

*Here is the letter mentioned above.*

**255. To Father Bardenet, Saint-Remy**

Bordeaux, November 6, 1823

Copy, Agmar

Reverend Father,

I have learned several times from my Children in Saint-Remy, especially from the heads, Brother David and Brother Clouzet, that they consider you a second father. You continually come to help them in the necessities of life and in the needs of the establishment. I am as appreciative of this as if all your benefactions came directly to me. That is what I was expecting. I was even counting upon it, both because of your wholehearted and loyal way of doing good and because of the dire straits in which the needs of my establishments were placing me.

Father, I wish you to learn for yourself whether this establishment as presently developing corresponds to your plans. If you will have the kindness to confide in me completely, I can give this institution a series of appointments and an overall direction possibly better adjusted to the designs you had in inviting us to Saint-Remy. Whatever good subjects enter our two novitiates,<sup>1</sup> I hope I can furnish a few others in proportion as I come to know better the possibilities for good at Saint-Remy. Up until now, I have been just feeling my way, as it were.

It seems from my correspondence that these young religious are giving a good account of themselves. Nevertheless, I would be very glad to know what you think of them. From a witness such as you, I seek details of their conduct and their manner of dealing with you. My solicitude will not surprise you if you have noticed that the entire Institute of Mary is only one large family, to which I have given birth by grace.

My heart was greatly distressed when I learned that several of these young men would not be sufficiently clothed for the winter. Without delay, I saw to it that Saint-Remy received a bill of exchange for 600 francs, which our correspondent of Ribeauvillé addressed to me. Surely, I thought, this sum would be insufficient. If I could have believed that this vast property was deprived of all instruments and means of cultivation, I would have taken precautions so that at the opportune time some portion of the land could have been prepared and seeded. Then the community would at least have been able to live off the land. Father, because Divine Providence has chosen you as its representative for this budding establishment, I would be greatly obliged to you if you can come to its assistance in such a way that it may not be in need of necessities such as food and clothing, whose absence would be harmful to health. I will be equally obliged if you take note, or designate someone else to do so, of everything you do for them only by inconveniencing yourself. These notes will indicate to me what will be considered only advance payments you have made, and I promise these funds will be repaid to you. It would be the same if these advance payments were to utilize some locality or to have some acres of the land cultivated. It is certain that if they have no furniture they will not be able to receive anyone—and if they do not sow, how can they possibly reap?

You must see, Father, how very necessary it is that we keep up our correspondence. You can choose for yourself a secretary from among these young religious who will write as you dictate or as you designate. I can guarantee that he will loyally keep to himself everything we may say to each other, even with regard to his colleagues. It is sufficient to tell him this once and for all time. I am, etc. . . .

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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<sup>1</sup> Saint-Laurent and the Madeleine.

*Father Chaminade continues negotiations for the foundation in Condom.*

**256. To Father Castex, Condom**

November 13, 1823, Bordeaux  
Autograph, Arch. Of the Gaïches Family, Condom

Reverend Father,

Before finally deciding upon an establishment at Piétat, I am sending Mme Belloc to Condom with a request for the information I still need and for the first steps to be taken in the event of acceptance. It is not that Father Collineau has not given me valuable information, but he was not there long enough to gather everything I need to know.

I would be very grateful to you, Father, if you would assist Mme Belloc all you can in the commission I have given her. I hope the Director of Hospitals will not look unkindly on the precautions I am taking and the delays which have been the inevitable result. I have understood that this administration, always prudent, wishes not only to increase the revenues of the hospital by the sale of the property, but also to favor an establishment that would be truly useful to the city. I have the firm trust that it will not be frustrated in its expectations.

I have not yet answered Father Lachapelle, but you may assure him that he will have ample reason to be satisfied. I will certainly write him before making any definitive move. I ask of you to introduce Mme Belloc to him and to give him at the same time the assurance of my respectful and entire devotedness.

I am also with a very respectful affection, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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**257. To Bro. David Monier, Saint-Remy**

November 18, 1823, Bordeaux  
Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

The retreat of the Men's Sodality had just begun when I received your letter, dated November 7.

I read with interest and satisfaction what you say about your trip to Besançon and about its success. I relish this mission to the schoolmasters, in the sense in which you first spoke to me about it. All the more because if it succeeds, little by little it could have general application throughout France, and then . . . !

The first time you spoke to me of it, I understood that the missionaries would give retreats, and we would conduct a normal school. Do you think we would have to do both? This would be no slight difficulty, considering our small number of priests. Tell me how things stand. Perhaps at the time of the first meeting, I could arrange for a visit. The present time is not too soon to make the suitable preparations. I foresee the possibility of sending one of several good helpers.

Regarding the establishment at Murat,<sup>1</sup> I have nothing to say until you let me know your views.

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<sup>1</sup> This is a question of Marast near Saint-Remy. In this small place, there was a former priory of Canons of Saint Augustine, which was suppressed by the Revolution and acquired by M. Lieffroy. He transferred it to the Archbishop of Besançon, who established a small seminary there; he transferred in 1822 to Luxeuil and later gave this property to the Society of Mary for a house of education (1826). The Society of Mary had the place improved by farmers, then by its religious, and finally opened a boarding school in 1826; this functioned until 1903.

You have answered for Colmar, and you have made the arrangements. You are correct to ignore the pastor's remarks. I promised teachers for the first of January, and has he accepted? He has not even answered, etc. . . .

I am surprised that M. Bernhardt did not reserve 616 francs for you, and still more surprised that before your departure from Saint-Remy he did not send you a bill of exchange in Paris for a similar sum. He sent me this bill of exchange in a letter he was writing to M. Rothéa. As he was finishing his letter he received one from you, in which you asked him for the funds he was to reserve for me. Then he did not enclose the bill of exchange, as he said he would do at the beginning. He told M. Rothéa he was awaiting further orders. I had someone write to him immediately, telling him to send you the bill of exchange.

Father Romain's<sup>2</sup> belongings are not worth bothering much about. Regarding the daughter of the person holding these, we would have to be assured that she has a sufficient dowry, unless she is an extraordinary subject. The convent of Agen has received a great number of subjects who brought nothing. Mlle Durrenbach<sup>3</sup> and Mlle Waller<sup>4</sup> are two excellent subjects, and so is Geneviève Prêtre, except for her interior troubles. Agen has 15 good novices.

Mother Thérèse died November 3, the death of the saints. Before her death, I had sent Mother Sacré-Coeur to Tonneins to console the much afflicted community, to arrange things for the funeral of the saintly superior, and in the meantime to exercise the functions of superior. Things are still at that point.

Mother Louis de Gonzague is exercising the functions of Mistress of Novices at Agen with great wisdom and zeal.

The schools of Agen are crowded. I am sending a fifth brother there for the school of "repeaters."<sup>1</sup> Since the end of last year, the prejudices of the majority of respectable parents have disappeared. This year they are sending their children . . . Brother Mémain is the director.<sup>2</sup>

The schools of Villeneuve must have opened yesterday. A grand reception was being prepared for the 16<sup>th</sup>, the day of the brothers' arrival. Brother Laugeay is their director.

I have just sent Mme Belloc to Condom with very precise instructions to secure final information for me about the establishment of a boarding school for young women.

The return of the boarders on Rue des Menuts is progressing very advantageously. There are now more than 80 boarders or half-boarders.

Everything is going reasonable well in our three establishments in Bordeaux, apart from the financial resources. We are getting along, but always in want and financially embarrassed. We are far from murmuring about this, however. We are constantly giving thanks to God for the unfailing help he gives us, so that these works we have undertaken may continue and flourish.

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<sup>2</sup> Biographical note. Jean-Baptiste Romain (1789-1853) born in Fouchy, Alsace, had ministered in several parishes in the diocese of Strasbourg, "there giving the finest examples of priestly virtues and there fulfilling all the duties of a good shepherd," when he decided to enter the Society of Mary. He was employed in Saint-Hippolyte, at Bordeaux, and at Cordes where he died, leaving the remembrance of a very pious priest, a friend of retirement, making holy Scripture his daily sustenance and source of inspiration.

<sup>3</sup> In religion Mother Gabrielle, who became superior of the convent of Acey.

<sup>4</sup> In religion Mother Saint-Joseph, who became Mistress of Novices at Arbois.

<sup>1</sup> The class of "repeaters" is made up of pupils who cannot follow the exercises in the other classes, either because of frequent absences, the lack of means, or as the result of incorrigible defects of character or regarding morals, and country children, with the exception of some subjects who might deserve some favor. The maximum number of pupils would be from 50 to 60.

<sup>2</sup> Biographical note. Jean-Marie Mémain, born in 1797 at Saint-Loubès near Bordeaux, entered the Society of Mary at the end of 1818 and in 1820 was one of the founders of the school at Agen. In 1823 he became its director, and with the exception of momentary absences he remained until 1833. Then he was appointed business manager at the boarding school Sainte-Marie, where Fr. Lalanne had just come to replace Bro. Auguste; he contributed to the transfer of the boarding school of Bordeaux to Layrac, 1835. At this same time, he succeeded Bro. Auguste as General Head of Work of the Society of Mary. Following financial difficulties, he left Layrac in 1836 and reassumed direction of the schools at Agen; in 1837 he left the Society of Mary. He had a brother, Antoine, who spent only a few years in the Society of Mary.

You will possibly notice in some newspaper something about the Institute of Mary. This is what I was told the other day at the archbishop's office. The Minister wishes to know all the religious institutions. Father Barrès inserted the name of the Institute of Mary. I asked to see the notice. It says only this. "This Institute is for teaching in secondary and primary schools, the arts and crafts. In Bordeaux, there are two novitiates and an establishment."

You never mention, my dear Son, the authorization you were expected to seek, which is so important a part of your mission. I take it for granted you are concerning yourself with the matter, but why do not you acquaint me with your ideas in a matter of such great interest?

In all your letters, my dear Son, I notice your soul agitated by sensitivity and, as it were, plunged in bitterness. The causes, which I know well enough, do not seem to me of a nature to produce such a great calamity. I know neither what to say nor what to think when I notice you in such a habitual state of torment. You experience contradictions, but who in the world does not? Especially in such great enterprises? I experience them on all sides, and I feel most keenly the type of quick-temperedness which yours has lodged in your soul. May the Lord deign to grant you peace!

I am now going to the exercise of the retreat, and I will pray God to realize in you this wish of my heart.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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### **258. To Bro. David Monier, Saint-Remy**

November 25, 1823, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

Prior to this letter you have received two others from me since the shipment of the two deeds. I have just received yours of November 14. It seems letters take more time to get to Saint-Remy than to come from there. I receive your usually the ninth day after their date.

In the next to last one, I enclosed a copy of a letter I wrote to Father Bardenet. Both letters had left before your next to last one, in which you gave me ideas about your relationship with Father Bardenet and about the letter Brother Clouzet had written me concerning Father Bardenet a long while before. In spite of this, I do not regret writing to him, for our mutual silence is an evil which must be avoided if possible. If it is not possible, I will try to find out what is to be done in such a circumstance. If I had received your last reflections sooner, my letter to Father Bardenet would have taken another turn. No matter! If he speaks to you of it, tell him to answer me, or else have someone else do it. This political silence is worth nothing to us.

I expected to choose you, my dear Son, as the person authorized to act in my name. I have not had any other idea. In the deed under private seal you are named, and that was necessary. The deed, made by the notary public, was in blank, because any other hand might have added your name. You know that better than I do. I have already told you of my state of suffering at the time, and also of my additional occupations. This is why I did not add a letter to either of the deeds.

I feel keenly your difficult position, my dear Son. I believe I would much rather endure it alone than to represent it to myself without sharing it. I sometimes fear having consented to an establishment so far beyond our resources, which conforms hardly at all to the initial offer. I noticed this discrepancy in the letter you wrote from Belfort. But the thing is done, and I adore the designs of God. We are working for God, and not for ourselves. I am quieting myself, I am encouraging myself, and I hope the Good God will lead us to everything that will be necessary. Two considerations help me to calm myself—one, that I had reasons to believe, at least apparently, that this establishment would be self-supporting and aided by those who had started it,

at least in the early stages; second, that establishments which are destined to do the greatest good are ordinarily those whose beginning is the most painful and stormy. "May God be praised in all things," as you so well conclude certain articles in your last letters.

I am awaiting an answer from Father Bardenet. If he does not respond in another two or three weeks, I may write him a second letter, which may well be my last.

In the meantime, let me know in detail and without ill humor, if possible, all your plans and the means for realizing them. At present, I admit to you that I would be greatly troubled to give myself an account of the establishment at Saint-Remy. I would be much more embarrassed to give an account of it to others. When I am asked about it, I give answers that I can see are barely understood, and how could they be? When we are definitely and fully informed, we will do what we can. What we cannot—and surely, there will be much that we cannot do—we will wait for. We will be patient.

Concerning the normal school, I would be very pleased if the idea were realized. A type of secondary or boarding school where elements of the arts and crafts would be taught, writing, the French language, etc., could first be started without too much trouble. In proportion as the boarding school developed and attracted students, we could find the resources to live and have the land cultivated and gradually begin the other works to which such a large place lends itself.

I am having someone write to Father Weber to pay these 200 francs to M. Bernhard, who will immediately give them to you. I cannot rid myself of the thought that Father Bardenet will not associate himself with us, even by corresponding with me. Again, patience!

I feel I would still have many more things to tell you, but I am stopping so this letter may soon be on its way. Today is the last day of the men's retreat, November 25. We have it last ten days. I embrace you tenderly, and I also embrace all my Children at Saint-Remy, even the new postulants.<sup>1</sup>

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I received Brother Pascal's letter. I will answer it very soon.

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*On the same date Father Chaminade wrote to his family.*

**259. To Mme Sophie de Lala, Sarlat**

November 25, 1823, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. of the de Lala Family

My dear Niece,

Oh yes, I am tenderly attached to you, as well as to your good husband. My silence has no other explanation than the impossibility of writing to you sufficiently. My reports are increasing every day. I cannot answer all the letter I receive, even the most pressing. Many people complain that their letters remain unanswered. Instead of complaining, what more can I do than never to lose an instant of time?

Your good husband, my dear Child, thinks my arms are very long when he believes I could procure from the Minister the job he desires, and which he deserves. He is greatly mistaken. If I seem to be able to do any good, this is not by way of great protectors, but by God who blesses what I undertake.

Firmin will be conscripted next year. It will be necessary to see if you cannot find any way of exempting him from it, if at Sarlat or in the department of the sub-prefecture there is not

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<sup>1</sup> On September 4 the first two postulants presented themselves, Jean Rosette and Antoine Guyot, who became excellent religious. Later Bro. Guyot was one of the providential agents for the vocations of Fr. de Lagarde.

an office where young men deposit a certain sum for the purchase of substitutes, if they happen to be chosen by lot. This is possible here, and I believe in most of the departments.

I will be greatly obliged to you, my dear Child, if you excuse me to M. Veyssière. I will always take the greatest interest whenever I find occasion for his mediation, but have you any need of this yourself?

I will be at your service, as well as your husband's and Firmin's, but use this service only in things that concern me directly. Believe in my affectionate sentiments toward you.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. My sister also embraces both you and Firmin and offers your husband and Mlle Mondesse her tokens of sincere regard.

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*Here is the first of several letters addressed by Father Chaminade to a group of religious. They are noteworthy for their spirit of faith and tenderness of heart.*

### **260. To the Community of Saint-Remy**

December 2, 1823, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

To my Dear Children, the Heads,  
and other religious residing in the château of Saint-Remy.  
My dear Children,

I have wanted to write to you for a long time. My heart inclines me to speak to each of you an individual expression of paternal tenderness, but I am so overburdened with work and the postal rates are so high that I believed it is more suitable to address you all together.

I wish to console you, my dear Children, because I have just learned that you are enduring great privations. I understand that severe cold weather has surprised you, deprived as you are of the barest necessities, overwhelming you with its rigors. My first sentiment is one of compassion for my children at Saint-Remy. I would have less pain in taking upon myself all your sufferings than to know you are in such straits and I cannot offer you any relief. However, lifting myself by faith to the arbiter of our destiny, I have adored the designs of God's ever-paternal providence. I said to myself, "The Lord is taking his winnowing fan in his hand. He wants to try this community of privileged ones. He wants to discern those who are fit to establish the foundations of a house which is to yield such choice fruits in these faraway provinces. Young men of only half-hearted virtue would not be worthy of such an enterprise." I hope, my dear Children, that not a single one of you will succumb under this trial of the Lord, that there will be no cowardly person among you, no one who murmurs, no one deserving to be cast aside. All the great works, all the great enterprises undertaken for the glory of God and the Blessed Virgin, are hindered in various, unexpected ways in spite of the precautions ordinarily taken by human wisdom.

Be courageous, be inviolably faithful! Penetrate yourself more and more with the spirit of the religious state! Whatever trouble, whatever contradictions you must suffer, you will have peace of mind and contentment of heart; you will be truly happy.

I have learned with pleasure, my dear Children, that you already have in your midst several postulants who may soon become fervent novices. They will succeed if you give them only examples of exactitude and fervor. This duty of yours is a blessed obligation. Tell them they have a place in my heart; I long to know their sentiments and dispositions more thoroughly in order to recognize and adopt them as my children. My dear Children, I desire that from now on they may share in the fatherly blessing which I am giving you in the outpouring of my heart.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I wrote this letter myself, and I wanted you to receive it as such when a little accident obliged me to have it copied. Young Brother Tissier will do the copying. I have taken him as a copyist and have been keeping him with me since the end of summer.

Mother Thérèse, superior of the convent of the Daughters of Mary, died in the odor of sanctity last November 3. Since her death, the Institute of the Daughters of Mary has felt the very appreciable effects of her protection.

The schools of Agen and Villeneuve are going along fine. The greatest fervor reigns among the brothers.

Brother Mémain is the director at Agen. Brother Moulinié<sup>1</sup> is his consolation by his humble and penitential spirit and also by his altogether religious wisdom. The number of pupils there has become so great that I was obliged to send a fifth brother, Brother Cros, who is only a postulant but is a very clever and good religious.

At Villeneuve, Brother Laugeay is the director. And Brother Troffer is distinguished by his great modesty and tender piety.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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## **261. To Bro. David Monier, Saint-Remy**

December 4, 1823, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

I see from your last two messages that your soul is always agitated and weighed down with bitterness, and because of this I have a very real sorrow. Please hasten to indicate to me what may bring you peace and consolation. I am determined to do everything that lies in my power to procure this peace of mind for you.

By now you must have received my letter in which I tell you very explicitly that the blank authorization must be filled out in your name; I never imagined anything else. When the notary's clerk brought it to me, I asked him if he had not inserted your name, and he answered that you had to put it there yourself. I believe that was the custom.

Mother Thérèse has died. At the beginning of her illness, M. de Lacaussade wrote to me that it was necessary to have her make a will because of the vineyard bought for the convent under her name. I answered him that she had made one. He did not say anything further about the matter. I searched for it in your study, but it is not there. And what is worse, there are no wills, either on the part of the religious men or of the religious women. Could you, perhaps, have taken along the bundles containing these wills with the copy books of the Institute? What is to be done? Your papers have not been disturbed. Everything is as you left it.

If Father Bardenet grasps the real meaning of the letter I wrote to him—which, I hope, he will—if its contents are always insisted upon, we will have the wherewithal to advance. But if things do not work out we will try to borrow a fairly large sum, but not from M. Bernhard of Ribeaupillé. I am not at all for that, at least for the present. I would greatly prefer to address myself to M. Masson. In case we have to, I will talk to you about this.

You have not said anything, my dear Son, about the authorization for the Institute that was to be requested of the Government. With things as they are, I will try to obtain a formal approbation from the archbishop.

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<sup>1</sup> Bro. Jean Moulinié entered Saint-Laurent in 1820; he later served as director in Moissac (1827-1834) and left the Society of Mary in 1836.

My dear Son, try to possess your soul in peace and to remain patient. Our Lord, in predicting to his apostles the numerous and violent contradictions they were to encounter in the mission he was confiding to them, said to them, *Possidebitis animas vestras in patientia vestra.*<sup>1</sup>

I am writing to Brother Clouzet. Included in the envelope are (1) a letter for the entire group; (2) a note for Brother Rothéa; and (3) another note for Brother Pascal.

I am embracing you very tenderly.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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*Here are the instructions for the convent in Agen.*

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

December 5, 1823, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

The short time that I have available for you leads me to answer your letter of November 25.

Do not be surprised or disturbed about the clamor that is certain to arise as the result of the wise measures you decided to adopt. You did well to try Sister Brigitte. I think that after this trial, you have given her proof of your satisfaction and that you have encouraged her not only to tread under foot all vain human considerations, but also to desire further occasions to do so.

Concerning the tertiaries, with her customary goodness and energy Mother Emmanuel will need to make them understand and feel the injustice of their proposals right away. Should any person among them wish to be bound by her own wisdom, Mother Emmanuel can speak with her in private, and if she does not agree with the new remarks made to her, then there should be no concern about excluding her from the Third Order.

Why do you add to the title of Companion that of “going out”? Why not simply say Companions, as the Rule calls for? By rule, the Companions are to be ready to go out when they receive an order to do so, to meet the needs of the communities receiving them as well as the demands of their regularly-assigned functions. All those wearing the habit of Companions may not need to go out, but will be ready to do so should some urgent case require this. Sister Geneviève, for example, possibly will never have to go out to exercise her functions as gardener, but . . . It seems to me I had clearly explained these slight differences necessary in the development of the Institute, which nevertheless leave the Institute in the integrity of its organization. But I will return to this subject in case further trouble should arise.

There would be some inconvenience, my dear Child, if the Companions going to the market, for example, wore a veil. There would not be any if they went to accompany the parish children. The most essential veil, the veil which all must wear, is the veil of genuine modesty. Companions who accept the task of going out must edify by their good manners, by their modesty, by their discretion, etc. It is important that their Mother entrusts and truly forms them to virtue and that they will be capable of receiving this instruction in the style in which it is given. Supple and docile characters are needed. Do not be in any hurry to increase their numbers. Do not be afraid to send away those who do not seem to you to be fit for the work of the Lord. Ordinarily this can be seen after the first month of postulate. The restless, capricious, self-willed subjects you keep, for whatever reason, by their bad example would corrupt others who would have succeeded, if they had known only edifying people.

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<sup>1</sup> “In your patience you will possess your souls” (Luke 21:19).

I will continue to consider the descriptions you have sent me. Be a mother, a good mother, the most tender of mothers if you wish, but only of your Daughters. You have not yet adopted the postulants, and still less conceived them in the bosom of your charity. Neither you, the Mistress of Novices, nor the Mother of Companions are the Mother of the postulants. You are only their mistress, their superior, etc.

I agree with pleasure that Sister Gabrielle, Sister Saint-Joseph, and Sister Geneviève may take the holy habit of religion and of the Institute of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin. The brother of Sister Saint-Joseph, as well as her cousin Bernard Bernhard, will take the cassock at the same time. Please tell Mother Saint-Vincent not to give them the bill for their habits and still less to send it to their parents. I will speak to her about this when I write. In the meantime, let her be patient.

I am obliged to stop here. May the Lord shower his blessings upon you and your entire community.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I was sorry that no one thought to consult His Excellency to learn whether it was necessary to give a veil to the Companions.

I am surprised not to have any news from Mme Belloc.

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*[The letter continues, from a copy.]*

I am returning to you, my dear Child, for a few moments. To diminish somewhat my correspondence with the convent, could you not decide, along with the local superior, a great number of questions which may be called “common,” such as, for example, entrance into the postulate, novitiate, etc.? There are rules for judging the aptitude of subjects. You have acquired a certain amount of experience; you know the spirit of the Institute. You and the council could actually take many things upon yourselves—not, however, without the advice of the local Superior, who is to be a sort of watchful sentinel, assuring that neither the spirit of the world nor mere nature may insinuate itself into the convent. This is especially true of the motherhouse, where the original spirit of the Institute of Mary, perfection, and fervor should reign. From time to time, you will inform me about everything that has happened. You will also submit to me all the matters that cannot be settled by the Constitutions or Regulations, and all those calling for expenses or permission which may be long-lasting or have serious consequences. In this way, the course of your administration will never be stopped.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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*David Monier's state of mind continued to disturb Father Chaminade more and more. But he still was unaware of the operations which absorbed Brother David's attention during October and November. These involvements had been miraculously checked, so to speak, by the refusal of consent on the part of the Marquis Voyer d'Argenson. If they had succeeded, they would certainly have brought the Society of Mary to its ruin. It would in fact have been in debt again for the sum of over 100,000 francs.*

*On November 28, Brother David wrote brusquely to the Good Father, “Here I am, thanks be to God, freed from all matters which might have detained me here longer. To tell you how, and by what stroke of fortune, would take too long. It is only necessary that I send a trunk to the carter and that I follow it in the near future.” Father Chaminade replied.*

## **263. To Bro. David Monier, Saint-Remy**

December 9, 1823, Bordeaux  
Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

I am so astonished at your effective determination to abandon Saint-Remy that I hardly know what to say and think; moreover, all the reflections I could make would be absolutely useless and perhaps even dangerous because you have placed yourself, so to speak, in the hands of your own council. Wiser men than you have been victims of their pretended lights. May God preserve you from such an unhappy end!

You say you will excuse what you clearly understand—the unsuccessful outcome of Saint-Remy. It is unsuccessful only because you are leaving, and in announcing this fact you expose the establishment to complete failure. Who is the wise person who could have ever foretold that because this establishment could not be formed in four months, it was not destined to succeed?

To believe, nevertheless, that success is despaired of at Saint-Remy and then to excuse the attempt is justice. You can do so without incriminating anyone, as you know, although this will be fairly difficult. There is nothing reprehensible in this matter except you and me, and it is certainly not you. . . .

You wished to free yourself from all difficulties, and you have softened the blow to this budding foundation by giving as a pretext a pressing need, calling for your return to Paris.

Father Tharin is doubtless very worthy of your confidence, and in every other instance I would have been the first to invite you to see him, to console yourself in his company, etc. Occasionally I have occasion to speak of him to Father Carbon, the superior of our Grand Seminary, with whom he is very friendly.<sup>1</sup> But in the present case, is it prudent to go to him for the balm to be applied to your wounded heart? Your wound will only partially heal, to be opened anew and with more pain, I do not know when, when you learn of the worrisome consequence of your confidences. I take it for granted that you are always sincerely attached to the Institute, and I also know you are sincerely attached to my person. Hence, it would even seem possible that all your torments have their principal cause in these attachments of your heart.

The annoyances which Providence permits make you look upon everything as lost, etc. . . . And yet these annoyances are more essentially the result of your views than of the work the Lord has confided to you. In the designs of God, these annoyances are the means of sanctification for you, for the Children of Saint-Remy, and also for me. I admit that for my part, I have already experienced very good effects for my soul from the anxieties which your letters have been causing me these last several months. Because your anxieties are caused at least in great part by my letters, it is to be presumed that, reading them in the spirit of religion, you will also find that it is good to have borne your own ideas patiently up to the point of abnegation. In this abnegation you will find peace of soul and new lights that will repay abundantly the sacrifice we have made of your own.

You were going to enter into retreat when you wrote your letter. If you have, do so with the spirit of humility, the most essential disposition. I presume you will have given up the idea of trips to Vesoul and to Besançon, and that this letter will find you quietly in Saint-Remy.

Today is the fifth day since I wrote you my last letter, in which I asked you to inform me promptly about what has become of all the wills of the men and women religious which are not to be found in your desk. You will please me also if you give me the address of Father Tharin in Paris. If I had not been in such a hurry, I would have written him in Besançon several days ago.

Yesterday, a half-hour after reading your letter, I received the authorization of the Institute from the archbishop that I had spoken to you about. I immediately had a copy made for

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<sup>1</sup> Fr. Tharin and Fr. Carbon had lived together in the community of Saint Sulpice, in Paris.

you, which I am including in this letter. I will make no observation to Father Barrès, the author of the document appointed by the archbishop, until you have made your own observations.

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*[Here is a copy of Father Barrès' letter which came with the authorization.]*

*One of the feasts of our Good Mother and the feastdays par excellence of our Sodalties! . . . The occasion is just right for sending the approbation of the Institute of Mary. Here it is, finally, accompanied by my excuses and my regrets about its delay. But all signed and sealed as it is, I ask Father Chaminade not to look upon it as finished. If there is anything to be added, modified, or omitted, please return it to me with all the corrections. I renew in your regard my respectable colleague, all the devoted and respectful sentiments of your very humble and obedient servant.*

*December 8, 1823*

*Barrès, Vicar General*

\*

I will have you note, my dear Son, that the original copy contains several erasures and that it is not countersigned by the archbishop's secretary.

Since yesterday, I am praying and having others pray continually for you. Let it stand, without any further explanation on my part. May the Blessed Virgin deign to continue her maternal protection!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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*[Here is the text referred to above.]*

*Diocese of Bordeaux*

*We, Charles-François d'Aviau du Bois de Sanszay, by the grace of God and the authority of the Holy Apostolic See Archbishop of Bordeaux, Peer of France, Commander of the Order of the Holy Spirit.*

*According the communication given us by Reverend G.-Joseph Chaminade, Canon of our Metropolitan Church, with the intention of soliciting from the goodness of the King legal and sovereign authorization of the Institute of Mary, in order to facilitate, extend, and improve primary education;*

*the said Reverend Chaminade, asking us to examine the object, the end, the spirit, and the rules of said Institute, in order to give it our approbation if there is good reason;*

*considering the Statutes of the said association, in 49 articles, relative to its formation, management, and discipline; to its different branches of teaching and their operation;*

*examination made with the greatest care in regard to the project as a whole and in each of its parts, the advantageous results already obtained by the first trials; and of those as may be with reason expected from a perfect organization, advancing under the auspices of religion and the authority of the King;*

*considering that the Institute proposed, first looked upon as a religious association, presents all the desirable guarantees and those most dear to religion, by the character, the principles, the proven fidelity, and useful works of the estimable priest who is its author; by the successes his Sodalties and other holy establishments have already attained, and by the general confidence which these establishments enjoy in our diocese and neighboring dioceses;*

*that, considered a benevolent association in its relationship with the State, the Institute of Mary*

(1) in its formation is in perfect harmony with our laws regarding the use and enjoyment of goods in society;

(2) in regard to teaching, having in the motherhouse and other houses of the same kind, to establish, if necessary, a preliminary course in theory and exact application from which the very desirable uniformity should result in all the schools;

(3) that making use of a method similar to that, already so advantageously known, of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine; perfected still more by experience, and accompanying all the schools of holy Congregations, it should necessarily attain the end of an education—Christian, solid, and monarchical;

(4) that by the union of arts and crafts schools to those of primary education, a union which facilitates everywhere the establishment of schools suited to local needs and customs, this Institute procures, above all, a benefit almost unknown until now. It is all the more necessary to youth, exposed in entering the various workshops to an almost certain loss of faith. It was particularly necessary to open houses of Saint Joseph in Paris to prevent or partly diminish the great evils resulting from this abandonment by the young people;

considering that the Institute of Mary embraces in its solicitude and charity all ages, states, and classes of society who have need of help, in furnishing missionaries in the country places, teachers in the secondary schools, and teachers distinguished in rural economy and in different branches of industry;

considering, finally, that successful experiences in all the provisional establishments favor it in the most consoling manner.

For these reasons, we look upon the said Institute of Mary as very advantageous to religion, useful, and necessary to the State.

We approve its statutes in everything that concerns us. We solicit in its favor the royal sanction and express very sincere wishes so that the Institute, born and formed in our metropolitan city, will be at all times one of the city's ornaments; and that this city will remain the center of the riches which the Institute is to spread throughout the kingdom.

Made and agreed upon in Bordeaux, October 6, 1823

Ch. Fr., Archbishop of Bordeaux

By mandate,  
Gignoux, Ch. Hon. Secr.

\* \* \*

On this same date, Father Chaminade wrote to Mlle de Lachapelle, who had become Mother Marie de l'Incarnation.

## **264. To Mother Marie de l'Incarnation**

December 9, 1823, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

Tell Mme Belloc, will you, that I have not yet received from the mayor of Condom the decision of the municipal council of which she spoke. I have no other news than what she sent to me. I expect to write only after learning of this decision. She will try to introduce this subject into her correspondence with Father Castex.

Our Feast of the Conception is getting along quite well.

Be a good Daughter of Mary.

\* \* \*

## **265. To Bro. David Monier, Saint-Remy**

December 16, 1823, Bordeaux

## Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

I am answering your last letter immediately. You dated it November 3 by mistake. You must indeed be sorely tried, for you believe me guilty of such a great injustice. My dear Son, you believe me guilty of an enormous sin, "of having made a promise which I cannot keep." But can you not see from the totality of my letters, both before and after the said promise, that you have understood it in too broad a sense and that you are allowing too short a time for its accomplishment? I am so convinced of this that, although I have a copy of all the letters I have written you, I do not believe I have reread them, so great is my assurance of never having intended such a promise. But you will tell me I did, for you have the letter written in my own hand. Well, I cannot respond to such a grave accusation except to ask you to send me an exact copy of this entire letter with its date. It must be very short, and I must have written it in a moment of inattention. I do not have a copy of any letter which makes so clear and precise a promise, a promise which goes contrary to my habitual dispositions and to the presuppositions of an entire multitude of other letters. Whatever the case, I must have made the promise while dreaming. The failure to accomplish a promise, although a serious matter, is at most only a material sin when the person involved is entirely in good faith and when the totality of circumstances leaves him in invincible ignorance.

Instead of so many lamentations, why could you not have sent a copy of my alleged promise, pointing out that I was not acting in accord with it?

I feel, my dear Son, that the more my excuses or proofs are just, the less you will be consoled, and it is your consolation that I desire. You yourself have made promises and are not able to keep them. Well, which are these promises? Whatever they are, I will make every effort to help you keep them. In addition, it seems to me, you are greatly preoccupied. At what time has a delay of several months in doing in an establishment things previously promised been considered an injustice? But I see that in taking comfort for myself in these reflections, I should be suggesting that you make some of your own and that in the end, we would be getting nowhere. Which promises have you made? What do you expect to do in Saint-Remy? How many times, directly or indirectly, have I asked you this question? If we do not burn our correspondence, I do not know what those will think who happen to come upon it.

I am returning, my dear Son, to what you call an injustice, my enormous sin. You have a mortal wound over this, and it is even greater than David's, whose words you quote. By the act of sale of the château, have we or the Institute been enriched? I say that on the contrary we, personally considered, have been made poorer. This truth is so evident that it has no need of proofs. I am saying boldly that it has not been enriched! Not by any tacit or verbal conditions which may be present! From those I know, I would again answer no, at least concerning actual riches. There remains only the possibility of riches, a possibility so burdensome that no one would want it, to examine things only humanly and from the temporal point of view. I am so convinced of this that I dare speak of this transaction only in the order of religion.

I admit that a rich and powerful party could have exacted a great profit, with a view to greater advantage. But someone who is a novice and poor to begin with is bound to become still poorer. If the latter does not use great wisdom, if he knows neither how to suffer nor how to wait, he must succumb. Father Bardenet and those whose counsel he sought must have considered us in a vastly different condition from what we actually are. Now they must be either laughing at us or pitying us when they see we are without any type of means to sustain an enterprise which called for such great advance payment. It would have been otherwise if we had presented ourselves with the modesty that becomes us so well and had allowed only our zeal for right living to be seen, along with some good sense in the formation of establishments.

But suppose, my dear Son, we had not played the part of the rich and the powerful and had held to what I wrote to Father Tharin for Father Bardenet's information?<sup>1</sup> Have we not already done much more than was expected in the first place? We wish to do much more good, in making use of this magnificent place, this immense property, according to the views of the Institute. Our desire should please his zeal; and if he could, it would be worth his while to help us. But if he does not help us, if he limits himself to what he has already given, how would it be an injustice on our part to delay a good which is only motivated by zeal and which we have not committed ourselves to, at least for the time being? As far as gratitude is concerned, should it not be reciprocal? Father Bardenet wants to do a certain good. For this, he transfers a vast domain, truly fallow land, without the slightest means to make use of the smallest part. He transfers a magnificent property, but one damaged and unfurnished. We take over this property, and we wear ourselves out to correspond with his plans. Who deserves more gratitude? Father Bardenet has given from his abundance a property that provided nothing for him, while we have given and are still giving from our necessity. We are not giving ourselves reciprocally, but we are both giving to God and religion.

My dear Son, a true peace of soul and solid consolation you will find only in taking things according to their truth. The works of God are not to be considered merely humanly. . . .

Will you adopt my reflections? I fear that you will not. You are considering me only as a person under illusion who is capable of going back on a promise. With such a prejudice, how can we remedy the evil? Nevertheless, I believed it my duty to tell you these things. I hope they will be useful to you. I must do my duty.

I hope this letter will still find you at Saint-Remy, and that there you will receive the news and the most abundant blessings which I wish for you.

I embrace all our dear Children.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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*Sufficiently informed, Father Chaminade accepts the foundation in Condom.*

### **266. To Father Castex, Condom**

December 19, 1823, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. Of the Gaichies Family, Condom

Reverend Father,

I have received the most advantageous report about the excellent dispositions of the recommended persons of your city, but especially about the mayor and the hospital administrators.

Mme Belloc remarked to me that the deliberations of the administrators lacked one or two signatures and that, as soon as this formality was completed, the mayor would send them over to you. Since then, Mme Belloc had someone tell me to write to you so the administration would be able to take action with the government.

I very willingly accept the establishment of the Daughters of Mary in the hospital formerly called Piétat, and I will take the proper steps to see that it measures up to the plans and expectations of all interested parties.

I have not yet answered M. de Lachapelle, but I will do so very soon. Before answering him definitely, I believed it was my duty to take all suitable precautions to assure the complete success of the establishment. I would be obliged if in the meantime you would offer him the assurance of my respectful devotedness. To give the contract for the purchase of the Piétat all

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<sup>1</sup> Letter no. 219.

possible simplicity and to avoid as much as possible all future anxieties, it seems to me Mlle de Lachapelle should buy it herself, under her private name and not as a religious, for the payment of 1,000 francs a year in rent. She could offer the administration (1) the rent of 800 francs, which her father would give her as a gift; (2) 200 francs that she herself would pay her heirs. Then acceptance by M. de Lachapelle and the administrators would follow.

I believed, Father, that I should set down these first ideas so that if they are found acceptable, nothing would further hinder the realization of the enterprise.

I will write to the Archbishop of Auch<sup>1</sup> if you believe that there is no longer any major difficulty. I can state there will no longer be any delay on my part.

Because of the interest you take in the Daughters of Mary, I wanted to let you know that I am almost on the point of concluding the arrangements for an establishment in Bordeaux which will very much resemble the one at Condom. It looks as if the group of sisters destined from Bordeaux will leave before the Condom group.<sup>2</sup> Mother Thérèse's death draws abundant blessings from heaven upon the Institute of Mary. A person would have to be very blind not to be aware of this fact.

I am with sincere and respectful attachment, etc. . . .

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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### **S. 266a. To M. de Lacaussade**

January 6, 1824, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

Please excuse my tardiness in answering your letter of December 4. This delay would have been prolonged had your letter of January 1 not obliged me to reread the first. I recalled that the ladies R. - - - had written to the minister.

I can answer affirmatively to the two questions which are raised by the complaints of the former inspector of the Academy. A petition must be presented to the minister by the proprietor to obtain permission for burial in the pavilion. It seems, in fact, to be imperative. The plan you send me seems to be well planned. If these women are informed of the complaints of their neighbor, perhaps they should mention this in their petition, unless the authorities are unwilling to endorse them.

I was absorbed by this question when your letter of January 3 arrived. Prayers must have been said from the first moment at our novitiate of Saint-Laurent. However, I will write to the prefecture of Agen; I hope I will say nothing that might compromise you. They may suspect that I am kept informed by you of everything that is happening; what is the difference?

I come now to the second question. I do not believe it is opportune to install a vault in the pavilion because (1) the neighbor has already complained, and (2) we are severely strapped for funds.

