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### 394. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

April 25, 1826, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

[With insert from S. 394]

My dear Child,

I believed I was very hasty in having my observations come to you regarding the matter concerning the interesting Mme Clairefontaine. I was mistaken about my expectation, and my letter came to you too late. Once a matter is an accomplished fact, further advice is needless. This is true, and very true in the present case, but even advice received rather late may serve as a warning for the future, and this is what is to be desired from more than one point of view. We must know how to ask promptly and not hasten the completion before the answer has been received.

The same thing happens to us regarding loans and the calls for payments presented to me by Mother Saint-Vincent. The borrowing has been done, and the payments are awaited on the one hand and promised on the other; how then is someone to back out? What advice can be given to you, unless we wished only to risk doing a great deal of harm and to merit a loss of confidence? When what has been done determines what remains to be done, then we must act effectively. This is where Mother Saint-Vincent finds herself at the present time with her plan and her excuses. I believe what she says, that in directing herself her intentions have seemed good to her—but is religious prudence behind it all?

My reflections must give rise to your own. This is not the time to review for you the rules of direction on this matter, but when I am able to see you I will need to speak to you about them because our establishments, which are always larger and more numerous, oblige me to do so. What would soon become of us if in each place, superiors placed themselves in a position of speaking too late and of merely saying they acted independently?

Let Mother Saint-Vincent follow her ideas on the maintaining of order outside the convent; I have no preference and no advice to give in the matter. Let her act with her usual uprightness. On another occasion, through his grace God will add those qualities which are no less essential because of our holy state.

What can we foresee and advise for the future? Let me mention two things now to avoid blame later. I have already mentioned the first—to pursue the repairs to the house so it might suit Mme Clairefontaine. That was my first promise and yours also to her, and if this is not done the rest is useless. I will never stop repeating that this first promise in no way influences the second, to admit her into the convent so her piety may find nourishment and growth. Again, her admission must not be at the expense of the improvements to the house. I have mentioned this previously, and I want you to promise me this in your reply. I want the house she is to occupy to be ready to be blessed when I come to Agen; give me reasons for hope in this matter.

The second thing I foresee and advise is the final payment on the house in Tonneins. The set date is fast approaching, and it will be upon us before we know it. There are still 6,000 francs to pay, perhaps more because the interest was not completely paid the last time.

I will see about other of your many interests at the time of my visit. I hear the summer house being spoken of, the budget to be decided upon to meet the living expenses of Mme Clairefontaine, the type and duration of the promissory notes referred to by Mother Saint-Vincent, and about some other human miseries.

But the larger object of my visit, as must be expected, is to purify and clarify all hearts, to advance them all in the way of our holy Institute, and to form new and stronger links among the members of our Society. If we were able to be thoroughly sanctified by the exercises and the

indulgences of the jubilee which is being granted to us, it seems to me that as one solid body we would attain our perfect union in Jesus and Mary, and what a blessing this would be! What an anticipation of paradise! Join all your prayers to mine, and may God grant you graces without measure!

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### **S. 394-2. To Father Bardenet, Arbois**

May 1, 1826, Bordeaux

Monsieur and Respected Colleague,

I have received your letter of April 13 and the two decisions voted upon by the municipal council of the city of Arbois. I find it strange that single vote should cover a multitude of subjects, but I imagine there are reasons for proceeding in this fashion. Not knowing the circumstances, I suppose nothing else could be done.

However, I want to bring up the point because it is worthy of note and may have serious consequences. It will not do so if the official authorization of both the prefect and the ministers is granted. However, these people will not approve if they feel that some of the conditions tend to implicate the city financially and necessitate the consent of the government. That would involve us too deeply. For instance, if they feel that a sale of communal property requires previous evaluation and publication; if they believe some of the conditions will force them to include the property in future budgets; if they find that because the following are concerned, they must be consulted—the Minister of the Interior, the War Ministry, the Minister for Ecclesiastical Affairs, and perhaps the Minister of Finance. I do not know what will come of all this; it can only be explained by the importance of the project and the public good which may result.

I point out these facts to convince you of the importance at the moment of obtaining the authorization from the prefect and the Ministers. So far, we have only the vote of the council, which gives us no title but which is only a first step to the purchase and our entry. The decisions ask the mayor to follow the usual legal channels; until this is done, we have not advanced a single step. I am telling you this so you may start out on the right foot. The deliberations charge the mayor to follow the course of what is legally correct in our dealings with a simple commune.

I believe you have been sufficiently warned; the rest is up to your prudence and to the friends who have at times been too helpful, something about which we do not often complain. Now as to what concerns us more directly, either in the discussions or in your letter.

I believe the report should not have specified the classes to be formed: a free class, two classes with varying tuition requirements, and a boarding facility. Taken literally, this would mean four sections with a further subdivision among 12 or 16 schools—this is impossible.

That there was room for 150 in the poor classes should not have been stated. If only 100 came from the city, we could be charged with non-fulfillment of our contract! Let us hope that these matters will be cleared up when the sisters obtain their permits. It will be stated that they will accept the poor who present themselves if these observe the rules of the school and use the quarters assigned to them. The sisters will reserve other quarters for the day students, the boarders, and the various levels of instruction for those paying tuition. The sisters must be allowed to settle these matters in their own way and under their superior's guidance. Going into detail would hamper their administration and place a constraint on their own methods.

The sisters will also need legal authorization, but that will be possible only after certain formalities concerning the property, as the mayor said. This is another reason the administrative authorization I mentioned earlier should be obtained as soon as possible. The property must be transferred legally before the religious body can ask to occupy it. There must be an inquiry to prove acceptability and usefulness; the written consent of the bishop must be obtained, and the special permission of the municipal council which has debated the measure.

The municipal decision does not permit the admission of our sisters (1) because they are not mentioned, (2) because it contains no report of a preliminary inquiry or the bishop's consent, and (3) because they were not a party to the discussion. I mention all these points now so that we may find all the means to expedite matters and so we will not be hindered once we begin installing ourselves. If you agree, I can deal with our sisters' matters once the formalities of the purchase are taken care of. Two aspects will need our closer scrutiny. One, the mention in the Arbois discussions of a possible repossession of the Capuchin property by the commune or by you and your agent. The others, the sums you ask me to provide for the transfer of our sisters.

On the first point, I think it is only just that you should receive the property if its original disposal does not take place. However, a slight change in the general law concerning religious is needed; without it, the law is powerless. The law stipulates that the goods will profit the donors only if a pension is given the sisters whom an act of God has prevented from continuing their services. You will admit that it would be foolhardy and difficult to try to change the law for this and other unforeseeable cases. And yet, the decision made would require just that. However, once the sisters are admitted, the problem vanishes. Moreover, in your letter you ask that your expenses will be paid from the early returns. I agree, for that will enable you to engage in other good works.

Once your expenses are covered the property will be clear, and I do not see how or why it could revert to your agents. They would come into the property directly, and into its monetary value through your will. If the property is ever returned to you, then you must have been the donor. If you are the donor, your expenses are not to be reimbursed.

The funds necessary in the beginning would be a personal gift of mine to Arbois, which has no need of it. As for our sisters, they have followed the example of the apostles, to whom Our Lord said to carry neither staff nor purse; they must not be caused to change in this. This would be tampering with the spirit of the Institute. They give everything, their care, their days, their thoughts of every moment.

I would be reimbursed before you for any expense, for ownership in my case is not so strongly linked to it as it is for your heirs. If you wish, we can exchange ideas on all this later. Let us place ourselves at God's disposal. I will try to provide worthy personnel, and you the means and the housing. You will find help from the good people of the neighborhood, while I must go alone and far afield to find my staff. I should not speak in such a human fashion, for it is true that God does with us as he wills. We will serve him as we see fit. May God accept our service; let us remain united to him, to Jesus and Mary.

With sentiments of religious affection, I am, Monsieur and most honored colleague, . . .

P.S. The essential now is the legal authorization for your purchase. If everything is ready in September, our sisters will be ready also.

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*This letter is an answer to a case of conscience concerning the rights and duties of children toward their parents in the matter of a religious vocation.*

### **395. To Fr. Pierre Juif,<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> Fr. Pierre Juif (1751-1836), after having finished his studies at the Jesuit college of Porrentruy, entered the convent of the Cistercians in Lucelle, Alsace, where he made his profession in 1771 as Dom Bernardin. Driven from the monastery by the Revolution, during the Terror he devoted himself to the support of religion in all the Upper Rhine region, where he was the representative of the Bishop of Basel, at that time responsible for the region. After the Concordat, he faced the persecution of the former constitutional Bishop Saurine, who had just been promoted to the See of Strasbourg. In 1822, the bishop, the Prince of Croy, who venerated him as a saint, named him archpriest of Ferrette,

**Pastor of Ferrette, Alsace**

May 2, 1826, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

My dear Son,

The two questions you propose to me are both easy to answer in the light of the laws of God, but the answer will not be less displeasing to the world because it goes against its tastes, prejudices, and false interests. The complaints of the malcontents will become even stronger, in proportion as they will be able to color their cries with two specious motives, if they cannot find any with any depth. They will say that a praiseworthy natural affection is being set aside—in other words, doing something wrong under pretext of doing something good. They will not want to see that the most praiseworthy affections are thus only within just limits, and that strictly speaking, to resist doing evil, even painfully, is by this very fact to avoid it.

Following these ideas, which it was good to mention before explaining your doubts in regard to the questions you have placed before me, I will now offer you their solution.

“A well-born young woman, of the fully mature age of 25, who is drawn by her sentiments of piety toward God—may she, without deserving blame, leave her father and mother, with whom she is living, to retire to a religious house?”

In such a question, it is always good not to reach the decisive answer before looking into some circumstances which could surprisingly modify it. In a way, it is unfortunate that human nature is unable to decide questions in an absolute manner, but is always obliged to examine them from all possible angles, so to speak.

The two principal circumstances which deserve consideration here are to know whether there is a refusal to consent on the part of the father and mother regarding the vocation of their daughter, and if this refusal is not to be excused by actual and temporary need of assistance on the part of the parents.

Not to have asked either the advice or the consent of the parents and to leave them without their having foreseen or been able to foresee the cause would certainly be a lack of respect contrary to the law of God and a lack of parental reverence, censurable in the eyes of everyone.

To leave those to whom we owe our life and education, when we owe them present assistance or what can be foreseen to be close at hand and urgent, would be an act of ingratitude and insensibility which nothing could excuse. In the order of the laws of God, this is a serious lack of charity in the first degree, and toward the people who have the most formal right to expect to be and in reality to be the objects of a well-ordered love.

But you tell me the father and mother have been notified, have been asked earnestly, and that their refusal dates from even earlier and is persistent; that this refusal has no other motive than their natural affection for their daughter and the very unfavorable idea they have of the benefits which the state of retreat in a cloistered house is able to provide.

In this state of affairs, we must not hesitate to answer that the affection of the parents is misplaced and poorly ordered, and that divine and human laws agree in leaving to the young woman the free disposal of her person and the choice of her withdrawal to the places consecrated to religion.

It would be useless to say human laws permit it, for a virgin who wishes to consecrate herself to Jesus Christ does not concern herself about rules of conduct based on purely human laws.

In the order of religion, one of the first precepts given by God to human beings was that the child will leave her father and mother to follow her husband and to be only one with him.

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near the Swiss frontier. A monument has been erected to his memory in the cemetery of Oberlarg, where he is buried with this inscription: “To the Apostle of Sundgau.”

Certainly a person would have to be carnal-minded, as the Jews were, not to admit the precept in the case wherein the Christian virgin consecrates herself to Jesus Christ and takes him as her only spouse.

But let us for a moment leave to the world its false ideas about the marriage of virgins to their divine Spouse, Jesus Christ, and let us grant for a moment that marriage in this less sublime sense is the only marriage of which the Creator wished to speak in his precept. By our human authority, this is placing a limit to the word and the law of God; this smacks of impiety and closely borders on a type of atheism. Notwithstanding, let us move on and suppose that it is to follow her affections, her religious vocation, that the virgin of whom there is a question separates herself from her father and mother.

There is no commandment in divine religion which orders her to do so. But the Savior commands and exhorts by his own personal example. It is said that when the prologue to his heavenly vocation had arrived, he separated himself from his father and mother at the age of 12. He left them in the anxiety of not knowing what had become of him. He had taken refuge in the Temple, where he was explaining the law of God. The man, the woman, do not have as a vocation, as their divine Master did, the dictates of the law of God, but they have as a vocation to go and hear it, to go and meditate upon it. They will abandon even household duties, as Mary left them to Martha, and they will listen to the spouse and he will tell them that they have chosen the better part.

I now move to the second question you asked me. What money may the person dispose of who leaves father and mother with a religious intention in mind?

She may dispose of all the money her father and mother have placed at her free disposal, for her preference, for her use, and for her free satisfaction. Because she is following an intention that is without blame to dispose toward its accomplishments or attainment the things which are left to her free disposal is certainly not to abuse them, but it is acting according to the order of law and morality.

She can economize; she can even save on other works, if she has acquired such a habit, and use everything in relation to her great design of realizing her perfect consecration.

She can borrow and oblige herself to pay back at the time when goods unexpectedly come to her, without designating that this will be done at the death of her parents or benefactors. I recommend that this time should not be expressed; after the death of such and such a person, because the world has adopted a false idea of death, has set in its maxims that this has become an annoying omen and that there may be found in it a wish for the death of the person designated. This scandal must be avoided—because it truly becomes one. Moreover, the scruples of the world are so rare, and it is greatly to be desired that this would never happen, that it must not be opposed in the present case, which is practically the only one of its kind. If money is borrowed for the purpose indicated, let the promise be made to pay it back with the first returns which are available, without saying another word about it.

On the other hand, could not the friends, the true ones who console this virgin in her troubles and afflictions, come to her aid, with a promise other than the verbal one given above? There are some who would bring their savings as a gift, for the erection of a church or of some type of holy house. I see this in the writing which has been sent on to me. Does the living temple of God not have the same privilege as the exterior one, put up by the hand of a mason?

Whatever the case may be, the daughter belonging to a good family who asks permission must not take money belonging to her parents and which the latter had no intention of giving her. Although there is no question here of saying that the money taken by the children from their father is stolen, the idea of joint possession being accepted and in any case, pardon being in the natural order of things, this is no less an immoral action and one which must be avoided in order to offer pure hands to the divine Spouse, as is his wish and desire.

## S. 395-2. To Father Calmels, Rector, Besançon

May 2, 1826, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

The superior of our house in Saint-Remy sent me the confidential letter with which you honored him on April 12. He also shared with me the provisional response he gave you. In this response, the superior kept in mind the spirit of the Institute of the Children of Mary when he told you of our intention to do everything in our power to uphold and improve public instruction wherever we are called.

Reverend Rector, when in your kindness you call us to the interesting town of Gray, not far from Saint-Remy, we cannot refuse; we must now find ways to implement the appeal. Your personal recommendation and the great confidence which His Excellency the Bishop of Hermopolis has in you would have banished all hesitation, if we were not bound by a duty of state to help the project. We find consolation and encouragement in the attitude of the administration and of the people of Gray, which you describe. We will prepare ourselves very seriously. It would ill become us to send you a principal of doubtful capability; we must find one who will be satisfactory. This requires a series of highly inconvenient replacements, as your experience will confirm. To make these substitutions less painful, I must make them gradually. If you approve of my method please let me know, and I will set the process in motion without delay in order to complete it at the desire time, just before the holidays. This is not the best of times, however, but I believe I can do it if all other conditions are fulfilled.

You seem to know one of my prospects, Reverend Rector, and you would like to have him carry out your plan. He is the type of person we know would suit you. I cannot grant him to you, however, for he would be too sorely missed. But I can find someone who will be just as satisfactory. Your project and ours, Reverend Rector, will be more surely realized if you, in turn, can help me in making some of the replacements rendered necessary by our new contribution to the town of Gray. All I need from you is a word of recommendation, an official act. I have two people who have proven their capacities in the field of education. They need only to be informed and practiced in the method under competent guidance. Their vocation has stood the test of years; one is subject to an archbishop, and the other to a bishop. One word of recommendation, I believe, would induce these worthy prelates gladly to free these men. Personally, I have always looked upon worship and instruction as the branches of the same tree, and I believe the archbishop and the bishop would be worthy of commendation if they allowed some of their young men to be used sparingly in the field of instruction. The greatest number of the French prelates agree with me; at the present time, I know of only two who do not. I am not blaming them; their responsibility is enormous. They are engaged in so many excellent undertakings that their opposing opinion in this matter does not grieve me. I look upon it as the plan of God, and I do not blame them.

Although I do not blame anyone, Reverend Rector, could you not have His Excellency the Bishop of Hermopolis intervene and thus effectively obtain for me the help I need? Would it be indiscreet to have His Excellency write, for instance, that because public instruction is profiting from the use of one or more religious who are sorely missed by the Institute of Mary (whose Superior General is Father Chaminade), he would look with favor on their replacement by people with an aptitude for this work and who would be trained for it? A general recommendation of this nature would do no one any disservice. If you think it is preferable to apply only to the two, the bishop and the archbishop, who do not admit that the lending of one of their men could merit for them an abundant increase in new priestly vocations, I would give you their names in confidence, and I would point out the two seminarians who are restrained by obedience from following their inclination and whose steadfastness deserved to be rewarded (see note A).

I know you will look kindly on my petition, Reverend Rector, and that you are at this very moment busy with the details of this good work. When we reflect that there is only one period in a man's life devoted to learning, if he cannot profit by it he will always give mediocre service, whatever his calling. I am most respectfully. . . .

*Note A.* Father Larrieu, a young cleric, in the business office of the seminary, who is under the authority of the Archbishop of Auch. Father Brothier, a young cleric in charge of a chapel of ease, under the authority of the Bishop of Périgueux.

P.S. Is the institution a full-fledged *collège*? If not, what is the highest class? Are there any special classes? How many boarders can be accommodated? What is the condition of the furnishings, and who is responsible for them? Etc. Information of the nature can be helpful in the planning stage.

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### **S. 395-3. To Fr. Georges Caillet, Saint-Remy**

May 6, 1826, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

My dear Son,

Your letter from Colmar was dated April 24. It contained your new address at Saint-Remy, where you hoped to arrive May 1. If your assignment was successful, it must be due to a special act of Providence calling you to help Saint-Remy. The inopportune illness of Father Rothéa must have surprised and pained you. We were deeply touched here, and our dear ailing Father was recommended to our prayers; we hope God will show mercy in the person of this faithful servant of the Institute.

I wrote to Brother Clouzet today asking that Father Rothéa will be granted a period of convalescence, preferably more than necessary. This is not advice; it is an order. See that it is carried out, and let no false zeal or pretended need veto this precautionary measure.

Under the circumstances, I believe you should postpone your journey rather than leave Saint-Remy without indispensable clerical services. If necessary, could you obtain a priest from the metropolitan church of Besançon or from the Missionaries of Beaupré, who have shown such zeal for good works? Do your best; if you cannot find anyone for the spiritual services, remain there and write to me.

You have probably heard that Monsignor Tharin, the Bishop of Strasbourg whom you were to visit shortly, has had an accident on leaving Paris. His coach was damaged, he suffered bruises, and his vicar is in a worse condition. The secretary is the only one who was unharmed. Consequently, His Excellency returned to the capital; I do not know when he will return. Until he does, your trip to Strasbourg is postponed.

On the other hand, in truth the Mertian matter is a series of poor choices. Follow your instructions when they say we break off negotiations. Nothing could be worse than new misunderstandings in which they seek to embroil us after that with Brother Rothéa and the so-called "donation." I had suspected that the lawyer had done Father Mertian a disservice; now he wants to become personally involved. I wish him luck. The intervention by the vicar general availed him nothing; are we at fault? Let each one direct his own Institute as he sees fit. We will keep ours, and we will find enough to do.

The suggestion that we accept some of Father Mertian's brothers in our schools but not combine our Institutes is not feasible. If this led to reciprocal exchange, to experimentation in both institutions, dislocation and laxity would result. Without reciprocal exchange, how can we be sure? What guarantee would we have that exchanged personnel, once trained and useful, would not be recalled? These are idiotic schemes which must be recognized as such.

We did inform one or another of Father Mertian's religious who preferred the Institute of Mary that with Father Mertian's declaration, they were relieved of all promises and obligations to him; and if their conduct was above reproach they would be accepted into the novitiate. One of us informed Father Mertian of this, but no official pronouncement was made.

Finally, if Father Mertian expects us to come to the help of his Institute, he will undoubtedly answer my last letters to him. I do not find it opportune to give you any power other than to receive his answer and to forward it to me. According to your letter, you are asked to express your views in writing, although you yourself are given only verbal replies which are contradictory. Can you not see, my dear Son, that you are being tested and that Father Mertian, who is clever, knows very clearly that this is time wasted?

Your only assignment is to have those documents registered in Strasbourg.

You were to read to Brother Rothéa that section of your instructions which concerns him. He writes to you and to me as if he had not read them. What else can I tell you, except to follow your orders? Stop being a party to this charade, now that you have been refused the lawyer's signed document. Let them believe . . . are we dealing with a cobbler? In truth, you are made sport of; do not play this game any longer.

With this same mailing I am writing to Brother Rothéa, asking him to drop this silly business.

I will be expecting news about our dear cleric you are to help. With a very paternal heart, I pray to God for you both.

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#### **S. 395-4. To Bro. Louis Rothéa**

May 6, 1826, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

My dear Son,

I received your very short letter of April 23 enclosed in one from Father Caillet. You still have that same desire which for the past few years has tempted you—to salvage Father Mertian's Institute. There must be some good in that intention, always supposing you had in mind the glory of God and the salvation of several religious; but the number of rebuffs you have suffered should have disillusioned you.

Our methods have been communicated, with no result; the year you spent at Ribeauvillé, the fictitious donation they were going to pass off to you, all that you have done beyond your assigned powers and after the termination of your mandate, plus a host of other details—all this does not open your eyes or enlighten your mind! You will perish in your dream.

You tell me new proposals were made today, proposal we should not reject, according to you. Where are these new proposals? What weight have such words had in the past? Your letters explain this in a way which I would not care to repeat. Let us simply say that they wish to fan our desires, to keep them alive, and that there are no proposals. I wrote and received no answer; do you know what that means?

What do you think should not be rejected? This, you say, that Father Mertian would like to disband his Institute, to give his brothers their freedom, to compensate some and let us have the rest. Please tell me how you nullify the letters patent from the king; how with a few articles of furniture you can compensate those who have a right to them because of their state? How do you dismiss those not worthy of compensation, and how do you confer riches on the others?

My poor Son, do you wish me to consult those who have no understanding of these matters, and for us to become endlessly embroiled both with the government and with people who have been more or less grievously deceived? An institution with letters patent from the king can only be dissolved by another grant of such letters. Neither Father Mertian nor anyone else is



above the king. He and I might believe the Order is dissolved, yet both be wrong and worthy of blame.

You add that under the above conditions, Father Mertian would give us Saint-Hippolyte, make repairs, etc. My dear Son, if by betraying the king's trust, nullifying his acts, being accomplices in the desertion of some, accepting the less worthy and accepting a state of permanent insecurity you were to offer me a kingdom, I would refuse it. I will not describe the headaches such an error would cause; I merely repeat the instruction Father Caillet was to convey to you. You have no powers; wait until I receive an answer. When God wants this event to take place, it will not meet with such obstacles. Because God will not move their hearts, let us keep our peace and bless the Lord.

I have asked Father Caillet to take possession of the documents concerning Saint-Hippolyte; neither you nor he make any mention of these in your letters. I certainly do not want to send another visitor. As for the plan you suggest, prepared by Brother Laugeay and approved by our people in Colmar, I will examine it when I receive it. However, if you have friends in that town, try to get some financial help. In one of your letters I read that the town is slow in coming to your assistance, that the item is not even in its budget. Am I wrong?

In one of my earlier letters I allowed Brother Laugeay to go to the normal school at Saint-Remy. Neither Saint-Remy nor Colmar has confirmed this move. While we abandon the Mertian matter, my dear Son, let us try to establish more solidly the curriculum, the order, and the discipline in our schools. In the sight of God, it will be to our advantage and to that of your students; we must bend all our efforts to this. May my prayer obtain this favor for you.

P.S. Those due for military service this year are exempted. I will immediately send the list to the prefect and keep you informed.

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

May 8, 1826, Bordeaux

Original, Arch. FMI

My dear Son,

I have received your letter about Arbois, the one which tells about the city of Gray and the one, very afflicting, which announces to me the serious illness of our dear Father Rothéa. My emotions were stirred only by this last one because the others seemed to me such trifling matters. But the strange malady of Father Rothéa, considering his age and the position Providence had assigned to him, seemed to me to have the character of a punishment, or at least of a severe trial for all the members of the Institute. We must submit to the hand of God and have recourse to his clemency. I have recommended our dear patient to the prayers of everyone.

Possibly all of us are not sufficiently purified; perhaps all are not walking in the presence of God in their state, either of innocence or conversion. Relaxation is setting in, the firm purpose of well-doing is being lost and of not doing anything for the glory of God, and our divine Master is warning us that the shepherd will be struck and the sheep dispersed. The oracle concerns no one in particular; it touches us all, just as we are, and God will often remove the purest among us. He will clearly know how to glorify them, but woe to those who, forsaken, will not have learned how to profit by this lesson.

If the youngest of our priests are taken away from us, if they are rendered useless and as if they are paralyzed, upon whom then will rest the tradition of our holy Institute? Let us not deceive ourselves. The priesthood is needed in it, and when the first priests grow old, there is neither rest nor security except in the assurance that God makes it possible for us to plant and to preserve new sprouts around the first olive tree.

Next to the confidence I place in God for the preservation of this well-beloved Son, I must rely also on the good care you will give him. I am completely confident that whatever temporal needs he may have, he will lack nothing, inasmuch as the matter will depend upon you. For the rest, I am lifting my heart to God and I accept, although with sorrow, the affliction which God is giving me.

Regarding the establishment of Saint-Remy and the need for spiritual assistance in which it found itself, I had reason to believe Father Caillet would have arrived, due to a happy intervention of Providence. His last letter was from Colmar, and before another week he was to be staying here in our Saint-Remy. He should be there by this time. I must believe that independently of all the other needs of his journey, the assistance to be given to Saint-Remy must have obliged him to stop there and will keep him there until he has provided for them in sufficient manner and measure. His quality as Visitor requires this, for a visit is not made to recognize an evil which has suddenly sprung up and to leave it uncorrected. When a wounded person is met on the road, and the 170 inhabitants of Saint-Remy<sup>1</sup> are this wounded person through the illness of Father Rothéa, he must not be passed by. We must be the Good Samaritan, bind up the wounds, and provide suitable treatment and care. Our Father Caillet will surely do his duty.

Regarding Father Rothéa, I require of you and I require of him that he will not be returned to work until his convalescence has been pronounced complete. After his first unexpected symptoms, his resumption of work has brought about the seriousness of his subsequent attacks. I forbid him to work until I have reason to believe his return to health is complete. A person must not make sport with words and with the head; his tongue, more or less affected, makes it a duty for us to relegate him only to the recreation quarters of the house. This type of treatment and time will heal everything.

Because this accident which has affected me has been explained to you, I have little more to say to you, it seems to me, on the matter of Arbois and on that concerning the city of Gray.

I wrote directly to Father Bardenet about the matter of Arbois, highly praising him for his activity and his success.

I believed it was my duty to have him observe that the matter in itself was greatly complication, there being an exchange of immovables, a financial reimbursement, the assigning of another place for the rural police, the lodging of the pastor, the promise of assistance to the schools, etc., so many things which depend upon different Ministers. And, if it is difficult to obtain anything from any one Minister—so greatly are they overburdened—what then can be expected when something must be obtained from each of them, or from all acting together!

In these particular regions, this matter would need to be started over again or not to be finished in 10 or 20 years! I did not believe I should think the same in regard to places which have other administrators, other customs, and other needs. I suppose that for the places in question, all this was the least evil or the best possible good.

I simply recommend to Father Bardenet to ask and to activate the authorization of the high administration for his contract, as the most important thing. Once the yielding of the place is assured, I have reserved to myself to have the sisters authorized in a legal manner to go and occupy it, and this calls for a little more time after the placement of the place into their hands has been assured. I have promised finally that our sisters would be available in the coming month of September, provided any hindrances unknown to them have been removed. I explained what needed to be obtained from the bishop and the Municipal Council in the special name of the Institute, but I have taken care of this myself.

Of all this, there now remains my answer to Father Bardenet which confirms his plans and which is positive regarding my promise to furnish sisters, and accompanied by observations which I have believed necessary or useful to assure its more prompt execution.

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<sup>1</sup> The teachers and pupils of Saint-Remy.

In what concerns Gray, I chose to answer Father Calmels, the rector of Besançon, directly. I approved your provisional answer as you had made it to him. I accepted Gray for the month of September, before the end of the school term. I requested from him a reciprocal service in order to replace two or three subjects for me, and because this takes no one from his own groups and there is a question only of an informal recommendation, I believe he will grant it to me. For the rest, I have requested from him some ideas about the strength of the *collège*, the extent of its property, the condition of its furnishings, etc., in order to provide in advance for whatever may be necessary.

