideas, clarifies the facts, and seems to render possible what at first seemed frightening.

I agree that considering the facilities Providence offers, it is better to start by establishing our religious in Eguisheim rather than in Colmar. It is up to them to make themselves desirable to the capital city. But to proceed with some order, (1) it seems to me the founders should write to me and inform me of their intentions and the sacrifices they are prepared to make to achieve them. I will always answer them through you, for you will always be the director and, if necessary, the mediator of this foundation. (2) As soon as possible, I will visit our establishments

in Tonneins and Agen and see what subjects can be available right now. (3) In the meantime, if we can agree on something for the *collège*, there is nothing but to move ahead.

Let us speak a little about the school. I have not proposed Father Baumlin¹ only because he had already been asked and with insistence, according to what I was told, to take the office of director. If he entered the Institute while abandoning himself entirely to the direction and motivation he would be given there, it seems to me I would make use of his talents and tastes in a more suitable and profitable manner.

I am beginning to realize the possibility of giving you a principal and even several other subjects for the administration of temporalities and for the direction of studies. Nevertheless, I must always take for granted the possibility of choosing some backers from among the good seminarians, at least for the first year. I hope it will be possible for me to give you exact information between now and the month of August or on the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin. I will be greatly obliged if you will explain what relationship we should have with the university, granting that we can take charge of the school. Will we pay all it asks in exchange for a diploma for the principal? This, I believe, is about as far as we can now go—apart from that, liberty, and complete liberty! We are working at a general plan of studies, but we did not believe we should change anything yet. We are limiting ourselves to bringing order into ordinary teaching. The classes are strong. The execution of certain parts of the general plan gives cause for great hope. We have hardly more than two subjects who are prepared to work at it, and these two are continually interrupted by other tasks. One is a former lawyer who joins great creative power to vast erudition,¹ and the other is a young priest whom the good God has blest with very rare talents for the handling of all sorts of subjects.² You may have him someday as a preacher and professor of eloquence and rhetoric, but I am not permitting myself to consider this for next year.

Taking for granted the first establishment of the Daughters of Mary in Eguisheim, we do not have to bother about the city of Colmar for the time being.

I promised you I would always watch over the establishment of the Christian schools of Colmar. Father Mertian is to give you brothers from his novitiate for this purpose. I am writing him by this mail, and I will insert with this letter an extract of the one I have the honor of addressing to him. You can judge our interest for yourself, particularly in the establishment planned for Colmar. I am not informing Father Mertian that I have given this extract to you. You can make use of it as you see fit.

Nothing remains but to thank you for all the detailed information you have given and also for your kind encouragement. You have wisely judged that I needed courage to undertake establishments at more than 250 leagues from here at my age and, above all, with the desire I have for a strict regularity.

I am with respect, Reverend Father, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

Only after sending these letters did Father Chaminade learn of the nervous attacks which had begun to trouble Brother David. He wrote to him immediately.

205. To Bro. David Monier, Agen

June 21, 1822, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

¹ Pastor of Saint-Marie-aux-Mines, who had expressed his intention of entering the Society of Mary.

¹ Bro. David Monier.

² Doubtless Fr. Lalanne.

[With insert from S. 205]

My dear Son,

I am holding my pen, and I am in a state of uncertainty. I do not know whether I should be thankful, or not. I understand it was at your request that I have not been informed about the violent and critical condition from which you are recovering. Anyhow, I appreciate your goodwill in not wanting to cause me any anxiety.

I have just experienced another shock. The same day His Excellency confirmed 500 people, he fell ill. He reached the danger point, was anointed, and has come back to health. It was immediately noticeable how much this saintly prelate is loved. Public prayers were said in all the churches and with a fervor which showed the most lively interest. It seemed God could not resist so many and such pressing entreaties. Some parishes continued their novenas, and each community did what its piety inspired it to do. The Miséricorde sent a kind of delegation to Verdélais. The two directresses, chosen by lot, went as if in fulfillment of a vow, on bare feet, etc.

...

Do not leave, my dear Son, however greatly we may need you here, unless you feel strong enough not to feel the strain of the trip and of the heat. I am thinking seriously enough of leaving this place on July 3 or July 4. As traveling companions, I will have Fathers Bouet and Caillet. Each are exemplary priests. You will doubtless understand that I have my reasons, but I simply do not have time to tell you more. If because of your illness you cannot be here five or six days before my departure, it would be better for you to wait for me. We must take care not to miss each other.

The superior of Agen and the entire convent are distressed because Sister de l'Incarnation has been suffering from a bad cold for the past 6 weeks. This sister's health is very delicate. Perhaps she, better than the doctor, can indicate what precautions should be used to recover her health.

Whatever accommodations are furnished for us at the major seminary, we will be satisfied, for it is only for the night. The convent cannot accommodate even one guest. Neither can the small community of our brothers, nor Brother Dardy. Furthermore, it seems to me, there are inconveniences everywhere else, and in the seminary these two good religious will be able only to edify the seminarians. As you know, Father Caillet, although young, was the director of the seminary of Porrentruy.

Building has been begun, both in the city and in the country.¹ When your observations arrived everything came to a halt, at least at Laval. Stone had been ordered. You know I am pretty much feeling my way, but I hardly ever return to what has already been begun. I have been speaking to you about all this at least since the beginning of Lent.

Let us put all our confidence in God and in the protection of the Blessed Virgin. My dear Son, I offer you to the Lord with all those in Agen who belong to me, including M. Lacoste and his entire family.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

*

Georges Caillet, referred to in the preceding letter, was born in 1790 in Porrentruy, Switzerland, to a family long faithful to the best traditions. Already a priest, he was drawn to the Society of Mary by Father Rothéa, his friend and companion in the seminary (1822). After his perpetual profession (1823) Father Caillet was called to Bordeaux, and under Father Chaminade's guidance he was initiated into the works of zeal which had the Madeleine as a center—Confession, preaching, direction of the sodalists,

¹ At the Madeleine and at Saint-Laurent.

of the Ladies of the Retreat, of the Daughters of Mary, and of the Carmelites in Bordeaux and neighboring regions. The first 20 years of Father Caillet's religious life were spent in this work.

As a consequence, great intimacy developed between him and Father Chaminade. On occasion, Father Chaminade confided to him the most important missions—the beginning at Saint-Remy, the work of the retreats and the normal schools (1824), and the legal recognition of the Society of Mary (1825). When Father Chaminade left Bordeaux, as during his travels of 1826, 1827, and 1829 and especially during his long absence from 1831 to 1836, Father Caillet replaced him at the Madeleine. Because of this relationship, according to Father Chevaux, no one knew Father Chaminade as thoroughly as Father Caillet. In a special notice, Father Caillet did not fear to speak of the “effusions of intimacy in which our venerated Father used to reveal to us the great things God had done for him and by him.”

Named General Head of Zeal in 1833, he was elected Superior General at the chapter of 1845 and found himself, God permitting this, in opposition to the views of Father Chaminade. For each of them this was a cruel trial, destined no doubt to consummate Father Chaminade's growth in holiness. “I experienced for the person of our Good Father,” Father Caillet said later, “such an attachment that, going over all possible worries in my mind, I found none more cruel than finding myself in disagreement with him.” When the last hour came, God had caused the trial to cease, and on his knees at the feet of the Founder Father Caillet received for himself and for the Society of Mary his final blessing.

The long generalate of Father Caillet (1845-68) was marked by a constant effort to strengthen and perfect Father Chaminade's work. Toward this end, his numerous circulars forcibly recall the principal points of the Rule. The General Chapters of 1858, 1864, 1865, and 1868 took place with this in mind and brought to a head the editing of the Constitutions in 1869. Trials relative to the organization of the Society of Mary were Father Caillet's lot, and also great consolations such as the approbation of the Society of Mary by the Brief of 1865. During his generalate the seat of the General Administration was transferred from Bordeaux to Paris (1861).

After the General Chapter of 1868 Father Caillet lived in retirement, in the company of Fr. Jean Chevaux, his successor, who surrounded him with affectionate and filial attentions. He led a life of prayer and gave examples of the most edifying of the religious virtues. “Everyone knows,” Chevaux wrote, “that he extended to the limits exactitude, punctuality, and regularity in his daily life. This fidelity followed him until these last days, and all those who have been its witnesses will always keep it in memory.” He was no less admirable in his spirit of obedience. Even in his last illness and for the least things proposed to him, he had an invariable answer, “I must first find out what Father Chevaux thinks about it.” And when it was insisted the Good Father wanted anything which might give him relief, “No,” he would insist in his turn, “I may not and I do not wish to do anything without the advice of Father Chevaux. He is my superior.” On the morning of August 18, Father Caillet had again received holy Communion. Near noon, almost without agony, he peacefully rendered his soul to God.

Good Father Caillet was a man “simple, upright and fearing God.” . . . “He has neither very great intellectual eminence nor great acquaintance with the ways of the world,” Father Chaminade said of him, “but he is full of faith and has sound judgment.” “He was a man straightforward and all of one piece,” again says one of the religious who knew him best, having witnessed his sense of responsibility and duty, “but only modestly endowed with the suppleness needed to govern others.” Above all, he was a man of great faith and in this way was a worthy son of the Founder, who had recommended him to the Ladies of the Miséricorde. He had inherited as the most precious patrimony the filial piety of Father Chaminade for the glorious Saint Joseph and especially for the august Mary. In a series of circulars, he has faithfully transmitted this heritage to his successors with burning enthusiasm. “I declare it,” he writes in Circular no. 67, “and I repeat it with all the energy of my soul and all the depth of my convictions, that the religious of Mary cannot attain the end of his vocation—his own sanctification, that of his colleagues, and

of the souls confided to his care—except by the powerful, unique, and universal means of a special devotion of Mary.”

* * *

206. To M. Faure de Lacaussade, Tonneins

June 25, 1822, Bordeaux
Autograph, Arch. FMI

I thank you very sincerely for the care you have given Good Mother Thérèse, as well as for the trouble you are taking to keep me informed about her condition. Without your letter, I might have been led to some imprudence in her regard. At the same time, I was hearing from Agen that her health required her transfer back to her previous convent. I am answering with this letter that she should not leave Tonneins until you believe it is best. You have already told me you cannot reach a definite decision before eight days, etc. . . . Please continue to give me news about her condition. When she has really recovered, might it not be good to let her recover more strength before departing? If you think so yourself, I may take her along when I pass through Tonneins. I would like to leave Bordeaux on July 3 or July 4. I will have two priests with me. Would it not be somewhat indiscreet for the three of us to stop at your house? Please receive the assurance of my sincere and respectful attachment.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

207. To Bro. David Monier, Agen

June 26, 1822, Bordeaux
Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

Another letter from M. de Lacaussade accompanied yours. It told me in detail about Mother Thérèse's illness. He adds that only after eight days can a definite prognosis be determined. The eight days are passing by. Let us be patient! To me, it would not seem prudent to withdraw her from his hands before she is definitely recovering. I am writing to M. de Lacaussade by this same mail, as well as to the Good Mother.

It is an effect of Providence that Mother Thérèse's journey and my visit should coincide. With her assistance, I hope to leave the convent in the spirit we both have so much at heart. Perhaps in passing I could very simply take Mother Thérèse along. I would be greatly inclined to name Mother Dosithée in her place, always in the supposition that she will be able to make the trip and to absent herself for only two or three weeks.

Profit, my dear Son, by the prolongation of your stay in Agen. (1) Give me sufficiently detailed notes regarding what prevents the greater part of the community from leaving with the real spirit of the Institute and also how to remove the obstacles and come to a unity of views and sentiments. I understand very clearly that you will be obliged to speak to me about personal failings, but do not hesitate in this instance to tell me everything you think. (2) Give me also notes about the free schools in general and about Agen in particular. I should very much like to consider completed the Method which the brothers will have to follow.

Do you have the correspondence of Fathers Mertian and Rothéa and also the work you had done? If you do not have it, tell me by return mail where it is to be found among your papers.

Take care of your health, my dear Son. I embrace you *in visceribus Christi* [in the bosom of Christ].

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

This letter addressed to Father Rigagnon, the assistant at the church of Saint Louis in Bordeaux, refers to Fr. Joseph Bouet, who appears at different times in the life of Father Chaminade. Born in Bordeaux in 1766 to an honorable and noble family, Joseph Bouet entered the seminary to prepare himself for an ecclesiastical career. The Revolution chased him from it and took away his father, who was guillotined. Overcome by misfortune, he was seized by a nervous malady, a diabolic obsession which could be excised only by the force of exorcisms. Ordained a priest in Paris in 1797, he returned to Bordeaux and associated himself with Father Chaminade, whom he followed into Spain. In 1799 he entered the Trappists of Santa Susanna. After a series of travels caused by the wars and troubles of Spain, he left the island of Majorca, where the monks of Santa Susanna had gone and where he had become Prior of the Desert of Saint Joseph, and took refuge in France (1822).

Father Bouet came to Bordeaux and stayed with Father Chaminade. His mother wanted to keep him with her and made him such fine offers to this effect that he fell ill as a result. The letter of June 30 refers to this. Father Bouet accompanied Father Chaminade to Agen, where he was greatly edified by the life of the brothers. Returning to Bordeaux, he retired to the apartment his mother had prepared for him and resumed his monastic life for some time. In 1824, Archbishop d'Aviau tried to found a Trappist monastery at Saint-Aubin, at the gates of Bordeaux, a project of short duration. Father Bouet became an affiliate of the Society of Mary and rendered all the services within his power, preaching retreats and directing the religious until his death in 1848. He even became Father Chaminade's confessor.

208. To Father Rigagnon, Bordeaux

June 30, 1822, Bordeaux

From the written life of Father Bouet;

Archives of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Bordeaux

Reverend Father,

You will learn with sorrow that Father Bouet's infirmities are always increasing. The nervous outbursts are becoming more and more frequent and lasting longer, so the intervals between them have become very short. Recently there have been convulsions, which chill the heart of those who witness them. Each time since his arrival that I have seen or heard of some new crisis, I have sought the cause. You know I had the hope, if not of curing him entirely, at least of relieving him enough so he could exercise the holy ministry. I have never discovered any other cause for these disturbances than his relationship with his mother or the news about her which reaches him. As his mother calms down or becomes exasperated with him, in that proportion the crises increase or diminish. The cause here is evident.

You are connected intimately enough with Mme Bouet, Father, to confer easily with her and to come to some mutual agreement. If she thinks she will be quiet if her son comes to stay with her, however attached he may seem to be to the little refuge he found with me, he is ready to sacrifice this and go his mother. He wishes her to recover her peace of soul.

Because Father Bouet has at times spoken to me of the benefit short trips have for his health, I invited him to accompany me on the one I am going to make to the Haute-Pays. He accepted with pleasure and has been preparing for it for some days. Nevertheless, this morning, I found him, although undergoing a violent crisis, fully disposed to sacrifice the good the traveling would do for his health. Although very ill, he is prepared to go to his mother if his presence would calm her. Mme Bouet has only to say the word. Either he will go to her, or he will leave with me on Wednesday. If she decides he should leave, it is very important that she will do this with good

grace so her son will not be bothered by his imagination, which will not fail to dwell on his mother's condition.

I know, Father, that you respect Father Bouet's virtue, and his present circumstance is a proof of the great generosity of his soul. In this he is sacrificing to filial love his strength, his health, and one could say even his life. Although he has no thought of submitting the exercise of his ministry to the maternal control, he has too much character not to realize that in living with his mother he becomes, as it were, useless to the Church. You are aware of his consuming zeal. Judge then the sacrifice he is offering to make. Judge the constraint he must live under.

I am not permitting myself to give Mme Bouet any advice. I do not know why she has taken the change of my dispositions so hard. For nearly two years I had been doing everything I could to make her happy by letting her son come to her, the object of all her tenderness. As I saw the matter, the son had the possibility of being cured, little by little, of his infirmities. He could devote himself according to his zeal, while his mother could see him whenever she wanted or all the time she wanted. She and her servant could profit from his zeal for their own sanctification. The exact opposite has taken place. The son, in order not to become more ill, has found himself obliged to lessen and shorten his visits, etc. . . .

As far as I am concerned, I have wished to make three more people happy; now, I adore the secret dispositions of Providence which did not permit this. Mme Bouet, moreover, must know that all along her son has had the same liberty he still has, of going to her whenever she says the word . . .

Friendly and respectful greetings.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

Father Chaminade made the trip to the Haut-pays at the time under the conditions indicated. He went as far as Villeneuve, where he immediately accepted the direction of the collège and, for the following year, the communal schools. He named Father Collineau principal and charged him, along with Brother David, with the preparation of everything for the reopening of classes. The distance from Agen to Tonneins was too great to give the various communities all the help they sought. This was a great lack, but the religious did not grieve over it. On the contrary, they seemed very happy about it, as in this letter written to the Head of Temporalities upon his return.

209. To Mother Saint-Vincent, Agen

August 16, 1822, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

[With inserts from S. 209]

My dear Daughter,

Before taking up my pen to answer you, I looked over our financial situation, our obligations, and our means of meeting them to see if I could free you in some way.

I see no way of doing this, at least for the time being, but I will not lose sight of your need. In the meantime, do what you can to free yourself, but with neither trouble nor concern.

The simplest thing to do, it seems to me, is to invite M. Lacoste to come and see you; then you can tell him the story of the bank draft, very simply. It is to be expected that he will invest it for you until November 25 at the rate to which you have a right. Neither M. Barsalon nor any other stockbroker has more solid stocks in his briefcase. You can consider M. Lacoste as your temporal father—I mean the temporal father of the convent. Let me know everything that is happening.

Let Father Mouran follow the promptings of his heart in his dealings with M. Darfront. Ask him only to let you know when, urged by his goodness, he intends to advance you the money.

During my stay in Tonneins, Mother Saint-Esprit told me on two different occasions that she had only five or six francs in her cashbox. I asked her what the sisters had when I first brought them to Tonneins and whether they had ever lacked what was necessary. She answered that when they came they had nothing, but they had never been in want since. I told her on two different occasions that I was afraid her anxiety over the future would not stop the ways of Providence . . . and in case there should be too great a need, she should let me know about it.

I was surprised that she accepted the 150 francs from the convent of Agen. What a trial to have been obliged to borrow 12 francs from the account of the poor! My surprise was also very great when you sent me Mother Thérèse's letter requesting an allowance for Sister de l'Incarnation. If I have time to write to her, I will invite her to enter into herself and make her *culpé* before me regarding such a letter. If we are going to carry on in this way with regard to our small human problems, we will not be doing much else. We will no longer be fit to be employed in God's work, etc. . . . I have been more grieved because of this than over the biggest losses we might have suffered. I willingly give you permission to write to Tonneins about this and to talk to the Good Mother, but not to the convent because of Sister de l'Incarnation.

Why should we not make an example of Sister Angélique? By the way, she has a name which fits her very poorly. Tell the Good Mother, to whom I do not believe I can write, to take all the suitable precautions prudence may suggest, but to leave the community out of the entire business. By yesterday's mail I received the request of four young women of the canton of Berne in Switzerland to enter the Institute, but what a difference between our capricious young women and those of Switzerland! Well, I think I will accept only one, Father Caillet's sister, whom you saw with me in Agen. The good God seems to have been preparing her for many years expressly for the Institute, just as he had prepared her brother.

You cause me great pleasure in telling me the Mothers and the novices like to discuss the instructions they heard during our stay in the convent. The Institute of the Daughters of Mary will develop beautifully (1) if among all of them there is a true bond of charity and (2) if there is perfect subordination. These two points include everything. The Daughters of Mary, in whatever part of the world they may be, will form only one and the same family. Everywhere, they will have the same views and the same interests. Like the angels in heaven, they will always be ready to leave or to carry out the orders of God as made known to them by their superiors. Tell the good Mistress of Novices and also the Mother of the Companion Sisters to test the novices, to bend their wills, even in matters which seem hardly reasonable. It is necessary to mold and remold them, so to speak, until there is no longer any shadow of inconstancy. A Daughter of Mary bases her views on God's. Her heart embraces the entire universe, as it were. Caprice! How it narrows the thoughts of the mind and locks up the sentiments of the heart! A capricious young woman, full of selfishness, seems to live only for herself.

I have to stop here. Perhaps Father Collineau and Brother David will go to the convent looking for possible letters. If I can, I will write to them from Villeneuve.

May the blessings of heaven come upon the Good Mother, upon you, and upon all my Daughters in the convent of Agen!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

*Fr. Jean-Baptiste Collineau's nomination to the direction of the collège of Villeneuve was to be approved by the university. Father Chaminade wrote to Bishop Frayssinous, whom he knew personally and who had just been named president of the university.*¹

**210. To Bishop Frayssinous
President of the University of Paris**

September 16, 1822, Bordeaux
Autograph Rough Copy, Agmar

Your Excellency,

The Inspectors of the Academy of Cahors, exercising the functions of rector of the same academy, have temporarily named Father Collineau as principal of the *collège* of Villeneuve. They have doubtless asked Your Excellency to confirm this appointment.

M. Vassal of Montviel, deputy of Lot-et-Garonne and mayor of Villeneuve, immediately requested the same favor of Your Excellency, if the young priest had the *exeat* from his diocese [to move from one diocese to another]. The wise answer of Your Excellency has been forwarded to me, and this gives me the honor and advantage of explaining my position to you. I will do so as clearly and as briefly as possible.

Following the organization of several Sodalities affiliated to the one in Bordeaux and also following the founding of the Daughters of Mary, which I had the honor of speaking to you about in the palace of the Archbishop of Bordeaux, Providence has rendered me the grace to establish a religious Society of men. It is composed of priests and lay members. The young religious running the free schools of Agen have been admitted to the class of laymen. The same will be the case for similar schools being built in Villeneuve-sur-Lot.

Last July, while going to Villeneuve to view the progress of the construction, I was deeply upset by the pitiful condition of the *collège*. I permitted the *collège* administration to present to Your Excellency Father Collineau, one of the priests of the Institute of Mary, who is capable of putting the place back onto shape and of inspiring confidence in the city and the department. No priest joins the Institute of Mary without an *exeat* from his bishop, and no priest works in a diocese without the approval of the local Ordinary. Every institution, either of men or of women, is expressly under the jurisdiction of the Ordinary of the diocese in which it is founded. I am myself subject to the same ruling by my letters as Missionary Apostolic. All the canonical forms have been followed in the case of Father Collineau. I presented him even to the administration of the *collège* only after having assured myself of the approval of the Bishop of Agen.

I believed, Your Excellency, that prudence could not permit me to explain myself clearly enough to the civil officers, or even to the Academy of Cahors. If the divine mercy on our unhappy country had not placed you at the head of the university, I would have preferred to withdraw Father Collineau rather than to try to explain myself. I am even afraid that while writing directly to Your Excellency by mail, my letter may not reach you. I am taking the liberty of having it delivered to you directly by one of the Honorary Canons of our cathedral, a zealous sodalist who happens to be in Paris at this time.¹ I am with the most profound respect, Your Excellency, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

¹ Bishop Frayssinous (1765-1841), famous for his conferences on apologetics which he gave in Paris under the Empire and the Restoration, was named first chaplain of the King, Bishop of Hermopolis, President of the University (1822) and finally Minister of Ecclesiastical Matters and of Public Instruction (1824-28). Father Chaminade became acquainted with him at the seminary of Laon in Paris in 1782 and met him again in Bordeaux at the famous lectures of 1817.

¹ Doubtless Fr. Goudelin, who as director of the Institute for the Deaf in Bordeaux had just been placed in charge of the similar institute in Paris.

* * *

Through his letters Father Chaminade did not fail to sustain the fruit of his visit to Agen. We note his wise counsels relative to the probation of the subjects and his views about a Third Order Regular, yet to be founded.

211. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

September 24, 1822, Agen

Autograph, Arch. FMI

[With insert from S. 211]

My dear Child,

I am taking up my pen with the intention of keeping this letter as long as I can. I will begin with your last letters.

It is unfortunate that the matter of the three postulants is not resolved. What a loss of time, and what interior commotion in the community as a whole! God be praised. Let us again discuss the three members, the topics of your last council meeting

1. Sister Angélique. It has been only 13 or 14 months since her dismissal was decided upon, but today she is doing well and gives no cause at all for being sent away. I ask a question from my side. Is it by a spirit of faith that she maintains herself in the observance of the Rule? If there is a reason for believing this, if by herself she takes the means suggested by faith, if, in one word, God has visibly touched her heart, not only would we need to be patient with her, but we would have to work with grace and sustain her courage. On the contrary, if only the fear of being sent away sustains her, you must seize the first occasion which presents itself to dismiss her. Your way of dismissing candidates is not the one usually followed. Some person among the heads tries to persuade the subject that he is not made for the Institute, etc., that he would do well to retire without display, that he needs aid and support outside of the community, etc. This should hardly be noticed within the community. Once the dismissal of a subject has been decided upon and the person has been informed of this, then the dismissal must not be delayed because ordinarily subjects will talk about it with their companions, and this causes harm. As much as is possible, subjects must be spared the odium of dismissal.

