*NOTE: as this is a file that was scanned, it is still being proof-read, notes converted to footnotes, and corrected. If you come across any obvious mistakes, I would be grateful if you would let me know.*

*The contents of the Diary for this period are still to be inserted according to the relevant dates.*

1848

962. [To Father Léonard, at Nantes].1

962:X in Oblate Writings

Reflections and advice for Father Léonard about his travels to various dioceses. He may take a trip to Rome. Trudeau at Marseilles. Mission to Ceylon.

Léonard

[Marseilles.]

January 21, 1848.

You travel so rapidly, my dear Father Léonard, that we have to hurry to write you if we wish to catch up with you. Will you still be at Nantes when my letter arrives? I do not know; but I think you will have given forwarding orders. This time. I am taking the precaution of addressing it to the Major Seminary from where, in any case, it will be forwarded to wherever you may be.

I approve wholeheartedly all that you have done, only I would not have been so easily vexed at Bordeaux. I would have endured, but not defied, the anger of his Grace the Archbishop, and I would have insisted to have him understand that he was mistaken. Your good manners would have persuaded him. I would have also wanted you to tell me which are the dioceses you have judged proper to omit. A few small details of your adventures would also have interested me very much. Father Courtès told me a few things about your meetings at Limoges with the Carmelites and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. I was awaiting something about Tulle. Someone wrote me from Toulouse about your interview, without your even knowing it, with a Canon of my cathedral who is at the Jesuit novitiate. Fear nothing. my dear Father. Father Trudeau is waiting for you on the trip to Rome. Take your peaceful time to finish your tour, you know that you shall not return; your passing through must leave its mark, a deep memory. You did not tell me if you intend to pass through Paris on this trip, or if you reserve it for your return trip. It seems to me, in any event, that you should not present yourself to the King this time; it would be better not to see him until you are about ready to leave.

Father Trudeau told me you have found a kind person who would pay for your trip to Rome. Tell me if that can be counted on. Father Trudeau’s parents have already turned over to Father Allard the amount for the expenses covering his trip. I would like to know these good parents, especially the mother, truly a strong woman, who has been admirable in regard to the vocation of her son. I am always very glad about him; I assure you he merits the affection I have for him.

I have received letters from Ceylon. The Fathers have all arrived in good health, after 37 days at sea. It took only 18 days from Suez to the blessed island which awaited them. Nothing is comparable to the reception given to his lordship the Vicar Apostolic2 whom they accompanied. They praise him very much and the Bishop is no less pleased with them. What a beautiful mission! My heart opens wide when I think of it. Bear in mind what it is to have 12 or 15 thousand infidels to evangelize. 150,000 Catholics to teach and a great number of Protestants to bring back to the Faith. So we will soon have to increase our little colony. In your excursions, you may add a few words about this mission which presents such great hopes.

Goodbye. my dear Father Léonard. I greet you affectionately. I am finishing my letter at le Calvaire where we came to celebrate the feast of St. John Chrysostom, patron of Canon de Lander. We regretted the absence of our good Father Léonard whose health we toasted, with sobriety however. Our Fathers greet you.

1 YENVEUX 1. 79\*; VI. 46; VIII. I43-I44; IX. 2I2.

2 Bishop H. Bettachini, coadjutor to Bishop Gaetano A. Musulce, Vicar-Apostolic of Colombo.

2. [To Fr. Étienne Semeria in Ceylon].1

2:IV (Ceylon) in Oblate Writings

Delight at receiving the first letter from Ceylon. Prudence must be exercised with Abbé F Reinaud and the other missionaries. He must not hide the fact that he belongs to the Congregation of Oblates. The Fathers must live in community, according to the Rule, united in charity.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Semeria

Marseilles,

January 25, 1848.

I have received your two letters, my dear Fr. Semeria, I would not say merely with great pleasure, but with a transport of joy. I was counting the days and the hours, and continually asking whether the boat had yet arrived, when at last your delightful letter was brought to me. Thank you, my dear son, first for having given me your news and that of your dear travelling-companions, and also for having gone into all the details of which your letter informs me. This is how things should always be done. When a person writes from so far away and there are so many things to say, how can he ever leave a line of his paper blank? I would love to blacken all my writing-paper in the same way, but I am not in so advantageous a position. Apart from my habitual distractions which you know well enough, I have little time in which to write to you if I am to take advantage of the boat’s return journey. No matter, I will do as much as I can, and for that reason I have firmly locked my door, although that has not stopped people from bursting in on me several times already. Fr. Aubert has begun already: he was to write to you in suitable terms yesterday, and in this necessity his reply can serve as a ruling for you, but I have reserved to myself the satisfaction of writing to you direct and in person.

Let us not speak of circumstances, of the fine reception you were given, nor of the contents of your first letter. I want to come to the point, being in fear of distraction before I have told you my thoughts.

You will have been able to judge like us, from everything that has happened between you and R[einaud], that we were right in thinking that he was more concerned for himself than for us in the fine suggestions he made to us.2 It is clear that that poor child, who left here in a mad desire to become a bishop, would gladly have made use of us as a step-ladder to reach his goal. After he had been disappointed of his hopes in Baghdad, Ceylon offered him a good opportunity, had matters been arranged as he suggested, and his chief reason for being furious with Bishop Bettachini is that he has seen himself thwarted by the new plan that has been agreed on. Notice too the indifference with which he has greeted your arrival, although from his letters he seemed to set so much store by our becoming involved in that mission. Let this lead you always to observe a just and prudent reserve. I would be glad if you would observe such prudence to the extent of never giving yourself to the other missionaries whom you have found and who have given you a warm welcome. Be polite to them, even friendly, but in important matters never share any confidences with them about anything. You know how easy it is to give a wrong interpretation even to the best intentions. I know for sure that you and your companions went to Ceylon from no motive other than obedience and a desire to work in conformity with your vocation for the salvation of souls, but the same is by no means proven in the case of free priests who may have looked at their mission from another point of view. This being the case, those priests may have been thoroughly upset by your arrival, although they have welcomed you, especially if they have any suspicion that you might come to inspire so much confidence that you will overtake them in any ambitions that may have arisen in them when they saw a simple priest like themselves become Vicar Apostolic. It is reasonable to suppose that they are not entirely without hope of succeeding him should a change come about, and that they are taking steps in consequence. I am speaking to you humanly. Perhaps this is not the case, but my experience of men obliges me to warn you in advance of any surprise and to illuminate your natural goodness for fear that it might allow itself to be deceived by appearances into believing men to be better than they are. I greatly love the simplicity of the dove, but I never like it to be separated from the prudence of the serpent. You have done very well in not following to the letter the advice that Reinaud gave you concerning your holy profession. You must not boast of it or parade it without reason, but you must never hide it. Moreover, that would be like trying to hide behind your own finger. What you must do is to insist with the Vicar Apostolic that he never separate you. You must not give way to contrary arguments that may be put to you. You must make it known that this would be in a way to do violence to your Institute, that you are absolutely obliged to walk about in pairs, and that therefore it is more simple that you should be placed together. It is essential that you should continue to demand that you be left in pairs. If there is only enough for one you must share what there is, but I can never agree that a subject be alone without at least one companion. The Jesuits have established this rule even in their missions in Maduré. Above all we must take the precautions necessary for the safety of our own men, and this will only make more certain the conversion of others. I know that if you were in charge of the Jaffna mission we would achieve that aim, however difficult it might seem to you; the good Bishop Bettachini3 must be made aware of the problem, and he will realise its importance. He will be better able to take advantage of your theological and liturgical expertise if he is living in the same area as you. Tell him that I will not refuse to send you more subjects when I am asked for them provided they are placed in pairs; but it will always be immensely important that you establish a principal house in one of the main towns. You must set your mind firmly on this, using if necessary funds that we will try to obtain from the Propagation of the Faith. I have asked Fr. Aubert to tell you how to proceed in this matter, since it is essential that some allowance be made to the Fathers of our Congregation independent of what may be granted to the Vicar Apostolic. You have not told me how you managed for the expenses of the journey. I had some news of you in the desert. A traveller who passed through here on the diligence saw you on your donkeys and told me that you were near Suez when he met you. We laughed a good deal about your mode of travel, but he assured us that it was excellent. Not being able to write to you individually, I address myself to all of you, my dear sons4, who have been called by God to such a wonderful mission. Do honour to your ministry by practising all the religious virtues. Be faithful in observance of your holy Rules, live in the most perfect union, and conduct yourselves always in accord with obedience. Should any cloud appear, and I pray God to preserve you from that, be careful never to complain to any stranger, for you will regret it later on and you will soon realise that you have done grave damage to the family, an irremediable evil that will weigh on your conscience throughout your life. Moreover, instead of the consolation that you were looking for, be sure that you will have nothing but bitterness and disappointment. Love one another, show due deference to one another and you will avoid this unhappiness, God will bless all your undertakings, and you will be rewarded even in this life as you await your coronation in heaven. Even though there are few of you as yet, while you are together do all your exercises in common as if you were a large community. Who can say how much good will be done by the good example that you will be giving? Do not allow yourselves to be weakened by the heat of the climate. God must be served everywhere with fervour. If I could believe that you would degenerate in that land which you are to soak with the sweat of your brows to recall some to their duties, and to bring the light to others who do not know the true God, I would declare you unworthy of your great vocation and I would regret having chosen you in preference to so many others for your wonderful mission of making Jesus Christ known and extending his kingdom as you walk in the footsteps of the Apostles. But no, you will never cause me that pain. On the contrary, I will have only to congratulate myself on having entrusted to you the glory of God and the honour of our dear Congregation. So I bless you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and place you under the motherly protection of Mary Immaculate. Before I end this long letter I wish to say to the Father Superior that I approve for the present what he has done regarding the Friday fast, but I exhort him not to adopt easily the relaxations that have been introduced by laxity.5 We must do more and better than others. If you lose the spirit of mortification, I cannot answer for you any longer. Fr. Semeria, beware of your weakness which arises from the excess of goodness in your character. You are not above blame in this respect for your governance of the house at Vico. I am having to reform several abuses which you allowed to be introduced through your excessive leniency. One must know how to resist the demands of lukewarmness which hides itself behind pretexts which one must know how to recognise if one is to overcome them. Even less should one listen to people from outside. So do not loosen the bridle before you have got under way. Try hard at first and yield only to experience. That is what you should have done before you reduced your Friday fasts. Do not dispense from the discipline: it does no harm to the stomach.