Now your letters have been answered, except perhaps the request you make in the first to send you Brother Laugeay for the benefit of our normal school, made up, you say, of 60 teachers. I gave an obedience to Colmar to have Brother Laugeay sent to you immediately. How is it that you have said nothing to me about this matter, while from Colmar everything I hear seems to indicate that Brother Laugeay is absent, but without anyone saying this positively? I will advise that in the future, such uncertainties should no longer occur. Reports and administrations must be organized on a firmer basis to be of any value.

Somewhat with this in mind, and for other useful purposes, send me a nominal list of all the subjects in your house, in the order of grades and qualities, the officers of all ranks, the professed, the novices, etc., and of the subjects on the recruitment list for this year.

The dispensations of the law in the matter of recruitment came to me, as I had expected. I will send you information about them. I ask of God to grant you consolations, as well as to our dear Father Rothéa, and I solicit for all my Children of Saint-Remy the most abundant blessings.

Your Good Father in Jesus and Mary.

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### **S. 397. To Bro. Louis Rothéa, Colmar**

May 11, 1826, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

My dear Son,

In your letter of May 2 I received your two promissory notes, one for 1,000 francs and the other for 309 francs 85 centimes, drawn on Combe and Dumas of Paris. I will take care of them and will do with them as you specified; the first will be used for the Schneder children, and the other will be deposited in the general account. I believe the problem we had with the other draft for 1,000 francs on Combe and Dumas has been solved. They were repaid with interest and cannot complain.

Your recent letter of May 4 comes on the heels of the other of May 2. I noticed that you were troubled; I will set aside my answer to the first, and I will respond more easily to both at the same time.

“You seem to believe, my dear Son, that you are being blamed. . .”

Why did I not answer a letter which had reached me 2 weeks before the Ribeauvillé transaction? Why did Father Caillet’s instructions to you arrive 6 weeks after that same transaction? Why were you not told to strictly follow your instructions about your rights as proxy?

“Even if you continue to ask questions. . .”

Three words on your three questions should set you straight. The letter you sent two weeks before the transaction did not say you would put off signing for 2 weeks, or that you expected an answer to the question. I could not know that an answer would have helped you. Moreover, my answer would have been, “Follow your instructions.” Just that, “Follow your instructions.”

“From the six weeks that, according to you, Father Caillet. . .”

As to your doubt about whether an agent must follow instructions, it would be difficult to explain unless you are really troubled. Granted, an agent can do better than expected, but he must not do worse or deviate from his assignment. Is an agent chosen to do anything other than his assignment?

“At Ribeauvillé you were led into error. . .”

I will not go into the rumors which are abroad in Ribeauvillé and elsewhere concerning the Mertian matter, or into the new proposals you are not commissioned to make to me . . . or into the attitude of M. Bernhard. The past has been subject to scrutiny by competent people. When Father Mertian truly wants what you say he does, he will answer my letter in which I blame only the author of the document, who interpreted the thought of neither of us. I do not even know the name of the author; I merely judge his actions.

“Regarding those confounded articles of furniture. . .”

Evidently you are absorbed by imaginary difficulties; you do not seem to fathom the real ones. Our merger with Father Mertian’s Institute, which is established by the king and whose statutes have the approval of the State Council, is impossible without new letters patent, new Statutes, and Father Mertian’s consent, for neither he nor I can nullify the king’s action or the approval of the council. Let Father Mertian keep everything, or furnish those documents. Without the proper title no person, no article of furniture, and no house can be changed without a serious breach of religious laws. I had nothing to refuse those poor teachers, and not for an instant did I wish to be unjust toward them.

When Father Mertian refuses to understand this, what can I do? Declare war on the king and on the State Council? Through foolhardiness or an act under any other name, to risk having the charter of the Society of Mary revoked?

“My dear Son, see where lie the real difficulties. . . .”

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*Bro. Louis Rothéa complained about having been removed from his task regarding the brothers of Father Mertian and the château of Saint-Hippolyte. Father Chaminade exhorts him to humility, confidence, and peace.*

### **397. To Bro. Louis Rothéa**

**Director of Colmar**

May 12, 1826, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

My dear Son,

You seem to believe you are being blamed beyond measure and that I am acting in your regard with anxiety, that I do not see in what others have been at fault in the same matter with Father Mertian, and that in telling you to exclude yourself from this matter, I do harm to you as well as to the matter itself.

All this, my dear Son, has very little foundation—or rather, it has no foundation at all. I am in no way blaming you for your intention, for it was good. It is useless for you to justify it, for it is entirely justified with me, and in a better way than you could ever do this. Be convinced that I see you more clearly than you see yourself, at least in the present case.

What then have I pointed out in your conduct? I have pointed out an error. What person is never mistaken or in error? Why trouble yourself when I tell you that you have made a mistake and I do not say anything else?

You yourself, my dear Son, have written to me that you had been drawn into this matter when you were told that it was understood that the law would be set down for you, and that it was not going to be up to you to do this. Since then, you have written to tell me you had been

deceived, and that you recognized this fact. Well, this is all I am telling you, and I add that it is altogether suitable for you to no longer involve yourself in it. If your soul would remain in peace, without any trouble, you would see for yourself the entire extent of this suitability because if I continue for you my powers for this same object, I thus approve everything that is past and I render your error necessarily my own. To defend myself, I must then tell you to set yourself aside, and that I must regulate the acts of the Institute; and because I adopt this attitude, you are almost beside yourself!

What in the world are you not asking me in this regard in your letter of May 2! . . .

Even if you continue to ask questions, my dear Son, I can answer them as I would have wished you to answer me, "I may have made a mistake. If there is still time to correct it, I must do it. At another time, I will be more circumspect."

Here you have my submission, my dear Son. At the present time, let us look a little further. Are not all our requests only so many means of showing, if this is possible, that the error did not come from you? And what difference would it make then, if the mistake had not been made in the title deed of Ribeauvillé? It exists, and it is a heavy burden for us. Of what use is it to try to find out from whom it comes? There was a misunderstanding; this is the point. From whom does it come, from you or from me? But who is interested in knowing this? However, for the direction of your conscience and because your letter of May 4 brings us back to it a little, it is good for me to help you to take your part of the blame and not confirm your tendency to cast all the blame on someone else. . . .

From the 6 weeks which according to you Father Caillet took in bringing you an answer [and which brought about the misunderstanding], subtract the time you took in having a copy of the title deed come to me, and of which I could have no idea without having seen it. Since it has been received, why do you complain? Father Caillet was able to tell you that we had only time to assemble the council of the Institute, to have the document sent, and this necessarily concerned Paris, Alsace, Haute-Saône, Nancy, and a large number of places which were not to be omitted. Everyone worked night and day. On the day of departure, the council was assembled at one o'clock in the morning; several members did not go to bed. Father Caillet left by coach at four in the morning. Where do you find reason to blame us? In Paris, Father Caillet was detained by the Minister, by some bishops . . . that is not his fault. He left his earnest money with the mail carrier, so greatly was he in a hurry to depart. . . .

At Ribeauvillé, you were led into error at the time of the action. There is your real answer. You did this; you must not go any further, or remain troubled. These are accidents which form part of our human nature. If we know how to receive them in a suitable way, they may be of benefit to our interior advancement. . . .

Regarding those miserable articles of furniture<sup>1</sup> of which you speak to me, I ask you, is this any subject for difficulties? Who has brought up this particular difficulty? Is it that you do not understand the spirit of the Institute? Most certainly, this spirit is to follow the counsels of Jesus Christ. If anyone asked me for my mantle, I will give him my tunic also. Take it for granted, my dear Son, that the poor man who will go away from us asking for an object worth six francs, will receive one worth twice that much. God will provide for it, and this is the last testament I will leave to all my Children. . . .

My dear Son, see where the true difficulties lie; see to what you wish me to employ, what you call my good heart and my zeal. Providence will open some other way by which to help the schools of Alsace, and I hope it will not find fault with me, either for having refused by cooperation or for having placed obstacles in the way. The first step which leads to this help is to

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<sup>1</sup> There was a question of articles of furniture belonging to the house of Saint-Hippolyte and which certain brothers of Fr. Mertian meant to take with them upon leaving the Institute. Fr. Chaminade writes that these articles of furniture are to remain in the house, but that the brothers who claim them will be given double their value; letter to the bishop of Strasbourg, June 1, 1826.

restore peace in your heart. With this peace, you will have confidence and you will second our central management. God will not permit us to go astray. Ask this of God. Pray particularly for those of your brothers you believe to be at fault, but do not insist on condemning them, for God does not want us to judge.

My long explanations have as their principal object to cooperate in bringing calm back to you. I am praying to God from the bottom of my heart to give this to you by his grace. I ask it of God in union with Jesus and Mary.

P.S. May God grant his blessings to all my Children in Colmar.

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**398. To Fr. Charles Rothéa, Saint-Remy**

May 13, 1826, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

My dear Son,

There is no need for me to blame you for taking that emetic<sup>2</sup> inopportunistly and without a prescription, because the pain you have experienced will serve as a warning for the future. I have been told that for five days you remained deprived of speech, unable to ask for anything except by signs. Not much more would have been needed to suddenly deprive you of life, or for you to have remained powerless and, as it were, paralyzed forever. As soon as we received the news you were recommended to the prayers of all, and, I dare hope for this, that God has heard us, at least in rendering you wiser in this regard. My dear Son, whims of this kind are beyond the limits of discretion. You had no idea of the enemy you were introducing, at least I like to think so; however, to forestall anything of this type in the future, as much as I can, I order that you take no more remedies except those which have been prescribed to you by a person of the medical profession, and the same is to apply to all our brothers. I am applying this rule to everyone because your example may become contagious for others, who under pretext of some modifications would consider themselves wiser and more clever. When there is a question of illness, it is permitted to no one to be a judge in his own case. Even the most clever physicians do not dare to do this for themselves.

Furthermore, in the Institute the rule is expressed in this way. "Notification must be given regarding the pain a person experiences, and he must resign himself to the regimen and to the treatments which are ordered." My dear Son, more than many others you have the obligation to have the Rule observed. You are the shepherd of your flock. The surest means of having the Rules appreciated is to observe them ourselves, with the greatest attention. Without a doubt, you had overlooked the one I am writing about, or you did not consider it as overly important. Does it happen to be missing in your copy of the Constitutions? If I happen someday to come into your quarters, I will have to review all this.

In the meantime, it is good for me to reaffirm here what I have already said very often, but which really cannot be said too often.

The more we study the Rules, the more we become penetrated by them and the less we are troubled in the conduct proper to each day and even to each moment. A case presents itself, the Rule is there to state what is to be done, and everything is settled.

There are many more cases which fall back upon the Rule than we believe at first and which is believed in general. The Rule may apply to the most ordinary matters, just as to those which are most unforeseen.

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<sup>2</sup> Tartrate of potassium and of antimony, a powerful emetic which produced a strong depression.

There are moments when the mind is in perpetual hesitation about everything. Temper makes us lose time with trifles which are not even scruples, with matters in which the choice for or against is a matter of complete indifference. For example, will I read seated or standing? Will I pray walking up and down or prostrating myself, when prayer is free? "To read and to pray," in these two cases is my object, and the temptation turns aside from both, in having me choose whether I will be standing, seated, or prostrate. What does the Rule tell me, in a thousand and more cases resembling these two? It tells me not to bother myself in such cases with what is not essential; to abandon my mind to God, to do everything for the love and glory of God without regard for what concerns my miserable body.

The same is the case in the matter of works of charity and of service toward our neighbor. There is a question of doing these with a good heart, opportunely, without voluntary delay, without formalities and customs which characterize anything but a work of charity and often render it beyond recognition.

For ourselves, we are always disposed to choose what is most humble, what seems to be the least. No detailed or advance deliberation is necessary when the good purpose is habitual and when the help of grace is requested.

How do we acquire this state in all things? This is the way. You will habitually say this prayer, recall it upon occasions and meditate upon it from time to time. "My God, may it not be me who speaks and makes the decision; rather, may it be your Holy Spirit." *Non enim vos estis qui loquimini, sed Spiritus Patris vestri qui loquitur in vobis* [Matthew 10:20, for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you].

Pray, ask, and you will receive. You will take up the habit of entirely abandoning your body and soul into the hands of God. When you are in this state, and this may come about quickly, you will not deliberate about trifles; you will not deliberate about whether you need the emetic or the quinine. You will take it if it is prescribed for you; you will not hesitate regarding the most ordinary acts of life; you will go through your usual schedule without even being aware of it. Your only attention will be to ask the Spirit of the Father to speak in you: *Loquere, Domine, quia audit servus tuus* [Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening]. *Loquatur in nobis Spiritus Patris* [the spirit of the Father speaks in us].

I desire that my letter may be for you the occasion of useful exercises during your convalescence, and that the fruits which God will bestow in them may remain with you all throughout your life. Because God has desired that I love you as a father, he will not cast aside my request. On the contrary, he will send you his blessings.

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### **S. 398-2. To the Prefect of Haut-Rhin**

May 15, 1826, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

Honorable Prefect,

In accordance with the instructions given me by His Excellency the Minister for Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Instruction, I have the honor of sending you four certificates attesting to the fact that the four brothers of the Society of Mary who are called to the army—Troffer, Hunolt, Weber, and Geiger—all four from your department, have contracted the legal obligation to serve for 10 years in public schools, conformably to article 13 of the law of March 10, 1818. In their name and as their Superior, I have the honor of asking that each of the four be dispensed from military service in conformity with that ruling.

Further instructions from His Excellency inform me that if any of the brothers abandon public instruction before the expiration of his term, I am to inform you, Monsieur, who have

granted the dispensation. I will not fail to do this, if the case should present itself. I am with sincere expressions of respect. . . .

P.S. The four brothers are of the class of 1825 except for Brother Troffer, who was of the class of 1824, as noted in the dispatches from His Excellency. Brother Troffer has already been dispensed, and the certificate we request is merely to correct an error in the dispensation granted last year.

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*Father Chaminade holds in great esteem the mission of priests in the ministry of education.*

**399. To Father Calmels,  
Rector of the Academy of Besançon**

May 17, 1826, Bordeaux  
Rough Copy, Agmar

Reverend Rector,

Your letter of last April 13, addressed to Brother Clouzet of Saint-Remy, had reached me and you now honor me with a new letter dated May 8. Although I have answered the first, I will repeat my answer in this one.

I have accepted and I do accept for one of my subjects the position of principal of the *collège* of Gray, Haute-Saône. I will supply for it one of my most distinguished children,<sup>1</sup> Father Lalanne. I have reason to believe that without difficulty he will replace Father Collineau, whom you had pointed out to me. I cannot assign Father Collineau to another post,<sup>2</sup> for fidelity to engagements previously assumed is necessary; my conduct regarding him, although it seems to hold a kind of reversal toward you and not a refusal, by this very fact guarantees you stability for the future in everything we will have succeeded in doing in the city of Gray.

To supply the person desired, it is not suitable for me to interfere elsewhere with the scholastic year, and so whatever I promise will be for the end of September.

I therefore have a reason to believe you may be able to hasten my arrangements and facilitate the release of the principal whom I destine for your praiseworthy city; the changes of assignments I make step by step to provide you with this principal, have not succeed equally well.

In removing him from his present post, I have in view to fill the resulting vacancy, calling two subjects who desire to be trained to education in my Institute; one serves under one of our archbishops, and the other belongs to a bishop. For a long while, both subjects have requested their release, their *exeat*, but there is a difficulty in the fact that their superiors are among the small number of those who do not see any relationship between ecclesiastical service, properly so-called, and education which is eminently Catholic, and from this comes their belief that giving a priest to education is losing him for the Church.

My opinion on this subject—and facts justify it—is that a priest who has a vocation for education, being released to an educational establishment, produces a hundredfold of priests for the sanctuary, and excellent priests at that. I do not have much authority to make this doctrine prevail in high places, but somehow I do not seem to be able to detach myself from it.

With things as they are, I had chosen the part of inviting you to assist me with your approval, in the estimation of his Excellency the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public

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<sup>1</sup> Fr. Calmels, Rector of the Academy of Besançon, who became vicar general of the diocese of Albi, where he helped to introduce the Society of Mary in Réalmont.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. Collineau was already employed as principal of the *collège* of Villeneuve-Sur-Lot.



Instruction, and to obtain his powerful mediation, whether with the Ordinaries in general or with the two prelates whom I respect, but who have refused to the two subjects their transition to the study and discipline of education.

Perhaps there is difficulty in asking things of this kind by letter, but because Providence has been pleased to have you called to Paris, many of the difficulties have disappeared. Reverend Rector, would you be able to request that the Minister of Public Instruction will be kind enough to write to the Archbishop of Auch and to the Bishop of Périgueux with this in mind? For example, would it not be possible to tell them that because the Society of Mary has been invited to give subjects to meet the needs of certain *collèges*, they would be doing a fine thing, one agreeable to friends of the restoration of doctrine, to give to this Society individuals who would find in it their vocation? In particular, would it not be possible to ask the Archbishop of Auch to lend or to give Father Larrieu, employed in the steward's office of the seminary, and the Bishop of Périgueux to be kind enough to provide Father Brothier, the officiating priest of a small subsidiary church? Both have as a motive a vocation of long standing and reasons of conscience for wanting to withdraw into the Society of Mary. Obedience to a superior is their only motive of caution and reserve.

It remains to me, Reverend Rector, as in my preceding letter, to request from you some details on the quarters of the *collège* of Gray, more or less spacious, on the strength of the classes, which can be limited to the third and second of rhetoric or stretched to full exercise, some ideas about the furnishings, the provisions, and about everything which calls for the most pressing arrangements.

Please accept once again the assurance of the confidence with which I am acting, and of the profound respect with which I am your very humble and very obedient servant.

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

May 18, 1826, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

[With insert from S. 400]

I have in hand, your letter of May 7, dated from Saint-Remy. At first sight, your conduct during your round of visits appears to me to have been well regulated, except for your omission of a visit to pay homage to the Bishop of Saint-Claude.<sup>1</sup> The pretext for this omission, taken from what Father Bardenet, according to the report he made to you about it, had explained the facts better than you could have done it, does not satisfy me at all. There is no question of explaining the facts more or less clearly. There is a question of submission and of deference which we owe personally to one of the successors of the apostles. This duty can be accomplished only by us.

The Bishop of Saint-Claude would certainly have been satisfied to hear the same facts from you and to compare them with what had already been told him by various intermediaries. I require that before you leave the region, you go to remedy this wrong, even if you must prolong your absence and make an extra trip; this is an indispensable duty.

I received a letter from Father Bardenet about the Arbois matter. I did not think that he was hesitating between another Order and that of Mary. What you let me see of this hesitation, although feebly, surprises me; I am inclined to believe you are completely mistaken. Whatever the case may be, I gave my answer to Father Bardenet in every confidence, as if there were a question of a work decided upon in common and which had to be brought to a conclusion with the least trouble possible.

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<sup>1</sup> Bishop de Chamon, first bishop of Saint-Claude after the reestablishment of the See, from 1823 to 1851. He was one of Fr. Chaminade's most devoted and faithful friends.

Trusting that this would be the case, I gave him my opinion of the complication introduced by the decision of the council of the commune. It was passed by a large majority, but it still had some opponents. I am not overly worried about my unknown opponents; I am vexed by the complicated decision of the council dealing with

- the police barracks; the parish house; other communal properties, which have been or will be sold
- the exchange of buildings after agreement on their estimated value
- moneys going into communal coffers, unauthorized
- the purchase of a new house for the pastor, hoped for
- planning for a water supply, not for the commune
- the annual grant to the institution
- future budgets, including all annuities
- donations to pay for the residence of the pastor.

All this from one stroke of the pen, one decision made by a council which, I am certain, is exceeding its powers in some instances. I find this new procedure so novel and so strange that I will consider it seriously only if it receives confirmation from a higher authority.

The lesser authority is that of the prefect.

If he hesitates, we must approach the Ministries, and how many there are! War, justice, finances, interior, ecclesiastical affairs, public instruction—what a lot of people to consult about nothing!

Bypass them? This is possible, but at the slightest word by our opponents, at the least hint of our intent, everything collapses in a moment, the building is sealed, the bank account garnisheed, the livelihood of the people compromised. I did not hide these dangers from Father Bardenet, but trusting in him and in his knowledge of local conditions, I simply asked him to obtain the administrative authorization, and on that condition along I promised him personnel for next September.

Since then I have gone further; I have chosen the personnel. You can imagine that after these maneuvers and the present state of our dealings, I find it very strange that you tell me Father Bardenet is hesitating between the Society of Mary and some other Society. Let the good man apply to another Order, and not have me remove from their posts people who are irreplaceable. I would be gravely disappointed if I could not do the good I hoped to do, with his help.

Father Bardenet has told me he expected our sisters to help financially in the development of his Institute. I compared our sisters to the apostles with a knapsack, a staff, and dusty feet. I cannot help him if he does not understand this. I asked him if he expected me to make a donation to the city of Arbois, which has no need of it. I am still waiting for an answer. I believe he has none. Hasten with your explanations, that we may straighten out this mess. Return to Arbois if necessary, and ask Father Bardenet to tell me what we can expect from each other. If I could meet him face to face, we could clear up all misunderstanding.

I am holding back all the preparations of our sisters until I receive his answer, but because they are already on the move, I will destine them according to the plans of God; destinations are not what we lack. The real trouble is that each group requires a good leader and support for this leader. God forms them sparingly, and God also takes care of all the rest.

See the Bishop of Saint-Claude. In presenting to him my greetings—too long delayed—open your heart to him, ask him to grant me his benevolence in regard to the journey I propose to make before long into these regions, and ask whether or not His Excellency is willing to make use of my Institutions; assure him that in all places and at all times, I venerate in him the apostle of Jesus Christ and his decisions.

You will communicate our Constitutions to His Excellency—I mean our Letters Patent and our Statutes. If His Excellency is inclined to believe he could make use of unprofitable

servants, according to the language of the apostle, during your stay it would be good for you to submit these documents for registration, as has been done in the dioceses where we are serving.<sup>1</sup>

You will return to the establishment of Saint-Remy. The hope you had entertained for the prompt recovery of our principal in this residence, Father Rothéa, pleases me greatly, but I do not dare to depend upon it as you seem to do. After his accident, he needs a long period of care. I recommend it to him, just as I recommend it to Brother Clouzet, and I am recommending it to you. My previous letters tell you enough about this subject.

As soon as the answers of Father Bardenet come to me, I will decide upon your return, because the disposition I have made of several subjects will render your presence necessary for me. But you must complete your round of visits.

The registration of the Statutes in the office of the Bishop of Strasbourg is indispensable. I do not know if the prefect will want to take note of our existence. Regarding the prefect of Haute-Saône who spoke to you about it, I had occasion to promise him a copy of our titles, which we expect to receive very shortly.

May the good God continue to direct you along the way, and upon the request of a real and tender father may he grant you his blessings.

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#### **401. To Fr. Georges Caillet, Colmar**

May 20, 1826, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

My dear Son,

Your letter of May 11 is beginning to clear up somewhat the entirety of the operations which were confided to you. In whatever else you will have to tell me, continue to recall as much as you can the portion of your instructions to which the matter most naturally refers. This manner of proceeding greatly facilitates the explanations, and then this assures us that you do not disturb, without consideration, the manner of proceeding outlined for you. I will have occasion to examine just up to what point your instructions have had their expected success.

The matter of Father Mertian and the registration of the Statutes in Strasbourg are the matters which, for the time being, are most in suspense. As for what concerns Father Mertian, the good God will decide as he pleases, with the aid of the Bishop of Strasbourg. I have no doubt that the registration will be made, as everywhere else, without any difficulty.

You propose two new matters to me; the one would tend to the establishment of a normal school in Colmar, and the other to the authorization of a visit for you to your immediate family.

I do not believe there is any solid reason for us to bother about a normal school, either in Colmar or anywhere else, because the bishop has been kind enough to occupy himself with placing it elsewhere, and he had you understand that if the first place were not available to us he had another prospect. It would be oddly lacking in respect toward him to believe ourselves better able to judge than he is. It is up to me to await respectfully that he has come to a decision regarding the matters proposed and the carrying out of his own plans. We must know how to wait until those in charge have made up their minds about what they propose to do.

Your visit to your family would not have interfered with anything, if it had been made at the time of your arrival in the region. Today it presents a series of “ifs” and “because” which must be avoided. It will not be long before you receive your order to return, as my previous letter announced.

It is possible that your father is declining, as the pastor of Ferretter has been telling you; but his illness is something fairly common, and so it may be another 20 years before anything

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<sup>1</sup> There was a question of the registration of the royal ordinance in the diocesan offices.

truly serious and urgent develops, so your family arrangements do not need to be made before their time. What you have so far done will suffice. This is a type of small temptation which did not come to you, but was only suggested; henceforth you will know how to guard against it.

Do not look to my preceding letters, my dear Son, or this one or the others, as you would to matters containing the natural elevation of the human heart. There is nothing in them which might humiliate you. This is the statement of what I desire you to do and of the order to be followed in your answers. We would never come to an understanding if we did not agree on these points, even more so when we are so far apart from one another.

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### **S. 401-2. To Bro. Dominique Clouzet, Saint-Remy**

May 23, 1826, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

Your letter and Father Bardenet's arrived at the same time. My earlier letter to this worthy collaborator was not given the proper interpretation. It breathed trust and confidence. I pointed out the necessity of receiving the approval of the Municipal Council's decisions, either from the prefect or from the ministries. This certainly could not prejudice our cause. Moreover, I promised to send along a colony of our Daughters of Mary when he would need them. I believed this to be helpful on my part and reassuring and consoling for him.

He does not intend to apply to any Institute. You assure me that he will comply with all the legal formalities, either at the prefecture or at the diocesan bureau; but I never doubted his goodwill in this matter. I merely pointed out what the prefect should approve, and I only shared a portion of the fears I have in case of a definitive refusal.

I did not tell him that this very year a certain prefect wished to authorize one of our establishments, but that the minister ruled that he would have to bear the expense himself. You must admit that it is worth entertaining doubts until permission is given. How can a friendly piece of advice be construed into ill will? I want to guarantee the survival of the work and to second any courageous effort, but you call this "discrediting" and "discouraging."

I believe I am doing more than anyone for the approbation of our sisters. I did not think I had to explain my actions and in order not to inconvenience anyone else, I said I would see to it personally. It is evident that I am not varying from my remarks, which you say caused some merriment and great satisfaction. I simply must take the means to attain my objective, that is all.

I had said I would contribute at my discretion to help defray the expenses, and I asked if a gift from me would be truly necessary. Did the word "gift" harm anyone? It could have, anywhere except in a charitable institution.

The spirit of abnegation of our sisters is a consequence of their vow of poverty. What can I do or say to the contrary? If they do not have what they need, of course they will suffer. If they were not so disposed, the Institute would not function as it should.

It is pointless to discuss the expenses you mention. It is not a matter of finding funds here and there, but rather of knowing whether I am committing myself to endless expenses. If they are limited, just what services am I expected to offer to Arbois? This topic has never been raised. What am I expected to contribute for a limited time? I have just received a similar request from one of our American colonies. I do not fear discontent, or that another Institute will be sought out.

Moreover, I am never offended by these things. Such unforeseen things happen all the time. We may agree the next time we meet and, God willing, everything will be settled. I believe we all desire to do the right thing.

Geiger, whose father was worried, is dispensed from the service. The prefect of Haut-Rhin received the certificate from the minister, with others for various of our brothers. Brother Rothéa has been informed and knows of the steps taken by the prefecture; you were told of

similar procedures required by the Haute-Saône. Father Bardenet will hear from me with the next mail. I could do no better.

Give my fatherly love to my children at Saint-Remy, and also to Brother Laugeay. God grant you peace and understanding in the management of your schools.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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**S. 401-3. To Bro. Louis Rothéa, Colmar**

May 24, 1826, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

My dear Son,

I read with pleasure from your letter of May 14 that you are beginning to enjoy more peace of mind. What on first impression seems good is not necessarily so, as in the case of Father Mertian. We must not be unhappy if this good priest revives his Institute through his or other efforts. It may be that after a period of vacillation and weakness, this Institute may do great good. I do not believe I have anything to add to what I said about the brothers who would be freed from any commitment to Father Mertian. Let yourself be guided by the little I have already written on the topic.

Certificates of efficiency are demanded by our royal institution; we must have them. However, they are issued on the strength of the letters of obedience which I send. I will have this matter ready to present to Haut-Rhin as soon as our statutes and letters patent are registered by the See of Strasbourg. I will write concerning this to the bishop, to the prefects, and to the rector. I believe I also will write to your wise and worthy pastor of Colmar.

What a consolation I find in what you tell me of your schools and first communicants. On the other hand, the illness of Brother Weber is a hardship. We will pray for him, as I am sure you are doing. Your salaries and finances will be placed on a sound footing when your registration allows you to discuss your legal existence, while you continue teaching according to the spirit of the Institute.

Let us both ask God to continue his merciful help. Pray for a father who loves you in Jesus and Mary.