My dear Child, I would like very much for you to finally adopt this attitude of wisdom and firmness which would spare you so many cares and worries. Because you admit people to the postulate, you and you alone carry out the dismissal agreed upon in council. You choose your own time and the proper means, etc. . . .

Sister Angélique's departure gives rise to several very serious incidental questions. Could the Third Order furnish subjects for operating the schools in small towns? I believe it could, and I wanted to establish this years ago, but there are many precautions to be taken and, in spite of my goodwill, I cannot bother about it yet. While passing through Marmande, a pastor came to offer me a location, gardens, some revenues, and a good subject for a similar establishment in his parish. I held out some hope, but I have not yet done anything about it. Father Mouran has to be responsible for Auvillar, and Sister Angélique must be placed. In answering, Father Mouran may be able to propose Sister Angélique and another subject of the Third Order, or anyone else who might desire, agree to, and be able to live with Sister Angélique, but there would be no question of the community, the Third Order, and affiliation to the Institute. When the time comes, we will see how we will work out this kind of establishment. It is more difficult than we may believe at first, especially when we want everything to go well. There are ten types of Sisters of Providence who busy themselves with this work. They are constantly growing worse. Those whom Father Mouran has reformed in Alsace and for Alsace seem to be the only ones who are doing tolerably

well. . . . Father Mouran might write and confide his message to Sister Angélique, who would present herself at the same time. This would be an excellent way of disposing of her. Then we would find her a companion. Neither you nor any of our Daughters needs to bother about whether she is to be or not to be head of this little establishment. It is a cause for amazement that you should use any time during the council meeting to discuss matters which in no way concern you.

The question of the admission of a certain number of widows is still postponed for further consideration. God must be consulted. I am saying “a certain number” because we may admit one or two who may find themselves in a situation where they might be associated with the sisters without inconvenience. We never expect to reject those God sends us.

We also need to be thinking of the works of zeal which the sodalists or tertiaries would have to perform around the cities of Agen and Tonneins.

I will return to the matter of the other two postulants. I already consider Sister Angélique as gone from the convent, and in a very peaceful and honest manner, however little you may be able to do about it.

2. Sister Félicité. I will give her a short answer. . . . It is done. You may send her away or keep her, according to her disposition when the letter arrives. In general, my dear Child, to judge subjects well, see whether you can find in them a true faith, a great desire for salvation, a decided fear of damnation, the spirit of penance, and hatred of sin and of self as a sinner or inclined to sin. If these sentiments exist, then see what actions they have produced. “Show me,” said the apostle Saint James, “your faith by your works.”

Ordinarily enough, this examination is to be preceded by another on Christian doctrine and on the principles of religious life. Instruction in Christian doctrine should precede the more particular instructions on the religious life. Here is the way of proceeding. A subject enters the postulate. (1) Does she understand her catechism? (2) Is the knowledge of the great truths of religion the motive for her entrance into the convent? (3) Does she know what religious life is? (4) Is she determined to embrace religious life by the motives of faith, which are supposed to have determined her entrance into the convent? (5) Does she understand that the Institute of the Daughters of Mary is a true religious Order?

3. Sister Présentation. It could be, my dear Child, that this young woman was brought to the convent by human motives and that today supernatural ones are keeping her there. I suppose you have closely examined this young woman and on this supposition, if she does not seem fit for the Institute I am highly in favor of your notifying her uncle. I would wish her departure to be judged necessary by her uncle and by her, not to be harmful to her reputation, and not to arouse her against the convent. My dear Child, may the Lord fill you with the spirit of wisdom.

4. Sister Saint-Sacrement. Tell her to write me a little letter in which she can give me a short account of her conduct since my departure from Agen. Moreover, my dear Child, I ask you to watch over or have someone watch over whatever she does, until we have the assurance that she is truly converted and is really seeking her salvation.

5. Sister Antoinette. I see only good in letting her strengthen herself in virtue. She has been in Tonneins such a short time.

6. Sister Marie-Joseph.¹ If the 100 francs her grandmother sent her have been used without consulting her with the intention of trying her, nothing is to be said about this. Her conduct in this matter is a new proof that she will be a good religious. However what should be done in the future for her and for other novices in like circumstances? I would wish that they would be permitted to have what is sent them and to distribute or use it as they prefer. This would be a means of having them acquire one more merit and a way of gaining a better knowledge of their dispositions. I ask you to give her some tokens of my kind remembrance.

Father Laugeay tells me he does not have a cent for a trip to Bordeaux with his little group for the annual retreat. He even owes 40 francs. He was not able to address himself to M.

¹ Elisabeth de Casteras, Adèle's second cousin and later third Superior General of the Institute.

Dardy, his ordinary cashier. I am writing to tell him to come to you this time and that I am notifying you of this. Their journey must be in the most economical way possible, the way most compatible with young men who make a profession of poverty.

I wanted to answer Mother Saint-Vincent's last letter, but it was not possible. It is too interesting to be answered in a few words. I am not rereading what I have written. I hope I have done no worse than omit some words which it will be easy to supply.

I must, nevertheless, acquaint you with the departure of Mlle Caillet of Porrentruy, which must have taken place yesterday, September 23. She has more than 300 leagues to cover. I am planning to keep her here a few days. She is traveling alone. The companion I was giving her has been frightened away. Pray for her. If she is like her brother, as I hope she is, you will have a good religious in her.

May the blessings of heaven be showered more and more upon you, my dear Child, and upon all our beloved Daughters.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

211. To Fr. Louis Maimbourg, Pastor of Colmar

September 1822, Bordeaux

Autograph Rough Copy, Agmar

Reverend Father,

I believe there is not a day when I do not think of writing to you or of hearing from you. I have not forgotten that before August 15 I was to tell you whether we could find you a principal for the *collège* in Colmar, but because my promise depended on the visit you were to receive from His Excellency the Bishop, when I learned it was to be delayed I myself delayed also. I always kept alive the hope of satisfying you. I am still waiting, and I now note with regret that this project must be abandoned unless you still have the same need next year. In the novitiate, I have a 55-year-old priest whose talents had distinguished him in the university before the Revolution—Father Bouet. But there are serious reasons not to recommend him for this appointment, at least for some time. In my annual round of visits to our establishments in the Haut-Pays, I granted the *collège* of Villeneuve-sur-Lot as principal the young religious I wished to give you as assistant principal. He was installed on August 31. I have been greatly concerned at the many disorders which prevail in this school. The subject of my choice, although young, is able to achieve the moral rescue of the place and to win again for it the esteem and confidence of the public. But your need is not so urgent. The city is not as important as Colmar. It is not very far from Bordeaux, although in another department, and I am making him at the same time superior and director of the brothers of the free schools which I have just founded there.

You know I had written to Father Mertian that he should send me two of the young novices he destined for you, in order to have them well-trained at the end of this year under experienced masters. He did not believe this precaution was necessary. I gave him evidence of my surprise at this fact. I hope he will not himself make what is called a school,¹ while neglecting some precautions usually necessary. Our novitiates² cannot be normal schools for this kind of teaching. I would not want the success of these schools at Colmar, the capital city of the department, to be jeopardized in any way.

The merger of Father Mertian's institution with ours is not yet accomplished. I believe that if we really desire the good, a union pure and simple is necessary, or there will be no union at

¹ "Make a school," *i.e.*, an experience in the pejorative sense of the word.

² In particular, which Bro. Louis Rothéa had just begun to direct, from which Fr. Mertian had planned to draw two leaders for Colmar.

all. I wrote to Father Mertian about this on August 8. I do not believe I have omitted any essential condition, but I have not yet received an answer. The approaching arrival of S. A. - - - is doubtless the reason for it. The matter will surely be submitted to her, and I hear that the account of it made to her will not be sufficient. If you have occasion to see S. A. - - - beforehand, you might have her promise to hold on to my last letter. I believe I have destroyed the most violent prejudices of Alsace. If the objection were made only by reason of the Statutes³ already approved by S. A. - - - and by the king, the superior's nomination is up to the bishop. You will call attention to the fact that because the Institute of Mary recognizes in all diocese the Ordinaries as First Superiors, any choice of local superiors the Institute makes would actually be only a presentation to Their Excellencies the Bishops, who actually make the appointment. Acceptance or refusal—everything is in the hands of God!¹

During my long stay in Agen, I made certain I would be able to send you a small group of religious without impoverishing the Daughters of Mary too much. I tried to sound out their dispositions. In general, everyone seemed ready to go to the ends of the world if they received the order to do so. If the founder had written to me in the way that I wrote to you, we might have been able to make the foundation this year. May his silence have some unfortunate cause?

I am with profound respect, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. Father Rothéa, whose writing you may recognize, is replacing the secretary with pleasure and has the honor of offering you his respectful remembrance.

* * *

The reputation of the Institute was spreading. The people of Montignac, a small town in the diocese of Périgueux, had the idea of confiding their school to Father Chaminade, their compatriot. The vicar general of the diocese transmitted their request to him, backed by the recommendation of the bishop. Father Chaminade's answer shows his prudence in business matters; this is from a draft composed by Bro. David Monier.

213. To Father Loqueyssie, Vicar General of Périgueux

September 28, 1822, Bordeaux
Autograph Rough Copy, Agmar

Reverend Grand Vicar,

You may not doubt the great satisfaction I would have in doing something agreeable to your worthy prelate.² While letting him know my good dispositions, please ask him to accept the sincere and respectful homage of my veneration.

If your request may both please you and free me from the debt I owe my native diocese, we have an overflowing of advantages, which I cannot help appreciating.

Then it is up to me to thank you for the occasion your charity gives me to explain myself about so many duties. Without doubt, I will do for Montignac and for any other places His

³ Concerning Fr. Mertian's Brothers of Christian Doctrine.

¹ On October 2, Fr. Mertian wrote to Fr. Chaminade that the new bishop was against the merger of the two Congregations. He concluded, "If we cannot be united as a Congregation, then let us at least be united in prayers." The matter of the merger was to be taken up again later on (letter of January 4, 1825).

² Bishop de Lostange (1763-1835), had just taken possession of the See of Périgueux, suppressed by the Concordat of 1802 and reestablished in 1821. On this occasion, he had asked Archbishop d'Aviau to let him have several priests employed in the Bordeaux diocese but originally from the diocese of Périgueux. "There is another," he continued, "but I am not referring to him, as he is doing too much good where he is. This is Father Chaminade."

Excellency and you may indicate what I have done for the localities where I have only occasional connections. It will depend only on me if I do not do even better, if this is possible.

To get to work immediately, M. Grand Vicar, I am going to tell you what I think of the request addressed to you by the gentlemen of Montignac. I imagine they want to succeed, and so they must take the only possible means of doing so. I will ask two questions. What is the actual condition? What is the condition that is sought?

Concerning the actual condition, your letter tells me the place is good and the garden is spacious. I see clearly that your letter was to be a kind of summary and was not to say a great deal. However, it is necessary for the local authority to explain more than that.

How many beds would the dormitory contain? How many places in the refectory? And in the buildings, how many classes and study halls? And for the teachers' lodgings, how many separate units? The yards? The chapel, etc.?

A general idea will be sufficient because it will be possible to finally decide without my actually going there myself. Or at least I will send a Visitor accustomed to this kind of inspection. This is the smallest portion of the indications I need to gain a fair idea of the needs, and consequently of the remedies to be provided.

Is the school royal, communal, or private? Is it a full-fledged *collège*, with or without philosophy? How many professors teach the classes? Is there a question of replacing the principal, or is the post still free? Is it urgent that the classes will be resumed? How many boarders at a minimum? How many day scholars?

Another set of questions comes next. Has the Academy or the university permitted you to proceed with your project? Has it promised to accept your choice of place, personnel, equipment, number of students, etc. as would be compatible with your plans? Are the treasurer, the study supervisors, or other officers of the administration to be entirely replaced, or only partly?

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

Here are two letters to Archbishop d'Aviau.

214. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux

September 25, 1822, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

Your Excellency,

At the time when agitations arose against the little church of the Madeleine,¹ in your wisdom you determined that I was not to give Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament every Sunday of the year and that I should limit myself to the first and third Sundays of the month. I have always respected your orders. But today, Your Excellency, now that we have had peace for several years, and no more attention is paid to us (in fact, we are doing nothing to draw it upon ourselves), it seems to me we could give Benediction every Sunday without inconvenience.

If you deign to permit this, I will do so without announcement and so those who have assisted at the service will at least have no reason for murmuring.

I am with the most profound respect, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

*

¹ A reference to the difficulties that arose between the Madeleine and Sainte Eulalie parish.

[The archbishop did not consider it prudent to grant Father Chaminade's request. He was afraid to reawaken the past, but Father Chaminade was able to add this, in his own handwriting, to the archbishop's answer.]

His Excellency has told me in an interview that he would readily agree regarding the even Sundays, during which there would be some special devotions. We have chosen the second Sunday of November for the Feast of the Dedication of Churches.

* * *

215. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux

October 22, 1822, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

Your Excellency,

The pastoral solicitude which absorbs you at the present time,² that of strengthening in your clergy the method of instruction needed by your people, makes me fear I am choosing an inopportune time to recall to you another matter of lesser importance. It is the anniversary of the retreats of the little Society of Mary. You have given this little Society such plain tokens of your benevolence that it would have been an oversight on my part to omit reminding you of the event. I have too much consideration for your occupations to dare to ask, Your Excellency, any of the favors which may compete with the pastoral care you are giving your clergy.

However, duty obliges me to acquaint you with the development of the little Society of Mary since your last annual blessing. Both the members and the works have increased. The *collège* of Villeneuve-sur-Lot, which we direct, has made the most remarkable progress.

Would Your Excellency deign to indicate the time and place where the little Society could again receive this blessing, which has always been followed by blessings from on high? Whatever you indicate, we will believe ourselves to be on the path Jesus Christ points out to people worthy of being blessed.

I can have no more fitting occasion for offering you my homage and veneration, Your Excellency, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. A small delegation I am sending to you will receive your orders.

*

On the letter, the archbishop wrote, "I have gone there, following this request presented by M. Auguste."

The Little Society now numbers 20 religious, among whom there are four priests, Fathers Lalanne, Collineau, Rothéa, and Caillet, and 16 lay men, divided among four establishments: the residence of the Madeleine, the novitiate of Saint-Laurent, the boarding school on Rues des Menuts, and the primary school at Agen. To all of these the collège and school of Villeneuve are to be added.

Five novices also assisted at the retreat. They made their profession at its close. There are also 21 postulants, 8 of whom were received as novices and 7 affiliates or friends of the Society of Mary, among whom were Fathers Mouran and Bouet and MM. Lapause and Lacoste. All these were able to lodge in the buildings at Saint-Laurent, even when they were enlarged, as we can gain an idea from a document of the time. It speaks of the 53 retreatants of the year 1823—30 in the large dormitory (12 meters by 8), 4 in the small dormitory, 2 in the infirmary, 4

² The pastoral retreat of the clergy.

in the study room, 2 in Father Chaminade's room, 2 in the parlor, 2 in the storeroom, 6 in the garret, 2 in the workshop, 1 in the cellar, and 2 in the wine shed. The spirit of poverty and family spirit caused this trouble to be joyfully accepted.

* * *

S. 215a. To Bishop Jacoupy of Agen

October 29, 1822, Bordeaux
Original, Agmar

Monsignor,

I believe it was in May that I detected in M. Choppy des Ages an inclination toward the religious state; he entered the Institute of Mary last year. I wrote to the superior of the seminary of Limoges on the matter and asked for his permission to withdraw. He was gracious and sent it to me. I have kept it to this day, for I had no reason to present it sooner to Your Excellency.

For some time now M. Choppy has been expressing his regrets, Excellency, at having deferred so long the reception of the Holy Orders of the diaconate and the priesthood. I was about to ask you to accept him in your major seminary, but when I mentioned this to him, I was surprised that he preferred to go to the major seminary in Agen. He gave me several weighty reasons for his choice. I urged him to see you personally and to ask to be accepted as a priest of your diocese, to give his reasons for wishing to enter the major seminary of Agen, and to wait with respect and submission for your orders.

With sentiments of deepest respect and most humble obedience. . . .

* * *

S. 215b. To the Rector of the University

November 9, 1822, Bordeaux
Rough Copy, Agmar

Monsignor,

I have already had the honor of recommending to your consideration Father Collineau as the future principal of the *collège* of Villeneuve-sur-Lot. Your Excellency was kind enough to appoint Father Collineau to the post we had chosen for him. I was even more pleased at this favor because I believe it contributed to the restoration of the schools in the Lot regions, in the areas of the fine arts, morality, and religion.

Today I feel it is my duty to draw Your Excellency's attention to an incident related to this same *collège* of Villeneuve. It is the purpose of this letter, and here are the facts.

In his desire to acquit himself faithfully of his charge, the young principal of Villeneuve surrounded himself with teachers, prefects, and collaborators to whom discerning people did not object too strenuously. It is one of the most indispensable conditions that they are to contribute to the installation of good and strict discipline, which is so important.

Professor Clamejanes was promoted and appointed titular teacher of one of the most important classes in the school. However, last year M. Clamejanes was the object of censure; it was even said that criticism of his conduct on a certain occasion was public and widespread. Whether he is fully responsible for these incidents or not, a change will be useful both to him and to the school. This truth is much more self-evident in the region than elsewhere.

This change, which was requested by the young principal, could be refused only on the basis of insufficient evidence or because of some error which escapes us at the moment. There is danger, and imminent danger, for the school, for you are justly considered, Monsignor, as the one who has revived serious study. He wrote to me about his case because I suggested that he be

given the position, because I alone persuaded him to accept it, and because he considers it his religious duty to be docile to me as a disciple is to his first teacher.

I may not deprive him of my intercession, however ineffectual it may be under the circumstances. I can certainly add nothing to what your farsightedness will dictate for the good of morality and religion. The public censure which has been leveled at M. Clamejanes, whether well-founded or not, requires that he be changed. A transfer is even more useful and necessary today because the principal of the *collège* was obliged to report on M. Clamejanes and to declare that in his opinion, the young teacher was guilty of unbecoming conduct. The mind of the young principal was swayed by a wish to appease public opinion, and he had to do his duty. I no longer consider the collaboration between teacher and principal a possibility, and this sorry situation is another misfortune added to the public disfavor into which the teacher has fallen. The restoration of this interesting school could be missed forever or indefinitely postponed.

In the case of a transfer, could the difficulty of finding a new teacher be used as a pretext? The simple answer to this would be that the principal of Villeneuve will obtain the services of a teacher with acceptable capacity and morality. If necessary, I would like to vouch for the promise made to Your Excellency, because you are aware of the objectives I pursue in this matter and that my preoccupation for many years now has been to form teachers who instruct both by their example and their doctrine in matters touching morality, religion, and respect for our king.

If there was a time when my students thought it was prudent to remain in the shadows, this precaution was no longer necessary the moment Your Excellency became the spokesman, the sponsor, and in a way the very soul of that most valuable department of higher administration. With your appointment, we felt the king had just conferred the greatest blessing on all the subjects of his kingdom.

I intimated to Father Collineau that he was to take up his new post without delay. My offer of a substitution because of the teacher transfer being requested is a second concession. I make no reference to others, which will be discussed in due course. Those of my disciples whose competence would assure them a place on the faculty of the university would be disenchanted if they were forced to associate in some district or other with men whom sound public opinion would repudiate.

The transfer of M. Clamejanes, admittedly a proper move, may be a good thing for him also. He would be spared the perhaps unmerited blame of which he is the victim. He will be happier elsewhere, and he deserves to be. There will be no interruption in the improvement of the *collège* of Villeneuve. The Academy of Cahors will not be unduly strained if they have someone who can fill the position; it will cost it nothing if we provide the teacher.

Without detriment to M. Clamejanes, I would like to remove the obstacle to the general welfare which his presence constitutes. I would even like to see him receive credit for his goodwill, for by his consent to a transfer he contributes to the general good. If he would not consent, then the interests of an attractive and populous city, the restoration of the *collège* after years of neglect, would seem to demand it. It is up to you, Monsignor, in your wisdom to decide.

This letter provides me with the happy opportunity of expressing to Your Excellency the deepest sentiments of sincere esteem, of veneration and respect which I have had for many years.

...

P.S. Father Collineau must have expressed his hesitation to you as to the manner in which the children who claim to have Protestant parents must follow the religious exercises in his *collège*, for the city has offered these children neither temple nor minister nor religious instruction, unless they take advantage of those of the *collège*.

* * *

Here are two more letters of Father Chaminade to the superior of the Daughters of Mary; they give instruction on religious government and the admission and exclusion of subjects.

216. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

November 12, 1822, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

I am continuing the examination of novices and postulants. I have before me the two extracts of the council.

I approve the admission of Sister Antoinette and Sister Mélanie. Although the latter has not had an entire year in the novitiate, she and I are determined enough regarding her vocation not to delay her sacrifice, especially because she finds herself united to a great number of victims of divine love.

I have confidence that Sister Justine will become a good religious. Sustain her courage! I am also of the opinion that you should admit her to the profession of annual vows.

Concerning the taking of the habit, I see no inconvenience in the admission of Sister Saint-Sauveur,¹ Sister Isabelle, Sister Saint-Paul, and Sister Louise-Marie. Now that their goodwill does not waver, will they not struggle with greater advantage in the novitiate against what remains of the old self? Moreover, they now have up to December 8 to prepare themselves. It is enough. I will answer Sister Louise-Marie at my first free moment, or at least when other matters are not in jeopardy. For a long time I have had no really free moments.

The entire council admits that Sister des Anges is lacking in judgment. If this were entirely true, I do not see how I could grant her a dispensations from the Rule, which requires this so rigorously. But from everything that has been said and from what I have seen myself, I find it difficult to believe this defect goes to the point of rendering her entirely useless in religion. I am of the opinion that her admission to the religious habit should be still delayed, that she should be carefully instructed and well-trained in the practices of the religious state, and that she should be examined. In the meantime, she could write to me about what she has at heart, whatever she cares to write, what she thinks of the religious state, how she considers the vows. In a word, this should be a sufficiently long letter without aid or counsel of any kind.

Concerning Sister Présentation, I am surprised she is not succeeding. But finally, since everything has been tried, you must speak with her parents, and especially her uncle. If possible, she should be persuaded that because she is not called to the religious state—at least, not to the Institute of Mary—she should ask to withdraw. There are to be no reproaches, no grumbling, no punishing, except when subjects are to be kept. But once it has been decided that someone is to be sent away, only mildness, persuasion, and honesty are to be used.

I am stopping here. Among the many matters I must treat, I have an establishment of the greatest importance, Saint-Remy. Pray yourself and have prayers said that I may neither say nor do anything except what God wants and as he wishes.

May the Lord shower his blessings on you and on all our beloved daughters.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

217. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

November 19, 1822, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

¹ Mlle Caillet, already mentioned in letter no. 211.

My dear Child,

I have read the letter of Mlle Latourette [Sister des Anges] and everything the different letters from the convent tell me about her. From all this, I conclude that she is not without judgment. I believe there is some confusion here between intelligence and judgment. It is true that hers is a dull mind, but her judgment is correct regarding what her mind can penetrate. Her heart also appears upright. Because she is in the convent I would favor her being received, but I would return to my first thoughts, that she would be received as a Companion Sister. It seems to me the result would be advantageous, both for her and for the Institute. For her, by keeping her true vocation because the good God gives her only what is necessary for temporal service, what she needs to serve in a subordinate capacity. Why then not follow the indication Providence is giving us? If she takes the veil among Mothers, valuable time will be lost. The novitiate will be four times too long for her; instructions will in no way suit her. Disgust and temptations will follow, etc. If she is among the Companions, we will see that the Institute does not make "preference of persons" but of qualities, of indications given by Providence, and that we do not intend the category of Companion Sisters to be made up of disreputable women, so to speak. Why then do the sisters fear the name of "Companions," and the superiors that of Mothers? . . . If the council adopts these ideas, which I am not ordering, I will write this good sister to prepare her for the vote of the council, or rather, for what she herself asks.

The novitiate of Saint-Laurent is completely without linen. The community on Rue des Menuts has furnished some until now, but as things are now, it has hardly enough for itself. I was thinking the Agen community might try to adopt this good work, and here is how it might be done. It would procure the linen, make the various articles needed, and take its time in paying the merchant supplying the material. If the convent is in a condition to pay for this it can do so, if not in entirety at least in part, letting me know the amount of its indebtedness. This is what I call trying to do this good work.