1 Original: Rome. Archive of the Postulation, L. M-Semeria. In a letter to Fr. Léonard, dated January 21. Bishop de Mazenod gives some news taken from the letter of Fr. Semeria: “I have had letters from Ceylon. Our Fathers have all arrived there in good health, after a journey of thirty-seven days. It took them only eighteen days to travel from Suez to the blessed isle that was awaiting them. Nothing can be compared with the reception that was given to Mgr the Vicar Apostolic who was with them. They speak very well of him, and the Bishop is no less content with them. What a beautiful mission! My heart swells as I think of it. Just think - there are twelve or fifteen hundred thousand unbelievers to be evangelised. one hundred and fifty thousand catholics to instruct, and a great number of protestants to bring to the faith. It will not be long, then, before we will have to reinforce our colony there. In your travels you could say a few words about this mission which holds such great hopes” (Ms. Yenveux I. supplement p. 79).

2 The Abbe Reinaud, an ex-Oblate, was working in the province of Kandy and desired that the Oblates should come into that area. As agreed, they followed Bishop Bettachini, appointed Vicar Apostolic of Jaffna in 1849. The Abbe Reinaud advised Fr. Semeria not to present himself as a religious and not to carry the cross.

4 Ms. Bettachini: the Founder writes the name sometimes with one ‘C’ sometimes with two.

5 The first group of missionaries consisted of Frs. Etienne Semeria, Joseph Alexandre Ciamin and Louis-Marie Keating and Bro. Gaspard de Steffanis.

6 The final lines of this letter are written in the margins of the four pages.

111. To the Members of the Central Council for Southern France of the Missionary Society for the Propagation of the Faith, Lyon.1

111:V in Oblate Writings

Enclosure of a note from Bishop Guigues of Bytown on the needs of this diocese, and a letter from Fr. Semeria. Expression of thanks for the publication of a letter from Fr. Pierre Aubert. Request to send the balance of the 1847 allocation as soon as possible.

Propagation of the Faith

Marseilles,

February 5, 1848.

Dear Sir,

I enclose two letters, one of which reached me some time ago and could have been forwarded to you at an earlier date. However, I felt it opportune to wait until this month when you begin to take up the business of distributing the funds of the Missionary Society of the Propagation of the Faith. The letter in question was written by Fr. Eugene Bruno Guigues, the Visitor General of our missions in Canada and bishop-elect of the new diocese of Bytown, in order to provide you with an exact idea of the state of that diocese and its extensive needs. It will serve as a basis for the deliberations of your Council when the time comes to decide upon the amount of the grant to be approved in favor of that prelate and the Congregation of which he is a member, for the various works which in his diocese require your charitable assistance. There is no need for me to add anything to the reasons advanced by the Bishop of Bytown to interest you in his position. The straightforward presentation of the state of affairs contained in the enclosed letter speaks rather eloquently on its own. I have no doubts that it will make a deep impression upon generous hearts such as yours which understand so well the noble mission of assisting, through your effective aid, the zeal and the devotion of the new apostles of the Catholic faith in distant countries and in the infidel lands. I will come back to the request addressed to you in this letter when the procurator of the foreign missions of our Congregation has received all the reports and drawn up the budget for those of our foundations which the Propagation of the Faith has included in the distribution of its alms. I think that work will be finished in a few days and I will still be able to send you the results towards the end of the month.

The other document enclosed is a letter from Fr. Semeria, the superior of the mission of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in Ceylon. It is a most interesting account of the missionaries journey and the excellent reception given to the Apostolic Vicar upon his arrival on that island. I felt it would merit a place in your Annals. The details it contains and the spirit by which it is inspired cannot but interest and edify the pious curiosity of the associates of the Missionary Society, and at the same time serve to the glory of the Catholic religion.

I saw with pleasure in your January issue the letter by Fr. Aubert, a missionary of our Congregation at Red River in the territory of the Hudson Bay Company. I hope that in the March issue you will publish the report of 1846 on the Missions in the wild lands of Canada. I will then send you the report relative to 1847 which I have already received, and which contains very interesting details on those missions.

In concluding this letter, Gentlemen, I would ask you to send us as soon as possible the balance of the grant given to our various foreign missions for the year 1847. The procurator of the Congregation is in urgent need thereof both to satisfy the repeated requests of our fathers in England who count upon their part of that sum in order to meet payments in the near future, and to recover the funds he was obliged to advance for the missionaries who left nearly a year ago for Oregon.

Please accept, Gentlemen, the renewed expression of the gratitude and high regard wherewith I remain your most humble and obedient servant,

+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

Sup. Gen.

1 Orig.: Rome, Arch. of the Postulation, L. M.P. This letter was only signed by the Founder.

963. For Father Verdet, novice O.M.I., at Nancy.1

963:X in Oblate Writings

Excardination. Coming ordination.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Verdet

Marseilles.

February 6, 1848.

I was waiting. my dear Father Verdet, for an answer from Avignon that I was anxiously expecting before answering your letter of a now rather ancient date. Well, my dear man, this answer has finally arrived, and I can announce with joy that you belong to me in a double manner, as a novice in our Congregation and as my diocesan. His Grace the Archbishop of Avignon has calmed down and has granted your leave. He has waived his jurisdiction over you in my favor. That’s a great obstacle overcome. No need to mention that he has done as much for Father Michelier whom I will ordain soon. I will do the same for you, what are a few months of novitiate? It is not in my power to shorten the canonical time. I will not call it a trial but a preparation. It takes no less than the unbreakable rules of the Church to resist the plausible arguments that you advance. At least they helped me to know the excellent dispositions of your heart and the shrewdness of your mind. I am also pleased to tell you that, forced to put off your profession to the time fixed by the laws. I count your rights to my affection from the day you determine that you gave yourself to us. I am planning to make a little visit to Nancy and we will talk about your interest in the missions to the Savages. In the meantime, I want you prepared to receive the order of diaconate; I reserve to myself the conferring of the priesthood. I shall write about this to Father Santoni. If he does not foresee any obstacles, I shall give you dimissorial letters for the diaconate; the reason is that the Bishop of Nancy wishes to do an ordination during Lent. Perhaps I was wrong to tell you my thoughts before giving them to Father Master; but you are reasonable enough and you have enough strength to accept a delay. if that were judged necessary. In any event. *cum venero disponam.2*

As a good citizen of Avignon, you will be pleased to learn that the two missions which our Fathers have just given at Bollène3 and at Caumont were perfectly successful through the grace of God, since there was much evil there and immense difficulties.

Goodbye, my dear son. I pray the Lord to keep you and to make your good dispositions grow even stronger. I recommend faithfulness and bless you with all my heart.

+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,

1 Original: Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M.-Verdet.

2 I Cor 11:34

3 Ms.: Bolène.

964. [To Father Courtès, at Limoges].1

964:X in Oblate Writings

Qualities and shortcomings of Fathers Chauliac and Nicolas.

Courtès

[Marseilles.]

February 7, 1848.

What you tell me about the talents of Father Chauliac pleases me; I do not despair that you will finally cure him of his ridiculous scruples. I have never known this strange malady except in other people, but it seems to me that with a minimum of common sense, one should be able to overcome it quickly by oneself when one is afflicted by it.

Father Nicolas. whom you are asking me for, is certainly a man of talent; but he is too little inclined for confessions, and besides, don’t you know the fanaticism of his political principles? I am afraid that he may forget himself on this subject and cause you some unpleasantness. In addition he has his own ideas on moral theology, and I would say even on dogma which he explains in his own way, even while remaining within the bounds of Catholicism but with his own slant, all of which caused the Archbishop of Reims, to whom I spoke of him, to say that theology is no place to be poetical. I really don’t think, all things considered, that this man can be sent to Limoges. especially with a superior other than yourself.

1 YENVEUX III. 202. 204; VI. I8.

965. [To Father Molinari, at Ajaccio].1

965:X in Oblate Writings

Reproaches, invitation to repentance and a more regular life.

Molinari

Marseilles,

February 10, 1848.