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*In a letter again from the pen of Bro. David Monier, Father Chaminade outlines the detailed plan of his approaching visit for the Mother Superior of the Daughters of Mary.*

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

May 28, 1826, Bordeaux

Original, Arch. FMI

[With inserts from S. 402]

My dear Child,

Four houses of the Institute are going to be the object of my visit. I have checked the list of the principal matters to be taken into consideration, and I have settled upon the order of discussion. I believe that in the established order, which you have indicated here, we will attain the essential purpose of this type of visit, which is to know the exact state of everything in order to apply remedies wherever necessary, and to advise ways and means of sustaining and of increasing everything that is found worthy of approbation.

It has seemed to me in place to send you the sketch of these operations in advance, so you may arrange everything to facilitate them and to render their conclusion all the more valuable.

The first meeting will be with you or with your replacement. Takes notes on the topic discussed. Thus prepared, we will soon have a good grasp of each point.

The second meeting is for all officers, members of the council; each prepares notes on her specialty, as indicated.

The third meeting has four purposes, each with subdivisions. More than one session will be required; it is important that the outline will be followed strictly, to avoid wasting time.

At least four sisters are on the council, along with the Mistress of Novices and another member by right. It would be awkward if all the topics could not be prepared by the sisters; one sister might prepare two or more topics. Useful results are to be expected. See that each topic is presented in turn, with appropriate notes, one or two topics per sister; do your best.

The fourth meeting is in two parts—the Third Order and the Sodality. We can have two meetings, but successively. See to it that the heads of these two bodies have well-prepared but simple notes.

At the fifth meeting we could go into details, but try to limit these by asking each sister to prepare her text well; this may be written to facilitate explanations.

Let me finish, as I did for my enclosed visitation plan, by remarking that whatever concerns Confession and gospel instructions should not be treated in an informal meeting. You will be told when to discuss both direction of conscience and community instructions.

If I have succeeded in explaining myself well, and if you have understood me equally well, it seems to me that the effect of the visit will be to breathe new life into everything, while healing a few small sore spots which may be found to exist here and there.

Let us ask God together to grant us this grace, which would mean a treasury of blessings for us.

Your father in Jesus and Mary.

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#### Visit of the - - - June, 1826<sup>1</sup>

First Conference. With the Mother Superior, and in case of illness or other hindrance, with those of the Mothers who replace her.

Object. Everything she will believe suitable to place for the examination of the Superior for the general order of her establishment; all the requests she will deem suitable to make toward the same end and which would tend to obtain information or the concession of something necessary. Her reports about every other house of the Institute. *Note.* Special questions about individuals and personal interests are not to be discussed at this time.

Second Conference. With each member of the council, in the order of rank and succession but without interruption.

Object. All that the sister in charge will believe appropriate to say and to observe in the general order of her functions, or in her reports with the other heads; the advantages or troubles she experiences, etc. *Note.* Anything of a personal nature would be reserved for another meeting.

Third Conference. With the assembled council.

First Object. Everything that concerns the ordinary holding of the council, the interruptions which have taken place, the manner in which these have been dealt with, the means for greater regularity in the future, and the method in practice or to be practiced to develop the deliberations and to assure that they are always religious, charitable, and promptly carried out.

Second Object. The condition and the needs of the house, of the personnel, regarding what is moral, and what is material.

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<sup>1</sup> The visit could not actually have taken place before the end of July.

Regarding the personnel. A complete account of the persons, classed according to rank: superior, heads of departments, perpetual professed, temporary professed, choir novices, postulants of the same, perpetually professed Companion Sisters, temporary professed Companion Sisters, postulants and novices, day students, ordinary help, and special help.

Regarding the moral. Regularity, choir and religious services, fasts, vigils, penances, and meditations.

Regarding the material. Ordinary food, clothing, care of the sick, enclosure, buildings and garden, furniture individual and in common, the church, sacristies, burial place, etc.

Third Object. Relationships with the outside, movements through the doors, in the parlors, on the towers, sights from the windows; letters and correspondence; Third Orders, Sodalities, classes for day students and *secondes clôtures*.

Fourth Object. Boarding school and novitiate; number of classes, their strength, behavior and direction, their actual spirit, their success in the past; their success hoped for, known obstacles, inside and outside; remedies and changes to be used.

Fourth Conference. With the heads and sodality councils; with the heads and councils of the Third Order.

Object. On everything which concerns one or another of these respective groups, first the general considerations and then the individual interests which would be most striking.

Fifth Conference. With each of the sisters, beginning with the Superiors.

Object. Their position and their individual interests

Last Observation. The religious instructions and the directions of consciences will have their determined times immediately after the arrival of Father Superior, all independent of the conferences which have just been designated.

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*These letters return to matters concerning Alsace and Franche-Comte.*

### **403. To Father Maimbourg, Pastor of Colmar**

June 1, 1826, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

Reverend Father,

Several of my Children have informed me that you had asked them to provide themselves with certificates of capacity for the schools. Your watchfulness in this matter is easily understood, as I always believed you were like a father to them and that they were to follow your direction and your counsels religiously. I had busied myself personally with the diplomas of ability of which there is a question. Article 1 of the royal ordinance, under which we function, obliges us to do this, and Article 3 determines the form. To this end, each of the brothers must have his letter of obedience from me.

On the other hand, I cannot exercise this right in the entire extent of a diocese, insofar as the royal ordinance and our Statutes are officially transcribed in the diocesan registers.

I have taken care of this with His Excellency, as far as I am concerned, but his important and numerous occupations have not permitted him until today, I am certain, to have this formal Ordinance sent to us. As soon as I have obtained it, I will deliver these obediences and will take the desired certificates, under the various names of the persons being employed.

If it had happened that one of the brothers employed in your interesting schools was shown to be insufficient for or forgetful of his duties, Reverend Father, you would be doing a work of charity to be kind enough to let me know confidentially, so I could remedy the situation to the extent of my ability.

This is a very favorable occasion for me, again to give you this token of the respectful consideration with which I am entirely, Reverend Father, your very humble and very obedient servant.

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**404. To Bro. Louis Rothéa, Colmar**

June 1, 1826, Bordeaux  
Rough Copy, Agmar

My dear Son,

I am very glad that your mind is finally at rest after the agitation caused you by Saint-Hippolyte. Profit from this time to take special care of your schools in everything that concerns interior discipline, instruction, and zeal in the ways of salvation.

If by the aid of grace we realize our salvation, we will have done enough; but it is no longer permitted to us to hope for salvation in our state if we do not cooperate in the salvation of our pupils. This must be our great preoccupation, my dear Son.

I pray to God to maintain you on the right path and to reserve for you the reward which comes with perseverance in this.

Your Good Father in Jesus and Mary.

P.S. Enclosed is a short letter from the pastor of Colmar. Read it, and if necessary make a copy of it. Seal it, let the wax dry, and deliver it yourself. My fatherly blessings to all of our Children.

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*At the end of May, the final failure of negotiations with Father Mertian was feared; giving up the offer of the château of Saint-Hippolyte because of the conditions imposed, Father Chaminade had asked the Bishop of Strasbourg to take it in his place (June 1). Bishop Tharin intervened personally, and all the difficulties were smoothed out.*

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**S. 404-2. To Fr. Georges Caillet, Colmar**

June 1, 1826, Bordeaux  
Rough Copy, Agmar

My dear Son,

I am including a copy of the letter which I am sending to the Bishop of Strasbourg. You will note that the letter contains the essence of the instructions I gave you concerning the Mertian matter. The outcome, which is still very problematical, must be left in the hands of God. Our minds in the matter are miles apart, and at that distance anything is possible. I am ready to overlook and forget the whole thing.

If Father Blanc wants to exercise M. Schender's procuration let him do so, but he must send me the draft of the procuration to make certain it contains all the necessary powers. People in that area should know what is needed; here we can only guess.

Memorize the rest of your instructions; when you feel they have been complied with, go to Colmar and then to Saint-Remy, where you will find an order calling you back.

May the peace of the Lord ever accompany you.



P.S. The postscript to the bishop's letter will inform you that I received your letter on May 25 and that your procuration will come to you through the bishop's office. In it you are subordinated to the judgment and decision of His Excellency, which does not mean that you may not speak for the Society. However, you must show that you are always ready to defer to His Excellency. Happily for our works, Providence has given us a person who in every sense is a good pastor.

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**S. 404-3. To Fr. Georges Caillet, Colmar**

June 20, 1826, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

I the undersigned, Superior General of the Society of Mary, hereby empower Father Caillet, for and in the name of the said Society or at least in his indicated capacity, to accept the agreement joining my Society with that known as the Society of Father Mertian, in the department of Haut-Rhin, both being legally approved by the Government.

To agree to the incorporation of such members who do not wish to withdraw, on the condition that they agree to submit to the examinations and tests imposed by our Statutes,

to accept the transfer of the various houses listed in the act, to assume the obligations which Father Mertian had contracted toward the commune,

to receive and accept all donations in the form of movables and immovables and anything destined for the installation, equipment, and maintenance either of a novitiate or of schools now standing or to be founded,

to agree to all repairs to be made by the donor to the schools and buildings transferred, according to all the above, to consent to and to specify all clauses or conditions, even and particularly the nullity of the so-called former act of donation which had the same purpose, but to which the parties could not agree.

To sign all papers, establish residence, to promise to seek from the Government the legal union of the Societies of Father Mertian and the Society of Mary.

It is understood that the procurator in charge will act on the advice and with the authorization of His Excellency the Bishop of Strasbourg, who will be asked to give this mark of attention to institutions which are of interest to the people of his diocese.

At Bordeaux, residence of the Superior General of the Society of Mary,  
June 20, 1826

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**S. 404-4. To Bishop Tharin of Strasbourg**

June 1, 1826, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

Your Excellency,

I have had the honor to send you two letters, and I hope to receive an answer shortly. Both dealt with the reasons I wish to give Your Excellency for refusing the so-called donation of Saint-Hippolyte by Father Mertian.

I refused because this donation should properly be made to you, to meet the needs of your diocese. I believed I should formally renounce in your favor an apostolic means which only seemed to be first offered to me.

Please look graciously on my intention, Your Excellency, one which leaves me ready to obey your every command. Father Mertian knows my intention, although he has studiously left me without an answer.

I have been informed by various letters that some of my religious have since looked favorably on Father Mertian's suggestion to donate the Institute to the Society of Mary in a legal manner; but these were my instructions to them.

- (1) To do nothing without Your Excellency's approval.
- (2) To contravene none of the Statutes of Father Mertian and the royal ordinance concerning them. Therefore, they were to wait respectfully until both documents were forthcoming and made known.
- (3) To respect all objects already consecrated to religion and belonging to Father Mertian. Was this ruling given too strict an interpretation? Did anyone wish to embarrass Father Mertian before the merger? I am not aware of any examples, and that strictness would go beyond the orders I gave to my members.
- (4) To work immediately at uniting both Institutes.

Through this fourfold plan of action, I hoped to fulfill indispensable obligations, to uphold disciplinary rules, to respect the demands of religion, the royal sanction, and your own pastoral authority which was to bring order into everything.

Someone wrote to me that the third article of these instructions was interpreted in a manner not conformable to religion; that I was refusing a few paltry articles of furniture to certain religious of Father Mertian who, for some unknown reason, wished to withdraw. My answer was immediate and proper—that I neither would nor could dispose of objects which had been consecrated for religious purposes, even if they belonged to my Order, and that I was in duty bound to dissuade anyone from such actions. I added that to prevent anyone from acting irresponsibly in this matter, I was willing to offer to each a sum equal to double the value of the objects they claimed, for example 12 francs instead of 6, and so to exhort them to respect and leave objects that were properly called "religious."

From Father Caillet's last letter, I hear that the undue rigor against the poor of which I am accused in distant places has reached the ears of Your Excellency. I do not know who showed such zeal, probably with the charitable intent to see me corrected, but they were unaware of my prompt reaction to this travesty of my true intentions. I must not allow this pretended scandal to gain credence with you or with any of my colleagues. I know that the answer I gave above will be satisfactory to you.

As long as we are of this world God will allow us to suffer these trials, but his consoling grace is always present, one of the most effective being the advice our bishops are ready to give us. Please tell me, Monsignor, what I must do and, above all to what extent I must be humiliated for Christ and with Christ.

Again, I offer to abandon into your hands, Monsignor, the offer made to me of Saint-Hippolyte, insofar as it is useful or necessary, and so you may be perfectly free to use this building for the needs of your diocese.

The second object of my previous letter was to have Your Excellency accept from Father Caillet the king's ordinance authorizing the Society of Mary, along with the annexed Statutes. I again ask Your Excellency to have these documents registered and deposited in the archives of your diocese. You know of my submission to your jurisdiction ever since I sought to legalize my institution. By repeating this gesture today in conformity with the terms of the king's ordinance, my first wish is granted, and I have done my duty.

Please accept the homage. . .

P.S. I am waiting for the registration of the king's ordinance in order to solicit from Your Excellency the permission to establish our brothers in Colmar, and to give them the obedience upon which their certification depends.

P.S. 2. At this very moment I have received a letter from Father Caillet, who announces that Your Excellency has studied the Mertian matter and that we may be able to come to terms. This was the purpose of the above letter, and I will not change a single word. Until now, I had no reason to expect a happy conclusion to this matter, and I did not believe my power of attorney was needed. After this new turn of events, I offer you this procuration, adding that I can change it to suit your purpose. I have always had the highest confidence in your advice and your decisions. After acceptance, Your Excellency will kindly give it to Father Caillet, to use as it was intended.

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**S. 404-5. To M. O'Lombel, Paris**

June 6, 1826, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

My dear Son,

I wrote to you in great haste to answer your two letters as soon as possible and to inform you of the departure of young Veltner, who must now be in Paris. I hope the young man can be cured of the infection to his eyes.

I had no time to comment on your remarks about the mansion on Ile-Saint-Louis, but I understood you to mean that the price for the house had been raised and that it was common knowledge that buildings of this nature had lost one-third of their value because of the times, with no prospects of increasing but rather of losing more of that value.

It was providential, therefore, that we had not borrowed, especially because we were not able to make a down payment. When buying property, we must be able to make a down payment of at least 1/4 or 1/3 of the purchase price. Borrowing the rest is not imprudent, providing the price asked for the building is the true market value and resale under similar conditions is always possible.

These rules covering the purchase were in your instructions, and it is to your credit that you did not deviate from them. Otherwise, where would we stand with that drop in value of 30%? Let our policy be earmarked by prudence, and we will suffer no loss which could strike at the very heart of our religious institutions. We are acting in God's name, and in conscience we must be able to pay what we purchase for our mission.

Apostolic works will never be lacking. I agree with you that the Society of Mary can take the initiative after suffering a certain number of setbacks. God's plans and designs go far beyond the present. We must not act prematurely; may God's will be done.

Here is a matter which I can leave to your zeal and your prudence. Father Calmels, the rector of the Academy of Besançon, contacted me through a second party and then wrote personally, asking that I provide a principal for the *collège* of Gray, in the department of Doubs. In two letters to him, I accept and promised. I assured him that the person I had in mind was highly qualified and that to free him from his present post would require a number of movements, but that everything would be completed by the end of next September. I have received no word since, and now I am almost forced to make personnel changes without knowing the decision made by Father Calmels. Is the worthy cleric ill? Is he involved in other public business which has made him forget this? A thousand other possibilities come to mind.

I have Father Calmel's address in Paris at the Ministry for Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Instruction. You are well known at the ministry and should be able to obtain some information; please see the rector in my name and obtain an answer.

I believe it was indiscreet of me to ask Father Calmels to intervene for the Institute by suggesting that the minister use his influence with two of our bishops to allow two of the seminarians, whom I have approached and who are willing, to come to our aid. I did not propose

this as a condition for my cooperation, but as a normal form of collaboration. It was not considered in this light. I am telling you this so you may be aware of the situation. Does Father Calmel's hesitation stem from the apprehension you mentioned in your letter? I do not share that opinion, as I told you, but keep me informed.

Receive, my dear Son, the new assure you of my paternal affection in Jesus and Mary.

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#### **405. To Bishop Tharin of Strasbourg**

June 23, 1826, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

Your Excellency,

It will always be for me a great satisfaction to be assisted by your counsels in the religious works, and in them to do as you say.

When I had to relinquish Saint-Hippolyte I experienced only one regret, that of moving away from your pastoral jurisdiction and not seeing for myself any likelihood of a return to it, but I believed I was performing an act of justice in the interests of religion. The property of Saint-Hippolyte, again placed into your hands, became free and assuredly more useful in the designs of God than if it had remained in mine.

Your Excellency realizes that it is in place once again to assign this property to the Society of Mary, but under a new title. You have deigned, Your Excellency, to indicate the plan of the arrangement and to forward me a copy in 11 articles, along with your benevolent observations. I am deeply impressed by your goodness, and I will not proceed to examine the motives which have persuaded your Excellency to announce this decision. I have received it, and I submit to it without reserve.

If it should ever occur to me to find worries in places of situations I cannot foresee at the present time, I dare hope always to find in your pastoral charity the encouragements and consolations which I would then need. I have confidence in another power than mine, and I dedicate myself to it. The schools of Alsace will be restored and cared for in the best possible way. I have also good reason to hope for some advice and kind services on the part of Father Mertian, in spite of the fact that I have caused him some moments of grief without wishing to do so.

Your Excellency, I am setting things in motion by sending Father Caillet my procuration, corrected according to your advice. I am adding to it a notarized procuration to accompany the donation, as required by Article 6 of the arrangement. As soon as I have received the Statutes, Decrees, and Ordinance from your Excellency authorizing me to do so for the schools and novitiates of Alsace, I will prepare to solicit from the king the ordinance of junction which is desired.<sup>1</sup>

Father Caillet will again go to present to you the tokens of my respectful veneration, until I will be able to go in person to acquit myself of this duty, of which I never lose sight.

Be pleased to accept the expression of the very religious respect with which I am, of Your Excellency, etc.

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#### **406. To Father Mertian, Ribeauvillé**

June 24, 1826, Bordeaux

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<sup>1</sup> The ordinance or decree authorizing the joining of the two Institutes, respectively approved by the Government in 1821 and 1825.

Rough Copy, Agmar  
[With insert from S. 406]

Reverend Father,

I have received with religious satisfaction your letter of last May 31. It has finally brought me promises of union, peace, and charity, sentiments in the way of which I feared having placed myself, although without the slightest intention to do so. My preceding explanations, having remained so long without an answer, gave me a vague idea of something extraordinary which I had no way of explaining to myself. Your letter, so conciliating, let me know that I had been for you the occasion of bitterness and annoyance by expressing myself badly or by having completely misunderstood you. Then with entire justice, for this is how I see the matter, I take upon myself the full responsibility and guilt, and I am grateful to those who have been kind enough to try to lessen the effects and to help us forget the past.

My thanks are addressed most particularly to that very worthy apostle of Strasbourg to whom you referred the entire matter, just as I did. Through one of his very gracious letters, His Excellency forwarded to me the 12 articles he believes must be sufficient to effect the union of the two Institutes. He was kind enough to tell me that this arrangement in 11 articles was the result of what had been explained in his presence by Father Caillet and you, Reverend Father, whom I also must thank. I am giving them my entire support, and this without reservations of any kind.

The Bishop of Strasbourg informs me that the procuration I had sent to him for Father Caillet bore some mention of an inventory of furniture not to be found in any document, and that I must send another power of attorney with no mention of an inventory to be made, without prejudice to your own intentions in this respect.

I will copy my first procuration, dropping the words "inventory" and "furnishings" and will send it to Father Caillet with a copy of the 11 articles, in case he should not have kept them. Moreover, I will send him another procuration, pure and simple but notarized, for the acceptance of the items described in articles 6 and 7 of the agreement. The agreement of Ribeauvillé will be treated as nonexistent, or it may be annulled if you wish; the results will be the same.

Nothing prevents me from adding to the Saint-Hippolyte donation that the buildings may not be used for schools and institutions for women, if this is still your wish as expressed in your letter. However, it must be remarked that I accepted the donation in my capacity as Superior of the Brothers of Mary and for my Society, and therefore to say that its use is not for women may be premature. I may be wrong, but do not let this thought stop you; I bow to your superior vision.

As soon as I have before me the Statutes and constitutive acts of the brothers of the diocese of Strasbourg and the bishop will have deigned to designate me [as Superior] according to Articles 4 and 10, without delay I will prepare the work and the request to the Government for our union.

I would have great need of your benevolent assistance, Reverend Father, in some rather difficult operations, those upon which in every way the success of the work we now have in hand depends. I mean the retaking of the establishments, the improvement in each place, the knowledge of the personnel, the prospects of the good which this or that a locality seems to promise, and many other things where the eye of the Superior cannot well be replaced.

All these needs make me realize the necessity of a journey to Alsace without further delay. Some interviews which you would consent to grant me would give me a good start. You have supplied the land, and you have planted. I am called upon only to water and to maintain. I hope that while awaiting my authorization from the king, you will keep an eye on this work in which you alone, Reverend Father, can foresee and even prevent the failure of several plantations, and to prepare the hope for new ones. As the father of this Institute, you will prevent your plans from being lost or in any way altered. Our united schools will not be forgotten, either by one or

by the other. God will bless them, and we will have reason to rejoice at the good which we will not have accomplished, but which God wishes to accomplish through our hands.

Please receive, Reverend Father, this new token of the charity which unites me to you and the sentiments of respect with which I am your very humble and very devoted servant.

\* \* \*

#### **407. To Fr. Georges Caillet, Colmar**

June 23, 1826, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

[With inserts from S. 407]

My dear Son,

Your letter of June 23 is the last I have received from you until today. Your trip to Arbois and to Saint-Claude has given me some consolation. I was pained at the displeasure which the worthy Father Bardenet seems to experience. I also was uneasy about the fact that on the occasion of your preceding visitation tours, you had not expressed my very sincere greetings to the Bishop of Saint-Claude, but I now see that everything is nearly restored and set right. God does not leave us always in desolation.

I was happy to learn of the steps taken by Father Bardenet at the offices of the prefect and sub-prefect. What they said about the ministers' authorization is much the same as what I wrote earlier. We must not cover the same ground again, but see to it that the civil authorities look upon the purchase in a purely administrative capacity. Patronage, passing favors which negate a law, in time leave a trail of threatened unfriendliness and almost inevitable disaster. Please take note, and now let us move to other things.

Now for your personal line of conduct.

1. There is certainly more than one difficulty to be foreseen in the running of the schools in Alsace, and others which we have not foreseen will present themselves.

Those to which we cannot close our eyes come from the fact that I have no positive idea of the customs, habits, needs, and resources of the personnel which is to remain.<sup>1</sup> or of that which will need to be completed or replaced.

If Father Mertian did not continue his paternal affection for his establishments, and if he did not help us in all these matters, we would be doing little more than feeling our way, in the midst of a very dark night. This fact must not be kept from him. I have no doubt he also sees it this way, and that he has resolved not to let us fall blindly into one or more pits. He will help us with his experience and his acquired influence.

2. In the schools, we must have men of God and, furthermore, men who know the vernacular language derived from the German.

So they may be constantly men of God, they must pass through the Institute so they have its imprint and spirit; this imprint of the Institute has prevailed everywhere, and it must be preserved from one generation to the next.

We have only a few Germans who are formed according to this discipline. Some from the Institute of Father Mertian who would be most likely to submit to it would become a very valuable nucleus. In telling them about this, they would be lost; therefore, they must be kept without a word being said. It is the work of God. If they study at the Institute, I have confidence that they will be completely to God from their hearts. But there must be guidance. Let them enter the Institute, and let them learn what it would be fortunate for them to know already, but which we must take for granted that many of them do now know at all.

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<sup>1</sup> The brothers of Fr. Mertian.

In addition to these general notions which you must try to understand and observe, there are others touching your mission.

3. The handwritten procuration which I am sending is the same as the one I had entrusted to the Bishop of Strasbourg. The only difference is the impression in the new one of a mention of the furnishings and of the need to take inventory. In spite of this deletion, in his letter the bishop states that Father Mertian intends to give away the furnishings, except for two or three pieces. After the bishop's decision, the stipulation expressed in my two previous letters no longer holds—that we could not be a party to a donation of articles consecrated to religion. The bishop has weighted the advantages and disadvantages, and we abide by his decision and deal with those authorized to make further decisions.

4. At the same time, you will receive a notarized procuration; it covers the acceptance of the donation of Saint-Hippolyte and of the school buildings up to no. 10, inclusive. To please the Council we had to add the clause that the transaction must be authorized by the Royal Council of Public Instruction.

5. When the transfer is made, you are to receive all the documents, Statutes, ordinances, decrees, and all titles to the property before the time of Father Mertian.

6. Note that until we have these papers our hands are tied, and we cannot ask for the merger of the two Institutes. I was sorry this simple request of mine caused some grief.

7. Once I have these documents and the private deed pertaining to the donation, I still cannot act until the Bishop of Strasbourg recognizes me as Superior of the schools and brothers of Alsace. You must request this appointment as discreetly as possible.

8. If the formalities continue at length, after I have clear title we will set up a provincial administration; but we are not there yet.

9. Return to Strasbourg, as you say in your letter of May 13. Sign three copies with the bishop as mediator. Article 11 calls for registration at the bishop's office; see to this, so we can obtain the certification if it is needed.

10. Do this unpretentiously, unhurriedly. You are merely acting under orders and to render a favorable report. If anything goes wrong, give me the circumstances and reasons in a letter.

After you have made the effort, try to tell me, number by number, what you have succeeded in doing and what has remained without effect.

I have set aside many small ideas scattered throughout your various letters. Someday we will gather all these remnants, and we will sift them thoroughly. For the present, we must see what will become of the Mertian matter, that of Arbois, and that of the *collège* of Gray. You will not have much to do with Gray because it is being handled in Paris. It is very possible that everything will not reach the point of maturity. God rules the seasons; let us always return to God with purity of intention.

The climate where you are, that where I am—all is under the hand of God. In each place God blesses his elect, and I ask of him this blessing for you.

Your Good Father in Jesus and Mary.

\* \* \*

*Here is Father Chaminade's description to the rector of the academy in Besançon regarding Father Lalanne and his designation for the direction of the collège of Gray.*

**408. To Father Calmels,  
Rector of the Academy of Besançon**

June 26, 1826, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

. . . This subject, according to the needs of the *collège*, will take charge of teaching the class of rhetoric or any other.

I do not believe his activity may be easily surpassed. He could easily look after four positions, for he has already given proofs of his ability. But is it not suitable to spare him somewhat? I hope the accumulation of salaries will not be the reason for it. Give him a great deal of work, as he has no fear for anything of that kind; but should the need of the work require that he must be replaced, he will easily be able to add to the corresponding salaries of those replacing him, if this must be so everything will proceed better.

He will be the chaplain; worship is the thing which he least must leave to the discretion of others. . . .

I know very well that no man is perfect, and I am not announcing this phenomenon to you in view of the one I have promised to you. However, he has been working a long while at the correction of his imperfections. We must not expect anything else in this world, for it is with this that God does everything. God does the good with very imperfect instruments. I perhaps realize this truth more than anyone else.

I ask of you to continue in our relationship the sentiments of kind indulgence which you have already shown to me, and to believe me with a respectful consideration. . . .

\* \* \*

#### **S. 408. To Father Calmels, Besançon**

June 26, 1826, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

While I do regret that I did not receive the encouragement I sought, this is not because my plea remained unheeded. Any disappointment is more than compensated for by the interest you have shown and which His Excellency manifests toward our Society. My discomfort comes from the fact that I may have appeared to be indiscreet, and that I probably was for asking something that was not quite proper. I am convinced this was a lack of tact, unrelated to my temperament or intention. I believed the intervention I desired would imply no use of authority, but would take place only if circumstances were favorable and a real advantage could be obtained. I promise, Reverend Rector, to be more discreet in my future demands.

Whatever anyone may have thought, what was at stake had so little importance that no sooner had my letter reached you than I came to an understanding with one of the bishops, and the other will soon find that it is expedient to help institutions which work for the common good. I was ill-advised to complicate this incident with a charitable intervention which had for its purpose a general cooperation in a good work. I will refer to it no more, but limit myself to the question of the *collège* of Gray, my consent to provide a principal being unrelated to the mediation I solicited for another purpose. Let me now discuss the *collège* of Gray.

Reverend Rector, you may rely on the person promised for this *collège* in my earlier letter. You have his name, his address, and his qualifications. I need say no more. In turn, I must be informed of your acceptance so I may prepare him for this assignment and find a replacement. This is only in the planning stage now, but if it is prolonged unduly it could be harmful to the existing order. You have until July 20 to decide, and I can hardly be informed of your decision before the end of the month. That leaves me August and a part of September to dispatch the principal and to take care of general matters.

I thank you, Reverend Rector, for informing me that the *collège* offers secondary education. About philosophy I can only say what the former students said of something they lacked: *desideratur* [it is to be hoped for]. We will soon attain this, I hope.

“This subject according to the needs of the *collège*. . .”



Without further details I can affirm, Reverend Rector, that your hopes to have a principal like the one I provided for Villeneuve will be satisfied; and the latter is chaplain, professor, and director of his *collège*.

“He will know very well that no man is perfect. . .”

\* \* \*

*From July on, the correspondence of Father Chaminade resumes a more personal character. He writes some of his letters himself; he dictates others to his nephew, Jules Chaminade, whom he took as his secretary after the death of Jean Tissier.*

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

July 12, 1826, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

[With insert from S. 409]

My dear Son,

I was going to write to you, when your letter with details about the visit of the prefect of Vesoul arrived. I will do what I can to write to him tomorrow, and I will send you a copy of my letter. If everything does not leave with this same mail. . . .