The novitiate is presently composed of 25 people. I estimate that 100 shirts would be needed, 50 pairs of small bed sheets, 12 to 16 tablecloths, 8 dozen napkins, and some towels and kitchen aprons. The work of making these would be done in our sewing rooms, and they would be sent to the novitiate as soon as they are ready. One-fourth of the shirts would be of the smallest size, for children 12 to 15 years of age, and the others of ordinary size. The linen should be common, but good and strong. You know the type.

I will answer the different letters I have received. We are giving the retreat for the Men's Sodality. I have great trouble in sending on what is most urgent. May the holy names of Jesus and Mary be ever glorified! Take good care of your health. Above all, do what the good Mother Saint-Vincent wishes, as she is the mentor of your health.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

The Foundation of Saint-Remy

November 1822 to January 1824

To the propositions coming from Alsace, others from Franche-Comté are added. At the beginning of November, Father Chaminade received a letter from Father Tharin, vicar general of Besançon, who several months later was to be promoted to the See of Strasbourg.¹

Archbishop's Palace, Besançon

Besançon, October 29, 1822

Reverend Canon,

I have the honor of sending you a note from Father Bardenet, missionary of this diocese, in which you will find a description of the château of Saint-Remy, with the proposal which he has the honor of making to you. Archbishop Adana, Coadjutor of Besançon,² has been informed of the steps Father Bardenet has taken to receive a number of your Congregation into the diocese of Besançon, and he asks me to ask you to send me the Statutes of your Congregation. When I have received them, I will give them to his Excellency, the Coadjutor, who will read them. I have no doubt that if you accept Father Bardenet's proposals, the archbishop will hasten to authorize you to make a foundation at the château of Saint-Remy. Regarding myself, I am rejoicing in advance in the firm conviction that the Brothers of Mary will spread the good odor of Jesus Christ in this diocese.

I ask you to accept my respectful sentiments.

*

This letter included the following note, written by Father Bardenet.

The château of Saint-Remy, property of a private estate, is five leagues from the nearest city, close to the village of the same name. It is in the Haut-Saône, diocese of Besançon, with a large population on its periphery. M. de Rosen built it 60 years ago.

It consists of a group of buildings. The largest one is 266 feet long by 45 feet wide. At its two extremities are two wings, each 130 feet long and 34 feet wide, and at the west end of these is a shed of the same length. Further away there is a greenhouse, 180 feet long by 35 feet wide.

All these buildings are solid with the exception of the last, which could be torn down without any trouble. The attachments of the château are the 300 journals¹ taking in the gardens, the orchards, yards and comfort stations. Everything is enclosed by walls.

The largest part of this property was park space, where today wood is cut, where meadows, fields, vines can be cared for and enough wood procured for the use of the house.

In its day there were also two large barns.

It is easy to add 200 quarters of tillable ground which touch the walls and a mill with adjoining properties which would furnish all the resources of the community to be established at Saint-Remy. The actual owner of the château is a priest, a missionary in the diocese of Besançon who has contributed to different establishments of this diocese which have interested him. For this reason, he could not purely and simply hand over Saint-Remy with its dependencies. However, he would want to be promised payment in time, once the house profits by its advantages, the sum of 30,000 to 40,000 francs, which

¹ Fr. Charles-Marie Tharin (1787-1843), from a noble Besançon family, had been a member of the Community of Saint Sulpice in Paris for some time. After having been vicar general of Besançon, he was named Bishop of Strasbourg (1823), then preceptor to the Duke of Bordeaux (1826). He later resigned as bishop and after 1830 lived in retirement.

² Archbishop Paul de Villefrancon, coadjutor of Archbishop Pressigny in 1821 and his successor in 1823 in the See of Besançon.

¹ The *journal* was a stretch of land that a man could take care of in a day. It consisted of four quarters, each measuring 800 square meters and about 80 square yards. The appendages of the château consisted of about 200 acres and the entire property of about 300.

he would apply to the help of establishments already begun. If this condition could not be reasonably met, he would reduce it as much as possible.

Furthermore, he gives hope that in case he still lives several years—I must tell you, he is not yet 60 and enjoys good health—he will favor the establishment that would be started at Saint-Remy, at the figure we could meet. With this evidence of goodwill, he asks of the Father Superior the permission to occupy, at different times of the year, an independent quarter of each building, and to enjoy a close relationship with the community.

*

Father Bardenet (1763-1844) was to become one of Father Chaminade's most active collaborators in Franche-Comté. Originally from Chasseley-lez-Montbozon (Haute-Saône), he was pastor of Mesnay-lez-Arbois (Jura) when the Revolution broke out. During the Terror, his life was the same as that of other confessors of the faith who escaped death only by a miracle. After the Revolution Father Bardenet, gifted with a burning zeal and a rare business sense, busied himself completely with restoring good works in the dioceses of Besançon and Saint-Claude. The construction of the diocesan House of Missionaries of Beaupré, at Ecole, near Besançon, was his first principal undertaking (1816). Later he took care of the arrival of the Society of Mary in Saint-Remy (1823) and of the Daughters of Mary in Arbois (1826). He had a part also in the foundations of the Society of Mary at Courtefontaine, Marast, and Saint-Claude. He finally introduced the Daughters of Mary to the abbey of Acey in Saint-Claude, where he himself settled and served them as chaplain until his death.

* * *

In spite of his reluctance to undertake distant foundations at this time, Father Chaminade could not avoid seeing in the appeals from Besançon and Colmar a manifest indication of Providence. He immediately prepared to answer them. The next two letters concern this.

218. To Bro. David Monier, Bordeaux

November 12, 1822, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

I am sending you the first sketch of an answer to the grand vicar of Besançon. If it is only a rough one, you can refine it easily. Make a second draft, and we will work out a good reply.

I take it for granted that you have the courage to go so far north and in winter. I also suppose you will keep on drawing up those Statutes which I consider general because they are to contain, in effect, only the first principles or general bases of the Institute of Mary. But they should really give a true idea of it.¹

For some time I have noticed in you, my dear Son, as others have also or believe they have, a deeply-rooted sadness or discontent. This condition is not good for your health or for the religious interests which concern you. You can and must aspire to a fuller peace rather than simply to resignation—the very peace of God. You concentrate too much and too long on the difficulties you experience.

I am very carefully examining our pitiful financial state. I will constantly tell you about the precautions we have to take. . . . Brother Rothéa is now entering my room and tells me that on Rue des Menuts, they are complaining of the expenses being made for the maintenance of the

¹ Fr. Chaminade had charged Bro. David with the task of preparing an edition of the Civil Statutes in view of an authorization of the Society of Mary by the Government.

novitiate. These complaints seem to scandalize him. I'm not actually scandalized, but I am surprised. *Pax Dei sit semper tecum!* [May the peace of God be with you always!]

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. There is a meeting of the Fathers of Families this evening.

* * *

219. To Father Tharin, Vicar General of Besançon

November 21, 1822, Bordeaux
Autograph Rough Copy, Agmar

Monsieur Vicar General,

I have hesitated several days before answering your letter. The importance of the establishment, its great distance from me and from the other establishments of the Institute of Mary, our small number of subjects, and the very frequent requests for establishments I receive from various places are about the only causes for my hesitation. I have finally reconciled myself to the inevitable before God, urged interiorly by the sight of the great good for religion which would result. I have also been especially encouraged by two of our priests, Fathers Rothéa and Caillet, who have both made their seminary in Besançon. They do not cease speaking to me of the zeal of your missionaries, of their complete frankness and loyalty, of the harmony or rather of the intimate union which reigns between the episcopal palace, the Missionaries, the seminaries, etc.

Therefore, Your Honor, I accept the propositions Father Bardenet makes to me. I look forward to entering into discussions with him and his worthy colleagues concerning the good works. In consequence, I seek to prepare a small group of subjects to form the nucleus of the establishment he has in mind. I hope I can increase the number gradually as the need will arise. I have the honor of transmitting to you the greater part of the summary or digest of the Institute of Mary or its Statutes.¹

May Your Honor permit me to add here a few observations.

The first is the near impossibility of meeting the expenses necessary to realize this establishment, at least at the present time.

The second is that it would seem to me in place for you to name one of our religious to be my second in the formation of our establishments. How much must be foreseen, regulated, and prepared if an establishment is to function well from the very beginning! And I insist greatly that there will be no time in which the religious do not live in complete regularity, no matter how small their number. Furthermore, my second could bring along with him the complete Constitutions of the Institute as well as its General and Particular Regulations.² The copies are bulky. I do not know if His Excellency the Archbishop can grasp the Institute as a whole, as well as its various developments and interconnections, from the summary that I have the honor of sending you. These statutes are only the barest essentials of the building. Will His Excellency be able to judge from these outlines the elevation which is to be justly given to the entire edifice, as well as the precision and proportion required of the groundwork?

Third, I am not sending you the fourth chapter of the summary, the one concerning government. It does not seem necessary at the moment.

I will work with all the speed you wish in spite of the severity of the season. I am determined about this. I rejoice in the opportunity this occasion presents of offering the Institute

¹*The Institut of Mary*, read at the Retreat of foundation in 1818, after having been approved by the Archbishop of Bordeaux (see *Spirit of Our Foundation*, no. 820).

² The *Grand Institut* and the Regulations of the Daughters of Mary (*Spirit*, no. 813).

for its encouragement the fine example of the Besançon clergy. In particular, Your Excellency, I offer you the token of my profound respect.

P.S. May I dare to ask you to present my respectful greetings to the archbishop. I am very mindful of the deep interest de deigns to take in the Institute of Mary.

*

Note of Secretary.¹ His Excellency the Archbishop of Bordeaux has given and continues to give on every occasion marks of a very fatherly interest in the Institute of Mary. The first reunion of its members took place only after his approbation and after a summary of the Statutes just made by the secretary had been placed in his hands. It is equally the archbishop who appended a recommendation to our Founder's request to the Sovereign Pontiff about the new institution, outlining its general principles and asking different favors for the religious. The Sovereign Pontiff received the request favorably and granted all the favors requested.

The Institute of the Daughters of Mary, which was founded at Agen some years before the Sons of Mary of Bordeaux, has since been approved and has always been favored by the Bishop of Agen, who personally examined it and also had the Constitutions and General and Particular Regulations studied. The summary of all this has been deposited in the secretariat by our Founder, who signed it *ne varietur* [let it not deviate]. The Sovereign Pontiff has also enriched it with his favors.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

Before continuing letters regarding the foundation of Saint-Remy, here are extracts concerning the acquisition of Father Conne's library (letter no.177). Father Chaminade had taken part in this project only with fear and hesitation. After signing the act of transfer, Father Conne raised difficulties either about the delivery of the library or about the conditions of payment. The next letters refer to a series of conferences which resulted from these difficulties.

220. To Bro. David Monier, Bordeaux

January 18, 1823, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

[With insert from S. 220]

My dear Son,

What you have reported to me of the conference held in the venerable Father Conne's home cannot make me change anything in our contract. I invite you to go see him personally and to acquaint him with most precise observations. He knows, and you know also, that I did not want his library at all, that I charged you expressly to tell him so, and that my refusal was definitive.

The motives which made me change my mind were those given by Father Bournac, Father Conne's director, who had only religious views. Here they are; this venerable Father would like to consider them once again.

Father Bournac showed me that Father Conne believed he was obliged to sell his library before death should surprise him in order to obey a rule of the Order of Saint Francis, to which he belongs; and because I was the only buyer then proposed, my refusal to purchase was placing him in jeopardy. I decided then to take back my refusal. I think the way the venerable Father has

¹ This note, intended to be recopied by David Monier following the letter of Fr. Chaminade, is written by Fr. Chaminade.

avoided making the delivery for a year is worse than if he had abstained from selling. Not selling, he kept the accidental possession. Since he has actually sold, he has a voluntary possession. I surely have the civil right to force him to make the delivery—but if I do so, I take from him the merit of the free dispossession, which was the religious purpose of the sale and of my purchase.

On the other hand, Father Bournac represented to me that for the portion of the price Father Conne did not need, he would agree to a delay of 10 years without interest. In this way, if I were buying with the thought of our teachers in mind, he would consent to the preservation of the collection in the interest of religion. This was a sort of compensation for the possession he had retained in violation of the above-mentioned rule. The venerable Father Conne, in complaining today of the 10-year term without interest, destroys what his confessor had maturely arranged. It even brings to this religious part of the contract a kind of disfavor which is out of place and almost slanderous. If there had not been the question of these two religious views and of his director's interest in his salvation, I would not have had anything to do with the library.

I am going to suppose now, against all belief, that because of his age and infirmities the venerable Father Conne has forgotten these two principal motives behind our contract, and I am considering it as an ordinary civil contract.

From this last point of view, here is what I see. The venerable Father Conne wanted to procure for himself 3,000 francs, and I have immediately given them to him. However, for a year or fifteen months he has enjoyed the use of both the money and the library—that is to say, of the thing and of its price. I do not believe he can safely permit this, for the buyer wants the delivery of the books.

The venerable Father says himself and encourages others to say that his infirmities, his age, and his needs were not considered when the agreement was made to pay the remaining 9,000 francs only several years later and without interest. But the contract states clearly that he will be able to demand as much as 500 francs each year if his infirmities and his needs require it. He himself is the judge of his needs, and this additional payment is to last four entire years, at whatever time he begins to use the privilege. God inspired me, so to speak, with this forethought, for no one was thinking about it. These various circumstances give to the reproach about the length of time allowed for payment a character very little in accord with the truth.

The agreement specifying that the sums not paid would not bear interest also had its just motive. The right to keep his library indefinitely is granted to the venerable Father. He wanted it thus. This clause is equivalent to a preservation of complete or almost complete enjoyment. He will always keep the books to which he is most attached, and these are the most valuable. I am asking if he is being reasonable in receiving 3,000 francs in cash and 2,000 more over four years, keeping the equivalent of enjoying the library, and then requiring that we pay him interest on the 7,000 francs which will one day make up the total price of 12,000 francs? Allowing him to thus enjoy the object and its price would not have been buying his library for 12,000 francs but for 24,000, which exceeds by half the value placed upon it.

If there had been no attempt at distorting the correct idea of the contract, if its justice had been recognized because it is almost perfect and to the advantage of the venerable Father, it would have been easier to lend ourselves to new needs, to new circumstances, which are alleged to change the time and the order of the payments.

But what can a debtor do who respects himself, when the report about him has been spread that his contract is not fair? Is he not constrained from self-respect to hold to his contract? If he changes it, it will be said even more that there was something unfair about it.

I believe the venerable Father is late in delivering the books and is as late in wanting to do so.

I believe his complaints in the statement regarding the civil and politely-considered contract are badly founded. I believe his delay and his complaints about carrying out the religious motives which have brought about the entire business are real faults, and in conscience I believe it my duty to tell him so.

Nevertheless, in his tendency to delay the delivery or to bring about sooner payments, the venerable Father makes another insinuation. This is that he says if we do what he is asking, we will have no reason to regret it, which means the delivery will be more complete.

I answer that if the delivery contains only what is sold, there will be no favor on his part, and that if it contains something valuable and beyond what is actually sold, it would be an injustice to heirs who have no need for deprivation.

On the other hand, it is true that the venerable Father's right to raise the price on delivery is permissible under civil law; however, his conscience cannot approve. He has promised to include the books that are not catalogued, and here is where we could negotiate; but the Venerable Father will not. His director, M. Bournac, suggested that he insert the clause "the books not inscribed in the catalogue" because he was attached to them, he knew their value, and without this clause they would not have been sold or delivered.

The prompt and faithful carrying out of the contract seems to me to be the only thing to do.

All justice being rendered reciprocally, I have no obligation to being offered compromises and advantages which I would more easily grant, in favor of a religious whom everyone reveres, if there had been no other agreement between us or if the one which binds us had been honored, as religion and justice demanded.

I greet you very tenderly.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. My dear Son, you will do well to communicate this letter to Father Roux.¹ His prudence will judge what should be done and what will need to be done by good Father Conne.

To have this taken care of sooner, I am sending you a plan for redressing our contract of November 5, 1821. If it is convenient, have it copied on stamped paper and I will sign it.

* * *

The new measures taken by Brother David concerning Father Conne produced no result. On January 29 two replies were written, one very short note to Father Conne written by Brother David and the other, more developed, to Father Roux written in the hand of Father Chaminade. The latter seems not to have been sent; it is given here to give an idea of Father Chaminade's thoughts about this matter.

221. To Father Roux, Theology Professor in Bordeaux

January 29, 1823, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

Reverend Father,

My first negotiations with Father Conne were already so painful to me that I thought of giving up the idea of buying his library without further explanation, out of respect for him. The letter I wrote him to this effect still exists.

Father Conne is extremely sensitive. Father Bournac, his friend, his advisor, and I believe his confessor, wrote me to let me know his extreme regret and actually asked me to complete the transaction. He had all the power necessary to handle the matter.

I did the buying according to the conditions given in the contract. To avoid reprisals, in my presence Father Bournac immediately wrote the said conditions. These were brought to Father Conne. The document was drawn up and signed only a few days later, without any complaint or protest. I have no recollection that prior to Father Bournac's death, Father Conne expressed any

¹ Professor of theology in Bordeaux.

regret. There was never any question of the delivery of the library. His regrets began, or at least became strong enough to attract attention, only when someone, I do not know who, seemed to offer him more advantageous conditions. Having become aware of the pressing need he had of the 2,000 francs, I have just promised them to him. I am not making this promise because of justice, as I have done him no harm. It is to oblige him and also to have the matter ended.

You propose to me, Monsieur, the mediation of the archbishop. Neither you nor he can offer one more respectable and more agreeable to me. But before accepting permit me one observation. A mediator is sought, it seems to me, to resolve or decide some difficulty which actually exists. But here the agreement is simple and transacted in good faith. The difficulty lies in the will of the good priest and in the affection—I would say almost too great an affection—which he has for his library. How could His Excellency remove this difficulty?

Nevertheless, if Father Conne finds difficulty elsewhere than in his extreme attachment for the fruit of his care and labors, then let him either himself consult the holy and learned prelate or ask to cancel the sale.

In the first case, honesty will require him to communicate to the archbishop the deed and the papers that go with it, my last letter to Brother David, and this one which I have the honor of writing to you. He will not fail to observe to His Excellency that he had sought a buyer who would take care of this library and make it serve the progress of religion, etc.

In the second case, I hope that in repaying the 3,000 francs which he has received, he will have consideration for the expenses which have necessarily followed the sale of the library, which he made to me. I do not intend to speak of those which would not be so clearly seen.

The pros and cons of this matter are very nearly indifferent to me. What I do care about is that it will come to an end and that nothing further will be said about it. I find it difficult to understand how someone can go back on a promise given, a promise written only after several days of reflection.

If Father Conne had greater needs than those I had foreseen, were we not close enough for him to have made them known to me without complaining of a contract which I entered into largely to oblige him and to further the religious views he had so often expressed to me?

I am with respectful consideration. . . .

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

S. 221a. To Father Conne, Bordeaux

February 29, 1823, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

I am informed of the following two things concerning the library that is to be delivered. First, that you have rejected the two mediators who were to solve the problem. Then, that you feel it is necessary to have a well-known person, whose spiritual director you are, resolve the differences. I doubt whether either of these alternatives was conceived in your own mind. If someone suggested them to you, I know you will surrender them after a little reflection. In any case, the decision is up to you. I want to have the matter settled, and I am asking you where you stand on both counts.

* * *

Following a lively letter from Father Conne, here is a note written in Father Chaminade's hand and no less characteristic of his way of treating others.

222. Observations

February 11, 1823, Bordeaux
Autograph, Agmar

1. I bought only because I was strongly urged thereto by Father Bournac. The conditions for the purchase were written by Father Bournac. This writing must exist as must the renunciation I wrote before purchasing this library. Furthermore, I presume a copy of these conditions will be found. It was then at least drawn up, when. . . . To say that Brother David did not conform to the conditions in the drawing up of the deed is a serious accusation, but it can easily be proved false.

2. In spite of the financial troubles this acquisition causes me, I have never asked to breach the deed of purchase because I have never gone back on my given word, whatever might have been my consequent loss. But Father himself proposes this breach. I accept it with the understanding that he will repay me the 3,000 francs I gave him at the time the deed was signed.

I will prove to him by particular documents that I paid heavy interest so I could give him 3,000 francs.¹ He could see, or he can still see, the considerable expenses which had to be made to get this library. I wish whatever Father Conne will decide. For the interest on the 3,000 francs, as for the expenses needed to receive the library, I submit everything to the sole judgment of his conscience.

3. If instead of attacking an act performed with so much good faith, Father Conne had exposed me to his needs as well as those of his family, he must know my dispositions well enough to believe that I would have agreed to the proposals he made to me. On my own initiative when I learned of his niece's marriage, I offered him 2,000 francs right after the delivery of the library, and I had already told Brother David to compare the terms for the remaining 7,000 francs—that this sum was to be divided into three parts, to be paid from year to year, the first in four years after the day of the new propositions.

4. I desire that these considerations will be nullified and of no effect if Father Conne is not affected by them. I will remain silent, even if he retains both the money and the library. He can rely upon this.

*

The matter of Father Conne's library was not completed until the end of August of 1823 (see letter no. 249). The library itself was installed in the Sainte-Marie boarding school then followed its destiny, first to Rue des Menus (1823) then to Rue de Mirail (1825) and finally to Layrac (1835). On the closure of Layrac (1845), it returned to Bordeaux and was lodged in the Madeleine, where it occupied a large hall on the second story of the seminary of the Society of Mary.

During the last years of the century, the library's most important and most precious books were sent to Paris to the General Administration, then in 1903 to Fribourg in Switzerland, at the seminary of the Society of Mary. The remains of the library, after the demolition of the house at no. 8, Rue de Lalande, were transferred to a hall below the sacristy of the Madeleine.

* * *

These letters return to the foundations in the north. Brother David, Father Chaminade's representative, again caused him anxieties.

223. To Bro. David Monier, Bordeaux

January 23, 1823, Bordeaux
Autograph, Agmar

¹ Fr. Chaminade had been obliged to borrow money in order to give Fr. Conne the 3,000 francs.

My dear Son,

I do not have the courage to give the copyist my letter announcing your coming departure. I had understood that the Statutes which organize the brothers' life and the extract of them which is to be presented to the Government were ready, at least to be discussed. I believed you had, as it were, settled on your plan for teaching the arts and crafts. And what about the Method for our schools which you have complained for so long is not being used but which you, nevertheless, do not complete? And the guiding principles of education to give the children, etc. .

..

You will leave. You have your own ideas. You will establish. You will found. You will cause to be approved. But who will see to the execution of what you have hardly shown even in outline? Where are the means of execution? If you . . . I do not want to cast any blame, but I would prefer that we act with prudence. If I am obliged to make an offer, if I am made to assume on an engagement, it seems to me I should know and even understand thoroughly what I am doing.

What stand will we take, my dear Son? You have too much judgment and shrewdness not to give a reasonable answer to this question. We are, so to speak, hitched to a cart that we have made ourselves, and we do not go far if we do not pull the same way. You like to go forward, and I like this also. The little time we still have to live obliges us to make up our minds, but I would not like to start everywhere and finish nothing. To speak truly, there is great imperfection in what we have done, and what are we doing to remedy the situation? For my part, I know it pains me greatly and that the time I use in holding up now one side, then another, might be better employed in the genuine progress of the work. *Pax tibi, fili mi!* [Peace to you, my Son!]

Thursday morning, January 23, 1823

P.S. I was sleepless a good part of last night. I made so many reflections about our works that it seems to me I could easily make an entire volume of them, if I wanted to write them all down. If in the few I have just made for you, one or the other is expressed in a way which displeases you, be assured I have only intended to do well and not to humiliate you in any way.

* * *

The same day, Brother David gave a satisfactory answer to all the questions which had been asked. In these he manifested deeply religious sentiments. In fact, professing docility, he appealed to the confidence of his superior and asked him not to be sparing in his remarks to him. "Even if I were more sensitive," he said, "it would be much better to face this instability and recognize your right to do it, you from whom I have sought the way of truth." Only partially reassured and counting on the fidelity of Brother David to keep him informed about everything, Father Chaminade believed he would proceed. He announces the departure of his representative to Father Maimbourg in Alsace and to Father Tharin in Franche-Comté.

224. To Father Maimbourg, Pastor of Colmar

January 24, 1823, Bordeaux
Autograph Rough Copy, Agmar

Reverend Father,

I was very sorry I could not fulfill your desires completely, and especially that I could not give you a school principal. The elder Father Rothéa had the honor of writing you last October 17 and letting you know just what I was able to do. However, if there was and still is difficulty in finding you a suitable and competent principal, there is none for the establishment of a good free school, and there is still less for the foundation of a sisters' convent in Eguisheim. At the time of

my last visit to Agen and Tonneins, I found all of the subjects well disposed for such a foundation, even though it is so far removed from the motherhouse.