I will tell no one about the sacrifices you are making to set up this small convent; but now and then I will pray to God to consider and accept them like those that Abel offered to him. I also ask God with all my heart to grant you all the good things I wish for you at the beginning of this new year; especially do I wish you to have in this world everything that can lead you to sovereign bliss.

You do well to remind me that I must pay Mme Verdier 6,000 francs. At the moment I cannot see how I can pay her because other debts for considerable amounts are also due. I keep in

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<sup>1</sup> André de Morlhon (1753-1828), first Archbishop of Auch after the reestablishment of the See (1817), which had been suppressed by the Concordat of 1801.

<sup>2</sup> See the following letter.

mind that the women from Agen have a like sum coming to them in Paris. In order to rid myself of such importunities, I will write immediately to press or delay debtors and creditors. I would like to have the exact date in July when the money is due and the address of Mme Verdier. She will not be sorry to have us replaced by a professor of law from Paris, a royal graduate.

The establishment of Saint-Remy in the department of Haute-Saône is the cause of many headaches and difficulties. Is this a sign of the great good which will come of it? That would be encouraging.

P.S. Although I have not written to our dear Daughters of the convent of Tonneins, they are too often on my mind to be mistaken about my true sentiments. At the moment two other houses of the Daughters of Mary take up my time and my attention.

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*Father Chaminade's last letter to Saint-Remy did not receive a poor reception. Brother David had become calmer, and on New Year's Day he wrote to Father Chaminade in less disquieting terms. This is how he began his letter.*

*My Good Father, a happy year for you and for all those who interest you, help from on high, lights for the mind, abundant consolations for the heart! Here are my wishes, which I presented to God during Mass and which I now repeat to you in the manner of a good son. May the Good God receive them, and may he join to them the other gifts of grace and the fruits which he will consider good for you! I am keeping the restrictions and the limitations you gave me, without any feeling of displeasure and with no desire on my part of going contrary to them.*

*And he continued in this tone, in such a way that Father Chaminade believed he could profit from some words of counsel. This counsel was not destined to be any more successful than the previous one.*

## **267. To Bro. David Monier, Saint-Remy**

January 9, 1824, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

Your letter of December 26 cast a little balm on my soul. Everything will be repaired, all will be properly ordered at Saint-Remy, if we get along with one another. We have not sinned against justice, as you seemed to think we had, by the delays which have occurred until now. If in your anxieties you have been able to communicate a similar sentiment to some people, you have enough intelligence and the means to justify everything. Why? Because those you consult always repeat what I thought I should recommend to you—that is to say, be master of yourself. Try then to do so! Mistrust your imagination! It is your imagination, my dear Son, which furnishes your mind with these subtleties which get the better of your reason and also deceive those to whom you make known your grief. The latter do not know enough of these circumstances to be able to discover what is genuine and what is merely exaggeration.

Your yourself will have a great deal of trouble guarding yourself against this, unless by a wise mistrust of your own ideas you do not so promptly dispel the illusions of others; that you rather try to discover their end, their motives, their intentions; etc. Although I am 500 to 600 miles away from you, it is nonetheless true that in the principles that guide us, I must have a grace of direction. This grace must be in proportion to the difficulty of directing from this distance, and it will always be where God desires establishments. The work of the establishment at Saint-Remy would have already made progress if you had not, almost entirely and from the very beginning, cast aside several requests and several reflections which I had sometimes ventured to make.

In your last letter, my dear Son, you seem in greater possession of yourself. For this reason, I believe I can offer you these reflections. If they do not appear fair to you, merely consider them as nonexistent, for I dispense you from resisting them. Let us occupy ourselves with our affairs.

I am going to write to M. Masson in Lorraine through M. Rothéa to ask him to lend you a considerable sum, 10,000 francs, for example. I will have a copy of this letter made and include it here along with a note from M. Rothéa to M. Masson. You may be the bearer, if you do not find it too inconvenient. If you decide to make the trip, you would do well in Nancy to greet the new bishop, on your own behalf as well as on mine. This is His Excellency Bishop de [Forbin-] Janson, former Missionary of France.<sup>1</sup> I believe he will recall the director of the Madeleine Sodality, etc. You will give him an idea of the Institute of Mary and of the establishment at Saint-Remy. You will ask for his protection.

M. Xavier Rothéa has just proposed several subjects as postulants to the Society. I requested from his brother an extract or notes about them. He has just given me a letter instead of an extract, which I will include with this one.

I also hope to include a copy, in due form, of the authorization of the Institute of Mary granted by the archbishop. It bears the suppression of the two words “entire and more complete”<sup>1</sup> and Father Barrès wrote, “form a perfect organization . . .” and the change which you have pointed out.<sup>2</sup> Regarding the article expressed in such a confused manner, Father Barrès told me immediately that he had repeated the word “union” because of the length of the sentence. I have retouched it, as you will see.<sup>3</sup> Father Barrès, not having received any remark about this matter, had had it transcribed in the registers of the archbishop hardly 8 or 9 days later. My young copyist will give Father Barrès’ secretary a copy of the authorization along with the changes, so he can indicate them in the margins.

I have hopes of forming an establishment of the Daughters of Mary in Bordeaux. First there is the question of taking on the boarding school of the Gramagnac young women, which is interesting. The Jesuits are doing what they can to attract boarders and teachers to the new community of the Sacred Heart, of which they are the protectors and, as it were, the instructors. Having thought over what should be done in this circumstance, I decided that instead of a confrontation, it was better policy to yield to the Jesuits and to the Sacred Heart the boarders and the teachers and everything that might belong to them and to limit myself to the house in question. I will transfer the novitiate of the Daughters of Mary there. I thought it was my duty to inform Father Barrès of my decision—that is to say, to inform the archbishop and to ask if this new establishment may not be looked upon with favor. Father Barrès answered me. “The Institute of Mary is authorized, etc. . . .” The little I can tell you about this matter and its numerous circumstances is only to acquaint you with something of great importance and also to show you our consideration for obtaining the authorization.

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<sup>1</sup> Bishop de Forbin-Janson (1785-1844) one of the most ardent helpers of Fr. Rauzan, founder of the Missionaries of France, was elevated in 1823 to the See of Nancy, in spite of his wishes. His activity for the missions and his attachment to the Restoration exposed him to the ill will of the government of Louis-Philippe, who in 1830 forbade him to enter his diocese. He profited from his leisure to continue his mission visits in Europe and America and begin there the beautiful work of the Holy Childhood, of which he was the true founder. He always showed himself attached to the Society of Mary. He had just arranged with Fr. Chaminade for the foundation of a normal school in the Nancy diocese when the revolution of 1830 broke out. Later, he even thought of his retirement in the Society of Mary. Shortly before his death, in the fall of 1843, he presided with Bishops Donnet and Gignoux at the transfer of the body of Saint Urbain, martyr, to the novitiate of Saint-Anne in Bordeaux.

<sup>2</sup> The first draft, fourth paragraph reads, “Concerning the results that may with right be expected from an organization, entire and more complete. . . .” Bro. David proposed the suppression of these last words.

<sup>3</sup> The project referred to note 3. “Making use of the methods already so advantageously known, of the Brothers of Saint Yon.” Bro. David corrected this. “Making use of a method similar to the one so advantageously known of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine . . . .”

<sup>3</sup> There is a question of the paragraph regarding the school of arts and crafts, in which Fr. Chaminade had made the wording more precise and improved the style.

Although I disapproved of your departure for Paris, my dear Son, I always have the same desire that you will continue to seek the authorization of the Institute. If possible, settle upon a method of elementary but practical teaching of the arts and crafts, especially of the arts. Remain in complete agreement with the university. In several of my letters, I sought to remind you that after your beginning at Saint-Remy, you would leave for Paris to carry out your plans there, but without abandoning Saint-Remy. I wanted to be always solicitous about using this vast property, little by little, leaving Paris to return to Saint-Remy at the first sign of any pressing need, leaving Saint-Remy to return to Paris to continue your other business there, etc. . . .

What made me very sorry, what I disapproved of and what in good conscience I must disapprove of, is this departure for Paris on your own responsibility, which amounted to an abandonment of Saint-Remy. The trouble was in your motives. It became necessary to send someone quickly to dispel the regrettable impressions created by your departure, your excuses, and even your lack of success. It was necessary to gain knowledge of the true state of things, to, etc. . . .

Let us come together, my dear Son, let us come together! You nearly know what your true position is everywhere. During the long time we have been together, the numerous reflections I have been able to make about everything that has happened may show you what I have in mind, what I desire concerning even the very slowness of our enterprises—slowness and delays in the manner of bringing them to their desired end, because of the poverty of our means and resources. If our views are not the same or if you find that my views are not extensive enough, that they are too timid and uncertain, write to me with moderation and with sufficient details and explanations. In a word, let us work together. Wisdom calls for this; faith and religion ask for it; our union for the work of God demands it. The distance of 400 to 500 miles is really a difficulty; it is not a reason we should not agree. The good we seek may sometimes advance more slowly, but what can we do? If the order of Providence permits it, why should we not suffer these delays?

I am stopping now not because I am at the end of my third page, but only to profit by tomorrow morning's mail. Yesterday's paper said the Bishops of Strasbourg and of Nancy are going to be consecrated in Paris. What, then, does M. Xavier think? *Pax tecum, Fili mi!*

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I am embracing all my dear Children of Saint-Remy tenderly. The common letter which they wrote in answer to mine, to wish me a happy New Year, filled me with consolation. It indicates excellent dispositions and is full of kind sentiments. It has 17 signatures.

I recall, my dear Son, that you told me that the Missionaries had built a superb edifice in Vesoul, where they had to furnish 125 rooms for as many schoolteachers. Would the Missionaries lend us the 125 beds? Who could ask them about this? I am ready to do this myself, but it would be more suitable, it seems to me, if the request were made by you.

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### **268. To Bro. Dominique Clouzet, Saint-Remy**

January 20, 1824, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

I have received the letter you wrote in the name of everyone, which 17 have signed. I have already expressed to you my satisfaction when writing to Brother David. I read with interest and feeling what you wrote to Brother Auguste. I sent both letters to Agen, to a rich heiress with whom I am to work toward an establishment of the Miséricorde dependent upon the Daughters of Mary. I hope she may place at my disposal a considerable sum which will help me to come to

your assistance, at least in part. I am negotiating a cash sale of the house of the Canton de la Rode.<sup>1</sup> If we can, we will sell Brother Auguste's house to the Chartrons . . . I am seeking other ways of obtaining money. My dear Son, the Good God will come to our help in these ways or in any other which his mercy alone understands.

Last week I sent Brother David some letters for M. Masson in Nancy. I hope the latter will be able to lend Brother David a considerable sum. Most of all we must be patient and then do whatever we reasonably can, in order not to tempt Providence.

I have been and continue to be amazed at your great tranquility at Saint-Remy. For the last six months you have not made any attempt to obtain what is urgently needed. If you had spoken confidentially to Father Bardenet, he would have introduced you to people interested in good works in Besançon, the Missionaries, the Grand Seminary, the archbishop, etc. . . .

Why leave the lands entirely uncultivated? You have neither farm implements nor oxen or horses, but are there no people who have some and who work for others for reasonable payment—whether in money or in kind—during the regular season or at the end of the year? I could name several people I know, both in the Midi and in the north of France, who work their farms in this way. Father Bardenet has reserved for himself a small farm; no doubt he has what is needed to cultivate it. After having drawn you to Saint-Remy, why does he then become your enemy so that you can reach no accommodation with him or with anyone he may recommend?

I am losing myself in all these considerations and in others like them. They are only natural—any reasonable person would make them. Surely you could foresee that. I would. If they cannot be accomplished for some reason, why not save me the worry by telling me of this? I have heard nothing at all for six months. If I hazard some reflections, I almost receive as an answer that at a distance of 450 miles, it is impossible for me to understand things. What government, what administration would be satisfied with such an answer?

You will tell me, perhaps, that you were not put in charge of such things, that you were only to see to it that higher orders were carried out. Agreed! But you could surely come to an agreement with Brother David. You could suggest to him with respect and simplicity that if everything could not be done at the same time, this is no reason for doing nothing at all; that there is often more than one road to get to the same place; etc. . . . You could at least write to me about your thoughts, your reasons, etc. . . .

It seems to me, my dear Son, that I am making complaints to you or that I am making them indirectly to Brother David. But no! From whatever side the wrong comes, from you or from Brother David or from me, it may well be that all three of us have our part in it. As for me, I reproach myself for not having exacted details on your actual position, even though I have always asked for them. I should have insisted on sterner measures, since what was being proposed was not possible.

I am writing to Brother David to act as if we were just making a beginning and to move ahead. "There you are," I am saying to him, "newly arrived at Saint-Remy. What can be suitably done in your position?" I am saying the same thing to you. But you wish to obtain for us sums of money large enough to place us in an advantageous position. It is true, my dear Son. But it is possible that I may not succeed. It is possible I may have some success, but that the sums will be insufficient to accomplish the intended result. It is possible, and very much so, that there will be very annoying delays, especially if you are not counting on them.

You tell Brother Auguste that you should have had 300 boarders this year. This is a great blunder, it seems to me, not to have received them. Without knowing anything about it, I proposed to Brother David opening a boarding school—but not a word of reply!

There is the question of the work of the mission for the schoolteachers after Easter, but what about the beds, what about advance payments to make the place suitable to receive them? The Missionaries have 125 beds which have been prepared for this work. Why would they not

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<sup>1</sup> Small property acquired in 1818 by Fr. Chaminade in Bordeaux, no. 6, Rue Croix-de-Seguey.

lend them to you, if you ask them in the proper way? It is they who are to give the mission. It is very possible, and I look upon this as beyond a doubt, that they would make or obtain the advance payments necessary. Perhaps the department, which is to pay the expenses of this mission, will advance the sums agreed upon.

Let us proceed, my dear Son, courage! Come to as perfect an understanding as possible with Brother David, but do not remain inactive in this manner any longer. Write to me about things as clearly as possible, that I may be correctly informed about what goes on.

I have not received any answer from Father Bardenet; I am not surprised about this, for he must have noticed that we were not in perfect agreement. But why do not you tell me anything about this? There is some small mystery here.

I wished to write a letter to all my dear Children in common at Saint-Remy, but I am obliged to postpone it to a later date, in order not to miss this mail. I hope that in spite of the great distance, the fatherly blessing I am giving them in the outpouring of my affection for them will fall on them all with abundance. I desire, and I ask this of the Lord, that you will have a very considerable share of this blessing.

My letter is finished and recopied. I have received one from Brother David, dated January 11. If I were not so certain about the uprightness of his intentions, I would imagine that he was giving over this establishment to complete destruction and that he. . . . Let us stop. . . . For 43 or 46 children of farmers, he tells me he has to pay a bill for books to the amount of 500 francs and that the teachers' manuals require the greater part of this sum. Then at Besançon, 1,030 francs, at the fifth presentation of bills. He promised to write me again about everything—that is to say, he really believes that he actually writes to me at each presentation. You know our situation, my dear Son. View everything before God. Pray and ask your brothers to pray. Speak to Brother David and see if he does not want to take measures dictated by wisdom. With the efforts alone that Providence permits us to make, along with your efforts and the resources you can obtain, the establishment may be able to maintain itself and make the progress of which it is capable. I do not know if your vexations and worries allow you to gain an idea of the excess of grief that Saint-Remy causes me. It is not important. Write to me everything that is on your mind, so we can come to a final decision.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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### **S. 268a. To Father Paga, Agen**

January 23, 1824

Rough Copy, Agmar

I, the undersigned, Missionary Apostolic, director of the Sodality of Bordeaux and of all those affiliated to it, etc., after all the inquiries we have made into the prudence, zeal, and talents of Reverent Paga, priest, one of the directors and professors at the minor seminary of Agen, have named and do appoint by these presents director of the Sodality of Christian women which we have established in his parish church and director of the Sodality of men in Agen, with the approbation and consent of the Bishop of Agen and without questioning the distinction which our venerable son Father Mouran, the superior of the major seminary, has as Director General of the Sodalities of men and women.

In consequence of which Father Paga will direct the Sodality for me at Agen and will preside at their general and particular meetings, will receive sodalists, grant them indulgences—in short, will full in their regard all the duties of zeal which I would perform if I were present; his is now the responsibility, etc.

\* \* \*

*Father Chaminade did not hesitate to make this decision. Not satisfied with searching for the necessary capital, he chose a radical measure—to recall Brother David, whose head definitely had more need of rest than of reasons—and he confided to Father Caillet the mission of drawing the establishment from its lethargy. He informed Brother Clouzet of this.*

**269. To Bro. Dominique Clouzet, Saint-Remy**

January 27, 1824, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

I have just revoked what Brother David calls his orders at Saint-Remy. I am giving him a new assignment, that of going to Paris.

I received your letter of January 16. Before this one, you will have received a lengthy one I wrote you not quite a week ago. Before his departure, I ask Brother David to leave with you all the papers, letters, and business notes relative to the establishment of Saint-Remy or any in which Saint-Remy became the center, except for whatever will require his further attention in Paris. It would then suffice for him to leave with you notification of the papers he is taking along and of the business he will need to look after.

I will send you someone around February 20 or February 25 to help you develop the establishment of Saint-Remy. I presume Father Caillet will have this assignment. I have been preparing him for several days, and the good God seems to be preparing him by the dispositions he is inspiring. If Brother David is in Paris at this time, Father Caillet will stay there a while to see and speak with him. From Paris, he will go straight to Besançon, at least I am presuming so. All those in Besançon who may have some interest in Saint-Remy have been notified of these changes by the same mail that will bring this letter. It is possible there may be some change between now and then, but I will keep you informed.

Profit by the intervening time to form yourself to virtue, and likewise to form all your brothers.

I was pleased to receive Brother Rothéa's short letter. He is working to acquire silence of the imagination, but with prudence. The imagination is not mastered by force or by constraint. I presume Father Caillet will often make use of him in this mission, and I have confidence that Brother Rothéa will be in complete agreement in following the directions Father Caillet will bring.

Make as few expenditures as possible, but take good care of your brothers' health, as well as your own. If Brother David is not cured, it would be necessary to oblige him to await his complete restoration to health.

I spoke seriously to M. Molinier's brother. He said to me, "If there is hope that my brother will get better or if his infirmity may permit him to be of some use to the Institute, or even if his infirmity leads to an early death, it would be better not to have him return." In the contrary case, he would have to be returned to his family. Arrange the matter with the doctor and the patient himself. In particular, tell him how much I am attached to him, that I am exhorting him to make of his infirmities and suffering sources of spiritual profit.

I will take notes on each of our brothers and even, as much as I can, on each of the postulants. In the meantime, write down for me anything that may give me a correct and complete evaluation of each one. Assuming he is sent, I will give Father Caillet rather considerable powers, as much in regard to things as to persons, even the power of admitting to the novitiate and to religious profession. . . . He is charged with causing our establishment, which we regard as one of the works of God, to succeed with all the means Providence may help him to find. You may notify Father Bardenet of this, while assuring him of my sincere and respectful attachment. You

may also tell him that I believe I have understood him, in spite of his rigorous silence, or rather that I have heard him by his very silence. . . .

I am embracing you, my dear Son. Embrace each of your brothers for me. They are all my Children, whom I carry in my heart.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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**S. 269a. To Father Vernier, Missionary at Bauprès**

January 27, 1824, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

Our good Superior,<sup>1</sup> who is ever mindful of all the establishments he has founded and who is particularly attentive to the welfare of the diocese of Besançon, has expressed to me his uneasiness at the slight progress made by the new community of Saint-Remy and has informed me of the new assignment he has given to Brother David. He orders him by this post to spend some time in Paris. When I speak of the slight progress noticeable in the budding establishment, I am not referring to the progress in virtue; it would be difficult to find such true fervor elsewhere. Our Good Father is referring to the development of the works of the Institute of Mary.

Because of Brother David's long absence, another religious must be sent to stimulate and develop the house. I have reasons to believe that I will be given this assignment. But who am I to work at such an interesting project? I am turning to you, Monsieur, and to M. Breuillot; you are aware of my confidence in you both. If obedience sends me to Saint-Remy, I will immediately have recourse to you for advice. I am without experience, so I will come to you as a child to his father. I will do only what you suggest.

*As you present my most humble greetings to this worthy M. Veuiller, please inform him of my imminent arrival and tell him how I long to see and embrace him.*

Before my departure I would have loved to know what you think of the establishment of Saint-Remy, what is the opinion of the archbishop, of M. Breuillot, the superior of the seminary, the pastor of the cathedral, etc., and especially of Father Bardenet.

*It is normal that I would write personally to the latter, but I do not know him and I already have so many proofs of your high regard that I thought I would ask you to do it. If you could write immediately, you would be rendering me a great service. While I await this favor and the pleasure of seeing you and of discussing very openly with you, I ask that you remember me in your prayers.*

P.S. Just between us, I understand that the Good Father, who has full confidence in Brother David, is not very happy however with the manner in which he is working at the Saint-Remy project. He is guided too much by human considerations; have you noticed anything of the kind?

\* \* \*

*Brother David was in no hurry to leave Saint-Remy. He was awaiting Father Caillet's arrival, and it was necessary for Father Chaminade to intervene again to help him decide to leave. But from this time on, Brother Clouzet took the direction of the work in hand. In the midst of these difficulties, the religious led a most edifying life. "Union is very close among all of us," Brother Clouzet could write. "Long live the Lord, who has given us such a great favor!"*

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<sup>1</sup>The rough copy of this letter is in Fr. Chaminade's handwriting; he wrote it for Fr. Caillet, who actually signed it. The paragraphs introduced by Fr. Caillet are in Italics.

*(January 16, 1824). The blessing of God was evident in the numerous postulants who offered themselves to increase the community.*

**270. To Bro. Dominique Clouzet, Saint-Remy**

February 23, 1824, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

I have just received your letter, and just at the right time. I was going to write to Father Bardenet. In fact, I am writing to him by this very mail. Include a copy of this letter, which he will receive when you get this one.<sup>1</sup> You will notice some details about Father Caillet's journey and about ways of dealing with Father Bardenet.

Brother David does not give me any reason for prolonging his stay at Saint-Remy, other than lack of money for traveling. He tells me the 1,000 francs he has just received and the 881 francs I am sending him to take to Ribeauvillé will be more than used up. Try to have him find some way of making his trip to Paris. How could we have managed at Saint-Remy if we had not received the 1,881 francs we were not expecting? On the other hand, this trip is so sudden and so short. . . . Brother David speaks to me about a bill required in Besançon amounting to 1,030 francs. If I had known the source and the reason of it, I could have had it paid. In any case, send the said account to Father Caillet in Besançon.

You certainly understand that if there is some serious observation to be made to Father Caillet before his arrival at Saint-Remy, you must write to him immediately, either in Paris or in Besançon. I doubt you will be on time to reach him in Paris, but upon his arrival in Besançon he should be able to find your letter, as well as Father Bardenet's.

I am not writing to Brother David because I imagine that after reflection, he must have salvaged something from the 881 francs and must have left for Paris.

Well, my dear Son, I am not answering any of the other points of your letter because Father Caillet is leaving supplied with notes of all kinds. There are few matters concerning the establishment at Saint-Remy that we have not spoken about.

Father Caillet has told Father Breuillot<sup>1</sup> that he is coming to Besançon. There he will begin to speak to him about the Marast matter and will be able to discuss it before his arrival in Saint-Remy. Brother David asked me for my power of attorney without telling me the name of the person he was doing business with. Nevertheless, I sent it to him. Names are sometimes of use in the management of matters.

Take good care of your brothers in everything that concerns the spiritual and the temporal. The Good Lord will bless your solicitude, as his unworthy minister blesses it, to whom he has nevertheless given the feelings of a father.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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<sup>1</sup> This letter has not been preserved.

<sup>1</sup> Fr. Breuillot (1758-1837) director and procurator of the Grand Seminary of Besançon, an affiliate of the Society of Mary, was a priest when the Revolution broke out. He refused to take the schismatic oath, was thrown into prison, and after his liberation devoted himself to the exercise of his ministry during the worst days of the Terror. Foreseeing the future needs of the Church, from this time on he devoted his efforts to the training of priests and to opening seminaries. "In mentioning to you this venerable priest," wrote the Archbishop of Besançon the day after his death, "I recall to you the founder of all our ecclesiastical establishments, the one to whom we owe the present condition of the diocese, who has contributed more than anyone else to its rise from ruins. A man of faith, with the help of God he understood and completed what the boldest genius would have hardly dared to imagine. I have seen only the last rays of this torch of the just man which the Lord had lit in this diocese to shed in it life and heat." With Fr. Bardenet, Fr. Breuillot was the instrument of God used to introduce the Society of Mary in Franche-Comté, in particular, Saint-Remy and Marast (see letter no. 296.)



## First Works at Saint-Remy

1824 to 1825

*The directions given to Father Caillet on the occasion of his first mission in the north are among the most remarkable documents written by Father Chaminade.*

### 271. To Fr. Georges Caillet, Saint-Remy

February 26, 1824, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

Obedience for my very dear Son, Georges M. Caillet, priest, professed religious of the Institute of Mary.

You desire, my dear Son, handwritten directions regarding the important mission you are going to fulfill at Saint-Remy. Your desires are praiseworthy. They prove at the same time both your goodwill and your obedience. I willingly undertake to give them. Your obedience will take the form of a letter.

What is the most essential object of your mission? In what manner and in what spirit are you to work at it? Here, my dear Son, you have what I believe you expect from the tenderness of the Father and Superior whom God has given you here upon earth.

1. The object of your mission. To point this out to you more clearly, I will speak about what is material and what concerns the personnel of the establishment.

Concerning what is material, I understand (1) the debts your brothers have been obliged to contract; (2) the most essential and the most urgent needs to live, to grow, to develop, and to cultivate the land at Saint-Remy; and (3) most of the repairs, whether needed in the framework and roofs or in the walls of the enclosure.

I am not giving you any money, my dear Son, but I am giving you what is worth more than this—it is the order of God. As you know, I have accepted the establishment of Saint-Remy only because we have believed it to be according to the blessed and merciful views of Providence. You also know the sacrifices I have made until now to sustain it. Your faith and your confidence in God will see to it that you meet those people whom God will accord the notable favor of coming to your aid. Happy the people chosen by God to aid in the development of his works!

Concerning the personnel, I understand this to refer to what is spiritual in the community and to whatever has any connection with it, either directly or indirectly. You know that the primary end of the Institute of Mary is the sanctification of its members. Each person, even the heads of departments of whatever grade or rank, is to render you an account of his interior. Moreover, the heads just referred to will show you their registers.

If you should encounter any “abuses,” you may, you must correct them. If you should discover in the new establishment some obstacle to the progress in virtue and to the perfection to which all are called, you have the duty to remove it, etc., etc., etc.

I clothe you with my authority. Do everything you feel I would do, or rather that I should do in your place. You have the power to admit to the postulate, to the novitiate, and to annual, triennial, and perpetual profession those you find worthy; do not easily admit anyone to perpetual profession.

In every difficult situation, surround yourself with the knowledge and experience of the various heads of the establishment. Hold frequent councils, etc., etc. To your authority over spiritual matters of personnel, I am placing no limits except for this single case, that you would encounter unanimous opposition of the various heads. In such an emergency you would suspend your orders and inform me.

2. In what manner and in what spirit are you to work?

In what manner? My dear Son, first observe your departure point. Consider where you are going and especially the people for whom you must carry out your mission. It will then be easy for you to conclude in what spirit you are to work.

You are coming from a place of retreat, from a place where you believed the world dead and crucified to you, just as you believe yourself dead and crucified to the world. From a place where your heart has so often repeated the beautiful words of Saint Paul to the Galatians, *Mihi absit gloriari, nisi in cruce Domini nostril Jesu Christi; per quem mihi mundus crucifixus est, et ego mundo.*

Saint Gregory the Great warns us, my dear Son, that in the most holy profession, in which we believe to have uprooted from our heart forever all taste for vanities, for the infidelities and the corruption of the world, it is still true that we find some roots of these evils in the relationships which religious are obliged to have with people in the outside world. We are no longer of the world, says the same Church Father, but the world still clings to us by almost imperceptible bonds. Oh, my dear Son, take care during your long journey that you and the world are reciprocally dead and crucified. Frequently enter into yourself and take notice of the slightest impressions.

Here I am ending my reflections on the first two points. The third, toward whom you are especially to exercise your mission, is well known to you. The religious of Saint-Remy are your brothers, and like you they have the honor and the glory of bearing the name of Children of Mary. Could I give you wiser and more religious counsels than those Saint Paul gives to the Galatians in the first five verses of the sixth chapter, already cited? Make yourself familiar, as it were, familiar with this apostolic doctrine, my dear Son, and make it the rule of your conduct.

“But in what spirit,” you add, my dear Son, “am I to work?” If you consider your mission in relation to your brothers, the holy apostle has just given you an answer, *in spiritu lenitatis*.<sup>2</sup> If you consider it as a whole, and above all in relation to its material object, it is in “a spirit of faith and of confidence in God.” Persuaded that the establishment of Saint-Remy is a work of God, chosen from divine mercy as one of the principal workers, how can you direct your actions in favor of this work if you are not a truly flexible instrument in the hands of the great Master, if you act contrary to God’s views and action by views that are complete human, all natural? A work of God, a work in the supernatural order, must be carried out with the views and with the motives of the same order. I know this is your way of thinking, so I will not insist on this point however important it may be. But because of this, my dear Son, for you there is the happy obligation of asking the Lord unceasingly for an increase of faith and of accustoming yourself to act only in the spirit of faith. Soon, then, this spirit of faith will become in you a spirit of confidence in God, a spirit of zeal, a spirit of strength and of generosity, etc. . . .

I will close this already long letter, my dear Son, the same way Saint Paul closes his letter to the Galatians. If you conduct yourself according to this rule, if you place your glory and your hope not in human wisdom but in the views of faith in Jesus Christ, our divine Master, his peace and mercy will rest with us. *Quicumque hanc regulam secuti fuerint, pax super illos et misericordia, etc.*

May the grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, my dear Son, be ever with your spirit. Amen.

G.-Joseph Chaminade  
Superior of the Institute of Mary  
Bordeaux, February 26, 1824

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*Before leaving, Father Caillet wrote to Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon on behalf of Father Chaminade.*

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<sup>2</sup> In a spirit of gentleness.

*Reverend Mother Superior,*

*Our Good Father gives me the pleasure of speaking a moment with you before my departure, which is to take place tomorrow, March 1, at five in the morning. He asks me to write to you concerning Lent, for yourself and for the community.*

*Regarding the community, his intention is (1) that you will make use of the sufficient authorization he gives you to provide meat for those of your daughters who may have a true need for it. (2) That you will equally dispense from fasting those who could not observe it without seriously compromising their health. (3) That to settle the matter and do away with all scruples, you will consult and follow the advice of the doctor. (4) Finally, that in case of doubt and uncertainty, you will follow the course most favorable from the point of view of health. Regarding those who are well, they will remember that in religious Orders, pure Christianity is to be found in this exact observance of the laws of Holy Church. I am certain they will make it a source of pleasure for themselves to conform to them.*

*Concerning yourself, my Good Mother Superior, his orders are that in everything you will follow the program the doctor prescribes for you, worked out in consultation with the Mother in charge of work. To this effect, let good Sister Saint-Vincent be charged with interpreting the doctor's instruction, to prepare for you what he will prescribe. In case of doubt, the matter is to be referred to the council of the Mothers. Our Good Father has no doubt whatsoever regarding your docility on this point, as on all others, He hopes you will become well as a result and that it will be a real joy for you to be able to obey and to renounce yourself in this matter. It is clearly understood this program will equally concern both the conferences and catechism instructions which would tire you too much, fasting and abstinence that may prove prejudicial to your health, etc. . . .*

*Let us love the good God, my Good Mother! Oh, that it were given to us to love God and cause him to be loved by all creatures susceptible of love, solely for himself and because of his infinite perfections! I would like to love him, but my self-love is always in the way. Give me spiritual alms, you and your dear Daughters, in according me your fervent prayers so that I may correct myself and no longer spoil the works of God. I am nevertheless at peace as I am ready to leave, and I hope in the Lord, who will sustain me in his infinite goodness.*

*During my absence of six weeks, I will not forget the beloved Agen community. I love it in Our Lord Jesus Christ, and I ardently desire to see all of its members rise to sanctity. This is the wish of my soul, and for you in particular, my Good Mother. In this disposition I have the honor of remaining in Jesus and Mary your very humble servant and brother.*

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*Father Chaminade added this in his own hand.*

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

February 29, 1824, Bordeaux

My dear Child,

In a postscript added to the letter Father Caillet wrote to Mother Saint- Vincent, I am including his commission in your regard. The care needed for the recovery and preservation of your health are under the law of obedience, and consequently you will conform to everything that will be prescribed for you under the same law. Whatever the needs of the community and of the Sodalities may be, do only what is in accord with the plans of God as they are manifested to you. In a few days, I desire to be able to remove the obstacle I am placing before the exercise of your zeal.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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*A few days later Father Chaminade completed his instructions.*

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

March 11, 1824, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

[With insert from S. 273]

My dear Child,

I am sending you (1) a small packet of papers for M. Lacoste, unsealed so you and Mother de l'Incarnation can take note of the contents. Please seal it immediately and send it on. (2) Two letters from M. Castex. (3) The plan of Piétat; you and Mme Belloc, who saw and visited the place, can then write your remarks and send them on to me. Do you see any objection to the presence of Mother de l'Incarnation at Condom when the contract is signed so that she can see to the repairs and the preparation of the place? She could take along a good companion, or even Mme Belloc. They could stay with the women of the de Trenquelléon family, where they could live very religiously. Besides, I can give them rules of conduct which they can follow.

You can write to Mlle Momus that it is not up to you to describe to Mlle Sénac how to reach Agen; that is her concern, and also, Mlle Sénac is not a child. She is 29 years old and must manage on her own; if she presents herself at the door of the convent, receive her warmly.

My dear Child, follow with simplicity the program prescribed for you. I understood that rest is what you need the most. Your body and your soul will profit by it, I hope. Speak very little. Have others do this for you, etc. . . .

I cannot as yet tell you anything about your establishment in Bordeaux. In a few days, however, we will know things more clearly, for or against.

I am returning, my dear Child, to the subject of your health. You seem to have troubles of conscience concerning some of the care being given to you. My dear Child, you should have many more for showing dislike for this care, whether it is a question of a meat diet or the contrary. Even if there should be a mistake in giving you more than is needed for your health, there would never be any mistake in your obedience. But be careful—we must obey with joy and in the spirit of those who command. You no longer belong to yourself but to God, to the Blessed Virgin, to religion. Follow without fear, follow with joy what such masters ask of you!

I have no illusions, my dear Child, concerning the fears you have reason to experience on the side of nature and on the side of self-love. Sensuality may be aroused by the good treatment we give our bodies. Self-love is flattered by the interest we have in them and by the care we give them. What is to be done? Nothing but to obey. We wish neither glory nor pleasure, but only what God wishes and as he wants it. Self-love finds it more to its interest to show regret in not being able to observe the holy laws of fasting and abstinence. Then it is far better not to say anything, to accept with gratitude what is given, and to be edified at the charity of others. . . . I am led to hope that in two weeks you will be sufficiently restored to health, if you do what is asked of you. May the will of God be done in all things! May the peace of the Lord be ever with you!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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*A first echo of Father Caillet's trip comes from Paris. Several weeks before, a businessman of this city, M. O'Lombel, had addressed the following letter to Father Chaminade.*  
*Reverend Father,*

*Knowing for a long time all the fruit being produced by the Sodality which you direct in so edifying a manner, I seek today to offer your zeal the consoling hope of seeing the same seeds come to fruition in this capital. Then the capital will be like Bordeaux, with so many and such beautiful conquests for our holy religion.*

*You know that associations of fervent men who make an open profession of Christianity have been formed in several parishes of Paris as a result of the pastoral visit of two years ago. They are directed by the pastors of the parishes in which they are found. For a long time, I believed they would experience great growth. I am convinced today that the good they will accomplish will be far from what could be obtained from a Sodality organized here in a manner conformable to the one you so admirably direct in Bordeaux.*

*In consequence, I am taking the liberty of addressing myself to you, with the confidence only Christian fellowship can inspire, to ask you very sincerely to have the extreme kindness to send me a copy of the rules which govern your Sodality, in view of presenting them to His Excellency the Archbishop. We will have these observed in the capital if he adopts them, as I have every reason to hope he will.<sup>1</sup>*

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*During his stay in Paris Father Caillet visited M. O'Lombel, and through him he was introduced to the Paris Sodality. There was an exchange of views, objections were raised, and Father Chaminade wrote to his new correspondent.*

#### **274. To M. O'Lombel, Paris**

March 22, 1824, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

Monsieur,

Thank you for all your kind attentions to Father Caillet. His courage and goodwill seem to have increased in the presence of you and the sodality leaders. While stopping in Dijon he saw Father Rauzan, the founder of the Missionaries of France, but he was able to speak with him only a short time. This is all he tells me in his first letter, written on his arrival in Besançon.

The religious association gives us great reasons for hope if it is well organized, as there is every reason to expect it will be.

I have the honor of sending you a copy of the Institut of the Sodality of young people. This is the plan which must be followed in the formation of a Sodality for men in general. Here we make a distinction between the Sodality of Young Men and that of the Fathers of Families, but in other cities we unite them under the same leader and under the same direction. The men's sodality, then, is divided into two sections, one for youth and the other for those of mature age. Each section has two classes, the first and the second. In the second we place all good workmen, while in the first we place all those who are above this class in society. Each section is divided into groups, more or less according to the number of sodalists. These groups bring together individuals who are most similar in age, tastes, and occupation. For example, in the second section—the young workers—the first group would be made up of all workshop leaders, their

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<sup>1</sup> M. O'Lombel, whom we will see for many years in a close relationship with Fr. Chaminade and his main correspondent in Paris, is not otherwise known to us. His family, of Irish origin as his name indicates, perhaps had located in Spain, where he had honorable connections through his wife, Dolores Rizo, an Andalusian. In France he must have received a proper education, if we are to judge by his correspondence with Fr. Chaminade, and he had established himself in Paris at no. 7, Rue de Sèvres, near the Foreign Missions; there Father Caillet met him. A businessman, very honest but not too clever, it seems he was involved in the religious and monarchical movement of the time. He had several daughters who made profession in the Daughters of Mary in 1837. At this time he had to leave France because of incidents unknown to us. He was living in Puerto-Real near Cadiz, and we lose trace of him in 1839.

sons or teachers, and the second group of simple workmen, etc. . . . If in a section there happen to be many of the same positions in society, they can be divided into several groups. In the first, for example, law students, medical students, etc. . . ; in the second, tailors, shoemakers, etc. . . . Tact and skill are needed in arranging these groups in order not to wound self-love or arouse any type of jealousy.

Father Caillet tells me he had the council of Paris Sodality read the notes he had made about the Institut of the Sodalities, and that, having been questioned by M. Ponton d'Amécourt<sup>1</sup> about whether the prefect of the Sodality was elected by the Sodality, he had answered that the sodalists themselves choose and name by vote the prefect they prefer, in the view of and with the sanction of the director, without whose consent nothing happens in the council and meetings of the Sodality. He had answered furthermore that M. Ponton d'Amécourt believed this was a concession to the worldly spirit; that it smacked of a charter, somewhat constitutional; and that it established a government, monarchical and constitutional. On this subject, here are a few short observations.

(1) You will notice by an attentive reading of the chapter on elections that Father Caillet's answer is not entirely exact. (2) I drew up this small Institut of the Sodality of Young Men many years before anyone heard of the charter and of an obsolete or constitutional monarchy. I laid its foundations and guiding principles 20 years ago. (3) In the oldest regulations of the Sodalities, were the sodalists influenced by votes in the choice of the prefect? (4) Throughout the more than three centuries that sodalities have existed, has there ever been a legitimate one in which the ecclesiastical head took any title other than that of director? Is it by instinct, imitation, or by pure reasoning that we thought we should more or less approximate this ancient practice? As for me, it seemed to me more in conformity with the nature of people, especially of today's youth, and more likely to sustain interest. Furthermore, by a careful reading of the chapter on elections it is easy to see that there can be no other prefect than the one the director wishes, without his having the inconvenience of seeming to name him by the force of authority. These preparatory consultations, these votes given by written and secret ballots, these white and black ballot sheets are in truth only toys, but they please nonetheless. Most of the sodalists know this, but they are still glad that both the older members and the newer have been consulted.