Father Caillet complains of the tardiness of my responses. I reassured him two days ago. I addressed all my letters to Colmar, usually entrusting them to Brother Rothéa, especially the last three. The first contained my procuration with my seal, as requested by the Bishop of Strasbourg. The second, another procuration, notarized this time, authorized the acceptance of the donation. I think this letter will not find Father Caillet at Saint-Remy. I would not want the letters to be forwarded by Brother Rothéa to Saint-Remy and have them pass by Father Caillet on his way to Colmar. If there is still time, arrange so that this will not happen.

The young priest I mentioned to you such a long while ago will finally leave. He is Father Brothier of Lavand, of the diocese of Périgueux. I received him as a novice a week ago. Yesterday he finished a general Confession. Tomorrow, Friday, and Saturday, he is to give some spiritual exercises to the pupils of the first Communion class of the school on Rue du Mirail. He will leave next Monday or Tuesday, if his trunk has arrived by that time. He will be a professor in whatever class is assigned to him. Before becoming a priest, he had already taught rhetoric and philosophy, but he will teach whatever you want. I hope he will get along well with our dear brother, Father Rothéa, regarding Confessions, instructions, etc. Here there is some jealousy over the fact that I am sending you this person. Although there was great need of him elsewhere, I believe he is absolutely necessary to you. Also, I had promised him to you, and I was far from expecting to find so many obstacles to prevent our having him. May the name of the Lord be blessed in all things.

It causes me pain, my dear Son, not to be able to speak to you at times about our last end and the means of reaching it safely. I would also like to write, at least once in a while, to all my Children at Saint-Remy in order to encourage them. I am seriously thinking about coming to see you all after my visits to the Haute-Pays. What is vexing is that these are always being delayed, in spite of the fact that they are so necessary this year. . . .

The Archbishop of Bordeaux died last night as a saint, just as he had lived.

My sister was buried the day before yesterday.

My dear Son, let us not cease to work for the glory of our good Master and of his august Mother, whom he has deigned to give us as Mother. Because I am obliged to write to you so briefly, say to all our brothers, my dear Children, how deeply I love them, how greatly I desire to see them and to speak to them unreservedly, and to penetrate them with the spirit of their state. Whatever you may be telling them on this subject, I do not believe you are likely to exaggerate.

*[Note with what brevity Father Chaminade, overloaded with work, tells Brother Clouzet of the two misfortunes which struck almost simultaneously, the death of his sister Lucrèce and of his great protector, Archbishop d'Aviau.]*

\* \* \*

*Here is the letter to the prefect of Vesoul.*

**410. To Count de Brancas,  
Prefect of Haute-Saône**

July 13, 1826, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar<sup>1</sup>

[This also appears in Volume 8-2 and Volume 9 as Agmar 218.2.38.]

Honorable Prefect,

The visit with which you have honored my establishment has had the most salutary results. The heads of departments have written to me about it in terms which leave no doubt concerning the emotion which your presence has aroused. They bore witness, so to speak, to the sentiments of emulation, perseverance, and new ardor for the good which you left behind at the time of your departure. Father Caillet and Brother Clouzet inform me more particularly of the benefits which they have gained since being admitted to your table. They have also told me about your confidential interviews and about the schools of arts and crafts. I am inclined to believe, Honorable Prefect, that among all the plans concerning the public good which the position and interest of those under your administration suggest to you, this one would not be one of the least. Do not doubt, Honorable Prefect, that if I can help in any way, I will do so with a good and willing heart.

I am not certain if you have been told, Honorable Prefect, that this same idea of a school of arts and crafts was the principal cause which led me to the acquisition of the château and property of Saint-Remy. With this same view, one of my men went there from here and liked the place, after looking it over and judging it from all points of view. We busied ourselves with the project, even under the administration of M. de Villeneuve, your predecessor. The unavoidable distance of the person I had put in charge delayed the preparatory steps, and I know that since then very little progress has been made in this part of our works. However, if your noble plans have been directed upon this object of public usefulness, it does not seem doubtful to me that with the favor of your powerful support and your knowledge, Honorable Prefect, we can go rather far.

The letters I receive from Saint-Remy inform me, Honorable Prefect, that you have been kind enough to have had a plan or project worked out, and that you would even have the kindness to acquaint me with it in a week or so. This activity on your part can only arouse mine, and I will await with great interest the communication with which you will be pleased to honor me. I will then make it a duty on my part to place my observations before you, if there is a need for this. As far as I see, it would be advantageous for the plan to be brought a certain degree of perfection before long because of my journey to your region, which can no longer be greatly delayed. Once the plan is fully matured in the mind of the cabinet, it would be better to try it out on the spot as soon as possible. Such a plan takes in so many things: the materiel, the personnel, the spirit, the interior order, the movement and progress in studies, the thousand and one needs and accidents which must be foreseen or prevented . . . When the idea is once very definite, then carrying it out will come as a matter of course.

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<sup>1</sup> Original in the departmental archives of the Haute-Saône. Consigned to Agmar by Bro. Eddie Alexandre.

I am congratulating myself, Honorable Prefect, over the fact that your honorable visit and the proposals which followed it have made it a duty for me to thank you on my own part and that of my children of Saint-Remy—that is, in their name. I am even venturing to assure you of their disposition to do the good. My eagerness to join them all in your plans for the schools is also for your further assurance, regarding my dispositions. Furthermore, these are upheld by the sentiments of confidence, the high consideration and respect, with which you will permit me to be, Honorable Prefect, one of your most humble and most devoted servants.

\* \* \*

*Now free to go to Alsace, Father Chaminade is preparing for his journey to the Haute-Pays. This note reveals his dispositions regarding the wills made in his favor.*

**411. To Bro. David Monier, Bordeaux**

July 17, 1826, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

Can we settle on Thursday evening for our departure, after the funeral of the archbishop, on the condition that a coach is to leave on that particular evening?

I am having the will copied by the hand of Mme Dubose passed on to you, the one Jules believed he could correct and in which are several unapproved erasures. Mme Dubose is asking for a copy of the said will, which she would leave among her papers. I have always experienced great repugnance in receiving the last provisions of this lady. However, if you believe that as the person in charge of the interests of the Society I must rise above this, see if I could not be exempted from the obligation of paying 4,000 francs to her servant as well as a life annuity, by giving her the house with which she could pay this herself, as well as the funeral expenses and all other small debts, etc.<sup>1</sup>

If it is already completed, send me the letter asking for exemption from taxes for the novitiate of the Daughters of Mary.

If we are to leave Thursday evening, you would need to be free tomorrow noon, so we could settle everything in Bordeaux which needs to be settled before our departure. I will take note of this. The matter of Father Lalanne regarding Gray is becoming more difficult. . . .

Yours very truly, my dear Son,

P. S. Mme Dubose is anxious to conclude . . . they say she is experiencing weak spells.

\* \* \*

**S. 411-2. Correspondent Unknown**

No date [July 17, 1826?] , Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar)

I have never been Mme Dubosc's adviser in her temporal affairs. My state and my occupations would not allow this. In some circumstances I was able to give her some advice, which she was free to follow or to disregard, and the result of which I know nothing.

If I had been the adviser of Mme Dubosc, I would have immediately turned to you; in fact, from the letters you wrote to her and which she showed me, I formed a high opinion of your common sense and intelligence. We would have gotten along famously.

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<sup>1</sup> A handwritten note relating to the same will, and without any indication of date or destination, is given below.

May she find the wise and calm adviser she needs and give him the confidence needed to conclude everything successfully.

\*

*Father Chaminade left Bordeaux Thursday evening, July 20; he visited the houses of the Daughters of Mary in Agen, Condom, and Tonneins, arranged in Moissac with the archpriest Father Imbert for the opening of a new school of the Society of Mary (July 26), traveled on to Villeneuve, and returned to Bordeaux around the Feast of the Assumption. On August 24 he began his first visit to the houses in the north; he was accompanied by Father Lalanne, who was going to Gray, and by Father Brothier, who was destined for Saint-Remy.*

*This was the itinerary: Paris July 27 or 28; Nancy on August 30 with Bishop Forbin-Janson; Strasbourg during the first days of September, with Bishop Tharin, with whom he spent a day in his country house in Molsheim; Ribeauvillé with Father Mertian; Saint-Hippolyte, of which he took possession around September 11; Colmar on September 15; Mulhouse; Saint-Remy September 19 or 20; Besançon; Arbois on October 1 for the new foundation of the Daughters of Mary; Gray; Nancy; Paris; and his return to Bordeaux on October 16.*

\* \* \*

*Here Father Chaminade announces to Father Liebermann the conclusion of negotiations with Father Mertian. In fact, the document drawn up in Strasbourg on July 13 between Father Mertian and Father Caillet, Father Chaminade's delegate, and confirmed by Bishop Tharin, had promised to the Society of Mary more than he was able to give. Father Mertian had chosen to transfer the former château of Saint-Hippolyte with its dependencies and the schools of Strasbourg, Erstein, Markolsheim, Ribeauvillé, Ammerschwir, Guebwiller, Benwhir, Blotzheim, Zellwiller—in all, 10 establishments and about 20 brothers. Now, only three brothers consented to be united to the Society of Mary—Brothers Enderlin, Cholet, and Kientzler, who were excellent religious; only two establishments, Saint-Hippolyte and Ammerschwir, were retained by the Society of Mary.*

*The foundation of the school of Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines (1827-73), mentioned in the next letter, was the fruit of the zeal of Father Bader, a pastor and dean of this locality.*

**412. To Father Lieberman,  
Vicar General of Strasbourg<sup>1</sup>**

September 15, 1826, Colmar

Copy, Agmar

Very Reverend Vicar General,

I have the honor of presenting to you the verbal account of my operations in Saint-Hippolyte, for the conclusion of the merger of the Institute of the brothers of Strasbourg with that of Mary. I will be obliged to you to have this deposited with the secretariat of the diocese. I have already sent to His Excellency the Bishop of Strasbourg the necessary documents to obtain the authorization of the Government. In leaving for Paris, he has been kind enough to take the matter in hand.

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<sup>1</sup> Fr. François Liebermann (1759-1844), born in Molsheim, was ordained in 1783 and named director of the Grand Seminary in Strasbourg and as a preacher in the Cathedral. During the Revolution he ministered first in Alsace, then beyond the Rhine. His compatriot and friend, the Bishop of Mainz, then brought him to his major seminary, where he remained for 20 years and published a course on "Theological Institutions" which had a great success. Under the Restoration, designated as Bishop of Metz, he refused the honor and in 1824 accepted only the office of vicar general of Strasbourg, which he held until 1834.

He excused himself to Father Mertian, at first verbally and then in writing, for having made mild complaints regarding the counsel he had given to the majority of his brothers, that “they should ask for another year for reflection.” I did not care much for his reasons, even the written ones. Without giving a rejoinder, I answered that I believed he had had only good intentions in everything he had been able to say or to do for the conclusion of this matter. Furthermore, the verbal account speaks only of facts, and he admitted the complete truth of them all.

Reverend Vicar General, I look upon this matter as finished. I am leaving tomorrow for Colmar, and on Monday I will leave Alsace.

I had planned especially to form an establishment of brothers in Ribeauvillé, and perhaps even in Guebwiller. Father Mertian had provided for this, even before the general merger, as 15 brothers at least had their special designation. I had asked Father Mertian for a list of names of the brothers and where they were placed. I did not give this matter any serious attention until I noticed, in my particular conferences, a perfect agreement among them.

After everything that has happened, I promised only four complete establishments in Alsace for the reopening of classes: at Colmar, Saint-Hippolyte, Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines, and Ammerschwir. I nevertheless consoled the rector of Ribeauvillé, the Justice of the Peace, and other inhabitants of this small town, in having them hope that perhaps later I could lend myself to the realization of their desires. They understood that I could not easily send Brothers of Mary to Ribeauvillé or elsewhere while former brothers, coming from the Strasbourg Institute, would be conducting schools.

I experienced great regret, Reverend Vicar General, in leaving Strasbourg without having been able to spend time and say goodbye to you, as I had the honor of writing about it to His Excellency. For all the matters of our humble Society, I will take the liberty of addressing myself to you, and I will do so with complete confidence because you have already given me so many tokens of deep interest. I am with profound respect, Reverend Vicar General, etc.

\* \* \*

**S. 412-2. To Father de la Haye,  
Secretary to the Bishop of Strasbourg**

September 15, 1826, Colmar

Copy, Agmar

I have finally achieved the merger of the Institute of the brothers of Strasbourg with that of Mary and have taken possession of the château of Saint-Hippolyte. I am sending the papers to Father Liebermann so he may deposit them in the bishop’s office.

From the account of the sale you will receive and from the copy of the letter I wrote to the vicar general, you will see how the sale was concluded. I did not believe it was necessary to point out to Father Liebermann the kind of contradiction between the utterances of M. Xavier Mertian and those of his brother, Father Mertian. The former told me there were no more brothers in Strasbourg, that one had already left and the other would retire. Father Mertian smiled as I repeated this to him. He told me the two brothers were in Strasbourg, but that he did not deem it necessary to convoke them.

I will abide by your advice in my dealings with the rector of the Academy. Should I send him the names of the brothers who did not join the Society of Mary, but who will continue to teach? They no longer have a superior and are in a class with the lay teachers.

I would be very grateful if you could give me your views on the matter and include anything that might be of interest to the Society of Mary. I will accept with gratitude any comment you may wish to make on my procedures in Alsace. I am certain I must be making many mistakes.

You could address your letter to me to Saint-Remy via Vesoul (Haute-Saône).  
I am. . . .

\* \* \*

*After the conclusion of the matter concerning Saint-Hippolyte, Father Chaminade settles the foundation of Arbois.*

**413. To Bro. David Monier, Bordeaux**

October 1, 1826, Arbois

Autograph, Agmar

[With insert from S. 413]

My dear Son,

I will finally write to you from Arbois. I will be leaving for Besançon tonight at two o'clock. Wednesday morning, October 4, I will go to Gray, where I will stop for only a few hours. From there, during the night I will go by coach from Vesoul to Nancy, then from Nancy to Paris, where I hope to arrive at the latest on October 10 or 11. I will make a stop in Paris of only two or three days. I will be taking all types of coaches in order to arrive in Bordeaux around October 16 or 17. If the Bishop of Nancy does not delay me, I will try to be in Bordeaux on the morning of Monday, October 15, in order not to find myself traveling on Sunday.

The retreat of Saint-Laurent may open on the evening of October 17 or 18, as you may see fit, but it seems suitable that it should not be delayed beyond that date. If I have not yet returned Father Collineau could take the lead, if his health permits. I will be occupied with so many matters upon arrival that I will need one or another to help me with some of the religious exercises. They could prepare in the meantime.

I received all your letters addressed to Strasbourg and the one addressed to Colmar. I stayed in Strasbourg only 3½ days, of which 1½ were spent in Molsheim, His Excellency's country place.

Dear Brother Clouzet had been in too great a hurry to write that the prefect of the Jura did not permit the Daughters of Mary to establish themselves in Arbois without previous approbation. All difficulties have been lifted by now. It would be good if they were brought together in Bordeaux when I arrive, so they may leave a short time after my arrival. If I do not join the list of their names to this letter, as seems likely, I will send it while I am on my way. I am omitting many reflections, as you may easily notice.

The 2,400 francs which I had asked the superior of Tonneins to keep until further orders were to cover the travel expenses of the religious of Arbois. If Condom is short of funds and if the convent of Agen cannot help, the 500 or 600 francs could be taken from those 1,000 louis. If Mother Emmanuel could be withdrawn from Condom for three or four months with no adverse effects on the boarding establishment, we would be willing to accept her; besides, Condom would benefit also. As for Mlle Dardy, use great prudence in trying to induce her to come to the Bordeaux meeting, unless she must substitute for Mother Emmanuel. It would be good if both could go to Arbois; then we could have Mother Emmanuel return and Mlle Dardy would be very happy to come to Arbois, as I had given her reason to hope, and to be with Mother Emmanuel. See what you can do without offending anyone.

I am bringing along with me a young ecclesiastic from Alsace who is ready to receive Holy Orders. He has a decided taste for the arts and crafts and is even good enough for sculpture, especially in marble. Since we left Mulhouse, he has been my inseparable companion. I brought him especially to the prefect in Vesoul, in case it might be necessary basically to discuss this special pursuit. In passing through Gray, I will take along another ecclesiastic who has made very

good studies.<sup>1</sup> Father Lalanne is keeping Brother Mülhaupt for himself. It is to be presumed that the two Barnhartes will go to Gray.

I am forced to stop here. Be sure to give news about me to all those who may be interested in having some.

My dear Son, I am saying nothing about the pain I experienced in learning about the poor state of your health. Nevertheless, you were right to also tell me of the improvement which has taken place. I also do not tell you how often I think of and pray for you. . . . I can only say I never felt better.

\* \* \*

*This letter is dated from the bishop's palace in Nancy, where Father Chaminade is the guest of his friend, Bishop de Forbin-Janson.*

#### **414. To Bro. David Monier, Bordeaux**

October 7, 1826, Nancy

Autograph, Arch. FMI

To my dear Son David,

Here is the list of the religious I had chosen for Arbois and which I did not have time to copy at the time I wrote to you from there. Sister Marie-Joseph, Superior; Sister Stanislas, Mistress of Novices; Sister Saint-Joseph, director of the boarding school and Mother of Zeal; Sister Saint-Denis, Mother of Work and mistress of embroidery; Sister Saint-François Régis, classroom teacher; Sister Scholastica, teacher of writing; Sister Saint-Joseph (the second), mistress of the day pupils; Mlle Dardy, teacher of vocal music and piano; and three lay sisters, or at least two. The Mother Superior of Bordeaux will be able to help you in making the choice, without hampering other communities too much. Here are a few directive observations.

1. In the place of Mother Marie-Joseph and Sister Stanislas, call Mother Louis de Gonzage who will have the double title of Superior and Mistress of Novices. She is in Condom as Mother of Zeal. The latter, Mother Gonzage, would be replaced by Mother Sacré-Foy, who is in Agen.

Sister Saint-Joseph, or Mlle Durrenback, is in Agen and fills no office there, unless at least in title.

Sister Saint-Denis is in Bordeaux. So are Sister François Régis and Sister Scholastique. I believe Mlle Dardy is already in Bordeaux.

2. If Sister Josephine, who is in Condom, is restored to health and is in a condition to make as long a trip as going to Arbois, she should be united to the group of sisters there. Although Mother Emmanuel is generally in charge of the community because the superior does not know how either to command or direct her; I imagine that to withdraw her even temporarily you would face several obstacles, as much because of the boarding school as of the Sodality, and nothing must be forced. The superior is both weak and timid, but there would be no obstacle in taking Sister Josephine away, provided she is in a condition to stand the journey.

What would have made me desire Mother Emmanuel for Arbois, at least for several months, is because of her exterior appearance; in this city, it is necessary to cause a sensation upon arriving. Now there will be a very large number of distinguished guests, both in the

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<sup>1</sup> Biographical note. Augustin Bouly (1790-1878) born in Chargey-les-Gray, studied theology in the seminary of Besançon for 4 years; he entered as a postulant at Saint-Remy, where he tried teaching in 1824. He made his novitiate at the Madeleine under Fr. Caillet (1826-27) and was a teacher at Saint-Remy and at Saint-Hippolyte, director in Marast and Charolles, and assistant pastor in Courtefontaine. He died in Besançon after a short illness, leaving the memory of a zealous and charitable priest.

boarding school and in the novitiate. If the Daughters of Mary are not inferior to the Religious of the Sacred Heart established in Besançon, it is not to be doubted that both the boarding school and the novitiate will furnish us with tolerably good subjects.

Sunday, October 8. I am leaving this evening at 6 o'clock for Paris with two theologians, one an Alsatian, the one who has taste for the arts and crafts, and the other from Gray who taught this year at Saint-Remy. I believed I should bring him to Bordeaux. I am continuing my observations.

3. Father Bardenet is offering for one year to the community in Arbois a cook who is very clever in preparing food, in going to the market, etc. He considers her very suitable for a convent. It is believed that she is one of those who are at Saint-Remy. Consequently, there will need to be quite a few lay sisters for the washing and the gardens, of which there are already two large ones, one for the boarders, another for the novices, etc., etc. . . .

4. I believe Mlle Bruite will stay in Condom this year, but in case she does not enter there, I would not see any difficulties in joining her to the group of sisters in Arbois under the same conditions as in Condom, providing of course that the superior feels she will be able to control and govern her, so she may not be harmful to the community.

My dear Son, I am not speaking of the matters I have had to handle in the various places through which I passed, for I hope to be able to embrace you again very soon. Very often, I would have wished to have you at my side, before coming to a decision. *Sit nomen Domini Benedictum!*

I am now obliged to close. The Bishop of Nancy is finishing his Mass, and the bell will soon call us to lunch. My health is holding up well, in spite of my frequent traveling during the day and at night. I will write to you again from Paris. *Pax Domini sit semper tecum!*

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*Father Chaminade had returned to Bordeaux by October 16 and was giving the annual retreat to his religious united at Saint-Laurent (October 19 to October 26); he was also providing for the needs of his old and new establishments in the north.*

#### **415. Obedience for Fr. Jean-Baptiste Romain, Bordeaux**

October 28, 1826, Bordeaux

Copy, Arch. FMI

Our dear Son, Fr. Jean-B. Romain, a priest of the Society of Mary, is chosen this year to go to exercise the functions of chaplain in our establishment of Saint-Hippolyte, department of the Upper Rhine. He will conduct six of the Brothers of Mary destined to four of our establishments, namely Brothers Bouveret and Delcamp for Saint-Remy, Upper-Saône; Brothers Colin and Hunolt for Colmar; Brother Perriguet for Ammerschwir; and Brother Thiriet for Saint-Hippolyte, where he is to go by himself. . . .

He will pass by Lyons and Arbois, in the department of the Jura. We recommend him, as well as the brothers whose leadership we confide to him, to all the authorities, civil and ecclesiastic, if—may God forbid—some accident should befall them on their long journey.

Given in Bordeaux, October 28, 1826.

The Superior General of the Society of Mary

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*During his recent trip, Father Chaminade had prepared the foundation of a work in Besançon, a school for the arts and crafts for the benefit of the orphans of the Hospice Saint-Jacques. He confided this work to Brother Clouzet.*



## 416. To Bro. Dominique Clouzet, Saint-Remy

November 6, 1826, Bordeaux

Original, First Paragraph Autograph, Agmar

To my dear Son Clouzet, Superior of Saint-Remy.

I have just received your letter of October 24, and I am answering it almost immediately. I have not had any other news from Father Brothier than that you have given me.<sup>1</sup> I have known about everything concerning his past. Before and after his priesthood, at all times, there has been evidence only of uprightness, piety, and refinement. The numerous Mass intentions he accepted here and there will be most conscientiously taken care of. During the long stay which his illness obliged him to make in Paris, a religious of another Order did everything he could to disgust him with the Society of Mary and no doubt to attract him to his own. Patience, and everything will be cleared up in due time.

You will do well to see the Archbishop of Besançon, and here is the occasion for it. While I was in Besançon, I was at the hospice, as I had promised to the superior and to the sister of the Bishop of Strasbourg.<sup>2</sup> I visited the large building destined for the orphans of the city, and I believed I could entertain the hope that we could take charge of the direction of the entire place, as well as of the teaching of reading and writing and the four trades followed there.<sup>3</sup> Six brothers seem to be enough for everything—one for teaching religion, writing and reading who is known there as a primary school teacher; four brothers for the four trades of hosier, weaver, carpenter, and shoemaker; and a cook. This part of the hospice is, or can be, sufficiently separated from the rest of the hospice, so the brothers can live there in community with the children, etc., etc. I thought at the beginning of November you might be able to go there on a visit to look over everything in order to be able to assume complete charge sometime in January.

Regarding the workmen of the hospice who may trouble you, you might temporarily keep the same ones, offering them the same advantages they have received from the administration. For them there would be no difference except that of being dependent upon the brothers and of being paid by them instead of by the administration. One or two, like the hosier and the weaver, I believe, are orphans who were reared in the establishment and who, it seems, would easily become attached to the Society.

Regarding the primary teacher, you might take Brother Perriguet.<sup>1</sup> He is actually on his way to Ammerschwir, but since his departure I have learned of the death of Brother Jérôme<sup>2</sup> and of the illness of Brother Benôit, his school colleague.<sup>3</sup> I am writing to Father Doyen, the pastor of

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<sup>1</sup> Fr. Brothier had left Saint-Remy during the retreat.

<sup>2</sup> Sister Tharin, religious in the Saint Jacques Hospice in Besançon.

<sup>3</sup> The orphanage of the Saint Jacques Hospice of Besançon, confided to the Society of Mary in 1827, was destroyed by fire in 1840 and transferred to the school near Besançon, in quarters previously occupied by students of philosophy of the diocesan seminary. It remained there until 1898.

<sup>1</sup> Biographical note. Auguste Perriguet (1797-1834), born in Accolans, Doubs, entered the novitiate in Saint-Laurent in 1825 and was employed in the Saint Jacques Hospice in Besançon, then in Saint-Remy, where he died as the result of an accident. Several letters of Fr. Chaminade to him remain.

<sup>2</sup> Jérôme Probst, a brother of the Congregation of Fr. Mertian, died in Ammerschwir as a novice of the Society of Mary.

<sup>3</sup> Biographical note. François-Joseph Enderlin (1804-79) is one of the first members of the Society of Mary. He came from Schlierbach, Alsace, and entered the Congregation of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine which Fr. Mertian had just founded as Brother Benôit; in 1826, with several colleagues, he was united to the Society of Mary, (letter no. 412). After directing the school in Ammerschwir for 12 years, Bro. Enderlin was called through the confidence of Fr. Chaminade to introduce the Society of Mary in Switzerland in 1838 at the school of Fribourg, which he directed until its closing in 1847 at the time of the defeat of the Sonderbund. In 1851 Bro. Enderlin was charged at the invitation of German Bishop von Ketteler with opening the school of Sainte-Marie in Mainz, where he worked until his death. A monument was erected by his former pupils in the cemetery in Mainz. Works founded and directed by Bro. Enderlin were the occasion and the point of departure for establishments of the Society of Mary in Switzerland, Germany, Austria, and America.

Ammerschwir, to ask if he could have the teaching interrupted for some time.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, I wrote to the very dear Brother Laugeay to keep him temporarily in Colmar, or to send him to Saint-Hippolyte. Brother Perriguy does not seem to me entirely qualified to be head of this entire establishment in Besançon.

Place genuine interest in this matter of the Society's taking charge of this Besançon establishment, but without harming its spirit in any way. As I see matters, this establishment will be both the cause and the model of several other establishments of about the same type in several other large cities, and especially in Paris, where they are particularly necessary.

I am sending you Brothers Brunet and Delcamp, as I had made known to you through Father Caillet. They are traveling in slow stages, so if their arrival is delayed regarding the reopening of classes, I believe you will have made provision for this by looking after the pupils of Brother Brunet, being assured of his arrival. Brother Delcamp has a fine handwriting and is sufficiently educated in everything which concerns primary teaching; nevertheless, he must be employed, in the novitiate or elsewhere, only under the direction of dear Brother Gaussens because of his great youth and inexperience. I hope that if he is directed well, he will soon become a great help to you and also an excellent example for the entire community.

I had written to you through Father Caillet to send Brother Coustou to Saint-Hippolyte. I believe you have immediately taken care of this. In giving this good brother the counsels he needs to conduct himself in this establishment as a true Child of Mary, you will do well, although he may be distant from you, not to lose sight of him and to correspond with him at times.

I am now finishing by embracing you tenderly, and also all my dear Children of Saint-Remy.

\* \* \*

*There are two acts of affiliation to the Society of Mary for Father de Cadignan, Superior of the Daughters of Mary in Condom and Father Imbert, founder of the school in Moissac; because of its very eloquent content, the latter is included here.*

#### **417. To Father Imbert, Pastor of Moissac**

November 7, 1826, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

Certificate of Affiliation to the Society of Mary.

We, Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Priest, Missionary Apostolic and Superior General of the Society of Mary, having traveled to Moissac at the repeated invitation of Father Imbert,<sup>1</sup> priest, Honorary Canon of Montauban and pastor of the said city of Moissac, in order to make a decision regarding the establishment of a free school to be taught by the Brothers of Mary, having been touched by the honesty, disinterest, and loyalty and especially by the ardent zeal for the glory of the Lord with which he is animated, we have accepted the proposed establishment.

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<sup>4</sup> The school of Ammerschwir, handed over to Fr. Chaminade by Fr. Mertian, was directed by the Society of Mary from 1826 until 1874.

<sup>1</sup> Fr. Imbert (1767-1840) who according to tradition must have known Fr. Chaminade in Spain, after having exercised his ministry in Moissac during the Terror at the peril of his life became archpriest of the church of Saint Pierre in this same city, where he was to end his ministry. He offered his house to Fr. Chaminade to open a school which still exists and bears his name. The wish to found a normal school in Moissac could not be realized, but around the small primary schools opened on November 2, 1826, the Society of Mary established successively a boarding school and a scholasticate (1868-79). At Moissac, the Society of Mary later opened a novitiate (1872-97), directed the minor seminary of the diocese (1851-98), and made it the seat of the Province of the Midi (1809-79).