I am sending, Reverend Father, one of our religious, my secretary and the Secretary General of the Institute, to a department very near to Colmar. He is charged with looking after the necessary preparations regarding the Institute of Mary. I will prolong his journey as far as your place, and you two could confer with great profit about all your projects. Capable as he is of seeing things clearly, he would promptly inform me regarding a great number of questions which are rather difficult to understand and discuss only by correspondence.

I am happy to have had the occasion of again assuring you of my respectful attachment.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. My letter had been written when Brother Rothéa told me he was afraid the main difficulty for our foundations in Colmar lay in the prejudices which had been suggested to His Highness the Grand Almoner against the Institute of Mary.¹ If this were the case, it would not seem difficult for me to find the reason for it. After he had an understanding with you, the religious could explain things to him during his stay in Paris.

* * *

225. To Father Tharin, Vicar General of Besançon

January 25, 1823, Bordeaux
Autograph Rough Copy, Agmar

Reverend Father,

On January 4 I received your honorable answer. The religious I promised will leave shortly. He is our Secretary General. I will have him meet you personally in Besançon. I will be greatly obliged if you introduce him to His Excellency the Coadjutor and if you notify Father Bardenet, with whom he will especially have dealings.

I have understood that the château of Saint-Remy is in the department of the Haute-Saône. If Father Bardenet were there, or even if he were in Vesoul, the religious, who cannot come to any conclusion without having seen the property, would go there to meet him.

I will direct our small band to leave once I have received word that it is time to begin. I will have a religious priest join them as Head of Zeal. The group will be small at first because of other establishments we must further occupy or sustain, but it will be sufficient to make a start.

For this establishment at Saint-Remy, I feel a confidence I have not experienced with many others which, nevertheless, have worked out well.

To complete my joy, I now have only to go as far as Saint-Remy, or rather to Besançon, in my annual visitations to see for myself all the good I have heard of its respectable clergy and especially to offer you my sentiments of devotedness and respect.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I will have the honor of writing to you soon, on the day the religious Secretary General leaves.

* * *

226. To Bro. David Monier, Bordeaux

February 17, 1823, Bordeaux

¹ The Prince of Croy, Bishop of Strasbourg, had been promoted to the rank of Grand Almoner and under this title resided in Paris.

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

I will avoid mentioning everything I believe I can take care of myself, in order not to delay your departure. If you have screened out anything which could trouble me, at least let me have a small note of guidance. Draw up the legal authorization you may need.

I am prepared to shower upon you all the blessings which my ministry can obtain from heaven and to give you my paternal kiss with a great sentiment of tenderness.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. This note is called for, as you can see for yourself, by the interview you had with Brother Rothéa.

* * *

S. 226a. To Bro. David Monier

February 26, 1823, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

I, the undersigned, Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, priest, Canon of the metropolitan church of Bordeaux, do appoint and constitute as my agent in general as well as in special matters M. David Monier, formerly a member of the bar of the city of Bordeaux, to whom I give the power in my stead to go to Vesoul, department of the Saône, and to other localities in the same department or of adjoining departments as the case may be, to learn whatever pertains to the château of Saint-Remy, of the estate and of the adjacent lands, to acquaint himself with the deeds and documents concerning the said properties on what they encompass and on the equipment, and after the examination is completed to arrive at a price, set the terms, and agree to the same. Likewise to grant and agree on all reservations and suitable modifications as he will see fit; to arrange all mortgages, exceptions, substitutions, and to give and to accept all invoices and bills of sale, sign all papers, establish residence, to vary in whole or in part the powers given to him in these presents and in general to proceed with the negotiations with the present owners as I would if I were present, promising my approval and committing myself to it conformably to the law.

Done by private contract in Bordeaux on February 26, 1823.

* * *

Here is the wording of the legal authorization referred to in the preceding note.

227. To Bro. David Monier, Bordeaux

March 4, 1823, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

I, the undersigned, G.-Joseph Chaminade, Honorary Canon of the Metropolitan Church of Bordeaux, give power to Bro. David Monier who is to go to Paris in the near future to solicit in my name authorization from the Government for the establishment of a religious and benevolent Society, for the purpose of training teachers for the primary schools, of establishing free schools of this level and of joining to them the teaching of the most useful arts and crafts.

To this effect, to present, if necessary, the Statutes, Regulations, and the Method, to consent to all suitable changes and modifications, to supply all petitions, memorandums and requests, to make all declarations and submissions, to sign all papers, to substitute in whole or in

part what is here said, and in general to do what I could do myself if I were there in person, should the power thereto not be expressed or contained herein.

Given in Bordeaux under my private seal, March 4, 1823
G.-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Canon

* * *

Bro. David Monier's departure was delayed longer than Father Chaminade had expected. On March 4 he again urged him to be on his way and gave him letters of recommendation to Fathers Tharin and Bardenet. Nevertheless, Brother David left Bordeaux only on March 10.

228. To Bro. David Monier, Bordeaux

March 4, 1823, Bordeaux
Autograph, Agmar
[With inserts from S. 228]

My dear Son,

You will do well to leave as soon as possible, for you know to what an extent long, unexpected delays confuse and often are the cause of changes in views and operations. This evening you will have nearly 440 francs. Do not lose sight of the fact that we are not able to make expenses for the establishment at Saint-Remy. On the contrary, we need, and this in a short time, for it to come to the aid of the other establishments.

Once in Saint-Remy, you can judge if the trip to Alsace is important enough to be undertaken. You will not judge it to be such if the establishment at Saint-Remy fails or if it comes off without your having to wait for the founding group to get it started. In every decision of this type you must weigh the time employed against the expenses to be made.

I will write to Father Bardinet and ask him to take care of three different matters for me: the matter of the house at no. 3, that of Mme Dubroat, and also that of Mme de Laugeay. I will ask him to see you about the necessary information. Please advise the porter.

With this mail I am planning to direct that children less than 5 years of age will not be admitted to the school unless they have older children to accompany them or unless they are docile or precocious enough to be easily controlled. Agen does not merit that a brother should be assigned for these little children.

I almost feel like writing to M. de Lacaussade and asking him to pay the 300 francs interest he owes, unless I absolve him of the debt. Does the farmer who lived in the house just sold owe any back rent? Who owes that? Who will see that the debts are paid? Allow Brother Rothéa to keep the draft for 1,400 francs and explain to him all the other papers he may need during your absence.

Greetings and the peace of the Lord!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

The rough copy of the next three letters are in Brother David's handwriting, but they reproduce clearly the thought of Father Chaminade, who reread and corrected them himself. Letter no. 231 had been prepared before Brother David's departure, and the date of March 10 was added only after his departure.

229. To Father Tharin, Vicar General of Besançon

March 4, 1823, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

Your Excellency,

This letter will be transmitted to you by Brother David, whom I have already been careful to make known to you.¹ I do not doubt you will be good to him. You will kindly recommend him to the protection of the archbishop, and I hope you and your commendable friends will give him full credit for everything he is doing for the success of our works.

Whatever you settle with this representative, I hold it as settled with me.

He already has in his hands all the correspondence relative to the proposed work at Saint-Remy. Our Statutes, Constitutions, and Regulations are well known to him. He has the main copies with him. He is even in a position, I am sure, to answer all requests for precise explanations which may be needed.

If God wills this collaboration to take place, it will produce salutary effects. There is the question of reforming morals and bearing witness to religion, and this cannot be done without working together. But it is difficult to keep together when such great distances separate us. The union of those who are of God is the most indispensable thing, and what I most ardently ask of God in my prayer.

The only obstacle I noticed concerning the establishment at Saint-Remy—and I have had the honor of telling you about it already, Your Honor—lies in my supplement of other duties. Establishments already founded have not received the attention they require from me, and the promises to them have not been fulfilled.

The work at Saint-Remy, even though it came after the others, attracted me because of the great results for religion which I foresee from it.

Without the graciousness of the worthy missionary, who really wanted us there and who offered a moderate price and convenient terms, I would not have believed the matter possible.

Still remaining to be considered are the expenses, the disbursements from the transfer, all the furniture needed by the personnel, all school furniture and whatever will inevitably be needed for the various projects to be undertaken, instruments, books, and all accessories for the proper functioning of every department, good government in everything . . . this perspective takes in more than is ordinarily believed.

Then, in a region little known to us, we have reason to fear that in the actual operation there will be many worries not necessarily connected with schools,¹ if we do not find kind people ready and willing to aid us.

From all this and from many other resulting considerations, Your Excellency, you must be convinced that it would be dangerous to disguise the material difficulties of the enterprise. I place confidence in my envoy to reduce these apprehensions to their proper scale. But he would do poorly if you were not to give him or find for him the proper assistance.

If, as I believe, this enterprise is the work of God, all difficulties in the path of its realization will eventually disappear. Each of the collaborators Providence has chosen will do his part. I will certainly do mine.

Believe me, Your Excellency, when I say I have already done at least something in sending my colleague in my existing works to a place 200 leagues from here. I hope his visit with you may be shortened and its purpose easily accomplished. But all sacrifices will mean nothing unless we procure the greatest glory of God and under all circumstances know how to submit ourselves to the hidden designs of Divine Providence.

Confiding the entire matter to you, I no longer need tell you of my deep consideration and profound respect . . .

G.-Joseph Chaminade

¹ Letters no. 219 and no. 225.

¹ That is to say, costly experiences.

P.S. I am at the feet of Your Excellency, and I ask your blessings for our works.

* * *

230. To Father Bardenet, Missionary in Besançon

March 4, 1823, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

[With insert from S. 230]

Most Honored Colleague,

Doubtless I should have written you as soon as the first vicar general of your diocese acquainted me with your plans for Saint-Remy. I do not know why I did not think of it; unless I attribute this failure to the absolute confidence I have in the vicar general. I should have looked closer to home. Be kind enough to excuse me from your heart, my beloved and honored colleague, at least by that ardent charity which unites us in Jesus Christ.

To get to the foundation of the matter, I cannot help being amazed that we have been brought together. In spite of the distance which separates us and the fact that we have never met, I could not help exclaiming, “O Providence!”

What are the views of this Providence in this circumstance, and what is being asked of us? This is what has particularly attracted my attention. I explain it to myself very simply. I say to myself that our bishops, successors of the apostles, are the apostles of the time in which we live. They have a high mission.

When the Church, brought to the east of France by apostolic laborers, asks of me, a petty minister placed at the other extremity of the kingdom, if I can send you workers and says the Master is waiting for them, there only remains for me to answer as in the time of the apostles—and God wants it thus! This is obeying and giving to the summons everything in my power. I have indicated the limits of this power because I believed it was my duty to do so. My power is feeble, but it can become strong in our divine Savior. His holy will be done! When this divine mediator deigns to associate me with men far more worthy he has taken into consideration my weakness, and this is cause for great consolation. I have confidence in the work undertaken, and I am obeying. On your part, you will do everything you can with the help of grace. Let us be united in God alone!

My representative can explain my thought to you in detail. He knows it better than anyone else. He was with me during my imprisonment, in my labors for the institutions in which God wished me to be his weak agent. He will not cease working with me, even while working together with you, my very honored colleague, at a task which will soon be common to both of us.

Even more than I, he will have the advantage of being edified by you and your clergy, about whom I have heard this word of high praise: “In their midst, there is only one heart and one soul.” My representative will easily share this same spirit, although he is not a clergyman properly so called. He is neither a stranger to nor useless to the clergy, since he is working in the religious¹ state, supported by grace in the service of religion.

I entirely agree to anything you may settle or work out in conjunction with him. I will consider it as settled or done by me. My very honored colleague, do whatever you consider worthwhile so good morals and religion may be assisted and made to flower as purely, if possible, as in the early days of the Church. May the works of faith and the fruits of charity abound!

¹ Bro. David had written “monastic.” Father Chaminade corrected this with the word “religious.”

This Providence, which has deigned to bring us together, gives me hope that it is not in vain that we have been drawn together on a holy path. This hope and this desire unite me to you in Jesus Christ and leave in me no other sentiment than to ask you to consider me sincerely, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

231. To Father Tharin, Vicar General of Besançon

March 10, 1823, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

Your Excellency,

My last letter to you was dated January 25. It mentioned in substance that my intimate colleague would soon visit you and Father Bardenet under the direction of Bishop d'Adana, who governs your great diocese.

This "soon" has become later than I hoped, but no one better than you, Reverend Grand Vicar, can appreciate the difficulties which arise when someone attempts to interrupt the general flow of business. Thus it was in vain that the departure was set for the first days of February, then for February 19, later for February 24, and then indefinitely postponed. And now at last, the departure has finally come. And our traveler has already been six or seven hours on the way.

It will take him 60 to 72 hours to reach Paris. His length of stay there will depend largely on the duties he has to fulfill. I do not believe he will be delayed more than four or five days, and from there he will go directly to Besançon. Then Your Excellency will deign to give him his orders to go to Vesoul to meet Father Bardenet there, or elsewhere if necessary, and then at his convenience to visit Saint-Remy without further delay.

He himself is the bearer of a letter in which I go into more detail, which would needlessly prolong this one, and in other respects refers to some of my preceding letters.¹

May Providence, which shows us the way to this great venture, render it useful for the salvation of a great number and bring my collaborator and I to labor there only for the glory of God. You can see, Your Excellency, what an array of forces, what a multitude of graces we will need. Be kind enough to remember us especially in your prayers and at the Holy Sacrifice.

Please accept the token of my sincerely felt consideration and of my profound respect.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. My representative is called David in religion. It was one of his characteristic names in the world. He was a member of the former Bar Association before the Revolution. He remained attached to his religion and to the king. Having retired from business, he dedicated himself to the Institute of Mary, which he helped me to form and to sustain. This is a way of letting you now I place my entire confidence in him and willingly hand over to him the management of matters.

He will be able to tell you in a few words about the apparel of the Order, which differs only a little in appearance from the most modest and ordinary dress—except that it is the same for everyone and should not lose this quality over time. This should settle things; you should not wait for a cassock.

Father Bardenet will receive a letter from me through my collaborator. He will be kind enough to forgive me if I have not made clear how much I am aware of my good fortune of being able to cooperate in his works. Your charitable mediation will further assure him of this.

¹ See letter no. 229.

Be kind enough, Your Excellency, to make known to the Most Reverend Coadjutor my sentiments of veneration. Tell him how privileged I feel to learn that he expects great good from our Institute and will not refuse it his blessing.

* * *

Here is the first letter of affiliation to the Society of Mary which has been preserved. It is addressed to a person who otherwise we do not know and bears the mark of Bro. David Monier. Other people had been affiliated to the Society of Mary from its beginning and under various titles—for example, Fathers Laumont, Mouran, and Serres, priests of the diocese of Agen; Messieurs Lacoste, Magnon, and Lapause, friends and benefactors of the Society of Mary; Father Bouet . . . Regarding affiliation to the Society of Mary, see Apôtre de Marie, no. 7, p. 425 and no. 8, pp. 2 and 41.

232. To M. Jean Veyssière, Saint-Jean d'Estissac

March 31, 1823, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

We, G.-Joseph Chaminade, priest, Missionary Apostolic and Superior of the Institute of Mary.

Upon the special request for affiliation which has been made by M. Jean Veyssière and upon the proofs which the candidate has given us of a sincere desire and praiseworthy intention of cooperating to the full extent of his power in the spread of the works actually in operation and of those which might be undertaken or founded in the future by the said Institute, in the well-founded hope that as a result of the said affiliation the candidate will share in its merits and in the efficacy of its prayers; after having taken notice of the good life and morals of the candidate, being informed particularly of his tender devotion toward Mary, and upon the other good and sufficient reports given of his exactitude in the accomplishment of his religious duties, his charity toward his neighbor, his discretion and wise prudence in his handling of religious and human matters,

have by these presents signed with our name, affiliated our above-named M. Jean Veyssière to the Institute of Mary, which has been established in Bordeaux under the title of the Immaculate Conception and of which we are the director, to be by the undersigned a participant in the good works and merits of the said Institute and the associations which are members of it or will be in the future. In consequence, may he enjoy through it the prerogatives, privileges, and indulgences which are attached to the said affiliation, in saying with devotion and at the times indicated the customary prayers and in receiving his monthly Communion in the principal church where he now lives or will live later on, all in conformity with the Bulls granted by Popes Pius V, Gregory XIII, and the reigning Sovereign Pontiff.

Given at Bordeaux, March 31, 1823,
under our personal seal and countersigned by our Secretary.
The Superior of the Institute of Mary

* * *

Brother David arrived in Besançon after a short stay in Paris. Father Chaminade acknowledges the receipt of his first letters and sends him his new instructions.

233. To Bro. David Monier, Besançon

March 31, 1823, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

[With inserts from S. 233]

My dear Son,

I have received your three letters from Paris dated March 14, 18, and 24. I was equally touched by your resignation to the violent illness you experienced upon your arrival there and by the blessings which God gave to the remedies which have delivered you from it. I believe the treatment of your malady and the prolongation of your stay in Paris must have made quite a hole in your purse, already so low. If the loyalty of Father Bardenet and his respectable colleague does not replenish it to a sufficient degree, you will be kind enough to let me know. I hope, no matter how deeply I myself may be in distress, I can supply you with what you need. In all cases of serious and pressing urgency, in order not to lose any time you could always borrow from Father Bardenet and leave the payment of the debt to me.

I am not surprised, my dear Son, at the welcome you received at the hands of the Archbishop of Besançon¹ and the first signs of benevolence which he showed you. You will recall that from the very first days of our correspondence, we saw that the clergy of Besançon—by this I mean the archbishop, the directors of the seminaries, and the missionaries—acted honestly and sincerely sought the good of religion. We also saw that the establishment asked for what was in the designs of God and that, in consequence, we should lend ourselves to its realization with all our hearts. I hope you will find few real difficulties, at least with the founders. You must not look upon your mission as a purely human matter, for no natural or merely human consideration has confided it to you. Fulfill it in the same spirit. All or at least the majority of your colleagues pray every day that the Lord may give you the spirit of wisdom and assist you. Novenas to Saint Joseph are being renewed, etc., etc. Why then should you not succeed? But do not be surprised at any difficulty or contradiction which may arise!

I cannot tell you anything further, my dear Son, about the proposition Count N.- - - made to you in Paris.

The 80-year-old religious, who wishes to found a normal school at Lons-le-Soulmier,¹ will write you and let you know his views and his plans for realizing them. You will share everything with me and tell me what you think. I will answer as quickly as possible. I rely on the assistance of the Holy Spirit in this, as in everything else. Will we have to go to Lons-le-Soulmier? We should go to the ends of the world, my dear Son, if God so calls us. But from the little you have told me of the views of this good religious, I believe we could realize them even at Saint-Remy.

Villeneuve gives us both consolation and sorrow. Consolation because the *collège* is progressing well. Its students, especially the older ones, are taking to piety, making progress, etc. Sorrow because Father Collineau thought himself obliged to dismiss M. Medvielle suddenly. He caught him in a serious offense against morality, reserved a place on the mail coach, and packed him off. Father Collineau would have liked you to notify Father de Vassal, fearing inaccurate reports from the Bureau or even from the city. It is useless for me to talk about everything here—all the observations I have made to this “too young” principal. I will send another teacher, a young man who has succeeded in all his studies and who has already taught for several years. Sheer necessity makes me do this because I do not yet know the young man well enough. I am admitting him to the Institute only as a postulant-boarder. He will be received as a novice only at the next October retreat, if we recognize in him the required dispositions.

M. de Lacaussade has purchased a small vineyard for the convent of Tonneins; it is only a short distance from the convent and is valued at 3,000 francs. It was bought in the name of the

¹ Bishop Gabriel Cortois de Pressigny (1745-1823) bishop of the diocese beginning in 1821, died in Paris May 2, 1823. His coadjutor was Bishop Paul de Villefrancon.

¹ Fr. Agathange, “former Capuchin, of eccentric memory,” sought to make a foundation at Lons-le-Soulmier, capital of the department of the Jura.

superior. M. de Lacaussade will manage and care for it during his lifetime, will take from it the wine he needs, etc. In two hours I expect to receive someone who is to give me a small house to help with our schools. It is valued at between 2,000 francs and 100 louis. He thought I would need a notary, but I gave a pure and simple bill of sale with a simple contract.

M. Clément was such an ineffectual teacher that we believed it prudent to invite him to give up his class, which he did very willingly. He left without more fuss for his native region. Today M. Bouzeran is substituting, but he is staying at the Madeleine. Finally, M. Dubosc returned all the papers concerning the house at no. 3, Rue Lalande. Father Bardenet turned them over to M. Pérèz, but I still believe it is better when I take care of things personally. }

At Saint-Laurent, everything is coming along as well as can be expected. Brother Clouzet has been here since Tuesday of Holy Week. Everywhere he has conducted himself like a true religious. Neither his long trip nor his stay at home has altered his zeal, his piety, or his recollection.

I have charged Father Lacoste to see what may be done for the schools with the new buildings acquired by the sisters of Agen. I have tried to settle things with a view toward our further plans for the schools for the young girls and for the workshops to accompany them.

At the Madeleine everything goes well with the exception of my health—work has become twice as great and very exacting since Easter. However, nothing prevents me from thinking of you and praying for you. I also often think of His Excellency the Coadjutor, of Father Tharin, and sometimes of Father Galliot,¹ of Father Bardenet and his zealous colleagues, and of the directors of the seminaries. It seems to me I am a member of their great family. I ask you to offer to each one the homage, respect, and veneration which I owe to him.

May the Lord shower upon you his most abundant blessings, my dear Son!

P.S. I am so pressed for time that I do not have even a moment to reread what I have written.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

Brother David visited Saint-Remy. He returned with enthusiasm and immediately described the most promising projects. Father Chaminade joined in his great joy, but also brought him back to reality, pointing out the difficulties which would be faced.

234. To Bro. David Monier, Bordeaux

April 23-25, 1823, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

[With insert from S. 234]

My dear Son,

I am beginning this letter on April 23, but I do not know when I will finish it. I received your three letters from Vesoul, Belfort, and Landser. I am not rereading them, so as not to disturb the sentiments they have left with me. But in the end I will reread them in case some serious circumstance apart from the main issues may have escaped me. I have been trying for several days to enter into a more perfect peace and to consider only the interests of religion.

My first sentiment has been one of joy. How could anyone love Jesus Christ and his august Mother and not rejoice over the dispositions you have found in Father Bardenet, his worthy colleagues, and the members of the clergy with whom you have dealt . . . but especially Father Bardenet, who is the mainspring of this great enterprise. I am sending an affiliation

¹ Vicar general of Besançon.

certificate to you, which I am sure he will accept with pleasure. We cannot be too deeply united, for infallibly we will need to work as one for the rest of our lives at such an important work. I have no doubt that Father Bardenet feels all the burdens of the enterprise. If it were true that he put only a modicum of interest into it I would not feel it my duty to go ahead, for I now have a better understanding of things. I am repeating these last words, my dear Son. "I now have a better understanding of things." They express a wide variety of sentiments created by reading your letters.

The members who would make up the founding group would not be suited, for the most part, to the works which can be undertaken on this vast estate. I am forced to rethink my priorities and make new choices. If we began a normal school in Saint-Remy for the 500 primary school teachers in the diocese of Besançon, at least for the present I would not have anyone to place at its head but you, and you know how necessary you are to me here as well as in many other establishments presently in existence and yet to be founded.

For the future, Saint-Remy offers means for continuation. However, at present I do not see the money which is needed (1) to arrive there; (2) to live there; (3) to equip rooms, kitchen, and possibly a chapel for retreatants; and (4) to provide for necessary upkeep and repairs and also taxes, to provide initial capital to clear the land, sow, and plant, and buy cattle so as to have revenue for the future.

You tell me, my dear Son, that about one-third of the outlying land of the château does not seem to you to be within the enclosure and consequently is not included in the terms of the contract. I want it so, if this is what our respectable founders want. But would it not be prudent to examine (1) if the land in the enclosure, given its full value and productivity, would suffice to meet the considerable expenses occasioned by the works to be undertaken? My dear Son, I do not need to point out to you that revenues are not always proportionate to the size of a property but rather to the fertility of the soil, to fertilizers and more or less considerable cultivation, to the quality of the products, to the ease in making improvements, in selling, etc. (2) If we leave this outlying land outside the enclosure, would we not need to fear neighbors coming there in the future, unless it is understood that this third¹ would belong to the Reverend Missionaries, passing from one member to another, as would be the case with us?² I do not see too clearly what the latter would gain from this, seeing that they would not be on the spot to see to working the land, etc. . . .