It should be noted, however, that here there is no question of bringing together simply pious and monarchical Christians, but rather of attracting the greatest number possible of adult men, of young men, and even of adolescents in order to continue to increase this very small number. The Sodalities are, so to speak, perpetual missions, etc. . . . I will have to return to these views, Monsieur, because they are, so to speak, the principles from which we draw all our methods and their many happy consequences.

Concerning what Father Caillet tells you about the general meetings of our Sodalities, which are held in the evening and which we call "public," it seems to me you have not understood their true spirit. If our purposes and methods had been followed well, the idea of the Protestant sermons would never have cropped up. I have never heard this difficulty raised here; if it had occurred, I would certainly have answered it. Nevertheless, the most outstanding, the best-educated people, including bishops, at one time or another have been present at our meetings, but such remarks have never been made for the simple reason that there was no occasion or cause for making them. No lay person speaks there in the name of religion. They read, and they give speeches relating, of course, to religion and morality. Often there are discussions, songs, etc. . . . However, (1) all these discourses of whatever type have been seen beforehand and approved by the director, who remains responsible for the teaching of the Church, whose representative and minister he is; (2) the director is always present at the meetings, where he has his desk and where

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<sup>1</sup> Antoine de Ponton d'Amécourt, one of the oldest members of the Paris Sodality and its prefect at the beginning of the Restoration (1816), at this time was one of the most active and zealous men in the capital.

he seems to preside; (3) no one other than the director speaks at any length. He alone makes the reflections he deems appropriate on the speeches given. He is the one who answers the difficulties which present themselves and which he himself often raises, without seeming to, to produce discussion and to create more interest in what is being said. He alone actually teaches, and everyone takes note of this. In general, it is the young people who speak at these meetings. They fill the functions of officers for the maintenance of order at the meetings and of officers of honor, and they look after strangers who may have come. In supervising the totality, the director actually runs everything. I have the sodalists understand that in principle they form a body, but one which should be full of life. And there are none who do not look upon the director as the soul of that body regarding the functions he has to fulfill, but always as a tender father in the midst of a numerous family.

The pastors who wish to be directors of the Sodalities and who believe their jurisdiction is lessened if they are not have an incomplete idea of the Sodalities, of their true ends, and of the protective relationships they should have with them. If this prejudice continues and works against the establishment of Sodalities in Paris, I could make some reflections which could help to dispel this. For example, what an honored place the pastor of Saint Roch would have if he became the Sodality's zealous protector, the one who approves everything said and done in its meetings, the father of all, etc.! He would secure for himself the love and respect of all the sodalists, and even of strangers. When he would speak, he would be listened to as a visionary. Furthermore, this fact often stops him from speaking—he speaks rarely, and then as someone not in charge of the details of the Sodality. If he always wishes to speak, he will repeat himself, speak badly, bore and disgust everyone, and the unattractive meetings which result will be avoided, etc. . . .

Perhaps I myself am boring you, Monsieur, by my lengthy explanation, but an explanation seemed to be needed. I wish so greatly to see this work spread to the capital! You can judge the truth of this by my noticeable temerity whenever the question comes up of forming in Paris a small establishment of the Institute of Mary, which would have for its principal object this work of preference. I call this "temerity" because we are so small, and there are so few even among this small number who are fully prepared to undertake it!

Whatever the case may be, Monsieur, try to gain a true idea of these Sodalities for yourself. If His Excellency the Archbishop of Paris came to the point of thoroughly understanding the plan, he would support it by his protection and the reform of Paris would make solid progress. But if the establishments which may be made there should be lacking in the basic essentials, then failure would result. Then it would be even more difficult to reestablish them as they should be than to form them correctly in the first place.

I am finally coming to a close. I repeat for you the assurance of my sincere attachment and the high consideration I have for you.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. As I was finishing my letter, I thought of the idea that as a conciliatory measure we could possibly consider naming the pastors as directors of the Sodalities, and they could delegate one of their assistants to do the work required. This means would do only a little to diminish the evil. The director must have another mission to be true to his office.

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**S. 274a. To M. Castex, Condom**

March 23, 1824, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

I agree with you that M. Lacoste's fears are unfounded. He can judge for himself when he sees the copy of the authorization from the prefect of Gers.

In the agreement on Piétat, I would like to see the provision inserted that the purchasing ladies may sell or dispose of the movables of the main house. I would appreciate it if you gave M. Lacoste the first draft of our purchase agreement, which has been completed. In a very few days he will bring it or send it to you with the authorization necessary to make a public contract. He is writing to him with this mail. Mlle de Lachapelle and her companions who will make up the small colony for Condom would like to take possession of their new house immediately after the essential modifications have been made. Once in their convent, they will have the necessary repairs made.

The moment I hear that all obstacles to the contract have been overcome, I will write to the Archbishop of Auch. We will take possession and install ourselves as soon as possible. You will have a large share in the good this new house will do; you are, so to speak, its mainspring. Without you, the project probably would never have materialized.

I am most respectfully. . . .

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*Father Caillet was to arrive soon in Saint-Remy; Father Chaminade prepared him by various instructions.*

### **275. To Fr. Georges Caillet, Saint-Remy**

March 25, 1824, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

My dear Son,

It is the Feast of the Annunciation, and before the Office of this evening, I am going to write to you by the hand of our young Brother Tissier.

I received your letters, three from Paris and one from Besançon. I noted with pleasure but without surprise that the blessing of the Lord has accompanied you. Place all your confidence in God's grace and in the protection of our august Mother. Everything is possible to those of real faith. Moreover, we wish only what God himself wishes. Let us only take care that we place no obstacle to the execution of God's merciful plans.

According to the information you have given me about the Paris Sodality, I wrote a long letter to M. O'Lombel and sent him a copy of the Institut of the Sodality for Young Men. When you are ready to continue to busy yourself with these Sodalitys, I will inform you about what I have written and about what has happened since. As of yesterday, His Excellency the Archbishop of Bordeaux had not yet finished reading the small notebooks I had given him some time before your departure.<sup>1</sup> I am addressing this letter to Saint-Remy, where you will still find Brother David, who will undoubtedly have awaited your coming to inform you about everything that concerns this establishment. Become well acquainted, in fact, with everything that has happened, especially with the titles to the property and with Brother David's correspondence with all those who have dealings with the Institute in general and with the establishment of Saint-Remy in particular. Take copious notes about everything. Brother David wrote to me that the former titles or papers for the domain were being carelessly scattered. If "carelessly" is the right word, stop this and try to remedy the losses. Without losing time in looking for old papers, consult Father Bardenet about what is to be done with them and which ones are to be kept. If there is no time to do this, then let them all be deposited in a room under key until a time when they can be looked over.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Doubtless a question of writings regarding the Sodality.

<sup>2</sup> Thanks to this recommendation, since the 14<sup>th</sup> century the former titles to properties have been kept in the Archives of the Society of Mary.

It seems the retreat to be given to the schoolteachers of the department of Doubs may nevertheless be destined for Saint-Remy. You know that I have some hope for the 125 beds which I believe the Missionaries had put in for this purpose. I have learned since that these 125 beds belonged to Father Bardenet, who himself had been obliged to sell them to the seminary to make money. Here is a means for remedying the great inconvenience of not having beds. Father Bardenet might buy back the 125 beds that he sold. It is presumed he would obtain them at the same price and that he would receive credit for a certain time. This loan would be paid (1) by the gifts and benefactions you will receive for a good work of such great importance; (2) from the salary for this good work; and (3) if to conclude this matter a little cash were absolutely necessary and it could in no way be found, you could take advantage of me for a small enough sum, say 1,000 francs, or I would make a draft for a similar sum payable in Lyons upon receiving suitable advice.

Father Bardenet will not doubt the importance of this work and of all this interest needed to bring it to realization. We have spoken of this several times, so I will not repeat for you reflections we have already made. The Missionaries have promised to conduct the retreat at Saint-Remy for the schoolteachers if we bring them together there. If the first retreat could take place a short time after Easter, perhaps it would be good if Brother David delayed leaving for Paris until it was finished, because then he would be carrying out his normal school project. In spite of the reflections I am making to you, I leave you entirely free to change this work as you see it, or rather as you are able. There are so many circumstances I know nothing about that it is impossible for me to trace out for you a line of action without exposing the work itself to harm of one kind or another. Consult Father Bardenet, the Missionaries, the directors of the seminary of Besançon, and even the archbishop if necessary, for this is in the interest of religion. It is to be presumed that everyone will interest themselves in it, and that if all are interested this work will succeed. There are great difficulties only for the first retreat. . . .

Brother David had at first delayed his departure for Paris for lack of money, as he said; it seems now he is delaying it only to wait for you. Lately, he has received 6,250 francs from M. Weber. If the first retreat of the schoolteachers were to be scheduled after Easter and if he were disposed to leave for Paris, it would be necessary to allow him to go and even urge him to do so. You should give him enough money to make the trip and to remain for some time in Paris, until I can give him some myself.

You ask me, my dear Son, what you would have to tell him concerning what Providence has reserved for us to obtain from the Government; the authorization for the Institute of Mary. I believe that at first you should speak to him about it nobly in a very general way—as, for example, if he foresees too many difficulties, if he fears for his success, he may write to me from Paris. I would suggest various solutions to him, that it is even possible, according to the turn other matters may take, that I could decide to go to Paris myself; that he may write to me always with simplicity and in the smallest detail; that moreover, in arriving in Paris he may use with wisdom and prudence whatever means he believes proper and has confidence in.

In writing to Father Farine,<sup>1</sup> urging him to break his bonds by all the motives and means authorized by religion and virtue—you may let him know that until we have provided for our already-existing establishments and secured as recruits some other good subjects, we cannot arrange for any establishment in Switzerland, however greatly we would desire to do this. Assure him of my real interest in the idea, however, seeing that some of my ancestors are even in Berne; but that in the works of God, the order of Providence must be followed.

I am not repeating for you any of the considerations we have made on the course to be followed with regard to the vast establishment of Saint-Remy, or the excursions you can make according to the periods of free time you may be able to find. Just keep in mind that Saint-Remy

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<sup>1</sup> A Swiss priest and a friend of Father Caillet.

is your great work and that all the others are only accessories, so to speak. Pray, pray a great deal!  
Act with confidence!

You ask for my paternal blessing. I give it to you, my dear Son, with all the outpouring of my heart. I am going to expose the Blessed Sacrament. You will not be forgotten at the holy altar.

I embrace Brother David, Brother Clouzet, Brother Rothéa, and all our other good brothers.

Give Father Bardenet the special tokens of my confidence and entire devotedness.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I will soon write to Brother David and Brother Clouzet; to Brother David unless I have reason to believe from some other letter that he has left for Paris. Take note for me of the date of your reception of this letter.

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*From the first letter from Father Caillet after his arrival at Saint-Remy, Father Chaminade understood that Brother David's return was required by the urgent need to assure freedom of action to the new representative. The following letters concern this.*

### **276. To Bro. Dominique Clouzet, Saint-Remy**

March 28, 1824, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

My dear Son,

I gladly enter into all your troubles—I can clearly imagine that you have many. I sent Father Caillet to you to relieve you, yet it is precisely his appearance which increases your difficulties. Well, I certainly hope this will only last a little while.

I am sending you a letter and an obedience for Brother David. You will seal the letter, and after having allowed the sealing wax to harden, give it to him along with the obedience. The obedience is not to be put in the letter, but to be handed to him without any comment. If Brother David still alleges a lack of money and if you are certain he does not have any, you should try to procure what is necessary for him to go to Bordeaux.

As soon as I received Father Caillet's dispatches, I sent the notary the instructions needed for drawing up a new procuration, which will revoke any previously given at any time. This new procuration will be filled in under your name. I cannot send it to you with this mail because it is not yet ready.

At the same time, I am writing separately to Father Bardenet, and I am informing him of the letter I am writing to you, of the obedience for Brother David, and also of the procuration which will be mailed soon. This is from concern that the letter addressed to you could be intercepted, in spite of all your precautions. In sending you this procuration, I will write everything I can to Father Caillet. I also will write him at Ribeauvillé, if I foresee that he can receive my letter at the time of his stop in this city.

Tell all my children at Saint-Remy how much I love them and that I am disposed to do whatever I can to make them happy and to ensure their entire faithfulness to God and to the Institute. I have been deeply touched by the good wishes you expressed to me for the Feast of Saint Joseph. Your letter containing all your requests was placed on the altar during the celebration of the holy mysteries. I embrace you all very tenderly and wish you constancy and peace in the Lord!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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**277. To Bro. David Monier, Saint-Remy**

March 28, 1824, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

My dear Son,

When I recently wrote to Saint-Remy, I did not include a letter for you for fear or in the hope that you had left for Paris. A few days later, I learned that you wanted to await the arrival of Father Caillet. Father Caillet himself tells me both about his arrival at Saint-Remy and his relationship with you.

I do not know exactly what to say about what has happened between you two. Any reflections I may offer would be useless in any case, for there is an urgent need for you to come to Bordeaux. Because you like to obey and prefer a positive command to a simple invitation, however pressing it may be, I am sending you an obedience. I would have done the same for the mission in Paris which I had confided to you, if I had not believed your taste for obeying had been sufficiently satisfied. The same for what I was calling your new mission to Paris and for my procuration to solicit government authorization for the Institute.

Concerning this authorization for the Institute, we will busy ourselves with it from the time of your arrival in Bordeaux. This matter has major consequences. Some friends, whether in Paris or elsewhere, seem to blame us for not making good use of the opportune time to obtain it.

While you are traveling, my dear Son, take care of your health. I long to see you arrive here. I am even counting the days. My tender friendship for you is always the same. The small complaints that I sometimes have believed it was good to bring to your attention do not mean my affection is any less.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. in writing to you, I am making use of young Brother Tissier, but this is all under dictation—not a word is from him.

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Obedience for Bro. David Monier, Religious of the Institute of Mary

My dear Son, Bro. David Monier, is finally discharged by these present letters of all the commissions holy obedience had given him, whether at Saint-Remy itself, in the dioceses of Besançon, Strasbourg, or others, and finally in Paris.

Thus entirely freed from all solicitude, he will leave as soon as possible for Bordeaux, where his presence is required. There is no intention, however, of freeing him from the obligation of telling Father Caillet, or in his absence Brother Clouzet, whatever may be of interest to the Institute of Mary in this region or of returning to them in proper order all the papers which concern them.

May the angel of the Lord deign to take under his protection my dear Son, Brother David, during the long travel which lies ahead of him!

Given in Bordeaux, March 28, 1824, under our seal and the counterseal of our under-secretary and sealed with the seal of the Institute.

G. Joseph Chaminade, Superior  
By order of the Reverend Superior in the absence of the Secretary,  
Tissier, Under-secretary

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*A few days later Father Chaminade wrote to Father Caillet; this gives information on the type of difficulties raised upon his arrival at Saint-Remy by the presence of Brother David. It is addressed to Ribeauvillé in Alsace, where Father Caillet had to go in passing through Besançon.*

**278. To Fr. Georges Caillet, Ribeauvillé**

March 31, 1824, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

[With insert from S. 278]

My dear Son,

Your stay at Saint-Remy was very short. Without going into whether you could have overcome the difficulties of Brother David's presence, here is the position I took when I received your remarks.

Yesterday morning, March 30, I wrote to Brother Clouzet.<sup>1</sup> I sent him, unsealed, a letter for Brother David along with an obedience for him. I am sending you a copy of both, or at least of the obedience if there is not enough time for copying the letter before the mail's departure. I told Brother Clouzet I was going to send a duly notarized procuration in proper form, including the revocation of all previous procurations, etc., etc. The notary worked at this until the day before yesterday. It may still leave with this mail, but if not, then surely with the next. I also wrote to Father Bardenet yesterday morning and told him specifically that I was sending Brother Clouzet the documents I have just referred to. I requested that he should be sure to ask Brother Clouzet for them. As a result, if the letters should be intercepted despite Brother Clouzet's precautions, we would soon know about it. It is to be presumed that Brother David will decide to leave when he receives his obedience, or that at least he will choose to remove himself from the scene, that he will give the procuration he already has in blank form to Brother Clouzet, and that the latter will not have to ask for the procuration I am sending him. However, if Brother David shows still further obstinacy, Brother Clouzet should notify him that he has been provided with a new procuration which revokes all others. But we should only point all these things out to him as a last resort.

While addressing you in Ribeauvillé, I will also send everything I am saying here to Saint-Remy in case the present letter does not reach you. I will leave the letter unsealed inside Brother Clouzet's envelope, so that each can take from it whatever concerns him. I presume you will write to him and to Father Bardenet as well, to encourage him and to communicate all your ideas and reflections. This way you can send on everything more promptly, once you have returned to Paris.

In another letter I am suggesting to Father Bardenet that he act in such a way that the delay of the schoolteachers' retreat, which was to be given after Easter, may be as little noticeable as possible.

Your stay in Besançon seemed very short to me. No doubt you were thinking of returning very soon. You could hardly have obtained sufficient information to obtain the help you will need for Saint-Remy. Perhaps with Fathers Brouillot and Bardenet helping, you can determine how to overcome the difficulties, or at least you can see what you are lacking.

I had written to you at Saint-Remy, but you left before my letter arrived. I was writing principally about Brother David, but circumstances are different today and there is no other choice. If Brother David persists in staying on at Saint-Remy, deprived of all spiritual and civil power, he cannot prevent us from setting up the establishment as we see fit. But again, Brother David will not be able to stay on at Saint-Remy when he learns that father Bardenet and the entire community know that he has no authority of any kind.

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<sup>1</sup> There is a question of the preceding letter, dated March 28.

In the same letter I say nothing about the means Father Bardenet could use to buy back the 125 beds he had sold to the seminary and what I am prepared to sacrifice to accomplish this. From your letter I gather that Father Bardenet has some other method of assembling the retreatants.

I also spoke to you briefly about M. Farine, asking that you write to him urging him to use the motives and means offered by religion and virtue to break those ties. You could try to make him see that until we have provided for existing or recent establishments, until we have trained several more good candidates, we cannot plan a Swiss foundation, however much we might wish to.

I will not commit on your round of visits. Just be careful to do only what seems useful. Your entire concern must be the Saint-Remy establishment. Take exact notes about everything, including names of places and people so that I am completely informed. I also need guidance about Ribeauvillé.

Convey my kindest regards to M. Bernhard and his interesting family and also to all the parents of our young seminarians.<sup>1</sup> A very special prudence and circumspection is necessary in M. Hoffman's case. No doubt his son is good, but his desire to go to see his parents, which his father has unwisely encouraged, could be very harmful to the young man. You would do well to see the mother privately to learn her real sentiments.

You seem surprised, my dear Son, at the first response—I would not call it the first reason— Brother David gave you to prove the nullity of the promises he has made. He is claiming that because I was never myself a member of the Institute of Mary, I cannot validly receive the vows or the promises of those who make them. My dear Son, if he is so clever, why did you not ask him about the authority that obliges Founders to contract the same obligations as the Orders they found? And in the second place, do they not contract a very close link with the Institute from the time they receive the promises in their capacity as superiors? For example, does the vow of obedience not establish a reciprocal tie between the subject and the superior? As much can be said of the other vows and of the Constitutions of the Institute. What would it be, then, if the Founder or first author were not to declare himself superior in designating another to receive the vows and the promises of his colleagues; if the true Founder and first superior had reasons, even in the interests of the Institute, not to give any exterior indications of the ties he contracts with the Institute except little by little and only as circumstances may require?

Brother David did not make his vows by chance. He concerned himself with these matters for several years. The first time he wished to make them, I prevented it. I wished to stop it just as much a year later at the end of a retreat, but he begged me so strongly to admit him that I believed I had to consent, although I did so with some reluctance. How is it that he only finds difficulty several years later, when the yoke of obedience begins to press? Why does he now seek only to direct himself and obstinately follow all his own ideas?

This is the first time I have heard of this difficulty. If it would occur in a sane and settled head, it would not be difficult to eliminate it by proofs of reason or by famous examples from the past.

As for his claiming he is as much the author of the Institute as I am, why not ask him what he means? Did God inspire him? Did he instruct and prepare the subjects? Did they seek to band together around him? Is it perhaps that he has written and worked hard at editing the Constitutions and Regulations? If this were so, then all department heads, all the private and general secretaries should take the title of their employers because they often do most of the work. It must be admitted that these are very weak reasons to be coming from a man of intelligence and experience.

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<sup>1</sup> The Bernhard family of Ribeauvillé, which had sent three of its children to Bordeaux, and the families of the other postulants and novices of the Madeleine, among others the young Joseph Hoffman.

What he calls the second reason, that I am acting directly against the ends of the Institute, that I have other views, that I am secretive, that I am establishing a type of Jesuit life—to all this I believe the best reply is not to make one. His conscience will not be less obligated because he has no factual proof of this allegation, while he has a great amount to prove the contrary. For more than 20 years I have warned him that he was allowing himself to be dominated by his imagination and attachment to his ideas, which go as far as headstrong obstinacy. My dear Son, you yourself have proof of this, enough to scandalize you, but undoubtedly your charity interprets them as favorably as possible.

I am stopping now to give my young secretary time to copy Brother David's obedience for you, as well as the letter I am writing to him. I give you my paternal blessing with all the outpouring of my heart!

*[Father Chaminade adds this in his own hand.]*

For some time I have been dictating all my letters, whether to relieve my head or to have them sent more promptly, but my young scribe thus has twice as much work.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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*Bro. Dominique Clouzet also nourished some prejudice against Father Caillet and his mission. Father Chaminade tried hard to dispel these, as we will see later.*

*At Condom, unforeseen difficulties arose regarding the act of sale of Piétat and delayed the foundation of the convent. The building had been transferred for the price of 20,000 francs, guaranteed to the seller by titles bearing 1,000 interest. The first six annuities were abandoned to the buyer as compensation for necessary repairs. The sale was made to Mlle de Lachapelle in her quality as religious, with a clause of reversibility obliging the Daughters of Mary to return it to the seller in case they abandoned the work. Father Chaminade made these objections.*

### **279. To Father Castex, Condom**

March 30, 1824, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

Reverend and Dear Colleague,

I have just received Father Lacoste's response. His opinion is always the opposite of ours and that of the prefect of Lot-et-Garonne, whose counsels in matters of administration I value a great deal and who has always seemed to me to be very interested in the Institute of Mary. I am having this letter from Father Lacoste copied for you, because it is not clear to me that he sent a copy. With it we will more quickly come to the conclusion of this matter, for if the first step is poorly taken we will be paying the penalty all along the line.

I admit to you, Reverend Father, that I have always had a great dislike for the reversibility clause in the Administrative Commission's resolution. In order not to delay its execution and also because you have told me the resolution had already been sent for governmental sanction, I said nothing about this feeling of dislike, but I admit to you that it continues unchanged. Does this clause of reversibility in fact (although it is not the intention of the commission) now cast a type of distrust, or at least a suspicion, about the stability of the Daughters of Mary? And does it not discourage the Institute from taking both measures to augment the structures on the property according to the blessings it pleases God to give to the labors of the sisters? Will it not always be said, *Sic vos non vobis nificatis, aves?* Will this clause not always supply grounds for ill will and complaints against the Institution? It is even possible that the more good this Institution does, the more complaints will increase! Have the Men's Sodalities in Agen not been attacked precisely because they have nearly emptied the cafes, the gaming rooms, and the dance halls and because some young women have complained that

they could no longer find dancing partners? Thus the mystery of iniquity is suddenly unmasked. So far, all establishments of the Institute, whether of men or women, have been undertaken in buildings belonging personally to members of the Institute, and it is not without very good reasons that we are acting this way.

The Administrative Commission of the hospice of Condom, which is very well intentioned, wishes to assure the greater good of the city in this manner. However, can you not make the observation that the Institute is very far from building only to destroy later and that if we were ever to abandon the Piétat, we would prefer to lose money rather than sell it to someone who sought to destroy it? When I say the Institute, I mean every one of its members, even those scattered all around. If the commission still has the least concern about all this, I am prepared to sign a contract obliging us to act in the way I have described.

If the reversibility clause is suppressed, no doubt it will be necessary to send a new resolution to the prefect of Gers so he may again authorize the sale, but I promise that we will insist on this authorization and that the act of sale will be allowed immediately. At the same time, the prefect of Gers could be asked to designate the notary to give this permission because it seems from Father Lacoste's letters that this formality is required.

I also promise that the six-year time span will be counted from the date of the commission's resolution of the prefect's authorization, so that these new delays may not seem to harm the hospice.

Reverend Father, pardon this letter's length when I have so many reasons for being brief. I dare to hope that these reflections, sent to M. de Lachapelle and to several others of the commission, may cause all members to reconsider this clause and perhaps to withdraw it. Your influence and your deep-seated love for the good will lend weight to my position. Zeal and patience!

I am with respectful attachment, Reverend Father and colleague, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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## **280. To Father Castex, Condom**

April 5, 1824, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

[With inserts from S. 280]

Reverend and Respectable Colleague,

I have the honor of responding to your letter of March 30, which seems to have crossed my answer to your preceding one in transit. I see that M. Lacoste has sent you a copy of the decision. If the administrators could appreciate the remarks I took the liberty of making in my last letter, everyone would be happy and nothing could block the sale, it seems to me. I will have a copy of this letter sent to M. Lacoste. In the same mail I received a letter from Mlle de Lachapelle in which, among other things, she tells me Father Lacoste told her about the insurance policy you sent him. She said she finds it very burdensome for the sisters.

You may perhaps have learned from Mme Belloc that they all say (1) there must not be any mention of Mlle de Lachapelle as a religious. As far as the acquisition of the house is concerned, she must remain a private person who wishes, with the help of friends, to direct free schools. (2) We wish to be free to pay the sum of 20,000 francs when we are able to do so. (3) We wish to be free to use the six years of interest accorded for repairs without giving any account of it and without supervision, according to the needs of the Institute. Undoubtedly this sum will not be enough to improve the work within this time span. (4) We wish to be free to sell all the other effects that form the title portion to provide money for making repairs.

I have just copied Mlle de Lachapelle's letter, Reverend Father. In general, her observations are similar to the first ones I had the honor of making to you—that is to say that the acquisition should be made in her private name, with her father as security. We would like to have the liberty of paying the 20,000 francs without making an express condition to that effect, in the event that it should prove displeasing. In the long run, this condition may have an advantage for the administration of the hospice. I hope we will not have to account for the 6,000 francs used for repairs because a portion can be used provisionally on building projects according to the particular needs of the Institute, saving the rest for the most necessary repairs on the building as a whole. Moreover, these repairs are already judged to cost up to the sum of 6,000 francs.

The administrative offices seem to have confidence in these women, and they have good reason to. Why then put an additional burden on this act of sale? Why not sell to Mlle de Lachapelle, as one would make any other sale, pure and simple?

Mlle de Lachapelle mistakenly believes she sent me a copy of the agreement; I never did receive it, but I have a good idea of its contents from the four small items I have just copied for you.

I come now to the second portion of your letter, which presents real difficulties.

(1) Spiritual Needs. If our good sisters were to be deprived of spiritual aid, if despite your help or whatever may be given by the Archbishop of Auch they found themselves deprived of the Mass, I do not see how the establishment could be formed until this great need can be met.

I have no priest available to send; and even if I had, I could not send him, according to our custom. As a matter of custom, our priests are to live in community, and not in isolation as a simple chaplain would. This could not happen unless some establishment of men is formed, e.g., a *collège*, a small seminary or primary school of the brothers. I have in mind sending a priest to Agen for the Confessions of the school children, but he will live in community with the brothers if my plan works out as I see it now.

(2) Temporal Needs. I noted these essential matters to Mme Belloc when I sent her to Condom. Her detailed answer was satisfactory. I can return to these things and see if they are in the same condition as when she left. I thank you for the wise remarks you had the kindness to make to me. Mlle de Lachapelle says much the same thing, but in greater detail.

All things considered, it seems we can make a beginning soon if (1) the administrators have enough confidence to grant an act of sale, pure and simple, to Mlle de Lachapelle in her private name; (2) you or some priest of the city with the faculty of binating under the authority of the archbishop can serve them as chaplain until simpler arrangements can be made; (3) the women who wish to lodge there and pay rent have not changed. The boarding pupils will bring in some resources, once they begin to arrive and we are ready to receive them.

I am with sincere and respectful devotedness, my Reverend Colleague, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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*Correspondence with Saint-Remy continued, although hindered by distance. Two weeks were required for the exchange of letters, and often letters would pass each other on the way, causing further complications.*

### **281. To Bro. Dominique Clouzet, Saint-Remy**

April 5, 1824, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

My dear Son,

However disagreeable the news you have for me, never hesitate from fear of causing me pain.

I received your last letter, dated March 26. I have also heard about one you wrote to Brother Auguste. When the letter arrives, you will have received another of my letters dated March 28, which left only the morning of March 30. To this was joined an unsealed letter for Brother David with an obedience for him. In the same one I made mention of a procuration in your name. Only today can I send it to you in due form. I am joining to it a copy of the letter I wrote on March 30 to Father Caillet in Ribeauvillé. You will give it to him upon his return to Saint-Remy. You may read it and see for yourself what prudence and discretion you must use with Brother David.

I am amazed that Father Caillet told you I had advised him not to bother about discretion in dealing with Brother David. This is not even according to my usual way, as you know firsthand. It is true there must be no sign of weakness; but the necessary strength, firmness, and constancy must be without prejudice to discretion, gentle hints, etc. Brother David has even more need to be handled with discretion because as a result of his unsettled head, he is far from being in a condition to see things as they are. Does he not wish to abandon Saint-Remy, even without having notified me? Did he not send his personal effects on to Paris? His belongings were actually on the way when he received a letter from me which told him of my disapproval of his rash conduct. I was far from condemning the trip to Paris itself, for more than six months ago, I was endlessly recommending this to him; but I was against it at this time because of the way he was undertaking it and the cause for his doing this.

I had not lost sight of the fact that he was so disposed to go to Paris on the one hand and that on the other, he had given up all hope of succeeding at Saint-Remy. To save the situation and to save the reputation he enjoys in the country, I wrote to him—I was sending other letters too, especially to Besançon—that I was giving him an assignment in Paris which obliged me to send someone else to Saint-Remy, presumably Father Caillet. Before definitively settling the choice on the latter, I waited for answers from everyone. I examined; I consulted. Everything seemed favorable to my plan. Even Brother David's answer was not against it. I announced Father Caillet's departure to everyone. He was to stop for a week in Paris and deal with very difficult matters with great prudence, as well as contact several highly recommended people whose confidence he was expected to win. His stay in Besançon left only good impressions, as far as I could determine. How is it that upon arriving at Saint-Remy, he would become totally different from his steady manner in Bordeaux, from what he had been in Paris and in Besançon? Father Caillet does not enjoy great intellectual gifts nor does he have any great knowledge of the world, but he is a true religious, full of the spirit of faith and of zeal. It seemed the right thing to do to send him to replace Brother David.

If possible, make Brother David understand that I have sent Father Caillet not because of a matter of preference, but rather because Brother David despaired of the establishment of Saint-Remy to the point of wishing to abandon it. Tell him I had only Father Caillet to send. Tell him Father Caillet possesses what is truly necessary to give the first signs of life to this establishment, except the authority to send those Providence will deign to place at my disposition. If Father Caillet's obedience states that I am giving him full powers over both personnel and matters of all types and of every degree of accomplishment, does this concern Brother David? I really presumed and continue to presume that he has left for Paris. In truth, what do all the delays mean? What do they say to a religious who fears God, who has made a total abnegation of himself? If Father Caillet did not know how to answer Brother David's sophisms at their first meeting, should he not have charitably raised the issue again? Could Brother David not see that Father Caillet was doing no more than carrying out orders which had been given to him, and that nothing of his own had been introduced into this mission?

My dear Son, make use of these reflections with all suitable prudence and discretion. Confer with Father Bardenet about them. Read him this letter, wholly or in part. He will know better than anyone how to appease Brother David's excited imagination and how to convince him

that we seek only to conduct ourselves according to the principles of Christian simplicity, uprightness, and charity.

As a result of Brother David's delays, conditions seem to have changed in the capital. Moreover, the prejudices he seems to have toward me have obliged me to send him an obedience to return to Bordeaux. There he will have occasion to see that I have in no way changed in his regard, and that I pity him much more than I blame him. I will do what I can for our matters in Paris. In fact, they may change of themselves. I may even go there myself.

With all the discretion I urge upon you, take care that there will be no hesitation in carrying out my orders and that Father Caillet will truly be free in the fulfillment of his mission, as I would be myself if it were possible for me to be there. I hope the spirit of God will not permit him to do anything imprudent. Furthermore, both of you have a good counselor in Father Bardenet. You also have others in Besançon. I presume Brother David has been to Vesoul to consult the prefect of the department. Father Bardenet may be able to go to see him and have a short conversation with him. In everything that is done, Brother David should be compromised as little as possible. If he had not compromised himself, he could never have been compromised at all.

In the midst of all the troubles this establishment is causing me, I have a secret hope that there will be as much success for the glory of God and the good of religion as there has been cause for chagrin and worry. It is already a great consolation to see that you are 24 and soon to be 27, hardened to all types of pains and privations.<sup>1</sup> Nothing, my dear Son, will be lost before God. I can well imagine that Father Bardenet sees things the same way. Take courage; the moment of the final solution is no longer far distant. Continue to take precautions so that none of this may become known in the community.

Receive for yourself and all my dear Children of Saint-Remy the blessing of the father whom God has given you upon this earth and who, completely unworthy as he is, participates in the love which the heavenly Father has for you.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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## **282. To Bro. Dominique Clouzet, Saint-Remy**

April 13, 1824, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

My dear Son,

It would be difficult for me to tell you how much I share in your affliction. Your position is truly sad. The good God has wished to reserve this new trial for you before the happy solution we are awaiting from his goodness and mercy. No doubt the apostles had great success in fulfilling the mission Our Lord had given them, but what sorrow, what labors, what privations, what persecutions they had to undergo! The greater the true good which religious institutions are called upon to do, the more they must undergo contradictions. The spirit of the good God sometimes has communicated these ideas to you, and he has inspired you with corresponding sentiments. Why then, my dear Son, do you allow yourself to be cast down?

At the same time I received your last letter of April 2, I also received one from Father Caillet dated April 2, but from Porrentruy. Things are very satisfactory. I imagine he has also written to you. Only in this last letter does he tell me about the arrangements for the retreat of the 60 teachers of the department of the Doubs. It is to begin on April 27, as Father Bardenet must have told you.

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<sup>1</sup> The number of postulants in this fervent community had not ceased to increase, and from the beginning of the year Fr. Chaminade had permitted Bro. Rothéa to open a regular novitiate there.

Here are the details Father Caillet adds.

Lessons in perfecting the method of teaching between the exercises of the retreat would be given; it would last two weeks; 1,000 francs for food would be paid to us and another 1,000 would be given as encouragement for the work of the seminary of school teachers, and scholarships for the best pupils. Father Bardenet, who is still very devoted to us, has taken it upon himself to procure all the equipment; beds, tables, chairs, etc. I remarked to Brother Clouzet, continued Father Caillet, that with Brother Gaussens he had the kindness to prepare himself to give the lessons and to have an understanding with Father Bardenet about everything. He must also have asked Father Rothéa to prepare himself to help in preparing these instructions and meditations. I will try to be there myself, to help in preparing these schoolteachers during the first week, at the major exercises of the retreat. The Missionaries of Beaupré<sup>1</sup> will give the last eight days only. That way, the first eight days will be especially devoted to the work of improving the method of teaching and the last eight more particularly given over to spiritual exercises.

Although Father Caillet is not always very clear, especially when he desires the use of the two sums of 1,000 francs each, nevertheless this work must be zealously taken up. First, there is an absolute need of it. Also, there are many supporters of this work who will come to the aid of the establishments now. The Marast property is currently being appropriated for the support of this type of seminary or work. And we must not forget the great good which may result for the department of Doubs and the neighboring departments, or at least for Haute-Saône. I have a secret confidence that this work will be realized throughout all of France. Work, then, my dear Son, with courage and with prudence. Of course, feed the teachers simply but also suitably, for there is such a thing as real necessity.

You would have a far greater expense in buying from the small village dealers, who are only the third ones in line in handling goods; consequently, Father Rothéa is writing to his brother Xavier to have him open an account for you. You can then buy more provisions wholesale. I told Father Rothéa to give you a short summary of what he is writing to his brother. You will find it included here.

Let us return to Brother David. I take it for granted that you know how to answer all his complaints and reproaches, especially what reaches the point of ingratitude. What could I do for him that I did not do? To be sure, he had a substitute at Saint-Remy, and a Swiss at that. But (1) did Brother David not provoke this change by leaving for Paris of his own accord and despairing of success at Saint-Remy? Could I have replaced him in a more honorable manner than by giving him a good assignment in Paris and making it known to everyone that I had great need of sending him to the capital? (2) If the substitute is Swiss and does not have the talents he himself has, of what importance are his birth and the place he comes from if he is a man full of faith, if he has right judgment, and if he is gifted with a supple and firm character for the execution of all the orders of obedience? Between the two of us, I must say that I cannot reproach myself for having sent Father Caillet. It is evident from everything he has already done that he is directed by the Spirit of God and that he has already inspired life and interest wherever he has gone. On the other hand, the good God has given him to me for this assignment. God has not given me any other.

By the obedience I have given to Father Caillet, I am not proving that I have sent to Saint-Remy men of no capacity at all for culture, for the arts, for teaching, etc. I wanted to clothe him with all powers necessary for his mission, even though the group has been made up of the most learned and spiritual men. I communicated this both before and after his departure to men of many different degrees of attainment. All were edified by it—no one found my granting of authority excessive. On arriving in Besançon, Father Caillet made this known to the archbishop, who read it through and was perfectly satisfied. How then does this obedience formally, even in the slightest degree, go against the article of the Constitutions which refers to the preservation of

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<sup>1</sup> Name of the residence of the Missionaries of Besançon.

a good reputation? I would not have made so much of this if it had not seemed to make such an impression on you.

Nevertheless, my dear Son, I do not intend to blame Brother David. I pity him with all my heart. It is easy to see his head is in a kind of delirium. Can it not be presumed that sometimes this very delirium has the intention of rousing and upsetting you and of forming a type of defeatist spirit? Give him all the care fraternal charity may suggest or require, but keep in mind that he no longer has any authority as long as he stays in Saint-Remy. If it becomes necessary to make his situation known to any of your brothers, you will do this with all suitable prudence and discretion. If he is still in Saint-Remy when the teachers assemble for the retreat, you will need to take renewed precautions to prevent their coming into contact with him. At the same time, there should be no evidence that any such precaution is being taken, as much as this is possible. If anyone asks questions you may say, for example, that he is sick and that his malady does not permit him to be visited. And you insist that he must not be spoken to about affairs, etc.

Father Lacoste, who has some understanding of his mental condition, wishes to have him in his house. He believes he may be able to return him to normal health. If he comes to Bordeaux, it is possible that I will consider this proposition. How is it possible that Brother David can so disregard my sentiment of esteem and my very sincere friendship toward him? Have these ever changed over more than 20 years? But where are we to find reason when the imagination is sorely wounded? I wanted to write still more to him and also to Father Caillet by this mail, but this is impossible. Easter adds greatly to other matters which are already too many times multiplied.<sup>1</sup>

May the Lord deign to clothe you with zeal, with strength and prudence! Embrace for me all my dear Children of Saint-Remy, for they are the object of a great solicitude for me. Embrace Brother David also for me, if you can find him in a mood suitable for these tokens of friendship and of tenderness that have never changed in my heart.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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### **S. 282a. To Father Castex, Condom**

April 18, 1824, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

In the next to last mail delivery I received a packet of letters from M. Lacoste containing the projected agreement he had sent to you, along with a letter explaining the same plus remarks by the administrators of the hospices, without signature or date, and which seems to be a reply to the projected agreement sent by M. Lacoste. In the packet there is also one of your letters in which you seem to look upon the reply of the administrators as an ultimatum. M. Lacoste and Mlle de Lachapelle suppose I am familiar with the projected agreement presented by the administrators of the hospices of Condom; in spite of this presumption, I have never received it from anyone.