My dear Father Molinari, I never expected that you would cause me such bitter grief. I had made myself accountable for you at the Council of the Congregation and its most senior members who, with more than enough reason, wanted you to go through a longer probation. I did this because I relied on your promises and on the assurance that you gave me with the strongest emphasis that never would you cause me to repent the confidence that I was showing you. Nevertheless, what has happened? For lack of religious spirit. humilty. deference toward your superiors, for lack of piety. you have cheated my expectations by not fulfilling any of your duties. From the outset, you have adopted the style of those bad Italian religious who are the scandal of the Church who think of nothing but their belly and live without Rule or the spirit of their holy state in life. And so, to my great astonishment, no one has been able to do anything with you anywhere. Instead of modelling yourself on those respectable men with whom I had you associate and of walking in their footsteps, you kept your own habitual lack of mortification, of ill-becoming idiosyncrasies; in spite of my recommendations, you persisted in your detestable principles of a revolting liberalism more proper to a partisan or a Carbonaro than to a good priest and a good religious. What has been the result? Father Magnan, fearing lest the honor of the Congregation be compromised, was forced to withdraw you from the work I thought I could confide to you, and he preferred to allow himself to be accused of inconsistency rather than expose himself to the consequences of your wrong attitude in the midst of so many people who were all disposed to judge you severely. It was hoped that, after this first miscalculation, you would take yourself in hand and work seriously to correct yourself. Far from it! You did even worse at Vico, and as it is written: *abyssus* *abyssum invocat2* you finally committed such an act of disobedience inspired by pride, that in truth there remained only apostasy to complete the series of irregular and condemnable actions; at least you placed yourself in the situation of losing your vocation by exposing yourself to expulsion, which your conduct merited. Yet you are the one who promised me so much, when it was a matter of admitting you to the Congregation and of advancing you to Orders! And you were not a child! ... You recognized your wrongs and you asked forgiveness for them. That is good. Certainly there is no one more disposed in your favor than I, but be fair and judge yourself; declare judgment if it is possible to maintain yourself in that attitude that is beyond all our religious practices, the spirit of our Rules, our usages, our principles, our way of thinking. When you joined us you were told that you would have to fit yourself into our mould; in becoming one of us, you could not be otherwise than we are; that is unquestionable. See what embarrassment you are causing me! and it is through your own grievous fault. It was up to you to do otherwise, and I would have rejoiced over your success, while now I must shudder over the totality of your conduct. What remains to be done now? Father Magnan. full of charity for you. is agreeable to keep you in his community in the hope of using you somehow, but he counts on your docility to his advice, and I would add on your gratitude, since he cannot render you a greater service than to help you with his advice and to indicate the road you must follow. I agree then to forgive you and to confide you to this good Father, a man of good sense and of good counsel. I cannot excuse you. on the other hand, from writing a letter of apology to the Father superior at Vico toward whom you have failed miserably. It is less a personal satisfaction that I am requiring than a reparation to the Rule that you have violated in grave matter, in disobeying your legitimate superior as you did.

Come back to order, my dear son, imbue yourself with the spirit of your holy state in life; ask God urgently for the gift of piety which is lacking in you. *Pietas ad omnis utilis est;*3with piety you will acquire all the rest and your least actions will become meritorious; put great simplicity into your obedience; beware of your ideas; guard yourself from self-complacence which is born of the pride you must protect yourself against; learn how to mortify yourself, even in the smallest things; but especially moderate yourself in the use of liquor. Pray, pray often with fervor, even beyond that which is prescribed in our Rule. Avail yourself of the privilege of dwelling under the same roof as Our Lord Jesus Christ to visit him often, to adore him, love him and speak with him of your need and ours. Goodbye, I bless you.

+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 YENVEUX VII. 29. Yenveux writes: “to Fr. M”, and gives only the first letter of (Magnan) and (Vico). According to the letters of Father Magnan, superior of the Major Seminary of Ajaccio, it refers certainly to Father Molinari. Father Magnan writes to the Founder, November 6, 1847, that he sent Father Molinari to Vico and he adds: “since it was believed that we had to endure him at the novitiate and the seminary at Marseilles, where he was smoking. drinking, offering at times certain radical proposals, sleeping late mornings, a bit rebellious about regularity. It must have been because someone had found in him qualities that compensated for this.” On January 30, 1848, Father Magnan wrote again to say that Molinari does not want to stay at Vico.

2 Ps. 41:8.

3 I Tim. 4:8.

966. [To Father Dassy, at Nancy]. 1

966:X in Oblate Writings

Reproaches Father Dassy for not having imposed his views on the Fathers under him. Vows of Brothers Saby and Surel. Sending Father Depetro and a novice. Coming letter to Father Santoni and to Father Verdet. Letters from Ceylon and from Oregon. Speak more often about the personnel of the house and of relations with the Bishop, etc.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Dassy

Marseilles.

February 12, 1848.

It would appear, my dear Father Dassy, that you did not reread my last letter before putting yours in the mail. You would no doubt have corrected it, or, even better, you would have suppressed it and have written another more in keeping with what I had told you. I must again add that you should allow me to give an appraisal of the men whom I could send to Nancy.

I would have preferred to find in your letter what the Rule prescribes to local superiors. You were obliged to give me an account of the decision the execution of which you took upon yourself, contrary to the Rule though this is. I refer to the trip of Father Michel. I want to accept that there was an urgency, but the obligation remained to inform me immediately of the attitude you thought you had to take. You should also keep me informed of everything that goes on, of everything that you do; to have me know just where you are with the Society of which you had been invited to be part. You should above all speak to me of each individual member of your community, and notably of the novices so that, when Father Master presents a subject to me for admission to profession, we can base our judgment on the opinion of both the Master of Novices and of the local superior who, without knowing the novices as deeply as their Father Master, sees them often enough during the common exercises to bear judgment on many things. You must not thereafter make of the Superior General a sort of bogyman who, so you say2 never ceases to recommend economy, when you have to answer to remarks addressed to you concerning the ordinary administration of the household. I have never spoken to you about economizing on the issue of food. I was led to believe, according to what you had written about this, you had all that was needed; I had nothing to add to nor to subtract from what you told me. These are reflections that come to mind concerning your last letter which, it must be said, did not resemble the others that I am accustomed to receiving from you. You were apparently in a mood, but I beg you, when this evil besets you, let it pass before taking pen in hand.

I had planned to give this letter to Father Depetro; but it occurred to me that Father Master must be impatiently awaiting the decision of the Council about the admission of Brother Saby. Father Depetro, who does not have to leave before Monday, would arrive too late and we would not have time to start the Brother on retreat. I shall therefore send the letter by mail. You may tell Father Santoni that Brother Saby has been admitted, and that the lay Brother Surel3 has also been admitted to perpetual oblation. Brother Saby will then go to Marseilles to follow the theology course.

Someone wrote from England that they are sending to our novitiate at Nancy the nephew of a priest who is very devoted to our Congregation; I recommend you welcome this young man with kindness. Father Depetro, whom you assess too cheaply in your famous letter, will be very useful to your Englishmen whose language he speaks; he also speaks Portuguese and is a good Latinist. This young priest not only has great talent; he also has a pleasant character, something that is valuable in a community. I believe I am sending you a real gift in assigning him to you. He has a certain ease in writing and sufficient calm to receive with grace and thanks all the observations you may wish to address to him, You will give me news about him when I go through Nancy next June.

I believe you asked me in one of your letters if you could enter the room of Father Bursar; I answer that, so long as Father Mouchel is in charge, say yes. I would be glad, should you see Brother Bouvier, to recommend especially to him in my name that he not give any reason whatsoever for a complaint against him. I have written to Father Verdet, please tell him; but I am not sending my letter by mail. Father Depetro will be the carrier; I will also write on the same occasion to Father Santoni. Let it suffice that you tell him for me about the decision taken regarding the two Brothers he had presented to me, Brothers Saby and Surel. Father Depetro will also bring you a document concerning our Congregation which must be given to the author of the History of the Church;4 Father Tempier had spoken to him about it. so that in his new edition, he may speak pertinently of our foundation and progress. He will also bring you the letter that our good Father Semeria wrote me on his arrival in Ceylon. This mission seems to begin under the best auspices. I expect they will be asking for reinforcements soon.

I have just received a letter from Father Ricard. It is dated August, and they had another 200 leagues to travel before reaching their destination. Our three missionaries, as well as the brother catechist, are well; but what a trip they have just made. Let none among us complain anymore of anything. for we have so generous an advanced contingent that makes conquests for Jesus Christ by so many sacrifices, and what merits do they not acquire in the eyes of the Lord and of the Church. Dear Brothers, how admirable they are! Let us pray much for them, and let us be proud to be one with such apostles of the Lord.

Goodbye, my dear Father Dassy. I am in a hurry so that my letter may leave by this mail. I embrace and bless you.

+ C. J. Eugene. Bishop of Marseilles.

*P.S.:* You are not keeping me informed of your relationship with the diocesan authority, especially with the Lord Bishop.

1 Original: Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M.-Dassy.

2 Several lines of this letter have been scratched out by the Founder. We may read, with difficulty, after the words: I was telling you: “but I beg you to keep as a principle that I dispense you from giving me counsel, and that when you do have to submit observations, you would do well to use measured terms so as not to wander away from the respect that both propriety and duty impose on you!”

We have the letter of Father Dassy, written January 31, to which the Founder answers with a bit of firmness. The superior at Nancy, as a good citizen of Marseilles, answers frankly, but seemingly without lack of respect. We read for example concerning new assistants: “You have decided not to send me young Father Depetro. I believe you have done well, since what I need here is mature men and not beginners, that is unless you send them to me as surplus, to give them time to compose sermons.... I have acted discretely in not asking you for anyone yet. However, it is time that you send me one, or even two, as soon as possible... I expect that you will leave me Father Michel. With him, I dare to ask you for Father Bellanger, who is at N.-D. de L’Osier. or someone else who would do fairly well.”

3 The words: “de croque-mitaine qui, a votre dire” are scratched out in the ms. and not replaced, so that, without these words, the phrase is incomplete.

4 Ms.: Surène. Brother Jacques Surel entered the novitiate of N.-D. de L’Osier, May 28, 1846, and made vows at Nancy on February 25, 1848.

5 R.F. Rohrbacher. cf.: M-Dassy. February 13, 1849.

93. [To Mgr I. Bourget, bishop of Montreal]1

93:I in Oblate Writings

Complains to Bishop Bourget because he has not written to thank him for the Circular on the occasion of the epidemic of typhus and to give details of the nomination of Father Guigues. Opposition of the clergy and of the Oblates to this nomination. News about the Canadians in France: Fisette, Trudeau and Rouisse. Bishop Blanchet has been cold in his reception of Father Ricard and his companions.

Bourget

Marseilles,

February 12, 1848.