I certainly hope Providence will come to our assistance once the establishment has begun to function. But in the meantime, must our zealous founders not be, in a way, our Providence in that they are at least its business managers and wise dispensers? Providence always assists with this work—Providence does not yet recognize us as the custodians yet, but it does know these men. I had the honor of writing to Father Tharin, telling him I could not make any expenses, at least for some time, as for example the cost for registration of the contract, which will be very considerable despite our precautions.

And when I say I cannot make any expenses, can I dispense myself from making any at all if you do not send me any money? Do I have the courage to let my Children depart without giving them the funds necessary to make the trip? And you now know what a trip it is without sufficient clothing, linen, etc. Never do I feel more that I am a father than when I must be separated from one of them.

You will do well, my dear Son, to indicate for me which religious you would most need for these beginnings. As a start, ask for as few as possible. Once I have been fully informed about these needs I will send you some, in proportion to what is necessary. These needs will hardly be slow in growing if to the essential works you add repairs, labor, etc. Since your departure, I have

¹ Bro. David had evaluated the land outside the enclosure as 1/3 the size of what was enclosed and had not included it in the contract.

² In regard to properties belonging to the Institute.

admitted five or six new subjects. They are each good in their way, but I cannot send them to you. One replaces M. Clement, professor of third and second Greek on Rue des Menus. I have sent another to Villeneuve to replace M. Medvielle; a third is preparing to receive the subdiaconate on Trinity Sunday; a fourth is continuing his studies at the Madeleine; two others are in line to enter the novitiate of Saint-Laurent. Several others are presenting themselves, but I do not know them well enough to admit them.

I have just spoken to you, my dear Son, as if you were ready to begin, but I failed to remember that the contracts are not yet signed and that you still need to go to Paris. Regarding the contracts and the necessary notification, I have no intention of limiting in any way the powers I gave to you on your departure by the reflections I am sharing with you in this letter. I believe it is my duty to make these observations for your guidance. Add to them as you feel the need, and do as you believe I would do if I were in your place and saw the things you see.

I hope Father Bardenet will make suitable efforts to put the enterprise in running condition. If I had available means, I would tell you with my ordinary frankness to draw on me for all the necessary sums which would not otherwise be offered. But you know of my trouble. I cannot support either the existing establishments or the subjects who present themselves, or even the incidental expenses I will have to make for Saint-Remy, whatever the generosity of its founders may be.

Concerning your trip to Paris, it can easily be delayed a little, but not omitted entirely. You are well aware of its importance and the opportunity. I leave you, my dear Son, to your own wisdom. I pray a great deal, and I have others pray a great deal for you. These prayers are fervent and persevering, especially in the novitiate of Saint-Laurent.

I do not dare oppose the work of a normal school at Saint-Remy because of the incalculable good it may do in the large diocese of Besançon. It is easy to foresee that the example this diocese could give would soon be imitated by others and that the Government would not delay in favoring a work which, without any inconvenience, would tend so directly to the regeneration of the people in our unhappy country. The Reverend Missionaries could very usefully exercise their zeal at the time of the reunions. However, if such works were begun in other dioceses, we would be obliged to send them some of our own missionaries. May the holy name of God be known, published, and blessed in all places!

I said I did not dare oppose this work, and not that I really want to do so. You know there are certain excellent things which are greatly desired but also feared, dreaded—and that only faith can overcome all repugnance to them. I fear this enterprise mainly because for so long a time it will deprive us of your presence. It will be difficult to replace you suitably. However, I do not doubt you will profit by your long stay in Saint-Remy to begin the most difficult workshops. I also fear the consequences of such enterprises. But I repeat, I do not oppose this project. If you have the interior sense—I no longer say about the success of this work but about its great utility—if Father Bardenet and his worthy colleagues suitably come to our assistance and stay with us at least until we can get along by ourselves, then I say let us go ahead! I will help you in every way I can. It seems to me my confidence in God increases in these events.

One more reflection about the workshops for the arts and crafts at Saint-Remy. The château seems very isolated for certain workshops to be established there. These large-scale workshops produce a great deal of work; who then would give us all this work to do? How would we dispose of all the work which would be produced there? I see only a small amount of agriculture in all this, as well as the trades necessary for the upkeep of so large a place and possibly shops for the elementary teaching of the arts and crafts. I would not have made this last reflection if I had not forgotten to say that you might profit by your stay in Saint-Remy to make a start with the most difficult shops. This reflection is perfectly useless to you, I am sure, because you are far too observant not to have made it yourself, as with a great number of others which might be made.

My dear Son, I am going to end this letter here so it may reach you in Besançon, in case your stay there is shorter than you believed. I will add only a bulletin which will describe what of interest to you has happened in the Institute since you left for Besançon. If you did not receive the letter I wrote you at the time of your arrival, be kind enough to reclaim it. It was addressed to Father Galliot, vicar general, to be handed over to you.

May the Lord deign to shower upon you his most abundant blessings!

In Bordeaux April 24, 1823

P.S. Please offer Father Bardenet the sentiments of my respectful attachment and, in general, to the members of the clergy the tokens of my veneration. I put His Excellency the Coadjutor, in first place. A week ago today, my dear Son, I received your two letters, one from Belfort and the other from Landser, the first around noon and the second around six o'clock in the evening. Since then I have received none, and this first silence gives me reason to fear for your health. I was surprised that in leaving Besançon, you took no steps to make certain my letters would reach you, no matter where you might happen to be. I received a large package of letters three or four days ago from Father Weber stamped "Belfort." This young priest speaks of your meeting with Brother Rothéa and of your correspondence with him. He did not like some of the expressions in your last letter, but a proper explanation will make things right. In the package there was a long letter from a young man who is in the rhetoric class in La Chapelle,¹ where Father Weber is teaching music. This young man is asking to enter the Institute of Mary.

Father Collineau received the rector of the Academy of Cahors. Apparently they like each other. The rector promised to interest himself in a chair of philosophy in the *collège* of Villeneuve for next year. Since M. Medvielle's departure, new boarders are always entering, several from other boarding schools attracted by the school's good reputation.

The boarding school on Rue des Menuts is getting along fairly well. Four pupils from Peru have just entered. Three belong to a deputy of the viceroy in the court of Ferdinand VII. I met their father, a very good and Christian man, but I have not yet seen the children. Two others have arrived, and I am told more are on the way. It is believed they will not choose another boarding school.

I will conclude my visit to the Haut-Pays only when all the business of Saint-Remy has been completely concluded. Although I always have new reasons to praise and to thank God's adorable providence over the entire Institute, I cannot help feeling, perhaps too often, the pull of cares and various anxieties, or rather of causes for uneasiness.

The tenants of the house at no. 3, Rue Lalande seem now on the move to find themselves other lodgings.

The matter concerning Mme Dubroca was brought to a rather satisfactory conclusion; 300 francs were granted to the husband. The case of the Laugeay family is in progress. Father Bardenet fears that it may go to court.

I cannot tell you how much Fathers Rothéa, Caillet, and Lalanne all embrace you tenderly and are praying for you.

I hasten to end this letter so it will not miss tomorrow morning's mail. If it did, then I would have to wait four days for the next. I prefer to write later if I have forgotten something very important.

May the peace of the Lord be ever with you, my dear Son!

In Bordeaux, April 25, 1823

* * *

S. 234a. To Father Bardenet

¹ La Chapelle-sous-Rougemont, a small seminary located near Belfort.

April 25, 1823, Bordeaux
Copy, Agmar

Diploma of Affiliation

I, Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, priest, Missionary Apostolic and superior of the Institute of Mary, having received letters from Father Tharin, Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Besançon asking whether we would be willing to found a central house of the Institute in the Saint-Remy area (district of Vesoul, canton of Amance, department of Haute-Saône in the aforesaid diocese, afterward, acting on our orders M. David, secretary general of the said Institute, our agent appointed to visit the aforementioned properties, turned in his report on April 4. On the advice of my council, I have decided that the establishment should be founded, and in consequence all measures taken to guarantee the foundation and its stability.

Considering that the report from our agent informs us that whatever advantages the establishment has to offer are due principally to the generosity, the zeal, and the piety of Father Bardenet, a priest and member of the missionary society of Granpré near Besançon; he has read the report and knows the sentiments of Father Bardenet and his willingness to help in the development of the project and of the works of the Institute, as well as the many good and sufficient testimonies he has given us, both of his Christian charity and of his wise and discreet prudence in all things.

By these presents, signed by our hand, we have affiliated the most honorable Father Bardenet to the Institute of Mary erected in Bordeaux under the title of the Immaculate Conception, and of which we are the director, so that the aforementioned now shares in the prayers, good works, and merits of the said Institute, and we ask him to say Mass once a month on the day of his choice, since he is dispensed because of his office and his priesthood from other prayers; all this conformably to the briefs granted by our Holy Fathers Pius VI and Gregory XIII and by the Sovereign Pontiff gloriously reigning.

Done at Bordeaux on April 24, 1823, countersigned by our Secretary General.

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This letter addressed to the convent in Agen is interesting from the point of view of the formation of the postulants, novices, and young religious.

235. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

May 5, 1823, Bordeaux
Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

You ask me if the baker may be admitted to the Society. He would like to know definitely. What can I answer that I have not already said? The young man has little piety; he does not know what religious life really is. . . . He does not even know his trade as a baker, and we have not yet provided for a bakery. In the first place, an actual baker is needed and not an apprentice. If the young man perseveres, let him go see Father Laugeay and ask that the latter give him the instructions he needs. Let him follow the little Rule of Life which will be given to him. Let him be what we call a kind of day-scholar postulant. Let him master his baker's trade and everything this entails. At the time of my visit, I will then settle the matter for him definitely, if possible.

When will this visit take place? You ask again, my dear Child. Just now, I cannot say. However, I will notify you as soon as I have been able to settle things. The principal reason for the delay is the final decision regarding the foundation at Saint-Remy. This matter is nearly in the last stage of settlement. Brother David and the interested parties are to meet in Besançon on the

first available day. My last observations about it must have been received by this time. I need to be here in case a group has to be sent, subjects have to be chosen, prepared and furnished with what is necessary, etc. Pray yourself and have others pray about this, which is of such great importance for the Institute of Mary and for religion in general. I will give you the principal details when I learn the contracts have been concluded. The sample registration of the contract will call for a fee of at least 6,000 francs, etc.

It is true that I have given Brother Bouzeran hope that we would supply 300 francs for his mother, who seems to be in very great need. I want to determine what concerns both the son and the mother only after Pentecost at the time of my visit. Nevertheless, because Brother Bouzeran is doing well and usefully employed, I am saying nothing to him about the unreasonable demand of his mother. Give her some financial help and put it on the general expense account for the year. Her son is a good subject. If he takes on the genuine spirit of the Institute, he will be well worth what he has cost.

We must give the pupils “of the little habit”¹ all the education and instruction they are capable of receiving, and we must not admit any to this class who cannot assimilate both to a certain extent. Great wisdom is demanded of the teachers if these children are to grow in piety, in contempt of the vanities of the world, etc. When a pupil has a special talent in some particular line, it is good especially to cultivate this gift of nature, such as for example a capacity for vocal or instrumental music, writing, etc.

It is otherwise with novices. Once they enter the novitiate, we suppose their education is finished. The novitiate is concerned only with Christian and religious instructions, with labors, exercises, and practices of virtue, etc. However if there is a young novice who has received some exceptional talent from nature, or rather from God, it is permitted to cultivate it, providing the novice is humble enough to be unharmed by this little distinction. A novice who would desire, who would ask for this distinction, would by the very fact prove that he already has very little of the spirit of his state. It is up to the Mistress of Novices to judge what may be suitable for such a subject. When she has judged it is suitable for this or that novice to take special lessons, she has an understanding with the Mother Superior, who arranges whatever may be necessary. She may first consult the Mother of Instruction, but in every case the latter remains charged with carrying out the orders of the Mother Superior and is responsible for the novice’s progress in the special lessons.

If the Mother of Instruction should notice that the study is becoming harmful to the novice, she should inform the Mistress of Novices. Both of them are to take every precaution so the special study will produce no bad results. Everything must be sacrificed to the essential. We must always aim at having true religious.

There is difficulty among the Mothers about government, my dear Child, only because the Mothers in different offices do not strive with simplicity to attain the end of their respective functions. The Mother of Work, you tell me, believes the novices do not devote enough time to work. What does it matter to her, providing the novices who are put under her charge work as true religious, that they bring to their tasks all diligence, care, skill, etc., of which they are capable? The Mother of Instruction, you add, finds there is too much which turns them away from their studies. What does it matter to her, provided those who are permitted to study usefully employ the time allotted them, that their lessons and assignments are carefully done, etc.? You tell me, my dear Child, that someone wants to teach them geography. Well, to whom does it belong to suggest such a thing? It belongs to the Mistress of Novices. In her wisdom, she must see those who need it, considering their likely future employment. Furthermore, if she sees a real usefulness in this or any other study, then she must be certain it will in no way harm their advancement in religious virtues. It would again belong to the Mother Superior to make her views

¹ This is what the postulants of Agen were called.

known to the Mistress of Novices, should she have reason to believe the latter was forgetting them.

In these same few reflections, my dear Child, you will find the answer to the other difficulties you place before me. In the most famous group of teachers among the men¹ the novices set aside all secular study for two consecutive years. When they make their final profession, they once more become novices for another year, during which secular studies are again set aside. We believe that with some care it is possible to combine with the study and the exercises of religious life some other studies, according to the dispositions of the subjects. This is what is being done in our novitiate of Saint-Laurent, and so far I see no inconvenience as a result. I am still very surprised that you have not brought this confusion to my attention before this. How can we form true Daughters of Mary in the novitiate at Agen?

I must add one more reflection. The young professed who are destined for employments calling for skills and knowledge and who are not sufficiently trained, could receive the lessons they still need, could they not? In this way, they could study longer and with less trouble. But my dear Child, let the Mother of Zeal be careful that these studies are made without prejudice to the interior and religious spirit!

May the Lord deign to give his blessing to your maternal cares!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

But Father Chaminade no longer received news from Saint-Remy. Brother David's last letter had given him a glimpse of the considerable expenses made despite Father Bardenet's goodwill. Insufficiently informed, fearing to compromise the Society of Mary and perhaps not wishing to miss an occasion which seemed sent by Providence, Father Chaminade made his hesitations known to his representative, as well as his total abandonment to Divine Providence regarding the result.

236. To Bro. David Monier, Besançon

May 21, 1823, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

[With insert from S. 236]

My dear Son,

I hope this letter will find you in Besançon at last. I hope also that the death of the venerable archbishop of this noted city will not hamper the satisfactory conclusion of the business which brought you there. After three or four days of reflection I answered your letters from Vesoul, Belfort, and Landser. I addressed my letter to Father Tharin, vicar general, to be put in your hands at the time of your second stop in Besançon. This very long letter contained a certificate of affiliation for Father Bardenet. I saw that everything was prepaid.

There is hardly a day, my dear Son, in which I do not think of you and of this matter often. Ordinarily, I recommend you and your enterprises to the Lord and his august Mother. My dispositions otherwise remain about the same as I told you. I certainly want this work, but I fear it. I wait to be drawn, so to speak, by the pull of Providence. I do not want to anticipate its designs; I do not want to go against them. This Divine Providence, in which I place all my confidence, assists us visibly in all our undertakings, but it does nothing in advance, if we may so speak. It provides at the exact moments for our needs and for our loans but nothing more, in such a way that I dare undertake nothing I do which is not clearly seen to be in conformity with its views. For example, I maintain all the works already undertaken, I refuse no subject who presents

¹ The Society of Jesus.

himself, however poor he may be, if he happens to have appreciable signs of a vocation, etc. . . . If the good God inspires Father Bardenet and his worthy colleagues to come effectively to our assistance with the costs and advance payments to get the work going, I will look upon this inspiration as an indication of the will of God and I will say to you, "Go ahead! God is for us! God is in favor of this undertaking. I promise to send you good subjects to sustain it, etc." If the contrary is the case, I am obliged to tell you, "I leave it to your wisdom; I accept what you think you should do in my name. I will do all I can to be faithful to the pledges you make."

Father Lacoste had written to you in Paris, my dear Son. The mail carrier delivered this letter to several hotels and several streets, and no one wanted to claim it. The post office then sent it to Bordeaux, where we claimed it. I notified Father Lacoste in Agen. This letter does not contain anything essential—I will not go through it simply to report to you the testimonies of friendship it contains.

News of the good being done in our Agen schools has just been published in the two editions of the *Journal de Lot-et-Garonne*. I heard about this and asked for copies. The writing is good. I congratulated the editor, who I suspected was Father Lacoste. I was going to send you a copy of his answer. I just remembered it is in the secretariat; I will tell Brother Rothéa to copy it at the end of this letter. I have already seen to it that the two articles are sent to you in Besançon. You can make use of them as you wish. I will also see to it that any further articles will also be sent.

I also wanted to send you a number of the *Ruche d'Aquitaine* in which an anonymous writer inserted a report about a meeting of the Emulation Society of Brother Auguste's boarding school. This meeting must have concerned the special unveiling of the bust of the princess.¹ The unveiling was truly interesting from beginning to end. The presentation of the bust was done with so much dignity that the assembly, which was quite large, was forced to stand in respect. M. Casimir de Sèze,² who was seated next to me, was completely enthusiastic, and you know he is no enthusiast. A sudden play of lights was without doubt a stroke of theatre. A small fire, well-placed behind the bust, topped off everything. The report in the *Ruche* is written well enough, but it does not express the depth of feeling the majestic ceremony awakened. It even prevented a better report from being inserted in the *Memorial Bordelais*. . . . The boarding school on Rue des Menuts has just received five young Peruvians as boarders. The father of three of them is a deputy of the viceroy of Peru in the court of Ferdinand VII. All of them took part in the meeting.

The matter of the Laugeay family seems to become more confused just as it was about to be made clear. M. Reynier received 4,000 francs which he immediately turned over to Father Bardenet, who divided it into quarters; I was given 1,000 francs several hours before Brother Laugeay's sister received 3,000 francs. She claimed the money and declared that she would pay their father's debts. While waiting for further instructions in the matter, I sent the 1,000 francs to Brother Laugeay at Agen. Meanwhile, Mlle Laugeay withdrew the power of attorney from M. Reynier and also from her brother and her mother. She has taken things into her own hands and intends to manage everything. She will have nothing to do with Father Bardenet, either. She wants his files and has hired her own lawyer; M. Reynier (who had not wanted a commission) is now asking for one. Father Bardenet protested that he could not turn over the papers without your consent, and that you might want a fee for your service, especially for a consultation you had granted. Another inquiry has just been opened by M. Desgrance, the son-in-law of M. Martignac. A detailed report on all the incidents would be lengthy indeed. (1) Should the money be divided into three or four parts? I seem to remember your telling me that it would be in three parts and a small pension for the mother. (2) Should we give up the documents? (3) I think Brother Laugeay

¹ The Duchess d'Angoulême (see letter no. 55) was making a journey in the south of France, while the Duke was directing the expedition into Spain.

² Brother of Romain de Sèze, the defender of Louis XVI and president of the chamber of the Court of Appeals in Bordeaux.

should keep as proxies both Father Bardenet and M. Reynier, otherwise we would lose the drift of the matter and any possibility of benefitting from the estate. (4) Brother Laugeay referred me to his will when I questioned him about the division into three or four parts; do you recall the terms of that will?

Father Caillet is on retreat. Tomorrow he will make his perpetual profession. There will be a reception of six novices and of four day-scholar postulants and two ordinary postulants. The classification is well made, for no one is a doubtful subject. This little three-day retreat gives me great consolation, even if it does greatly increase my occupations. I am writing you this letter in self-defense and in spite of being endlessly interrupted. May the Holy Spirit shower gifts upon you, and in particular his wisdom and counsel!³

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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S. 236a. To M. de Lacaussade

May 23, 1823, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

Your letter, whose contents you had discussed with M. Lacoste, arrived via Agen. I have nothing to remark about the first item except to admire your shrewdness. We must wait until January 1, 1824. As to the second item, in order to hasten matters I will have a copy made of the section of Brother Laugeay's letter which deals with it. I have to manage every minute of my time. I assure you of my sincere and respectful consideration.

*

Copy of Brother Laugeay's Letter

M. Lacoste showed me a letter he had received from M. de Lacaussade. It is addressed to you, but M. de Lacaussade wanted M. Lacoste to be aware of its contents. You will find it opened and enclosed. It deals with the project of the free schools for Tonneins. M. Lacoste would have liked to write to you himself on that and on other topics, but he is too busy. He told me in person what he wanted you to know and asked me to write to you today, for the matter is important.

The General Council will meet next month. M. Lacoste, who will draft the various documents, must hand in his manuscript in a few days to the prefect. The latter informed M. Lacoste that the question of our school must come again before the council, not in view of any aid to the schools of Agen but to plan the foundation of new schools in other departmental districts. We must appreciate the fact that the prefect has made these overtures and not turn a deaf ear, but rather be thankful and try to benefit from them.

This is what I think and what I advise M. Lacoste. Because the towns of Marmande and Nérac expressed no desire to profit by their allocations, the prefect told M. Lacoste that he would give more funds to Villeneuve. M. Lacoste replied that Tonneins had presented a petition for its school and that it would be normal to give it first consideration; the prefect did not discard the idea. M. Lacoste considers this a favorable sign and believes now is the time to act in favor of Tonneins. First, the mayor of Tonneins should write to the prefect describing the advantages of free schools to his town and present his own desires and the satisfaction he would experience if the council would be in favor of a work which is highly praised for its performance.

³ This was the week of Pentecost. The retreat was preached by Frs. Chaminade and Bouet. In a note in the archives of the Society of Mary we read, "Indulged crosses made of copper and wood were distributed to 18 professed and 6 novices. This is the first distribution in the Institute of this new type of large cross."

M. Lacoste insists that the mayor of Tonneins must write immediately to the prefect, for the slightest delay could mean failure; in a few days, no more applications to the council will be accepted.

P.S. I noted what concerns Justine in your letter of May 20, and will send M. Lacoste the information dealing with the petition. I will add several reflections to guide him before he presents his document to the General Council of the department.

* * *

Father Chaminade did not need to wait long to be fully informed about the business of Saint-Remy. He received two letters in succession from Brother David. One dated May 16 complained about Father Chaminade's hesitations in the presence "of the most beautiful work our life has presented to us." The other, written the next day, announced that the transaction had been concluded.

"My Good Father," said Brother David, "I have just signed the contract which makes you the proprietor of the château of Saint-Remy, called Château de Rosen—about 400 acres surrounded by walls and about 125 acres outside the enclosure make up the entire estate. The buildings are of such size, solidity, and style as to be beyond price. These buildings, I have said to you, have cost one and a half million francs! It is one of those foolish things of the century which God had disposed of to serve his glory." Brother David had obligated Father Chaminade to about 60,000 francs, a small amount considering the value of the property but a very heavy one for shoulders already overloaded.

237. To Bro. David Monier, Besançon

May 27, 1823, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

I received your letter of May 17 thirty hours before the one dated May 16. I do not know why it happened this way except that the letter of May 16 came by way of Lyons and the letter of May 17 by way of Paris. Henceforth, we will have to take this into account when we are in a hurry about our messages.

You have managed cleverly, my dear Son. I am very glad, and all those whom I have acquainted with your deeds share my satisfaction. We praise and thank the Lord, and we are all disposed to second your efforts and the views of Providence.

My letters, my dear Son, would not have tormented you if you had not been so preoccupied. You should have recalled the letter you wrote me from Belfort, which explained the one you had written me from Vesoul. You would then have understood that I was giving you full liberty to negotiate, that having accepted things only on the condition that you had seen them, I wished to extend to you a further freedom to say "yes" or "no."

It is very true that I believed Father Bardenet was still attached to the Mission, although I was astonished at the reservations he was making.¹ The superior of the Mission, whom you brought to Saint-Remy, as well as many circumstances left me with the opinion that although the work was done at Father Bardenet's expense, it was nevertheless common to all the Missionaries.

I am somewhat sorry about the way you go back over your doings in Agen, not so much because of the reproaches you seem to make to me, but because of the harm your complaints may

¹ In his letter of May 16, Bro. David let Fr. Chaminade know that Fr. Bardenet had just separated himself from the diocesan Missionaries and that he counted on retiring to Saint-Remy, where he was reserving for himself a place to live, some land, and certain privileges.

work upon you. If you did for the Haut-Pays what you had to do and could really do, if I had not always agreed with your ideas but had made some observations to you, what is there in all this to make you anxious about Franche-Comté and to make me anxious about Bordeaux? If I make observations, if I give some orders, this is because I consider it my duty to do so. I may be mistaken, and I am likely so to be more than anyone else, but what is to be concluded from this? You must notice that even now I am tolerably afraid of being mistaken and that I am going ahead only after I think I have seen the will of God clearly enough. Am I to fear still more? If I had a broader view; if I were more closely united to God; if, etc., things would go better, I have no doubt about this. But once more, what is to be done? Say nothing to you? Do nothing? Certainly this is not what you want. If you answered me that I must speak and act better, all I could answer would be that you are right, but the fact is I can neither speak nor act better.