Monsieur and Honored Colleague, I have been perfectly frank with you in my last letters of March 30 and April 5. Why not sell to Mlle de Lachapelle, as one would to any stranger by a pure and simple sale, just as it had been requested from the government and the government had approved? In the demand presented to the government, both the small and large lots were included. In its wisdom and moved by its interest in the welfare of the region, the administration would not allow the sale to a buyer who would have pulled down the purchased building and thought only of profit for himself. It found a buyer who, far from destroying the ancient hospice, wants to repair, remodel, and add to it, and who would make it promote the public good of religion, morality, and the education of youth. Both wisdom and the public good would be well

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<sup>1</sup> Allusion is here made to Confessions at the Madeleine at Easter time. This day happens to be Tuesday of Holy Week.

served. So far I see no reason for adding a condition to a pure and simple sale, such as I had understood it and as everyone would inevitably have understood it.

What gave rise to the difficulties confronting the sale and to the conditions which now encumber it? It is the six-year exemption from interest granted to the purchaser so that needed repairs might be made. Well, if the administration fears this concession might eventually be to the prejudice of the hospice, let a clause be placed in the contract binding the actual purchaser or his heirs, in the event of a withdrawal from the building, to reimburse the yearly concessions in whole or in part, or better yet, return the hospice known as the Piétat, and also that part of the exemption shown not to have been devoted to useful repairs and house maintenance; and if any objects included in the actual sale have been separated by the purchaser, he would also reimburse the value of those objects.

There would still be one difficulty, it seems—the exemption made for the little cemetery. However, in the first place, this exception had never been made. Then does it not form a part of that small plot which the government promised to sell? I do admit that the mayor's intention to make an exception is praiseworthy; I understand that a public road was to pass through the spot. In any case, in deference to the mayor a clause could be added making an exception for the sale of this plot of ground if it were needed for a public road project.

I had to interrupt the dictation of this letter for two days because of the holy season. In the interval, I received your letter of April 13 in reply to mine of April 5. Your remarks would not deter me from a sale pure and simple, to which the above conditions could be appended. Not that you and I have not considered the good motives and the honest intentions of the administration, and to give you an idea of my confidence, I did not break off negotiations when I was notified of the opinion which they were to submit to the government. I was also aware that reversibility could turn to the advantage of the new owners; but if this was the intention, why not leave the option to the buyers, or at least not express it in a manner which was almost insulting to the Institute of the Daughters of Mary. As I said, I have not laid eyes on the sales contract presented by the administration, but I do know that when I was informed of that clause the underlying supposition was far from honorable and could, at the very least, stir up some people.

I do not hesitate to repeat that the administrators are very well-meaning, and I hope to have the opportunity to give them some proof of my respect and gratitude. But they must realize that sooner or later they could be replaced by some anxious people who will have no inkling of the single-mindedness with which these men have drawn up and modified the bill of sale.

Let me sum up these thoughts and all those contained in my letters of March 30 and April 5. (1) We agreed on the price for the two lots, 20,000 francs; (2) 6,000 francs or 6 years of interest which is granted to the purchaser for repairs to the buildings; (3) full use would be made of these 6,000 francs, if the clause I suggested above is introduced into the text. The present difficulty is due entirely to the format of the bill of sale, which to a person of experience is an essential weakness. Because I feared the introduction into the document of some clause which could have been disadvantageous, I wanted M. Lacoste to agree first, for he knows our method of procedure. But between us, Monsieur and Honored Colleague, why look for a formulation of this bill of sale other than the one which conforms to the nature of the contract? We are in agreement on all the essentials of the sale. It is now just a matter of the expression, of the clauses that further the interest neither of the sellers nor of the hospice, nor of the buyers. In this situation, why not choose the middle course, a pure and simple sale with the simple provision reserving to the seller all the advantages which he claims?

I thank you, Monsieur, for the information you have so kindly furnished, so that the new community may enjoy the use of the chapel; I will put it to use immediately if your answer to this letter leads me to believe that M. Lacoste will be invited to come to Condom to validate the bill of sale. He will leave Agen only if he has the power of attorney from Mlle de Lachapelle. M. Lacoste is dutiful enough to accept the few modifications needed to appease some of the administrators but which are without importance for the new community or for the Institute to

which it belongs. With this mailing I am sending him a copy of this letter. He knows I have my mind set on this establishment, but he is aware also that in all my transactions I desire that wisdom and prudence will preside and that one of the essential forms of prudence consists in judicious foresight.

I do not intend to busy myself with the material needs of the community until the sale is completed. I will not abandon this new venture to an undeserved fate.

You will certainly find this letter too long and rambling; this is because I do not have time to make it any shorter! I am finishing its dictation on the holy day of Easter; I truly believe this work, which is all for the glory of God and the important concerns of religion, will not be harmful to sanctification.

Monsieur and Dear Colleague, again I offer you my most sincere devotion.

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*The horizon becomes clear in this letter.*

### **283. To Bro. Dominique Clouzet, Saint-Remy**

April 21, 1824, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

My dear Son,

I was trembling when I opened your letter of April 13. I blessed the Savior for the good disposition Brother David showed in receiving my letter and in his obedience. I have made known his imminent arrival at the Rue des Menuts and elsewhere. If he keeps his promise, he should be leaving as I write this. . . . I am writing to Father Caillet about the retreat—I told you about this in my last letter.

I wished to speak to Father Caillet about the special need to procure sufficient funds for the establishment at Saint-Remy, whether to pay off the debts entirely, secure clothing, linen, furniture or food or make urgent repairs, etc. As is stated in his obedience, the good God will provide everything he has destined for him, and we should not wish for anything more. Father Caillet has only to do what is necessary and suitable before God and before others, as we said so often in my room before his departure. He has a great deal to do in as short a time as possible.

I will try to write Dubarry by the next courier. I'm sorry to hear about Rose, the carpenter.<sup>2</sup> I pray you, tell Father Caillet not to admit M. - - -<sup>3</sup> to perpetual vows; it would be a great deal, it seems to me, to allow him to renew his vows for a year.

I just received a long letter from Father Caillet, dated April 13 from Strasbourg. Reading it has used up the little time remaining. I will respond some other time. There is little pressing for the moment.

Everything is going well at the Madeleine, at Saint-Laurent, and at Rue des Menuts, as usual.

With a very good heart, my dear Son, I extend my paternal blessing to the entire community. Give Father Bardenet the most affectionate greetings from me. I am very sincerely devoted to him.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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### **284. To Fr. Georges Caillet, Saint-Remy**

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<sup>2</sup> A postulant who had left.

<sup>3</sup> The name has disappeared from the original.

April 21, 1824, Bordeaux  
Original, Agmar  
[With inserts from S. 284]

My dear Son,

I have received your last two letters, the one from Porrentruy dated April 2 and the other from Landser, dated April 9.

As soon as I received the letter of April 2, I wrote to Brother Clouzet to encourage him about the schoolteachers' retreat. He seemed somewhat disconcerted and especially found the sum of 1,000 francs for food very insufficient. He was surprised that you had not written anything to him directly.

Time is too short—even the retreat will have begun by the time this letter reaches you—to make any reflection on the retreat itself. You will have done and will continue to do all in your power so that we might judge, from this our first attempt, what the work holds in prospect once it is fully launched. I do not understand what you tell me about the other thousands of francs that are to stimulate interest in a seminary for schoolteachers, and to pay the room and board of the more promising students. What do you mean by a seminary for schoolteachers? I would more easily understand a normal school—but a seminary for schoolteachers in a brothers' school, themselves schoolteachers, who are preparing candidates for the religious life who are also schoolteachers! Would these two institutions not militate against each other's interests? Perhaps I did not quite grasp what you wanted to say. In any case, do what you can and for the best, but do not settle on any particular type of institution until I have a clear idea of its nature and its relationship with the works of the Institute. Perhaps your letters to the rector of the Academy and to the Archbishop of Besançon may enlighten me somewhat.

I have just reread what you wrote about the matter at Marast. The uniting of this property with Saint-Remy is very well-regarded. But it is a pity that the buildings and the church cannot be utilized according to the original information Brother David gave me. This seems to me to have grave consequences. I do not recall at all the teacher training school you say we talked about in my room. A primary boarding school and a boarding school for Latin studies are very likely to fit in at Saint-Remy. Our arrangements will be completed little by little and in proportion as we can secure students and teachers. It is important, my dear Son, that as we shape these works we do not begin from any faulty or incoherent principle. We certainly may develop and perfect them, but without changing their nature.

I still have nothing to answer you concerning the project of the seminary of Saint-Claude.

For the third time, I am rereading your letter from Landser with its news about the persecutions of the Protestants against the Catholics.<sup>1</sup> I have heard of other outbursts, no less alarming, from the same canton, which I believe have been made public in the press. The opposite seems to be the case with governments outside Switzerland, where Catholics seem to be favored more and more.

I will write immediately to Agen about those 800 francs of Sister Geneviève Prêtre. As things now stand, M. Farine will be replaced only if he can withdraw before his substitute arrives. If the two sisters of M. Farine could stay temporarily at Saint-Remy without disturbing, you could continue to examine them during your brief stay, especially the one with the religious vocation. With what she writes to me and what you observe, I will more easily reach a decision. You could talk to Father Bardenet about their stay.

Let the former Ursuline sister write if she truly believes the Lord is calling her to the Institute of the Daughters of Mary. Have her write in sufficient detail in order to inform me completely, in view of a final decision.

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<sup>1</sup> Doubtless in the canton of Berne, from which Father Caillet had come.

The Daughters of Mary have, and should continue to have, a real devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. You know they neither begin nor conclude an exercise without invoking this adorable heart, and that from time to time efforts are made to increase this devotion by exhortations and meditations. They celebrate the feast in a very special manner, and I would be the first to help them in this. However, as far as the ordinary practices are concerned, it would not be suitable to make any changes.

My dear Son, I very highly approve of all the projects for good which you have in mind for your country. When we are strong enough to undertake them and to have the government intervene, we will really have to start working there. We may perhaps not be so far removed from the time when we can make the attempt. Even without the intervention of the government, may we not realize our dream by forming a diocesan seminary?

I will not say anything about your trip to Porrentruy,<sup>1</sup> but I must express my surprise at the length of your stay at Landser,<sup>2</sup> where one day seemed more than enough for the transaction of the business you had. After all, you are pressed by so many other things which are the more direct object of your mission.

Regarding the young priest confided to Father Juif,<sup>3</sup> if as you say he resembles Father Romain only in knowledge we could get along, presuming of course he is not like him in manners or in imagination. It would not be very difficult to make the Archbishop of Strasbourg understand what we are able to do without diminishing the consideration proper to the Institute.

Concerning the 12-year-old child from Porrentruy whose uncle would pay 400 francs for his tuition, nothing would stand in the way of taking him at Saint-Remy first. If he is found to be well-disposed for studies and for piety, if he is of excellent character, then we could have him come to Bordeaux, etc.

About the little niece of 15 or 16, why could we not wait until the formation of an establishment of the Daughters of Mary in that region? *Non est periculum in mora.*

The illegitimacy of a subject would not be an absolute cause for exclusion, if the subject could otherwise make up for this defect by outstanding qualities.

I believe I have answered the questions in your last two letters. I am returning to the long letter written in Vesoul at the time of your departure from Saint-Remy. You spoke about Father Breuillot's intention of forming in Besançon small communities, as it were, within the same establishment for the instruction and education of the deaf, both men and women. Joining communities of men and women in the same establishment is a very delicate matter. I imagine the separation would not be so perfect that inside communication would be impossible. The project in itself, however, may very well be possible. The sisters could learn sign language from the actual teachers who habitually use it. If necessary, a deaf young woman could be sent here, as is often done with young people, and in a short time we would succeed in perfecting this type of education and instruction. Father Goudelin's<sup>1</sup> advice would be to send a deaf woman with the sisters. Here at the Institute for the Deaf, I could also board for several months the young woman who is headmistress of the school at Langoiran. She has been asking to join the Daughters of Mary for some time. We could easily give her charge of the instruction of the children at Saint Jacques hospice in Besançon and place two more brothers in the community of the deaf. These would take care of the schools at Saint Jacques hospice.

I am stopping here. I am going to write a few words to Brother Clouzet and also a few to M. Fleury in Paris, even if I do not know where I am going to find the necessary time.

Imagine, my dear Son, all my heart could say if I had the advantage of embracing you. Place before yourself in the Lord's presence the counsels your Good Father would give you for

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<sup>1</sup> Native country of Father Caillet.

<sup>2</sup> Small town in Alsace not far from the Swiss frontier, hometown of the Rothéa brothers. Fr. Caillet must surely have visited M. Xavier Rothéa, the businessman of the family.

<sup>3</sup> About Father Juif, pastor of Ferrette, see the letter of May 2, 1826.

<sup>1</sup> See letter no. 119.

your spiritual conduct if he were close enough to speak with his living voice. He is asking the most abundant blessings for you.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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*The schoolteacher's retreat was successful beyond all expectations. But even without knowing all the details, Father Chaminade considered the extension of the work.*

**285. To Fr. Georges Caillet, Saint-Remy**

April 26, 1824, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

My dear Son,

I have just received your letter from Ribeaupillé dated April 18. I foresee that my own letter is going to be short, considering the little time I have before the next mail. I prefer to write to you twice rather than delay too long in writing you . . .

I am sending you a letter for Brother Dubarry. You may give it to him after having read it thoroughly, if you believe this suitable, or you may wait until after the retreat of the teachers or even until after Brother David's departure, should some new incident or even the retreat itself keep him at Saint-Remy. In general, bad matters should be attended to only one at a time. I leave everything to your wisdom and discretion!

For some time I have believed that the establishment at Saint-Remy will require your presence for a long time, whether for the establishment itself or for procuring funds and other necessary means. Because you have set it in motion, Brothers Clouzet and Rothéa would find it difficult to continue in the same manner; wherever they would go, it would mean new faces, new conditions, etc. but a priest who is formally attached to the Institute is needed in Bordeaux. What then is to be done? Although he could not replace you here in every way, Father Rothéa could at least do something. He desires to be near me for a while, and I believe this would be to his advantage. If you think the same way, you could send him here, but before doing so you would need to come to an understanding with Father Bardenet so that the establishment is never lacking in spiritual assistance. It would be necessary that whenever you are absent from Saint-Remy, Father Bardenet would be present there until your return.

There is no doubt that you will have to make short trips from time to time, to ensure water for the mill. You are very poor, but have no fear. Go to Providence with complete confidence and in a true spirit of faith. Encourage and sustain Father Bardenet. If he is placed in need for the establishment, you understand that he should be the first to receive the help provided by Providence.

You ask me for the 1,000 francs I had offered for the retreat. A short time after my letter was written and before you could have received it, I had already received notice that the retreat would take place on the 27<sup>th</sup> of the current month and that Father Bardenet had taken charge of all the arrangements. As a result, I immediately disposed of all the funds I could obtain. However, I do not refuse to add other funds, or at least to try to do so, if this sum is absolutely necessary to you and if you have not been able to procure it in spite of all the precautions you would have taken.

Around here people often ask for news about you, and everyone enjoys hearing about what is happening to you. You cannot take too much care to keep me always well informed about how things are going.

You tell me you obtained the *exeat* for Brother Dominique, Brother Antoine, and Brother Bernard.<sup>1</sup> I suppose you must have received them by mail before your departure from Strasbourg. I am now obliged to stop, but I am embracing you with fatherly tenderness.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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**S. 285a. To Father Castex**

April 26, 1824, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

With this mail I have the honor of writing to the Archbishop of Auch (1) to ask him for permission to establish the Daughters of Mary at Condom and (2) also to permit Father Lagutère to say Mass at Piétat, etc. I am sending this letter to M. Fénace asking him to plead my case with His Excellency. Father Maurel has not yet returned from the mission he is preaching at Pujols.

With this same mail I am writing to M. Lacoste urging him strongly to go to Condom to conclude that matter; I am sending him a copy of your letter of April 20 and of the one I am writing to the Archbishop of Auch.

I have some hope that a spinster with considerable revenues will board at Piétat as soon as the Daughters of Mary are installed there. She may even join the community. Today this woman expressed to me her desire to help the poor of Condom, even after her death, in the form of a substantial endowment. Let us hope Providence will come to the assistance of this establishment, undertaken solely for the glory of God.

I am concerned about the condition of your health. However great our dependence on your zealous activity, this must not be at the expense of your health.

I am, Monsieur and honored colleague, your. . . .

\* \* \*

*Difficulties in the acquisition of Piétat seem to be disappearing, and Father Chaminade solicits authorization for the foundation from the Archbishop of Auch.*

**286. To Archbishop de Morlhon of Auch**

April 26, 1824, Bordeaux

Copy, Arch. FMI

[With insert from S. 286]

Your Excellency,

I would have had the honor of submitting sooner to Your Excellency the plan of an establishment of the Daughters of Mary in Condom if I had not met with many difficulties on the way to its completion. Today all these seem to be overcome. If you deign to give your consent and to accord your protection to these good religious, the contract of sale of the former hospice called Piétat will be drawn up. At the same time, I will take all the precautions necessary to have the small group forming the nucleus of the establishment transferred there.

Your Excellency, I have another favor to ask of you. Through my correspondence with Condom I have learned that Father Lagutère was the only priest the Daughters of Mary could rely on for the celebration of Mass. I am taking the liberty of asking you for permission for him to do so. There could be no establishment if the sisters are to be deprived of spiritual aids. You know, Your Excellency, that Father Lagutère is already 64 or 65 years old, that he extremely dislikes

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<sup>1</sup> Dominique Weissemburger, Antoine and Bernard Bernhardt, seminarians of the Madeleine.

being in charge of a parish, and that he is even not too suited for that type of work, finding himself troubled by the least difficulty because of the extreme delicacy of his conscience, etc.

I have wanted so much to write to you, my honored friend, but I am not able due to the rush of affairs just at mail time. I can only say that a copy of the letter I had the honor of sending to the archbishop was inadvertently sealed and placed in an envelope destined for M. Fénace, who was not able to plead my case as I had asked him to. Please give my excuses to His Excellency and above all to M. Fénace.

I am, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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**S. 286a. To M. Lacoste, Agen**

May 4, 1824, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

My worthy Son,

Thanks to the Bishop of Agen, I received your short note of April 29. I was somewhat surprised at your departure for Condom after my last letter to you, to which I had added the letter I was writing to the Bishop of Auch. I asked the archbishop for his permission and patronage for the establishment of the Daughters of Mary at Condom, and on this favor depended the purchase of Piétat. If you have actually left, he will be astonished that we did not take pains to answer him immediately before any further negotiations. If you have actually left, Father Castex will do the best he can; I will write to him with this mail delivery.

Your remark, my worthy Son, that this business was poorly launched is only too true; but whose fault is this? Only much later was I told that their conclusions were sent to the government. When I agreed to the purchase of Piétat, I meant a simple purchase, with no other condition than that of price. My only stipulation was that Mlle de Lachapelle would make the purchase not as a religious, but using her family name. Whatever deception I felt on hearing of the discussions, I concealed this until I heard that the prefect of Gers considered government consent unnecessary. Since then I have protested, and you know how vehemently. Was there anything else I could say or do? Could I and should I have done so sooner? You will be doing me a favor if you tell me what I should have done better; your remarks may be of use to me in future negotiations of this nature.

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*Because the archbishop had asked for information regarding the projected establishment, Father Chaminade wrote this letter, an interesting summary of his ideas about the Daughters of Mary.*

**287. To Archbishop de Morlhon of Auch**

May 18, 1824, Bordeaux

Original, Arch. of the Archbishop of Auch

Your Excellency,

A letter written by Your Excellency's order which Father Belloc<sup>1</sup> addressed to me serves me as an answer to the one I had the honor of writing to you last April 26.

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<sup>1</sup> Vicar general of Auch.

I wanted to receive a small part of your benevolence for the religious house of the Order of Mary which we are planning to begin in the city of Condom. This is one of the cities which Providence has placed under your apostolic direction. Father Belloc was kind enough to tell me that Your Excellency did not know of any establishments of this Order and that it was desirable for me to give you some details on the project I am planning for the said city of Condom. I consider myself very fortunate that you would deign to listen to my explanation. I am sorry only for not having lived up to your wishes. I will try to make up for this without abusing the authorization that is being granted to me.

As their name indicates, the Daughters of Mary have placed themselves under the special protection of the most holy Virgin. In great part they have adopted Statutes drawn from the Rule of Saint Benedict. The most striking modifications are those which have seemed necessary to defend these holy souls from the contagion of the world. It is clearly enough known that this dangerous contact is never far away from religious institutions, but it threatens them at much closer range when the religious body occupies itself partly in teaching. The Daughters of Mary are in this situation everywhere—near to this world and its needs, they are to work out their sanctification, to lead many others to sanctity, and at the same time to protect themselves against all the dangers involved.<sup>1</sup>

They are under the direction of a Mother Superior who is aided in her functions by three principal heads having the titles of Mother of Zeal, Mother of Instruction, and Mother of Work.

Silence, recollection, obedience, and the support of mortifications are part of their ordinary effort. Humility, modesty, abnegation of self, and complete renunciation of the world are the virtues which are most recommended to them to attain.<sup>2</sup>

Furthermore, they are to combat everything in the interior of the community which may be an obstacle to progress in these virtues.

They observe a strict enclosure.

The works of each house consist in conducting free schools for the young girls who are not in easy circumstances. They are also prepared to conduct separately boarding schools for young women of a higher social level; there all the useful and agreeable lessons are given. But the most essential object of this work among these two classes is that the pupils who are to profit by it will become seeds of virtue, whether for the world or for religion.<sup>3</sup>

On certain days the Daughters of Mary also instruct in Sodalties various groups of women whom the spirit of religion may bring together.

As far as I can see, this is a summary of everything that the Daughters of Mary propose to themselves in their various establishments.

They have produced beneficial fruits in the city of Agen and in Tonneins-sur-Garonne, which happens to be close the city of Condom.

Having become their instructor and their immediate superior by the will and order of Providence, I do what I can to develop among them everywhere the same spirit and to maintain them in the observance of the Rule, under the authority of the Ordinary.

The same Providence which has thus arranged things has kindly disposed of circumstances in order to bring about the foundation of a new house in this Institute in the city of Condom. While this matter is being taken care of, it is my duty to secure for it the approbation of the archbishop following the blessings which Your Excellency will deign to bestow.

It seemed to me that local authorities as well as the more esteemed families and, I may say, the entire population of this region would welcome this establishment with genuine and profound satisfaction. Even the king will not refuse it the necessary authorization.

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<sup>1</sup> Note in these few words the object proposed to the Institute of the Daughters of Mary and to the Society of Mary from the beginning.

<sup>2</sup> These two paragraphs summarize the method of the Institute relative to the virtues of preparation and of consummation. See *Spirit of Our Foundation*, no. 864.

<sup>3</sup> Here is the thought of Fr. Chaminade on “the most essential object” of the works of education in the Institute.

There now remains for me nothing more than to place at Your Excellency's feet the homage of my respect and veneration. I remain your very humble and obedient servant.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I have just heard that Your Excellency has deigned to permit Father Lagutère to say Mass for our religious. Thus one difficulty is out of the way. It was not the least.

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*[The Archbishop of Auch gave the following answer to this letter.]*

*I am very well satisfied, Reverend Father, with the report you have given me of the Order of the Daughters of Mary. Very willingly, I grant you my benevolence for the establishment you desire to found in the city of Condom. This enterprise appears very praiseworthy and can only result for the good of religion and society. The guarantee of this is to be found in the fruits these Daughters of Mary have already produced in different cities. This is sufficient to assure them my constant protection.*

*I have the honor of being etc. . . .*

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### **S. 287a. To Archbishop de Morlhon of Auch<sup>3</sup>**

May 4, 1824, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

Father Larribeau, the rector of Loupian near Damazan in the Garonne region, impelled by his piety and his intelligence, assembled under his direction the most fervent people of the neighborhood. Their zeal was directed toward the important work of instruction for the poor country children. Mlle de Trenquelléon contributed spiritually and financially to this holy project, gathered the children of the family in the castle, and at times had the joy of bringing Protestants into the church.

Father Chaminade, who had succeeded Father Lacroix in Bordeaux, had charge of the two Sodalities of men and women which had been meeting for years to encourage one another to fervor and to the practice of charity. These sodalities were authorized by the Sovereign Pontiff, who had granted them abundant indulgences. Ten or twelve years ago, this holy priest met the above-mentioned Mlle de Trenquelléon at Villeneuve d'Agnois. Their conversation soon turned to piety. The young woman spoke of Father Larribeau's budding sodality and of its good works. "This is just like ours," said Father Chaminade. "Would you like to become affiliated to it and to profit from the graces and indulgences it offers?" This suggestion was adopted with enthusiasm. She spoke of it to her director and to his penitents. Her confessor detected the hand of God in this plan, approved their good purposes, and committed this precious flock to Father Chaminade's direction.

Father Chaminade turned the good intentions of these fervent women to good account. They soon gathered in a rented house in Agen. The example of their virtues and their warm-hearted instruction attracted many women of all ages and conditions, and in a short time the town of Agen was renewed to the point that young people who refused to attend dances and balls, provoking the rage of hell and of its minions, drew down a mild form of persecution on men's gatherings, which were doing great good in their sphere but which were denounced as suspicious by a fierce and suspicious tyrant and were forced to dissolve. Meanwhile, the Ladies' Sodality

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<sup>3</sup>This notice was sent to the archbishop to complement the letter he had received several days earlier from Fr. Chaminade in Bordeaux, asking for permission to establish the Daughters of Mary in Piétat and to have Fr. Lagutère or a priest of the archbishop's choice say Mass for them.

was growing in numbers, in virtue, and in external works of charity. It bought a house which was larger and more suitable than the one they had first rented and in the end, 45 of them chose the cloister and became novices and professed religious. Just like bees, these pious women have already swarmed and sent a small group to Tonneins, where for the last few years they have been bearing the same fruit of charity as at Agen.

As they multiply, they are obliged to search elsewhere and find other means of making themselves useful.

The administrators of the hospice, who were aware of the great good these women could do in Condom, proposed to Father Chaminade to grant him the Maison de Piétat, a former hospice for men recently joined to the women's wing, and to give him favorable terms if he would promise to devote it to the same charitable purpose, so beneficial to the poor, convinced that the establishment could serve no more useful purpose than that for which it had been founded. Father Chaminade accepted the proposal of the administration. They agreed to the terms of the sale. The prefect has authorized it. Only the approbation of the Archbishop of Auch is lacking, and this must be accompanied by a permission to have a priest to minister to the house.

In no way will the diocese be inconvenienced by this arrangement. At Condom there is a priest who from his youth has been attracted to community life. Three times he had tried to enter the Order of the Carthusians, but it was too rigid for his constitution. The town can easily spare this holy priest, Father Lagutère. He is extremely reluctant to engage in parochial ministry and refused the parish of Cannes, the least demanding of all. He is already 65 years of age and would willingly take it upon himself to say Mass daily at Piétat. There may be a problem on Sunday, when he has to say the 11 o'clock Mass at Saint Peter's. However, in spite of his reluctance to say two masses, he would do so at the archbishop's request. Doing both would not inconvenience Saint Peter's, and the Daughters of Mary would have the happiness of a morning Mass.

These are the details which should have accompanied Father Chaminade's letter.

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### **S. 287b. To Father Castex, Condom**

May 18, 1824, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

I am afraid that all our concern and all the pains we took to provide a house at Condom for the Daughters have been wasted. I find myself obliged to abandon the project because it is impossible to agree on the terms of the sale. I have sought advice in the matter from an old lawyer who is very sharp, intelligent, and especially versed in civil and religious matters.

Just as I finished the paragraph above, your letter of May 13 arrived. I thank you for describing the manner in which the matter was treated, and it is too bad that it took such a turn. The administration will sell only on orders from the king, but the sale does not conform to the royal ordinance! What guarantee do the buyers have if governmental authorization is needed for the new clauses which the administration has introduced into the contract? How can someone hope to obtain this authorization without first complying with the ordinance? Let me explain. The royal ordinance sets the sale price; in the contract the price is reduced by an amount equal to the annual concession, and these 6,000 francs must go toward the maintenance. It is only to guarantee that these 6,000 francs will not be lost to the administration that free schools are planned! And yet this deal is so binding that should the buildings for some reason not be used for free schools, by that very fact the buyer would lose the property in question.

In all justice to the administrators, I do not believe they meant any harm to the sisters who would take charge of the establishment and who devote themselves so zealously to the public good. But, Monsieur, can I allow such clauses to stand in that first sales contract? Will the

successors of the present administration be of the same mind and heart? Here I omit a host of considerations which present themselves.

It seems to me, Monsieur, that if you could agree with M. Lacoste and M. de Lachapelle, everything could easily be arranged. There are three things to be considered here: (1) the sale of the real estate; (2) the 6,000 francs conceded; and (3) the special case of the laundry.

(1) The case of the real estate. This involves the pure and simple sale of the hospice of Piétat with its appurtenances and annexes to Mlle de Lachapelle, with the consent of her father, etc., which, according to the ordinance of His Majesty of January 29, 1822, and that of the Minister of the Interior of September 23 last. . . . In this act the administration may imply or state that it favors this buyer because she agrees to set up an establishment for the daughters of Mary, thus guaranteeing that this hospice, which is a superb edifice in Condom, will never be demolished; and furthermore, that the local people will have available the educational and instructional resources for their children because the Daughters of Mary will include among their charitable works the founding of free schools everywhere they go. For this reason, the administration agrees to remit the interest for 6 years on the sale price, and this in order to help them with the repairs, etc.

(2) If because of this first contract fears are expressed as to the use to be made of the 6,000 francs, could a paragraph not be introduced stipulating that the buyer, in the name of the Daughters of Mary, is obliged to open schools for the free instruction of the local children for as long as the period of grace corresponding to the 6,000 francs, with the obligation if free schooling is interrupted before this time to reimburse that portion of the 6,000 francs corresponding to the services still due? This paragraph or second contract could easily be suppressed. Then the administration would need only to make mention of the 6,000 francs in its budget. In any case, I do not believe this second contract would need any authorization but that of the prefect of Gers.

(3) I understand that no special mention needs to be made of the laundry if it is considered a part of the building. The buildings themselves are not too large or spacious; we must see to it that the alley between them is sealed off.

These, Monsieur, are my last remarks. You will note that I am not seeking to create a difficulty and that we are really conceding more than was first agreed upon. I readily agree in order that the administrators may more easily carry out their good intentions. To avoid any future lack of agreement, if the administrators are favorable to my suggestions I can have the contract drawn up here by a lawyer who is well-versed in such dealings. You understand that I wish to compromise neither the administrators nor the Daughters of Mary; the rights of both must be respected. This would lead to a prompt settlement of the matter. Should the gentlemen have a contrary opinion, we will have to abandon the project. This will not be our fault; then you can turn your attention to some of the other houses you have already mentioned which may even be better adapted to the project, and where the transactions would not be so difficult as in this case.

Should the gentlemen accept my suggestion, I ask you to send me copies of the minutes of their meeting and of the royal ordinance; these documents will be helpful when we draw up the bill of sale. I am enclosing the letter I wish to send to the Archbishop of Auch. The administrators will find therein a further proof that the free schools are high on our agenda.

Your rewards will be great, Monsieur, if as I hope they are in proportion to the pains you have taken with the establishment of the Daughters of Mary in Condom.

Receive here, please, the assurance of my respectful remembrance. . . .

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*This letter gives us the first news about the retreat for schoolteachers. Details and the circular letter of the Inspector of the Academy mentioned by Father Chaminade may be read in Apôtre de Marie 16, p. 137.*

## 288. To Fr. Georges Caillet, Saint-Remy

May 17, 1824, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

[With inserts from S. 288]

My dear Son,

Well, there has been a long period of silence on your part, as well as on my own. I received your last letter from Saint-Remy on April 28 and the one from Colmar on April 24.

Brother David arrived on the afternoon of May 1, feeling well. He visited me in the evening in the sacristy. He had been traveling for 12 days—three at Vesoul, three in Paris, and six in the coaches. He stopped in Paris, for he was short of money. He borrowed some, but he did not tell me how much and from whom. Neither did I ask him about it. You tell me that Father Bardenet and Brother Clouzet believe that Brother David brought with him 1,600 to 2,000 francs. On what basis is this reckoning being made, and how much did he need to borrow to continue his journey? Since his arrival, we can see each other every day. He is feeling well and is calm, so we talk business. He has again taken me as his confessor. We speak little enough about Saint-Remy. Some days after his arrival, I asked him for notes and papers relating to Saint-Remy. I am sending you by Brother Romain a copy of the notes he gave me. He had no papers at all because he left them all with Brother Clouzet. Before his departure, he gave Brother Clouzet some notes and all the papers relating to the establishment. See if everything is in order. Compare my notes with Brother Clouzet's in such a way that I may be up-to-date on everything, that I may see and understand as though I were actually present.

See also if all the former titles of the château and of the property are in a safe and dry place. Brother David wrote me five or six months ago, more or less, that our young brothers were squandering these titles. I immediately wrote that they should be transferred to one place and kept under lock and key. Was this done?

Brother Clouzet wrote me during the retreat given at Saint-Remy for the schoolteachers; he also wrote to Brother David and included a letter from the Secretary of the Agricultural Society of Vesoul. He tells me that the eight-day retreat was coming off perfectly. I hope the end results will be as good. You must give me a very detailed account of the entire retreat, of the preparations by the teachers, the community, the Missionaries, and Father Bardenet. I am also interested in the fruits of the retreat for the spiritual life, as well as for the improvement of teaching. This last point must be very detailed. I take it for granted that you took notes about each of the 55 teachers who took part in the retreat. These notes must be carefully kept, along with the registry.

I read the circular letter of the Inspector of the Academy of Besançon attentively. It shows a good attitude throughout. I believe you must have given him information about the success of the retreat, etc. . . .

I cannot yet make any observation about this important establishment, for I need new information. Perhaps this is already on the way. You must still make a little more progress in your relationship with the Academy Inspector and the prefect before we can be completely satisfied with this first attempt.

I will say the same thing with regard to what we call the small training school for teachers. Three months are absolutely insufficient to train them, if in fact there were none who stayed longer. You will never come to the point of instilling regularity in these young men. The very possibility of leaving at the end of three months would cause them to be lacking in submission, with little interest in learning. Moreover, the 25 francs they would pay each month would be very insufficient, just as must have been the francs given each day of the retreat by each schoolteacher. Nevertheless, you have done well not to create any difficulty. I am talking about this now so that you will take your time regarding the Inspector of the Academy and the prefect.

These retreats for the schoolteachers, my dear Son, are an excellent work, as is the small training school for young men who wish to devote themselves to teaching. I had understood that all the teachers of the department of Doubs would present themselves each year for the retreat, one-fourth of them at a time, or 125. That would not be too many, but they would all need to present themselves within two years. If everything is settled once and for all concerning the teachers of the department of Doubs, there will be few difficulties in extending invitations to teachers in the department of Haute-Saône. There are 600 teachers there.

Brother Clouzet remarked to me that several retreatants asked to enter the Institute. You know I had really hoped a certain number would actually take this step. What efficient means we have, my dear Son, in this work of purifying even before our death a great portion of the present generation of French people! But great wisdom and firmness are necessary.

You are worried about money matters. I believe I said in my last letter that Providence would come to your assistance, and I am firmly convinced that it will, providing you conduct yourself with wisdom and in a spirit of faith. After all, is this not the work of God? For my part, I want to work and I want you to work only at what can truly be called works of God. Do you remember the saying that is, so to speak, placed in the mouth of Providence, "Help yourself, and I will help you!" When your presence is no longer strictly needed at Saint-Remy, you will need to go in search of resources, as I told you in my last letter or in the preceding one.

Although I am often at a loss to place my hands even on 50 francs, I believed I should profit from the chance of buying a large building and to transfer to it the boarding school on Rue des Menus. It is a matter of more than 100,000 francs,<sup>1</sup> and Providence and only Providence has allowed me to find without delay a way of borrowing all I needed to pay the entire amount in cash.

Brother Romain is determined to leave the morning of the 20<sup>th</sup>. I believe this is imprudent, even if he apparently has a good excuse in the weakening of his head and stomach. Several times I have offered him a chance to come to the Madeleine with me, to recover his health if possible. He did not think he should. Two causes seem to me to be the basis of his departure. The first is the one you point out to me on the loose slip of paper enclosed in your last letter; the second, more serious, is that he is not considered capable of giving sustained instructions—I wanted him to limit himself to catechism explanations and then be sent to Agen. . . . Nevertheless, he has never alleged these two reasons—he speaks only of his health. You will see if anything can be done for him at Saint-Remy.<sup>1</sup> On the bill we included the 91 francs which you received for him. So you have nothing to pay; one of the two ornaments will stay at Saint-Remy, as I understand it.

I am ending here so this letter may leave with the next mail. I prefer to mail it rather than to send it by Brother Romain, but I will give him the notes mentioned above.

Take heart, instruct and fortify our youth. Take good care of your health. Without scruples, take all the nourishment you need for sustaining yourself in your labors. Also take sufficient rest. Long vigils would cause you to be ill-prepared for prayer. And you have great need of prayer, considering all the worries you have to bother about.

Try to send me Father Rothéa, if you have not yet done so.

Be the interpreter of all my sentiments among all my Children. I can assure you they are all very dear to me. Embrace them all for me, *corde et animo*. I am making special mention of Brother Clouzet and Brother Gaussens.

Receive, here, my dear Son, my paternal blessing.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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<sup>1</sup> Including accessory expenses.

<sup>1</sup> As will be seen in letter no. 292, Bro. Romain did not carry out his idea. He remained faithful to his vocation and served as secretary to Fr. Chaminade from 1840 until 1844; he died in Cordes in 1853.

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*The preceding letter refers to the acquisition of the Razac house on Rue du Mirail, Bordeaux, where Bro. Auguste Brougnon-Perrière's boarding school was to be transferred because it had outgrown its present quarters. For this purpose, the Baron de Razac wrote to Brother Auguste on April 23.*

*I have spoken to Reverend Father Chaminade with a frankness and a confidence that I believed worthy of his character. If he comes to the point of thinking it proper to accept my offer, may God be blessed! If not, may God still be blessed and for all time, and everything be accomplished for God's greater glory! I had received the counsel, several times repeated, to hold to 100,000 francs as the price of my house. I am limiting myself to 80,000 francs, wishing to participate in the blessings which this excellent work will bring. I then ask that my family and I may be strongly recommended to the prayers of those who will live there, and that I will not be considered as a benefactor but rather as a friend.*

*M. de Razac later consented to another lowering of the price, but it was the occasion of a misunderstanding; the following letters refer to this.*

### **289. To Baron de Razac, Bordeaux**

May 11, 1824, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

Monsieur,

I will be at your disposal between nine and ten this morning. I believe you are acting wisely in agreeing to the second lowering of the price of the house. The total price will then be 85,000 francs. You will receive 30,000 in cash, the rest in ten years. We will possibly try to find sooner, little by little, a minimum of 10,000 francs.

I am going to the altar. I will not forget you. I will recommend the matter we are concluding to the Lord. We are seeking, each of us in his own way, only the interests of God's glory. May God be blessed forever!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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### **290. To Baron de Razac, Bordeaux**

May 11, 1824, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

Monsieur,

It is true that you do not mention the value of the reduction that you want to make, but was it not clearly indicated, both by our differences of opinion and by the designation of the first reduction, which you call the suppression of 10,000 francs? After the holy sacrifice of the Mass, I sent your letter and a copy of my answer to those who take the greatest interest in this operation. All have read and understood what I had read and understood, and no one even thought of an intervention of the devil. I was so far from imagining it that I saw only a stroke of wisdom in this second reduction or suppression of 5,000 francs.