For quite a while, Monseigneur, I have wanted to complain to you about your silence. But how can I allow myself to scold a friend who finds himself in the anguish wherein you have been plunged by the frightful sickness which has decimated your clergy and has brought you yourself within inches of death? But that is precisely the circumstance which gives me a new reason for complaint. Upon my word! Alone of all the Catholic bishops of the world, I take to heart your deplorable situation. Seeing you overwhelmed by the weight of adversity, it is not enough for me to express my pleas to the Lord in private. Too great is the evil in my eyes not to apply a more powerful remedy. I raise then my voice in the midst of the Church, I want it to resound throughout the whole of France in the hope of inducing by my example other bishops to do as much. I order public prayers in the whole of my diocese. At each Mass is to be said a Collect, Secret and Postcommunion apt to arouse fervour in the most tepid soul, should such be found among my priests; the people are to be united by such prayers and of their charity they are to be moved also to implore relief from your sufferings each time the Blessed Sacrament is taken from the tabernacle to bless the multitude. My people respond to my thoughts and unite their intentions to mine, they pray with so much fervour that they obtain, I am confident, what we ask for with ardour and perseverance, at least it has been noted that not another priest of yours has died since the name of the Lord has been invoked on their behalf. Well now! Not the least little word, I speak not of gratitude and thanks, not merely a mention to show that at least someone noticed what our heart had inspired us to do for you. The obliviousness of the Bishop cured of the sickness which had alarmed me so deeply has been matched perfectly by the missionaries, of whom four or five have also obtained their cure, not being mindful, not one of them, of what we have done for them and for you. Such are the items and the substance of my complaint that I am not now loath to express.2 And I have not yet said all! Do you believe, Monseigneur, that I need not even the briefest letter from you after you have seen the storm which struck me as the aftermath of the resolution you had taken and which my confidence in you had induced me to second? I have had a very bad time because of the kind of vortex which seems to have had everybody’s head whirling. I shall not characterize the conduct of your clergy for to express what I thought of it would perhaps grieve you3 but I will tell you that all our missionaries without exception, seized by I know not what obsession, had lost their wits. Is this the influence exercised by the impertinent M. Chiniquy who dared to write me a letter which he though quite sensible but which revealed to me an attitude that would be no asset to us and earned him the unanimous refusal of our Council to grant him admission - is it, I ask, his influence which stirred them all up against the decision which you took and which I believed I could support in spite of my initial repugnance? The fact is that in the end I was obliged to write a most severe letter in order to put an end to all this turmoil. I can but say that at the peak of this conflict, or if you will, this grievance, it would have been a relief to me to receive a letter from you. Even now what a pleasure this would be, in the first place to learn of your complete recovery to which no one attaches greater value than myself. And this is not an empty phrase I formulate. Those who heard me when I found out about your illness can testify to that. I would also be grateful to know something about this great matter for Father Guigues himself says hardly a word about it. Someone told me the other day that he had heard from Montreal that he would encounter grave difficulty over the question of nationality4 but it seems to me that is one of the first things that would have occurred to you and that you would judge it a simple matter to have the future bishop naturalized. Whatever the case may be, I beg you, write me somewhat at length about all these things. I need not remind you that more than ever you must be the Father of our Oblates of Mary. They feel weakened by the election of their superior to the See with which you have entrusted him. Help us as well as him to pacify them and reassure them as I have not ceased to do from this side.

Shall I add a few words about the Canadians over here? Fisette has remained with the Trappists after having passed through the Chartreuse. He has been a novice for some months at Aiguebelles. Trudeau is now a priest and I am very pleased with him. He is now here with me. When he will have made his trip to Rome,5 as I promised him, and after a short stay in our houses in England, he will return home to his country with Father Léonard who will by then have finished his mission in France and which he is accomplishing very well.

As for M. Rouisse, I do not think he will do for the Congregation. He does not understand how we can hesitate to admit him and for my part, I think we would come to regret having received him. He has too good an opinion of himself, he is much too loquacious, his judgement is faulty, he lacks good sense. I know he can hurt the Congregation on his return to Montreal by his ill-considered observations but I prefer that he be hurtful in this manner from the outside rather than in this or any other way from within. I pray God that Fisette will persevere with the Trappists. He has written to me several times and I to him for he retains for the Congregation and for me personally an extraordinary affection. Poor child! I love him ever so much. He has a good heart and one should add that he has shown great generosity in being ready to assure his salvation by a way so difficult. This is heroism. Pray, Monseigneur, also for him and never forget me before the Lord in return for the veneration and the friendship I have for you.

+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

P.S. I was going to say in confidence how little the Bishop of Walla Walla had responded to the alacrity with which I had, in his pressing appeal, furnished him with devoted missionaries. Having been provided, during the period that our good Fathers were on their way by sea, with what he thought would suffice, I believe he was annoyed to see them arrive. He received them in the first place more than coldly and does not appear to have become more amiable towards them since. What appalls me is that the distance between us and these good missionaries means that they are going to suffer greatly before I can get to them the supplies which I had to presume this prelate would furnish since he had asked me for them as a great favour, his letter being proof of that.6

1 Orig. - Montreal, Archdiocesan archives - Oblats.

2 Mgr Bourget excused himself, April 10, 1848. Following his illness, his doctors had forbidden that anyone speak to him of administrative affairs. In gratitude for the concern of Mgr de Mazenod, he will confide finally “an establishment right in the middle of one of the fine suburbs” of Montreal.

3The Bishop of Montreal makes no reply about this. For details of this opposition, which was rather limited, cf. G. Carrière, op. cit., t. I, pp. 299-304.

4 Bishop Guigues obtained his naturalization in February, 1849.

5 The Founder writes to Fr. Léonard, January 21, 1848, regarding this journey.

6 In this connection, Mgr Bourget wrote on April 10: “I believe that Fr. Ricard and his confreres might well have been surprised by the cold manner of the Bishop of Walla Walla. But I hope that when they will have lived with him, they will better be able to judge the goodness of his heart. He is naturally serious and his manner is cold and even glacial to anyone approaching him for the first time. Besides you understand that in the sorrow one feels on leaving his fatherland and in the middle of the fatigues of a long and uncomfortable journey, one is not naturally inclined to laugh.”

967. [To Father Bise, at N.-D. de Lumières].1

967:X in Oblate Writings

Friendship for Father Bise, who still remains too reserved.

Bise

[Marseilles.]

February 13, 1848.

My dear and most dear Father Bise, what you admit to me. while it pains me on the one hand, only increases the esteem that I have for you ... even though I perceive that your attitude toward me is not all that the keen and very sincere affection that I have always had for you would seem to require; nevertheless. I would never have imagined that you were so far removed from a father who has always loved you so much.2

Would to God that, when certain anxieties began to lay hold of you. you had confided a little in me; I think I would have succeeded in solving things easily... All I can say to you is that I have never ceased loving you with great affection, even when I was led to believe that you are rather cold and quite indifferent toward me. I attributed this to character, and did not at all hold this against you. I fought off as an imperfection the secret desire of my heart which deserved to have you love me more. I have on occasion offered to the Lord this mortification as a due punishment in that there is perhaps something a bit too excessive in my attachment for the children whom the Lord has given me. You see, my dear son, that I am making my own confession to you; you will certainly not have any difficulty in absolving me. Ah well. be sure that it will not cost me more to forgive you, according to your wishes, the harm toward me for what you blame yourself.

Goodbye my dear son. I press you tenderly to my heart, to show you all the joy I feel in finding you just as I would like you; never doubt about my own sentiments, as you love a father who cherishes you; pray for him and receive the blessing he gives you from the bottom of his heart.

1 YENVEUX V. l59. Text copied by Yenveux himself.

2 Bishop de Mazenod often complained about Father Bise. For example, he wrote about this Father in his *Diary* on June 15, 1845: “Inconceivable conversation with Bise who came to express his discontentment at being placed at the seminary... Though I have lavished kindness on him ... he remembers only those observations that I might have made a year ago, and even those made four or five years ago, which he has kept preciously in his soul as a bitter memory and now he concludes that I am being unjust toward him.”

119.[To Bishop Buissas of Limoges].59

119:XIII in Oblate Writings

The Oblates must live in community. Their purpose is to preach Missions, not to work in parishes.

Buissas Bishop

[Marseilles],

February 20, 1848.

I experience grief which I cannot but confide to you. You know that each one must live one’s own life and follow one’s own vocation. It happens that because of the system followed in Limoges, our Oblates are deprived of what they have come to seek in the Congregation. To live in community, they have given up the ordinary parish ministry, and it is especially through the use of the missions that they lead souls to God. Their Rules provide that they live in community, so much so that they prescribe that they always go forth in pairs: *Duo saltem ibunt ad missiones.* I understand that at times it is necessary to dispense from this point of the Rule, especially when a missionary is sent to assist a parish priest. It is essential, however, that this be a temporary measure only. You understand, Your Lordship, that there are good reasons for this. Moreover, there is a point in the Rule that says: *Nequamquam licet paroecias regere.* Their lot gives them enough to do, so that they can leave to others the care of parishes for which they are not called ...

I wanted to give Your Lordship a general view of our missionaries’ Constitutions,2 to help you understand that we cannot give them another orientation than that which they have received from the Church. Even were I to desire it, my authority does not go that far. Hence it is essential that the Oblates form a community, where they can always find the spiritual aid the Constitutions assure them. In continuously disposing them to replace parish priests, they are deprived above all of the advantages they had come to seek in religious life, in community life; they are isolated for long periods of time, which is contrary to their Rules, and they are thrown into the parish ministry, which is also against their Rules and their vocation: they are called to the Congregation precisely never to be parish priests. Furthermore, it is within their community that, by practicing virtues prescribed for them by mutual example and good direction, they find the means needed to preserve them in their fervor and the ways of perfection so that their ministry may be blessed by God and produce the fruit which, by God’s grace, we have always reaped.