You seem to find fault, my dear Son, with the acquisitions and the repairs I made.¹ How could I correct myself of such imprudence, if this are really such? I intended to do well, and I still believe I did. There are few important actions I have taken which I would not do all over again if the necessity for them should arise. Not that I am not afraid before God, but pray to the good God, my dear Son, that God will pardon my sins and that God will choose a better instrument to do the works of his goodness and mercy.

You tell me nothing about the normal school to be established at Saint-Remy. I believe the Missionaries would find it difficult to give up those large meetings of the primary school teachers, both because of the expenses they made to build a large house to accommodate them at Vesoul and because Father Bardenet has separated himself from them. The work in itself would be of the greatest importance, if it attained complete success. Little by little, the other dioceses would follow the example of Besançon, if the Government especially and the university gave their consent.

Would it not be possible for us to begin a boarding school, a kind of *collège*, in this large place? Independently of the intrinsic good of this work, we could find in it the means of sustaining all the other works of the Institute and of training subjects.

I cannot make the definitive choice of subjects who will finally make up the group until you have given me your final reports. In the meantime, I will make my visit to Agen. The General Council of the department is to open there on June 5.

The priest I had considered for the group was to have been Father Rothéa. I believe today it would be more prudent to send Father Caillet, however great my need for having him here. It seems to me Father Rothéa is not yet sufficiently mature. I want to keep him with me for awhile, because he is not being trained quickly enough at Saint-Laurent. I believe I can make Brother Fayet a member of the group. I mention him because you may know him. He may not come into any of our houses here because of a kind of hatred which his father bears toward religious. This young man is very pious, rather tall, well built, very modest and quiet. He would have been a priest by this time if studies and a sedentary life had not seriously injured his health. Movement does him good, and I think he will have plenty of it at Saint-Remy if he is employed in supervising the work there, the repairs to be made, etc. The fear he has of the corruption of the world would seem to have been the only obstacle to his choice of a state of life there. . . . Would we not need some farm workers, peasant religious? The promised priest was to be part of a group of nine, but no matter. When you have told me your needs precisely, I will be better able to make my choice. At the outset it would seem the establishment at Saint-Remy could receive men converted through missions who would have need of a retreat for a short time or continually. If this were to help, then we would need a certain number of servant brothers. . . .

Father Baumlin, pastor of Sainte Marie-aux-Mines, would be pleased to be in this solitude, especially with Father Bardenet as a regular resident.

¹ In Bordeaux, at Saint-Laurent, or on Rue Lalande.

My dear Son, you speak to me several times of your replacement. I thought of leaving you at Saint-Remy only as long as you are absolutely needed there. For example, if a normal school were established there, if we organized a boarding school for letters there, if we opened a polytechnical school for arts and crafts, you would be needed for a very long time. You know we have no subject at all trained to sustain such large enterprises. It would be quite a job to find someone sufficiently qualified to be quickly formed for this responsibility.

Furthermore, my dear Son, whatever arrangements you may prefer, after sufficient temporary arrangements you will need to go to Paris to seek government authorization with the understanding of returning to Saint-Remy.

Only today has the departure of the tenants of the house at no. 3, Rue Lalande been completed. This house is very large. More people can be lodged here than at Saint-Laurent, in spite of the extensive repairs I made there last year. I am going to have it put into condition for occupancy right away. I will give the main direction of the work to Mlle de Lamourous. I believe it will be completed before my return. Only what is rigorously needed is to be done, so the house may be decently occupied.¹

The time for the Paris mail has arrived, so I am now coming to a close, my dear Son. I wish you all sorts of blessings. . . . Everyone is deeply mindful of your tokens of affection and remembrance and returns them to you by my pen.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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S. 237a. To M. de Lacaussade, Tonneins

May 27, 1823, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

I wish to inform you that I propose to make my annual visit to Agen in the first days of June. I will spend at most one day in Tonneins, my first time around. I should rather like to be in Agen during the General Council meeting of the department. I wish you would tell Mother Teresa when you see her. . . . I will write to her in spite of my haste to avoid having to spend time making a visit. Please accept the assurance of my respectful devotedness.

P.S. I have not finished reading your reports to the municipal council; I will return them to you. Here is the first part of the last letter I received from Brother David, dated May 17 from Besançon. "Good Father, I have just signed the deed which makes you the proprietor of château Saint-Remy, called Château de Rosen (pronounced "Rose"); 400 acres within the walls and about 125 acres outside the enclosure make up the estate. The buildings are of such size, solidity, and of a new style that is beyond price. These buildings cost 1,500,000 francs, or a million and a half. This is the absurdity of the century, which God has allowed for his greater glory."

* * *

A new letter came from Brother David, full of enthusiasm, following a more detailed inspection. "Versailles has greater riches," writes he, "but it is not more beautiful. The finest sights I have ever seen, even in Italy, have not affected me more." And he draws this interesting portrait of Father Bardenet: "He makes use of a loyalty which is far from common. I believe his character is to do everything to oblige even when this is not expected, and he does this with great care, the more so when special importance is involved. If anything like bickering arises or seems to arise, he promptly takes his leave. He does good in his own way. If he meets obstacles in one

¹ Concerning the destination of this house, see letter no. 249.

place, he goes elsewhere to do good and in some other way. We two have never failed to be in perfect agreement.” Toward the end, complaints as usual and the announcement of his departure for Paris.

Father Chaminade answers—after some indications regarding the postal service, which had not handled the last letters to Brother David in time to be of use to him.

238. To Bro. David Monier, Paris

June 3, 1832, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

[With insert from S. 238]

My dear Son,

I am answering your letter dated May 26 which has just arrived from Vesoul. It seems you did not receive the two letters I sent to you in Besançon, always to the address of Father Tharin. The second last I had written before hearing of your arrival in Besançon, and the last was in reply to yours of May 16 and 17. In them I expressed my satisfaction at the importance and the happy outcome of the negotiations which were so burdensome and absorbing. I explained why I had included that expression which so exasperated you, contrary to my expectations. My second to last contained the same sentiments, and for the same reasons. I also brought up other topics; you had better make inquiries about those letters, although they can compromise no one or nothing. It is wise to claim them.

I thank you for your consideration in sparing me the anxiety which the news of your serious indisposition and your sufferings at the time of your first visit to Saint-Remy would have caused, but I ask you not to spare me in the future. I would not be so tranquil if I thought you were remaining silent about your health.

The new details you give me about the château make me feel more and more the importance of this work. I will await your further reflections before definitely determining the choice of the nine subjects who will make up the founding group. I entered into some details about this in my last letter. Father Rothéa has the tertian fever, and this prevents me from taking him to Agen. This young priest seemed to me highly in need of being well-trained along certain lines before being sent so far. I was also speaking to you in this letter of M. Fayet. This young man has lived almost like a religious for some years. The superior of the seminary, his confessor, approves of his vocation. By his education as well as by his imposing physique and his need of exercise, this young man could be put in charge of the farm work. You seem to desire Father Laugeay; if you believe he may be of any particular use to you, I will try to replace him in Agen. Enter into the smallest details about the suitability of subjects, and I will try to accommodate you as closely as possible.

As soon as I learned you had just drawn up the deed in Besançon, I decided upon my visit to Agen. It will coincide with the General Council of the department of Lot-et-Garonne, in which our schools for the small towns of the department will be discussed. Other institutions are trying to influence ours, and the name of Father de Lamennais makes this all the more striking. I have already written Father Lacoste a letter, which he gave to the prefect. It had a good effect. On arriving, I will make a little note, etc.—if you happen to have some details about the institutions of Father de Lamennais, give them to me. The little I know about it seems to me to demonstrate the inconsistency of his system.¹ The letters you write me from Bordeaux will be sent to me in Agen.

¹ In 1817 Jean-Marie de Lamennais (1780-1860), the brother of Félicité de Lamennais, founded the Institute of the Brothers of Christian Instruction of Ploërmel. In a letter of March 2, 1837, Fr. Chaminade explained his thought. “It is very true that the institution of Fr. de Lamennais, like that of Fr. Mertian, was offering very appreciable advantages, for example, that of being able to send a brother alone to a small parish, but we do not believe this advantage can outweigh

On my return, I will have your reflections and counsels, and I will determine the founding group for Saint-Remy. Father Rothéa will have recovered from his illness. I will arrange everything for an early departure.

I counsel you to see to it that my two letters are returned from Besançon to Paris, in case they have not been give to you by Father Tharin, as I asked him to do.

How much I have yet to say! But the direct mail to Paris is about to leave, and this letter will gain two days by my ending it now, a half-hour before my scheduled time. You should be in Paris now or on the point of arriving. You will begin affairs of greater importance than those of Besançon, and I see the need of redoubling our prayers for you.

I am not rereading what I have written. May the Lord shower upon you his most abundant blessings!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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Father Chaminade went to Agen, where he obtained from the General Council of Lot-et-Garonne a favorable decision concerning the school at Agen and subsidies for the spread of the free school throughout the department. From Agen he addressed these two letters to M. de Lacaussade and to Bro. David Monier.

239. To M. de Lacaussade, Tonneins

June 10, 1823, Agen
Autograph, Arch. FMI
[With insert from S. 239]

Monsieur,

The Tonneins schools matter has been treated in the General Council. If Marmande refuses or does not accept the 12,000 francs which are being offered, they will be given to Tonneins. Although your letter to Count de Beaumont came only after the decision of the council, I hope it will have produced its effect. Before sending it on to its address, because it was unsealed, I will present it to the prefect and then to the Count, who lives in the prefecture and who had the goodness to come out of the council to speak to me. It would have been a real benefit if I had arrived in Agen two or three days before the council. Brother Rothéa will give you the small packet of letters and the article which we forgot to leave with you when we passed through Tonneins.

Everything around here is moving along tolerably well. Before my departure, I will try to have an extract of the deliberations and decisions to let you have it at the time of my arrival. Time is so pressing. I write you these few lines only most hurriedly.

I have the honor of offering you my respectful greetings.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

240. To Bro. David Monier, Paris

June 10, 1823, Agen

My dear Son,

the inconvenience of the dangers to which this young religious is exposed of losing the spirit of his state, and even of losing himself." Experience proved Fr. Chaminade was right, and as they developed the brothers of Fr. de Lamennais gave up this character of their Institute; it is no longer found in their Rules.

I was in Agen yesterday when I received your letter from Paris. It was dated June 4. It seems you had not yet received my answer to yours from Vesoul. This surprises me, for I had used the address you had given me and that you still give me in your recent one. Would it have been necessary for you to have received it to have written M. Lavardens? You said nothing about this, but I will do it with this letter. I asked you in my last letter to have the two letters I wrote to you in Besançon returned during your second visit to Saint-Remy. How is it that you did nothing to have the letters I was writing to you about forwarded? You would not be complaining about my lack of correspondence if you took note that since you last wrote from Vesoul, you have given me no address other than Besançon and in Paris.

Why not tell me clearly that you were taking along little Charles?¹ I had no idea you were taking charge of this child, with all the matters you had to look after. I was less inclined to believe it because in your letter from Vesoul you insisted several times that you were alone. Whatever the case may be, there is no reason for making the trip from Paris to Bordeaux to bring him there, since you would only have to return again. There are always trustworthy travelers coming to Bordeaux to whom you might confide the child.

From your last letter, my dear Son, it would seem you need to reach agreement with me in order to act. If you need further information, if you meet unexpected difficulties, why not tell me immediately? It seems to me you would find in this way of doing things greater facility in obtaining what we seek. This is a time, possibly unique in its own way, when the Government looks with pleasure upon all useful institutions.²

The joining of the teaching of the arts and crafts to primary school teaching¹ will produce admirable effects and will give us the greatest facility in spreading the principles of religion among the youth of the country. I exhort you to keep on working at the Method. You must not doubt that I am using all the means at my command to support your efforts.

My dear Son, to determine finally the choice of the subjects who are to make up the founding group, I am waiting, as I have said in nearly all my letters, for you to inform me about those you would judge to be the most suitable. I am awaiting the reflections you promised me from Vesoul. I did not want to leave Bordeaux before knowing about the conclusion of your dealings with Father Bardenet. When I received your last letter from Besançon—the one dated May 7—I thought I saw clearly that I could begin my trip to Agen. I was strengthened in this by your letter from Vesoul. I was really needed in Agen for the opening of the General Council of the Department, as I believe I told you in my last letter. I will be back in Bordeaux in time, as far as I can see now, for following through on our promise.

In your last letter from Paris, my dear Son, you hinted you had liabilities in Besançon for 4,000 francs, and this for the end of the month. When you reached Besançon, you were telling me you were trying to negotiate for 3,000 francs which you would have to pay at the end of June and that you did not know if you would be able to do this. Now you have written again and said nothing about the matter. What am I to think? When you originally mentioned it, you seemed extremely tired and perhaps even a little out of sorts because you thought I was neglecting our correspondence. I will calmly handle our matters here, settle them as promptly as possible, and then return to Bordeaux.

If you are troubled to the point of not being able to free yourself, tell me so in all simplicity and I will do everything in my power to come to your aid. But I do hope your malady will not be as serious or your needs as urgent as they seemed in your last letter.

¹ Charles Bernhard, 13 years old, from Ribeaupillé, was coming to rejoin his two brothers Antoine and Bernard, already postulants at Saint-Laurent.

² This had been the case since 1821, under the Minister Villèle.

¹ Regarding the schools of the arts and crafts and the conjoined schools, according to the views of Fr. Chaminade, see *The Life of the Founder, The Spirit of Our Foundation*, III, no. 34 ff. and in succeeding letters the project presented to the Government on April 7, 1825.

For three or four weeks, Father Lacoste has sent the newspaper of Lot-et-Garonne articles about our primary free schools. So far there have been three, all of them good and in a very readable style. I sent the three to you in Besançon in one bundle. They can be sent to you from there.

My eyes are closing. It is past ten o'clock [in the evening]. . . . Everything around here is going along reasonably well. At another time I can enter into greater detail. For the moment, I am adding only the paternal blessing I give you from the bottom of my heart.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. All our good brothers greet you respectfully.

* * *

N.A. 240-2. To the Mayor of Agen²

June 13, 1823, Agen
Printed in Volume 8-2.
Copy, Agmar 218.2.18

Monsieur Mayor,

When I first planned to organize Christian elementary schools of my Order in Agen, I wanted to submit the project to you; in your absence I explained it to your first deputy. He led me to believe that the commune of Agen might feel disposed to grant us some subsidies for these schools. I was satisfied with that for the time being because I was going to introduce an entirely new type of school, and before making any requests, I had to prove it to be a success.

Several years have passed since then. Your own voice, Monsieur Mayor, if not that of the general public, can vouch for the happy results of my plan. I have heard from your own lips words of praise which do my Institute too much honor and spur me to action. I must add that the constant favor of the prefect and the practical patronage of the council of the department leaves me with nothing to request for the development of our schools in Lot-et-Garonne.

However, Monsieur Mayor, I cannot say the same for our schools in Agen. In the interview which you were so kind as to grant me, I informed you that I had already spent 16,000 francs for the first establishment, that I had urgent need of 2,000 francs to pay a maintenance bill. Last, I pointed out to you that I was still paying the rent for the house of the Refuge, which belongs to the hospice but is used by our school.

If my memory serves me, I believe you told me then that the commune of Agen could grant no subsidy for our schools before 3 years; that the sum of 1,500 francs, which was to cover unforeseen expenses, had been spent on the visit of Her Royal Highness; that the budget of 1824 had already been handed down; that the hospice could not be deprived of revenues that were earmarked for it, etc.; but that you would give proof of your goodwill as soon as possible.

After thinking over what you told me, Your Honor, I felt that I should write to you.

The 3-year postponement is a long delay indeed. Allow me to suggest that your resources are still intact and that the use of the funds for unforeseen expenses applies only to 1823. This is all the more reason to include in the 1824 budget suggestions that the council could approve, and that it is up to you to invite the prefect, the custodian and author of the budget, to modify it in such a manner that the needs of the hospice, to which the Refuge belongs, would in no way be my concern. Finally, that your goodwill, which I have never doubted in the past and certainly will not in the future, because it has to bend to other urgent needs of which I am unaware, is no longer sufficient to quiet my apprehensions.

²The original is in the archives of the department of Lot-et-Garonne.

In light of this situation, do not take it amiss if I ask you for a categorical, official, and written explanation. You are aware that I must be informed about the financial matters I have just mentioned. I hope with all my heart that you will be able to give me a satisfactory answer. You must know that I have only the interest of the city of Agen at heart. I am committed to it because of my humble efforts and my hopes for its future. I have the highest esteem for its first citizen, His Honor the mayor.

I am with respect, Monsieur Mayor, your very humble and obedient servant.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

N.A. 240-3. To the Prefect, Department of Lot-et-Garonne

June 15, 1823, Agen¹

Printed in Volume 8-2.

Copy, Agmar 218.2.19

Monsieur Prefect,

Will you kindly take the time necessary to read the enclosed letter which I wrote to the mayor of the town of Agen on June 13 and the response which he sent to me on June 14?

I am almost certain that you will not scold me for the steps I took with His Honor. The stand you have taken with respect to our schools from the very beginning is a sure guarantee. It seems to me that I have been waiting long enough; your patronage, that of the General Council, and the flattering expressions of your esteem should inspire the mayor of Agen to think as you do. But far from sparing me the trouble of pleading for what I consider to be my right, Monsieur Mayor has indefinitely postponed those hopes which in my earlier conversation with him were to be realized in 3 years—already too far in the future. More than that, he did not seem to grasp the reality of the resources I described to him, and he even justified a refusal to deliver me from the burden of rent for the schools, alleging the needs of the hospice to which the school buildings belong as if I ever believed that no other organization other than the mayor's office was obliged to contribute to the support of an institution of which the town of Agen is the sole beneficiary.

I am also surprised, Your Honor, that the mayor alone is responsible for the very polite but very formal refusal to consider my legitimate claims. It does not seem possible to me that the municipal authorities of a large town would refuse to give me credit for the free gift I have made to it. I doubt if the objection will be made that I was not asked to contribute anything. I may be justly surprised, therefore, to see that the sacrifices I have made and those which would be needed if the schools in Agen are to operate should be considered so small in the eyes of a mayor who had always honored and encouraged me by his attitude.

In any case, I do not intend to rush things. I leave the matter in your hands, Monsieur Prefect, and I am determined to follow your directives and to do nothing without previously consulting you. I know your decision will be in line with the actions which distinguish your administration and which have earned for you a well-deserved reputation for skill, justice, and devotedness to institutions whose purpose it is to consolidate our legitimate monarchy.

I am with profound respect, Monsieur Prefect, your very humble and very obedient servant.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

¹The original is in the archives of the department of Lot-et-Garonne.

In the meantime, David Monier was just in Paris a short time. He did not begin negotiations there for the legal recognition of the Society of Mary, which he was supposed to complete. Instead he left for Bordeaux and arrived there before Father Chaminade.

241. To Bro. David Monier, Bordeaux

June 17, 1823, Villeneuve

Autograph, Agmar

[With inserts from S. 241]

My dear Son,

Yesterday evening in Agen I received two of your letters at the same time—one from Paris dated June 7 and the other from Bordeaux. This last is the second one from Bordeaux. The first from there came at a time I was so busy that I asked Father Lacoste to answer it.

Twice I wrote to you in Paris at the address you had given me. The first was in answer to your letter from Vesoul, and the second written in Agen in answer to your first letter from Paris. In both I asked you to return those I had written to Besançon, and also the two issues of the newspaper of Lot-et-Garonne. I made a point to answer promptly anything of urgency in your letter. Before giving me your Paris address, had you given me others besides that of Besançon?

I cannot understand how in almost all of your letters you can reproach me, and with great bitterness, for having neglected to answer you. Look at all my letters, as I have all of yours, and it will not be difficult to see whether I have not answered, date by date, everything which seemed to call for an answer.

In all my letters, from the time of the purchase of the château and even, I believe, before that, I asked you about the qualities of the subjects to be sent to Saint-Remy. Only in your last letter from Vesoul did I learn that at least for the present, we are not to think of a normal school for primary school teachers. In this letter you also tell me you will give me your reflections on the use of this large place. Until I knew about these matters, I did not want to decide anything about my trip to Agen. I made up my mind and I left, providing sufficient time for my round of visits. I limited myself only to what was absolutely necessary, in case I learned my return was eagerly awaited. Were you actually expecting to find the group of subjects in Paris at the time of your arrival? And, if I had had the imprudence to send them, would you have been there to meet them, considering your hurried departure from that city?

Now, my dear Son, you say your first mission is finished. But you are mistaken, because your mission for the establishment of Saint-Remy is just coming into its own. The purchase of the château is a great advance, but it is not the entire matter.

I am hastening to end this letter because of the mail carrier. When you write to Father Bardenet, do so with wisdom and caution. According to the information I have received, a revised list of the members of the colony must be made. In the past, I had made several annual visits. The priest who was to form part of the colony has just had a three-day fever, the future director has just been taken ill, etc. Who will collect the dues for the first two weeks? Probably the treasurer you appointed after asking Father Bardenet to keep watch over the operation.

I ask you, my dear Son, to tell Father Caillet to invite Father Goudelin to preach on the Feast of Saint Peter, feast of the master bakers. I am expecting to arrive in Bordeaux two days before, at the latest. If Father Goudelin cannot preach, Father Caillet should be prepared to do so, unless he can find a good substitute.

Pass the good word along to Marie, very especially from me.¹ Speak to the people on Rue des Menuts, at the Madeleine, and at Saint-Laurent as their father would if he were not in such a hurry to get back to Bordeaux. Especially do not forget my sister. I cannot tell you anything at

¹ Marie Dubourg, servant of Fr. Chaminade, since the time of the Revolution, who several times had risked her life to save his. She remained in his service until her death in 1847.

this time about Villeneuve. I am writing from there. I will spend the night at M. Vassal's preparing the letter he wants to write you for the university.

Do not worry, my dear Son. I have the greatest confidence in you, and I am always intimately united to you. Let us arise and go forward for the glory of our God in true harmony. Let us mutually pardon one another the failings we can each attribute to each other. Let us cease this petty warfare, which might harm the work of God. . . . I am not rereading what I have written.

May the peace of the Lord be ever with you!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

Father Chaminade returned to Bordeaux immediately. He is occupied with the personnel for the new foundation at Saint-Remy.

242. To Bro. David Monier, Bordeaux

July 1, 1823, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

It seems to me that the little group destined for Saint-Remy would be better chosen and more promptly organized and equipped if you had an agreement with the director, Brother Clouzet.

See that he has a clear understanding, and see that he even appreciates what you have in mind. Make him, as it were, your administrative assistant. To all appearances he will make the best choice possible. You need have no fears about his not consulting anyone, or that his choice is not always subject to our approval. If you take all this into consideration, you may be sure of bringing along nine or ten subjects full of goodwill who will be true to their various posts, etc.

Father Rothéa must no longer be uninvolved in your plans, and Brother Clouzet must remain in perfect agreement with him.

The retreat, more or less long, will not delay the departure in any way. The main thing is that the director will undertake, according to the views inspired by faith, the enterprise which Divine Providence offers us. Yours very truly . . .

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

The choice was finally made. It consisted of Brother Clouzet as director and Head of Zeal, Brother Gaussens as Head of Instruction, Brother Bousquet as Head of Temporalities, Father Rothéa as spiritual director and chaplain, and Brothers Dubarry, Pascal, Coustou, Constant, Molinier, and Marres. The small group left Bordeaux on July 18 under Brother David's leadership, and arrived at Saint-Remy July 30 or July 31. The account of the trip is to be found in Apôtre de Marie XV, p. 443 ff.

S. 242a. Ordinance for The Establishment of the House of Saint-Remy

July 16, 1823, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

I, Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, priest and Missionary Apostolic, Director General of the Institute of the Children of Mary, with the authorization of the Ordinary, have decreed as follows.

Article 1. A central house of the Order is established on this day in Saint-Remy, canton of Amance, district of Vesoul, department of Haute-Saône, in the château and appurtenances and on the lands which we have purchased on May 17 last at the given location.

Article 2. The manor of the château and the cloistered areas will be determined and designated within a month's time at most by the agent who will be named hereafter; the remainder of the buildings and property will remain at our disposal.

Article 3. The director, a priest, the appointed superior, the Heads of Zeal, Instruction, and Temporalities who are the constituted officers of the established house have been named by me as follows:

Father Rothéa, priest, Director of Saint-Remy
Bro. Dominique Clouzet, Superior and Head of Zeal
Bro. Bernard Gaussens, Head of Instruction
Bro. Bousquet, Head of Temporalities.