Having had the advantage since then of having him with us several days in community<sup>1</sup>; having been able to examine more thoroughly the excellence of the virtues which we at first only admired, we have accepted the new offer of joining two schools to the establishment in which we were already working—the special school and the normal school.

Father Imbert, having made known to us the ardent desire he had to be united as closely as possible with the Society of Mary while preserving his place and title of pastor of Moissac, where he could be more useful to the Society than in incorporating himself into it and living in its bosom, we did not hesitate to promise him this affiliation and intimate union, from which religion and the said Society, as well as the respectable petitioner, could draw such great advantages.

And by these presents, signed by our name and as Superior General of the said Society, we have affiliated and intimately united, as we affiliate and intimately unite by this fact our very honored and very respectable Father Imbert to the Society of Mary, of which the central house is in Bordeaux, so that consequently the aforesaid may be a participant in the prayers, good works, and merits of the said Society, and of all the associations which are affiliated to it or which will be in the future, and enjoy also the prerogatives, privileges, and indulgences which are attached to the said title of Affiliation, while asking the favor, with devotion, that each month in one of the holy Masses he will celebrate on a day of his choice, finding himself dispensed from all other prayers because of the saying of the Office.

Furthermore, we desire that our aforesaid Father Imbert will be regarded by the entire Society as one of its members, with all the attentions and with the same confidence as the other priests of the Society of Mary.

In testimony of which, we have signed and have countersigned these presents by our secretary and sealed with the seal of the Society.

Bordeaux, November 7, 1826

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### **S. 417-2. To Father de Cadigan**

November 7, 1826, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

I, Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, priest and Missionary Apostolic, Superior General of the Society of Mary,

Having been informed by our very dear Son, Father Caillet, a priest of the Society of Mary, that Father de Cadigan wanted and even asked to be affiliated with the Society of Mary, already aware of the personal qualities of the worthy petitioner and desiring to give him a proof of our gratitude for the services he has rendered and still renders to the Institute of the Daughters of Mary as superior of the convent of these sisters, established in the town of Condom,

Urged by the good and sufficient examples he has given of charity, discretion, and prudence in all things,

Have by these presents with our signature affiliated by the fact our most respected Father de Cadigan to the Society of Mary, whose central house is in Bordeaux and of which I, in my unworthiness, am the Superior General, so that the above-named may share in the prayers, the good works, and the merits of the Society and of the associations affiliated to it and which will be in the future, and in consequence that he may profit by the privileges and indulgences attached to the affiliation, and that he will pray for these graces by celebrating holy Mass once a month on the day of his choice, being dispensed from the other prayers by reason of his office and of his priesthood.

Done in Bordeaux, November 7, 1826,

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<sup>1</sup> At the retreat of Saint-Laurent.

Countersigned and sealed by our private secretary.

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*On several occasions Father Chaminade has been preoccupied with the financial situation of the Society of Mary. Worries of this type were becoming more serious in the boarding school of Bordeaux, as is shown in notes addressed to Bro. David Monier. If later catastrophes were to be the result, this was not because Father Chaminade had not given a timely warning by pointing out the dangers and taking measures to avoid them as much as he could.*

**418. To Bro. David Monier, Bordeaux**

December 1, 1826, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

The course of action we are taking with Brother Auguste will not lead us—at least this is to be feared—to the end we are proposing to ourselves. We will reach it, I hope, if you take over not the accounts, but the direction of the accounts. Do not wait for a completed work, and still less for a sustained work. Allow him to be in on it, part for part, and then sustain him. At this time he seems well enough disposed. Do with this whatever you can.

Brother Auguste has goodwill, but he needs to be guided. The multiplicity of details absorbs him, and as a result he is incapable of the general administration. He will go if he is directed, and if he is given work piecemeal and one part at a time. Otherwise, we have reason to hope we will be able to find him some assistants. All to you, my dear Son, in the Lord.

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**419. To Bro. David Monier, Bordeaux**

December 20, 1826, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

I am writing to Brother Auguste, and I am enjoining him to communicate my letter to you. I ask you to do what I am indicating to him, and do this as promptly as possible. Delay here, for something better, would give occasion for the application of the old saying, “The better is opposed to the good.” Take care of your health.

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*A man of means in Orléans, M. Pothain, a former notary, had proposed to Father Chaminade to sell him the former buildings of Abbey Saint-Mesmin with the idea of establishing a house of education there. Through the pen of Brother David, Father Chaminade makes reference to this.*

**420. To Bishop de Beauregard of Orléans**

December 2, 1826, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

[With insert from S. 420]

Your Excellency,

To correspond as much as I can with the desire of Your Excellency to know my Institution, I will have sent to you the Statutes and the ordinance of the king which gives its foundation and determine its nature. I will have the honor of sending these documents to you in the way you have indicated to me. However, it would be possible that one of the members of the Association on a round of visits might be charged with the presentation of these papers to you in my name, and with the expression of my most profound respect.

Regarding the plan to buy the old house of Saint-Mesmin-lez-Orléans<sup>1</sup> and to form one of our establishments there, which it seems has been attributed to me, the misunderstandings are so great that this account is almost completely opposite to the truth. The fault would have been extreme on my part to plan, to buy, and to establish without having previously obtained the authorization of the episcopal See.

The truth is that M. Pothain of Orléans proposed his plan to me—not mine—for the realization of a religious establishment in Saint-Mesmin. My principal answer was that I could not do this if I was not authorized by Your Excellency, and if neither I nor my works, such as they are, were not known in your diocese.

On the other hand, M. Pothain did not have the deciding word in the making of the cession he was speaking of. He needed the authorization and the consent of a third party and lastly, if he availed himself of his former rights, the fitness or unfitness of a religious body involves serious questions. Would the establishment in some way meet the needs of the diocese? Are the buildings sufficiently large, safe and in a healthy location? Time is needed to discover the true purchase price, as well as the expenses connected with the carrying out of the plans, and so many other things . . . the preparation of the teachers for the classical courses not for this year, but for another year. . . . What is the spirit of the surroundings? Upon what type of cooperation and encouragement can we depend? Etc.

On the lips of the seller, all the difficulties are easily covered with a clever sentence. Here, the historic and religious memories were not omitted; but it has not been stated that there is a question of only one-thirtieth of the former monastery, that this part is the most difficult as far as upkeep is concerned, that the remains of the saints are no longer there, and that the church has been destroyed. Yes, there is a great deal to be considered. If M. Pothain returns to his right of making the cession, all these things will need to be considered. I will then certainly take the liberty of asking your advice. In the meantime, I am glad for the circumstance which has given to me in your letter lessons and examples which inspire in me toward Your Excellency the sentiments of veneration with which I will not cease to be your very humble and faithful disciple, etc.

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**S. 420-2. To M. Pothain, Retired Notary**

December 2, 1826, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

Your letter arrived one day after that with which Monsignor had honored me. I answered His Excellency by pointing out, as I should, that the Saint-Mesmin project was yours and not mine; that far from adopting it, I had declared my incapacity because no arrangement had been made with the episcopal authority which has jurisdiction there. I remarked further that when you talked to me you did not have the final say, that a third person was involved, and finally, that its appropriateness for a religious Order had to be studied, and that would take time. Under the

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<sup>1</sup> Former Abbey of the Feuillants, where in 1841 the minor seminary of the diocese was established, rendered famous by Bishop Dupanloup.

circumstances, I was far from conceiving a project which by being concealed from the bishop would challenge his authority.

Your gentle and excellent bishop took a most Christian attitude and asked me for the documents which would explain our Institute. These are now being copied, and if someday His Excellency gives his permission, I will readily listen to your proposals, which must not appear as a project of which I am the author.

Monsieur, I cannot refuse your petition to be admitted among the children of Mary. I have taken note of your request and the date of your letter. If we ever establish ourselves in Orléans, you will be received there after conscientiously complying with the tests and conditions—the reception of the sacraments, a confessor approved by the Ordinary and known to us, a desire to perform good works preferably as a member of a team rather than as an individual, and other requirements, just as simple, which will allow you to fulfill your desire.

Your letter informs me that far from resuming the practice of law, you think only of business ventures which you propose to undertake. I will certainly rejoice at the successful outcome of your case with your creditor. I am certain you need peace of soul; you will enjoy this only after your affairs are in order.

May God grant you what he knows you need. I will remember you in my prayers. This is the first fruit of the affiliation you seek, and which I grant to you in Jesus and Mary.

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*These next two letters, written by Bro. David Monier, discuss a curious foundation project, a house for the Daughters of Mary in the city of Aire, in the diocese of the same name, a project which was not to come to realization.*

#### **421. To Mlle Beaulac, Aire**

December 10, 1826, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

My dear Daughter,

Your undated letter, but which I believe was written during the last days of November, has reached me. It sufficiently recalls to me your preceding letters and the answers which I gave you at the time. I am referring to them in all their contents.

One of the preliminary measures is the only one which has met with any difficulty, but the fault is not on your part. As I now recall, there was a question of making a visit to your place and then of deciding what could be done with it. My intention was also that the same visitor, who was supposed to give me a report on the place, should go in my name to the ecclesiastical authorities and obtain information regarding the religious and moral conditions of the locality. All this is necessary to know how to establish ourselves and to prepare the means to make the work bear fruit, to sustain it, and to safeguard it against certain obstacles. Finally, the thought came to me that at the time of my visit to our establishments of the Garonne, Lot, and the Gers, I would be able to make a digression as far as the edge of the Pyrénées to which you are so near, but all these thoughts could not be reconciled with the designs of Providence, which brought me to the other side of France, at the foot of the Alps and on the banks of the Rhine. I have not been back a very long while and your establishment, so long delayed, had returned to my mind without having at my disposal the type of visitors who might be suitable for the task at hand.

From your last letter, I consulted before God what I was to do in order to carry out his will and to correspond to all your confidence. After everything has been examined, it seems to me that considering the actual state of things, nothing better can be done than to confide the visit and the report to be made to the worthy pastor of Aire, whom I had the advantage of knowing before his appointment to that post and whom I appreciate as he fully deserves. If he is once convinced

that the enterprise is possible, suitable and capable of producing fruits of virtue and of religion, this worthy pastor will take it upon himself to secure the consent of His Excellency, your bishop. He will be kind enough to let me know everything that has happened, and then I will act without further delay.

There will be the question of sending you a good and well-trained religious sister with one or two companions at most, who as a result will arrange everything according to the Rules of the Institute. You will make a study of these Rules, with order and under her direction. This will serve you in place of a novitiate. You will be the founder of the house of Aire, and you will associate with yourself with those of your sisters or your friends whom you will judge capable of supporting you in everything you do. You will associate them to the foundation, for only founders are authorized by the Institute to make their probation outside of the general novitiate, and only in the house newly founded. If a greater number of postulants or founders were found, you would send them to Bordeaux, where the novitiate is located. I have my eyes upon two Mothers of the Institute, equal in goodness, of whom one will be delegated to you in the meantime and to get things started.

I am adding here a letter to your pastor; you will read it, my dear Daughter, and if there is nothing in it which might be opposed and anything of which I may be unaware, after having sealed it make it your responsibility to take it to the pastor.

In the meantime, pray to God that he may direct you in this work. I am asking God from the bottom of my heart that he may deign to grant his holy blessing to it, as well as to you as its founder.

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#### **422. To the Pastor of Aire**

December 20, 1826, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

[With insert from S. 422]

Reverend and Worthy Father,

It has been a long time since the good God has allowed us to be separated, one from the other, in our respective works, which as I fondly hope are also his. From one day to the next, I have been hoping to be able to propose that you help me in accomplishing a plan which has application in your region and which seemed by this very fact to belong to you. But the plan had already been formed, and several means of realizing it had been taken before the church of Aire had been placed under your charge, otherwise it would have been entrusted to you without fail.

Here are the facts.

For a long time, Mlle Beulac of your city has had the desire to convert the house of education which she has into a religious house, and to establish it in such a way that it might continue as such after her death. She asked me about Rules, and how she might set about the undertaking. She would have desired that I see the situation for myself or that, in any case, I would have the matter judged by a friend of God, habitually gifted with the ability of judging such establishments.

I entertained the hope of satisfying her, but this hope has vanished. Establishments located far from us, placed at opposite ends of France, have taken up my time and all my strength, as God has wished. Upon my return, Mlle Beulac asked me what she should think of my long silence, and if she can hope that I will come to her aid. The good God having been consulted in my prayers, you come into my mind. I believe this should not provoke you in any way, and that you will give the matter serious consideration.

We would open the establishment under the title of the Daughters of Mary, an Institute which already has notable houses and of which the divine goodness has wanted me to be the

Superior. Mlle Beaulac would be recognized as the founder of the house of Aire. She could join to herself co-founders, at least up to four, who along with her would bring the number up to five. She could go beyond this number providing the house offered enough resources for their maintenance in the religious state. Among this number, if it is five or more, would be two or three Sisters whom we call Companions, assistants or of service, who are not to have less of the religious spirit than the Mothers and as part of the foundation are to receive and share the same privileges, indulgences, etc.

If Mlle Beaulac would not be able to join to herself more than two co-founders, we would then have to associate to the foundation some of the sisters from our establishments already in existence, who in this case would have a share in the work of foundation. The number of at least five is indispensable, as the Institute does not know of any foundation with less than this number. In connection with Mlle Beaulac, you would see to their choice, among truly pious members who are free from any past irregularity.

I informed Mlle Beaulac that I would keep in readiness to leave one of the Mothers who is better instructed in our Rules, who will proceed to do what several holy religious have done in the most edifying monasteries of the Church. She will come to know these new sisters and to direct them during the time necessary, the length of which I will determine, instructing them in all the Rules both by conferences and by personal example. She will also bring with her two or three assistants, also clearly instructed. The time of these studies will take the place of novitiate for the subjects admitted for the foundation, and the individuals will be left to themselves until their progress has brought them to a point in education which leaves nothing more to be desired.

The miraculous harmony, if I may speak in this manner, which reigns in the convents of the Order will continue, I hope, in the new group. However, for the moment there are other things to consider.

(1) Is a religious house, containing a boarding school for young women, suitable to the region and its surroundings?

(2) Can schools for the young daughters of the people and free to the largest extent possible be accommodated separately?

(3) Are there now similar establishments that are to be managed?

(4) Does the bishop have any settled opinion about these various matters? Will he receive this new establishment under his eminent jurisdiction?

(5) Have the civil and local authorities any need to be spurred on, or will they gladly receive this additional help for religion and sound instruction?

My dear pastor, let us plant the vine of the Lord together. You do the watering, and Providence will bless it. With this intention, address some prayers during the holy sacrifice of the Mass, and believe me to be one with you in Jesus and Mary.

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*The foundation of the Daughters of Mary in Arbois was completed on November 16. The consolations of the first days were soon followed by a very sad trial, the serious illness of the young superior, Mother Marie-Joseph de Casteras, the cousin of Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon and who would become the third Superior-General of the Institute. The religious found support and comfort with a venerable benefactor, Mme Crestin d'Oussières.*

### **423. To Mme Crestin d'Oussières, Arbois**

December 27, 1826, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

Dear Madame,



I have received your excellent letter dated December 16. I read it with great attention, and I did not find it long because it told me only of things that are of great interest to my heart. I am very thankful to you for it, and I ask you always to continue your maternal care for the benefit of the Daughters of Mary. They all have the will to do the greatest good possible, but they have little experience. They are 500 miles away from their Good Father, and so they have even more need of an intelligent and experienced mother. Providence has brought them near to you and shows them to you as worthy of your affection by their virtues, at the same time as worthy of your compassion by the type of extreme poverty in which they find themselves. How could you stop yourself from adopting them and considering yourself their mother? With this hope, I have adopted their establishment in Arbois. Everything I had been told about you and everything I had seen for myself made me overlook many difficulties, which I could not at all have overlooked otherwise. From now on, I will speak to you with great openness of soul, with no fear of allowing you to notice the weaknesses and defects which should be hidden from the eyes of the world or strangers.

Madame, I have admired the prudence, charity, and delicacy with which you passed on the article in my letter of which Father Bardenet was the subject. I will not return to it. I understand the discretion that must be used in dealing with him and would not find it difficult to send him my procuration for the borrowing of the boarding school. I have met with few men more intelligent and more economical than he is when it comes to building. Right now he is busying himself, and with great interest, with the convent of Arbois. It would be annoying to allow him to apply his solicitude and care elsewhere. Furthermore, it is prudent to profit from the good dispositions in which the families of your country region seem to have, those which have daughters to be brought up and educated. It is very difficult to make up for time lost on similar occasions. By the confidence you have inspired, Madame, I will consider carefully everything you may tell me that it is useful to do. Nevertheless, I will take the liberty of making the following observations to you.

(1) The Society of Mary, like the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, has and acquires each day a certain fortune. I am not talking about my personal belongings, because I am identifying myself with both Institutes. Everything I have and everything I may have later on has been consecrated to the Lord for a long while. But—and you will not be surprised at this—I have contracted debts and I have made commitments which I sincerely hope to honor in their time. I will be greatly troubled for two or three years to place, as we say, a good face on a bad matter. In addition, the current expenses are very heavy because at the present time, I am in a position to form two other convents for the Daughters of Mary,<sup>1</sup> without speaking of those of the men which I have promised. Although the essential expenses for these establishments are offered to me, how many additional expenses have not been included!

(2) The apartments or rooms of the rural police were destined to lodge boarders. I had estimated with Father Bardenet that easily and with next to no expense, the religious could receive 20 or 25 boarders. Also, we decided that this year there would be no tuition for school. You see how the original plan has been changed; it is not precisely that I disapprove of this change, but no doubt you see the consequences.

(3) To save still more on building, Father Bardenet had me look over a vast place where without great cost we could place the sleeping quarters of a large boarding school. Personally, I did not understand much about this, but I turned the matter over to the intelligence of Father Bardenet, who had looked around the place himself.

(4) There, where we placed the free schools, we could organize the paying schools without confusion; there would be sufficient space. The entries could be different, and each group of pupils could even have a yard for gathering, proportionate to its number. I believe I had Father

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<sup>1</sup> No doubt there is a question of the projects of formation in Aire and in Lectoure, which were not to be realized.

Bardenet observe that we could arrange for a decent apartment for a chaplain. When I visited this part of the establishment, I found it very little disposed for school premises.

Father Bardenet assured me that there would be time to have all the repairs done before All Saints; it seems that so far nothing has been done, and this would be very inconvenient for the sisters. It must also be very difficult for them to have the children go through the movements needed to train them in deportment, modesty, etc., etc. You tell me, Madame, that the mayor's office is seeing to the repairs needed for the free schools. Would it not also be considered part of its responsibility to tend to those of the paying schools, at least of those which concern the working women?

(5) After all these considerations, it would seem we could delay the construction of the large building without inconvenience. In truth, it would cost enough to pay for all these repairs, but it would be a sum less than 20,000 francs and we could receive without interruption all the boarding students who would present themselves. From the number of boarders, we could even see the urgency there would be for further building. The religious are doing well by inconveniencing themselves to receive the 12 boarders who are enrolled.

Regarding the furniture of the boarding school, we could actually limit ourselves to having all the wooden beds made the same, and perhaps also what goes with them. The parents, who it seems to me are all from the city, could have the couches made according to measure and of wood. You know, Madame, that in all the boarding houses the boarders furnish everything they need for their personal use; but here, because there is the question of uniformity of which I greatly approve, it would be good if the community furnished the beds and then, as in other boarding houses, it would require a small fee from each boarder as repayment for this service.

You see, Madame, I am speaking to you as I would to the true Mother of this establishment. You will confer about this either with Father Bardenet or with those with whom it will seem useful to you to speak. You will have the kindness to let me know about your final plans, and I will conform to them. I will not write to Father Bardenet, for you will know better than I everything it is most suitable to tell him regarding me. Always, you can assure him of my dispositions to continue the work already begun. I have never abandoned any enterprise, and certainly I will not begin to do so with this one.

It would not at all seem suitable to me to have the sisters involved with all types of temporal schemes. Let them carefully follow their Rule, enter completely into the spirit of their institution, and occupy themselves with their works as perfectly as possible. This is their all-important concern.

I am taking the liberty of inserting into your envelope a short note for the good superior, who I hope will be in a state of convalescence. I would fear to burden you by adding here other observations I could make for you regarding the personnel of the sisters. I will limit myself to assuring you, Madame, of my sincere gratitude and profound respect.

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*The next two letters concern family matters. The first refers to difficulties arising between Father Chaminade and his nephew, François de Lala, at the time of his nephew's recent stay in Bordeaux. The second addresses a claim of Father Chaminade's older brother François on the heritage of his sister, who had died July 9. In reality, Lucrece Chaminade had left nothing. "You know very well," wrote Father Chaminade later to his brother, "that in the last and long years of her life, your sister has lived on hardly anything but the benevolence of others" (May 29, 1827).*

#### **424. To Mme Sophie de Lala, Sarlat**

January 7, 1827, Bordeaux

Original, Arch. of the de Lala Family

My dear Niece,

I have received your letter of January 1, and I thank you for the New Year greetings and good wishes you offer me. I had already offered you the same in my heart, and I am now doing the same in writing and with great sincerity. The turkey stuffed with truffles came in good condition. We will eat it with gratitude for your kind remembrance of us.

If your good husband had wished to listen to some of my counsels, however poor he believed them to be, it is possible that your residence in Bordeaux would have had better success. But you know that when I wanted to make few observations to him on the difficulties he might encounter or regarding precautions it seemed advisable for him to take, he believed I was indifferent regarding the success of his affair, etc. You are aware of everything that has happened. In the end, what could I do? Sigh, remain patient, and leave things as they were.

I was pained when you left Bordeaux, my dear Niece, hiding the displeasure you and your husband had because of my conduct in your regard. You have been misled. At my return from my round of visits, neither of you deigned to come to me, unless as it were in passing. If I had asked you not to come to my home during my absence, you would have been obliged to believe that I had good reasons for that, and not that you were a burden to me.

I had my share in the damage the hail and the mountain streams did to your harvest. It is very rare that reverses, just as prosperities, do not succeed one another.

Firmin has not written to me. I did not know he was in Paris. I had no other news about him than that which you have just given me. I fear greatly for him in the capital; religion sustains virtue, especially in a young man. I am going to recommend him to M. O'Lombel, but what will he be able to do for him?

My dear Niece, I ask you to give my regards to your good husband, content or discontented with his uncle. Embrace him for me. I hope you will bring him to the point of recognizing the sentiments of affection and interest which I have for him, for you, and for your son.

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#### **425. To Bro. David Monier, Bordeaux**

January 8, 1827, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

Does a childless widow have the legal obligation to declare in writing that she wishes to use some of her funds to sustain and render her existence more agreeable? Would she be able to offer and give them during her lifetime as a feeble compensation for the numerous sacrifices which would be made for her, without further written declaration? I believed so, and you seemed also to think so, when I asked you about this a while before her death.

If my sister did not have the legal right to dispose of what she had during her lifetime, even for her needs, without this said declaration, we must not risk becoming involved in a lawsuit; rather, we must get along with my brother, and, in one or another case, it is easy to see the declaration which must be made at the time of the registration.

Regarding the last letter I wrote to my brother and which caused him to be upset, it is difficult for me to have any regrets about it, for I recall the good disposition I was in at the time and the careful attention I gave to it.

Take care of your health, my dear Son, but as far as it will be possible for you without prejudice to anything or anyone, do not lose sight of the fact that the lack of order in the temporal affairs of the boarding school, may cause the entire establishment to crumble. Brother Laugeay has just run expenses up to 1,300 francs in Colmar, which he regarded as indispensable and which are having no other effect than causing the brothers to become vain and to make them lose the

religious spirit. This is the admission of two brothers who wrote to me about it, without making themselves known. Everything to you.

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

January 10, 1827, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

[With insert from S. 426]

My dear Son,

I have received with a very real pleasure the good New Year wishes and greetings which you and my dear Children in Saint-Remy sent to me last December 31. I bless you and I bless them, not only for this year, but for your entire life, as well as theirs, in all the effusion of my paternal tenderness.

You have already had 15 beds made for the new community of Arbois; you have advanced it some money, and you have done well to do so. It is thus that good brothers must act toward sisters who are working at the same tasks as they are. Nevertheless, I had already written to Mme d'Oussières on the subject of the beds for the boarders, but my letter had not yet reached her at the time of your visit to Arbois or to the other establishments. I cannot say when, but you may be sure it will be done.

How is it, my dear Son, that you received my letter of December 14 only on December 29? Several times I have already noticed delays more or less long. Try everything you can to prevent this inconvenience.

I received your letter of December 31 on January 7. You answered me too soon on the subject of the tax of 10,000 francs.<sup>1</sup> You did not reflect seriously before God, and you have even less placed all your confidence in the paternal providence of our God. You have seen only one means, that of borrowing 10,000 francs from some capitalist and of being provided with a procuration you felt you needed for this purpose. Our dear Bro. Louis Rothéa has answered me that he would suggest to his brother Xavier, without seeming to do so, not to ask you for anything this year.<sup>2</sup> A certain number of days ago, he answered me on this subject, just as I told you when I was writing to him. There is much more importance in paying here than you seem to believe; if some setback happens to take place, at least I will not need to reproach myself for not having taken every means possible to prevent it, and the slightest setback of this kind can do as in the penitents at cards<sup>3</sup>—the first one to fall causes all the others to fall successively.

I would be pleased to see you look after the preparation of several dormitories in the garrets, to give further development to the boarding school. Nevertheless, this should not be prejudicial to the 10,000 francs. Make it a point to receive all the boarders who present themselves. Let them sleep in the extra rooms, even in my room and its antechambers.<sup>4</sup>

I am awaiting from day to day a young man in ecclesiastical clothing who is to leave for Saint-Remy as your boarder. He is 18 years old and was in the sixth class in the seminary of Besançon. He is pious, very honest, and very modest; he left the seminary only because of the misconduct of his father, which has become public news. The poor young man is trying to hide his shame and to go to some distant place where he would not be known. His mother has the means to provide for his tuition, his travel, and his maintenance. We have agreed on 400 francs

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<sup>1</sup> In his letter of December 14, which has not been preserved, Fr. Chaminade had asked Bro. Clouzet to send him 10,000 francs for urgent needs in Bordeaux.

<sup>2</sup> As interest on sums loaned.

<sup>3</sup> The reference here is to a children's game. Cards are placed against one another in a file, similar to a row of penitents. If the first falls, all the others fall with it.

<sup>4</sup> The room on the second floor in the extremity of the right wing of the château, opening onto the principal lane.

for tuition and 20 francs for the use of the bed. He will be supplied with all the clothing he needs. I am expecting him any day now. His father's house is located about 20 miles from Bordeaux. In case of need, I will tell you more about the subject.

It seems to me you have been somewhat hasty regarding Besançon. (1) Is Brother Troffer actually in a condition to be head of such an establishment? (2) Under the supposition that he is—as can be presumed, considering how close you are to Besançon—have you seen the administrators of this establishment? Are they glad to give us the administration and the government? Will they do for the Brothers of Mary what they are doing for the present teachers? Etc., etc. In a way, I would be pleased if by this substitution we could point to a considerable savings in the running of the place. The present heads of the shops, who would be retained, must be entirely dependent upon the head of the establishment and not upon the administration.

Take care that all the arrangements are very clear, that everything is well-ordered, and that the Rule of the house and of the brothers is well adapted and entirely conformable to the spirit of the Institute of Mary. You will be in a position to approve everything, at least temporarily; but for definitive authorization, pass everything on to me. Furthermore, I see with pleasure that you are taking an interest in this establishment. If I had time to tell you what is happening in Paris in regard to us,<sup>1</sup> you would be very glad to know you had in no way neglected it.

Father Caillet let me see Father Rothéa's letter of apology. I had been expecting that he would recognize his mistake; I will answer him a little later. Regarding the prompt opening of the new establishment of Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines where everything is ready to receive the brothers, here are the final arrangements I will order by this mail for the four establishments of Alsace. (1) To Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines, Brothers Laugeay, Weber, and Perriguy. (2) To Saint-Hippolyte, Brother Colin in place of the dear Brother Rothéa; all the others, just as they are. Brother Rothéa will keep the primary inspection of the house; he can do this easily from Colmar. There are three coaches each day from Colmar to Sélestat. (3) To Colmar, the dear Brother Rothéa, head and teaching the class which Brother Weber is handling for those destined for first Communion; Brother Coustou for the large class in French. (4) To Ammerschwir, the two who are already there, until a third can be sent. My dear Son, you see Brothers Coustou and Perriguy designated for Colmar; I cannot tell you all the precautions I had to take to arrive at this result, all the letters which have been written from everywhere, and all the information I have gathered wherever it could be found. I hope everything will go well. Brother Coustou will find one of my letters in Colmar.

Take courage, my dear Son! In going to fulfill their mission the apostles wept and sighed, but what was their joy, says the Holy Spirit, at the sight of the abundant harvest they reaped! You will be like the apostles, my dear Son—you sow in tears and sighs, but the blessing of God will give you an abundant harvest, and a very pure joy will be your reward; but penetrate yourself deeply with the spirit of the apostles!