Your Lordship is aware that I am speaking frankly and freely. The Bishop who is as far advanced as you in the ways of God will understand better than I know how to express the importance of the considerations that I have only indicated. You are the father, the protector and the counselor of our Oblates; no one should be more concerned than you that they be worthy of their vocation at all times, since it is in this way that they will be able to render themselves truly useful to your diocese where they will certainly do good, as they are doing in every place where they are established.

1 Yenveux II, 146.

2 Yenveux omits the excerpts from the Rule mentioned by the Founder.

968. [To Father Courtès, at Limoges].1

968:X in Oblate Writings

The Founder’s anxiety over the position of the Fathers at Limoges. Political events at Marseilles. The Oblates went to Limoges as missionaries, not to replace pastors. Death of Father Perron.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Courtès

Marseilles.

February 26, 1848.

Your last letter, my dear friend, has eased my mind greatly. I was anxious in a way difficult to describe. Even though Brother Ferrand’s letter gave evidence of more than exaggeration. I could not ward off a worry that is proportionate to the love I bear you. Tell him not to intervene and write anymore. This saintly man has hurt me very much. If there were only a distance of twenty leagues between us, I would have crossed them; but from here to Limoges, what can one do? Suffer and pray, that’s what I did. Thus, may your letter be blessed, it again brought peace to my soul,

*March 2.* Do not be surprised at the interval between these two dates. The events which followed one upon the other so rapidly were, as you can well imagine, my preoccupation and my attention was taken up by many matters.2 I impatiently await a letter from you to reassure me about your situation. Here all is calm. I have been able to continue my functions by crossing the city without the least inconvenience. Yesterday the Commissioner of the provisionary Government came to proclaim the Republic and to settle matters in this department. This morning, he came to see me so as to be the first to make his call. He asked me to order a religious service for the victims of these latter days, a request that was easy for me to grant. Our population has been admirable under these delicate conditions. You would have been touched by the concern that has been shown me. The other day, I was crossing on foot all the older quarters to give confirmation to a sick person. Well, people called others to come and see me pass by and to ask for my blessing. I saw a filial affection on all these faces, a kind of joy that made me believe they were convinced that I could have been implicated in this business or that I had withdrawn from it completely. Surely it would take nothing less than bayonets to make me retreat ever so slightly. Our place is in the midst of the flock.

I have written to his lordship the Bishop of Limoges; it was a measured letter to make him understand that it is impossible to continue a service which takes our missionaries away from their vocation, Living in community is essential to their style of life. I explain the situation to him by quoting from the very text of our Rules. That we help pastors from time to time, is good, but to make our missionaries pastors of parishes, that must not be. You will tell me what impression this friendly, but in some way official, communication made on the Prelate.

From what you tell me, I see it as very important that Father Burfin may still find you at Limoges when he arrives. You will have to catechise him, to make him understand our position well, to suggest to him how to conduct himself with either the members of the community or the Bishop. You will especially need to enjoin him never to condemn our men when someone takes it upon himself to judge them severely. It happens only too often that we give in to a miserable vanity of seeming to be better than others by agreeing on their weaknesses. Even humanly speaking only, this is a deceptive tactic; but supernaturally speaking, it is a serious fault.

Goodbye, my most dear man. I assume that they have told you the news of our loss in the person of our Father Perron. He succumbed to a terrible typhus after sixteen days of illness. I greet all our Fathers and I embrace you.

+ C. J. Eugene. Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Original: Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M.-Courtès.

2 The Revolution of February 1848, and arrival at Marseilles of M. Emile Ollivier, extraordinary commissioner, delegate from the Republic for the departments of Bouches-du-Rhone and Var.

969. [To Father Vincens, at N.-D. de L’Osier].1

969:X in Oblate Writings

Saintly death of Father Perron. Father Depetro. Father Bellanger is admitted to vows. Revolution.

Vincens

[Marseilles.]

February 27, 1848.

Alas! I hasten to ordain dear Brother Grey because I must immediately send him to England where the death of good Father Perron - which I knew to be imminent but the news of which has reached me since I took up my pen to write you - has made a void which must be filled as soon as possible.

Father Cooke writes me that our poor Father Perron had regained consciousness after several days and that until his last breath he continued to speak of heavenly things. This is a new and very cruel loss, especially under the circumstances, for we would need ten workers more in England. May the Lord be blessed in all things. One more of the elect of our family is in heaven; the assurance that our departed give us of their eternal happiness is truly remarkable. We can rightly apply to ourselves the words of Saint Alphonse de Liguori who promised heaven to all who die in his Congregation. We have the same reason for confidence because it is perseverance in faithfulness to the contract made with God, and the saintly death of all our members whom the Lord has called to himself confirming us in this reassurance.

Far from finding inopportune the observation you make about Father Depetro, I admit that I was so much preoccupied by the same thought that I postponed his departure for a month in the hope of giving him a travelling companion. My solicitude was thought exaggerated, and yet I did not fear to express my disquiet to the young Father himself, once we had finally decided to let him leave.

I gave him suitable advice. He gave me the finest promises, and then we had to let him go. In fact, I almost reproached myself for the excess of my precautions, for I told myself that every day young clerics, even if not priests, were sent to travel on the highways, either to go on vacation or to go to Paris or to return from there. We would be too unfortunate if we could not count on the virtue and solidity of our men. Your remark, however, reawakens all my anxieties and causes me to tremble. As to the other one you mention, I would have too much to say if I started on that chapter.2 I must tell you however that Father Guigues writes to tell me that we should avoid sending him to Canada for a long time. There is another trial that he perhaps does not expect.

I am now going to give you the results of the Council I have just held. On the first point concerning the priest with the infirmity, we had some difficulty in admitting him.3 We finally decided to ask you to inquire very seriously so that we know just what this illness is, and to ascertain if it is liable to worsen to a degree that he would be a burden to the community to which he belongs. You tell us, on the other hand, that he is odd. These odd people are a torment for those who live with them. We asked ourselves what is there to gain with a mediocre person of a peculiar mind. What are the advantages that can compensate for his defects and infirmity? Consequently, we put off the answer and decision until you can give us more ample information.

In relation to Father Bellanger, a new debate. We are impressed by the good qualities you tell us about him; but his touchiness, his very fertile imagination, his ease in communicating his preoccupations, in influencing others with his rash judgments, etc., seemed to be serious and quite disturbing. Here again, we finally gave in to your view and consented to admit Father Bellanger to make profession.

That’s the way things are, but I must remind you that up to now everything here happened with great calm. Our population is admirable in its devotion to maintaining order and tranquillity. What will happen later? God knows. I hope that your solitude will not be disturbed, that is what I ask of the Lord for His glory and the salvation of souls. Do not forget us with the Mother of Mercies in your shrine. *Spes Nostra, Salve!* It is under this title that we should pray to her, for I expect nothing from mankind.

1 YENVEUX IV. 90; VI. 156: VII. 154; VIII. 35. 87: IX. 180.

2 Allusion to l’abbé Rouisse.

3 Following the incomplete indications in the Register of Admission at N.-D. de L’Osier, there were only four priests who entered the novitiate in 1847: H. Lempfrit, already gone to Oregon. Aug. Bellanger, mentioned in another paragraph of this letter. Frédéric Michel and J.-B. Luc Sabon, who made vows in the summer of 1848. We do not know to whom this refers.

970. [To Father Dassy, at Nancy].1

970:X in Oblate Writings

Revolution. Father Dassy should not send the novices home. Answers several questions on the relationship of Father Dassy to the Fathers of the house. Forbids the beginning of new construction.

Dassy

[Marseilles.]

March 7, 1848.2

My dear Father Dassy, I had spoken to Father Tempier who was to write you and give you news about us. I see by your last letter that you are anxious still. I am the more upset because here everything has always been very quiet, so that your anxieties have been all for nothing. It seems that things have not been the same in your area. Yet, there was no reason to be so concerned. All changes, even those that have just occurred, always bring on some bit of nuisance; but it is easy to foresee that it will be temporary. Also, I was a bit surprised that you took so drastic a step as to send our young men home. To have sheltered them from the first uprising was very simple; but to send them back home was exposing their vocations to too great temptations. You could have seen to their safety with much less expense than so many trips have cost. It would have been so easy to spread them around the neighborhood and paying, if need be, the cost of their food to the pastors or to private persons who would certainly not have refused to receive them. It is done now; but we will have to suffer the consequences either by the loss of money of which we have so little, or by the loss of vocations that have been put to too great a test.

Taking it for granted, with reason, that you always keep me informed about everything, I now come to those questions you asked me in an old note that I have just rediscovered on my desk.

There is no doubt that you are obliged in conscience to have the Rule observed. You need in no way to go to any trouble about what takes place at L’Osier, if some abuses have crept into that house, far from adopting them in yours, you should avoid them, and when such come to your notice, you are obliged to let me know so that I can deal with them.

Not only Father Santoni but all the young Fathers have the right to make observations to you but always with proper respect and reserve; but you yourself have the duty to conform yourself and to require that others conform themselves to what is written. In case of doubt, you should consult me. All this should be done with a view to the greater good, with all the consideration owed mutually by brothers who are moved by the charity of Jesus Christ and are well brought up. Take care, however, that you yourself ought to give the example of the most exact punctuality in everything prescribed by the Rule pertaining to things or to persons.

For each one you must make the performance of his duties easier, avoid having the manner of a boss. To achieve this, gladly consult those who have been chosen as your council; do not neglect doing this especially at those times indicated by the Rule, so that no one may accuse you of doing things or letting them go according to your whim.

It would seem, my dear friend, that you are not sufficiently aware of our very disturbing financial position, because, after having been reminded of all that we still owe, you come back twice to request that we authorize you to begin new buildings. But that is more than most impossible. The founding of Nancy has ruined us. We accept it in the hope of finding in that area a way to repaying the advances that we had been forced to make and which obliged us to take out ruinous loans. Since this resource is lacking to us. we have thrown ourselves over the brink.