Article 4. The following are to go to Saint-Remy and place themselves under the Heads and officers mentioned above: Brothers Pierre Dubarri, Jean-Pascal Bermon de Sandarède, Jean Coustou, Jean-Baptiste Constant, Augustin Molinier, and Antoine Marres, all six from the novitiate of Saint-Laurent.

Article 5. In consideration of which the personnel of the house of Saint-Remy will consist, for the time being, of the superior and nine members.

Article 6. In order to comply with Article 2 above and to proceed with the required installations and to take the means needed to set the central house of Saint-Remy in operation, and until that has been achieved, I hereby appoint as special agent Bro. David Monier, Secretary General of the Institute

Article 7. The execution of these presents is entrusted to our aforementioned agent.

Done at Bordeaux, July 16, 1823
Signed by Fr. Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Superior General
Countersigned by David, Secretary General.

The undersigned Secretary General of the Institute of Mary, agent named to supervise the installation of the central house of the Order at Saint-Remy, Haute-Saône, and to take the means necessary to set the house into full operation, hereby ordains that the ordinance of July 16 given above will be copied completely into the register of the house of Saint-Remy, and that the secretary of said house will confirm this without delay.

Done at Saint-Remy, August 17, 1823
David, agent in charge of the installation of Saint-Remy

* * *

The following letters return us to matters of the Daughters of Mary in Agen.

243. To M. Faure de Lacaussade, Tonneins

July 29, 1823, Bordeaux
Autograph, Arch. FMI

Monsieur,

The order, conveniences, and needs of our administration would call for the sending of Mother Thérèse to Agen and giving the convent of Tonneins another superior. Her three years as

superior are coming to a close. I have an excellent subject to give you, worthy of replacing Mother Thérèse.¹

My greatest difficulty is the latter's health. Is she in a condition to be guided by correspondence? Your orders would be better carried out in Agen than in Tonneins.² There she would be under your immediate direction. Moreover, she would be exercising an office which is easier and more in conformity with her character and her inclinations—Mother of Zeal.

I wish to repeat to you the expression of my friendly sentiments.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I need not remind you of secrecy about the projected change.

* * *

N.A. 243-2. To the Prefect, Department of Lot-et-Garonne

August 1823, Agen¹

Printed in Volume 8-2.

Copy, Agmar 218.2.20

Monsieur Prefect,

I have received the minutes of the municipal council meeting of the town of Agen dated June 21 concerning the free Christian schools, and also your letter on the topic, dated August 2.

Frankly, Monsieur Prefect, I cannot explain the conduct of the municipal council of your city. If they do not want our schools, why do they not explain themselves? I have never forced one of our elementary schools on anyone. I receive more requests for schools than refusals. I could easily come to a decision except for the fact that our schools in Agen are under your auspices and they depend on the General Council of your department. I am constrained by these two flattering circumstances, and I will make no decision without first securing your approval and that of the General Council.

Under these conditions, would you consider the following claims to be reasonable?

1. Some indemnity for past expenses and for those I am contemplating, from the opening of the schools up to 1824 inclusive; I will give the details of these expenses.
2. Rent-free use of the Refuge and its accessories, from 1825 on.
3. A salary of 500 francs per year for each of the four brothers in the schools of Agen (all expenses included).

I would agree to any change in these conditions if you think it is just and proper. Once a decision has been made, I would ask you and the General Council either for permission to see to its implementation or the authorization to set up our school elsewhere.

I have had to make a considerable investment, Monsieur Prefect, to give a certain prominence to my system of elementary education. However, my Institute is not confined within the walls of one town, or even within the limits of a department. In conscience I may not lavish my resources on a single town which barely tolerates our schools, when these resources should be

¹ Doubtless the Mistress of Novices, Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur, who eventually replaced Mother Thérèse at Tonneins.

² We know M. de Lacaussade was a doctor.

¹ The original is in the archives of the department of Lot-et-Garonne. A note added by the prefect and addressed to the mayor of Agen reads, "Your Honor, I have the honor of sending you a copy of Father Chaminade's reactions to the decision of the municipal council of last June 21 on the subject of the free Christian elementary schools of the town of Agen which I forwarded to him on the second of this month. Father Chaminade briefly explains his position and is willing to wait until 1825 for their implementation, as suggested by the council. This is already a noteworthy concession. When the budget for 1825 has been worked out, which will be in 1824, we will need to decide whether the town of Agen is willing and is able to make the necessary sacrifices to preserve its Christian schools."

used to spread my work into the many areas which are so persistently asking for my help and offering their support. You would call me shortsighted if I were to reason differently.

I do not want to abuse your kindness, Your Honor, by again raising the question of our schools. However, I know you have an interest in them. This is in conformity with a praiseworthy policy which is common to you and to your Government.

I am with respect, Monsieur Prefect, your very humble and very obedient servant.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

244. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

August 3, 1823, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

[With insert from S. 244]

My dear Child,

I am awaiting an answer from Tonneins about Mother Thérèse's health before deciding upon the planned replacement. Your idea about Sister Sainte-Foy seems very good; for example, in making her assistant Mistress of Novices while allowing her to act as if she were the true mistress we would then see if she is actually capable of this office. You have two very apparent reasons for making this change. The first, the presumed increase in the number of novices; the second, the severity with which she will exact the reports of the various heads in the exercise of their functions.

The functions of the Mother of Zeal are extensive. I see the need of giving to each head of a department notebooks, or rather models, on how they are to keep the accounts of their office. To be accountable, they will need only to copy what is in their notebooks. All of them are to be arranged in the same way as those of the General Administration.

I had to make my last secretary, Brother Rothéa, the head of the novitiate at Saint-Laurent. I am going to employ another, but he will have to learn by himself. I hope it will not take too long.

At present I do not have my notes about Sister Agnes in order to be able to answer you particularly, but in general, those in poor health should not be kept, especially if they belong to the Companion Sisters. We should not even receive anyone in feeble health, for whom continual excuses are necessary and who is not able to follow the regime of the community and must always receive dispensations, etc. . . . These subjects, however holy they may be, should sanctify themselves elsewhere. Our religious must lead a very active life, and for this reason they need strength and good health. My dear Child, be reasonably severe on this point. One of the novices, one of the group which left for and arrived at Saint-Remy, had an inner illness he had never disclosed. even to his own family. On the trip he was a really heavy cross to the entire group. Brother David tells me from Moulins that this young man cannot live long. Perhaps he has already died. Of course there is no fault, either on our part or on that of his family. Perhaps there may be some on my part, for it occurred to me several times to have him examined about some slight indications of illness, but I passed up the idea because he seemed cool and lively. This was after he had been in the novitiate only three months. I am telling you this story only because you are the superior—I hope you may see more and more that you must rise above every type of indulgence. Do not fear that God will not send you enough subjects, and good ones at that. Have patience!

I am again receiving requests for an establishment of the Daughters of Mary in Colmar. Most of the difficulties have been cleared away. Let us think of bringing true order to the administration. Let Father Laugeay know, if you please, that he will receive two extra staff for the schools this week.

I am surprised that you have not yet received an answer from Mme de Portets in Paris with respect to the 6,000 francs.

Mail as few letters as possible, but do not hesitate to let me assume the cost when there is question of something pressing.¹

The work of the “little habit,” that of the postulants, must be suspended, as I wrote to Mother Emmanuel to notify her parents. I will not delay in writing to the parents of those you have. If Father Mouran’s niece could only go to the novitiate! From the letter of the assistant pastor of Damazan, you would probably find a very good subject in the young woman who is asking to enter the convent.

May a true spirit of fervor animate you and also all of your beloved Daughters.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. On the way, the travelers to Saint-Remy conducted themselves in the most edifying manner. Brother David told me a word about it. It was an itinerant community. He fears the young women postulants received his letters too late to have their meeting on time.

* * *

S. 244a. To M. Lapaue, Bordeaux

August 13, 1823, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

I helped to pay the cost of transporting Father Conne’s library to the boarding house on Rue des Menuts.

The opposition of our two religious was not serious and merely passing; they deserve my full confidence, just as they already enjoy all my affection.

Fraternally and respectfully. . . .

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

This is the acknowledgement of the receipt of the first letter from Saint-Remy after the small group’s arrival.

245. To Bro. David Monier, Saint-Remy

August 17 and 18, 1823, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

[With inserts from S. 245]

My dear Son,

I was very anxious to know about your arrival. Although you tell me nothing either about your health or about your fatigues, I understand that this enterprise must cost you many worries of body and soul. I will be glad to do what I can to lessen them, but as I am of so little consequence, I ask God to pour upon you the anointing of his grace, which may lead you to love even your worries.

You must have received my two letters. One was sent to your address and the other to M. Bardenet, a lawyer at Favorney, to be given to you. This one is the third. I will do all I can to keep you from worrying in expectation of my letters. I willingly assume the obligation of writing you at least once a week, even when there is nothing very pressing.

¹ Mailing costs were very high at this time, and every occasion was used to send letters by other means.

I will send this to the address you included in your last—that is, your third—letter.

You seemed surprised, my dear Son, to find the house destitute. Who better than you could remember how you had left it? The least clearheaded of our brothers have seen this; I do not believe I had them expect anything else. Once in a while, I could help one or another appreciate what resources they had in your experience and your genius, but I do not believe I stopped there, for I must surely have spoken to them the language of faith.

I very sincerely admit to you that I would be much more disturbed about this establishment or others already founded or yet to be founded if the good God did not reassure me, allowing me to consider them only in the order of his merciful providence. If the works we undertake are the works of God, and if we undertake them only to the extent that we have reason to believe God asks us to take them up, why should we trouble ourselves? Why, in contradictions, reverses, or the lack of means should we be anxious? Let us always say with Saint Paul, “The one who has begun a good work will complete it.” In peace and confidence, let us make use of all the means God has placed at our disposal, and he will know how to provide for all we may lack. What good reflections may we not draw from all this! However, this is not the place for them. I have made these last only because your letter indicated some small worry.

I made someone promise you I would see to it that you received the 500 francs to acquire the property. I did not expect, and it seems very much that you also did not expect, that you would find them upon your arrival in Saint-Remy. With the Paris mail, which is to leave tomorrow, Father Rothéa will write to his brother Xavier for 1,000 francs. This is the way we thought would be the most prompt and the least likely to meet with inconveniences. I presume you have already received something from our postulant travelers¹ and that you have disposed of everything to make up your mortgages. If you have not done so, you should do it now that you have heard from me. Our Father Rothéa does not seem to doubt his brother can still give you 1,000 francs, and he asked me for permission to write you because he has useful observations to make. He will do so by this mail.

I think I mentioned to you that Father Rothéa is no longer here. I have sent him to Saint-Laurent in place of Brother Clouzet. I have chosen as my usual copyist young Tissier.² The delivery of Father Conne’s library can now be completed.

Will it really be done? I asked Father Rothéa for the file on the matter, and he looked for it in vain; so did Brother Auguste. It is inconceivable that you took it with you. If you would have taken the catalogue, perhaps you also took the deed, and several other documents along with it? What do you make of this? What can we do? Where do we look for these documents?

Please tell Brother Clouzet that I will be pleased to receive a long letter in which he should freely tell me all his thoughts and sentiments concerning himself, his brothers, his new position, or any temporal matters. Remind him that his liberty is guaranteed by the Rule, that his letter will be read only by me, etc. Continue, my dear Son, to keep me informed about everything.

From Agen I have received a copy of the registers of the schools. This administration is wise, but we have not drawn every possible advantage from it. I will let you know how I think it should be used. I take as basis for the administration of all our establishments that of the schools, making allowance for each establishment and what its particular nature requires. The work is advancing, in spite of the number of my other occupations. When you have first formed your plan, let me have it, for it may be of service to me. That of the Miséricorde, made little by little according to need, is meeting great success.

I am stopping now. I embrace you tenderly and all our good brothers. Take courage, for the Lord is with us. Tomorrow I will go for dinner with the archbishop, to begin to negotiate with Father Barrès and M. Jafard.

¹ Daughters of Mary.

² Jean-Pierre Tissier, born in Agen, December 13, 1804, made his profession at Saint-Laurent in 1823 and served as secretary to Fr. Chaminade until his death January 19, 1826.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

S. 245a. To Bro. Auguste Brougnon-Perrière, Bordeaux

August 19, 1823, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

I, the undersigned, without departing from the nature of the agreement I have with Father Conne to buy his library, promise to advance the dates on which the payments of the 9,000 francs are to be made. I still owe him as follows: 1,000 francs immediately after delivery of the library, another 1,000 within the year, 3,500 in three years, and another 3,500 in five years, always dated from the delivery of the library—which date will be that on the receipt which I will give him upon receiving the books.

Furthermore, I promise Father Conne to date the receipts as of August 1 of the present year, providing he delivers the library immediately.

In witness whereof, at Bordeaux, August 18, 1823.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

In 1823 Father Chaminade announced to all houses of the two Orders the adoption of the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary as the patronal feast of the Institute.

246. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

August 22, 1823, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

The Feast of the Holy Name of Mary will henceforth be the patronal feast of the Institute of Mary for both the men and the women, without prejudice to the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, which always remains the patron feast of the Sodalities.

His Excellency the Archbishop of Bordeaux has found the choice of this feast as our patron feast very appropriate and authorizes the Institute of the men to make of it the solemnity preferred to any other of higher rank. In the Roman rite this feast is set for the Sunday within the Octave of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, except when this Sunday happens to be September 14, the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, in which case it is postponed until the following Sunday. However, for us the feast is never postponed.

His Excellency the Archbishop of Bordeaux, was happily able to authorize us to take the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary as our patronal feast, but he was authorized to grant the solemnity only for the communities which are in his diocese. At the present time there are only three like this: the Madeleine, the M. Auguste boarding school on Rue des Menuts, and Saint-Laurent. In your case, you must make arrangements with the Bishop of Agen concerning your community and the one in Tonneins.

The eve of this feast, or the Saturday which precedes it, will be a day of fast for the entire Institute, wherever it may spread. On the feast itself, you are permitted to allow something a little extra at dinner and also a prolongation of the recreation. Let us rejoice, let us even manifest our joy, but let our joy be always holy. Let us rejoice only in the Lord!

My dear Child, have three copies made of the first part of this letter. The first will be to add to the one you write to the Bishop of Agen asking him for the authorization to solemnize the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary in the communities of Agen and Tonneins. The second will be

sent to Tonneins with the permission of the bishop. The third will be given to Father Laugeay, and he will see what can be decently done in his direct dealings with the bishop.

*

Second Part of the Letter. Continuation of the registers of the administration for the personnel.

I was saying, in concluding in my last letter¹ the remainder of the community register is divided into three parts. The first will be entitled "Signs of Zeal," etc. Each of the three parts must contain at least as many sheets as you actually have professed religious, reserving one sheet for each name.

You do not need to have the sheets lined. Limit yourself to two small vertical columns on the left side to list the day and the year. You will write these indications of zeal on the part of your religious.

In the eight or ten days that follow the making of your community register, you will set down on the register on succeeding pages the description of each religious concerning the practice of zeal. You would do well first to make a rough draft of each description, in order not to be obliged later to make erasures on the register. Then, after having reflected upon and reread the copy for several days, you would neatly recopy it on the register.

Every three months you will make other descriptions, dated as the first. If you had not noticed anything good or bad in any of your young women, you could then limit yourself to write after the dates "nothing special during the last three months."

Observe two things, my dear Child. First, as Mother Superior you must especially exercise zeal toward the Mother of Zeal, who by her office is not subordinate to any other Mother except the Superior. Second, you are not to make the descriptions of your Daughters recognizing zeal according to those of the Mother of Zeal, but rather according to your own observations and all you have discovered in the exercise of your functions as superior.

Fourth register, kept by the Mother of Zeal.

The register is very simple. It has as a title "Descriptions of Zeal." It is lined with only two vertical columns on the left side, to receive the day and the year. It must contain at least twice as many sheets as there are professed religious at the time, one sheet for each sister, with her name only on the reverse side.

(1) In the eight or ten days which will follow the preparation of this register, the Mother of Zeal will make a description of all the religious of the community on the subject of zeal. (2) Every two months she will note the progress in zeal and constancy in the spiritual combat for each religious on the folio of her register.

The Mother of Zeal must make her descriptions according to the observations she has made or received herself. She must only set down what she is personally convinced of and not be governed by her conversations with the superior.

If the preparation of these registers would trouble you, my dear Child, or embarrass the more intelligent sisters, Father Laugeay may be of some help.

I believed I could still answer several requests you made to me or to Mother Saint-Vincent, but this will have to wait for some other time. I am no less yours in J. and M.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

Mlle de Lachapelle's entrance into the Daughters of Mary (letter no. 164) was the beginning of a foundation at Condom, her native town. This led to a prolonged correspondence

¹ Allusion to a letter which has not been preserved. Nevertheless, see a first allusion to these registers in letter no. 244.

between Father Chaminade and Father Castex, chaplain of the hospitals and director of the Sodalities there. This correspondence is scattered over several months among letters about the foundation at Saint-Remy. Of the two letters of August 26, the first has an official character, directed to the hospital administrators. The second explains to Father Castex in a more confidential way Father Chaminade's views about the proposed work.

247. To Father Castex, Condom

August 26, 1823, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. Of the Gaîchies Family, Condom

Reverend Father,

I have received with satisfaction the proposal you make in the name of the hospital administrators.

I would look with pleasure upon the establishment of a group of Daughters of Mary in Condom. Nevertheless, I hope the administration will not take it ill if I postpone formal consent so the idea can mature and the Archbishop of Auch can express his wishes. With this mail I am sending your letter to Mother de Trenquelléon, Superior of the Daughters of Mary. In the meantime, if something special should occur, I would be very grateful if you would let me know of it.

Please accept the assurance of my sincere and respectful devotedness.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

248. To Father Castex, Condom

August 26, 1833, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

Reverend Father,

Here in all simplicity is my first reaction after reading your kind letter. I think of beginning two establishments in Condom, one in the former hospital, a boarding school for young women and the other in the buildings of Sainte-Ursule, a community which would occupy itself mainly with Sodalities and schools. What do you think? I have just been told that a group of former religious sisters had a similar boarding school. Could you give me any definite information?

In case there is only one establishment, I would prefer the former community of Sainte-Ursule. The hospital would seem good for a boarding school because of its distance from the city and its position off the main highway.¹

When the owner returns, try to see him. Make certain he wants to sell, on what terms and at what price. Perhaps you may not consider it prudent to tell him the same party wants to buy the two sections. Moreover, the hospital administration may believe there was duplicity in our dealings, not knowing our eventual plans. I leave everything to your skill. I will not give a definite answer to the hospital administration until you entirely inform me about this last acquisition.

With a good heart, I am renewing the assurance of my sincere and devoted attachment.

¹ Condom, a small town of 7,000 inhabitants between Agen and Auch, had been the seat of a bishopric of which at one time Fr. Bossuet had been the head. There, as in many other places in the convents closed by the Revolution, new works arose. The hospital of Condom of which there is a question here and where, in fact, the Daughters of Mary established themselves, had been founded close to the sanctuary of Our Lady of Piétat and directed until the Revolution by the Brothers of Saint-Jean de Dieu.

P.S. I am completely ashamed not to have given you an account of the person you had directed to me. Wishing to take care of the most pressing matters first, I am always behind in the others.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

Returning to Saint-Remy, here is a series of letters in which Father Chaminade shows his prudence and patience in the face of the inextricable difficulties created by Bro. David Monier. In them there is the blending of a profound spirit of faith with a shrewd practical sense.

249. To Bro. David Monier, Saint-Remy

August 31, 1823, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

[With inserts from S. 249]

My dear Son,

I have received your two letters from Besançon dated August 22 and August 25.

Our three travelers, with the young Philippe, arrived in good health in the evening of August 24.¹

It was only yesterday, the morning of August 30, that the driver sent his daughter to claim his 200 francs. I had received your letter and note of August 22. I read the note to the daughter and asked her if she would have her father come over or accept the 157 francs 10 sous herself and give me a receipt which included the 42 francs 10 sous for oats received, the total being 200 francs. The daughter asked that her father be excused, accepted the money, etc.

Today, September 1, I am continuing my letter. The driver and his daughter arrived one hour later. I was in church, and they did not want to disturb me; he said they would go home to breakfast. Neither he nor the daughter called again.

Our religious postulants are preparing to leave tomorrow for Agen. They will be accompanied by M. Clouzet, whom I am sending home. I am not sending him away because of misconduct, but mainly because of too great a mediocrity in everything. I also have evidence of a lack of right judgment, as shown on three or four occasions.

You had forgotten that just before we crossed the bridge, you said as we spoke of your address that it would be preferable to address them to Father Bardenet at Faverney.

I had certainly taken notice of some bias against you² as soon as it was decided, at the time of my arrival from Agen, that it was time to leave for Saint-Remy. But I thought I had dispelled them all by the time we made the final choice. The choice, as far as I am concerned, was made in the best spirit. It is true that I often consulted Brother Clouzet, but I was far from imagining—I admit this to you, and I still believe it—that Brother Clouzet wished to choose subjects with the intention of arousing opposition to you. Moreover, I do not recall having accepted additions which he recommended, except for Brother Molinier,³ whom he put in place of an older religious because he was better qualified. This surprised me, but I accepted the change

¹ There is the question of three female postulants and one male postulant from Alsace.

² Doubtless, on the part of certain religious.

³ Biographical note. Auguste Molinier, born in 1805 in La Guépie (Tarn), entered Saint-Laurent in 1822 and was part of the small group that founded Saint-Remy. In 1827 he was sent to Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines, where the Society of Mary was opening a school; he stayed there 45 years as professor and then director, until the closing of the school in 1827 at the time of the annexation of Alsace to Germany. He lived then in Paris, at Collège Stanislas, where he died February 18, 1879. "He was admirably prepared," wrote Bro. André to Fr. Lalanne, "calm, quiet, resigned as a child who goes to his father in the most complete confidence."

mostly because I wanted to have the matter ended and because I had no particular reason to oppose it.

My dear Son, if you had read my letters with more attention and with less agitation, you would have seen that I had no intention of speaking about the regulations properly so-called, but of the administration which seeks to enforce these regulations. Although it is true that in general the regulations are sufficient in number, that there are even some which might nevertheless be considered administrative—for example, those which refer to the heads of departments—it is also true that the lack of sufficient registers is very harmful to each establishment. I have pointed this out to you several times since the beginning of the foundation, and you yourself have complained about it, especially regarding the novitiate at Saint-Laurent.

Why, while speaking of the admission of subjects, my dear Son, do not you point out to me one or two examples you have in mind, telling me clearly what you consider inadmissible instead of indulging in vague generalizations? Then I could profitably reconsider them.

As soon as you made known your distress and the urgency of the 500 francs needed for the mortgages, I directed Brother Rothéa to ask his brother Xavier to send you 1,000 or 1,200 francs. I presume he has brought them to you personally. His brother, to whom I read your tirades on Alsace, told me he had done this a few hours ago.

I am not guessing who this sincere protector named to the diocese of Strasbourg may be.¹ Doubtless you were certain of it, for you acted on it. A correspondence between me and Father Bardenet, whom you call your original associate, would have been a good way to proceed.

Perhaps you could have offered yourself as his secretary. He could have taken someone else—someone he did not need to dictate to directly—providing that person expressed his ideas and sentiments faithfully. I had already suggested this possibility to you. Now I am only recalling it, in case you see some possibility in it. A correspondence between us seems to me so necessary that it is possible Father Bardenet suffers interiorly because of its absence.

I am dumbfounded, my dear Son, to hear you tell me I am leaving 10 or 12 of my children without resources. In what am I in arrears? I do not believe you truly believe this, but by this overdrawn portrait you try to move me to keep my attentions fixed on Saint-Remy. I love the establishment of Saint-Remy. I love still more those who have been sent there to begin it, but will anyone be surprised that I am not abandoning the older establishments? Have I not written? Have I not said so from the beginning? Like all the others, is this establishment not in the hands of Divine Providence? Recall, my dear Son, what Our Lord tells us. “Your Father in heaven knows you stand in need of all these things.” In any case, do not attempt anything more than you can safely handle. Is it in the plans of God that we should look like rich people, like people to whom any amount of credit can be extended?

My dear Son, you do not approve of the small foundation established at the Madeleine known as the “Little Seminary” or novitiate.¹ The same attitude exists at the Madeleine toward Saint-Remy. Do you not fear the consequences of these clashes? “A kingdom divided against itself, etc.”

You tire yourself and you lament about the bizarre reports you listen to and that you doubtless believe. They tell you at Saint-Remy that the Companion Sisters have been divided into two groups, interns and externs, and you very honestly deduce from this fact the hodgepodge of Agen! And if you believe that in Agen or elsewhere there are essential changes you do not know about, why not ask about them? Why not at least learn what it is all about, before passing judgment, and especially before ridiculing? Doubtless Brother Rothéa told you about Agen.¹ Is he in a position to understand the conclusions reached at the end of a visit? At least, is there not a

¹ Father Tharin.