Whatever the case may be, M. le Baron, I will actually sign whatever you want me to sign. I have said that the matter is practically ended, for I have never liked backtracking on anything. Nevertheless, I still hope you will make the reduction requested, or at least that of sharing the difference, for the fair motives I have suggested and actually in the natural meaning of your letter.

I am waiting for you at my house, M. le Baron. Or I will go wherever you wish to conclude our transaction.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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*The act of acquisition was concluded by Father Chaminade the next day, May 12, for the price of 90,000 francs. The transfer of Brother Auguste's boarding school now creates Institution Sainte-Marie. However, this actually took place only in 1825. On this first educational establishment of the Society of Mary, see Apôtre de Marie, 17, p. 239.*

**291. To Mother Louis de Gonzague,  
Mistress of Novices, Agen**  
May 21, 1824, Bordeaux  
Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Daughter,

I am enclosing a letter for Sister Trinité. I am in no way oppose to the reception of the postulant Sister Victoire. You tell me she has been seeking admission for eight months. And why such a long postulate? Doubtless because her conduct did not easily suggest she would become a true Daughter of Mary. But are you truly following out our principles? (1) Young women who have been in the service of anyone or such as are of low birth or who have had a childhood without education must not be received. (2) There may be exceptions to this rule, and in consequence a dispensation may be obtained, but only when these young women join great virtue to some extraordinary quality. The excellence of their piety and their more than ordinary natural qualities must be for us the signs of their vocation, but it is evident that with such indications they would not remain postulants for any length of time. If we content ourselves with mediocre virtue, these women will always be a problem, always capricious, with little strength to repress the sudden expressions of their nature which have never been subdued by education, etc. . . .

There is nothing really pressing in Agen, so I believe it is more prudent to postpone my trip there until Pentecost—it will be more useful then. If the establishment in Bordeaux could make up its mind more quickly, we would take steps to have the Good Mother come to sign the contract, etc. . . . I will bring her back. Perhaps we could come back together at the head of the group, etc. . . . Let us follow the order of Providence in peace, and everything will go well.

It seems one of our young priests, Father Lalanne, has fallen into a state of exhaustion as serious as the Good Mother's, and this from overwork.

It is very proper to take care of Father Larribeau.<sup>1</sup> Tell Mother Saint-Vincent to do what she told me for him. He may be permitted to enter the enclosure to see the Good Mother, and even all his former daughters, especially Sister Saint-Sacrement. Let the Good Mother use her discretionary power to this effect without any inconvenience every time it is useful, either for herself or for the community, and I hope this will be for the entire time that he stays in Agen.

Also tell Mother Saint-Vincent to confide in Father Mouran and to follow his counsels. If Marie<sup>1</sup> has not answered, it is more likely the fault of his secretary than hers. . . . Marie will be glad to receive the beans and to follow her directions in cooking them.

My dear Daughter, may the Lord grant you his peace and his blessings!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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<sup>1</sup> The former director of Adèle and of her Association.

<sup>1</sup> Marie Dubourg, housekeeper of Father Chaminade. See letter no. 241.

*More complete and consoling news came about the retreat of Saint-Remy. Immediately Father Chaminade returned to his plans and made them more precise. Note his competence in matters of temporal administration.*

## **292. To Fr. Georges Caillet, Saint-Remy**

May 29, 1824, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

Yesterday I dictated a very long letter to my secretary. I was very tired and was often interrupted. After some reflection I took the copy and, without rereading what had been written, I took up my own pen.

Your last letter of May 13 consoled me, especially the details you gave me about the retreat at Saint-Remy and the happy fruits it has produced. I believe you have also given an account of them to the rector and the Inspector. I would have been pleased to know that you had told all the retreatants that you intended to write to the rector about the great satisfaction they have given you, etc. . . . At this time you may know everything that is needed for such retreats, how the teachers are to be treated, what the costs of food probably will be . . . what must be taken into consideration with regard to the Missionaries of Besançon. What particular occasions or circumstances seem to have assured the success of the retreat, or was it simply the general effect?

I read with pleasure that you were all going to spend recreation periods with the retreatants. Each of you four—you, Brother Rothéa, Brother Clouzet, and Brother Gaussens—could write up your own history of the retreat according to how it has affected you, expressing any gaps in the program you may have noted, etc. Thus experience is acquired, and thus the Missionaries of France have acted from the beginning, each mission calling for an immense notebook for the detailed report. . . .

I will not yet say anything about the school for teachers. Seventy-five francs is sufficient for three months. Three months is also sufficient for training this type of teacher in what concerns both teaching skills and virtue. There are many other types of inconvenience which you will soon recognize, but proceed nonetheless. Try for the best!

These works are excellent in themselves, but I hope we can improve on them and succeed in coming to an understanding with the academy or with the prefecture about this. I had always understood that all the teachers would make the retreat each year, only one-fourth or one-fifth at one time, as I believed Brother David had suggested. It seems to me all of them should make the retreat at least once every two years.

Why, my dear Son, could we not obtain the same advantage for the department of Haute-Saône? I am told there are 600 teachers there. It is the same academy, the same archdiocese, the same mission. The prefecture is good and well-intentioned. But what about the resources? At least the 1,000 francs?<sup>1</sup> Well, my dear Son, let us move forward! Obtain suitable resources for yourself, either through the charity of the faithful or through prudent loans. I hope I can give you—or rather give the establishment of Saint-Remy—much more than 1,000 and 2,000 francs. I have almost decided to accept the schools of Colmar and the Pilgrimage of the Trois-Epis.<sup>2</sup> These two establishments will come to the assistance of the one in Saint-Remy, and perhaps strongly. And because the property at Marast is to be joined to Saint-Remy, why should the cession and the resultant joy not begin immediately, as long as we fulfill our obligations—of course, subject to the necessary government approval at the proper time? I do not see why this foundation should be

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<sup>1</sup> See letter no. 275 and letter no. 285.

<sup>2</sup> In Alsace, above Colmar. See the end of the letter.

delayed. When we discussed it, there was no difficulty other than sending in my procurement, which I immediately did.

I believe as you do, my dear Son, that the property of Saint-Remy is generally made up of rather poor soil, the type usually classified as third grade, and it is hardly worthy cultivating. We must learn, with the help of people who understand such matters, which parts can be cultivated with profit and leave things at that. In this way, you will have only minor expenses for the purchase of farming tools.

Concerning cattle, you will have little to add to what Father Bardenet offered you. You can surely see from Brother David's letters the idea he wanted to give me about this matter. The same with regard to his verbal explanations. There was no question of less than 12 teams of horses, of oxen and of cows, with everything that goes along with such animals. The entire domain was to give us in crops from 12,000 to 18,000 francs in clear gain. We must thank the Lord for the interior resistance with which he has always inspired me about seconding such views.

Something must be done to preserve the park, to keep it clean and to protect the small trees. Next year, when the second pruning takes place, care must be taken not to harm the past year's growth, etc.

The former community, occupying all this living space<sup>3</sup> and cultivating one or two farms, must have been more useful than this château with all its magnificence, and still what a difference in everything! Without a doubt the good God must have secret plans, so do not let us be discouraged. Let us do all the good we can, let us gain all the profit we can from the property, and let that be the end of our worrying.

The cost of the repairs on the enclosure walls will be greater than that of cultivation. Perhaps you may obtain the greater part of this through working a lime kiln. You would have enough with half of what the furnace can contain, and the rest might be sold. Combine everything wisely. Seek good counsel, and always have a complete understanding with Father Bardenet. What is certain is the suitability of making the repairs you spoke of last summer. Nothing must be neglected, so that this needed work moves forward. You have not yet told me anything about the church or the large chapel. This should be easily within reach of all the buildings on the property, and to some extent even of the general public. Above all, it is necessary that the religious be able to enter it easily, in order not to have to mingle with the lay people apart from some special function. May the Lord deign to communicate to you at least a part of the intelligence and the wisdom that he gave so abundantly to Bezalel!<sup>1</sup> Modesty and simplicity are needed everywhere, even in the church, but there should be no shabbiness. Each single part must be planned with the entire undertaking in view.

For now this is enough about the material side of Saint-Remy. Let us speak a little of Colmar.

My dear Son, you may accept the direction of the schools of Colmar in my name, providing Saint-Remy can provide two teachers for the French language. I will send the two German teachers I have here—Brothers Rothéa and Troffer. Father Maimbourg seemed at one time to want Brother Rothéa. I spoke of this several days ago to Brother Rothéa and he will gladly go, for he can accommodate himself much more easily to Father Maimbourg's character than to Father Mertian's. To place everything in working order, I would believe it would be good in a few weeks for Brother Gaussens to be one of those from Saint-Remy.

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<sup>3</sup> That is to say, a former convent of sufficient proportions.

<sup>1</sup> The reference is to the text in Exodus 31:1. "The Lord spoke to Moses. 'See, I have called by name Bezalel . . . of the tribe of Judah: and I have filled him with divine spirit, with ability, intelligence, and knowledge in every kind of craft, to devise artistic designs, to work in gold, silver, and bronze, in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood . . . so that they may make all that I have commanded you: the tent of meeting, and the ark of the covenant, and the mercy seat that is on it.'"

Tell Father Maimbourg I have every confidence in him, that in writing to Paris, to the mayor of Colmar, I could invite him to confer in Paris with M. Vassal, mayor and deputy of Villeneuve. I would like the schools in Villeneuve to be run by the Institute of Mary and the *collège* of Villeneuve to have a principal belonging to the Institute of Mary, etc. If Father Maimbourg wishes, we can make a start this very summer. Let him tell me when the brothers will need to be there. Regarding the authorization, Father Maimbourg can easily obtain what they actually need to proceed. I have in front of me the royal ordinance dated last April 8<sup>2</sup> to which he rightly asks us to conform ourselves, but the authorization of the government is not required. You may tell him that the Institute of Mary is regularly authorized by the ecclesiastical authority, that it is known to the ministry, that all the brothers' establishments in Agen and Villeneuve have enjoyed the favor of the General Council of the department of Lot-et-Garonne since their origin, and that we are known to the Archbishop of Strasbourg,<sup>1</sup> for in a way he has drawn us into the diocese of Besançon.

I read the article, or rather the copy of the proposition to transfer the former convent of the Trois-Epis. You can say to Father Maimbourg that I would be very disposed to accept the parochial duties of this pilgrimage and to procure for the people of the region every possible religious service, but that I would need his advice and even his consent. Furthermore, at present I do not have a priest available, but I have reason to believe I will have one in the near future, etc. .

..

The mail carrier just brought me your messages from Besançon. I went over only the first page of your letter which concerns Father Bardenet. I cannot read what he himself has written without again missing this mail carrier. The matter is becoming difficult. Perhaps the good God has seen that we are leaning a little too heavily on Father Bardenet. He wishes to be our sole support. It seems to me I feel some pleasure at this disposition of God's providence. *Regi saeculorum immortalis et invisibili*, etc. When I say God is our sole support, you understand very well that I exclude only men, and not the help of our august patroness, the most holy Virgin.

Assure Father Bardenet of my respect. Tell him that upon the departure of this letter, I received his without being able to read it and that I will answer him soon. In the meantime, I AK him to believe all my thoughts are in the interest of religion, that I have always believed that on his part he was not seeking anything else, that we can triumph over real difficulties only in being in agreement in our views and sentiments in seeking, so to speak, only God in privations and sacrifices.

I embrace you tenderly, my dear Son, as well as all my Children at Saint-Remy.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

P.S. Father Romain is much more satisfied since he made the prudent choice of remaining. His place had already been reserved on the coach.

Often recall, my dear Son, this passage of the Gospel. *Messis quidem multa, operarii autem pauci; rogate ergo Dominum messis ut mittat operarios in messem suam!* If only we had laborers, and laborers full of faith!

\* \* \*

*Father Bardenet had decided to break the ice, and his letter justified Father Chaminade's long patience. Here is the beginning.*

*Reverend and Very Venerable Superior,*

*I am truly ashamed of not having answered several of your letters and for not having followed up a correspondence so honorable and flattering to me. I did have*

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<sup>2</sup> Concerning the *collèges*, institutions, boarding school, and primary schools.

<sup>1</sup> Archbishop Tharin, who has just taken possession of the See of Strasbourg.

*reasons, and I ask you to excuse me.<sup>1</sup> Be kind enough to believe that I am still filled with veneration for you and with attachment and devotedness to the Institute of Mary. I am sorry I did not let you know of my great satisfaction with your little community, which has always conducted itself perfectly and with edification to all those privileged to see it in action. It inspires the greatest confidence, and I hope the Lord in his mercy will have everything at Saint-Remy redound to his glory and to the honor of the Blessed Virgin. For a while I thought we should furnish the establishment in grand style. In the different meetings of the region, there has been talk of extremely vast projects; inexhaustible resources were discussed even while the house was lacking the most basic necessities. A certain embarrassment took hold. In this way the great reputation of the last several months vanished into thin air.*

*It was time for something to be done to bolster it. The retreat given to the schoolteachers did exactly this. I will not repeat what Father Caillet and Brother Clouzet must have told you. It is certain that even our fondest hopes were surpassed. The young teachers the rector sent will continue the precious fruits of this exercise. They will speak about the advantages of the Institute and of your good religious. They will send subjects, talk to their pastors with satisfaction, and these in their turn will surely esteem your Society and promote its works.*

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*Father Bardenet then touches upon the financial question, stating the situation clearly and tactfully expressing the complaints he had brought up against certain activities of Brother David. Father Chaminade hastened to reply.*

### **293. To Father Bardenet, Saint-Remy**

May 31, 1824, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

Reverend Father and very dear Collaborator,

I have been greatly consoled and full of joy at finally receiving a long letter from you, in spite of the weight of the bill that was annexed to it.<sup>1</sup>

I never had the intention of going immediately and in grand style to Saint-Remy. In truth, our resources are inexhaustible and we find them in Providence, which protects the Institute of Mary in a truly admirable manner. However, I never permit myself to have recourse to these resources but in proportion, as this same Divine Providence seems to invite me to do so. To follow step by step the plans of God in doing the work he chooses to delegate to me—here you have my entire system. For some time I have been almost constantly in want, and nevertheless I sometimes have a type of abundance that astonishes me. Just last week, for example, I was very embarrassed to pay even some insignificant accounts. In this trouble I believed I saw the designs

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<sup>1</sup> Fr. Bardenet had just been having a hard time. “Fr. Bardenet is embarrassed,” Bro. Clouzet had confided to Fr. Chaminade. “He still owes 20,000 francs on the purchase of the château. To pay this sum, he was counting on 25,000 to 30,000 he had in reserve that he believed was very safe. He now expects nothing from them. . .” (letter of January 16).

<sup>1</sup> The secretary, Bro. Tissier, had written “which was too high,” which called for a protest from Fr. Bardenet. Here is Fr. Chaminade’s explanation. “I hasten to correct a mistake made by my young letter copyist in the letter I had the honor of writing to you, on June 6. You complain, and with cause, about the expression ‘what was too high’ in the half sentence ‘in spite of the amount of the bill, which was too high.’ The mistake comes from the fact that my copyist, who often writes my letters under direction, had understood ‘too high’ instead of ‘annexed.’ I signed the letter after having had him read it, but without my having read it myself. Here is the half sentence, as I dictated it. ‘In spite of the amount of the bill, which was annexed to it.’”

“You must understand, Father, that your bill, however exact and moderate I found it to be, did seem to me rather high, but not in a way to affect the consolation and the joy I felt at the reception of the letter. I am surprised that Fr. Caillet and Bro. Clouzet, who must know my feelings so accurately, as well as my habitual care of not in any way hurting anyone’s feelings, did not even suspect the mistake of the copyist” (letter of June 25).

of Providence in a vast project that was offered to me. I asked for a little time to think things over. In just 24 hours, I was able to offer 80,000 francs in cash. Then I returned to my usual condition of want.

I read with sorrow, Reverend Father and respected collaborator, the notes Brother David left for Brother Clouzet at the time of his departure. I am strongly against this entire discussion. I was preparing to write to Father Caillet or to Brother Clouzet when your letter came. I held back only because I did not see clearly in these notes what I suspected precisely to be the very reasons you allege.

As far as the poplars are concerned, Brother David had always written, and even said verbally, that even though there was no mention of the fact in the deed of sale, you were supposed to give them up. But from his way of expressing himself, I understood that you were surrendering them only with reluctance. These poplars have always seemed to me to be a necessary ornament to the property, otherwise so devoid of anything of the sort. Your wisdom and your generosity helped you to find a way of arranging everything, that of having them form part of the account, with all the advance payments you had the kindness to make; I am thinking especially of the one for the retreat given to the school teachers. When I say "all the advance payments," I mean only those that are more apparent, because I know you have made others which are not indicated on your bill. We are both working at the same task. Each of us may look upon it as his own. Without you, I would not have believed it was my duty to undertake it. For this I am thankful to you in my own name, as well as in the name of the Master we both serve.

Let us come to the last issue. You offer me a release from every account up to now in consideration of 6,000 francs counted as cash, payable in six months, or else for 600 francs clearly assured as a life annuity. Either one is agreeable to me, but because a choice has to be made, I prefer that a sum of 6,000 francs be counted out for you. I have reason to believe you will give me the entire year to pay this and that you will be kind enough to accept, by anticipation, the total sum in payments of 1,000 francs each. I authorize Brother Clouzet to make this arrangement with you, with the promise of never recalling the past, for you yourself will be kind enough to grant every reserve, etc.

As you see, I am accepting your propositions purely and simply, in order as not to put anything in the way of this final arrangement. I am very sorry that the notes written by Brother David have been made known to you, and although I had no part in the annoyance you were made to suffer, I am here doing my best to excuse him. Assured of your good heart, I will not neglect to propose a new benefaction to you, that of stocking the pond with fish. Brother David wrote me during the last vacation that you had in mind to do this during the month of November. Why would you not carry out this project, which will become so advantageous to this budding community and which, as it were infallibly, will always keep on increasing? I understand that the large breaks in the walls of the enclosure have made you fear great waste. But there is very little to be feared during the first year because the fish are so small! Additionally, in the second place, I hope that in the course of a year all the breaks will be repaired.

The work of the retreats for the schoolteachers has always seemed to me most valuable. If at some time we can bring together at Saint-Remy the schoolteachers of the three departments which make up the education offices of Besançon, and if we can improve all primary education within the jurisdiction of the academy, it is to be presumed that the university and the government will be interested in introducing this work in the other academies. And you, Father, will have a share before God in all the good that will result, both for religion and for our unhappy country. Let us work with courage and in perfect harmony. The good God will bless our solicitude because it will have no other motive for existence but God's glory.

I am with respectful attachment, etc.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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### S. 293a. To Father Castex, Chaplain at Condom

June 1, 1824, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

Almost immediately after receiving your letter of May 28, I sent it to my council along with a copy of the contract. My council was absent, but upon their arrival they sent me the remarks which I will have copied for you. [See below.]

I am truly sorry for all the incidents which obstruct our plans to establish the Daughters of Mary in Condom, and I regret more deeply the opposition shown to the parents of Mlle de Lachapelle; but what can I do? I have agreed to all the terms of the sale suggested and put forward by the administrators. I want to see a sound contract which will give rise to no worry or bickering later on. Am I wrong? Would M. Lachapelle himself agree to it? The more adamant the administrators are with respect to these clauses, the more the buyers have to fear. The difficulty seems to stem from the 6 annual rent remissions granted by the administrators. If they wish to promote this establishment and at the same time guarantee its use in the education of indigent young women, why do they not include a clause which expresses their wishes, that is not in contradiction with the sale, and which does not expose the purchasing religious to ever-present and eternal apprehension when in their house? Frankly, I would prefer to provide them with the funds necessary for the repairs to the hospice Piétat than to accept those 6 annuities under their conditions.

I am writing in all haste to show you my goodwill, and also that you may share these feelings with M. de Lachapelle and with Madame his wife. The postman is about to pass.

I am, with a respectful attachment. . . .

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#### Remarks (referred to above)

“To repossess” is a very ordinary and, as the author admits, a superfluous word, neither adding nor subtracting any right. This is not true of the expressions used in Article 4. This article was unacceptable in its first draft because it contained a perpetual threat of repossession by the seller, even if the buyer’s intent has been above reproach.

The new question is to understand if this addition would have this withdrawal as an effect, or if the withdrawal is solely dependent on whether the buyer fulfills the conditions.

In this case, the proposed condition remedies nothing because the original shortcoming has not vanished; it is found in the expression, “if by some chance.” It matters very little if we add “especially by some action resulting from the will of the purchaser or of his agents.” This *a fortiori* clause does not suppress the other; on the contrary, it confirms it. It should be stated simply, thus: “Article 4. If for any reason due to the will of the buyer or of his agents the buildings sold are not used as in the agreement, the aforementioned lady or her agents will cease, etc. . . .”

Note that the council accepts this refinement only with respect to the clause in question; it does not make the contract, as such, acceptable. For with this new clause, the perpetual threat of repossession without formality still could apply, and this is not acceptable. I will explain why, at least in part.

1. No loan or mortgage can be obtained using as collateral a building which can be repossessed; this possibility nullifies any such transaction.

2. If no mortgage can be obtained, then for the same reason no money can be invested and no repairs made, for we must not hazard our own resources more than another’s.

But, it is argued, if you are well-intentioned you are assured of keeping the property, and your expenses and repairs will not be lost. Not true, for although I may not wish to disrupt the agreement because of the resulting chaos, external circumstances may lead to this.

First Example. When the church law underwent a change, some religious people wanted to act as in the past; but they were declared to have ill will.

Second Example. Not so long ago, the government of the king decided to appoint women teachers to take charge of the girls' schools. In Agen a woman you know was chosen, and this resulted in the closing of several schools. The woman then refused the offer, and order is being restored.

We run the risk of intrigues, pressures, jealousy, and more. Instead of all these difficulties which would always be present because of the terms of the contract, it would have been reasonable to admit temporary conditions irrespective of the time factor; but a perpetual threat of repossession is a cause of distrust and perpetual bickering. It seems to me Article 4 should simply read this way.

“Article 4. The buyer promises and commits herself to obtain the authorization to organize free schools in the buildings concerned, and this within 6 months from the present date, or to justify any impediment which may have caused a delay; and if after one year she has not obtained royal agreement to the plan, the administration would repossess the property without any recourse to legal procedures.”

Such a clause would render useless any addition to Article 1, such as “committed by their state to education.” The word “state” supposes that they are authorized by their civil and legal status, which is not the case. However, everything is in order of the obligation to make the establishment conform to legal requirements is assumed.

Someone could read into the present formulation a lack of confidence in the government, as if they foresaw that the government would change the destination to which both parties agreed. Such distrust has no place in such a contract. The expression “for any reason” implies the same idea. Have the following possibilities been contemplated—fire, complete destruction of the buildings, famine in the land, loss, or occupation by the enemy? The word “reason” includes all such events. It is damaging to the entire document. It is entirely improper, to my mind; it must not be used. I could write on and on about this and other ideas. If the parties were to meet face to face they would soon agree, for everyone seems eager and willing; but each in his corner sees only one aspect. Either we must seek good counsel or arrange a meeting.

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*If on the matter of Father Bardenet Father Chaminade then was peaceful, he was not without worry because of the lack of understanding on the part of his coworkers; the inflexibility of Father Caillet's character and Brother Clouzet's touchiness sometimes clashed and obstructed the progress of the work. Father Chaminade tries to find a remedy for this problem, but with his ordinary charity and delicacy.*

#### **294. To Fr. Georges Caillet, Saint-Remy**

June 4, 1824, Bordeaux  
Original, Agmar

My dear Son,

I have already told you about the reception of your messages from Besançon. I am answering them today. . . .

It seems to me you interpret too rigorously the intentions and conduct of Father Bardenet. Doubtless, the poplars and a small stretch of woodland might have been given more generously; perhaps we might have been able to deduct something on the account of advance payments it

secured for us. Whatever the case may be, the section of poplar trees, the part that was burned and the line of trees—all a part of the 40 acres—the advance money payments, the material requirements for the retreat, everything costing well over 12,000 francs, is there not generosity in being satisfied with 6,000? And still, for these 6,000 he offers two methods of liquidation, either paying the sum in six months or reducing it to a life annuity. You will see by the letter I am writing to him that I prefer the total liquidation in the space of one year and that I authorize Brother Clouzet to take upon himself the payment of this sum, insofar as both sides promise to release and liquidate everything from the past. It is necessary for these promises to be sufficiently detailed, etc. . . . I have no idea what it would cost to supply the pond with fish, but in a friendly way, Brother Clouzet must be given the task of securing the funds, and this as soon as possible. You will understand, my dear Son, the wisdom and the circumspection with which you are to avail yourself in his services and benevolence. I am sending you the note written in his own hand.

Already three days have passed since Father Bardenet's letter. I may say the same with regard to this one. Work around here is forever piling up, and the preparations for Pentecost practically deprive me of all time for writing. I am continuing this letter by myself, while Brother Tissier is copying another.

I agree, my dear Son, that Brother Clouzet should join the title of director to that of superior, because Brother David needed the three distinct names for the three grand offices. I do not believe this would render Father Rothéa's zeal powerless, nor do I believe he would get in the way of the functions of the position of superior. However, at the same time I rejoiced at the thought of the increase in Brother Clouzet's zeal. Father Rothéa is to be praised for his modest conduct, for this is necessary for the preservation of peace, but one of them should have informed me about this apparent incompatibility because the question would not have been difficult to solve.

Are the priests to be subject to the lay brothers? When the regulation determining the ranks of the members of the group was read in the chapel, I noticed that some had believed that at Saint-Remy Father Rothéa would be subject to Brother Clouzet. I hastened to explain to everyone the meaning of Brother Clouzet's position as superior and his relationship to Father Rothéa. Father Rothéa, having only the quality of director, was actually the superior of the spiritual life of the brothers and of the entire establishment, above even the Head of Zeal and the superior in spiritual matters. In communities where it is suitable to appoint a lay superior, the priest is essentially the Head of Zeal, unless on some special occasion something else is prescribed. But this would only be by rare exception. Could it be that Brother Clouzet was absent when I gave very detailed explanations on this important subject? I do not recall if he was. Furthermore, I do not believe Brother Clouzet is a prey to the spirit of domination. I am not giving too much importance to these reflections because I am very pressed, but you can appreciate them and explain them to others.<sup>1</sup> Brothers Dubarry and Pascal, at least, must have been free to address themselves to Father Rothéa. In this, Brother Clouzet's position as superior would have had advantages, etc. . . .

Let us say another word about your present relationship with Brother Clouzet. My dear Son, if your obedience is in opposition to the Constitutions of the Institute, there would be a great mistake in the Constitutions; and if the oath which every superior of an establishment takes at the hands of the First Superior dispensed him from the obedience which he owes him by a formal

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<sup>1</sup> Fr. Chaminade's thought on this point is made precise in his handwritten notes on the Constitutions. "The priests will never be subject to the laymen as far as their persons are concerned, but they may be in regard to their functions. For example, in an establishment where all the religious are laymen and where the functions they must accomplish would not require the sacerdotal character, the superior could be a layman and one or two priests in charge of zeal as confessors, chaplains, etc." What the Constitutions declare in similar terms is that "Priests who happen to be in houses directed by a lay member depend on the Provincial as to their particular conduct in what does not concern the Order or General Regulations of the house. In such communities, the priest, or one of the priests, is appointed Head of Zeal and presides at the exercises of piety."

vow, this oath would be entirely injurious to God. But only one superior is needed in a house. What a poor way of reasoning in the present circumstance! When Providence does me the favor of founding a new establishment and when I give it a superior, from this very moment do I lose my jurisdiction over the establishment and over its new superior? The orders I give—should they only be counsels, and will they be subject to the judgment of the new superior? Have I even lost my right to visit the establishment? Because what would this right be if I had no authority above that of the head of the establishment? I may not pay a personal visit, so I name a Visitor whom I clothe in my own authority. Should this Visitor not be obeyed as I myself would be obeyed? If the authority of the Visitor were explained by the regulations, it would be necessary for the extension of authority eventually to be delegated to him would be clearly pointed out in his letter of obedience, and then he would be an “extraordinary” Visitor.

I cannot see in Brother Clouzet’s conduct toward you, my dear Son, anything but an illusion that has come about as a consequence of the proposals of Brother David during his last days at Saint-Remy. These proposals were absolutely contrary to what he himself had previously written and taught, everywhere and always. Moreover, Brother Clouzet has acted and still acts contrary to the false principles he has just expressed, which clearly shows that there is illusion involved rather than a spirit of rebellion. Again, if he holds so strongly to the Constitutions, let him carefully examine what the First Superior has to do at the time of his visits, etc. . . .

What is to be the thought behind what Brother Clouzet said in open council, that “to make known to you my interior sentiments is not an order but a counsel, just a genuine counsel.” I believe, my dear Son, that Brother Clouzet thought that his authority would be weakened if he modestly took his place alongside his brothers to carry out an order given to all. He was under an illusion again on this point, for he will enjoy true authority only in proportion as he himself gives the example of genuine submission, according to the occasions presented to him by Providence. After all, making known to a superior our interior is not necessarily going to Confession.<sup>1</sup> If he has no confidence in you, it is permitted to him not to make his extraordinary Confession to you; but if you have the charity to offer the brothers your ministry, to listen to them exceptionally in Confession, he must present himself at the tribunal of penance as all the others do, so that it will be impossible to point out those who present themselves from actual need, etc.

I will not add other reflections, as I believe they would be superfluous for Brother Clouzet. I am convinced of his uprightness, and so his illusion will not last long. But it is annoying nevertheless because on its account you are always thwarted in your dispatches. As you know, we had not counted upon your being away so long.

I am having your prospectus returned to you.<sup>2</sup> I note only the following. (1) You must come to an understanding with Brother Clouzet. It seems from the letter he has just written to me that he would have something to say about this prospectus. (2) Would it not be in place to announce in this same prospectus that the boarding school will be divided into a primary and secondary school; that the pupils of the secondary school will pay a tuition of 400 francs a year; and that as soon as it begins to increase, the public will be notified by a second prospectus, under the authorization of the rector, about how it will be run?

My dear Son, let me have the three *excats* of Brothers Dominique, Antoine, and Bernard.<sup>3</sup> I propose to have them receive tonsure very shortly. Do they have or do you have their baptismal certificates? I cannot say for certain, before ending this letter. Bro. Philippe [Schneider] is to take the cassock after tomorrow, the holy day of Pentecost. Bro. Joseph Hoffman has left for

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<sup>1</sup> At the time, the revealing of a person’s interior was a point of rule in a number of religious communities. “Every month,” we read for example in the Rules of the Visitation written by Saint Francis de Sales, “the sisters will open their heart summarily and briefly to the superior in all simplicity and complete confidence, letting her know its innermost recesses, etc.” At the present time, this practice is optional.

<sup>2</sup> About this prospectus, see *Spirit of Our Foundation*, 3, no. 72.

<sup>3</sup> See letter no. 285.

Ribeauvillé, following an unexpected order from his father. I will answer Father Breuillot immediately after the feast. I will also write a few words to Brother Clouzet.

My dear Son, take courage, *Certa bonum certamen etc.* . . . and believe in my fatherly tenderness.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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**295. To Bro. Dominique Clouzet, Saint-Remy**

June 6, 1824, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

I will send you only a few words because I have just written to Father Bardenet and Father Caillet at some length and because today is the Friday before Pentecost. It is evening, and the bell for Benediction has rung.

I was glad to receive your letter of May 25. I hope that with time and patience, the establishment at Saint-Remy will improve in every way. Nevertheless, take great care that what is purely temporal may not be harmful to the spiritual. If I have sent Father Caillet to come to the assistance of the former, I have surely not lost sight of the latter regarding the community, whether in my verbal instructions or in his letter of obedience. Alas, my dear Son, what would temporal prosperity be if in reaching it, you were to neglect progress in the practice of the Christian and religious virtues?

Because Father Caillet is to represent me, I gave him very extensive powers. This was even more necessary because the sphere of his activity is at such a great distance from me, and correspondence from there is less active. You should have encouraged him and brought all your subordinates to the recognition of his authority. Actually, you have done the opposite—imbued with the false principles Brother David poured out to you in his delirium, you have grieved Father Caillet and almost disheartened him in your first interviews.

You speak about Constitutions and Regulations. I am glad to note that you insist upon these; you should do so inviolably, both because of your vows and your oath of office. But you must do so with intelligence and not easily believe that by a few words you can render powerless the words of a First Superior. How can we remedy Saint-Remy's most desperate situation if I limit the authority of the one I have sent to provide the needed assistance? After announcing his visit both to Saint-Remy and Besançon, I awaited replies from each before allowing him to leave. I overburdened myself with work here so he could go. I was hoping his journey would be far less prolonged. Through his obstinacy, Brother David started by making him lose two months. And when he came to believe he could operate in peace, you did not seem to recognize his authority, or at least all the authority of his mission. . . . I am replying to Father Caillet about the principal difficulties you placed in his way, and I do so very briefly because there is no question here of writing any type of memorandum. That would even be inconvenient.

On the other hand, my dear Son, I believe you have good dispositions, and I do not attribute these digressions to your heart. I will add only that (1) if you seemed to perceive some oversight or error on my part, you might have told me so immediately. In the meantime, you risked nothing in receiving Father Caillet in the capacity which I was giving him. (2) If Father Caillet used the powers I had believed it was my duty to give him imprudently or with haughtiness, again you should have told me.

If there is the least misunderstanding between the two of you, the work of God will suffer by just that much. If at Saint-Remy there will be subordination, charity, and the spirit of faith, Saint-Remy will triumph, and the blessings of God will reign there.

I am stopping here. I am leaving this letter unsealed, that I may include one for Father Caillet. If he does not read it before giving it to you, let him know its contents, just as he may let you know what I am writing to him. I will never have more satisfaction than when I can see you all as one. Oh! What a beautiful Society, in which all the members, and especially all the heads, have only one heart, one soul, and among whom everything is held in common! This will be, I fondly hope, the Society of Mary.

One more word, my dear Son. I now recall that you or Father Caillet remarked to me that Brother David complained a great deal at Saint-Remy about the expressions and style of my letters, etc. . . . Guard yourself against such an obsession, for it is altogether against religious simplicity. A father who writes to his children seeks no other end than understanding of his views and desires. If to increase their strength he makes use of the method of obediences, these acts are not to be discussed like the letter of the law, after the manner of civil tribunal, etc. . . .

I continued this letter, begun yesterday, during the time of the High Mass on the Feast of Pentecost. On this solemnity, what can a good father wish to one of his older Sons than the most abundant gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit?

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*The business manager of the seminary of Besançon was very kind in regard to the religious of Mary. Father Chaminade encourages him to interest himself in their works, as well as in recruitment to their ranks.*

**296. To Father Breuillot,  
Director of the Seminary of Besançon**

June 11, 1824, Bordeaux

Original, Arch. of the Besançon Seminary

Reverend Father,

I have received with great pleasure your short letter of last May 21. It seems that the good God is blessing the holy intentions he inspires us with, as well as the labors of my Children at Saint-Remy. I especially distinguish among them Father Caillet, although he is there only on a special mission. The Institute of Mary has several subjects who have more ability and natural talents than he, but who do not have as much faith and virtue. This is the only reason he has been chosen by me to go to the assistance of the establishment at Saint-Remy.

I greatly favor the work for the teachers, both the retreats and their training at the seminary. This above all will cause the Institute of Mary to take great steps forward, provided it can become wide-ranging. It will especially help the Institute realize the end with which God has inspired it, the regeneration of our unhappy country. The philosophic spirit is being introduced even into the tiny villages, corrupting young and old of all conditions, both men and women, and this by the clever use of every type of means. This is why we undertake different types of works and train, or help to train, subjects fully capable of sustaining and developing them.

Another of our works which goes directly toward the same end is the establishment of Sodalities. Father Caillet will be able to give you a good idea about these.

Oh, Father, how abundant the harvest but how few the laborers, especially laborers who know how to gather it in! You may be able to help us recruit them. You may find good subjects in your seminary to whom the Lord may have given similar dispositions. Perhaps you could facilitate the conditions for joining us. That would not in any way be a serious loss for the diocese of Besançon. We would put back into the diocese both the capital and the interest, but in better currency. Father Caillet might be suspect if he did the recruiting himself.

I may have said too much, Father, when I said that Father Caillet's faith and virtues were my only reasons for choosing him. I recall now that he often spoke to me of the confidence he

had in you and of the many opportunities you had for doing good, etc. . . . Everything he told me about you, at different times, figured greatly in my choice of him. I am almost a stranger in your vast diocese. I can do no good there except with the help of those Providence deigns to send me. This same loving Providence has chosen you to help in the formation of the large establishment of Saint-Remy. It is evidently impossible for it to develop sufficiently by itself. Help us, Father, or rather continue to help us. In a year I hope this establishment will be able to stand on its own feet, so to speak. But we cannot reach this point without urgent expenses.

You have clearly seen, Father, that it was preferable to unite the small property of Marast with that of Saint-Remy rather than to make of it an institution by itself. However, would it not be necessary to draw up a deed of surrender, at least under a private seal, reserving to ourselves the duty of seeking confirmation by the government? As soon as a favorable moment presents itself, I intend to ask the king for the actual authorization of the Institute.

The project for the establishment of the institution for the deaf seems to me well planned, at least as far as the basic intent is concerned. You and His Excellency the Archbishop seek to reform the morals of the people of this part of the city where the institution will be located.<sup>1</sup> If the archbishop truly desires it, the project could be carried out quite easily. First he should ask for help or aid from both the Municipal Council and the General Council of the department. It is beyond doubt that the minister would approve the articles of the budget presented for this purpose by either council. Direct requests would be made to the government only after the establishment becomes an established fact. I am afraid that if this simple but painful step is not taken (even though it will be expensive), you are going to encounter many difficulties and even contradictions on the part of the government. . . . You may have trouble from the Royal Commission for the Deaf, which is made up in Paris of important people, or from the independent commission of the university, which has a direct relationship with the Minister of the Interior. It is possible that the most influential members of the commission would not like to see this work placed in the hands of religious. If this work were thus carried out in grand style, all its parts would sustain one another in far better fashion; the lay religious and the sisters would have superiors and confessors of their own Order; they would help one another in forming and sustaining the Sodalties; the parish would be served with dignity and edification, and the other parishes of the city would not be long in following the salutary example of this one.

But Reverend Father, I am afraid of repeating myself to the point of boring you. Try to obtain for us ready-made priests or priests to be ordained. Try to procure for Saint-Remy the means to pay its debts. We must make at least the most necessary repairs and cultivate that part of the farmland where the ground is of better quality.

I may have to recall Father Caillet, but I will be very sorry to do this before he has completely fulfilled his mission.

I am returning to the deaf. If the latter project were adopted and carried out with a certain enthusiasm, it would be better, it seems to me, to leave things pretty much as they are rather than to begin the institution as Father Caillet had first indicated to me. Whatever the case may be, you will always find me disposed to second your zealous views with all my strength.

I am etc. . . .

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*Difficult negotiations for the foundation in Condom continue and are at the point of succeeding.*

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<sup>1</sup> See letter no. 284. The breadth of Fr. Chaminade's ideas is seen here; in addition to the institution for the deaf confided to the brothers and sisters of the Institute, he already foresaw the organizing of Sodalties, the direction of the parish, etc.

### **297. To Father Castex, Condom**

June 7, 1824, Bordeaux

Autograph, Archives of the Gaïchies Family, Condom

[With inserts from S. 297]

Reverend Father,

For several days, I have thought of writing to M. de Lachapelle to share the sorrow and anxiety the incidents connected with the acquisition of the hospice of Piétat must be causing him.