1 YENVEUX V. I23; VII. 162. 165. 182. 191. 201. 247.

2 Yenveux writes 1846; but following the context, it is 1848. On March 12, 1848, Father Dassy answers: “All your advice, recommendations, reproaches are gratefully received by me. Properly speaking, we have sent away from Nancy only three novices.

971. [To Father Vincens, at N.-D. de L’Osier].1

971:X in Oblate Writings

Revolution. Measures to take if the community is threatened. Conduct of Father Santoni at L’Osier and at Nancy.

Vincens

[Marseilles.]

March 19, 1848.

As long as they leave you alone, do not budge, only calm the agitation and anxieties such unforeseen events can arouse. We have communities here which do not know what has taken place. If it were to happen that you had to dissolve or reduce your community, take care not to send each one back home. That is the worst course you could take. In this extreme situation, you would have to scatter your young people, the greater number of whom are preparing for the foreign missions.

We must admit (that Father Santoni)2 has made intolerable claims. When the local superior with the Rules in hand closes him in, he gets out of it by answering that that’s the way things were done at L’Osier. It remains to be seen by what right L’Osier presumed to modify the Rule. I was obliged to write and reaffirm the principles.

I return to your reflections concerning Father Santoni. Should I not conclude that you must reproach yourself for never having told me what you noticed when he was filling the same function at L’Osier and you were superior? It is quite wrong to indulge in these kinds of discretion which leave the Superior General ignorant of those things he ought to know.

Goodbye. It is nearly midnight, and tomorrow we must be up and about as usual at half past five.

1 YENVEUX III. 224; iv. 24; VII. 224. Father Yenveux does not name the recipient of this letter. According to the context, it is Father Vincens, superior and Master of Novices at L’Osier.

2 In his letter of March 12 to the Founder, Father Dassy. superior at Nancy. had complained about Father Santoni, Master of Novices, who did not take any notice of the superior and was feeding the novices too well.

972. [To Father Dassy, at Nancy].1

972:X in Oblate Writings

Decisions to be taken if the revolution becomes hostile to religious. The discord between Fathers Dassy and Santoni has upset some of the novices.

Dassy

[Marseilles.]

March 28, 1848.

I see by your letters that you are still apprehensive and that you cannot be secure regarding the morrow. It should be otherwise in a sincere republic to which the clergy has adhered without hesitation; but since you are threatened, we must foresee what is to be done in any eventuality. You have learned that I did not approve the course you took in your first moment of panic. You answer that you have sent some home, others to our house in England. That seems very simple to you. But if we had wanted to leave these men in England, we would not have had them come to France at great expense. They should have been sent anywhere except to England; now they will have to stay there, much to my great regret, since we do not have the money to face up to such long and frequent trips for our people.

I return to the rules of conduct you must follow in case you have to leave your house. If it is through prudence and to allow the disturbance to pass, it will suffice to hide ourselves for a short time in order thereafter to resume our peaceable occupations. If, through an abuse of power you were forced to abandon your property and never to return, in that case, you should have to examine what is to be done; either to leave completely this inhospitable region, or to try and establish yourself somewhere in some diocese other than Nancy, for example, that of Saint-Die. This latter alternative would be better. Thus you will go and speak with the Father Superior of the Major Seminary of Saint-Die, for it is in seminaries that we will have to establish ourselves, and you will propose to him in my name to receive our novices under the direction of their master. They would then be considered seminarians exteriorly, and they would pay for their board. If that arrangement is not feasible, the only course remaining would be to send to L’Osier those who are farthest removed from their oblation and send here those who will soon be professed. The project of Saint-Die would be more advantageous because our young men would be closer to the seaports where they could board for America or for England; for, if persecution sets in, it will be in those countries that we will take refuge. As for you priests, you are French citizens who have the right to live on your property; you will insist on this right with modest firmness.

It is somewhat of a farce to call yourselves Jesuits; you are no more Jesuits than you are Carthusians. You are priests exercising the ministry of preaching under the jurisdiction of the diocesan Bishop who gives you work according to the needs of his diocese. You have no obligation to answer as to what you do within the community. You say Mass, you recite the Office, you study, you compose sermons to preach, especially to the poor when the Bishop sends you.

Two novices from Belgium, according to what I have received in writing, were so scandalized by the dissent which occurred between the local superior and the Master of Novices, that it is quite possible they will not return. I also believe that Brother M. does not care to witness such things anymore; he will stay where he is. So take care, I say this in passing, to treat such matters among yourselves, and never let anything be perceived by your young men, who are rightly scandalized when there is discord that should not exist.

1 YENVEUX V. 124-125; VIII. 51. Answer to the letter written by Father Dassy. March 17.

973. [To Father Courtès, at Limoges].1

973:X in Oblate Writings

Elections. Importance of regularity.

Courtès

[Marseilles.]

April 24, 1848.

For the occasion of the elections,2 I had ordered Masses each morning from five o’clock on to one o’clock in the afternoon. Never have the elections been more peaceful. I would even say more silent.

First, establish perfect regularity and let us get used to living according to the virtue of obedience, applied quietly but faithfully observed.

1 YENVEUX V. 127; VII. *165.* Yenveux does not give the name of the recipient of the first of these extracts; but the same date and pagination (pp. 128, 129) of the register whence he took these texts, allow us to conclude that they refer to Father Courtès in both cases.

2 There were elections held on Easter Sunday, April 23, for the Constituent Assembly of France.

974. [To Father Vincens, N.-D. de L’Osier].1

974:X in Oblate Writings

Coming departure of missionaries for America. Father Cas. Aubert sent as visitor to England: Father Bellanger replaces him at le Calvaire. List of Brothers admitted to vows. Calm at Marseilles despite the revolution. Burfin replaces Courtès at Limoges.

Vincens

[Marseilles.]

April 26, 1848.

A ship is to set sail on the 10th for Boston. Six Jesuit Fathers are embarking on this voyage, there remain five berths which for all sorts of reasons we should take advantage of. Father Maisonneuve, Brother Déléage and Brother Cauvin have been notified; you will have to send us Father Menthe and to choose between the two Brothers from Savoy who are going to make their vows on Sunday which one you consider preferable.2 Send them to me in good time so that they can be equipped and, if need be, to receive the tonsure and minor orders. Brother Bouvier must not worry, I agree to him leaving with Father Léonard, who will go by way of Le Havre. We had spoken of a Brother Gelot who would like to be among the privileged; he could also get ready and go with Father Léonard, although it is with regret that I see novices leave before they have made their oblation. If Brother Bouvier has arrangements to make, let him hurry, for Father Léonard is impatient to get started. His brother also wants to go very much, but I do not know what they can do with him in Canada. He imagines that he can serve as a catechist. I cannot promise him that they will consider him competent. But if he resigns himself to being purely and simply a Brother, that will be fine. Father Léonard will not delay his departure beyond the 15th. If Brother Gelot wants to leave, he has no time to lose in putting his affairs in order. You will not be surprised if I do not make a visit to England as I had planned; but I could not refrain from sending Father Aubert. We have great interests at stake. There is question of accepting a beautiful property for a novitiate, and regulating many other things. He will go to that country at the end of next month, and remain only long enough to establish our houses. In the interval. I will have no one here except Father Bernard; I absolutely need someone. I think Father Bellanger, who has not much to do at L’Osier during the heat of summer, will be the man I need here. So send him to me for this short period of time, I will send him back to you just as soon as Father Aubert returns from his missions; but I would like you to send him a little before the departure of Father Aubert who will tell him something about the ways of the house; he could accompany the young Brothers whom we are sending to America.

You have not yet presented to me those whom you consider should be admitted to their profession on the 12th of next month. I read on my list the names of Tissot, Moloney, Naghten, Perréard, Pellarin, another Tissot, Henry, Fea. Father Aubert must have written you for those who had been previously admitted, that is, Sallaz, Babel and Jean Tissot.3

I hope you are now a bit reassured, we must not be so anxious before being beaten; it is enough to cry our “Ouch” when we feel the blows. We take certain precautions; but we are not afraid.

I no longer mention Father Burfin. He must have arrived at his destination. He will be there with Father Courtès, who has conducted himself admirably in the direction of this new establishment. I see this good Father Burfin as you do; but this is not the first and probably will not be the last time that our hand is forced by circumstances.

Are you happy with Brother Luc? You have not mentioned him to me again. I leave you. They have come to fetch me. Goodbye.

+ C. J. Eugene. Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Original: Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M.-Vincens.

2 Claude Sallaz and Jean Tissot; the latter left for Canada.

3 According to the Register of Admission, there were at that time only two Tissot at the novitiate: Jean and Jean-Claude.

*94.* [To Father Gaudet].1

94:I in Oblate Writings

Observance of the Rules. Illness of Father Bernard. Revolution of 1848 in France. Departure of missionaries.

Gaudet

[Marseilles]

April 29, 1848.

I am most glad to see that you are happy. I conclude from this that you will be blessed by God. *Hilarem datorem diligit Deus.* I recommend that you seek ever to be united amongst yourselves and to have the greatest deference for those who stand in the place of God. Remember what I have recommended so much to you all. Never murmur amongst yourselves, never reveal confidential matters outside. Your predecessors were not always sufficiently reserved on these two counts, so what mischief has not resulted in consequence! Ah, if only one would reflect a little more on the Holy Rules that the Church has given us, how many faults would be avoided and what progress would not be made in the way of perfection!

The good Father Bernard who had so well endured the ocean crossing, being so strong and well constituted, him I saw at grips with death;2 what grief I felt! But I never lost hope. I had unlimited confidence in the goodness of God and in the protection of the Holy Virgin. As for you, is it not marvellous that you should keep so well considering your delicate health? Do not abuse it, my dear friend, never commit an imprudence, never must work too strenuous be imposed upon you. They have to remember that your chest is delicate even if your goodwill is robust.