¹ Novitiate destined especially for the students of secondary teaching. It was established in the house at no. 3, Rue Lalande, located to the right to the church and torn down at the opening of Cours Pasteur. It was directed first by Fr. Caillet, then from 1825 to 1826 by Fr. Lalanne, and then again by Fr. Caillet.

¹ See letter no. 245.

reason to doubt that he has understood things clearly when his reports tend to ridicule the disposition of a visiting superior? I have no intention whatsoever of making complaints, but I would like our correspondence to be simple. Let us learn for ourselves what is going on, what is being said, what is being done—in a word, the “yes, yes and the no, no” of the Gospel. Let us help each other in bearing our sorrows and our contradictions and avoid afflicting each other and indulging in what I once called the petty warfare.

Well, I am finished. I still want to tell you that Father Conne is handing over his library peacefully and even, it is said, joyfully.

It was not to draw you away from your distress that I spoke to you of order, of discipline, and of regularity. This would not be in accord with the tone of simplicity which should exist between us, but it at least gave you occasion to see how much I hold to order, etc. . . .

In the near future, I will answer the letters which have reached me from Saint-Remy. I embrace you as a father.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

The following letter is the first addressed to Bro. Dominique Clouzet, a religious who played an important role at the time of the foundation and during the entire first century of the history of the Society of Mary.

Bro. Dominique Clouzet was born in 1789 at Sarremezan, Haute-Garonne, in a family of merchants which finally settled in Bordeaux and there acquired a most honorable situation. Entering the Sodality of the Madeleine in 1814, young Clouzet placed himself under Father Chaminade’s direction and was one of the first seven members of the Society of Mary. In 1821 Father Chaminade confided to him the direction of the first novitiate at Saint-Laurent.

At the time of the foundation at Saint-Remy, a man of confidence was needed to direct the founders at such a great distance. Again this was Bro. Dominique Clouzet, whose natural prudence and religious spirit were greatly appreciated by Father Chaminade. For nearly 30 years Brother Clouzet was the very soul of Saint-Remy; after the initial difficult years when his faith and wholeheartedness upheld the courage of his brothers, the work owed its development and its prosperity above all to him. Primary and secondary boarding school, normal school, and teacher retreats, practical school of agriculture, the community of Working Brothers and its novitiate—these sum up the great work he accomplished at Saint-Remy, with the aid of collaborators like Fathers Rothéa, Lalanne, Fontaine, and Chevaux.

For several years before the organization of provincial offices, Brother Clouzet was entrusted by the Good Father with the office of Visitor, and in 1839 with that of Third Assistant or General Steward, which he exercised until his death. In 1851, in this capacity he changed his residence from Saint-Remy to Bordeaux; in 1861 he followed the General Administration from Bordeaux to Paris.

Brother Clouzet was well proportioned, preserved as he advanced in years, with a clear and ruddy complexion, agreeable and always expressive of kindness, having a dignified bearing and irreproachable neatness, a serious and easy gait, polite and attentive manners, and gentle although somewhat slow speech.

His visits were feared by the religious who lacked order in their management or who let themselves get into trouble by irregular expenses. He liked to encourage men of goodwill and took real pleasure in entering with them into the least details of their work. To a religious, a director who asked his advice, he described this plan. “Be sure to provide for your fellow brothers wholesome food, and on this point, do not consider the expense. This is how health is sustained, and this is necessary. In your purchases, buy only good merchandise, neither of the finest nor of the worst quality. Watch over the least expenses and keep an exact account of everything.” By this watchfulness and solicitude he succeeded in improving and strengthening the material situation of the Society of

Mary. Brother Clouzet also knew how to soften by his urbanity and goodness what his control might at times make painful, so communities rejoiced at the news of his coming. His grand manner was tempered by amiability, and his benevolence won him all hearts. He was always willing to grant the brothers private interviews, and then, as well as in his general conferences, he spoke as a religious, not limiting himself to questions pertaining to his office but recalling the duties and exhorting to the practice of the virtues of religious life. The language of faith was familiar to him, and he used it in the most natural manner in conversation and in his correspondence. His bearing in the chapel revealed a man of more than ordinary piety, and his devotion to the Blessed Virgin and Saint Joseph was that of a true son of Father Chaminade.

Brother Clouzet had hardly arrived in Paris with the General Administration when he fell sick. His naturally robust constitution, worn out by age and work, soon had to give way, and he quietly died February 27, 1861, in the arms of Good Father Caillet.

“His was a death, the easiest and most edifying a person can desire,” wrote the Good Father, “no fear, no anxiety, a boundless confidence in our august Mother and on his lips, endlessly, the names of Jesus and Mary, until without any agony he peacefully fell asleep in the Lord. In witnessing such deaths, we realize more clearly what it means to be a Child of Mary. Called from the first days to the foundation of our dear Society, he devoted all his strength and every moment of his existence in its service. What fidelity, what zeal, and at the same time what prudence in the most difficult circumstances! You know if he has ever hesitated between his rest or his preferences and his duty, and you are well aware of the fruits the Society reaped from his labors. We can easily say that after God, the Society owes today the security of its temporal existence to him above all.”

* * *

250. To Bro. Dominique Clouzet, Saint-Remy

September 9, 1823, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

Your letter gave me great pleasure. It makes me hope that your complete cure is not far off. However poor you may be, take good care of yourself.

The more there are difficulties to be overcome, the more you must be master of yourself. The more there are works, occupations, and matters of all kinds, the more prudence, patience, prayer, and recollection are necessary.

Listen with kindness to all your brothers. Never tire of ever receiving all the suggestions they may wish to make to you, and may they never leave you without some consolation and encouragement. Let them understand clearly that you are always mindful of their hardships, whether interior or exterior, etc. . . and you will be able to do with them what you will, once you have won their friendship and their confidence.

I am not surprised, my dear Son, that you have had trouble adjusting to the character of Brother David. Your two characters are so different! But peace, union, and concord will result from this very difference. It is very rare that two similar characters get along for a long while. But what a restraint, in whatever situation Providence places us, is a true religious spirit!

You are doing well to address yourself to Father Bardenet for Confession when he is in Saint-Remy. Never delay concerning the politeness and attentions which are his due.

Have no other depository for the worries caused by exterior matters than your Good Father. To him you can and you should confide everything. How otherwise, may I be able to console you? How may I be able, especially from so great a distance, to give you the counsels you need? Keep me always informed about whatever concerns zeal, instruction, and temporalities—that is to say, about everything—because you know we include everything under

these three titles and that a superior is at the same time Head of Zeal, Head of Instruction, and Head of Temporalities.

Brother David is ordinarily an excellent counselor when it comes to serious and pressing matters, and he is reserved and very discreet—but be careful; the least distrust wounds him, but he rarely complains of his wound, and at times it is difficult to recognize the arrow which has wounded him.

I am coming to Father Bardenet. I am amazed that there is so little communication between us about an enterprise of such great importance. Does the establishment we are beginning in Saint-Remy correspond to the plans he had originally entertained? I would like to know what he thinks, for or against. If he does not write to me, either himself or through a secretary, make a record in writing of anything he may have said to you and send it on to me. Correspondence between us, whatever type it may be, is truly necessary. Maybe he himself suffers from the type of silence I seem to be keeping toward him.

You speak to me, my dear Son, of your lack of everything—provisions, furniture, and money to have work done. Brother David does not cease to talk to me about it in all the letters he writes to me. After this larger sum than he originally requested, M. Xavier Rothéa wrote his brother that he was going to send Brother David 2,000 francs by mail, that the 2,000 francs would be in Vesoul before his letter of advice would arrive in Bordeaux. It is very vexing that our letters from Bordeaux have such difficulty reaching Saint-Remy. Here I receive your letters, dated from Saint-Remy and passing through Vesoul, in seven or eight days. How is it then that you do not receive our letters from Bordeaux, also passing through Vesoul, for two weeks?

Of course, my dear Son, I had imagined that our community in Saint-Remy would experience needs of various types, that it would have to put up with all types of contradictions, that in the beginning most of the men, even all of them, would have to busy themselves with manual work. But I never thought—and even now I do not think—that if you and our beloved brothers know how to be patient, if you put all your confidence in the paternal Providence of God, that you would have to suffer the lack of what is most necessary to life. That you are being tried, that the Lord is tempting you, so to speak, to see if you are all true religious, if you are all truly devoted to the work of God, I am not at all surprised; and you know, my dear Son, that this is a good indication at the beginning of any establishment. Say to everyone very openly from me that those among them who may have lost courage or who may have gone to Saint-Remy only to lead a life of repose and sensual satisfaction, that you are authorized—or rather that Brother David is authorized on your recommendation—to give them their obedience to return to Bordeaux. There seemed to be strong reason I should add to this letter an obedience to recall Brother Dubarry, but what you tell me at the end of yours makes me hesitate. God grant that he has truly opened his eyes and really repents of the bad example he has given! God grant that he may become entirely master of himself and be constantly docile and edifying.

When I came to know better the situation at the château of Saint-Remy by the other details Brother David gave me, I began to fear an establishment there, and I wrote to him about it in Besançon before the acquisition. I was relying on his wisdom—he alone was acquainted with everything involved. I especially asked him to note the great expenses he would have to make and how very far we were from being able to meet them without help from somewhere. Whatever may have come from what I thought and whatever has happened since, we have believed we should undertake the enterprise, and this is what we have done. Our intentions are pure, so let us move forward.

Be always of one mind with Brother David, even as you make to him whatever observations you believe are suitable. Do not fear I will be bothered if you tell me everything. The Lord will be with me. I have no fear about that. The Lord will also be with you and with all my Children. Do not cease telling them how much I love them and how deeply I desire their spiritual advancement.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I wanted to write Brother David and Father Rothéa, but this letter has become rather long, and a great number of other letters have come since this one was begun. I expect to write to them shortly and also to those who profited by the occasion of meeting our religious postulants. Everything is going tolerably well in all our establishments. I have special satisfaction concerning the novitiate of the Madeleine.

* * *

251. To Bro. David Monier, Saint-Remy

September 15, 1823, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

[With insert from S. 251]

My dear Son,

I received two letters from Saint-Remy at the same time—one from you, dated September 2 and the other from Brother Clouzet, dated September 5—both postmarked Vesoul, and all those that came from Saint-Remy have the same stamp. The address you gave me if I needed to reach you was via Vesoul and Favorney, to Saint-Remy. I believe this is the reason you are not receiving my letters (for I answer promptly): they are stopped at Favorney, which has no mail delivery. But there is one in Vesoul, and the steps you have taken to assure prompt service apply only to Vesoul. I am going to risk sending this letter, which is a mere notice. If you should receive it before my previous letters, the one I wrote a very few days ago to Brother Clouzet, the one Father Rothéa wrote to you, inquire in Favorney; you will find them all there.

At each letter you wrote me, I consoled myself in the persuasion first, that you were going to receive 1,200 francs, and then, that you would have received the 2,000 francs which M. Xavier Rothéa must have sent to Vesoul by general delivery. Many days ago M. Rothéa's brother received word you were receiving this sum. The cost of sending 2,000 francs to Vesoul is three francs. Was it possible that you did not receive the message M. Xavier Rothéa must have sent to you? If you gave him the same address you gave us, it is possible that his messages are also at Favorney.

I do not blame anyone who complains when he feels hurt, but I would come very near to blaming him for directing his complaints against someone he has no reason at all to believe is their cause. You are correct in writing that I should not have sent the funds by way of Alsace; but when this first message came, the precautions had already been taken, and certainly you would not have been so promptly and loyally served had the funds left from Bordeaux. It would be much worse if my letters had contained negotiable papers entitling us to funds at certain dates.

This letter was begun twice 24 hours ago. During the intervening interval, M. Lacoste arrived from Agen. The prizes were distributed in Brother Auguste's boarding school. For the first time, we have celebrated our patronal Feast of the Holy Name of Mary. M. Lacoste embraces you. He is going to leave on vacation with his son. He seems very happy.

I am embracing you very tenderly. I also embrace all our Children.

If Brother Dubarry does not behave better, send him to me. This letter will leave on September 15 at 7 o'clock in the morning.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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252. To Bro. David Monier, Saint-Remy

September 30, 1823, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

I noted with pleasure at the end of M. Rothéa's letter that you finally were going to receive 2,000 francs in kind, and so I thought I no longer had to dread receiving your letters. But I was wrong—for your most recent one of September 19 is even more annoying. I reread several of the letters I wrote to you, and in particular that of August 18, from which you quote. You say that letter shows you the triviality of my promises in founding a definite establishment at Saint-Remy.

Doubtless these promises are those you suppose I made to Father Tharin, which you endorse. You well know—and you knew it long before your first departure was determined—that I had written Father Tharin that I could make no expense for this new establishment. at least for some time. I do not remember having written to Father Tharin since, except to tell him about your departure. It is nevertheless true that I wrote to you from Besançon last April 24 something like a promise, but in what sense? Reread this letter carefully, and you will not find me contradicting myself. What is special in this letter is that I recall what I had written to Father Tharin.

It is evident, my dear Son, that if we seek the same end we differ greatly in the manner of reaching it, and this is extremely vexing. My reasons seem to you to be illusions. You even see a spirit of darkness pervading the entire business. With such an attitude what value will you see in any reflections I might make about how I believe religious should act? You say as a friend, the only friend I have, you seek to stop me from falling, even at the risk of incurring my disfavor. You have no need to fear, my dear Son. I do not have such a good opinion of myself that I do not believe I can be mistaken. I will listen to the advice which you and others give me. I will weigh it and ask God to teach me whatever in it is good and true, even if it does seem somewhat out of the ordinary. And the good God has heard my prayers, for I have often profited by the advice of others. It is then not the poor opinion you have of me or the compassion you show for my illusions which caused me sorrow, but rather the consequences which may follow for the establishment of Saint-Remy. You add, "I respond to your reproaches by overlooking them as a friend." If my reproaches have no foundation, if they are dictated by bad humor and caprice, if they suggest only a deeply wounded self-love, you show great virtue in forgetting them. On the other hand, if they are reasonable, why forget about them? How would it be a sign of friendship to forget them? Oh yes, my dear Son, if you look upon them as harmful then forget them, because I am very far from wishing to injure you in any way.

How disturbing our respective positions then are, my dear Son! But . . .

The very same day I received your letter, I had just written to M. Bernhard. My letter, which contained only marks of affection, I am afraid, was a poor preparation for the business letter I would write later.

I easily understand that, with 10,000 francs, you could get things going far better, but what I do not yet understand is that religious, vowed to evangelical poverty—in consequence, vowed to Divine Providence both in their persons and in their works—should need to appear well-to-do, to appear rich. I also understand easily that these religious may not attribute the glory to themselves but to God, but I do not understand how God could be pleased with such a reflected glory.

You blame me having borrowed so much and, for a long time, of having washed one hand with the other. I can believe I may have gone too far in this, although up to now the reasons for doing so have seemed much stronger than they have for the newer establishments. . . .

Must there be equipment for all the arts and for all activities? Yes, but we must have the patience to do all the good we can at Saint-Remy, letting the good be seen only if we can actually do it.

And regarding Paris, what about the approbation of the Government? We had been thinking the moment had come, that the times seemed favorable to ask for the authorization of the Institute.

The first proposition made regarding the château of Saint-Remy presented the motive, the object, and the means to begin a religious establishment of considerable size. The Missionaries had need of a community which could give retreats to the men they had converted and whom they could not continue to care for. I have always believed these men would be glad to see, without prejudice to their own work, that other works were undertaken there. In fact, I was so convinced of this that I looked upon Father Bardenet and the Missionaries as the real founders until after the acquisition, as you can readily see from my letters. Then you showed me I was wrong in this.

Must we make this property an object of speculation? A big question! Why not solve it before going farther? On the one hand, from everything you tell me about it, this property could easily become the motherhouse of the entire Institute, either by its territorial revenues or by the products of its workshops. On the other hand, the Holy Spirit inspires the Church to tell us, *Nemo militans Deo implicat se negotiis saecularibus*.¹ What type of a religious, it will soon be said—if it has not already been—is one who is occupied only with the increase of his fortune, who bothers himself only about worldly matters, etc.? By this last reflection, I am far from blaming the moderate care of the goods which Providence may send, which it might evidently make use of for the support of the ministers of its works.

You had promised me, my dear Son, to send Brother Gaussens back. Is it from forgetfulness that you are telling me nothing about this? It would be good for him to make the retreat usually held here. I have fixed the date of the opening this year for October 18 and October 19 because of the grape harvest, which will be rather late.

Father Tharin's nomination as the Bishop of Strasbourg will doubtless be a great blessing on the part of Providence in favor of the Institute of Mary if we conduct ourselves religiously at the establishment of Saint-Remy, if there is unity in our views, and if you give its heads wise and prudent procedures. I hope you also suggest to them a very simple way of proceeding, as for the time being they cannot follow any other. If you want them to enter into your grand plans, you will render them powerless, they will become disgusted, you will have to be "always and continually on the job," etc. . . . May the establishment function in such a way as to do some good, to support itself and, above all, to edify! May you always find it easy to disentangle yourself in order to be available for other things. . . . Well, this is enough, even if it is a lot for the moment. Little by little, you can add other things as circumstances permit.

One more word. It seems there were about 56 acres of fallow land on this property before the acquisition. Because you have not found any cultivating tools there . . . may Father Bardenet not have removed them? What scandal can there be if you do as he did, especially on arriving?

I embrace you, my dear Son, with tenderness.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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Here is a new letter regarding the foundation at Condom.

253. To Father Castex, Condom

October 7, 1823, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. Of the Gaichies Family, Condom

Reverend Father,

I have just heard of your visit to the community of Agen. The good superior must have told you that I had just written her on the same subject. I immediately asked Father Collineau, one of our religious who is director of the school at Villeneuve, to meet you in Condom. I would be greatly obliged if you would show him the former hospital, which is now for sale. You could also

¹"No one entering into the service of God bothers about worldly matters."

present him to the Director of Hospices if you judge it useful, and introduce him to M. and Mme Lachapelle, who want to arrange for the purchase of the building.

It would be necessary for you to introduce him, or at least refer him to those people who can help the Daughters of Mary make necessary repairs or supply modest furnishings to the establishment. Perhaps the Lachapelle house may be able to do even more. Could the ladies of Trenquelléon¹ find an apartment there? They might be able to follow their Rule and even perhaps wear their religious habit. You know that the oldest of the young women, in whose house Father Desterac lives, was to enter the first foundation of the Daughters of Mary. I presume that she and her sisters might take an interest in this establishment.

There is an old friend of the superior of Agen at Condom who owns a certain property. We might give her a separate apartment. She has a disfiguring mark on her face, but she takes great interest in the Institute.

Finally, Reverend Father, I am leaving it to your zeal to discover the means of forming the establishment I spoke about in my first letter. It will also be necessary to see and weigh the inconveniences and learn if there is any way of possibly remedying them.

You may also acquaint Father Collineau with all that concerns the former convent of the Ursulines in the middle of the city. This second establishment would become of the highest importance to the city. I was thinking that if a boarding school was a success in the first, this second would find the means of sustaining them both.

Father Collineau has no commission to settle things definitely, but he will look over everything and make his report to me. I hope that with your help, he will allow me to promptly establish the Daughters of Mary in Condom.

I am with respectful devotedness, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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S. 253a. To M. de Lacaussade, Tonneins

November 2, 1823, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

Your replies to the articles which the mayor submitted to you at the request of the sub-prefect seem appropriate and to the point. I presume that M. Lacoste would give a similar opinion.

Could the answer to the first article not read, "At Tonneins there is a convent of religious woman who call themselves Daughters of Mary." For the entire 5th article, it might be good to add, "the religious do not envisage with enthusiasm the suggested separation. They would prefer to follow the practice of the convent of Agen and give free instruction." I would be grateful, Monsieur, if you would give to the superior of the convent of Agen and also to M. Lacoste the articles the sub-prefect desires and also the replies which you have provided subsequently, after consultation with M. Lacoste. The replies from Agen should be the same as those from Tonneins. At Bordeaux, the mayor sends all ministerial questionnaires to the superiors of the convents. Two weeks ago, I was consulted by the House of Mercy. I will return very soon to your remarks on free schooling. I must hasten to catch the next post.

I salute you very cordially.

¹ This is about three aunts of Adèle who had been Dominican religious of the monastery of Provillan, not far from Condom. After the closing of the convents in 1792, they took refuge in the Château de Trenquelléon; then in 1820 they returned to Condom, where with the aid of some of their former companions they opened a boarding school for young women. After the foundation of the boarding school of the Daughters of Mary, they lived together in their house on Rue Sainte Eulalie, continuing to observe their Rule and in a way giving new life to their former monastery.

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254. To Bro. David Monier, Saint-Remy

November 6, 1823, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

I received your short letter of October 18, in which Father Rothéa's was included. His brother Louis has also received the one you wrote to him on the same date.

It is true that I received two of your letters without being able to answer them immediately. I was suffering a great deal from a tooth infection—and so I resolved to call Father Rothéa and ask him to answer both of them. I perhaps suffered more in having to read them to him than from my infection. I had advised him not to answer anything which might show traces only of complaints and reproaches. You were certainly greatly mistaken, my dear Son, in believing I had any intention of halting our correspondence or of withdrawing or in any way lessening the powers you have. You may have read the letter too quickly. Neither he nor I had even thought of such a thing. Do not you recognize his style—severe and almost German?

In a letter I wrote to Brother Clouzet,¹ I had enclosed a long article for Father Bardenet. I was waiting for Brother Clouzet to at least send me a verbal answer. Brother Clouzet speaks to me only about his goodness toward everyone—he thinks I would do well to thank him. I am choosing to write to him directly, and I will also make a copy of my letter. You will not be caught unprepared if he speaks to you about it. You might even mention it first.

We made our retreat at the time I had indicated. We were 56 retreatants, as in previous years. The most important results are (1) the exclusion of two subjects, Brothers Cizes and Pelletier, but the good God has given us compensation. (2) M. de Loncle and M. Boutoey have been received as novices. (3) Father Serre² has made the definite choice of entering the Institute. The conflict must have begun with the Bishop of Agen. Father de Loncle is the son of the president of the Tribunal of Cahors. He made his studies and had two years of law. For nearly 10 years, he did little more than occupy himself with family properties. If you have the list of the Archbishops of Besançon, you would be able to see if there is not one who has come from this family. Father Boutoey is that young pastor from the diocese of Bayonne, today the diocese of Aire, who had such trouble in obtaining permission from the Bishop of Bayonne to come to Bordeaux.

All our Alsatians are very fervent, even little Charles, who made his first Communion on the last day of the retreat. He wanted to be received as an intern-postulant. Since the retreat, he himself has written a short letter of thanks to Father Caillet, his confessor, which gives a good idea of his fine sentiments. Without the boy's knowledge, Father Rothéa sent it on to his father. Among the Alsatians who are at Saint-Laurent, two are distinguished by their piety and upright character, Benoît [Geiger] and Troffer.³ I sent this last one to Villeneuve. Father Collineau, leader of the Agen and Villeneuve brothers, after the retreat particularly pointed out this young Troffer. Their trip was made about like the one to Saint-Remy. There were 12 traveling together.

¹ Letter no. 250.

² Fr. Jean-Félicien Serre (1797-1867), a native of Agen, was ordained in 1821; on several occasions he took part in the retreats at Saint-Laurent, consecrated himself to Mary there, and was received as a postulant of the Society of Mary. It seems he could not obtain permission from his bishop to leave the diocese of Agen, and from 1827 to 1831 he there served as chaplain of the Daughters of Mary.

³ Théodore Troffer, born in 1804 at Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines, after a start in Villeneuve was sent to Besançon to direct the orphanage of the Saint Jacques Hospice in 1827. He was also the first director of the schools of Salins (1833), Castelsarrasin (1839), and Puylaroque (1845), where he left the Society of Mary.

It already seems there will be a few more boarders this year on Rue des Menuts than last. Among them is one of the sons of M. Barsalou of Agen.

My pains ceased with the approach of the retreat. I had myself taken to the country, in order not to catch cold in this swelling I have. My head was very clear all through the exercises. I have been feeling worse since. Courage and patience! I say this, my dear Son, for both of us. Glory forever to the Lord and his holy Mother!

I am sorry not to have a word about the personal character of our devoted Children, particularly about Dubarry and Pascal, whose conduct at the beginning was so slightly religious; and about Molinier, whose illness so alarmed his family, etc. I am embracing them all, one by one, but you the first, as not only their principal head, but also my firstborn.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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