I sent him a new agreement I had my counselor draw up for him. Everything the administrators wanted, even the most difficult, is included without harming the firmness of the acquisition or leaving the sisters any cause for anxiety or worry. As I did for you, I showed him that I would prefer to pay for the repairs on these buildings and for the expenses of the first establishment rather than enter into all sorts of discussions. The observations I have made come in no way from any distrust on the part of the actual administrators. Like you, I saw that they were only seeking to help the establishment. However, I did not believe, and I do not believe even now, that prudence could permit an action, above all as a beginning, such as the one which had been proposed.

I had the contract proposal drawn up and have sent a copy to M. de Lachapelle as proof of my goodwill. I suppose M. de Lachapelle has shown you the letter I sent to him. I will await his answer. I have just received yours of June 4.

Let us not be discouraged. Let us do everything we can and adore the designs of God in the obstacles God permits to stand in the way. Most certainly some great advantage will be the result, even for this establishment.

We will gratefully accept the help offered by M. Lacave.

I offer you, Reverend Father, a new token of my respectful attachment.

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### **298. To Father Castex, Condom**

June 15, 1824, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. of the Gaïchies Family, Condom

Reverend Father,

Only two or three days before, I had received from the Archbishop of Auch authorization of the establishment of the Daughters of Mary at Condom, his promise of benevolence, etc. . . .

I consent, and even with pleasure, that there will be a sale, pure and simple, of the former hospice of Piétat to Mlle de Lachapelle, with the authorization and security of her father as has already been agreed upon, and according to the ordinance of the king. Please let there be no other clause and condition than those that refer to the method of payment of the perpetual yearly income and of its security. In a word, let the sale be made to Mlle de Lachapelle just as it would be to any other buyer. I renounce in her name and with a good heart all favors, and by this I mean the six annuities which have caused us so many worries, not to say more. This is not denying that I always have in my heart a deep sense of gratitude toward the mayor and the administrators. I have never had any illusion regarding the purity of their sentiments. If there had been a question only of a transitory act, I would not have offered any type of resistance. But in a simple and perpetual act, prudence could not permit me to adopt conditions of that kind. If any one of these gentlemen does not yet understand this, I hope he will not delay in doing me justice, and M. de Lachapelle will himself bless God that his daughter has entered an organization which knows how to respect itself and which has superiors and directors who in all cases and circumstances are able to compensate for the lack of experience on the part of these religious women.

On the other hand, the administrators do not need to fear that our religious will exercise less interest and less zeal in the teaching of the indigent young women. True zeal has motives which are more powerful than those inspired by human interests. Our religious women will do good in Condom, but they will do it freely and willingly. Father, you may handle this matter as speedily as M. and Mme de Lachapelle may desire. By this mail I am writing to their daughter, that she may send you her procuration and that you may sign it in her name.

I am thinking of going to Agen during the first days of July. There I will make the first selection of the small group that is to go to Condom. I will also make the choice of the young woman who is to come to Bordeaux, for I settled everything for this latter establishment last Wednesday. If everything is finished at this time, I will go myself to Condom with Mlle de Trenquelléon to install the new community. We will not stay long so we can return to Bordeaux for a similar ceremony.

I had and still have the intention that these women will accept boarders at Condom. This is why the school's young women will have to be entirely separated from the boarding school. There should be no communication at all between the boarders and the young women.

Concerning the other establishment, in the interior of the city, if I go to Condom for the installation we will look over the city a little and make up our minds about the other matter.

I am so pressed by this mail that I cannot write directly to M. de Lachapelle. I ask you to let him read this letter. You may interpret my respectful devotedness toward him and Mme de Lachapelle. As for you, be pleased to accept the renewed assurance of my tender and respectful attachment.

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### **299. To Fr. Georges Caillet, Saint-Remy**

June 16, 1824, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

[With insert from S. 299]

My dear Son,

I have received your last two letters, dated from Saint-Remy on May 28 and June 4. I had already answered you in regard to Colmar and the pilgrimage of the Trois-Epis. What you tell me—that all the brothers were employed in the cultivation of the land or in rather hard labor—makes me fear that Saint-Remy will not be able to furnish two brothers for Colmar for the French language, chosen either from the older ones or among our new recruits. Coustou and Constant, had they been trained, would have been in a condition to be sent. As things stand, I can give you only Brother Rothéa and Brother Troffer. The latter is doing very well in Villeneuve. I have been obliged to withdraw Brother Revet from Villeneuve; he was replaced by a certain Armenaud and this latter in Agen by Brother Weber. In a pinch I could let you have Brother Tissier, but (1) his small stature, (2) the feebleness of his complexion, and (3) the small services he renders me. . . . Work on the priests in whom you may see some signs of a vocation to the religious state, such as Father Juif, etc., and among the brothers try to discover those who would be good for the schools but who are otherwise not masters in any profession. These can easily be put to the test in the schools of Saint-Remy.

In fact, I had forgotten to tell you that the 75 francs had been paid by M. Allègre himself. . . . I have answered you several times about those 1,000 francs. That would not stop me from sending them to you if I had them. We have a candidate who would like to join the Institute; he has 1,500 francs in cash. I want to accept him, but only for Saint-Remy; on the other hand, he dreads the long journey. If he decides, I will send him to you with all his money, which I will have changed into gold.

Everything is finished with regard to the Milles Gramagnac.<sup>1</sup> It appears that at Condom, the deed will also be drawn up for the new establishment of the Daughters of Mary which has been planned for a long time. I am thinking of leaving for Agen during the first days of July to make the choice of subjects for the two establishments, for, etc. . . .

This is the land surveying you are especially in need of [at Saint-Remy]; I do not find any better and faster way than to have Bro. Louis Rothéa learn this mathematical science, and at the same time Jules<sup>2</sup> and Brother Thiriet. I am looking for a good teacher so this may be done. I hope Brother Rothéa will soon understand all about it, and even in an exceptional way. It may even be prudent to take Colmar only for the reopening of classes; but I will then send you Brother Rothéa, who will be able to teach.

I am surprised, my dear Son, that you have not yet received anything in benefactions or in advance payments. . . . *Scit Pater vester coelestis quia his indigetis.*<sup>3</sup>

To act, to undertake and to conclude matters, my dear Son, you do not need any special authorization if the works have already been agreed upon between us or if they are of the type and purpose we commonly undertake. If as part of his office each head has a discretionary power, this is all the more reason you should have it, especially since you are some 400 to 500 miles away from here. If I ask for circumstantial details about people and things, you do not have to wait for answers to act on your own initiative. It would be otherwise if there were questions of a new establishment of some great and new undertaking, of some matter directly affecting the entire Institute. Even then, in case speedy action is called for, you could proceed in view of a later approbation.

My dear Son, I am not prolonging your stay in any way. All I am doing is assenting to the circumstances and needs of the establishment, or rather to the dispositions of Providence. But take careful note that I am giving in only to the urgent and indispensable needs. You will need to return to Bordeaux as soon as you have adequately fulfilled your mission, as soon as Saint-Remy can dispense with your most important services. For this reason, you must not undertake any employment which presupposes the *animus permanendi*. If I asked Father Rothéa, this is because I foresaw the need there would be for your continued stay for several months, and in fact, already a month and a half has passed since my first observation. As soon as you can foresee a convenient time for departure, let me know immediately.

If the prefect and the sub-prefect of Vesoul come to Saint-Remy to visit the establishment, they must be received in Father Bardenet's office. I take it for granted that you have arranged this with him, and that he was pleased. If Father Bardenet were not what he is, if he were not your cousin, he would not refuse such an arrangement, for he knows what is proper in such matters. It would be the same if even the archbishop were to come on a visit.

On all occasions, preserve a great presence of mind. Say the same to Father Rothéa and to Brother Clouzet. Beautiful and noble simplicity in all proceedings, frankness, loyalty, prudence—there you have our complement of action in our relationships with others. Does it not seem as if Our Lord had made of it a type of summary of his doctrine, *Estote ergo simplices sicut columbae et prudentes sicut serpentes?*<sup>1</sup>

You seem affected, my dear Son, by debts which we contract every day to multiply our establishments or to sustain or extend the older ones. Pray and pray earnestly, so that the evils you have in mind may never occur, so that I may never forestall the order of Providence in the works we believe to be according to its views. I was thinking this morning about this extraordinary path we are following, and in a way I was frightened and slightly disconcerted when I understood that God acted thus to increase our confidence in God and to make us live in

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<sup>1</sup> See letter no. 267.

<sup>2</sup> Jules Chaminade. See letter no. 135.

<sup>3</sup> Your father in heaven knows you have need of all these things.

<sup>1</sup> Be therefore as simple as doves and as prudent as serpents.

entire dependence on God's grace. This realization somewhat comforted and strengthened me. What surprises me and sometimes causes me trouble is what Saint Paul says, *Nemo militans deo, implicat se negotiis saecularibus ut ei placeat cui se probavit.*<sup>2</sup> In my position, and in this struggle which I must undergo for God, I often must enter into negotiations with the world. May this obligation of mixing in *negotiis saecularibus* be a proof that the struggle is not in the designs of God? Herein lies the difficulty. For many long years I have mulled this over. I find some interior peace only in being careful when entering into these negotiations, to do so (1) only as a result of matters I believe God is asking for; (2) as little as possible; and (3) not to cease to raise myself to God, so that my mind and heart may not be really implicated in these negotiations. If you know of anything to be added to this list or of anything better to tell me, my dear Son, do not hesitate to speak.

Everything is going fairly well in Bordeaux, at the Madeleine, on Rue des Menuts, and at Saint-Laurent. Everyone is deeply moved at the tokens of your kind remembrance.

I will close this long letter in quoting for you the verse preceding the one I have just considered. *Labora sicut bonus miles Christi Jesu.*<sup>1</sup> *Pax Dei sit semper tecum.* May the Lord also shower his most abundant blessings on your labors and upon those of all our Children at Saint-Remy!

P.S. I am not yet saying anything to you about Brother David. He is always quiet, or rather, he is feeling calmer. To lead him is no easy matter.

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### **S. 299a. To Father Bardenet, Saint-Remy**

June 25, 1824, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

Father and Worthy Collaborator,

I ask your indulgence for a error which my young secretary allowed to slip into my letter of June 6. You protest, and justly so, at the expression "which was in excess" in the phrase "in spite of the importance of the account which was in excess." The error is due to the fact that my secretary, who often takes my dictation, had heard "in excess" instead of "annexed." I signed the letter after he had read it back to me, but I did not reread it myself. Here is the phrase I dictated: "In spite of the importance of the account which was annexed to it." You must understand, Monsieur, that although I did find your account to be exact and reasonable, it did seem to be to be excessive—but not to the point that it dimmed my consolation and joy at the letter to which it was attached. I am astonished that neither Father Caillet nor Brother Clouzet, who should know my feelings and the pains I take never to offend anyone, did not suspect a secretarial error.

Brother Clouzet writes to tell me that you will need 3,000 francs in two or three months. I will write and ask him to be careful of the money he receives or that I will obtain for him by various means. I asked for a delay of one year to refund the 6,000 francs, to give us sufficient time to pay back the sum and not be overwhelmed. Moreover, Monsieur, if you negotiated a loan for a longer term for Brother Clouzet you could be refunded from that loan without implying that the purpose of the loan was to refund you. When I authorized Brother Clouzet to pay you the 6,000 francs within one year, I thought the term ran from the date of my letter, June 6, or even June 1, and not from the date of the accompanying letter.

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<sup>2</sup> No one, as a soldier of God, entangles himself with secular business, that he may please the one to whom he has engaged himself.

<sup>1</sup> Labor as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

Monsieur, I believe soon I will be able to withdraw Father Caillet from Saint-Remy. Help us to set up this establishment on a solid footing. I will do all I can to help you; I truly have my heart set upon it.

I intend to leave on July 5 for my annual visitation. I will stop in Agen for the express purpose of choosing among the Daughters of Mary those who will make up the new communities of Bordeaux and Condom. Condom used to be an episcopal city; now it is in the Archdiocese of Auch.

I am with a respectful attachment. . . .

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*Brother Clouzet is troubled at the reprimand of the Good Father, who explains to him the reasons for it and its meaning.*

### **300. To Bro. Dominique Clouzet, Saint-Remy**

Bordeaux, June 27, 1824

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

I have just read the copy of the letter I wrote to you on the holy day of Pentecost, which seems to have worried you too much. I was surprised that in the very peace and joy of the Holy Spirit, I should be writing a letter to you so bitter and so contrary to the fatherly tenderness I have for you, especially. But my dear Son, I have not discovered things to be as your sensibilities have interpreted them. Never, my dear Son, has my confidence in you, even more than my affection for you, been altered for an instant. Through the letters of Father Caillet, I discovered you had been under the influence of evil principles. What was I to do? Should I not enlighten you without delay, helping you to recognize the evil and its vexing consequences?

I note with pleasure that there was not an evil, but an error on Father Caillet's part that he interpreted as resistance to authority the remarks you were making to him. And you had not only the right but also the duty to make them; you could do so with even greater reason because I have the habit of consulting before commanding and of consulting especially those who are to carry out the command. You were certainly permitted to believe that it would be thus with Father Caillet, who for the time being is representing me in Saint-Remy.

Nevertheless, both of you deserve reproach. I am saying "both of you" because I suppose that Father Caillet allows you to see the letters he writes to me. Why would you not have told him he was mistaken in what he wrote about you? Why on his part would Father Caillet not have asked you if he was correctly expressing your sentiments? I excuse both of you for your lack of experience in such circumstances. What consoles me is your good dispositions.

It seems useless to me, my dear Son, to enter into further details after the honest statement of your dispositions. May your humble submission nevertheless not lead you to another extreme. You say, for example, that you will no longer meddle with spiritual matters. Here, my dear Son, there would be something of an extreme attitude. A superior is at the same time Head of Zeal, Head of Instruction, and Head of Work. It is up to him to see to it that the immediate heads of these three offices do their work well. He must even adequately supervise those who are the beneficiaries of these offices, in order to give an account of them to God and to the First Superior of the Institute. He must be ready and easily able to give a description of these in regard to zeal, instruction, and work. During the first month after your arrival at Saint-Remy, I often wrote to Brother David to show you how to arrange your administration notebooks according to this threefold report. I was to obtain, so it seems, little more than vain promises. There is no annoyance, my dear Son, in the exercise of the different offices, but there is a great deal—I do not like to say this—when there is question of all the precautions which must be taken to guard

against relaxation. I do not believe Father Caillet is entirely up to date on all these points. I have often spoken to him about it, but I would have given him more exact notes if I had believed you less advanced about the same matters. Patience! In the meantime, adopt a sterner rating of the offices and do whatever he tells you because, my dear Son, we must always begin by showing deference to authority, except here where a more profound examination of the observations you may have believed it your duty to make would be recommended first.

If Father Rothéa is named principal of the boarding school, he will need to have the power to exercise all the functions of the principal, and with dignity. Nevertheless, you will remain superior of the establishment of Saint-Remy. If the boarding school increases and there should be any difficulty arising from a clash of authority on either side, I will clearly specify your respective duties in such a way that all future mistakes of this type may be avoided. Remember it is always better for things to continue, even less smoothly, just so there is no evidence of disagreement on the part of the heads. I am sorry that the complaints that I made in one or two of my last letters have become known among several of your brothers.

I am surprised, my dear Son, that Father Caillet should have made it possible for you to resist him in the points you enumerate for me. Without seeming to resist, you might have been able to ask him permission not to make the changes he wanted, at least until he had received an answer from me about the difficulties. There is hardly a doubt, for example, that I would have agreed with your opinion and Father Bardenet's in regard to the wine to be given to the schoolteachers.

I hope this normal school will provide some good subjects to the Institute, but great prudence is needed, for there should be no evidence that this is a cherished hope.

I am thinking of going to Agen on July 5, for there is a question of the almost simultaneous foundation of the two establishments of the Daughters of Mary. I believe I have already spoken to you about these. Your letters will eventually reach me, even if I happen to be absent at the time of their arrival.

Let us take courage, my dear Son, for the crown is promised only to the conquerors. Uproot self-love down to its last shreds, and you will have peace, the peace of God. Your good—I dare also say tender—Father embraces you with all the effusion of his heart.

P.S. I received Brother Pascal's letter. For lack of time I am not answering him directly. I am inserting in this packet a note for Mlle Bolle, which is an answer to a letter she also received from him. Let Brother Pascal remain quiet. If he honestly undertakes to wage war against his self-love, he will be permitted to renew his vows for another year.

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*Father Chaminade understands that Father Caillet is still uninformed about many of the secrets in the art of command and that it is necessary to train him in these. He gives him advice about the manner of exercising authority.*

### **301. To Fr. Georges Caillet, Saint-Remy**

June 29, 1824, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

[With insert from S. 301]

My dear Son,

I am writing to Father Bardenet by this mail, and am including here a rough copy of this letter for you. I am also writing to Brother Clouzet in answer to the letter you tell me about. His letter expresses a great sensitivity to the reproaches, albeit paternal, which you had me address to him. A person must be very careful, my dear Son, (1) not to confound the remarks an office head

may make with formal resistance to authority, for most of the time only zeal inspires him to make these, even when they are made with vivacity. (2) In general, only rarely must we make use of formal commands in matters which most of the time are only matters of good order and are purely arbitrary.<sup>1</sup> (3) Only in the most urgent cases would we have to give orders against others' observations, for it is rare that in these observations there is not some point of view which we can make use of to soften, change, or even abandon disciplinary commands we have wished to give. Do you really have anything to fear, for example, in serving only water to the teachers, especially in the beginning?

I know of one Order in which Visitors give their instructions only at the time of their departure. I know of another in which they do no more than listen to each religious in private, taking exact notes, and then return to the motherhouse and issue the necessary orders. Authority is weakened by hasty acts, or acts that appear to be so. A local superior is one thing, while a First Superior is quite another. A local superior—for example, Brother Clouzet—must rarely listen to observations, for if he did, he would be forming his religious poorly.<sup>1</sup> On the contrary, as a rule, especially if there is a question of his administration, any First Superior should listen to the remarks, weigh them, etc. . . . because of the responsibility of his office. He must not easily dispense himself from this responsibility.<sup>2</sup> The religious would obey only with sighs, if they have the idea of conforming to arbitrary and ill-considered orders.

My dear Son, you are correct in believing certain defects may harm the work of God at which you are laboring. Thus in general, you do not give your subordinates any reason for believing you have a good opinion of them. Sometimes you find fault with them on matters which must seem trifling to them because of the lack of virtue or instruction they may have. In all cases, you must be truly humble; but in all cases you must not humiliate yourself. Yes, no doubt you must speak and act with simplicity, uprightness, and honesty. Nevertheless, there is such a thing as a prudence and a self-control which must direct the exercise of these good qualities according to the character of people, in keeping with their various dispositions, so to speak.

I have said before, my dear Son, that a local superior—such as Brother Clouzet—must rarely listen to the observations of his subordinates. It was not my intention then of speaking of the three first heads, who are as it were his constant council, and still less of Brother Rothéa, who to his role as Head of Zeal adds so many others. In general, it may be said that the best superior is the one who makes his position as superior the least visible. Is it very easy to recognize the keystone? Let a superior support all the parts of an establishment so that not a single one of them will be shaky, but doubtless with an influence that is so mellow and at the same time so active that he will seem to be going beyond the mere fulfillment of duty.

I would be of the opinion that the retreats given to the teachers should be repeated every three or four years, but that it would not be suitable to give these all in the same year. It would be difficult for them to accept this. And we simply do not have the means. Two Missionary priests and one or two teachers would be needed. If these retreats are held at a convenient time and if the establishment can continue to function normally, they will cause no disruption. They will in no way harm the spirit of recollection of the brothers, who will be called from their labors to serve the retreatants only as a rare exception.

For the moment, we lack nearly everything we need. Patience! Let us hold up! But let us take note of whatever will be necessary for this work to bear fruit later. This work is of great importance. It will not be long before we can extend it. If it goes well at Saint-Remy for the three

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<sup>1</sup> Matters which usually can be settled in different ways, according to differing understandings of the circumstances.

<sup>1</sup> The superior must not let himself be directed by those he is charged to direct, whose first duty is to obey in the spirit of faith. However, this point of view does not exclude family spirit, in virtue of which the religious may respectfully make to their superior whatever remarks they believe useful for the common good.

To the same Bro. Clouzet, Fr. Chaminade wrote on September 9, "Listen with kindness to all your brothers, and never grow tired of receiving all the suggestions they may wish to make to you, etc." (again, see the previous letter).

<sup>2</sup> To release religious from the duty of making observations to the heads which they would consider useful.

departments of the education offices of Besançon, it will propagate itself. There is already talk about it here in the archbishop's palace. Could you not engage the Missionaries of Besançon to continue to assist us until we have enough priests of our own to conduct these retreats? You must have seen what I wrote to Father Breuillot in order to attract subjects. For your part, do everything you prudently can toward the same end.

In other respects, I am doing all I can to have Bro. [Louis] Rothéa learn land surveying and bring this knowledge to bear at Saint-Remy. Perhaps tomorrow I will send someone to seek out a former boarding school master, one who knows all about teaching the grades, and I will see if there is a possibility of sending him to your secondary school. If the pastor's nephew you have mentioned is really a good subject, you can bring him along with you to Bordeaux. Studies are going along well enough at the Madeleine. Brother Descubes is very attentive to his duties as Head of Instruction and as a teacher, etc.

I see that you are moving forward with your mission, my dear Son. Try to gain a clear idea of the dispositions of each of the members of the Institute. Give a description of each person regarding zeal, instruction, and work. Have each head give a description of his department. Have Brother Clouzet also give a description of every one. You should bring along all the notes you have made, but without communicating them to anyone. You should also bring along a copy of the descriptions the heads have given you.

Come to an understanding with Father Breuillot and see whether he will not once and for all take charge of the projects we have under way, either the construction, the repairs, or the secretariat, and help us secure funds, candidates, etc.—in a way, to be our representative of the Institute of Mary at Saint-Remy. He knows Father Bardenet and how to obtain his cooperation. I believe we must not make any permanent agreement with him; for this reason, I agreed to pay the 6,000 francs, and I have given him an annuity of 600 francs. But we must not set him aside. So we will write to Father Breuillot, or rather correspond very frankly with him as between friends who team up for a good and worthwhile purpose. I would like to send him a diploma of affiliation.

The answer of Brother Clouzet about the Constitutions seemed to me very wise and very exact. I am surprised at the answer you gave him. However, if it is exact, here it is. "He told me that regarding the Constitutions, I was not to follow them, that he had talked long enough about them to you (that is to say, with me), that you had told him everything, and that they should be changed. . . . and that I should thus obey, even when he would order something entirely contrary to the Constitutions." Under oath, Brother Clouzet adds, "Thus," I said to him, "I swore to have a Rule observed that does not exist, to have it observed without having the authority to ask this, and even more, I had the obligation to break it myself."

If these are exact, my dear Son, you seem to be mistaken on several points. (1) How have you brought Brother Clouzet to such serious challenges, almost from the very start? Most certainly you could have and should have avoided these, even if you had been clothed with papal authority. (2) Because I told you the Constitutions were to be recopied because the style needed some corrections, if you believed I also told you to lessen their observance, to tone them down, etc. . . . I must have told Brother Clouzet himself these same things. In fact, I say them openly to anyone who speaks about them, but no one has drawn from my remarks the inference that the Constitutions were not to be observed. I would be contradicting myself in giving an authority which would demand obedience to things entirely opposed to the Constitutions. I am sure both of you are clever enough not to confound certain Regulations with the Constitutions. The Regulations are only consequences of the Constitutions, which in a growing institution can readily undergo certain changes. (3) How can it be supposed that for the head of an establishment, his "oath" is without object or purpose?

I am stopping here, and still I am afraid this letter will not leave with this mail. I am constantly diverted to other things. I am closing now, much like Saint Peter closes his first Epistle, chapter 5; today is his feast, and at this moment his Mass is being sung in the Madeleine.

*Seniores ergo qui in vobis sunt obsecro, consenior . . . pascite . . . providentes non coacte, sed spontanee secundum Deum, sed voluntarie, neque ut dominantes in cleris, sed forma facti gregis ex animo . . . Saluate invicem in osculo sancto. Gratia vobis omnibus qui estis in Christo Jesu. Amen.*

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*Everything is ready for the foundation at Condom; Father Chaminade makes the last arrangements with Father Castex.*

### **302. To Father Castex, Condom**

July 2, 1824, Bordeaux  
Autograph, Arch. of the Gaïchies Family, Condom  
[With insert from S. 302]

Reverend Father,

There is no possibility of profiting from the favors of the Government regarding registration (1) because the Daughters of Mary are not legally approved and (2) because, as the Piétat is the first establishment of the Daughters of Mary in the department of the Gers, these women would be very glad to have it as their own property. Mlle de Lachapelle did not acquire it under her title of religious for this reason.

M. de Lachapelle does not need to fear proceeding with the registration, as well as with the purchase. He will recover not only one daughter, but as many other daughters as there will be religious. All will be as well-disposed as his own daughter to give him and Mme de Lachapelle all the tokens of filial love, profound respect, and active interest which well-bred children accord to their fathers and mothers.

Our custom is to name a "temporal father" for each community. At Tonneins, for example, M. de Lacaussade has this title, and he carries out its functions perfectly. I do not need to look for anyone in Condom to entrust with this happy office. Providence itself has designated M. and Mme de Lachapelle. I believe God wishes to repay them in this world for the sacrifices they have made in consenting that their daughter will embrace the religious state.

The sum of 3,000 francs which the commission would lend us cannot be put into better hands than those of Mlle de Lachapelle. I have no objection to giving her the title of religious, especially if it is not found in the purchase contract, as it is our intention. Besides, one is a public act and the other, I imagine, will be a private deed.

I have nearly made up my mind to leave for Agen next Monday, July 5. I will stop at Tonneins for at least 24 hours. I will be in Agen on July 7, or at the latest on July 8. If everything could be ready in Condom, I believe our holy group could leave on July 13 or 14, or possibly even on July 12. Then I would follow. If there is some delay, I hope your traveling companion will take this in stride, considering how necessary it is for you to be present for the first two or three days of our arrival. Will you kindly keep me informed about everything and address your letters to the convent of the Daughters of Mary in Agen.

I am with respectful attachment, etc.

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*In reality, Father Chaminade brought the small founding colony of Daughters of Mary to Condom only on July 16 and July 17. Everything proceeded to his complete satisfaction, according to this report.*

### **303. To Archbishop de Morlhon of Auch**

July 14, 1824, Condom  
Autograph, Archives of the Archbishop of Auch  
[With insert from S. 303]

Your Excellency,

I have just happily finished bringing the Daughters of Mary to Condom. The ceremony took place without display of any kind. As soon as it was over, the two superiors, the Mother Superior and the superior of Condom<sup>1</sup> got into a carriage and went to visit the highest authorities of the city. They also went to visit the Ursuline Sisters. All these religious sisters mutually gave one another marks of a religious friendship. In place of an unedifying rivalry which could have manifested itself, there will surely be only a holy emulation between the two convents.

I obtained from Father de Cadignan the permission to designate him to Your Excellency as Superior of the new convent and also as an extraordinary confessor. Father Castex will be the ordinary confessor, if this is agreeable to you, and when he is away, Father de Cadignan will replace him. Father Lagutère will be their chaplain, and if you will kindly permit it, in the absence of their confessors and with the permission of their superior, the religious will address themselves to him in some circumstances.

I believed Your Excellency would also permit the sister sacristan to touch the sacred vessels, according to custom.

For many years Father Castex was director of a small section of the Women's Sodality of Agen. I will confer on him, according to your good pleasure, the title of director of the Women's Sodality of Condom.

Your Excellency, I have the honor of sending you a verbal account of the installation ceremony and also a copy of the blessings accorded by His Excellency the Bishop of Agen to the two communities which are in his diocese.

Before having it copied, I read it to Father Castex and Father Lagutère, who are familiar with the customs of the parishes of Condom. They remarked that (1) the second rather than the third Sunday of each month must be chosen and (2) that the 40 hours' devotion was held in Saint Peter's during the three carnival days. If Your Excellency does not find this to your liking, it could be transferred to Sexagesima and the following two days, or better still, to the three Sundays of Septuagesima, Sexagesima, and Quinquagesima. The Daughters of Mary have a brief from the Sovereign Pontiff granting them a plenary indulgence on each of the days of the 40 hours' devotion.

Yesterday, the city of Condom gave proof of its satisfaction with the foundation of this convent by the crowd that was present at this ceremony.

Pardon, Your Excellency, any inaccuracies that may exist in this letter. I am to leave in a moment.

The enclosure begins strictly only today.

I am very sorry I cannot go to Auch to pay you my humble respects, but I ask you to believe in my sincerity. From the heart, Your Excellency, I am signing myself your very humble and very obedient servant.

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**N.A. 303-2. To the Prefect, Department of Lot-et-Garonne**

July 21, 1824, Agen<sup>1</sup>

Printed in Volume 8-2. Copy, Agmar 218.2.21

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<sup>1</sup> Mlle de Lachapelle, as Mother Marie de l'Incarnation.

<sup>1</sup> The original is in the archives of the department of Lot-et-Garonne.

Monsieur Prefect,

I intend to ask the authorization of the Government for the Institute of Mary which I have founded in Bordeaux and which has been operating elementary schools for young boys and girls at Agen for the past 4 years, and also the school for boys at Villeneuve only since last year, and those which may soon be established at Marmande.

In conformity with the practice before the revolution, I was not satisfied with presenting to the Government on paper a plan which might be accepted in principle but which might not be adhered to in practice. I preferred to wait until I had schools which were well organized, solidly established, and proud of their achievements.

I was able to put my system into practice in the department of Lot-et-Garonne only with your assistance. To this day you have tolerated with an active goodwill what you must have presumed to have some merit in itself. My plan has gradually unfolded before your eyes, and you are familiar with the results. I have come to ask you, Monsieur Prefect, to give public witness to what you know. This testimony is one of the most solid bases upon which to found my hope of ever multiplying and consolidating establishments which with the grace of God will contribute to the spread of religion and to the prosperity of society and of the legitimate monarchy. I do not believe it is beneath a magistrate's dignity to share as energetically as you do in an enterprise of this nature and importance.

Please accept this token, Monsieur Prefect, of the high esteem in which you are held by your very humble and obedient servant.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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**N.A. 303-3. To the Prefect, Department of Lot-et-Garonne<sup>1</sup>**

July 22, 1824, Agen

Printed in Volume 8-2. Copy, Agmar 218.2.22

Honorable Prefect,

The elementary schools which I founded in 1820 at Agen have fulfilled all my hopes. This experiment was simply part of a much broader plan. These schools were set up to educate the children of the common people, both boys and girls, according to a system which does not suffer because of the large number of pupils and which sends graduates into society only after giving them the instruction of which they are capable, apprenticing them to some trade which will make them useful to society and worthy of its confidence, and where, finally, they will have been encouraged and strengthened in the calling which Divine Providence reserves for them.

Experience, that universal teacher, has shown me that the problem I was facing has been solved. The threefold objective I had in mind for this institution has been attained in the most satisfactory manner, and my theory has been confirmed in practice. I have been able to proceed confidently with the development of my Institute. For instance, Monsieur Prefect, in your department schools like the first one in Agen are in operation at Villeneuve and will soon be established at Marmande. Others have been organized at various places in France, and even in Alsace and Franche-Comté. With one exception, these localities have welcomed our schools and have been only too happy to support them financially.

Only one town, Agen, is an exception. This is not meant as a reproach, for the town did not truly understand my plans. It gave me a free hand, and that was something. Later it was able to judge the value of my foundations, but its slim resources could not help with the expenses. The study it made shows that it will have more resources in 1825, and it voted 1,000 francs. This manifests goodwill and promises well for the future.

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<sup>1</sup> The original is in the archives of the department of Lot-et-Garonne.

Monsieur Prefect, it did not take you long to grasp the spirit of my institution. Your sponsorship, although not too public in its expression, was prompt, constant, and effective. You spoke to the General Council of my plan. The proof of both the timeliness of your recommendation and the insightfulness of your advice is that almost from the beginning, you declared yourself the protector of my schools and obtained funds for their extension. The town of Villeneuve and that of Marmande bless you already for your religious and political generosity.

You will note, however, Monsieur Prefect, that the school at Agen has been maintained at my expense. To date I have spent more than 16,000 francs on it, and I still must pay the expenses of the 5 religious of my Institute who run the parent school, as well as the rental on the house they occupy.

I believe I can expect from your goodness, Monsieur Prefect, that you will show this document to the General Council and with your usual affability will point out to it that it is in the interest of the entire department that this parent school, the normal school of Agen, does not flounder, particularly at this time when the teachers whom it sends elsewhere need guidance and instruction from a common center, and must maintain that valuable uniformity of discipline, method, and spirit without which a professional body soon degenerates. Please make it clear to them also that if I am asking for reimbursement, this is only so I may have the means to develop the institution; this would make it less a reimbursement than an investment. I am certain the General Council will understand this type of language, especially from such a worthy interpreter as you, Monsieur Prefect.

I am with respect, Monsieur Prefect, your very humble and obedient servant.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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*After completing the foundation in Condom, Father Chaminade, accompanied by Mother de Trenquelléon, proceeded to transfer the novitiate of the Daughters of Mary from Agen to Bordeaux, to the house acquired for this purpose, no. 1 (at present, no. 2), Rue Mazarin, where it remained until 1830. This letter shows us Father Chaminade working at the recruitment of his two religious families and giving advice to Father Caillet on this subject.*

### **304. To Fr. Georges Caillet, Saint-Remy**

August 9, 1824, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

Eight or nine days ago I returned to Bordeaux. Today, August 6, is the close of the priests' retreat. I received all your letters in due time, either in Bordeaux or in Agen, through arrangements I had made with some of the postal employees. I have not answered them because I saw nothing in them that called for a prompt reply, and because I was doing my best to be away for as short a time as possible. And today I am writing you without having reread your letter, the sooner to give you news and to talk to you about those Saint-Remy matters which seem most urgent.

The Daughters of Mary now have two more establishments, one at Condom and the other in Bordeaux. The first will be a boarding school for young women and the second a novitiate for the Mothers and their assistants. The novitiate for the Companion Sisters will be made at Agen for a while. Your good sister is its mistress and Mother. You must know that she has made her profession. The Bordeaux Novitiate has 12 novices. The superior is Mother Marie-Joseph, and the Mistress of Novices is Sister Louis de Gonzague. In addition, there are two Companion Sisters for the service of the house, 16 women in all.

In Condom I had reason to be satisfied with the welcome and interest the city has shown. Things have gone equally well in Agen, whether at the bishop's palace, at the prefecture, or even at the General Council of the mayor's office. In Bordeaux, the new establishment is well-regarded by the main authorities of the city. I am not going into details, and doubtless you know the reason.

Try to bring your mission at Saint-Remy to a close this month, my dear Son, or at least during the early part of September. I have great need of you here, even to occupy myself still more with Saint-Remy. I will be pleased if you bring with you several priests who are surely called by God. It goes without saying that you may bring other subjects you believe destined by Providence to labor at the works of the Institute.

I have just received your letter from Besançon dated July 29. The young priest, Father Perrey, would do well to go into retreat and to train himself in the priestly and religious virtues for some time. His project of going to Dijon to study civil law seems to me extraordinary and hazardous. It is to be presumed that he will succeed very little in drawing law students to the practice of religion—and still less the city lawyers—because as only a student, he would have no other means of supporting himself than his Mass stipends and whatever fees he could charge from giving Latin lessons. Furthermore, how could whatever good he could do this manner last? I will answer him in a few days under cover of the letter I will write to Father Breuillot, and I will send you a copy of both letters.

Regarding the seven women who already live together and wish to embrace religious life, it would seem to me more suitable (1) to learn of their respective talents and tastes in order to send them to communities best fitted for them. If there were one or the other whom God seems to have formed for the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, we would take them. We may even take them all if it is sufficiently evident that all have a vocation. (2) If there are some without sufficient indication of a vocation to religious life who nevertheless would wish to separate themselves from the world, why could they not remain living and working together? Are there not many examples of this among both men and women?

After these reflections, it is evident that that the trip to the Capuchin Father would seem worse than useless. If Father Perrey is of a humble and submissive character, however hot-headed, it would be possible to employ him in important works. Always supposing these dispositions, I would be glad to see him come. . . . Without judging of the fact in itself—the things you said to me—he does not displease me, especially considering his age at this time. These very things presuppose a highly sensitive soul, one blessed with a capacity to rebound, as they say.

You may bring along the young philosopher of the diocese of Bâle, if he has sufficiently succeeded in his studies, but he would need an *exeat*. The Bishop of Bâle could allow this conditionally, for he would be staying in the Institute, as with the three *exeats* given by His Excellency the Bishop of Strasbourg. Moreover, Father Perrey could definitely inform you of his ability and his dispositions. Also, bring along Father Thuet's young nephew if you believe we can make a good subject of him. I believe his uncle will be able to obtain an *exeat* for him without difficulty. Regarding the 19-year-old man, let things remain as they are until we see later what progress he has made. We will then be in a better position to judge whether he would be suitable for us. At 19 years of age he is beginning rather late, especially after not having been previously instructed. May he possibly succeed better among the schoolteachers? In rereading your letter, I see that this young man is to go to Saint-Remy to undergo a period of probation of one or two months. But you will not be there, for you must leave in September, as you led me to hope you would.

I did nothing with the president of the university regarding the nomination of Brother Rothéa as the principal of a school in Saint-Remy. It is not up to me to initiate such a matter. Brother Rothéa must ask the rector of the Besançon Academy to obtain a diploma for him so that he can exercise the functions of principal. If the title of principal creates any difficulty, he can

simply be called Master of the Boarding School—whatever the rector would determine. If the rector has the kindness to explain to His Excellency the President what Saint-Remy actually is, who Brother Rothéa is, and the great usefulness of the establishment of a secondary school, there is no doubt he will obtain it. If any difficulty should arise in the offices of the president or should there be too long a delay, I would do what I did for Father Collineau; I would write to him. However, until there is an agreement between us and the university, I believe we must leave things about as they are. The protection of the Inspector General, who was consulted and who knows Saint-Remy, might be invoked if the rector judges it suitable. Once the rector has promised to ask for the diploma, you will not have to wait for the answer. Everything will be taken care of between him and Father Rothéa. I would be greatly flattered to correspond with the rector, if Father Rothéa thought this would be useful.

If your former school fellow is of a nature that is congenial to the spirit and the practices of Saint-Remy, I would be pleased to see him go there to make use of his talents by teaching. It would be just to come to the help of his mother. It would be a useful agreement for everyone concerned if the establishment would take care of her and of Father Farine's sister. With wisdom and energy, study the best way of arranging everything.

Then Father Farine would find himself free to act on his own.<sup>1</sup> Why would he himself not make a new effort to come with you? Brother David told me the advice he had given him, which all centered on the fact of his staying where he is. These counsels sound sensible, but I do not like them. I always say to myself, whatever God inspires must be done. A person must always be faithful to his vocation. Who knows if God is not calling him to France, precisely to procure from the deputy sheriff of Porrentruy and from the canton of Berne aid which will cause the Catholic religion to flourish? As for himself, why does he not bolster the bishop's courage? Is it not a great deal to have truth on our side? I understand that if there is a question of bringing along Fathers Farine and Perrey, the young philosopher, etc., your return may be delayed. You must then act as quickly and as thoroughly as possible.

I am sending Father Breuillot the proposal for Marast. I believe we must let the matter stand as it is. I think what M. Brézard is doing is touching. I will pray to the Blessed Virgin that she may reward him for his goodness toward her children.

I am stopping now so this letter may leave by today's mail. However, I will continue it very soon. Tell all our good brothers at Saint-Remy that I carry them all in my heart, and that I love them all tenderly as my Children. May the fatherly blessing I am now giving you, my dear Son, in all the overflowing of my heart, also come upon Brother Clouzet, Brother Rothéa, Brother Gaussens, and upon all the others in abundance!