A revolution is always a sorry affair. We accept all things from the hand of God. He will give us the strength to support the trials which are in store for us. Double your prayers for us that we who are going to be in the thick of it may be benefitted by your peaceful serenity in serving God well and the Church. I am sending you help. It will show you that I think of you - he will not be the last.3

1 Ms. Yenveux III, 224; lv, 226; ‘l, 216, 244.

2 Concerning the illness of J. P. Bernard, the Founder wrote in his Journal on March 6: “Letter from Mme Trudeau. This lady is wonderful to our missionaries but gives me dreadful news to the effect that our Fr. Bernard, so good and so fervent, is so ill that he has received right away the sacraments. I am really cast down by this news. What could not be envisaged in the way of devotedness towards God and the salvation of souls from this fervent missionary with his strong hand, his fine voice, his good health. My God, what a new affliction... The holy Bishop of Montreal has ordered a novena which is now being made for him and it is still hoped that he will be cured. All are sympathetic, Mine Trudeau tells me, and are with him in his suffering...”

3 The minutes of the General Council of April 17 give the list of missionaries who are soon to leave on an American ship for Boston: Fr. Aug. Maisonneuve, the scholastics R. Deléage, A. E. Cauvin, J. Tissot, and the lay brother J. Menthe. Fr. Léonard was to leave from Le Havre with the novices J. Bouvier and P. Gelot.

18. [To Fr. John Naughten in England].1

18: III in Oblate Writings

Can exercise his ministry outside the Congregation but on certain conditions posed by the Founder.

Naughten John

[Marseilles]

May 1, 1848.

In view of the misfortunes of your family,2 I recognize the need to accord you the dispensations compatible with your vocation. I therefore consent that you accept an assignment from which you will draw remuneration in order to relieve the distress of your mother and sister. But note on what conditions I propose to leave you thus to yourself, detached from any community of ours.

1. I am most insistent that from time to time you betake yourself to one of our communities and so spend one or two days with your brothers and be able to receive direction from a superior.

2. That you render an exact accounting of the use you make of the money you are authorized to receive. You know that in virtue of your vow of poverty you must not go beyond a certain level of moderation. Be content, in regard to your own person, with what you honestly need and see to the needs of your mother and sister without extravagance or excess. If a surplus remains of the revenue you receive, you should give an account thereof to the superior. The decision as to the use to be made of it will be given to you by him or by the Visitor General.3

1Ms. Yenveux VIII, 320.

2 The General Council of May 24, 1848, permitted Michael Naughten, brother of John, to make his profession. The secretary added: “In the previous session, there had already been question (of Bro. Naughten) and the Council had judged that it would be appropriate to suspend its decision relative to this subject, until more ample details (could be learned) on account of the exceptional situation in which he found himself with the misfortunes afflicting his family. But this painful situation has not shaken the firm resolution of this young novice. He wishes no longer to return to the world and seeks the grace of being received into the Congregation. Moreover the Rev. Father Master is strongly of the opinion that he be admitted, remarking that if the relatives of Brother Naughten find themselves in a state which requires the assistance of someone, the elder brother, to whom all the necessary permissions have been given to this effect. can well fulfil this duty, without the younger brother being obliged to renounce his vocation.”

975. [To Father Courtès, at Limoges].1

975:X in Oblate Writings

Congratulations to Father Courtès as founder of the house at Limoges. Father Burfin will replace him.

L.J.C. and MI.

Courtès

Marseilles.

May 5*,* 1848.

Dear Courtès, I admire always more (that does not mean that I am surprised) your activity and your courage. Your conduct since you have been entrusted with the difficult mission of Limoges is beyond all praise. You have shown what you can be, and I bless the Lord a thousand times that I gave you this trust, to show everybody what are your resources of mind and heart when you apply yourself to the task at hand. What a difference in comparison to that sedentary life that was so insufficient for a soul so full of energy like yours! And so I would regret to see you return to that quiet life which neutralizes a great part of the qualities you possess. and that I had wanted many times, but vainly until now, to have you in a situation to deploy them.

It makes me happy to be able to tell you that I approve in every way all that you have done since I gave you the direction of our establishment at Limoges. I only feared at times that you did not give enough care to your health, but the Lord has shown us that he comes to the help of those who have in view only his glory, and the success of the holy ministry entrusted to them. I do not gloss over the difficulties you will have to bring those who will succeed you to your ways of doing things. If the lord Bishop had been less urgent, less threatening, let us say, in his demands, I would not have abandoned adopting the project that you proposed as feasible to me, that is, to give this mission to the care of Father Viala. The Father does indeed lack some things to do the task well; but since we can get used to him, and he does succeed rather well, it could have been achieved by persuading him that he must be more faithful to the Rules which govern the family and that he himself is to observe well that which he is obliged to have others observe.

But everything was settled, and unless Father Burfin was to be left where he was, it was no longer possible to come back on what had been said. He did not prove very courageous in the proposal he made to you, together with Father Nicolas, to leave the situation and go back. That is a bad beginning. How is he going to pilot this ship which needs a good cool-headed pilot, who does not at the first commotion take an extreme position that compromises the very existence of a newly established foundation, that has been so well directed up to now. Of course, we have no choice.

May 6.

I am tired out. I do not remember what I wanted to add. Guess who turned me away from finishing my letter yesterday? Your father and your sister came to see me on purpose to tell me their fears for you. I reassured them by showing them your letter.2

1 Original: Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M.-Courtès.

2 The last words of the first sheet of this letter have been erased; the second sheet has disappeared.

112. To the Members of the Central Council for Southern France of the Missionary Society of the Propagation of the Faith, Lyon.1

112:V in Oblate Writings

Dispatch of Fr. Casimir Aubert’s report on the need of the Oblate missions. The procurator has taken into account the decrease in the Missionary Society’s income. The Oblate missions are only beginning, are full of promise, and therefore should be helped as much as possible. A dozen missionaries will be sent out this year.

Propagation of the Faith

Marseilles,

May 8, 1848.

Dear Sirs,

I have the honour of sending you the enclosed documents compiled by Fr. Aubert, procurator of the foreign missions of our Congregation, to be presented to the two Councils of the Missionary Society of the Propagation of the Faith and serve as a basis for the deliberations during which you are so kind as to dwell upon the interests of these different missions and set the figure of the grants approved in their favor for 1848.

I would have sent these documents to you at the usual time, i.e. in March, if it had not been for the unforeseen events2 which intervened to suspend any and all activities. Today, however, I do not believe I should delay further, and even though the situation is not the most reassuring, it is nonetheless possible to hope that your administration will be able to pursue its course and its operations more or less as before.

I have nothing to add to what is stated by the Fr. Procurator of our foreign missions on their pressing needs and the numerous reasons they can advance in claiming the assistance of the Propagation of the Faith. Even though succinct, his presentation will suffice to arouse your zeal in their favor and assure them a generous vote on your part. I will therefore refrain from insisting on the reasons therein contained. I nonetheless feel it necessary to recommend to your attention the cause of the bishop of Bytown. This prelate is going to be in an extremely difficult situation which he will only be able to manage through your charitable cooperation. There is an immense amount of good to be done in his diocese for the erection of which the goodly Bishop of Montreal did not fear to make a second trip to Rome. His financial resources, however, are practically nonexistent considering the pressing needs of all kinds.

Together with the requests we address to you in favor of the foreign missions of the Congregation, it is my pleasure, Gentlemen, to submit to you a few observations which I would ask you to keep in mind in deciding these requests. First of all, the missions on behalf of which we appeal to your zeal and generosity are of such a nature as to bring about great results for the good of religion and, if success is to count for anything as a criterion determining the distribution of your alms, our missions of Cornwall in England, together with those in Ceylon and America are worthy of your benevolence and merit a large portion in that distribution. I also feel it necessary to comment that the recent date of our foreign missions establishment makes them more interesting and should foster the deepest interest on your part in their favor. The oldest two have not yet existed for five years and the other in Ceylon and Oregon were only founded last year. Should it be surprising that they are still unable to do without the alms of the Propagation of the Faith and that we hold this assistance to be an indispensable condition for their very existence? If some missions, less than others, are to suffer the consequences of a reduction in the income of the Missionary Society of the Propagation of the Faith, is it just that it be the incipient missions rather than those which, founded for sometime, can at least subsist for a certain lapse of time on their own resources and await more favorable circumstances without suffering too much.

It goes without saying that in the notes I am sending you the Rev. Fr. Procurator of the foreign missions of the Congregations of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate has taken into consideration the distressing situation experienced this year by the Missionary Society whose supreme administration is entrusted to your care. That is why he has included in his budget only the strictly necessary expenses and has set the figure at the minimum level. This will be readily evident when you look through the different articles of the situations he has drawn up for each mission in detail. It is quite certain that the sums requested for our missions in foreign countries are less than half of what appears in the reports of the Annals for other missions under the same conditions. It is true that the total sum of the grants requested for our foreign missions is rather high. It should not be forgotten, however, that these grants are to be shared among 5 or 6 foundations scattered in three different parts of the globe and that these foundations will together receive comparatively less than what the Missionary Society of the Propagation of the Faith grants each year for the missions of one or another Society in a single part of the world, for example in America or Oceania.

Besides the sums indicated in the enclosed documents, the Congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate requests of you, Gentlemen, a special grant of 12000 francs for the travelling expenses of the missionaries it must send this year to the aid of our Missions in America. The Congregation has chosen a dozen members for this holy expedition. A much larger number offered themselves and would be ready to go but certain limitations are necessary while awaiting for the resources of the Propagation of the Faith to be such as to enable it to respond to the needs of the missions and the zeal of the apostolic workers with more abundant alms.