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*The state of Adèle's health is becoming more and more alarming, and the lingering illness which is sapping her strength is progressing. Father Chaminade orders public prayers to be said for her in all the houses of the Daughters of Mary.*

## **427. To Mother Louis de Gonzague, Bordeaux**

January 27, 1827, Bordeaux

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<sup>1</sup> Through M. O'Lombel, Fr. Chaminade had been in relationships with various people who were busy with various social activities, in particular with members of the Association of Saint Joseph, established in 1822 by the Missionaries of France, who directed the apprentice shops for young workmen.

Copy, Agmar

My dear Daughter,

This morning by today's mail I have sent an order which prescribes prayers and supplications for the restoration of the health of the good Mother Superior of the convent of Agen. It is to be sent to the three convents of Agen, Tonneins, and Condom. Because time was pressing, I was not able to have copies made; so I made up for this by this short letter for the novitiate in Bordeaux and for the community in Arbois, to which you will be kind enough to send a copy.

In substance, this order contained the following six articles.

Article 1. Every day, until the complete restoration of the health of Sister Marie, Superior and Founder of the Daughters of Mary, the Litanies of Saint Joseph will be sung.

Article 2. The first nine days will be distinguished as a novena, to which are invited the members of the Third Order and of the Sodalties and all pious people, friends of the convents.

Article 3. In the cities where the bishops and archbishops or their representatives reside, a humble petition will be presented to them on the part of the convents, with the end of obtaining permission to have Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament every day during the novena.

Article 4. The singing of the Litanies of Saint Joseph will be continued until the reception of the official notice concerning the restoration to health of the Mother Superior. Pious lay people will be able to assist at this, without any infringement upon the rules of strict enclosure.

Article 5. A day of general Communion will be determined upon in the course of the novena, as much for the sisters as for the lay people who will make it.

Article 6. All the Communions of the sisters which take place on Sundays, and also the Friday fasts, will be made according to this intention.

You will see to it, my dear Daughter, that these six articles are carried out within the shortest delay possible, and you will kindly and promptly give notice of them to the community of Arbois.

I hope to be able to spend all the next Thursday morning in the novitiate, and I will have occasion to listen to all those who will want to speak to me.

May the peace of the Lord, my dear Daughter, be always with you!

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**428. To Bishop de Chamon of Saint-Claude**

February 9, 1827, Bordeaux

Original, Arch. of the Bishop of Saint-Claude

Your Excellency,

I am completely embarrassed over all the good things and kind attentions that you express in your letter of last November, for which I have not as yet had occasion to express my sincere gratitude. All I can offer as an excuse for this delay is that I wanted to have a copy of your letter sent to Father Bardenet and to await his answer regarding the matter of the normal school, which he had discussed with your Excellency. I have not yet received his answer. Perhaps he feels guilty for having exaggerated our claims for the forming of this school. I am disposed and ready to do everything possible in order to enter into your views regarding this establishment, which is so necessary to your diocese. What is most difficult in the establishments, as you wisely observe, Your Excellency, is to give them a truly capable and efficient head. If as I hope I can make my visits in the northeast of France this summer, I will have the honor of seeing you,

paying you my respectful homage, and agreeing upon a common plan of action with Your Excellency by which I can be of assistance to you in increasing the good you are doing in your diocese.

In the letter I had the honor of writing to you on November 6, Your Excellency, I omitted designating for you the superior I was choosing for the community of Arbois. In fact, I wrote to him only on November 8; he is Father Lalanne, principal of the *collège* of Gray, one of our good religious and one of my dearest Children. But Your Excellency, although the correspondence of the community with him may be very active, considering the short distance between Arbois as he has already done several times since the arrival of the sisters I would believe that in pressing cases, it would be good for him to have a substitute, even in Arbois. The pastor of the city seems to have the wisdom and the experience necessary. Your Excellency, not doubting that you will consider him acceptable, I will write to him to tell him I took the liberty of designating him to you. I will also give notice of this to the superior of the community of Arbois. This budding community was not able to give its works the development they should have because of the long and dangerous illness which the superior fell victim to a few days after her arrival, and also because the preparations on the building had made only a little progress by the time the sisters arrived.

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

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*Nevertheless, with the first momentum over, difficulties natural to the consolidation of the work make themselves felt—increasing financial trouble as establishments are multiplied, the capital of foundation almost always lacking. Also there are troubles with personnel: there is not enough time for training of subjects, and requirements of the works call for less strictness regarding the admission of recruits. There are difficulties of organization; the government of the Society of Mary is constituted only nominally, and in fact everything still rests only on the head of Father Chaminade; it is very difficult for things to be otherwise. The result for souls less strongly tempered is fear, hesitation, and discontent; these begin to show in the correspondence. From now on, Father Chaminade will be obliged not only to provide for the progress of the works, but also to remedy these internal dangers and causes of uneasiness. He applies himself to this task in a correspondence with Brother Clouzet which will continue for several years.*

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

February 14, 1827, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

My dear Son,

Brother Gaussens tells me you fell on the ice-covered snow and sprained your arm. I was sorry to receive this news, and even sorrier at the thought of the pain you must be experiencing with this sprain. From day to day I am awaiting some new letter which will give me further details and which tell me if there have been even more annoying complications or consequences.

On the occasion of a letter from Father Lalanne on the subject of the 10,000 francs I requested from you, and in which he finds that in this matter you reason more like a merchant than a religious, I was going to write to you again when I had someone reread to me my letter of January 10, the one answering yours of December 31; I noticed that Father Lalanne and I had seen everything nearly the same way. You will also do well to read it again and to place all your confidence in the Lord. If we are too greatly surprised at difficulties and allow ourselves to become discouraged, far from advancing, we will be throwing ourselves headlong into serious difficulties. If I have asked you for 10,000 for the beginning of next May, this is because I believed you might be able to succeed by using the means I had indicated to you in my request.

From your letter of December 31, you do not seem to have examined the matter seriously, and still less to have prayed to God to favor the trials and endeavors you might make. Doubtless, nothing must be done that is contrary to reason and prudence, but we must know that there is such a thing as supernatural prudence, which is greatly superior to the human variety.

I learned with pleasure of the arrival of Brother Coustou in Colmar, but at the same time I see with some regret by the letter of dear Brother Gaussens that you needed him at Saint-Remy. If you had sent him immediately at the beginning of the school year, when through Father Caillet I brought the matter to your notice and when at the same time you would have given me a list of the needs of your establishment, I presume that now your house would have been provided with all the subjects it needs. Whatever the case may be, I will watch with care what is happening, in order to profit from the circumstances and if possible to send you some new subject.

In the meantime, give me a very clear account of all the subjects you might need for all the functions to be accomplished, and one of the subjects who are fulfilling them at the present time. Tell dear Brother Gaussens that I bewail the fact that he is overloaded with work. I will answer him directly at the soonest possible time.

I am sending you the chart for a list by name of all the brothers, which you will fill out or have filled out when you can, without haste but also without negligence.

I would still have many things to tell you, but I am obliged to stop for the present. I will take them up with you as soon as circumstances permit.

Say many kind things on my part to Brother Brunet; I often think of him, and I hope not to delay much longer in writing to him, at least a short letter.

My dear Son, may the Lord shower upon you and upon all my Children in Saint-Remy his most abundant benedictions!

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#### Information or Chart for the Brothers Received in the Society of Mary

1. Name, Christian name, age, place of birth of the brothers.
2. Names, Christian of the father and mother, the quality of their condition, their means of existence, the number of their children. Is there some strain in the reputation of any one of the members of the family, and especially of the same name? Is there some hereditary malady?
3. The religious name of the brothers, if they have one,<sup>1</sup> the date and the conditions of their entrance into the Society. The title: is he a postulant, novice, professed for one year, two years, three years, for life? The place where he is stationed.
4. A short description of each brother: his physical build, his character, his judgment, his heart, his education, his piety, and his aptitude for an office.

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

March 7, 1827, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

Your letter of February 18 came to me at the same time as the one you wrote to Father Caillet on February 16: I was sighing for the moment about when I could answer both, and I had just found it when your letter of February 26 arrived; I am taking all three, and I am answering.

In the three letters, my dear Son, just as on the particular sheet, I see with sorrow and great compassion that your imagination is overexcited, and this excitement is the cause of certain troubles of your good heart; this makes you ill and causes you severe headaches. At all times,

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<sup>1</sup> As was the case with brothers who left the Institute of Fr. Mertian.



superiors have had to endure many difficulties, whatever their grade or rank may have been. A good pastor has many, if he wishes to do his duty, but his archbishop has many more. Saint Paul had to go through many more than each archbishop or bishop in particular. You have many, but do you believe I do not have still more? Are your troubles not very much my own?

What seems most to worry you is that you are under the impression that I doubt your good dispositions. You would be correct, my dear Son, if it were true that I have such doubt in your regard, but this is not the case. There is no one in the Society in whom I have more confidence than in you. I may have made several remarks to you, but this is in no way a proof that I have no confidence in you. It means only that I do not approve this or that matter. And then, are you without any kind of defect? Are you not likely to be mistaken, in spite of your goodwill and your pure intentions? Do I not have the duty to help to lift you, when I believe you are falling or have fallen? I may, I admit this, do it rather awkwardly. It is also possible that believing you stronger in virtue, I am less troubled by you. Be deeply convinced, my dear Son, that I am everything to you, as I believe you are everything to me in God and for God, and following this conviction, be patient and remain quiet. . . .

I will follow the particular sheet as a summary of the three letters.

(1) I have known something about the letters which were written to you from Saint-Hippolyte and from Colmar. At one time, some sentences were quoted to me. I answered almost immediately to move away from the impropriety and in such a way that it was never done again. That is perhaps what has brought you the request that all these letters should be burned. That I myself should be biased against you, my dear Son, I have already assured you of the contrary, and I am repeating it here very willingly. No, no!

(2) Is the government of the Institute defective? I answer that it is not defective in its principles; I am far from denying this, as far as its action is concerned. I am so convinced of my awkwardness that I will never be astonished when its results are blame.

As you say, I should govern alone. This is just what I have been doing since the return from my visits. All the members of my council are scattered.<sup>1</sup>

As far as you are concerned in the change of Brother Coustou, only I, without influence from any source, have decided this. You say I should have consulted the head of the establishment where he was. But are you clearly aware that I was coming from Saint-Remy when I made up my mind? The last time I ordered his departure from Colmar, I had just received a letter from Father Rothéa, which nearly told me that he was useless at Saint-Remy, that the refusal to send him to Saint-Hippolyte had hardly any other motive than his excessive vanity. The letter Brother Coustou wrote to me around this time did no more than confirm what Father Rothéa had said. Take note that previously you had written to me that it was Father Rothéa who had decided he was not to leave. On the other hand, what consultation I had made and what information I had sought from the small number of heads we have in Alsace! Only after all the possible information was obtained, alone and with no outside influence, after having turned the matter over and over in my mind for several days, did I finally come to my final determination.

I will be obliged to you, my dear Son, that if you see any type of defect in this way of doing things, you will let me know of it. At my age, I can profit from good advice and wise counsels and acquire experience, which is always a wise teacher.

(3) You exclaim too, my dear Son, against the order I had given you to count 10,000 francs for the first two weeks of May, and I see that you have reason to cry out, for your mind was not on the situation, where I believed it might be. I have not given a similar order to any other establishment. I was taking precautions and care in making my requests and, so to speak, boasting about the imposition I had placed upon you. This way of proceeding has succeeded in regard to another establishment, which offers far less resources than Saint-Remy. A certain jealousy resulted from this because, purely and simply, I was imposing 10,000 francs upon you,

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<sup>1</sup> Fr. Collineau in Villeneuve, Fr. Lalanne in Gray. There remained only Bro. Auguste Brougnon-Perrière in Bordeaux.

while the other establishment was being consulted as to what it could do. I have been obliged to impose upon it in the same way for its own satisfaction. We hope to succeed, and it is true that we are praying a great deal.

(4) It is true that when Father Lalanne entered our small seminary as superior, I did not disapprove that he required that everyone should address one another by the titles of "Father" or "Brother," but I have never ordered that it should be so.<sup>2</sup>

For myself, at times I have done this and again at other times I have not done it. I have just given an order regarding this matter which seems to me conciliatory to all tastes and to all considerations. I will, however, not have it made known without first having consulted the older and the principal members of the Society. I am not consulting even you, for your advice is so decisive in your letters. Nonetheless, if you happen to have something good to say on the subject, I will be glad to hear it.

At another time, I will give you the answer to several other articles in your letters. May the peace of the Lord, my dear Son, be always with you!

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

March 20, 1827, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

[With insert from S. 341]

My dear Son,

I have received your two letters of March 9 and March 12. Do not be afraid to multiply them, as I always receive them with pleasure and interest, although for some time they have contained only a few consoling and encouraging things. All those that come to me from Alsace have been postpaid since our financial difficulties have become known.

It seems your soul does not yet enjoy great peace. Because you are experiencing even greater contradictions, you are allowing yourself to enter into a kind of interior irritation that make these contradictions seem much greater than they actually are in themselves.

For example, do you not think I would have honored your draft for 240 francs, if there had not been a mistake? The inaccuracy was such that the most able financier could not have avoided it. Many days before Father Bardenet informed me, Mlle de Nouillan asked me to pay a certain sum from a refund that was due to me. I asked her where her letter came from, and she said from near Montpellier. Twice she asked me if I had received any word about this transaction. I artlessly replied, "No." However, the last time she asked, I had received a letter from Father Bardenet in which he said, "Brother Clouzet must have asked you to pay a draft for 240 francs in Bordeaux; the good ladies trust that you can advance them that sum." I saw no connection between Mlle Nouillan's request and Father Bardenet's letter; in fact, I was glad I had not invested the 240 francs in what seemed the good intentions of the worthy young woman, in order to reserve them for Father Bardenet's draft, which you had failed to mention to me. The money has been kept on hand until this day; I will put it to use, now that you have taken care of the matter yourself. I must admit that after waiting so long for that draft, I thought you must have made Father Bardenet change it from payable on receipt to one with several days' grace.

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<sup>2</sup> In his preceding letter, Fr. Chaminade had written "To my dear Son, Brother Clouzet," which motivated the surprise and the protest of Bro. Clouzet and the explanation of Fr. Chaminade. From the beginning, religious of the Society of Mary had called one another "*Monsieur l'abbé*," and this custom has been preserved. The address of "Brother" was nevertheless not excluded, as we see from Fr. Chaminade's correspondence. It was authorized by the Constitutions of 1839, art. 132, and in correspondence among the religious, lay or clerical, the expression "My dear brother" was frequent at this time. The order to which Fr. Chaminade refers was not published and has not been preserved.

My dear Son, please send a copy of the above to Father Bardenet, and also to M. Beau. It seems to me that if your soul had been at peace, you would not have been so bothered by this miserable incident. I can hardly believe that Father Bardenet, who is experienced, did not explain more fully how he was drawing on me, and especially that he did not immediately advise me of the action. I will continue to write to Father Bardenet, but make no mention of the draft. Do not forget to send a copy of the above to both Father Bardenet and M. Beau. A copy should be sent to anyone else who may be involved in the matter.

You tell me, my dear Son, "Over here, letters are being received from some trustworthy person in Bordeaux which give distressing details about the Society of Mary and its manner of running things in the Midi." My dear Son, what would you wish me to answer to such generalities? As far as I am concerned, I generally receive from all the sections of the Midi where we have establishments of men and of women only letters of congratulation. In general, all the details provided to me are consoling. I am often asked for new establishments. In Bordeaux, there never has been more rule and order in everything. I have opened my heart to you regarding the type of chasm dug on Rue du Mirail, but this chasm has not as yet been seen by anyone. That some people said to be trustworthy should be writing against the Society does not surprise me in any way, for in the city talk for and against is continually heard, not based on actual knowledge but on rumors and reports, most of the time without any foundation. I am not bothering at all about it. Do the same, my dear Son, and let us do all the good we can, and do it with all the prudence at our command. Let us keep ourselves in peace.

You add, "Saint-Hippolyte is getting along very badly and it could hardly be otherwise, for it is a very unwise policy to desire to do what we cannot." My dear Son, do these lines not still announce that there is yet in you a remainder of trouble and irritation? The disorder in Saint-Hippolyte has not been of long duration; the fire that took place about the same time has not had any annoying results and was in no way caused by the stumbling block which was to be found there. Father Mertian would certainly be very unkind to attribute his disorder to someone of the Society because it is one of his former brothers, the music teacher of Saint-Hippolyte, who has secretly sown anxiety and discouragement among the boarders and other people of the house. He was sent away, and peace has been restored.

Regarding the reflection you make on what you call "our false policy," I will not excuse it because I am already entirely convinced that my way of doing things must be very defective, although I am not aware of it. I will remark only that the word "policy" does not express our way of doing things. I do not recall having begun any type of institution without having first examined if it was in the order of Providence, and when I believed it was my duty to begin it, I tried to put into it all the prudence of which I was capable. That I should be mistaken regarding the order of Providence or that my prudence should be defective, I grant all this; but that is not exactly what is called "policy." Also, my dear Son, can someone judge either the goodness or the usefulness of an establishment by the misconduct of some people whom we could in no way suspect?

"Saint-Remy is in the saddest of conditions!" I believe this, my dear Son, and the illness of Father Chevaux must be giving you additional worries. I believe I have already given you notice that I would not lose sight of Saint-Remy. Keep me informed about the illness of Father Chevaux, and if during the fine season in which we are entering he does not get better, I will make the greatest sacrifices to send you help. Brother Gaussens, whose letter you have just sent to me, speaks to me about your troubles, but he does it in a much more moderate way than you, although just as exact. My dear Son, do everything that will depend upon you to enter entirely into the peace of your soul, which should be none other than the peace of God. In all things, adore the dispositions of Providence. Human views are limited and uncertain. Let us entrust ourselves to the amiable Providence of our God. Let us try to carry out in the best way possible the plans which he deigns to communicate to us, and let us remain tranquil. This demands our cooperation, but not our success. All the glory be to God, all pain and confusion be to us, miserable cooperators!

I am going to write to our dear Brother Olive<sup>1</sup> to have him send you his procuration directly in order to sell everything he has in the region. If he has a few particular intentions, he will be able to let you know them. You will put into these sales all the activity you can and draw from them all the profit you can.

I believe Father Caillet will have already written to you to tell you to receive the 1,000 francs which are due to Sister Marie de la Croix; I do not recall her family name.

I have received, although it was on the day after my name day, but with grateful and paternal affection, the name day greetings and good wishes which you and all my Children in Saint-Remy sent to me. I ask you all to accept the assurance of my warm feelings and tender friendship. May the Lord deign to shower upon you all his most abundant blessings!

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This letter contains the first explicit mention of Jean-Joseph Chevaux, who was to become the third Superior General of the Society of Mary.

“As long as there will be a Society of Mary, his memory will be in benediction!” This is the tribute given to him the day after his death by a religious charged with writing his biography, one of the most interesting in our annals, and in this he was only the echo of all his brothers who mourned his death as that of their superior and father, and whom they venerated as a saint.

Born in 1796, in the village of Jouhe (Jura) at the foot of the sanctuary of Our Lady of Mont-Roland, the young Chevaux made excellent studies in the seminary at Besançon, where he was known for his great piety, his sound judgment, and his excellent spirit; but his humility persuaded him that he was unworthy of the priesthood, and he returned to his family, then placed himself at the service of a venerable priest afflicted with cancer, whom he assisted until his death.

About this time, the Society of Mary took possession of the house of Saint-Remy. Young Jean Chevaux did not delay in presenting himself, dressed in a simple peasant smock, to be employed in farm work (1825). The secret of his life and virtues was soon discovered, and in 1828 shortly after his promotion to the priesthood, by order of Father Chaminade, at Saint-Remy he was named to the office of Head of Zeal, which he was to exercise on a terrain more and more vast during the entire course of his life.

He was Head of Zeal first in Saint-Remy in the boarding school and in the community of the Working Brothers, called Saint-Joseph, which he formed more by his example than by his counsels to the practice of the most austere virtues, to the point of making of it, according to the expression of the Founder, “a new Thébaïde.”

An obedience of December 15, 1841, made Father Chevaux Provincial of Alsace with residence in Ebersmunster. This was the first provincial nomination in the Society of Mary, while the office of provincial was completely organized only in 1849.

Named General Head of Zeal by the Chapter of 1845, from that time he lived with Father Caillet in Bordeaux and then in Paris (1861). In Bordeaux, he settled in Sainte-Anne, where for 15 years he was Master of Novices and formed to the religious life, among many others, Father Simler and the saintly Father de Lagarde. From this time on, the action of Father Chevaux in the Society of Mary became more and more extended. “In the Council of the Superior General matters were decided, but in the cell of Sainte-Anne around that very small table in front of this little crucifix that Father Chevaux found this simple and benevolent language with which he knew how to say everything, how to have all accepted without ever hurting anyone’s feelings, without ever discouraging anyone. Who would be able to count the souls, who according to need he raised, fortified, brought back, caught on the edge of the abyss, or sent along the beautiful

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<sup>1</sup> Biographical note. Pierre Olive (1797-1864) born in Amance near Saint-Remy, made his novitiate at Saint-Laurent in 1825, was employed in teaching in various schools of the Midi and Franche-Comté, exercised the functions of director at Orgelet (1827-38) and in Sellières (1839-54) and died in retirement at Courtefontaine. Everywhere he left the memory of a charming simplicity, which caused him to be called “the Good Father Olive.”

ways of perfection! This is the secret of heaven. Those who had the happiness of living in this happy solitude of Sainte-Anne under the direction of Father Chevaux will never forget either the morning meditations made aloud, those peaceful recreations at which he never failed to preside, or those walks in which he only rarely took part because he was greatly kept by his occupations.

The Chapter of 1868 named Father Chevaux as Superior General. For him this was like a thunderbolt, and nothing less than a formal order from Cardinal Mathieu, who presided at the Chapter, was necessary to have him accept the nomination. For seven years he served with the humility and mildness that always had been and to the end would be the characteristic traits of his life, devoting his attention especially to prayer and to the direction of souls.

He thus arrived at the end of the year 1875, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his entrance into the Society of Mary. Around the middle of December his strength abandoned him, and he saw his end approaching. From then on, for all those who could visit him it was a spectacle of the greatest edification. On December 15, surrounded by his children in tears, he received the Sacrament. On the eve of the Feast of Saint John, his well-beloved patron, he had the first Vespers of the Office recited by his assistants, visibly uniting himself to their prayer. He renewed his religious vows into their hands. At the moment when the prayer *Sub venite sancti Dei* was being recited, he rendered his beautiful soul to God.

Good Father Chevaux left various essays on mental prayer, particular examen, spiritual direction, and especially a series of circulars animated with profound religious spirit. To him also are due ordinances upon the holding of councils and upon the functions of the Inspectors. He also affiliated the Society of Mary to the Apostleship of Prayer. His body rests in Merles in the vault of the Superiors General.

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

April 9, 1827, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

[With insert from S. 432]

My dear Son,

I received, one after the other, your two letters of last March 24 and March 30. In my last two letters, you have been able to read less reproaches than paternal counsels. I was a little sorry that you were allowing yourself to be mastered by your sensibility, and also because you were allowing yourself to be frightened by the difficulties or contradictions you may experience. We all have great need of possessing ourselves and of not allowing our imaginations to get the better of us. However busy you may be, my dear Son, pay sufficient attention to mental prayer, as only there will you find in sufficient great abundance that peace of soul which you must never abandon. There you will learn to resign yourself and to be patient in the midst of numerous difficulties and contradictions; these are never lacking in establishments that are meant to accomplish great good. Often adore interiorly, adore always and in all things the dispositions of Divine Providence. Let us always have present in our minds this maxim of faith, that “nothing ever happens without order or the permission of God.”

Enclosed are two letters, one for Brother Dubarry and the other for Brother Brunet. The first is not sealed, and you may do with it as you please. If you think he should be sent back here, give him the letter, sealed or not, as you see fit. In this case, I do not believe you should give him money for the trip, but get him a place on the coach leaving Vesoul for Paris. Vesoul might even give him a ticket all the way to Bordeaux, and then you could send a refund to the office at Vesoul. Otherwise you could write to M. O’Lombel in Paris, no. 7, Rue de Sèvres, and ask him to

reserve a place on the coach for Bordeaux. As usual, you will pay half the cost and I will pay the other half upon his arrival, in spite of my poverty.

You tell me, my dear Son, that it would be urgent to replace Brother Fridblatt.<sup>1</sup> I believe this because you say so, but at this time this cannot be done by Brother Laugeay. The establishment of Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines has had a good beginning and is doing well, but it is still very new, and I find myself obliged to replace Brother Weber; he is greatly vulnerable because of his relatives and acquaintances. I am told to send him to Ammerschwir in place of Brother Stoffel, who would serve as a teacher of music in Saint-Hippolyte. Regarding a music teacher, if you believe the one we sent back from Saint-Hippolyte may become a good subject, you might write to him and invite him to come to see us in Saint-Remy. I received his certificate from the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs to exempt him from conscription. If he does not enter Saint-Remy, I will be obliged to announce his leaving of the Society to the office of the prefect of the Upper Rhine.

You say that Brother Cuny, professed, is always asking for an answer on my part. I have no idea at all that this Brother Cuny has written to me, or of any request he may have made to me. Father Caillet, who could have informed me about this matter, is absent. He is in Saint-Laurent with all his people, directing a small retreat for all the novices or postulants in preparation for the Feast of Easter. In general, the two houses, the Madeleine and Saint-Laurent, are doing well. Both have a fair number of good subjects.

I was on the point of sending you one of the theologians, a young man of about 30. He is accustomed to teaching, but only the sixth because of his weak eyesight. He can teach this class without any preparation, whether it is for Latin or for French. He has not yet entirely made up his mind regarding religious life, but he has certainly decided to live according to the Rule, and he is among the most regular in our small seminary. The cause of the delay in his departure is my hope of having his travel paid for by one of his protectors in Paris. Already several days ago, I had someone write to this effect.

I am now returning to Brother Fridblatt. I have just run quickly through the letter he wrote to me last March 19. I see in fact that his imagination is becoming more and more excited, but will he get any better at Saint-Laurent? This is too bad, because he was very useful to you in the normal school. I would have sent you the dear Brother Etignard.<sup>1</sup> He would be easily able to do everything that you would need, but two great reasons oblige me to keep him still as head at Saint-Laurent; first, he is not yet cured of too great a quickness of action, which often deteriorates into heedlessness and second, he is of this country, but not likely to be much of a prophet in it. Remain patient, for in time I hope, we will see the end of everything. Please tell Brother Fridblatt from me that I have been very mindful of everything he tells me in his letter of March 19 and that I am determined to have him come here to me, providing you or I can replace him at Saint-Remy. In the meantime, let him fulfill his post well, and let him do this without anxiety, now that he has completely opened his soul to me and that I am at ease in regard to his spiritual needs.

You often tell me that you have good subjects to send, but that you fear that Brother Etignard is no longer at Saint-Laurent and that he may have been replaced by Brother Gobillot. It

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<sup>1</sup> Biographical note. André Fridblatt (1802-61) born in Elsenheim, Alsace, made his novitiate at Saint-Remy while he was a teacher in the normal school, 1824. He made a second novitiate at Saint-Remy at the direction of Fr. Chaminade (1828) and returned to the normal school at Saint-Remy, where he spent several years. He was ordained in 1825 and was charged with the direction of the postulates in Courtefontaine, Marast, and finally in Saint-Hippolyte, where he remained for 20 years. He died there, worn out from work, but leaving the memory of a religious in love with humility and poverty, entirely devoted to the Blessed Virgin and to her Society, for which he gained many vocations, in particular that of two of its Superiors General, Fr. Simler and Fr. Hiss.

<sup>1</sup> Biographical note. Fr. Augustine Etignard (1807-78), born in Laviron, Doubs, entered the Society of Mary in 1826 and filled several posts of confidence, but he had to leave in 1836 because of his character, poorly fitted for community life. He always remained deeply attached to Fr. Chaminade, and in 1871, with Fr. Lalanne, he erected the monument in the Chartreuse Cemetery of Bordeaux. He died in Bordeaux on September 25, 1878, and was buried beside Fr. Chaminade.

is very true that I would have wished to make a superior of Brother Gobillot, but a long while ago I gave up hope of doing so. I will then still leave Brother Etignard in Saint-Laurent because (1) he is doing fairly well there; (2) he himself needs to be trained in view of future positions as superior; and (3) I have no one to replace him adequately.

I would be very pleased with your plans, but I will return to this point some other time. Perhaps I will wait for the visit I intend to make to you, especially if you send me some money to cover expenses, for the needs of which I spoke to you are becoming more urgent from day to day, and I would not dare to start out on a journey before all of them have been met.

I have not yet been able to write to Brother Olive to send you his procuration, but I will do so here and now. I will also have someone write again to Sister Marie de la Croix. You no longer tell me anything about the 4,000 francs of which you spoke at the time of your return from Besançon.

I am stopping now, my dear Son. Take courage. Place all your confidence in the Savior and in the protection of our august Mother. Do simply, honestly, and in peace everything that you can. May the Lord deign to shower upon you his most abundant benedictions!