\* \* \*

*Returning to Bordeaux and met as usual by the ever-increasing number and importance of his associations, Father Chaminade had received from Bro. Auguste Brougnon-Perrière and Fr. Jean Lalanne a disquieting letter about the progress of the Institute. "No working together, no concerted action" they said; "no deliberations in common, everything resting on one man (however capable he may be), troubled by a thousand cares, tired by his labors, slowed by the weight of years. . . . This man has been chosen by God, it is true, to establish the Institute; but Moses had also been chosen. God did not fail to warn him that he needed aides and counselors. . . ." And the letter concluded with the necessity of "giving the Superior General an administrative council which he would be obliged to consult in all common business, changes, regulations, nominations, expenses, etc." These reflections were entirely just in appearance but did not sufficiently take into account the difficulties inherent in all foundations, and they did not consider the rights of a Founder.*

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<sup>1</sup> See letter no. 275.

*Even more than anyone else, Father Chaminade valued, the benefit of a council. He had perhaps even too often deferred to the advice of certain of his usual counselors. If he had wished to enter into detailed cases, it would have been easy for him to show how unreliable this suggestion of Brother Auguste and Father Lalanne was at this time. He contented himself with this reply.*

**305. Bro. Auguste Brougnon-Perrière and  
Fr. Jean Lalanne, Bordeaux**

August 3, 1824, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

My dear Children,

On the whole, your letter pleased me both because it was dictated by a good spirit and because it was a new proof of attachment to the state to which God has called you. My answer will be brief.

It seems to me, my dear Children, that you have confound the prerogatives of a Founder or a schoolmaster with those of a Superior General who would succeed him. From this observation, I am in no way concluding that I have no need of counsel or that I should do everything myself. No, my dear Children, I sincerely desire and very ardently want you to come to my assistance; but to what a degree can you do so?

A council that would be made up of only you two? (1) Could it embrace in their entirety all the concerns of the Institute? Perhaps these are much more numerous and difficult than you believe. (2) How would you and I find all the time necessary to study and discuss them? Which one of the three of us would draw up the report?

Would you want Brother David to join us? There is no doubt that Brother David would be of great assistance in a large council made up of a certain number of judicious and experienced members. But third in the supposed council, he would constantly dominate it. Will I take him as a private counselor? A still greater difficulty! I have made known to Brother Auguste the absurd pretensions he has as a counselor.

Here you have, my dear Children, what I thought before receiving your letter.

(1) To bring you both together as soon as possible so that we can all examine the establishment you are forming. I especially would want you to understand your relationship to all the other establishments, including those yet to be formed.

(2) To bring together several priests in the house which is next to mine and to delegate all possible details.

(3) To make use of Brother David in whatever capacity he may want to serve.

If, my dear Children, you see anything for me to do, I will receive with eagerness any advice or counsels you may wish to give me.

In all things, let us seek but the greatest glory of God and of the Most Holy Virgin.

I embrace you tenderly.

P.S. Have I told you that we were well-received by the prefect and that I saw to it that he became acquainted with the boarding school on Rue des Menuts?

\* \* \*

*Brother Auguste and Father Lalanne did not insist, but declared themselves always ready to obey. However, they believed it was their duty to recall to their father the serious obligations of justice which fell to Brother Auguste as a result of the management of the boarding school on Rue des Menuts. This is Father Chaminade's response.*

**306. To Bro. Auguste Brougnon-Perrière and  
Fr. Jean Lalanne**

August 12, 1824, Bordeaux  
Copy, Agmar

My dear Children,

The observations you have made would not only be conformable to the obedience which you have vowed, but they would make you live more according to its spirit. You are the firstborn sons of the Institute by your vows. You are two of the first foundation stones upon which the Institute is being built, at least as far as men are concerned. How then to imagine that the interest which you must be taking in your family, in your very home, would not permit you to make observations you believe are correct and useful, and even to consider it a duty on your part to do so? Especially in regard to a Father who esteems and loves you so much?

Yes, my Children, make all the observations you believe will be useful. Without fear or hesitation, give me your advice and counsels. Obedience asks of you only that you no longer adhere to your own opinion once a determination has been made.

What you add at the end of your short letter concerning the position of your house, I have been crying out—and more strongly—about the same things to Brother Auguste for a long time, but my cries have done little to remedy the evil. I am glad, however, that both of you are alarmed. With the grace of God and the help of our august Mother, we can draw ourselves out of this situation more quickly.

My dear Children, I began this letter on August 9. I was not any further along when I had an interview with one of you two. We agreed that it was more suitable and more expeditious to stay in touch with one another by word of mouth, either one at a time or all together, but with honesty, sincerity, and cordiality. This is my desire and the need of my heart. . . .

At this time, I am dealing with a matter which may have serious consequences for the Institute of Mary, both men and women. Although secrecy has been requested, I would wish to speak to you about it, and I believe I must do so, as to my firstborn children.<sup>1</sup>

I am obliged to stop. Let us keep moving toward our end, fulfilling the designs of God. But let us not be dupes of the tempter, the implacable enemy of the glory of our august Mother. You know that Satan at times transforms himself into an angel of light.

\* \* \*

**307. To Father Perrey, Besançon<sup>2</sup>**

August 12, 1824, Bordeaux  
Copy, Agmar  
[With insert from S. 307]

Father,

I have read your entire letter with attention, while elevating my soul to God, and everything Father Caillet told me about you in the one he wrote. I seem to understand that God has destined you to work for the glory of his name, and perhaps even for the glory of the august Mary.

In the account you give me of the plan you have in mind of going to Dijon to study civil law, I easily see the workings of the Holy Spirit; but for the moment, at least, I cannot see in it the will of God that calls for its execution. You know that among the inspirations and attractions the

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<sup>1</sup> We do not know exactly what Fr. Chaminade refers to; it may be the entry of the Institute into Alsace or its authorization by the Government.

<sup>2</sup> See letters no. 304, no. 308, and no. 319. We do not otherwise know this young priest.

Holy Spirit gives us, certain ones are meant to form our souls to good and to virtue, while others are meant to be indications of God's will. In the former, we discern the will of God inviting to certain ways of life those who are destined by Providence to exercise certain functions or missions.

I find it very difficult to believe that the good God wants you to go to Dijon to study civil law; and I do not believe that if you went, you would have much success alongside the jurists of this city. However, I believe that (1) God wants to make use of you to do the good works that are in the designs of his mercy; (2) you would do well to dispose yourself for this mission by the practice of mental prayer and the evangelical counsels; (3) your ardent and hot-headed character, as you call it, would require you to place yourself under the yoke of obedience, in order not to be exposed to following your own views instead of those of God.

Only in the religious state will you find the preparation you need and the spiritual direction your character seems to call for. The three reasons that make you doubt whether you should carry out your Dijon plan would lose their force by your entry into the religious state. The first, lack of money—you will not need any. The second, the ardor of your character—obedience will restrain and direct it without suppressing it. The third, the needs of the diocese and the opposition of the superiors. This reason, strong in itself, would infallibly fall away, especially if you enter the Institute of Mary, because (1) we expect to continue the good begun in the diocese of Besançon; we desire to give it the greatest development possible, but we need subjects, laborers. Most certainly, the diocese will not miss the few subjects who will wish to share our labors, for we will even send it some new ones or certainly train many more than it could ever send us. (2) Whatever need a bishop or archbishop may have of his subjects, he cannot oppose a well-decided vocation. Furthermore, we are asking only for a conditional *exeat*. If the subject, well-examined and well-tested, is not admitted to religious profession, he is simply obliged to return to his diocese. I cannot believe that according to the knowledge which your superiors must have of your views and character, you will find any obstacles to your conditional departure from the diocese of Besançon, and I would not at all be surprised to learn that you are coming with Father Caillet.

The good which you have begun to do through your retreats will not be lost. You may come to an agreement with Father Caillet regarding the precautions to be taken.

Meditate before God upon this short letter. If the Spirit of God has inspired me to write it, I hope God will deign to have you find in yourself all that I wished to make known to you. I am so burdened with things to do that I cannot give further development to the views I have placed before you, but the good God will make up the difference if you go to him with uprightness and simplicity, as I am happy to believe you will.

May the peace of the Lord be ever with you!

P.S. I am sure you will not mind my having sent this letter unsealed to Father Breuillot. I advise you to go to see him after having read it carefully, and to receive his counsels.

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**308. To Father Breuillot,  
Director of the Seminary of Besançon**

August 16, 1824, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

Reverend Father,

My thanks to you for your note. Everything that comes to me from you or through you is very agreeable to me, in whatever form it may come.

I do not believe the surrender of the landed property of Marast could be handled better, considering the present condition of things.

If His Excellency deigns to engage the pastors of his vast diocese to give so much to sustain, etc., it is to be presumed that the establishment at Saint-Remy will acquire considerable resources in this way. In order to dispel or prudently lessen the opinion that Father Bardenet is doing everything for this establishment, could not a wise and well-intentioned collector be chosen by the department? All these collectors would be visited and instructed in a very short time. This way of doing things, or any better one you may think of, would give the invitation of His Excellency all the force it should naturally have, without wounding Father Bardenet, at least not seriously. Brother David seems to have had this in mind.

It is possible that if Brother David had had a clearer view of things, I would not have consented to this establishment. In fact, I had such strong doubts about it that before its acquisition, I allowed Brother David to take upon himself the responsibility for making or refusing to make this acquisition. Brother David answered by complaining that I did not wish to commit myself and that I was leaving everything to his responsibility before God. Moreover, Brother David, forewarned by his ideas, did not believe he should let my letters be known, although they were expressly written to be known. . . . Providence permitted it. The same Providence has inspired you with all the interest necessary to remove us from this mess and to have us arrive at the accomplishment of its ever merciful designs. May it be forever praised!

I hope, Father, to be able to give you religious sisters and brothers to teach the deaf, both men and women. Even today I conferred about this with Father Goudelin. He is willing enough to help with it and this is becoming easier, since today I have made the transfer of the greater part of the novitiate of the Daughters of Mary from Agen to Bordeaux.

I take the liberty of sending you unsealed the answer I am giving Father Perrey. I would be obliged to you if you gave it to him without delay. If you believe I have come to understand him correctly, have the kindness to support my observations and help him obtain his *exeat*. This young priest does not seem to me too well-educated. Possibly he was in too great a hurry when he wrote to me. Whatever the case may be, I believe he will be able to do much good. His soul seems energetic; he has keen sensitivities and is gifted with genuine honesty and simplicity. We have a great need of subjects. On all sides good things commend themselves to us, but laborers are woefully lacking.

I am going to draw up your Diploma of Affiliation to the Institute of Mary, and I will send it very soon to Father Caillet, to give him the satisfaction of presenting it to you himself. The labors you have undertaken call for the continuation of your care and zeal. I would be reluctant to turn you away from them, but because the establishment of Saint-Remy and the Institute of Mary in general enter into your overall plans for sustaining religion and spreading the spirit of Christianity, you will not turn away from the sentiments with which God has inspired you if you favor our works and help us to gain subjects. We must hasten to set up the most powerful barriers against the torrent of philosophism which threatens to flood our unhappy country.

I am with respectful affection, etc.

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*About the time of the Feast of the Assumption, we see Father Chaminade entirely filled with hope in the protection of Mary.*

**309. To Fr. Georges Caillet, Saint-Remy**

August 17, 1824, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

My dear Son,

I am sending the two letters by the same mail and am enclosing copies to you.<sup>1</sup>

I have just received your two letters, of August 8 and August 9. I will pay special attention to several matters, following your notes on them. I will not delay writing to you, to Brother Clouzet and Father Rothéa, and also to Dubarry.

*In omnibus labor a ministerium tuum imple.*<sup>2</sup> If fear, timidity, or even defiance come close to your heart, recall the special protection of the august Mary, which entirely surrounds you. If we act alone or according to our human views, we should tremble, but. . . . Receive, once more, my dear Son, the paternal blessing you have asked for. In seeking the success of your labors for the establishment of Saint-Remy, I desire still more for you the blessing of heaven on your personal sanctification.

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**310. To Father Breuillot,  
Director of the Seminary of Besançon**

August 18, 1824, Bordeaux

Diploma of Affiliation

We, Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, priest, Missionary Apostolic and Superior of the Institute of Mary,

Having by the grace of the divine mercy formed a religious establishment at Saint-Remy, in the château of the same name, the diocese of Besançon;

—having sent there on mission our dear Son Father Caillet, a priest of the Institute, to consider means of developing this establishment and placing it in the proper condition for accomplishing the good we had proposed to do there;

—considering the hearty welcome that Father Breuillot, the director of the seminary of Besançon, has given to him;

—informed by various reports that since last March Father Breuillot has not ceased to show the most active interest for the increase of the Institute of Mary and the development and stability of Saint-Remy;

—and on the good and sufficient tokens given us of his charity and zeal for the support of religion, as well as his discretion and prudence in all things,

We have, by these presents, signed by our hand, affiliated and do affiliate by the fact our highly honored Father Breuillot both to the Sodality erected in Bordeaux under the title of the Immaculate Conception, of which we are the director, and to the Institute of Mary, of which we are the unworthy Founder and Superior. May the above-named become a participant in the good works, prayers, and merits the aforesaid Institute and the Sodalities which are affiliated to it or will be in the future and, in consequence, enjoy the prerogatives, rights, privileges, and indulgences attached to the said title of affiliation. On the strength of the same title, may he devoutly ask God for the treasures of grace in one of his Masses each month, on a day of his own choice because he is dispensed of all other prayers because of his breviary and his priesthood, all in conformity with the Bulls issued by Popes Pius V, Gregory XIII, and Pius VII.

Given in Bordeaux, August 18, 1824, under the counter-signature of our Secretary.

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*Father Chaminade sends counsel and directions to the superior of the new foundation in Condom.*

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<sup>1</sup> Letters no. 307 and no. 308.

<sup>2</sup> Labor in all things, fulfill your ministry (2 Timothy 4:5).

### 311. To Mother de l'Incarnation, Condom

August 22, 1824, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

[With inserts from S. 311]

My dear Daughter,

I have received your letter of August 17, and I am glad to share the solicitude which your new charge calls for. I will aid you all I can in bearing the weight.

You have not failed against obedience by having the altar built with the least possible cost, for we had decided on no particular model. You were hurried, you used your discretionary power—be at peace. The superior misinterpreted my letter advising her to answer your inquiry on the parlor, as far as I recall. Do not worry about it. I see no objection to closing those crossings, if you do so in such a manner that they can easily be opened when needed.

The classes will be better beside the garden because of the accessibility of the children's toilets and the chapel. Moreover, they will be closer to the city. Have no fear about making the necessary expense to keep these places in good condition and well-adapted for the supervision of the children. They also should be located to facilitate the entry and dismissal of classes, etc. . . . It is to be presumed that the classes will be there a long time, perhaps always, because it seems to me rather difficult to put them somewhere else. I do not see very clearly what you say regarding the connecting passages from the toilets to the two classrooms. Look into the matter.

Although your 1,500 francs are not sufficient for suitable repairs, do not neglect to make them. It is to be presumed that several workmen will be waiting for the job. If at the times agreed upon payments are due and you find no means to pay, you may borrow what you need. Have no fear. Do just what is suitable, and Providence will come to your assistance. This is not your work that you are doing, but the work of God.

If it were for the community alone, I would suggest leasing the laundry for 200 francs. But because you have boarders, the parents might refuse to send their young women for fear of the powder depot. Revoke that lease. If you find an honorable lessee you may rent it out, but not by contract. At least in the near future, if not immediately, lodge your gardener where you can easily call him by a bell if necessary.

I have wanted to write you all, especially Mother Emmanuel and Mother de la Visitation. It is even for this reason that I am writing you on a simple sheet of paper. But writing to you all is not possible for the moment.

Recommend to everyone the fraternal union which inspires charity. Let no one be so wedded to personal opinion as to trouble this union. You will prosper, and God will bless your establishment if your union of hearts and souls is never altered.

Confidence, we might say, does not come at will. In general, it is true that confidence is not susceptible to being taught, but the good God does not fail to inspire it in humble and docile souls regarding the superiors he deigns to give them. The administration of communities would become impossible if superiors were obliged to consult the tastes and inclinations of each religious. We believe the office heads have a particular grace for the good performance of their duties. If they render themselves unworthy of this grace by some infidelity, or if the administration had chosen incapable subjects, the subordinates should judge neither their lack of dignity nor their incapacity, but obey with simplicity in a spirit of faith. Saint Thérèse gained greatly by consulting and obeying her first confessors, in spite of the fact that they were ignorant.

My dear Daughter, do not be anxious. Never has any superior had more assurance of her election by order of God, but this assurance does not dispense you from acquiring the qualities you lack and from correcting the defects which would hamper the exercise of your duties. Be the good and tender Mother of all your Daughters. Watch unceasingly not only over their well-being and their advancements in virtue, but also over whatever concerns their health. May your

firmness and your exactitude in having the Rule observed always be tempered by mildness, patience, and charity. Often read the chapter in the Constitutions which relates to the superior. In particular, you may cooperate with the Mother of Zeal as if you were a simple religious, but nevertheless not in a way that would indicate that she was governing the community through you. In her regard, there should hardly be a question of anything except what is personal to you in the spiritual order.

I hope, my dear Daughter, you will soon have reason to give me the consolation of learning that peace, order, union of minds and hearts, and humble charity reign at Piétat. I ask the Lord to bless you, to bless our dear Daughters at Condom and all the works that you and they undertake for his glory and that of his august Mother.

P.S. It must not be forgotten that the patronal feast of the Institute of Mary is the Feast of the Most Holy Name of Mary, which falls on the Sunday within the Octave of the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin.

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*There are new letters to Saint-Remy. This letter contains invaluable counsel about spiritual direction.*

### **312. To Bro. Dominique Clouzet, Saint-Remy**

August 26, 1824, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

You have reason to believe that the multitude of my occupations, constantly pressing and never ending, is the only reason for my long delay in writing to Saint-Remy.

I spent only 21 days in my round of visits to the Haut-Pays, but the good God has deigned to bestow blessings on all my efforts. The four establishments of the Daughters of Mary are doing very well; they are in Agen, Tonneins, Condom, and Bordeaux.

I also render thanks to God for the blessings he is bestowing upon your labors. You seem to tell me that you are unable to find any cause for them. I believe I see reasons in Father Caillet's submission and spirit of faith. I see them also in the patience, the resignation, and the confidence which you have maintained in the obstacles and privations you have encountered ever since your arrival at Saint-Remy.

I certainly wish you to be prudent, for prudence is, as it were, the first requisite in a superior; but I desire that your prudence will direct itself in the torch of faith, even as it also makes use of the lights of reason. "Human views," says the Holy Spirit, "are timid and uncertain."

Do everything that depends on you to gain complete peace, and sustain yourself by this. In everything, seek only God and God's good pleasure. The more you are occupied, the more you have need of entering into yourself. Do this at least at the time of the principal actions of the morning and afternoon. And so that this practice may produce its full effect, recollect yourself profoundly at each principal action, setting aside for one, two, or even three minutes every other thought or sentiment. Moderate your natural activity and hope that everything will go well.

Have a great openness of soul with Father Caillet. If he does not happen to have all the qualities you may desire to see in him, remember that the good God has sent him to you. He certainly has the grace of his state. I am not making this a matter of obligation for you. I am simply holding to the old saying, "Confidence is not a thing to be bought." However, my dear Son, in certain circumstances reason enlightened by the lights of faith must make us triumph over certain natural dislikes and even place us above several inconveniences we believe we see. It

would be regrettable for you in the order of your sanctification, if your position were to prevent you from enjoying the divine favor accorded to everyone else. But no, things are not this way. The spirit of submission and humility will diminish your authority if in you, your subordinates have a model of the same sentiments which should enliven them. If there were minds so poorly disposed as to draw some troublesome consequence from this, the harm would be all on their side. You would in no way be responsible.

Furthermore, I notice that you can do without Father Caillet in a few days. You must seriously think of letting him go. I am very hopeful that I can send you some other priest, but Father Caillet is in Saint-Remy only on a particular mission. I sent him there only to set in place the works this establishment is capable of, to procure friends and protectors for it, to arrange for needed repairs, etc., for the cultivation of the arable land, etc., and especially to reinvigorate the spirit of the Institute in everyone there. If he may need a few more days to wait there for some subjects he could bring along or to close some important matter I have no objection, but do not allow the delay to go beyond the month of September. He must be induced, and helped if you can do so, to leave as soon as possible. I cannot write to him by this mail, but then you may let him know the message contained in this letter. I am going to continue it on the other sheet, because there is only a half-hour until mail time. Moreover, as usual, it must be inscribed in the secretariat.

*[The continuation of the letter.]*

M. Laborde, the uncle, 58 years old but still strong enough and in fairly good health, has accepted the direction of the classes in the secondary school. He can teach the highest classes and could honorably occupy the post of disciplinarian. He knows mathematics and in particular all about the theoretical side of land surveying. I have hired him to go and practice this on the property with a good surveyor, etc. Also, you know his piety and virtue. He will easily conform himself to the religious exercises of the community. I have let him know he has somewhat tested himself in the establishment. He must go to Paris to have his books printed. The first two sections are entirely finished. It is the complete word-for-word translation of Virgil in the unique style of the French language. He wants to have the Pastorals and the Georgics printed first. The *Aenid* is not yet finished. He will leave Paris for Saint-Remy around October 15 or October 20. I will come back to M. Laborde as we move closer to the time of his departure from Bordeaux.

You will not forget, my dear Son, to have the feast of the Institute of Mary duly celebrated this year. It falls on September 12 this year and is always set down for the Sunday within the Octave of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin. I think that since last year you have had permission from His Excellency the Archbishop of Besançon to celebrate it; I sent the regulation about it to Brother David. He must have communicated it to you, although I have never heard another word about the matter. It will be celebrated in our other establishments of both men and women.

I am stopping now, but I will continue with another letter for the next mail. I embrace you tenderly, as well as all the other members of my dear family at Saint-Remy.

\* \* \*

### **313. To Bro. Dominique Clouzet, Saint-Remy**

August 28, 1824, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

I am continuing my letter of August 26, as I promised you I would.

I understand that your normal school has done well these past three months, and I am grateful to God for this. This is even more interesting because it bears close connection with the retreats. Give Father Caillet all the notes you can about primary teaching. As soon as our brothers

of Agen and Villeneuve have arrived we will have conferences, however occupied I may be, on the Method we have adopted from the beginning. Each person will take part, relating his experience, and Father Caillet will give everyone the benefit of his notes.<sup>1</sup> I take for granted that he will have read them closely, and that you will have helped him along from the practical side. In these conferences, it is necessary for him to represent you and Brother Gaussens. We will reedit the Method the best way we can. In this manner, it will secure some measure of improvement and become the one to be followed at the time of the reopening of the classes. I will see to it that you receive an extract of it. Perhaps I will send it to you with Brother Tissier because I feel you still need some trustworthy person, either for the normal school or for the primary boarding school. His health is holding out fairly well, and he conducts himself tolerably well. Still I am only slightly satisfied with the progress he is making in virtue, especially in religious humility. Possibly this is my fault, finding myself more frequently with him and so in a better position to observe and instruct. In any case, I will have him assist at the conferences. I understood by "Method" not only the 11 points Brother Gaussens has presented during the teachers' retreat, but also the manner of keeping the registers, of encouraging emulation, of controlling the beginning and ending of classes, the beginning and end of the school year, etc. . . .

It seems to me, my dear Son, that the roof of the château should be included among the most urgent repairs, especially where falling rain drips inside the building. I was told last year that there was only one damaged spot; perhaps this was not even in the château, but in the building you call the shed. I am certain you have not received any money from here, but I will continue directly or indirectly, through Father Caillet or with him when he is here, to have some sent to Saint-Remy. Without fear and in a spirit of faith, engage all the expenses necessary for the maintenance of the works Providence has confided to you. The most urgent repairs on the buildings and on the enclosure walls are to be included, as are the cultivation of the portions of the property that are likely to produce revenue. I am not complaining, but my position here is much worse than yours. . . . What surprises me is that neither you nor Father Caillet mention clothing, and by this I mean the clothing for the entire community. I had expressly recommended to Father Caillet articles of clothing and linen. Certainly I want you to practice poverty, to keep nothing for individual use except, of course, for what is understood to be for common use. But let there be at least enough in winter for protection against the severe cold and also for the maintenance of neatness.

I was at this point in my letter when the Alsatian weaver arrived. He is very obliging by his modesty. He admitted he should not have left secretly without having made you an acknowledgement. He boarded the coach a day after it had left Lyons. Brother Auguste paid the fare.

I am writing a few lines to Brother Dubarry; I am including the note in your letter. You will inform me of its effect upon him. Although he seems more guilty than Brother Pascal, I nevertheless have a little more confidence in him as far as correction is concerned. It seems to me he has a little less self-sufficiency.

I am concluding this letter in the sacristy. I prefer to have it leave after it is half finished than to be endlessly delayed in reaching the conclusion.

Let Father Caillet know whatever may be of interest to him. Let there be complete union between you two! Do whatever is possible so he may leave in September, at the latest. I will write to him shortly to tell him what he is to do on the way. Whatever need there may be for his passing through Paris, I believe I will decide to have him come by way of Lyons.

I cordially embrace all of your community at Saint-Remy.

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<sup>1</sup> See *Spirit of Our Foundation*, 3, no. 251.

*The following letters concern Alsace, where the foundation in Colmar is to take place.  
This letter is the official acceptance of the direction of the schools of this city.*

**314. To Baron de Muller, Mayor of Colmar**

September 15, 1824, Bordeaux  
Original, Municipal Archives of Colmar

Honorable Mayor,

I have received your letter dated September 2 in which you say your Municipal Council has unanimously adhered to your wish to substitute brothers of the Institute of Mary for the former teachers of your city. I understand the council settled upon the salary to be paid to the four brothers, as well as upon the sum necessary for the first reopening of classes.

I accept, Honorable Mayor, the offer which you have the kindness to make to me. I will send the brothers once I am certain the quarters are ready for them. I believe this should be around All Saints Day.

You would like me to send Bro. Louis Rothéa to speed up the arrangements. Honorable Mayor, I believe I can cooperate more closely with your views by asking the head of our establishment at Saint-Remy to go himself or to send someone else to judge the arrangements to be made. This way things will move more quickly, and Brother Rothéa will not need to be separated from the brothers who are to leave from here.

For a long time now, Honorable Mayor, I have heard of your personal merit as well as the wisdom of your administration. This is what has induced me to accept the establishment at Colmar, so distant from here. I have no fear of sending my four young religious if you deign to take them under your protection. My solicitude for them will not surprise you, once you understand that the Institute of Mary is only one large family, of which I am the Father much more than the Superior.

I am with respectful consideration, Honorable Mayor, your very humble and very obedient servant.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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**N.A. 314-2. To the Prefect, Department of Lot-et-Garonne**

September 17, 1824, Bordeaux<sup>1</sup>  
Printed in Volume 8-2. Copy, Agmar 218.2.23

Monsieur Prefect,

You have had the goodness to inform me that the General Council of Lot-et-Garonne has allotted me a sum of 6,788.80 francs in compensation for my investment in the free elementary schools of Agen.

The plea of an administrator such as you, Monsieur Prefect, must necessarily have made the General Council declare in favor of our house in Agen. I continue to hope that your protection and goodness toward our works will never fail.

I am with respect, Monsieur Prefect, your very humble and obedient servant.

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<sup>1</sup> The original is in the archives of the department of Lot-et-Garonne. Here is the reference to the minutes in the prefect's letter to which Fr. Chaminade is responding. "I have the honor of acquainting you with the resolution of the General Council of this department, which allocates the sum of 6,788.80 francs out of an available 10,609.42 francs to compensate for your investment in the free elementary schools of Agen. This is subject to the approbation of His Excellency the Minister of the Interior. . . I am very pleased at the results of my plea before the General Council. However, I also share the council's disappointment that it could not reimburse you fully."

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**315. To Bro. Dominique Clouzet, Saint-Remy**

September 20, 1824, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

[With insert from S. 315]

My dear Son,

I received both your letter with that of Father Caillet dated September 11.

You know of the official request presented by the mayor of Colmar and Father Maimbourg, pastor also of Colmar. Each want Brother Rothéa to be head of the schools. They also want me to send him ahead to make the arrangements necessary for the coming reopening of classes. In answering the mayor and accepting the establishment on the conditions proposed by the Municipal Council, I told him I believed I could enter more thoroughly into his views by asking the head of the establishment at Saint-Remy either to go himself or to send someone else to look after all the arrangements needed by the schools of Colmar. Consequently, I asked Brother Rothéa to make some notes. I am sending them to you with this letter. These notes seem to me to include a certain number of things that brothers of the small group can obtain for themselves upon their arrival. I believe that if you can go there yourself, this would be better than sending Brother Gaussens. Because the establishment must depend upon Saint-Remy in very many respects, it seems suitable that you should see the necessary personnel, as well as the location. You may wish to give some advice, etc.

Brother Rothéa will leave from here only after the retreat, which is to begin October 17. This presumes, however, that you can inform me adequately about the necessary preparations for the opening of the Colmar schools after All Saints Day. I believe it is very prudent not to send the young brothers alone on such a long journey. Brother Rothéa has, I think, already begun his charts for German. He showed them to me yesterday.

The schools of Agen and Villeneuve have done very well this year. The brothers are now all together in Villeneuve to take their notes on the Method. We will compare these with what you gave to Father Caillet. We will give several conferences, as I have already remarked, for, etc. . . . They will all be here by the end of the week.

If there is still time, my dear Son, I would like a copy of the titles for the Saint-Remy property, for example the sales contract. I believe I have already asked you for a copy of the verbal report of your installation, with the accompanying reports, what is copied in the register, etc. . . .

I will do what I can, my dear Son, to make up as much as possible for Father Caillet's absence. I understand your need for several priests, especially after the winter season. I have always said that Father Caillet was there only for a special mission. It is very possible that I will send him back to you if I cannot send other priests in time for the retreats of the schoolteachers.

Possess your soul, my dear Son, and you will be master in your patience, Our Lord said to his Apostles. . . .

Allow Brother Pascal to withdraw, but not as someone belonging to the Institute. Give him no paper to that effect. His passport should make no mention of it. See to it that his coach fare to Bordeaux is not charged to us, as happened with the weaver, Joseph. We will not receive him here.

While writing Father Caillet and sending him my notes for Lyons and Saint-Etienne, I forgot a letter of recommendation for M. Duplay. I am including it in this one. If there is still time, give it to him.

My dear Son, my heart would like to tell you many things, but there is no time. It is already half-past ten in the evening, and there still remain many other things to do. Keep up the spirit of your brothers young and old, whom I love as my Children. I will try to write to Father Rothéa very soon. I commend to his zeal as well as to yours the advancement of everyone in virtue.

May the Lord deign to grant to you all his abundant blessings!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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*The notes mentioned in this letter refer to the material conditions of a primary school at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.*

Notes Relating to the Primary School  
To Be Opened in Colmar

The pupils of this school numbering from 400 to 500, the following are necessary.

1. A place for the classes and playground space;
2. A dwelling place for the brothers and their help;
3. Furniture and equipment for the said classes;
4. Furniture for the teachers.

The Pupils' Quarters

It is desirable that these be made up of 4 or 5 classrooms, separated by a hallway.

1. The big classrooms 50 feet long by 20 wide; large enough to contain 100 to 120 pupils, their benches, writing tables, suitable aisles at both ends, and the teacher's platform and desk.
2. The second classroom 40 feet long by 20 wide; the third classroom also 40 feet long by 20 wide; the fourth 20 feet long by 20 wide; the fifth, divided into two, 25 feet long by 20 wide.
3. A parlor on the ground floor.
4. Toilets, divided by stalls and ease of surveillance.

*Note.* It is desirable that the doors of the classrooms be glass double doors and open in such a way that from his own room a teacher may see the teacher who is facing or alongside him; the windows as large as possible and in two movable parts; the yard as large as possible so as to provide room for assembling all the pupils, and in direct contact with the classrooms.

The House for the Brothers and Their Help

1. An oratory
2. A room to receive visitors
3. A room for work and study
4. A dormitory with place for at least six beds
5. A little kitchen
6. A refectory
7. An attic and some sheds for firewood and the storing of wine and other provisions
8. A little garden. It would be desirable that the quarters destined either for the classes or for the teachers be adjoining so as to be of easy access and forming one complete whole.

Furniture for the Classes

20 writing tables, each about 8 feet long with the larger part slightly inclined in the form of a desk to facilitate writing, the upper and smaller part level, every second one equipped with lead inkwells, sunk so as to be level with the top of the table, all of them painted in a dark color.

The benches are to hold 10 children, to be solid and comfortable, of varying heights and sufficient in number; 20 ordinary stools, furnished with straw; a sufficient number of small kneeling stools for use at holy Mass, each affording 5 or 6 places, their positions in the church to arranged with the pastor.

A platform with a suitable step and a writing table for only the teachers of the large class. For the other classes, only a chair 5 or 6 feet high. A long, low bench in front of the blackboard for use by the smaller children and proportionate to their size. That of the first class should be at least 4 feet long by 5 feet wide.

Twenty charts—10 for French and 10 for German, mostly of very thin and light wood, on which teachers can pin or paste letters, syllables, and words, made or painted in large size. These charts or would-be bulletin boards could be 3 feet, 4 inches long and 2 feet, 4 inches wide, with a long, low stool in front of them in each small class.

A clay stove for each class, preferably of cast iron. Four silver crosses as awards, with their chains, one for each class.

Six crucifixes, either in wood or plaster; book-size pictures, colored with a brush; rosaries.

Sprinkling cans, brooms, hot-water bottles, tin cups. Some diocesan catechisms; Bibles; Psalms of David; *Imitation of Christ*; Epistles and Gospels; French and German grammars; half of these books in French and the other half in German; pictures and small books to be distributed among the pupils.

Furniture for the Teachers.

Bed boards, mattresses, bolsters, woolen blankets, straw mattresses, and curtains necessary for every bed. Tables, cupboards, chairs, water containers, kitchen equipment, table accessories. Sixteen bed sheets, 24 napkins, 24 towels, 6 tablecloths, 24 aprons.

The city will provide, according to the various customs of the region, certain articles of furniture. The name, shape, and purposes escape at present, but it would be in place to mention them here.

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*Only one or two other business notes remain from the last months of 1824, along with two obediences.*

### **316. To Bro. Théodore Troffer, Villeneuve-sur-Lot**

October 20, 1824, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

#### Obedience

Our dear Son, Bro. Théodore Troffer, is chosen to form part of the small group of brothers which I promised to the mayor and to the pastor of Colmar, after having assured ourselves of the consent of His Excellency the Bishop of Strasbourg.

We are placing him under obedience to Bro. Louis Rothéa, already named director of the brothers who are in or who will be sent to this capital of Haut-Rhin. All matters concerning his travel will be subject to the orders and supervision of his new director. We hope he will conduct himself as a true religious and worthy Child of the Institute of Mary.

Given at Bordeaux, October 20, 1824, written and signed by our hand.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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### **317. To Bro. Jean-Félicien Tissier, Bordeaux**

October 24, 1824, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

Obedience

*Ad majorem Dei gloriam Virginisque Deiparae.*

My dear Son, Brother Tissier, will go immediately to Agen, where several of his colleagues have fallen ill. He will put himself at the disposal of Brother Moulinié, head of the schools of this city.<sup>1</sup>

The latter, having an understanding with Father Collineau, principal of the *collège* of Villeneuve-sur-Lot, and Brother Armenaud the younger, head of the schools of this city, will be able to exchange him for one of the brothers of Villeneuve, according to the report of his needs.

Given at Bordeaux, November 24, 1824

*[Brother Tissier went to Agen but remained there only a short time, for by March he had resumed his work as secretary to Father Chaminade.]*

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**S. 317a. To Bro. David Monier**

December 5, 1824, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

My dear Son,

You must have realized from Father Bardinet's letter in reply to your remarks, of which I had informed him, that you and he are following two different lines of reasoning. It is clear that there will be a court case or a loss of the 600 francs, plus interest. You could help by writing a statement which, after tracing the history of the matter, would prove that we have a right to compensation, somewhat as you explained it to me in your last interview, quoting as far as possible the laws which favor our cause. Father Bardinet claims that we are subject to the law governing registrations and that there are no exceptions. He bases himself upon the opinion of several people whom he has consulted. He is prejudiced and will listen to no argument. The only thing to do is to draw up a clear statement. His honesty will force him to read it; others will do the same. This should be done as soon as possible, for M. Biernès may be insisting and we must be ready. However, take care of your health, my dear Son, and believe me your. . . .

\* \* \*

**S. 317b. To M. Ponton d'Amicourt**

December 9, 1824, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

Will I have the happiness of jogging your memory?<sup>4</sup> I hope M. O'Lombel, who was gracious enough to present me to you, will be kind enough to excuse me if you should chide me for my too long silence. Today, now that I have returned from the long journeys at the service of my Superior, Father Chaminade, Founder of the Society of Mary, may I ask for your advice and protection in the following circumstance?

It was our wish to establish a secondary school on the vast property of Saint-Remy, department of Haute-Saône. We wanted to have Father Rothéa (one of our religious priests) as head of that institution, although he has little competence in Greek, physics, and mathematics. It was agreed with the rector of the Academy of Besançon and the archbishop that he would present

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<sup>1</sup> Bro. Moulinié was director of the schools of Agen in 1824-25.

<sup>4</sup> Fr. Chaminade wrote this for Fr. Caillet, who signed it.

a petition to His Eminence the Grand Master of the University asking that he be dispensed from the examinations on those three subjects. I enclose the straightforward but negative answer to this petition.

Although Father Rothéa has pursued serious studies, it is not surprising that he has only a superficial knowledge of subjects which were not required in his time. True, the university today requires—and rightly so—studies in Greek, mathematics, and physics, and we would be the first to bow before the wisdom of the Royal Council of Public Instruction, if Father Rothéa were someone upon whom the curriculum of the institution depended. This is not the case here. But how can we convince His Excellency that the Institute of Mary will provide all the necessary teachers for this school as it develops and as the enrollment increases? That the teachers and their principal are guided by. . . ?

It is regrettable that neither the Archbishop of Besançon nor the rector have described to His Excellency the true state of matters and that dispensation from these three subjects was sought. His Excellency should have known something of the Institute of Mary and of its venerable Founder; but while he may have recalled this, was he made aware of the type of instruction involved here from the petition presented by Father Rothéa?

We now take the liberty of addressing ourselves to you, Monsieur. His Excellency is seeking only the general good, and in his wisdom he will easily find the way to reverse his decision without compromising himself. I believe this is just a matter of having him understand the situation. You are well placed, Monsieur, to profit by the first opportunity which presents itself. You may even inform him of our intention to have the Institute of Mary approved by the Government.

In your opinion, Monsieur, will the Chambers at this session study seriously the question of public instruction? Do you believe the time is ripe to petition for the legal and civil authorization of the Institute of Mary? Should the answer be affirmative, what should we do? Oh! If in your goodness you could point out to us the steps we should take! I hope I have not bored you with the length of this letter. I hasten to give you the assurance, Monsieur, of my deepest sentiments. . . .

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**S. 317c. To Bro. David Monier**

December 10, 1824, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

I am sending you the file of the house at no. 3, Rue Lalande and of my business with M. Biernès. I have read and reread article 2109 of the Civil Code. After your explanation of the differences between family sharing and the division of the inheritance between husband and wife, and also because I was under the impression that no chattel mortgage could be taken out on what M. Fontblanc said remained. I thought everything was settled. However, the reading of this article 2109 reawakens my doubts. Here we are talking of a mortgage on shared property. M. Fontblanc has a right to compensation from M. Lafargue's portion of the inheritance. According to the terms of the article, he seems to have observed the formality of registration within 60 days, etc.

As soon as possible, my dear Son, let me have an itemized account of what I owe M. Biernès and send it along with the files. May the peace of the Lord be with you!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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*1825 opens with an important letter to the Bishop of Strasbourg regarding a merger between the brothers of Father Mertian and the Society of Mary (see letter no. 212).*

### **318. To Bishop Tharin of Strasbourg**

January 4, 1825, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

Your Excellency,

I had hardly received the letter with which you deigned to honor me, dated last November 15, when I hastened to look over my correspondence with Father Mertian.

What is essential in this correspondence is a long letter from Father Mertian in which he proposes to me a union of his Congregation of Brothers with the Institute of Mary. Although at first it seemed the projected union was to be, so to speak, merely a merger of one into the other, with the charge upon us of running the schools of all Alsace, nevertheless he proposed 23 conditions to me.

I was very astonished, Your Excellency, not to find my answer joined to this letter of Father Mertian's. In vain I looked for it in all the files of my secretariat. At the present time I find myself without a secretary, even an assistant secretary. It has pleased Providence to afflict most of our establishments of the south with serious illnesses, so that recently I was obligated to send help. Father Caillet saw a copy of this letter in Saint-Remy. If it becomes necessary, we may find it there.

To make up for the lack of it, Your Excellency, I will make a short analysis of its contents from memory in order to place no obstacle in the way of the projected and desired union.

I am placing all the observations I made under three principal headings. They refer as much to the Statutes of Father Mertian's brothers as to the 23 conditions for union. One of these related to the nomination of superiors by the bishops; a second refers to the sending of one or two brothers to the small communities; and the third referred to the brother sacristans, organists, etc.

As to the main heading, I observed to him that the General Administration would be handicapped if superiors were not named or chosen by the Institute. Named, if the Institute could send one of its priests; chosen, if it were obliged to make use of a secular priest, which would occur only rarely. I added that both types of appointments would always be presented to the diocesan bishop for approval if he judged the candidates worthy, etc., and that furthermore, the bishops have been the First Superiors of all our establishments, both by their office and by the Constitutions of the Institute of Mary. I asked Father Mertian to be kind enough, in spite of the union, to continue to exercise the functions of superior during his lifetime. How could the bishop of a diocese know the religious of the Institute who may be qualified and in every way fit to exercise this type of function? How could the secular priest he might name direct the religious? With what confidence would he inspire them unless he happened to find someone like Father Mertian, etc. . . .

On the second article, Your Excellency, I feel I have had to express myself rather strongly. To send to the small communities a single religious, sometimes two, but who are ordinarily very young men . . . I cannot imagine how love for the good can give rise to an illusion to the point of believing that this is possible, without inconvenience of any kind, to send one or two very young religious alone into the smallest territorial districts. To establish a good of some days' duration, is this not evidently endangering these young men? Is it not endangering the entire group of brothers, without speaking of the scandals which might result?

What would it be, Your Excellency, if this young brother were a sacristan, an organist, a singer, etc.? Would it not be adding to all the inconveniences already foreseen and bringing discredit upon the religious and upon the entire body to which he belongs? Who are the young men of honorable families, those with some education, who would then embrace the religious state? And then, of whom would the entire organization of the brother teachers be composed?

Last summer before the holding of the General Councils of the departments, a counselor of the prefecture of Lot-et-Garonne wrote to me that some prospectuses of another Institute of brothers had just been received, and one that follows the same principles as Father Mertian's, and he was afraid it would be preferred to the Institute of Mary because it seemed more advantageous. I immediately made a little note of it, to be given to the prefect of the department. No one dared to speak any more of this.<sup>1</sup>

The views of Father de Lamennais, of Father Mertian, and of several other people distinguished by several varieties of merits are fascinating at first, but they are without substance, just as are the foundations and establishments founded upon them. I have been assured that Father Mertian considered an establishment simply the sending of a brother or even of a sister to a parish. I have seen here some letters from a Sister of Providence of your diocese, but not from the congregation of Father Mertian, who was lodged and taught school in an inn. What idea do we wish the present generation to adopt regarding the religious state, after all that philosophy has uttered against it before and after the Revolution?

Because Father Mertian was leaving to us the interior organization of the houses and the formation of the subjects, I did not believe I should push my observations any further, in order not to hinder in any way a union from which so much good could result for your vast diocese. I have no illusion about the uprightness of Father Mertian's views. He wants immediately to bring about the reform of all the country villages by the Christian education of children of the people. A very serious person told me that another instructor is going still further. The brothers will be able to watch over the pastors,<sup>1</sup> lodging with them and rendering them all types of services in return for the food they will receive.

These plans are admirable in theory, but I cannot see how they can be put into practice without the most serious inconveniences. If God deigns to continue to shower blessings on the Institute of Mary, will we not have as beneficial results without any fear for the particular society of the brothers destined for the schools? The institutions of the normal schools for the young teachers and the retreats for the older ones, established for one or several departments in agreement with all the authorities—would these events, which are occurring at Saint-Remy, not hasten an earlier regeneration of the people? Would they not be more solid? Is it not to be hoped that the Government would come to the point of adopting and sustaining such simple institutions, based on principles that assure their stability?

Your Excellency, I desire these institutions, these types of establishments for the Institute of Mary, but solely according to the grace and the lights which God is pleased to give me. I must admit that from the natural point of view, I fear them. And so I do not anticipate. I found no change in my soul when I learned of Father Mertian's refusal, but I was surprised that he did not answer me.

I have the honor of being with profound respect, etc. . . .

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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*Here is a new letter to Father Perrey (see letter no. 307).*

### **319. To Father Perrey, Besançon**

January 5, 1825, Bordeaux

Autograph Rough Copy, Agmar

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<sup>1</sup> See letter no. 238.

<sup>1</sup> The copy reproduced here must be in error; the text of Fr. Chaminade doubtless intended to read "will be able to be watched over by the pastors."

My dear Son,

Since the reception of your last letter there have been few days on which I did not think of answering you. Providence has provided that I have never found the necessary time until now.

Your small establishments for young women in the country places would please me greatly if they were better organized, if they had deeper foundations, if in some way they were connected with other establishments capable of sustaining them, etc. . . . Yesterday, for example, I adopted one which is being formed in Montfort in the diocese of Auch, but only on the condition that a community of the Third Order Regular of the Institute of Mary would be organized there which would always be subordinated to its superiors and dependent upon the Daughters of Mary, etc. . . . For lack of these precautions, suggested by wisdom, you are running the risk of doing nothing solid or worthwhile. You may even see some of these establishments actually doing more harm than good. It could also happen that these small establishments would harm others, better organized and more suited to the reformation of the country districts.

I bless the Lord for having inspired you with still more zeal for the meetings of the men, who would be working both at their own sanctification and at that of their fellow men, but this part is still more difficult than the first, at least if it is to be done on a large scale. Although I believe the Spirit of God inspires you with these works of zeal, I find it difficult to believe that this inspiration has all the necessary characteristics of a vocation to the state you may have in mind, at least for the present.

Thus, my dear Son, I am confirming the answer I gave you in your first consultation. This second conversation makes me see even more clearly your need for doing apostolic work, only under competent direction. Even the prophets were submissive to other prophets.

I must have indicated to you in my first letter that the first meetings you were conducting should not be abandoned, but that you should take counsel with Father Caillet about the means of supporting them. Later, we could think about how to develop and consolidate them. I still cannot see the matter in any other light.

You seemed to me to think the same way, if I am to judge from your letter and from what Father Breuillot had the kindness to write about you. How could both of us have been mistaken? How would the chance of forming a small gathering of four people in a parish by breaking up a gathering of eleven—I say, how would this prove you have not been called to the Institute of Mary? If you do not have any other motives than those which you mention in your last letter, it will be easy for you to see, but in the presence of God, that those motives which you allege against this vocation are simply new proofs of this vocation.

My dear Son, I wish the superiors of the diocese had not had occasion to notice your vacillation. Everything could have been kept simpler between us if you had been prudent enough to say nothing about it to anyone.

Before God, my dear Son, see if you still persevere in believing your vocation to the Institute of Mary is divine. Supposing the answer to be affirmative, as I hope it will be, write to tell me so definitely. In the meantime, continue to acquit yourself well of the functions confided to you at the school.<sup>1</sup> Declare yourself at the archbishop's palace and ask for your *exeat*. I will write myself to help your cause.

You know that at Saint-Remy we are to give a retreat to the teachers sometime after Easter. Because I propose to visit this establishment this year, I would pass by Besançon at the suitable time. I would take you along with me. You could help me in giving this retreat, etc. . . .

If in the meantime, my dear Son, you find subjects worthy of entering into the privileged family of the august Mary, I will be glad to meet them when I stop in Besançon. Perhaps I might take them along, if they were free. Your brother, for example, although still in the seminary, and the priest you were planning to train for apostolic work, etc. . . .

May the Spirit of the Lord, my dear Son, deign to enlighten and enliven you!

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<sup>1</sup> At Ecole, no doubt, a small place near Besançon, the seat of the diocesan Missionaries.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

*[Father Perrey did not decide to enter the Society of Mary, and what happened to his projects is unknown.]*

\* \* \*

*At the end of the business notes which Father Chaminade exchanged with Brother David daily, on January 9 he added the following lines, a token of the goodness of his heart toward his follower, who was always uneasy.*

**320. To Bro. David Monier, Besançon**

January 9, 1825, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

[With insert from S. 320]

My dear Son,

I am sending you the paper I have just received entitled "Reply to the Letter Sent to Father Chaminade" (it is your letter on the Biernès matter) and the "Memorandum To Be Consulted." M. Biernès is putting pressure on me to end this business. I wish you could take care of this as soon as possible. I am adding your letter to the memorandum; you may need it.

I have had very extensive interviews with Father Lalanne about you, and I am certainly very glad about your good dispositions. Nothing would be easier than for us to come to an agreement and to work together for the glory of the Lord and that of his august Mother. May the one of us who finds something wrong in the other pardon him with a good heart and henceforth reject even the slightest memory of it as an unfortunate temptation. Let us busy ourselves only with the future.

If you believe you have need of some type of pardon, I grant it to you most sincerely. If I have crossed you inopportunistly, if I have used my authority unwisely, pardon me as sincerely as I am pardoning you.

Principally two great motives must lead us to this reciprocal pardon: the uprightness of our views and intentions, which we must take for granted as having always existed on both sides, and the serious inconveniences which result from our lack of agreement and from your almost complete lack of cooperation in the work of God. If you do not agree to this, I will complain about it to God and make you responsible for all the evils that will result from your refusal, as well as for all the sorrows you will be bringing upon your Good Father.

I would have believed, my dear Son, that with a good and honest will to help me in my labors, you would have done well to come and live with me.<sup>1</sup>

May the Holy Spirit deign to communicate to you the ideas and sentiments you need for the happy ending of this difficulty.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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**S. 320a. To Baron de Razac**

After January 10, 1825, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

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<sup>1</sup> Bro. David always lived in Bro. Auguste's boarding school. Father Chaminade had invited him to stay instead at the Madeleine. He did come later and remained there until his death.

I have just been handed your letter of January 10. It was addressed to Brother Auguste, but he feared that if he responded with his customary simplicity and openness he might fail in the respect which he owes you. Because the matter discussed in the letter in no way concerns him, he decided not to show any further interest in something which has been so fruitless. Therefore, Honorable Baron, I myself must answer because you took the pains to present your interests and to contrast them with what may be called mine.

First, may I thank you, Monsieur le Baron, for your courtesy in recalling old memories. Thank you also for your reference to the 1,000 francs which I turned over to M. Estebenet. But I must thank you above all, M. Baron, for your series of maxims on simplicity, candor, the danger of verbosity, and the detachment we should have from temporal things. M. Baron, you have expressed all these things in an extraordinary manner. Reading them in your letter, a person feels the love for them growing. If excerpted and collected, these statements would make profitable reading.

May I ask you now, Monsieur Baron, why it is that when I go from the maxims to the matters which inspired them, I am struck by a contrast which is truly distressing? Surely this contrast alienated the worthy young man who has acted as our mediator in this matter. And this contrast alone is responsible for the unpleasant answer which I am obliged to give you.

Monsieur, here is my answer, and with God's help, as you put it, I hope I will not fail against the truth and not confuse Christian charity with a complacency which for both of us could lead to injustice. As to the greater or lesser degree of deprivation to which my project may be exposed, I commit everything to the will of our God. One of the most appreciable losses in this world would be that of the goodwill you seemed to promise us before this miserable confrontation. I believe the following considerations will help us regain your esteem; at least, I will try to do nothing which could forfeit it.

A brief word about your mention of the 1,000 francs which I gave to M. Estebenet. To bring up the subject letter which was not addressed to me, and with no hint that the sum was paid for you or to you, is very insufficient in business confusing to our bookkeeping. You owed me a pure and simple receipt for the transaction. Actually, I should not have paid without this receipt, but the alleged urgency of one of your transactions required this payment, and I made it from deference to you. The receipt I expect is very simple. You can hardly refuse it. You have not sent it simply because you believed it was unnecessary, and I see nothing wrong in that. I am convinced that you will send it as soon as my request reaches you.

I would wish this were the only thing we had to discuss! But you, in turn, Monsieur Baron, make three claims concerning the 90,000 francs in our contract. I will list these claims and examine them. They concern (1) the additions to the house in question, done long ago by Chevalier de Gombaudo; (2) the two gashes on the staircase and the 30 francs I charged you for your share of the repairs; (3) the marble plaques from a small fireplace about which you express some doubt as to your ownership. Here are my responses, Monsieur, and my remarks on these three points.

With reference to the furnishing added by Chevalier de Gombaudo, I do not understand why in your letter you call them movable goods, detached from the house. This is pure nonsense and a pretext to allege or to think that I knowingly bought the furniture of the tenants along with the house. Monsieur Baron, if this implausible intention had crossed my mind, I would have said so and asked for your forgiveness. But it was far from my mind; there is no proof, not even a suspicion, that I did so. Chevalier de Gombaudo removed all his furniture; he never complained that he had been inconvenienced by us; he hauled everything away in complete freedom.

Although you labeled those transformations "movables," your very honesty could not allow this equivocation for long, and immediately on the very next page you refer to things which could be dismantled, and that the house in question did in fact suffer some dismantling. Chevalier de Gombaudo could have been forced to restore everything so that not a trace of the damage could be seen. The fact that there was no damage simplifies things. I do not care to engage in a dispute

over such matters with Chevalier de Gombaud. He has all my respect, and I would not want to antagonize him over such a trifle.

If before agreeing to the contract, Monsieur, you had required me to bear the cost of the demolition or to pay for what had been erected years ago, and if I had accepted that condition, I would have undoubtedly been bound to it. But you admit that no such condition was imposed, to which you add this fact—that as you showed me through the building, you were careful to point to the transformations, now attributed to Chevalier de Gombaud, declaring them to be advantageous, suitable for the purchaser and for which he would be willing to pay a higher price, with no mention of any secret reservations on the part of Chevalier de Gombaud or any other. My dear Baron, what would the 90,000 francs have purchased if you had reserved parts of every section of the house?

Let us forget, if you will, this regrettable misunderstanding.

I now come to the two gashes in the staircase, only because you provoke me to do so. The agreement concerning the staircase is a closed chapter; I agreed to pay for the two removals, and have done so. I have been freed from my promise. For your part, M. Baron, you agreed to pay 30 francs to cover part of the damage, and my trust in the word of the Baron de Razac is such that I consider it paid.

However, I do not know what to make of the almost bitter regrets about this little agreement of ours which I read in your letter.

Do you really believe, M. Baron, that the transaction was a bad one? There are those who tell me that with 600 francs I cannot repair the mutilation. Who stood to gain by this? We are speaking here of your escutcheons, not those of another. There were two bas-reliefs of no great value to anyone but you. Do you really believe those objects could be classed as furniture? In your letter you seemed to express yourself in uncertain terms. You would have been in error, for how could the objects have been called movables? You realize, of course, that when I agreed to the 30 francs I knew nothing of the object of your agreement. You made the suggestions, M. Baron; you changed the conditions, you quoted the 30 francs, and I agreed merely because I sought to please you. I do not regret my action, although the damage caused by the removal proves that more than 30 francs were involved here.

But were the objects movable? Were you mistaken in wanting to buy them back and claiming the right to remove them to the detriment of a house that no longer belonged to you? Now, I am not familiar with the laws governing this case, but if they favor the common good, as it is claimed, this must mean that the panels that form part of the edifice belong to the proprietor and not to the owner of the furniture; otherwise, the said owner of the furniture could carry away the entire house, piece by piece. I am told I have lost 600 francs, but I am not in the least concerned. In this you will note, M. Baron, that I satisfy your desire to see us detached from temporal things.

I still must speak of the marble trimming of the little fireplace. Please bear with me, M. Baron, as I tell you what I think. Do you know why you are in doubt about those poor marble plaques? The answer is simple—because you are not certain, in spite of our agreement, that the marble belongs to you. Otherwise, M. Baron, you would have spoken of them much as I did about the 30 francs for the two gashes to the staircase.

Do you want another argument? Here it is. You gave your orders concerning the staircase. You had free access to the house; the marble slabs could have been removed at the same time. They are embedded in plaster; a jolt would have loosened them and yet, the two items were taken from the staircase but not the marble plaques. Why not?

Again, the answer is simple. The reason, M. Baron, is that you did not believe you had a right to them.

How is someone to explain the request you make today for the marbles only? I believe I can see the reason, and with your permission I will explain without taking any liberties with the simplicity of the truth.

A little peevishness, justified or not, caused by the staircase problem and by Chevalier de Gombaud may have recalled other details that influenced our conversation. You may have recalled, although erroneously, what was said about the marble slabs and the bribe which you linked with them, although the two were entirely distinct. As far as my memory serves me, here are the facts. I was offering you a sum somewhat less than what I finally paid for your house. You tried to obtain more, and in doing so you mentioned a bribe, you manifested your attachment to some details of your house; even the fact—you assured me—that King Henry IV had spent some time in it, and many other things. Your fondness for the little fire place was hinted at. As for the bribe, I thought that since neither you nor I had used an agent, the bribe was in the nature of a second offer, under a different name. The 500 francs you suggested were forgotten.

About the fireplace, I can say that according to my plans, the small room housing the little marble chimney could disappear, for I had no intention of using the marble elsewhere; if that had been the case, I would keep your wishes in mind. But later, Monsieur, a great change took place in our relationship. I paid for all those discussions with so many thousands in francs that the memory of our small difference completely vanished. I made every sacrifice in the interest of religion and for the house that would serve it. I went beyond your estimate of the value of the house, beyond its commercial value. The transaction was a profitable one for you, and I admit that you committed no injustice in taking full advantage of it. You were happy with the 90,000 francs, 1/3 down payment for your security and a first mortgage for the rest. What better deal could you have made? If you had brought up our first discussions, our first skirmishes as I call them, you would have risked losing everything. You were too clever, Monsieur, to compromise 90,000 francs because of a few pieces of worthless marble. We made no agreement on the marble, and none was promised.

And yet, Monsieur Baron, my original intention concerning the objects, in case the room and fireplace disappeared according to plan, remained the same. To state freely what I intended to do in no way obliges me, yet my intent has not changed. Why should your letter to a third person deprive me of the satisfaction I anticipated the moment I was able to dispose of the articles? Was this the only time I hoped to please you without being obliged to do so? Did I not give you sufficient examples? And if I did so, who could say that it was a meaningless or false gesture on my part, a mere pretense of politeness? Both nature and time have left me vulnerable; everything I said, I felt deeply.

Please excuse, Monsieur Baron, whatever harshness you may find in my explanations; do see in them only truth and the desire to avoid hurting you. Still greater is my desire that we remain united before God, pardoning these distractions from the good we should be seeking, these failings and faults to which we are all subject, supporting each other in justice when necessary but always with charity. If you doubt my explanations, Monsieur Baron, have them compared with yours and let me know the results. You and I may be in error, but neither you nor I would wish to remain in that error without enlightenment.

Let us agree once again on the high consideration and respect with which I ask you to believe me, Monsieur Baron, your very humble and very obedient servant. . . .<sup>5</sup>

\* \* \*

*Here is another note to Saint-Remy after Father Caillet's return to Bordeaux.*

**321. To Bro. Dominique Clouzet, Saint-Remy**

January 18, 1825, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

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<sup>5</sup> This letter will be replaced by letter no. 324a.

My dear Son,

You have found a good lawyer in Father Caillet for your Saint-Remy. I see with pleasure that he has entered into everything, just as you have done. It is now up to me to take care not to allow myself to be drawn along too far by my tender affection for this establishment, and more particularly for the one who has so completely devoted himself to its prosperous development.

I was happy to receive the tokens of affection expressed by the entire community, as well as the many good wishes offered to me at the beginning of the New Year. It is you, my dear Son, and Father Rothéa who have inspired these tender sentiments, at least in the new members and who make of them just that many adopted Children. If they have the desire to see their Good Father, tell them that this same Good Father just as ardently desires to go to see them; that he has no fear of the dangers and fatigues of the journey in spite of his gray hairs and the weight of years; that he is withheld only by the order of Providence, whose designs he must always consult.

...

I have not forgotten that I owe Brother Galliot an answer.<sup>2</sup> If there had been urgency, he would have already received it. Let him take courage and keep on going forward. I hope not to delay too long in writing him. I also owe a letter to my dear Son, Brother Rothéa. Oh! What creditors in the matter of letters and answers! I am, as it were, an insolvent debtor! Happily, Father Caillet defends and takes my place as much as he can.

May the Lord shower upon all my Children of Saint-Remy and upon their head his most abundant blessings!

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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**S. 321a. To Bro. David Monier**

February 1825, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

Is there any way you could extricate me from this business with M. Biernès, for instance by paying Mme Coste (her mortgage for 4,600 francs) and she could let me have 600 francs? I would pay the 600 francs to any one of my creditors. I would no longer be the one pleading; there may be other ways of going about this, it seems to me. However, I have no time to take care of it. We can talk on our way to Saint-Laurent; you are coming to dinner.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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**S. 321b. To Bro. David Monier**

February 8, 1825, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

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<sup>2</sup> Biographical note. Pierre Galliot (1798-1872), born in Chemaudin, Doubs, was one of the first postulants to enter Saint-Remy in 1823. In his long career, he was employed as professor, director, and especially as business manager in the houses of Franche-Comté and Alsace, principally in Saint-Hippolyte, Courtefontaine, and Marast. He was the founder and organizer of Marast, where he died. He left behind the memory of a religious of the old stock—good, honest, faithful, devoted heart and soul to the Society, never frightened or troubled in the face of difficulties, firm in his principles, with a profound spirit of faith and of great confidence, above all in Mary. God placed the seal of his holiness in trying him during his last years by a long and painful illness, in which the slightest complaint was never heard. He sought all his strength in prayer and offered himself to God as a sacrifice for the salvation of souls.

M. Biernès has just left me. He claims to have seen you since you received the memorandum from Father Bardinet. He believes the memorandum contains the opinion of M. Pérèz, just as we had planned. I did not discuss this with him but sent him to you with the promise that I would ratify whatever you decided. It seems he would desire a third opinion; I told him I want what you want, and if you agree to that you should add your reasons to the memorandum, etc.

We made no mention of the consultant's fee; if you agree, I think we should share that. If you were of M. Pérèz's opinion or if you won over M. Pérèz, then I believe Father Bardinet and even M. Biernès would follow suit. At least if he wanted advice, he would pay for it himself.

May the peace of the Lord, my dear Son, be with you.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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*Here are instructions given by Father Chaminade to his two Institutes for Lent of 1825. They are his first circular to his children.*

### **322. To the Institute of Mary**

February 6, 1825, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

Directions Concerning the Fast and Abstinence,  
Particularly for the Holy Time of Lent,  
In the Religious Houses of the Institute of Mary.

1. Because religious communities are vowed by their state to the practice of penance, the laws of the Church on this point must be more exactly observed than anywhere else. If on the one hand, people of the world relegate penance to the cloister, and if on the other, in the cloister penance is neglected, what will become of the observance of this important precept? To whom would holy religion turn to appease the anger of God and turn aside the scourges of God's justice from the guilty?

2. Only two reasons can dispense from this law: physical impossibility and moral impossibility. The respective superiors of each house will judge with prudence and charity concerning the men and women religious whose personal conduct is confided to them. In case of doubt, they will consult a doctor whose religious principles and convictions are well known to them.

3. If the case should remain doubtful, it would be according to the spirit of the Institute that in his final decision the superior would incline to the side most favorable to health. The Spirit of God, which must animate all superiors, will help them find this wise compromise, this golden mean, which must be maintained between a guilty relaxation and a no less destructive rigidity.

4. If anyone cannot fully observe the law, or if he is obliged to make use of a dispensation for a portion of it, he must observe the other part all the more exactly and do everything he can, conscientiously, with simplicity, peace, and submission to the decisions of the superiors.

5. In the houses of the Institute, members do not benefit by the general permissions given to the faithful by the bishops of the dioceses to eat meat or to use meat or meat products as seasoning on certain days of the week. The observance of abstinence begins already on Quinquagesima Sunday and is observed also the following Monday and Tuesday. This is a pious compensation offered to our adorable Master for so many outrages he receives during these days of dissolution. The abstinence alone is anticipated. The fast begins only on Ash Wednesday.

6. The laws of the Church must come before special devotions. In consequence, if it should happen that a member of the Institute feared, and with good reason, that he could not

observe the abstinence during Lent if he began to do it sooner, he could be dispensed from what the Rule prescribes for the three days preceding.

Given in Bordeaux, February 6, 1825  
G.-Joseph Chaminade,  
Superior Of the Institute of Mary

\* \* \*

**S. 322a. To Mother de l'Incarnation, Condom**

February 11, 1825, Bordeaux  
Autograph, Agmar

My dear Daughter,

Soon you will receive a short instruction on the observance of Lent, my dear Daughter, which you will share with the superior, Father de Cadignan. I have news from Father Fenace. I also received Father de Cadignan's letter and will presently inform him of Father Fenace's sentiments. I do not have time even to read Father Caillet's letter to you. This morning I sent Mother Emmanuel's letter to Mme Vergne with my postscript. From time to time, read the "Guide for Superiors in the Institute of Mary."

May the Lord always give you the grace to fulfill your obligations well.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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**S. 322c. To M. de Lacaussade, Tonneins**

February 13, 1825, Bordeaux  
Copy, Agmar

Monsieur and Respected Friend,

The thread sent by Sister Adélaïde's mother seems to make good cloth. If you agree and if you feel a similar cloth would be more expensive, see to it that 50 kg of the thread is purchased and delivered to a weaver.

Also at least 25 kg of tow are needed, the type agreed upon between her and Marie.

I have a note from Brother David for you. I am sending this by mail, although Justine is leaving in two days; I was told it was necessary because of the purchase of the thread.

I have the honor of offering you the evidence of my respectful affection. . . .

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*This letter shows us the delicacy of Father Chaminade's approach in his relationships with authorities.*

**323. To Baron de Muller, Mayor of Colmar**

February 18, 1825, Bordeaux  
Original, Municipal Archives of Colmar

Honorable Mayor,

I was notified by the pastor of Colmar that you have in mind to ask me for a fifth brother for your elementary schools. I had written the principal of the *collège* of Villeneuve-sur-Lot that soon I would send a substitute for one of our brothers teaching in this city. The same mail that

brought me your letter also brought one from the head of the establishment at Saint-Remy telling me that he had a young brother who knows German and who would be suitable for Colmar. I have just accepted the offer. He will arrive sooner than the person I had intended to send, and the traveling expense will be much less.

I am always very eager, Honorable Mayor, to second the pure and just views that guide your administration. I have wanted to sound the praises of the Honorable Baron de Muller for a long time.

Regarding the brothers' salaries, I did not even have any thought of making a request, for I leave that matter entirely to your sense of loyalty and justice. What you have already done for us surely dispenses you from any solicitude for the fifth brother I will send to you. Despite your already great generosity, you are planning to give to the motherhouse from time to time what you delicately call "tokens of grateful remembrance." The motherhouse, in fact, must meet some heavy financial obligations before the brothers can be available for teaching. It must also pay travel expenses. But in truth, I should add that the pastor of Colmar has promised to repay what the motherhouse advanced for the journey for the first brothers I sent to you.

I am with profound respect, Honorable Mayor, your very humble and obedient servant.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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### **S. 323a. To Father Bardinet**

February 13, 1825, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

No matter how carefully I study the Biernès matter, I cannot hope to see it settled by conciliation. I would have liked to spare him the court costs, if he takes that route. He does not want my mediation, it seems. Therefore, we must have recourse to the only remaining means. I will not defend this case but will await the court's decision to see whom I will pay.

Can I prove my goodwill more convincingly than by giving him 2,000 francs under these circumstances? He asked me to consult, and I did; now let him consult his lawyers if he believes mine are incompetent. I cannot imagine a good lawyer not blaming him for not wanting to conciliate.

Please, Monsieur, inform M. Biernès of my last decision. I will write to Brother David in case he goes to the former's residence first, rather than to yours.

I am with respectful affection your very devoted friend. . . .

\* \* \*

*These business letters show us Father Chaminade's character. He was always eager for mutual understanding and agreement and was the enemy of all lawsuits. The first relates to difficulties concerning the payment for the house at no. 3, Rue Lalande. Father Chaminade submits to Brother David the draft of a letter he intends to send to his lawyer, M. Bardinet. The second discusses the house of the Daughters of Mary in Tonneins.*

### **324. To Bro. David Monier, Bordeaux**

February 18, 1825, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

I am going to write to M. Bardinet as follows.

“In vain do I examine M. Biernès’ lawsuit, for I am abandoning all hope of seeing it ended with any form of conciliation. I really wanted to spare him the enormous expenses connected with courts of justice if the collocation of order<sup>1</sup> is called for, but he does not seem to want my mediation. It follows that we must have recourse to the only remaining means. I will not be bringing a lawsuit but a court decision, which I will wait for to pay the money to the one to whom it is due. Was I able to show my goodwill in any better way than to give him 2,000 francs in this difficult situation? He tells me to consult; all my counsels have been taken. Let him take his, if he believes mine at fault. I am unable to believe that an enlightened council will not blame him for not wanting to resolve these differences.

“I will be greatly obliged to you, Monsieur, if you will have the kindness to communicate my last resolution to M. Biernès. I am going to write to Brother David, in case he presents himself at his house instead of at yours.”

I will not send this letter to M. Bardinet, my dear Son, until you have made some important observation as to its form.

I believe you agree with Brother Auguste on the repairs to be made on the Razac Hotel, and that if it were otherwise, you would tell me. After dinner, I will go there to decide what will need to be done.

The petition I am to present to the mayor for the commune gardens<sup>1</sup> is awaited with great impatience. It is feared that spring, which will make them more beautiful, will render the concession just that much more difficult.

Tender and friendly greetings.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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### **S. 324a. To Baron de Razac, Paris**

March 1825, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

I did not attribute much importance to the claims which Chevalier de Gombaudo made shortly after the sale of your house. Today the matter has taken a serious turn. Chevalier de Gombaudo has already taken some energetic steps, turning first to Brother Auguste. He went so far as to threaten to drag him before the justice of the peace. Fortunately, Brother Auguste lived up to his reputation for gentleness and honesty, both in his writings and in his speech. We were waiting for an answer to the two letters he sent to you, hoping your answer would bring a settlement. We waited a long while, longer than Monsieur de Gombaudo anticipated. Your letter came finally, and Brother Auguste, who had been my agent in the matter, gave it to me so I might answer it.

My first impulse was to give up everything that was claimed. Nothing is so precious as peace. But in spite of my inclinations in this direction, several considerations deterred me. Let me state simply, M. Baron, that our money lenders were beside themselves when I told them of the difficulties which exist between us. In fact, Monsieur, if you would consider the problems for a few moments, you would find that it is not complicated and that our right is as genuine as that of Monsieur de Gombaudo. Here is a short and clear explanation.

You allowed me to visit your house and to show it to visitors more than once. I even visited it with you, and with you we went into the wing occupied by Chevalier de Gombaudo. You made no mention of the claims we were to expect from your respectable lodger. Far from doing so, one day you said as you showed Chevalier de Gombaudo’s room to Brother Auguste, “Here is an apartment that is ideal for a teacher.” After several visits we agreed on a price, and we drew up

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<sup>1</sup> Inscription of a creditor on the list of the Tribunal following the order the law assigns to his credit.

<sup>1</sup> See letter no. 333.

the papers. Some days later, Chevalier de Gombaudo informed me that according to his lease, he had the right to dismantle and remove all the additions and decorations in his apartment. I told him the sale was an accomplished fact, and any complaint must be addressed to you; however, I charitably offered to inform you myself. He answered that he would have everything removed unless we reimbursed him for what he had put in for a very modest sum. I then imposed a condition, that all this must be included in the plan Brother Auguste had for alterations, and asked Chevalier de Gombaudo to see him about it. I added that if this was accepted, we would have it evaluated and the money would be given to you. This was done, and Brother Auguste informed you.

After this short account of the facts, is it not easy to recognize our right and that of Chevalier de Gombaudo? His right is based on his lease; he says so, and you do not seem to contest the fact. Is ours less evident? We bought the house just as it stood, just as you showed it to us. You certainly did not intend to sell us anything that did not belong to you! I am convinced of this—yet did you not actually sell articles which M. de Gombaudo had the right to take? You were not aware of it, I am sure, but must your oversight turn to your advantage and to our loss? To your advantage, for you pocketed the money; to our loss, for we will have to pay Chevalier de Gombaudo. Finally, in justice—and now we are dealing with perfect justice—you have been compensated. And that sum you will now give to him.

Moreover, Monsieur, you have the right to contest the evaluation if you find it too high. This is why we did not contest it ourselves. Our reluctance has been just as great as our answer has been delayed; perhaps it is this reluctance which has so displeased Chevalier de Gombaudo. I admit unhesitatingly that I believe he is acting honestly. But what could we do without you? As I read and reread your letter, I believed I grasped the reason for your misunderstanding and for the worries you are causing us, no doubt in innocence. You seem to lump everything together with the furniture; the additions, the partitions—in a word, the various repairs M. de Gombaudo has had made to the wing of the mansion he occupied. I believe it is sufficient to point out your error without providing proof.

After reasoning in this fashion, I resolved simply to ask you to consider the matter for a few minutes and to recall the main facts.

Enough of this, M. Baron, and I hope that nothing of this nature ever comes between us again. However, I cannot suppress my surprise at reading in your letter that “it was due to a misconception that you were asked to contribute to the repairs of the main staircase; that it was perhaps due to an error that you were left in doubt about whether you would or would not get the fireplace of the little parlor overlooking the garden on the main floor.” The first item was the last to be discussed by us. The terms had been agreed upon, a compromise had been reached when you spoke to me for the first time about your escutcheons. I replied that I had no real notion of what you exempted from the sale. We agreed that the staircase would suffer from the removal, that you would give 30 francs for the smaller of the repairs, and I accepted the more burdensome expenses. Please, where is the misconception? If there is one, tell me honestly where it is found.

Let us talk about the fireplace. It was during the second or third interview that you again stated your price and added that you reserved the entire fireplace for yourself, or offered a 500 franc bribe. I answered firmly that there could be no question of a bribe between us, that since I did not know the objects you requested, not even the premises, I could not arrive at a decision.

I added in all sincerity that if that room were to be demolished during the repairs, I would remember your attachment to the fireplace. However, that was not a promise. You know now that I had given up that purchase, that we formulated new proposals, and that only the escutcheons were reserved.

As I conclude this long letter, M. Baron, I ask you once again to examine this entire matter. I know your sense of justice, your loyalty, and even your disinterestedness, and I do not doubt for an instant that you will cease these vexations, which I never should have suffered. If you accept the evaluation made by Chevalier de Gombaudo, I immediately will give him the

money. I will then draw up a bill and send it to you. We will know where we stand, and I have every reason to hope that our decisions will receive prompt implementation. One more word. If you do not see things as I do, M. Baron, I would ask you to consult some person in whom we both have confidence.

P.S. This letter was ready to leave, M. Baron, when Brother Auguste sent me one from Count de Saint-Exupéry along with his answer by return mail. The Count informs Brother Auguste on the part of M. de Gombaudo that M. Titta has already drawn up a document for our signatures. Brother Auguste answered that he was only an agent in these negotiations, that he was sending me his notes and that I was to write to you. In fact, Brother Auguste is only a volunteer agent, as I pointed out to M. de Gombaudo, for I had no time to visit the mansion, to listen to his claims, and to write to you also concerning your interest, to allow M. de Gombaudo to remove the partitions, doors, etc., if these were not included in the new plans. Although my honest efforts have not been rewarded to date I do not regret them, and I hope you will never cause me to regret them. To that end, I am substituting this letter for another which my lawyer had drawn up according to the articles of the law. One word from you, M. Baron, and justice will be done to M. de Gombaudo and to me. But I implore you, send that word promptly.

If I agreed to allow my counsel to draw up my answer, this was because M. de Gombaudo had already chosen his (M. Titta, a lawyer you know). The tardiness of your answer has undoubtedly ill-disposed him; he will not have believed our frankness. Perhaps he will agree with you interiorly but by pestering you will hope to obtain the 500 francs he claims and leave us to come to an agreement by ourselves.

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### **325. To M. Faure de Lacaussade, Tonneins**

March 4, 1825, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

Monsieur,

I immediately sent your letter of March 2 to Bro. David Monier. He believes the most practical thing to do is to buy the wall for 300 francs, and I think so myself. To avoid the lawsuit some want to draw us into, the 300 francs would soon be doubled . . . and then the long chapter of moral considerations!

Brother David has been indisposed for several days. If the repurchase should meet with some difficulty and you could delay it—carry it over with until my next visit—that would still be a small solution. On the whole, Brother David believes his trip to Tonneins would give too much importance to this matter. See to all the arrangements while the purchase is being made. I presume there is passion, irritation, resentment, etc., in the entire business. This is where a beginning should be made to moderate things somewhat, at least to come eventually to a real conclusion. . . .

I have not yet attended to your errand concerning the clouds of glory.<sup>1</sup> There were at least eight large sheets in the Madeleine. It is painted on cardboard.

Sincere and respectful devotedness,

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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<sup>1</sup> The Daughters of Mary had asked that “a cloud of glory” be painted for them, similar to the one used at the Madeleine for the repository of Holy Week.

**S. 325a. To Baron de Razac, Paris**

March 22, 1825, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

Monsieur,

I ask you again to give me a direct answer to my last letter, and more particularly to send me a receipt for the 1,000 francs I gave you for past interest due. I repeat my offer, Monsieur, to pay M. de Gombaudo whatever you believe you owe him because of his claims. I will deduct this amount from my next interest payment. I am respectfully yours. . . .

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**S. 325b. To Count de Saint-Exupéry**

March 22, 1825, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

Monsieur Count,

It has seemed to me that the shortest and the simplest way to obtain the result which you so justly claim was to write again to M. Baron de Razac. I hereby send you a copy of my letter. I hope M. de Razac will finally open his eyes, especially if you yourself have the goodness to acquaint him with the ideas we exchanged at our last interview. He is implicating both of us in a matter which is not actually one of any consequence.

I am with a profound respect. . . .

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**S. 325c. To Count de Saint-Exupéry, Bordeaux**

March 24, 1825, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

If, as you say, I am to be taken to court for trying to reconcile M. de Gombaudo and M. de Razac, the event will be most extraordinary indeed and one which I could not foresee. I would be vexed indeed if you, as an intermediary, were to approve of such an action. The only thing I agreed upon with you was to see whether it was possible for me to have M. de Gombaudo surrender his rights and to induce M. de Razac to admit yours. I stated that I had to learn how to bring this about. I was told that it was not proper to assume a debt which was being contested by the debtor, that M. de Razac and M. de Gombaudo were close relatives, that they could not agree, and therefore I could not help by taking on the latter's debts; that the best thing to do was to be an open mediator, offering to pay if M. de Razac billed me, who would shortly be his debtor. In all this I merely offered my good services. I would be offended if the good I wanted to do turned to evil.

You suppose in error that I have leased my house and that a third person is now the tenant. My house is not for rent, and the repairs I am making are mine.

I cannot see how someone can demolish anything for a third person in a house which one cannot claim to have been fraudulently bought and paid for.

I thank you for obliging words in the midst of so much misunderstanding.

Please know the perfect consideration with which I have the honor of being. . . .