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**S. 432-2. To Mlle Faivre,  
Head of the Saint-Jacques Hospice, Besançon**

May 7, 1827, Bordeaux

Madame Superior,

I was away when your letter of March 7 arrived in Bordeaux. Shortly before, I had received word from Brother Clouzet, the director of our house at Saint-Remy. Both reassure me on the question of establishing the Brothers of Mary in the Saint Jacques Hospice. Brother Clouzet adds, "The board of directors would like to have the shops run by the Brothers of Mary, and the Mother Superior was advised by the board to write to me." The direction of the shops may be in the hands of the Society of Mary without necessarily changing all the shop teachers. They would be replaced in time, unless they felt called to the religious state. For instance, I believe I can soon replace the head shoemaker. I may be able to pay you a short visit near the end of the summer; you might have the board write to me about the project, or you yourself could write to me. You will always find me ready to support your good project.

I am respectfully. . . .

P.S. Please give my respectful remembrance to Sister Tharin.

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

May 7, 1827, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

[With inserts from S. 433]

My dear Son,

I received your letter of last April 24 and with it the three bills of exchange which you sent me from Paris in the sum of 2,096.45 francs. You console me in telling me that this is only a small beginning, which will prove to me your goodwill and disposition for doing even better in the future. When I received your letter and these bills of exchange, three hours had not passed after I had presented our many urgent needs to the good God. My dear Son, I am not saying this

to cause you any anxiety, for I desire you to remain as quiet and as confiding in Providence as I ordinarily am. It is always our duty to do everything we can, but in peace and confidence.

I had sent you notice of a claim made by Sister Emmanuel, today Sister Léocadia, on the mayor of Amance, I believe.

A short time after you wrote, you should have received a procuration in due form from Brother Olive. I was informed from Moissac a few days ago that it had been sent. I will have another one sent to you and made out to Brother Gobillot so he can sell all his furniture. He has just sent me a list of 27 items he is offering for sale. The entire amounts to 2,727 francs 50 centimes.

Take good care of Brother Brunet.<sup>1</sup> It had not been very long before I came to know of the weakness of his left arm, when I got the idea of sending him to you. He was not suffering from this arm, or at least not enough so it could be noticed. His sister is giving slight satisfaction in the novitiate of the Daughters of Mary; she seems too much as if she needs to be treated as a child. I have placed her under the immediate direction of Sister Léocadie, who is very good but who also knows how to have herself feared. I have not received any further complaints about her. Her brother is a good enough child, docile enough but without an education and always preserving the remains of the poor impressions he received in the world. He is making some efforts to prepare himself for his first Communion. Regarding his mother, I have not learned anything since I have last written to her. I ask you to let her know the part of this letter that concerns her.

You tell me that you are in distress, in trouble for want of good professors. The theologian of whom I had spoken to you has not yet left because I am still expecting someone to pay for his trip. Moreover, because of his defective eyesight, he will be good as a teacher only for the sixth grade of the classical course, or at best for the fifth, and also for the duties of supervisor. He is always very regular. When he takes exercise or goes out into the fresh air, as when he goes to Melac<sup>2</sup> or even just out for a walk, his eyes are better, and this makes us hope for still greater improvement once he is in Saint-Remy.

Your worry made me believe you might take some teacher who would not form part of the Institute. Yesterday we received into the Sodality a medical student who seems to have made very good studies, who has already taught for several years, and who likes teaching much better than medicine. Every now and then similar subjects present themselves. If you were to meet with any in Besançon, or in any other nearby town, it would be better if they were from this region. With this in mind, you could place the matter in charge of competent and trustworthy people, and it can be presumed they might make some very valuable discoveries. I do not believe I am able to send you any subject strong enough in studies during the course of this classical year—I am speaking of subjects belonging to the Institute—and I do not have the assurance even for next year. The thought now comes to me that Father Lalanne, who feels your needs acutely, may be able to find for you just what you would need. What you really need is a teacher who can handle all the courses and present the students for examination when you think they are ready.

Dear Bro. Louis Rothéa, who is now head of the establishment of Saint-Hippolyte, had caused me to understand that with three more brothers, our four establishments in Alsace would get along very well. Among the three, he was asking for one to teach Latin in Saint-Hippolyte. I assured him that I would be sending these three brothers shortly after the Feast of Easter. He now informs me that with a Latin teacher, everything will go well enough until the end of the year.

I was going to have Brother Olive in Moissac replaced when Father Imbert, the pastor of this town, requested him for the establishment of Lauzerte, an establishment I was not able to

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<sup>1</sup> Bro. Jean-Louis Brunet, from the Dordogne region, entered the Society of Mary in Bordeaux in 1826 and was sent to Saint-Remy, where he taught rhetoric and served as assistant director. He had a brilliant mind, but his judgment was not so certain, and he left the Society of Mary in 1825. Later he was in Layrac with Fr. Lalanne, but then all trace of him is lost.

<sup>2</sup> Country house of Bro. Auguste on the outskirts of Bordeaux.



refuse and where a brother is needed to teach Latin.<sup>1</sup> Father Imbert examined him and judged him capable of leading his pupils up to the fourth of the classical course, which is amply sufficient for this small town.

Nevertheless, I would like to send a subject to our good Brother Rothéa. I had at first thought of sending him Brother Mémain, who is in Agen. This Brother Mémain is the one who was in the seminary of Bazas. After obtaining some information, I believe it is more suitable to leave him in Agen until the vacation.

I was going to consider Brother Claverie, who has made all his studies, even four years of theology, but who was admitted only among the number of laymen in the Society.<sup>2</sup> In my uncertainty because the religious virtues have not grown deep roots in his soul, it was remarked to me that Brother Perriguet, who is in Besançon and who has completed all his classes, or at least the greatest part of them, might teach the first elements of Latin at Saint-Hippolyte. Moreover, he would always have with him Father Romain, who knows Latin very well but who is somewhat weak when it comes to holding a class. At Saint-Hippolyte, a tried and experienced religious is needed. On the subject of virtue and character, Perriguet would be just the right man. See if you could have him suitably replaced in Besançon. I am saying "suitably" because if he is to be replaced, it must be by someone truly pious and docile.

It appears to me from one of your letters that you would have some good subjects to send me. See if there is anyone among them who is sufficiently experienced. . . . Or else by one of yours, whom you would replace with one of those you want to send. We would thus avoid the expenses of a long trip.

The superior of the Saint Jacques Hospice of Besançon wrote to me on March 7, as you had told me. She has great praise for our brothers, and she hopes that in proportion as the shop heads will ask to leave, they will be replaced by Brothers of Mary. She seems to believe the head hosier will become a religious. I am writing to him by today's mail. I will have a copy made for you of the letter I am sending him, if there is enough time to do this today.

I would willingly send you Brother Etignard if I believed he was capable of meeting your hopes in his regard, but for the time being it is better for him to remain a little longer at Saint-Laurent. If until the vacation he receives more benefit from this time than he has since the last one until Easter, we may possibly have a true man out of him. At the time of my visit, we will seriously examine Brothers Galliot and Pelleteret.<sup>1</sup> Regarding Brother Bousquet, he is not at all the person to be a head at Saint-Laurent, or anywhere else, but because he has kept a certain amount of goodwill and still has great confidence in me, I hope to cure him entirely and eventually render him useful to the Society. It is not from fear of not having a head at Saint-Laurent that I am not sending you the dear Brother Etignard. I hope to be able to send you a master shoemaker, a good religious, one of excellent character. You may have him for yourself or for Besançon. We will return to him in another letter, and also to Brother Séguin.

I am embracing you very tenderly, and I desire for you the peace of the Lord. Please tell all my Children of Saint-Remy the most fatherly things from me and how much I sigh for the moment when I will be able to embrace them all.

P.S. The postman is waiting; that copy of the letter for the superior of the Saint-Jacques Hospice will have to wait.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The school of Lauzerte, near Moissac, was directed by the Society of Mary from 1827 to 1835.

<sup>2</sup> Biographical note. Guillaume-Claverie (1802-35) born in Doubs, Haute-Pyrénées, made his novitiate in Bordeaux in 1826 and worked in Agen until 1830. Then he was sent to Belfort to found a school, but the July revolution prevented it from opening. He remained in Franche-Comté and died at Courtefontaine of a chill. He was an excellent teacher, dearly loved by his pupils, and distinguished himself by a great spirit of zeal and a special devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

<sup>1</sup> Bro. Claude-Joseph Pelleteret. See the note at letter no. 438.

<sup>2</sup> The copy of the letter to the superior will follow letter no. 434. The text of that letter is no. 432-2.

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#### 434. To Bro. Dominique Clouzet, Saint-Remy

Bordeaux, May 15, 1827

Original, Agmar

[With inserts from S. 434]

My dear Son,

I have received your letter of May 3 and am answering it right away. Dubarry arrived May 14 at five o'clock in the morning, the day after the one you announced as the one of his departure. The same day I had an interview with him lasting at least three hours, from which we will see the results. Today he is in retreat.

I am glad that Jean, his wife, and little girl have left Saint-Remy. I already knew about your trip to Alsace. Brother Rothéa and Brother Laugeay, each in his own way, had told me what had transpired, but no one had told me of the 18-year old German woman. I think you acted wisely; however, if there is nothing unseemly in her desire to see M. Walliser, you could correspond with her with Arbois in mind, but preventing any meeting with M. Walliser. You might see to it that he will not have occasion to meet her at Saint-Remy, but if a trip to Arbois is in order, you could take M. Walliser along; with him you could see the young German at the parlor grille.

I have some hope that our three establishments in Alsace will arrive at the point of doing well, and very well. I am saying "three" because the one in Ammerschwir seems to me to have been abandoned.<sup>1</sup> It does not seem that for some time at least we will be able to undertake others due to our lack of German subjects; furthermore, because it is so dangerous to return young religious to their own region!

Regarding Besançon, what you tell me about Brothers Troffer and Perriguy does not astonish me. Troffer is too young and has too little intelligence to be the head of such an establishment. I will prepare someone who will be truly prepared at the time of the reopening of classes—that is to say, after our retreat in October. Perriguy is also too weak-minded, although he could get along very well with a good leader. In a recent letter I urged you to have him replaced at Besançon and to send him to Saint-Hippolyte, where he can teach Latin. He is getting along well now, especially with Brother Romain.

In the novitiate of Saint-Laurent I have a young master shoemaker who could easily replace the master shoemaker who is in Besançon, and with whom the people are not satisfied. He wishes only to get away from his own region as far as possible because of his parents, whom he loves very much and by whom he is very tenderly loved in his turn. I am keeping him here for still some time because very soon another young man, also a master shoemaker, is due to arrive from his region, and it is suitable that he would still be at Saint-Laurent and can spend a few days with him to help him become adjusted. Would you not believe it more prudent to send Salmon<sup>2</sup> to Besançon, and to take the latter, named Soleil, for several months to Saint-Remy, at least until he has made his profession? However good he seems to be, he has not finished his novitiate, and it is proper to send to Besançon only subjects who have finished their time of probation.

You have done well, my dear Son, to pay a visit to the rector of the Academy and to the prefects of the Doubs and of the Haute-Saône. Take every precaution for the success of the

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<sup>1</sup> See letter no. 416. Nevertheless, the establishment seems to have been kept.

<sup>2</sup> Biographical note. Pierre Salmon (1805-86) born in Ehuns near Laneuil, was one of the first novices at Saint-Remy, where he was formed to religious life under the direction of Fr. Rothéa in 1824. As workshop head, he took part in the foundation of the Orphanage Saint-Jacques in Besançon, where he remained for 10 years. He then taught elementary classes and later was in charge of several primary schools in the Midi. Even later, he was in charge of linens and infirmarian at Cannes and at Saint-Remy, where he died.

normal schools and the retreats, and also for the establishment of Besançon. Although, as I believe, our other institutions are in the order of Providence, I regard these as inspired directly by the Spirit of God as being destined to carry out the essential works of the Society of Mary.

I received the bill of exchange for 1,000 francs on Paris, and immediately I gave it as payment of chargeable and demandable debts.

My dear Son, I have nothing at all against granting you a month's holiday to go with your good brother to see your aged father, but would it precisely be until June 1? The fact is that neither you nor I can make this out very clearly. Perhaps after your return from your visit home, you could be my traveling companion.

In separate letters I will take care of the retreat master and M. Maillot's affiliation. You should have said something to me about the religious attitude and the merits of the latter. I will enclose a short letter to Brother Brunet, which you can seal before handing it to him.

I embrace you again very tenderly, my dear Son, and I hope that by the grace of the Lord and the protection of our august Mother we will succeed in everything we undertake, even with Saint-Remy, but patience and courage are necessary. Do not neglect prayer, however busy you may be.

I also embrace all my dear Children. I carry them all in my heart, but I am not losing sight of the fact that they are all overloaded with work. Replace me in keeping up their courage, and cheer them, until I have the occasion of seeing them and doing this myself. Make yourself clever in securing for them the means of making their meditation well, for there you as well as they will find the peace of soul, the strength, the courage, and especially the means by which we know how to exercise ourselves to the utmost when we find ourselves overburdened.

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**S. 434-2. To M. François Chaminade, Périgueux**

May 29, 1827, Bordeaux

Rough Copy, Agmar

My dear Brother,

I am happy indeed that I was able to guess that your anonymous emissary did not have your confidence and that I did well in not volunteering mine. However, the visit of this emissary had some effect, since I felt obliged to tell you what transpired. I also wish to answer your letters of the past January, hoping that in the 3-month interval you have acquired peace of soul. All I asked at the time was a short answer indicating that you had accepted my reply and would act on it.

The entirely different tone of your reply convinces me that time has not mellowed your stand, dictated as you put it by interest and need. Because of this admission on your part, I will not complain of your conduct, and I do not know what threats are more obvious in your last than in your previous letters. I am truly grieved at your disturbed state of mind. May God pour out his balm upon you. The spiritual calm and peace which come from God are his greatest gifts in this world. You may call this a sermon and resent it, but it is a sermon I preach to myself, and it can do no harm to wish others might benefit from it.

In any case, I promised to answer your letter of last January, and this I will do. You will thank me for insisting very little on what is beside the point. But I will touch on all aspects so you may be convinced that I am not avoiding anything; your disturbed state is the only cause which seemed to call for silence as a remedy.

Let us dispense with the dignities and possessions which you attribute to me. I have none and desire none, but since it pleases you to call me wealthy and powerful, I must attribute these to your generosity. They are simply nonexistent. I also will overlook your accusations that I have neglected my family. The facts prove the opposite; they are self-evident, as we say. Your

objections to my advice and your complaints show that I am more concerned with my family than they would like.

You claim to have understood the advice I gave you, to be silent and to allow me to do the same. You had no difficulty in understanding this, for we have been in agreement in the past. We said we must not aggravate the harm we may have caused in the heat of a first discussion. Your letter proves that you remember this, and that is all I meant by a recommendation to silence. But according to you, this case is different! My dear brother, if you say this is not the time to keep our agreement, then there will never be a time! You say and insist that you want to share the inheritance. In a calmer moment, my dear brother, you would chuckle at such a request. You know that when there is no inheritance, it is folly to demand one. You also know that in her long last years of life, your sister lived off the charity of others. You demand today for a share in the inheritance is very similar to the request you made to see the will. I told you to look for it, and that your wish was as fruitless as it was strange. Today, I am saying the same about your desire for an inheritance which exists only in your imagination. You graciously offer me half of this treasure; I thank you and tell you to take it all. It is better to smile at these things than to squabble about them.

Again you claim that 40 years ago your sister had 7,000 livres, and that she loaned them to me. I wonder where you got that figure and the loan, or the benefit of that sum for 40 years. Your imagination is lively, but it is not dealing with facts. If I remember correctly, our sister had invested some money in a public utility, which later was nationalized. You were asked to lay claim; what happened? I do not know, but if you were successful the title of heir, which you claim, allows you to profit by whatever funds you recovered. You also claim that after many years in a home, our sister withdrew 3,333 francs and 35 centimes. But after the description you yourself give of her condition and the expenses caused by her illness, can you ask if after 18 or 20 years there is something left from that tiny sum?

In addition, you would have done better to ask for information from your nearest relatives who were at her deathbed and closed her eyes. They must have told you; I merely saw to it that she was honorably buried. Why did you not claim the inheritance until there was nothing to claim? Why did you not have the will probated within 6 months? As for myself, I never wanted to be the beneficiary; I have only prayers to say for the soul of the deceased.

I would like to see peace reign again in your soul, to see you turn your talents to useful purposes, just as I said when you came to see me. Dreams are a waste of time and sometimes become more painful than the loss of material goods. I hope my willingness to answer such futilities has calmed you. Please believe in my very real affection. . . .

P.S. I have made no comment on the expenses you say you made for our sister, and on your right to the inheritance. There would be too much to say, and all to no purpose. But I am convinced you could not have had a better business manager and housekeeper, worth more to you than you could pay. Your misfortunes prevented you from doing her justice, but you can still keep alive the spirit of gratitude.

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

Bordeaux, May 30, 1827

Original, Agmar

[With insert from S. 435]

My dear Son,

I received your letter of May 13. I will make no reflection on the actual position of Saint-Remy because there is a question of a journey to those areas and of our having the occasion to see

one another before long. Please act in such a way that the young Brother Brunet may have all the care which his illness may require.

Urge Father Rothéa to apply himself to his teaching; he has the qualifications. The more interest he shows, the more his students will benefit. I will take note of the comments which you made while on your trip to Alsace. Brother Gobillot would like to follow Brother Olive's example, but two things restrain him: his brother-in-law cannot pay cash, and his fear of depriving his mother before her death. To the first objection I countered that we could give his brother-in-law the time he needed, since he is solvent. To the second, that we would sell on the condition that his mother would have use of the small house in which she dwells. Before leaving Saint-Remy, perhaps you could see how and when these arrangements can be made; then when you travel through Bordeaux, you could be given a regular procuration if it is warranted. I believe you have found the sum of 1,500 francs sufficient to settle the affairs of Brother Olive. I immediately will send a shoemaker to Saint Jacques Hospice in Besançon if you can send me one who can work in leather, cut, etc. Otherwise, I will wait also in the case of our good Brother Seguin until you come to Bordeaux, and you can judge for yourself whether these two are suitable.

Are we to receive subjects who have nothing, or next to nothing? Yes, of course (1) if they look good and bear themselves well; (2) if they have good health, etc.; (3) if they have true piety; and (4) if before too long, they can be usefully employed.

For the time being, I will say nothing about Dubarry.

Now let us come to your trip. I spoke about this to your brother. As far as concerns him, he cannot absent himself from Bordeaux before June 25. Does this not inconvenience you too much? See, before God, whether your absence of about a month would not become harmful to the establishment in Saint-Remy, for you could hardly return before July 15, 16, or 17, according to the time in June when you would be starting out. I would be greatly pleased to have you give your aged father and your uncle the pleasure of seeing you again; also, you can render your trip and your visit to your relatives very useful, doing everything religiously and in the correct spirit which must animate you. If you see too great a difficulty in this long absence, do not worry, for you are certain of my consent as soon as you can make this absence without causing very serious inconveniences. However the case may be, write to me as soon as you have decided upon something definite.

I embrace you very tenderly and wish you the peace of the Lord! Say a thousand good things from me to all my Children in Saint-Remy.

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**S. 435-2. To Father de Lachapelle,  
Director of Ecclesiastical Affairs**

August 8, 1827, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

I have believed it is my duty to advise the Daughters of Mary to obtain the benefits of the law regarding the authorization and the legal existence of religious congregations and communities of women. To date, they have only five communities, all observing the same rule. I was about to have them formulate the statutes based on their Constitutions and Rule and to submit these again to the Bishop of Agen, the cradle of their Order and the seat of their motherhouse, when I heard there was a set of Statutes nearly the same for all Congregations or communities asking for authorization, in order to avoid possible lengthy discussions in the State Council.

I am about to leave for Paris. If you would be so kind as to send me the form in which you wish us to present our Statutes when we ask for the authorization for both the Institute of the Daughters of Mary and for their motherhouse at Agen, I could arrange to have all the papers

ready before my departure. M. O'Lombel will have the kindness to go to seek your advice, which he will relay to me with any material you may wish to add.

I have made no mention of the main purpose of my trip to Paris. M. O'Lombel knows I have full confidence in you and will surely have told you so.

I am with the deepest respect. . . .

\* \* \*

*For the second time, Father Chaminade decides to undertake the trip to the north. He leaves August 16 and goes to Paris, where he spends the end of August, and then to Besançon where he accepts the foundation of Marast. He arrived in Saint-Remy September 2, where he gave the annual retreat. He visited Gray on September 20; Orgelet, where he accepted a new foundation; Arbois on September 30, where he presided at the retreat of the Daughters of Mary; and Courtefontaine, where he prepared the opening of the normal school of the Jura. He returned to Paris in mid-October, where he lodged with the Foreign Missions and saw the Nuncio Lambrushini. He returned to Bordeaux October 27. In Paris, Father Chaminade received a note from Bro. David Monier which involves one of those small, detailed matters of which life is full, but which Father Chaminade addressed with his ordinary precision. "A request has been sent to me in writing," David Monier writes, "which looks too much like a complaint for me to allow you to be unaware of it."*

*"The chaplain and confessor of Rue de Mirail [Father Boutoey] says three years ago he made you a deposit, partly in foreign gold coins and partly in silver articles. He made up his mind, in agreement with you, to leave our Institute and to return to the jurisdiction of his bishop. You promised him the return of the deposit and a report about his religious priestly conduct. The letter was written to the bishop. This having been done, the poor chaplain went to you on the eve of the Feast of the Assumption to obtain what should have been the result of your promises.*

*"You told him to remain in peace during the entire feast, and that you would satisfy him the next day. But the next day, you left at daybreak. The unfortunate chaplain thus saw himself without a testimonial to his conduct and without provisions or traveling money. This position was very sad, to say the least, and it became worse with the negative and rather rough answer of your representative, he says.*

*"As your former counselor, permit me to recommend to you the compensation for this forgetfulness on your part. So many matters of this kind have happened in the world, to the detriment of our holy religion, that we cannot afford to be the cause of new ones. A deposit of money not returned on time as promised is no small matter. Of course, your many worries make of your forgetfulness a rather slight fault, but this concerns a serious matter. If the most prudent act in this manner, what about poor me, who am so slightly advanced on the paths along which I wished to walk? Pray for me, and always pray for me. The Good God will be merciful to me. I believe, I hope, I wish to love."*

*This was Father Chaminade's reply.*

#### **436. To Bro. David Monier, Bordeaux**

August 24, 1827, Paris

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

Your letter of August 20 fortunately found me still in Paris. It is entirely true that before my departure, I forgot to leave for Father Boutoey the objects which he reclaimed. I had notified Brother Auguste of the position in which I found myself, and nevertheless, I forgot. You know, or possibly you do not know, about the occupations I had on the holy day of the Assumption, the eve of my departure. I would never have believed this forgetfulness on my part would give cause for

similar alarm, and still less that it would be numbered among matters which have happened in the world and have occasioned such detriment to our holy religion!

Father Boutoey told me he would leave at the end of the classical year, which is around the middle of September, and that in the meantime, he would need to make some purchases.

I told him I would return to him everything I had received from him. We made an accounting. I told him that he had in his purse 14 gold coins worth 20 francs each. He answered that that was correct, although he had withdrawn 50 francs, but he never spoke to me about a certificate attesting to that fact.

Whatever all these considerations may amount to, first, my dear Son, I ask you to count out for Father Boutoey the sum of 230 francs, in gold if possible; second, I am writing to Marie<sup>1</sup> to give him his silver articles and to tell her where they were placed at that time, as well as to give him a purse in which there are a great number of 5-franc pieces; third, I will add in the form of a letter the certificate recently asked for.

I will not write to him otherwise, but you will do well to make a few wise observations to him, in having seen in the hurry of my departure, only the deprivation of his wherewithal to live, the explanations to be given his bishop, etc. Having noticed my forgetfulness, why could he not have written a word to me about it, and if he was in such a hurry to make purchases, he could have asked you or Brother Auguste for some money on account, and not allow his imagination to . . . I do not dare say it. Have I ever given him any cause for alarm?

I do not need to make use of the letter of M. de Villeminot. M. Clauzel de Coussergues<sup>2</sup> has given me reason to hope that my petition regarding the rhetoric class<sup>3</sup> would meet with success. I wish you, my dear Son, the peace of the Lord.

P.S. You will understand that this short letter has been written in a hurry. I will leave for Besançon on the morning of August 27. I have greater grief over the flights of imagination of Father Boutoey than over the forgetfulness that caused them; but in all things, patience!

\* \* \*

### **437. To Bishop de Chamon of Saint-Claude**

September 20, 1827, Gray

Original, Arch. of the Bishop of Saint-Claude

Your Excellency,

While entering into the provinces of the northeast of France, my first solicitude and care was to obtain information about Your Excellency, and where I could meet you to offer my respectful homage. I learned from Father Bardenet that you were to have ordinations in Orgelet. Having arrived in Gray, I realized the impossibility of arriving by Saturday. I am going to leave for Arbois; there I will await the answer you will be kind enough to give me and which will let me know the place where I will have the honor of meeting you in the course of one of your pastoral visits.

Father Bardenet will be in Arbois next Tuesday, September 25, and I presume he will be as happy as I to have the honor of discussing with you some means I have in mind regarding greater good in your diocese.

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<sup>1</sup> Mlle Marie Dubourg, his housekeeper.

<sup>2</sup> Member of the Chamber of Deputies.

<sup>3</sup> There was a question of the right to open the class of rhetoric in the boarding school Sainte-Marie. Fr. Chaminade did not meet with success, and the pupils of rhetoric had to continue to follow courses at the royal *collège*.

I would greatly desire that our departure from Arbois in order to meet Your Excellency would not be delayed later than September 26, for I still have a great deal of work to do in these regions, and I would find myself obliged to abandon a good part of it.

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

P.S. My address is the convent of the Daughters of Mary or the house of Mme d'Oussières, in Arbois. I am addressing this letter to Orgelet in recommending it to the superior of the seminary in this city.<sup>1</sup>

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### 438. To Bro. Dominique Clouzet, Saint-Remy

October 1, 1827, Arbois

Original, Agmar

My dear Son,

Before leaving Arbois, I will say only a few words to you.

Only tomorrow will I go to Courtefontaine. Everything is arranged for this establishment, as much with the Bishop of Saint-Claude as with the prefect of the Jura, in what concerns Father Bardenet's authorization for taking up a collection in the entire department to meet the expenses of the normal school. I doubt that we will be able to make an appeal to the candidates in order to have the opening around All Saints Day. Our dear Brother Laugeay will not need to go to any trouble regarding a teacher of plain chant, for the pastor of Courtefontaine is very strong in this subject.

I am still working at the appointment of teachers destined for Saint-Remy: Brothers Brunet, Chevaux, Carrère, Muhlhaupt, Gaussens for the French language, etc.—Brother Brunet, prefect of studies. Brother Gaussens will continue as Head of Instruction, but I would desire that Brother Brunet will be admitted to the council, and also the new Head of Work whom I hope to send to you soon. You also do well to admit the head of the normal school, Brother Fridblatt, to the council. Your establishment will never get along better than when all those most occupied with it are clearly united and work with heart and soul as jointly responsible for the success of the task which the Lord confides to them.

You will do well, my dear Son, to have Brother Chevaux and Brother Pelleteret<sup>1</sup> take the cassock; I will lose sight of neither one. The latter may help with the beginners, and he may also help Brother Fridblatt, as with problems of supervision. You will be numerous enough to take care of everything, but you must have a clear understanding among yourselves and work together as one. Bring them together for discussions once or even several times, and have them divide the

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<sup>1</sup> From 1827 to 1852 the Society of Mary directed a primary school in Orgelet, to which later a secondary boarding school was added.

<sup>1</sup> Biographical notes. There were 4 religious of this name in the Society of Mary. Pierre-François Pelleteret, mentioned here, was born in Oricourt, Haute Saône on April 27, 1804, and seemed to give promise of becoming a good subject, but these hopes were not realized. He left the Society of Mary in 1836.

Claude-Joseph Pelleteret, born in Oricourt on January 2, 1807, his brother, entered the Society of Mary at Saint-Remy in 1827, was employed in numerous communities in Franche-Comte and was director in Saint-Claude (1838-42), Strasbourg (1844-49), and Givry (1856-66). There he fell victim to a serious illness which weakened his faculties and obliged him to retire from active work. He died in Givry on April 3, 1878. He was a religious blessed with great energy and exquisite charity who placed all his energy and care into having family spirit reign in his community, and in inspiring respect and confidence in everyone.

François-Xavier Pelleteret, also born in Oricourt on February 21, 1808, and perhaps a relative of the others; he was a carpenter, and died piously in Saint-Remy on May 19, 1830.

Jean-Baptiste Pelleteret, born in Arpenans, Haute-Saône on August 2, 1818, entered the Society of Mary at Saint-Remy in 1835; he was a farmer, led a very austere life, and died January 26, 1837.



various functions among themselves, etc. If the spirit of faith animates them, I repeat, everything will be well.

Regarding Brother Galliot, I would like to place him in another establishment where I would need a man of complete trustworthiness. He would be there at first only to teach French, but I am afraid to cause him sadness. You would please me if you would write to me about him from Paris, addressing your letter to the Foreign Missions, always under the protection of His Excellency the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Instruction.

I am placing in your envelope three short letters, one for Brother Meyer, one for Brother Gaussens, and the last for Brother Brunet. I may still have time to add another for Brother Rothéa. I am embracing you tenderly, my dear Son, and wish you the peace of the Lord.

P.S. My dear Son, I ask you to give the tokens of my affectionate remembrance to all of my dear Children of Saint-Remy.

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

October 18, 1827, Paris

Original, Agmar

[With insert from S. 439]

My dear Son,

In Paris I have received your letter, written October 9. I truly believe the normal course will hardly be able to begin in Courtefontaine at or about Easter time. Father Bardenet has reason to believe it would be better, in general, for those destined for this course to be prepared at Saint-Remy, but in this particular case, they will have taken measures to this effect. I am destining Brother Laugeay and Hunolt for Courtefontaine, and I have placed them temporarily at Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines with Bro. Joseph Cholet.<sup>1</sup>

In passing through Besançon, I gave to the archbishop's secretary the securities concerning the property in Marast,<sup>2</sup> and he promised me to send them very soon to the prefect of Vesoul in the name of His Excellency the Archbishop. The prefect must have received them by this time. If there is a possibility that he has not yet sent them to the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs, please ask him not to delay doing so any longer.

In your letter of October 9, you tell me you are still without a teacher and a Master of Novices. I hope to remedy the situation. The teacher will be Carrère, whom I discussed with you. I have written to Colmar asking that he be released and arrive at Saint-Remy for All Saints. I am sending Brother Galliot to Saint-Hippolyte as a teacher of French and also of Latin, in case Brother Etignard is too heavily burdened by some higher class, which I doubt. I have told you repeatedly that I wanted Brother Pelleteret in Bordeaux to continue his studies, but I will let you have him as long as he is needed for Latin, for supervision, and to help Brother Fridblatt. As for Father Meyer, I gave Father Lalanne some good reasons why he should come to Bordeaux. When he passed through Colmar he told me, but at greater length, what you noted in your letter.

It would be necessary, my dear Son, to send me a short report about the retreat which has just been given in Saint-Remy to the schoolteachers, and about the obstacles which you needed to

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<sup>1</sup> Bro. Joseph Cholet (1792-1864), one of the brothers with Fr. Mertian, joined the Society of Mary in 1825. He was one of the religious who by their zeal and devotedness contributed the most in establishing the Society of Mary in Alsace. He directed successively the houses of Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines, Ribeauvillé, Saint-Claude, Eccle, Conflans, and Arc-et-Senans, and spent the last years of his life at Saint-Remy.

<sup>2</sup> Property which the diocese was proposing to give to the Society of Mary, which was eventually accomplished.

overcome. How do you expect us to grow in experience if at each retreat, I receive no detailed report about these exercises which are so interesting?

Father Lalanne tells me from Colmar that at the time of his stay there, a remarkable thing had occurred in regard to one of the teachers. Have you written a detailed and exact account of this, or have you had it done by someone else and duly signed? If you have not, then see to it without further delay, and be sure to send me a copy.

I now have time only to add that I have named Brother Copey, although he is still only a novice, for the establishment of Ribeauvillé; I hope he will do well there. Dear Brother Weber will be the director. I am embracing you tenderly, and I wish you the peace of the Lord.

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**N.A. 439-2. To M. de Lugat, Mayor of Agen**

October 27, 1827, Bordeaux<sup>3</sup>

Printed in Volume 8-2. Copy, Agmar 218.2.24

Our brothers, teachers in the free schools of Agen who had come to Bordeaux to make their spiritual retreat, are returning to their posts inspired with renewed zeal. I know, Monsieur Mayor, that they will continue to work with success for the good of the children of the underprivileged classes of the town. Their only ambition, the only reward they expect from their labors, is to be able to inspire into these young hearts the love of religion, noble sentiments, and professional competence in the modest professions they intend to embrace. While they are working for the welfare of the citizens dearest to you because they are in most need, Monsieur Mayor, it would be very comforting for these brothers if they could place themselves under your special protection and consider themselves to be your sons. So far, their work has not been identified as yours. I believe this is our error, for your sentiments are known to me. Monsieur Mayor, if you dedicate the Refuge to the free schools or sell it to them, thus, we dare hope, giving them the means to continue, could you not then make the city understand that you alone are responsible for an institution which is the consolation of the poor and the satisfaction of those who are well-to-do? They do not intend to claim anything because of the past. They have spent more than 25,000 francs. They are occupied only with the present. They entertain the hope that you will not reject their plea.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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*Having just returned to Bordeaux, Father Chaminade gives an account to Mother Adèle about the steps he had taken in Paris in view of the legal recognition of the Institute; he urges her to collect various papers necessary for this.*

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

November 1, 1827, Bordeaux

Original, Arch. FMI

[With insert from S. 440]

My dear Child,

In Paris I received your letter, and I am proposing to answer it as well as taking care of several other matters, as soon as possible. In the meantime, do not do anything about the 17,000

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<sup>3</sup> The original is in the archives of the town of Agen.

francs as part of your indemnity. At most, you might give the establishment of Tonneins part of the interest when you receive it. The capital, being for emigrant indemnity<sup>1</sup> will be paid only at the rate of three percent.

This letter is only to send you a copy of the edition of the Statutes of the Daughters of Mary to be presented for royal authorization, and to tell you what you need to do.

(1) You will have these Statutes in your large book or the council register, signed by all the members of the council.

(2) On the copy I am sending you, you will put at the bottom “Certified True Copy.” Then you will sign it as Mother Superior and have it countersigned by the secretary, and before her signature the secretary will write “By order of the Mother Superior.”

(3) You may ask Father Mouran to see the mayor of Agen and to tell him that the Daughters of Mary, wishing to appeal to the king in view of asking for the authorization for their community of Agen, he would be kind enough, according to the law of May 24, 1825, regarding the authorization of the Sodalities and Congregations of women, (1) to give the information required about the suitability and the drawbacks of the Agen community, and (2) to ask the advice of the Council of the Commune. Furthermore, Father Mouran will add what he will believe fitting, so that the information as well as the advice of the council may be favorable and even honorable to the community of the Daughters of Mary.

(4) You will write a short letter to His Excellency the Bishop of Agen, and you will ask him to add his approbation at the bottom of the copy of the Statutes you will send him. You may let him know of our determination to have approved, and very soon, both the Institute of the Daughters of Mary and the central house in Agen. You may tell him also that I have prepared everything for the Ministry so that the authorization may not be deferred and the discussions may not be prolonged in the State Council.

(5) You will draw up a short petition for His Excellency the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Instruction. His petition is to be collective, which means drawn up in the name of the Daughters of Mary, and so you will sign, “de Trenquelléon, Founder” and then the Mothers of the council will sign and all the professed members of the community who will know how to sign suitably. The petition may be very short and very simple, for example,

“That the Daughters of Mary, desiring to enjoy the benefits of the law of May 24, 1825, humbly ask His Excellency to obtain for them the Royal Ordinance which authorizes the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, as well as the central house in Agen; that they dare to hope for this favor from the goodness and zeal of His Excellency; that consequently, they address to him (1) their Statutes duly approved by the Bishop of Agen and (2) the information about the suitability, the unsuitability, and the opinion of the Commune of Agen.”

As soon as you have assembled these papers, you will send them to me in the safest way possible, and I will address them to the Ministry myself. The short petition should be copied by someone who can write fairly well, and especially by someone who can spell. If you have no one like this in the community, Brother Mémain will gladly render you this small service. I do not need to tell you that this petition should be written on a good quality paper, the kind known as “Ministry paper,” and in a style in keeping with its end and purpose.

The 11<sup>th</sup> and last article of the Statutes<sup>1</sup> will perhaps astonish you and also astonish His Excellency the Bishop, for it seems contrary to the essence of the vow of poverty. Nevertheless, this article is indispensable and without it, the authorization would not be obtained. The explanation I give of it is satisfactory to any conscience. I have consulted among other worthy

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<sup>1</sup> There was a question of the indemnity granted to emigrants by the law of May 1825, and of which Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon was to benefit as the heir of her father, Baron Charles de Trenquelléon.

<sup>1</sup> “Each sister keeps the ownership of her present goods and those she may acquire in the future, and the right to dispose of them conformably to the laws, and especially that of May 24, 1825. As to the usufruct, when she has the use of one, she hands it over the house where she happens to be, and which owes her no account of it.”

people His Excellency the Representative of the Pope in Paris;<sup>2</sup> He approved the explanation I gave of it. I will tell you in passing that I have agreed with the Papal Nuncio that after the authorization of the Government, we will have been definitively approved by the Holy See, the Institute of the Daughters of Mary and the Society of Mary, their Constitutions, Regulations, etc. It has approved everything we have done for the two religious bodies, as well as for the Sodalities.

I have just taken notice of the letter Mother Saint-Vincent wrote to Father Collineau on your behalf, my dear Child. You have a good idea to endow the community of Tonneins with the small property of d'Aiguillon. All we need to do is to delay the sale, and I will seriously examine and study how this may be done.

About those 10,000 francs—you would do well to withdraw 3,000 first. For the rest, urge the purchasers to pay as soon as possible. Once Mother Saint-Vincent has the 3,000 francs, let me know the mood of the buyers. I approve all the steps you have taken to have M. Larribeau lodge with M. Gay. You can lease half the small house to the two edifying ladies Mother Saint-Vincent spoke about. The rent will be 500 francs per person, a modest sum, for 600 would not be too much, providing they have the means to pay.

I must stop, for I am pressed for time. Some other time I will reply to some items of your letter to Mother Saint-Vincent. Take care of your health.

May the Lord shower upon you his most abundant blessings!

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

November 7, 1827, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

My dear Son,

I have received the summary of the retreat given in the establishment of Saint-Remy to the schoolteachers on September 24, 1827. I bless the Lord and his august Mother for all the good effects it has produced.

Regarding the miracle worked on the person of Labé, the teacher, you must immediately give information about this to the Archbishop of Besançon if you have not yet done so, for it is up to the ecclesiastical authority to decide upon the reality and authenticity of a miracle.<sup>1</sup> The archbishop will know what attitude will have to be taken, but you must give him all the information you may have so he may be able better to direct his course of action. The physical condition of the archbishop may cause some dangerous delay on the part of the vicars general, so you will do well to write to Father Breuillot to push the matter somewhat, if you deem there is a reason to do so. You will let me know everything that happens in regard to this subject.

Brother Carrère and Malbouriane must have arrived by now, since they had left several days before my arrival in Bordeaux on October 27. They left, as I have been told, full of zeal and courage. Brother Carrère is to teach the class which will be decided upon by you and all the teachers. Brother Malbouriane is to have the post of Head of Work, even if we may not be able to give him the official title because he has not yet made his profession. At first, he will be rather

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<sup>2</sup> Archbishop Lambrushini (1776-1854), who early entered the Order of the Barnabites, accompanied Cardinal Consalvi to the Congress of Vienna in 1815 and was named Archbishop of Genoa in 1819, Nuncio to Paris in 1827, and Cardinal Secretary of State to Gregory XVI in 1831. He showed the greatest benevolence toward Fr. Chaminade and toward his works, in particular during the steps that ended in the Decree of Praise of the Society of Mary in 1838.

<sup>1</sup> In his memoirs, Bro. Benoît Meyer reports this. "During the Retreat of 1827, there was a teacher who could walk only with the aid of crutches. He came into the little chapel, in the place where the organ is now, to go to Confession to Fr. Rothéa. In leaving, on the order of his confessor he left his crutches behind and walked, thus better to perform his duties as a teacher."

new in this work, but I believe he will learn little by little, if you have the kindness to direct him for some time. It will be good for him to assist at the council, at least when there is a question of temporal matters. He will have only a consultative voice in them, and his consultative voice, not deliberative, could thus be included in the minutes of the various sessions.

It will not be long before it is noticed that he has real aptitude in satisfactorily fulfilling the functions of the Head of Work. Anyhow, I do not believe he will ever have all that is required, especially if Saint-Remy has all the development we expect, but in the meantime it seems to me clear that temporarily at least, he is easily able to assist you in the post to which we have assigned him.

I saw in Colmar a boy of mature age who desired to go on retreat at Saint-Remy. He seemed to know a lot about agriculture. I have invited him, before definitely ending his affairs in Colmar, to spend a few days in Saint-Remy to start a chestnut grove. He seems to me to have already been in Saint-Remy, and that you had already adopted him. You will tell me about him, whatever you happen to know. He seems to be at his ease, and even to be able to make at least a start in all the useful changes in the establishment in what involves farming.<sup>1</sup>

Regarding the arts and crafts, if the large establishment in Versailles happens to succeed well,<sup>2</sup> it will be able to furnish artists and workmen for Saint-Remy. I am in a position to form ten arts and crafts there as a start. I will tell you this entire story at a time less pressing than this one. You are perhaps saying to yourself, “Why does our Good Father not rather do in Saint-Remy what he is doing in Versailles?” The reason for this is very simple; I have for Saint-Remy neither suitable subjects, artists or workers, or even the means that would be needed. While in Versailles, I will be able to find—or at least I hope to be able to find—everything that is necessary. Let this suffice for the present.

In Colmar I have obtained permission to bring Father Meyer along with me. Father Lalanne had been charged to tell him everything that concerned him when he would come to rejoin him at the retreat of Saint-Hippolyte, but I have no longer heard anything said about him. . . . Father Lalanne does not tell me a word about him in the long letter he wrote to me after the retreat. I am going to write him a short letter. If he is no longer at Saint-Remy, then see that he receives it as soon as possible; you will know or will easily be able to learn where he is.

I am not forgetting that you need a good Master of Novices, but I do not yet have a definite answer on whether the one I have in mind is able to go. May our dear brother, Father Rothéa, remain in the job with his customary zeal.

I will answer my dear Children, Brothers Gaussens and Fridblatt, a little later. My dear Son, constantly reanimate your faith. With the help of our good Father Rothéa, may you reanimate it in all your brothers! I saw with sorrow that the spirit of faith had weakened at Saint-Remy.

May the Lord deign to shower his most abundant blessings on you and upon all my dear Children in Saint-Remy.

P.S. I left with Father Rothéa the plan of the instruction which I gave on “The Beginning of the Children of Mary.” Father Rothéa may easily make himself a copy, but it will have to be

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<sup>1</sup> Biographical note. The postulant in question is Maximilien Geng (1797-1870). He was in the service of the Meyer family of Equisheim, whose two sons, Léon and Benoît, he followed into religious life. A hard worker, he devoted his entire life to the works of the Society of Mary, first in Saint-Remy and at Saint-Hippolyte and then at Ebersmunster, where he spent 3 years alone after the purchase of the former abbey by the Rothéa family, occupied in repairing the ruins from the Revolution, always joyous in the midst of poverty and privation and happily calling himself “the Prelate of the Abbey.” He returned to Saint-Remy as a farmer and finally went to Paris, where he fulfilled the functions of supplier. He died at Saint-Hippolyte on January 28, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> This is a question of the “Royal Establishment of Saint Joseph,” under the special protection of His Excellency the Duke of Bordeaux, begun in the “Grand Commune” of the Château of Versailles which its director, M. Galibert, had just offered to Fr. Chaminade (letter of October 17).

returned to me. Your last letter, or rather the summary of the retreat given for the schoolteachers, came to me by mail. You will do well not to forget to put all your messages in the double envelope of the Archbishop of Bordeaux and of his Excellency the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Instruction.

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Léon [Leo] Meyer was born in 1800 in Equisheim, Alsace, of a family with patriarchal manners which gave nearly all its children to the Church. After good studies made in Luxeuil and Strasbourg, he was ordained in 1823 and named chaplain of the hospital in Strasbourg.

Nevertheless, for a long time the call to a more perfect life had been working in his soul. Still young, he had taken refuge in a Trappist monastery, from which only an order from his father had been able to recall him. As a priest, he thought of entering the Society of Jesus. After three years of entreaty, having obtained permission from his bishop, he made his way to Fribourg where at that time there was a novitiate of the Society of Jesus; but Providence, which destined him to become one of the pillars of the Society of Mary, was waiting. Because he was on the way to prepare the entry of his young brother Benoît in the boarding school at Saint-Remy, he happened to arrive when the teachers' retreat was in full session and was asked by Father Rothéa to help him for a few days. Soon he was won for the Society, and after several months at Saint-Remy, instead of going to Fribourg he left for Bordeaux, where Father Chaminade initiated him into religious life. On October 20, 1828, at Saint-Laurent, he made his religious profession for life, "in the joy of his soul," into the hands of Father Chaminade.

After a second year in Bordeaux in the company of Father Chaminade, Father Meyer returned to Saint-Remy in 1829; for several years he was a teacher and chaplain there. He was then the head of important houses, Courtefontaine (1833) and Ebersmunster (1843), until Providence designated him to carry the Society of Mary to America in 1849. Arriving in Cincinnati, where the religious opened the first school, he was sent to care for cholera victims in Dayton, Ohio. There on March 19, 1850, he bought a property to which he gave the name of Nazareth, and this became the motherhouse of the Society of Mary in America.

Twelve years later, when the Province of America consisted of 12 houses and 60 religious, Father Meyer was recalled to Europe (1862), where he lent his remaining strength to the foundation of the orphanage in Kembs in Alsace. In 1866 he retired to Saint-Remy, the cradle of his vocation, and died there January 30, 1868.

According to his contemporaries, it was Father Meyer who, among the disciples of Father Chaminade, had his spirit in the highest degree. In fact, after having been formed by him to religious life, he did not cease to maintain with him a correspondence full of mutual confidence; no one during his life and after his death remained more attached to him. Under such a master he had soon raised himself, according to the expression of the Rule, to the heroic exercise of the virtues of his state.

Among all these virtues, his robust faith stood out prominently, a faith unflinching ready for any trial and which God more than once rewarded with prodigies. His poverty was heroic. His clothes were at times so patched that it was a matter of surprise how the pieces could still hold together, and it was impossible to convince him of the need of having others made. Regarding his food, he contented himself with what was coarsest and always in such minute quantities that it was asked how his constitution, so strong, could survive on so little. In the later years, during Lent he celebrated Mass at 11:30 and joined to it a short homily on the Gospel of the day. While his brothers ate their noonday meal he made his thanksgiving, then partook of whatever they happened to leave. At Nazareth, when by dint of savings he had finished construction of the first convent, fire destroyed everything in one night. He had only this to say, "*Deo gratias! Deo gratias!*" His chastity was no less remarkable; on this point he was extremely reserved, and watched jealously for himself and his brothers anything which might have

been able to expose their virtue in the slightest degree, even from afar. During his last years when he was tried in his body like the holy man Job and obliged, in spite of himself, to have the care of an infirmarian, he admitted that since his earliest infancy, no one had ever seen or touched any part of his body. "When I used to bind his wounds," adds Bro. Damien Litz, "I felt a sort of veneration for those suffering members, thinking of Our Lord, who thus abandoned himself into the hands of his executioners." His obedience was the equal of his other virtues. His dealings with superiors were always characterized by great sincerity, candor, and freedom of speech; once he had made known his mind, he obeyed with the simplicity of a child.

He had given himself heart and soul to the Society. For it, he was ready to undertake as well as to suffer everything, as was amply proved in the course of his long and fruitful career. On the other hand, he was better qualified to inaugurate works than to direct them.

With Father Meyer, a person was always sure of an obliging welcome. He loved particularly the little ones and the poor. No one else had his gift of winning the hearts of children and young people and of attracting them to religious life. "There are very few priests," wrote Father Chaminade, "who know how to win youth for virtue and to piety as he does." Furthermore, his goodness had nothing soft about it. On the contrary, it helped him to lead souls to the practice of the most austere virtues. His spirit of faith manifested itself lastly by a tender devotion to the Blessed Virgin and to her glorious Spouse.

From the days of his youth, he had the habit of reciting every day the *Little Office of the Immaculate Conception*, and because of this he had felt himself attracted to the Society of Mary, in which this practice is in honored. He also was very diligent in the recitation of the *Rosary*.

Regarding his devotion to Saint Joseph, it was legendary. Having received it from Father Chaminade as a precious heritage he passed it on, even more increased by his fervor, to all those who were his disciples. In all his needs, he had recourse to Saint Joseph, and Saint Joseph always came to his assistance. When he bought the Nazareth property, he did not have any resources at all; he gave a Saint Joseph medal to the seller as security, and a few years later everything was paid in full. "How did you manage to find all that money?" the Archbishop of Cincinnati asked him. "Your Excellency," he responded, "I do not keep accounts with Saint Joseph." Father Meyer conversed familiarly with the souls in purgatory; he prayed for their release and called on their help.

The memory of Fr. Léon Meyer will always be preserved in the Society of Mary as that of one of the most faithful disciples of Father Chaminade, of a religious admirable for his spirit of faith and the heroic practice of the religious virtues.

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#### **442. To M. Firmin de Lala, Sarlot**

November 12, 1827, Bordeaux

Original, Arch. of the de Lala Family

My dear Firmin,

Your letter met me in Bordeaux where I had just arrived. I am sure you do not regret very much the marriage your parents wanted you to contract in Paris. In looking for a large fortune in a young woman rather than desirable personal qualities, you will risk entering into a marriage which, all told, will cost you a great deal. It seemed to me that your stay, either in Bordeaux or in Paris, was of very little profit for you on the subject of religion. Take care, my dear Firmin; do not adopt the false maxims of the world!

I would like to be able to lend you the sum that you desire. If I were able, I would do so without requiring any interest, but I am always financially dry, and I can meet my obligations only with the greatest difficulty.

My dear Firmin, please share this token of my sincere friendship with your father and mother.

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

November 29, 1827, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

My dear Son,

I have received your letter of November 20. I have made no condition of any kind with Mr. Christophe. He seemed to me to be in very grand circumstances.

It did not seem to Father Lalanne any more than to me that I had succeeded in reanimating the faith in Saint-Remy. If the faith there had been a little more lively, then certainly Father Meyer would not have long doubted whether he was to leave for Bordeaux or not.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, I am pleased that you are recalling this important article. Reanimate your faith, my dear Son; multiply your acts of faith each day. If you are constantly following the dictates of faith, it will infallibly, as it were, lead you to heaven, and during your entire stay or pilgrimage here on earth, it will cause you to enjoy a profound peace.

Regarding Brother Copey, I answered Father Rothéa on the day following the one on which I wrote the letter in which I addressed him such justified reproaches; but he has admitted his mistakes with humility. It is nevertheless surprising that a Head of Zeal has not sought to mend these same mistakes, while at the same time dispelling the doubts which obliged Father Meyer to consult Father Bardenet.

Take courage, my dear Son; enter into the beautiful views of faith. Everything will be arranged, all will be well.

I wish you, my dear Son, peace of heart.

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**N.A. 443-2. To M. Lugat, Mayor of Agen**

December 18, 1827, Bordeaux

Printed in Volume 8-2. Copy, Agmar 218.2.25

The tone of your letter reveals a heart that is too loyal, too desirous of the common good to allow me to doubt the fate of your free schools any longer. You have shown your fellow citizens the affection of a father and the devotedness of a magistrate. Your concern extends principally to the poor, and you are convinced that the free schools can contribute to easing the burden on the less fortunate. You consider as a godsend the services our brothers are rendering to the working and poorer class of your town, and you say that you appreciate this godsend for what it truly is. These words, Monsieur Mayor, dispel all my worries, and I will not hesitate to declare to our young teachers that you are their best and most devoted friend.

For the rest, Monsieur Mayor, even though for a moment I had been persuaded that you had not the least interest in the free schools, I have never doubted your devotedness to the least fortunate of your subjects. I had believed that the words of blessing and gratitude coming from the unfortunate of all regions and addressed to the brothers had not yet reached you. Today, I have a resounding proof that you have heard them.

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<sup>1</sup> Fr. Meyer had been called to Bordeaux by Fr. Chaminade, who wanted to form him in the spirit of the Society of Mary. With the entreaties of Bro. Clouzet, Fr. Rothéa, and other heads in Saint-Remy, he had considered being able to prolong his stay in Saint-Remy.



There is no doubt now that the free schools will have their proper locale and the brothers their lodging, their clothing, and their food. All this is in your power. I had thought of purchasing the Refuge and had decided to do so, rather than let such a promising project vanish. But instead, having the Refuge become the property of the commune and having it turned over exclusively to the work of the school meets with my hearty approval. This is a more natural arrangement, and the finances will be more secure; it is also completely in harmony with your thinking. Other than the hospitals, is there another institution of greater public usefulness than the free schools? We have based the schools founded since those of Agen on this premise. The commune furnishes the buildings and a modest salary for each brother. In several towns in Alsace, for instance at Colmar, the authorities have asked that the brothers add to their free schools a tuition school for the youngest children of the upper class because the uprightness of the brothers' lives seemed a more certain guarantee [of a good education] than the way of life of the lay teachers. Any small revenues from these schools are added to the wages given by the commune. More than any other, the commune of Agen should be ready to conform to the desires of its mayor.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

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

December 27, 1827, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

I will use a few moments, stolen as it were from other occupations, not to answer the questions in your letters that may not yet have been answered—just to find them would easily take up all the time at my disposal—but merely to be in contact a little with you.

I am seriously trying to do everything I can to supply the novitiate of Saint-Laurent with all it needs, in order to make of it a true normal school for interns. It is composed of 35 individuals, but I am doing some sorting out and already some questionable subjects have been sent away. I am going to send three to Orgelet, if the mayor of this town is willing to pay for their travel expenses. I am awaiting several other subjects, and I will perhaps be able to attract one or another from the other establishments.

In spite of very numerous occupations, I am drawing up the plan for the teaching of religion which will be followed in the normal schools for day students. I will have someone draw up the daily program for these schools. I have had a type of prospectus made regarding the nature and usefulness of the normal schools, according to the plan of the Society of Mary, and I have sent two copies to Paris to be seen by - - -, by - - -, etc. I am sending it back to be tried out in the establishment of Saint-Remy. But at Saint-Remy, how is the normal course going? Or if it has not begun, for what time is it scheduled? I recall now that you told me you had destined the big stable for the normal course, but is it big enough before having made the repairs of which we had spoken? Have you perhaps found some better disposition than that which you had pointed out to me? How will you lodge the schoolteachers during the retreats? Explain your plan to me, and do this clearly, for this is one of our principal works which I have very much at heart and which, in a general way, is of interest to everyone. Never weaken on this point. I have a serious request for one in Colmar, for the department of the Upper Rhine.

Do not think, my dear Son, that to occupy ourselves with ourselves and with others, I am forgetting that you have no Master of Novices, properly so-called, and no normal school for boarders. I have every hope that we will succeed in furnishing it with all its needs, when the one of Bordeaux is once what it should be. Patience and confidence in God! And why should we not have confidence? We are working for God.

Be careful to let me know about everything, or to have me informed if you do not happen to be able to take care of that yourself. Encourage and support Father Rothéa and, nevertheless,

look after his health. An unaided person is often able to do many things when everything is clearly directed. I hope the various types of help will become more abundant. These must be requested of God and awaited with confidence. My time is now about over, and I am making use of the last moment to embrace you in true fatherly fashion.

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*By the hand of Father Collineau, Father Chaminade writes again to the seminarians in Auch.*

#### **445. To the Sodalists of the Seminary of Auch**

End of 1827, Bordeaux  
Original, Seminary Archives

My dear Children,

It now has been almost a year since we sent you a banner of the Blessed Virgin. It was to be placed on the altar of Mary and to become your rallying sign.

I have no doubt that since then you have had many difficulties to meet, for the devil is so furiously set on your loss! But has everyone remained at his post? Has everyone fought as valiantly as he was expected to fight? I am transporting myself today into your midst—in heart I am always there—and I am going to count on you.

And so, first of all, where are all your old friends? O, my Children! May the Blessed Virgin have had to weep over the loss of someone? May any one of her children have ceased to love and to serve her divine Son? I do not know what answer it seems to me I hear in the bottom of my heart, and which fills it with sadness. . . . See, my Children, count yourselves, and if it is true that the heart of our good Mother has been torn, console her by your fervor and above all, instruct yourselves by means of her example. Woe to the person who prays negligently, woe to the one who has dealings with those who have lost the fear of God! Woe to the one who feels the lessening of the love of the Blessed Virgin in his heart and who does not make of it his duty to renew himself in the spirit of his vocation!

But we have another matter to discuss. It is not enough to defend ourselves; conquests for the Blessed Virgin must also be made. This is up to you to accomplish by your mildness, your humility, your exactness in your frequenting of the sacraments and in the fulfillment of your duties of state, and above all by a very Christian union, in making those with whom you live understand and feel how sweet it is to belong to Mary. Have you implanted in their hearts the desire to unite themselves to you? Keep count, my dear Children, because so great should be your zeal that at the same time as we perfect ourselves in doing good, we must draw a great number to follow after us. I am giving the kiss of peace to these new Children of the Blessed Virgin with all the effusion of my heart. The Sodality of the Young Men of Bordeaux is giving you a banner of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Mary will present you this adorable heart, and while studying the heart of Jesus, you will learn how to love and honor Mary. I have blessed your banner.

I am embracing you all, my dear Children, your prefect for whom I pray, and your respectable director. Once more, let me say, “Love the good God, my Children, and be ever faithful to the Blessed Virgin.”

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