Gentlemen, please accept the expression of the high regard wherewith I remain your most humble and obedient servant,

+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles, S. G.

1 Orig.: Rome, Arch. of the Postulation, L. M.P. This letter was only signed by the Founder. A similar text is kept in Paris.

2 Reference to the Revolution of 1848.

3. [To Fr. Étienne Semeria at Jaffna].1

3:IV (Ceylon) in Oblate Writings

Departure of missionaries for Canada. The Revolution of 1848 in France is diminishing the resources of the Work for the Propagation of the Faith, and make it impossible to send more Fathers to Ceylon. Fr. Ciamin is alone in the Mantotte mission. Relations with Bishop Bettachini, the Abbé Reinaud and the Italian priests in Jaffna. Little hope of obtaining Religious Sisters and Brothers of the Christian Schools, but some Oblates are available, in particular Fr. Frédérick Mouchel. Letter of Bishop Bettachini. Illness of Fr. Keating. Hopes of obtaining a Vicariate reserved to the Oblates.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Semeria

Marseilles,

May 9, 1848.

My dear Fr. Semeria, look how much I have been able to write to you from May 9 to 11, when I take up again, I will not say my pen, which I have never put down since that time, but the letter that was intended for you. During the interval I have written to the whole of North America. On this very day four of our Brothers and a Lay-Brother are to embark for Canada.2 They have among them only one priest, a deacon on whom I conferred the diaconate the second day after I had made him subdeacon, and two in minor orders. These last two have not yet begun their theology - Fr. Allard will have the responsibility of teaching it to them at Longueuil; the deacon has only done one year’s theology. You will say that we are eating our wheat while it is still green, but it is not true: they will do their studies as well at Longueuil as here, and they will acclimatise themselves to the country as they learn the languages. Also, it was necessary to take advantage of the opportunity of a ship that was leaving Marseilles to go direct to Boston and offered us the advantages of saving five or six francs a head. My dear Father, had God willed that we needed only to spend four or five hundred francs to send you subjects, you would already have had several, but when we must spend 2000 francs for each missionary whom we send to your island, we are obliged to hold back until the Propagation of the Faith decides to provide something. The recent events in France have so depleted their resources that there is reason to fear that they will no longer be able to do anything for the missions, and then what will become of us? I have sent Fr. Tempier to Lyons to try to obtain something, but I have little hope that he will succeed in spite of the pressing letter that I have sent with him. I have received all your letters punctually, and I thank you very much for your promptness in writing to me. If I am not so prompt myself in replying, it must be attributed to two causes, firstly to the disturbances that come to me in my position, which have increased even more of late and oblige me to miss the departure of the boat, and also a little to the fact that I rely on the faithful and incomparable Fr. Aubert who copes with everything with admirable efficiency and presence of mind. I am having another look at your most recent letters in the fear of having allowed something to escape of what you have said to me. In your letter of February 7 you told me that you decided you should allow Fr. Ciamin to go and govern the Mantotte mission. It would have been difficult to take any other course, but it is essential that you preserve contact as normal with him, whose superior you still are. You must demand that he write to you at least once a month to give you an account of his administration, and concerning this I would like to know myself what sort of a mission this is, what the missioner has to do there, what the resources are, etc. As regards financial resources, be sure that the missioner renders you an exact account and that he only keeps for himself what, in a spirit of poverty, he must have for his needs: the surplus, if there is any, must be sent to you so that you can begin forming a provincial fund which could help us, if no aid is forthcoming from the Propagation of the Faith, for sending subjects whom I would dearly love to associate with you, but whom I cannot send because I lack the means. I approve very strongly your remaining with the Vicar Apostolic for several reasons. He will become more attached to you, he will appreciate you and you will come to have a perfect understanding of the mission in the whole island, which will help you in drawing up your plans and in communicating them to me when you know where you stand. If the island had to be divided, I would very much like us to have a Vicariate reserved for us alone, which we will be responsible for keeping supplied with subjects, but while we wait we must make ourselves useful and even indispensable to the Bishop who, being good and zealous, will prefer to have you share his concerns rather than anybody else who did not offer him the same guarantees. Make every effort you can, then, to learn as soon as possible the languages it is necessary to know in that country, but at the same time deal carefully with all those Italians so that they do not oppose you, even those who do not like the Bishop, but carefully, in order not so shock him. As for R[einaud], be more and more concerned to know his intentions, do not make yourself his enemy, and see how he comes on. I have always believed firmly that he was working for himself, that everything he did he did in order to become a bishop, and that if that happened he would like nothing more than to have us under his jurisdiction and to use us. It is a pity that you have not been able to talk to Bishop Beni3 so that he might not allow himself to be influenced too much by biased men *qui quaerunt quae sua sunt.* If everything were not in chaos at Rome I could have thought about doing something there, but at the moment it is impossible. However, I did write to Propaganda to recommend our missionaries personally. If you had a chance to get in touch with them it would do no harm perhaps, even if all you did was speak well of your Vicar Apostolic and to defend him if necessary from attacks made on him by jealous persons and malcontents. I am following your letters item by item. And so now I will reply to you that the plan of Bishop Bettachini of calling the Sisters and the Brothers of the Christian Schools is very good, but impracticable in the manner in which he intends it and especially today with the difficulty of getting anything from the Propagation of the Faith. There is perhaps not a single Brother of the Christian Schools who knows English, and among the Sisters, with the exception of the Dames of the Sacred Heart, I do not think any more are to be found. The other plan would be more practical if the means could be found of paying for the passages. I could send plenty of subjects for you to use for teaching although that is not at all the vocation of those who come to join us; but if they were used for this work only for a time perhaps this would suit them. However, I think it would be a mistake to hope for providing ourselves with subjects from among the inhabitants of the island. How could one hope to form religious from a nature such as theirs? Could you even make secular priests of them? Look at your Goans. As for the schools, it might perhaps be easier to take on that responsibility for the future if we had a house residence and if we were to put some of our brothers there, but the really difficult thing would always be the finances. Do you know who is the first missionary I would send you if I had the money to pay for his passage? Guess: Fr. Mouchel, who is learning English at great speed and has written me letter after letter asking to be given preference for your mission, fearing that he will not be able to endure the cold of North America. I think that, knowing English as he does, he would be a good acquisition for your mission. This Father is very virtuous and his attraction to the missions to unbelievers is very pronounced. No, it is not subjects that we are lacking, it is money.

Bishop Bettachini wrote to me by the same post as you. He paints me a deplorable picture of the ignorance and depravity of the Christians in that country. And whose fault is it, he asks me. Of pastors *qui pascebant seipsos et quaerebant quae sua sunt.* No catechism, hardly any confessions, and so on. However, he sees from experience that it is possible to instruct these poor folk, to correct them, to reform abuses and their morals. He tells me that one Goan has gone mad, another is dead, and a third has become a schismatic, so that there now remain in the island no more than seventeen of these poor priests, that his voyage to Europe has considerably improved the state of the mission since half the island has been entrusted to him exclusively and he is coadjutor of the rest of the island. He could have added the fact that he brought with him such good and faithful cooperators as yourselves. He asks me for the support of my prayers and assures me of his protection for you. “Sta a V.S. Ill.,” he says, ‘di mandare un compagno al p. Ciamin.” - Subito, si, ma il denaro dov’é?4 It is true that the good prelate, asking me to find for him three Religious Sisters such as you mention adds that the Propagation of the Faith will send me 8000 francs and that he thinks that 6000 francs will be enough for the passages of the Sisters, the remaining 2000 being for the missionary whom he hopes I will send him with the Sisters. We have the missionary already: it is the sisters and the 8000 francs that we lack. I am too busy today, since it is the day the post leaves, to reply to Bishop Bettachini on these various points. Let him know what I have said to you and assure him of my good wishes and my constant goodwill and desire to send him as many missionaries as I can. Finally, I come to your letter of the 7th, the same date as the other and as the Bishop’s letter. For a start, be reassured about your alleged incapability. It is not you who have called yourself; God will give you all that you need to bring your ship safely to harbour. Trust in his goodness and his promises, pray to him unceasingly for the lights of his Holy Spirit, and walk without fear in the name of the Lord. I approve of all that you have done. Take great care of Fr. Keating if he has spat blood: you must give him all the dispensations that his delicate constitution make necessary. Fr. Arnoux played the same trick on us when he went to say one of his first Masses at Notre-Dame de la Garde. So Fr. Keating will see that accidents happen everywhere. As for you, do not do anything that is above your strength. Remember that you have a delicate constitution, and have no scruples about allowing yourself all the comforts necessary for the accomplishment of your mission. I am looking forward to your explaining to me a little more the state of the mission throughout the island before I give you the advice that you ask me for. There is a little confusion in what you say to me about it, as you recognize yourself. However, I have explained myself clearly on one point at the beginning of this letter by telling you of my desire that a Vicariate could be formed which would be entrusted to our men. It seems to me that you believe that Bishop Bettachini, if he feared that he himself might not succeed, might not be far from suggesting another coadjutor of Colombo. I am afraid that I find it hard to believe, but if it were so it would be annoying if someone outside the Congregation were preferred. You go on to speak to me of Negombo, which has thrown me into confusion. Come back to this subject, and give yourself time to reflect on it in order to explain things to me well and to give me your fully detailed advice. I cannot continue - people are coming at every moment to call me. I would like to write to our two Fathers, but I must put that off until next month. I embrace you in haste and bless you all with all my heart.

¶+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

P.S. Please pray for a novice who has just died at Nancy. Have you been told of the death of Brother Arvel, Oblate?5

1 Original: Rome, Archive of the Postulation, L. M-Semeria.

2 Fr. A. Maisonneuve, the scholastics R. Déléage, A. E. Cauvin and J. Tissot, and the lay-brother J. Menthe.

3 Bishop Louis dei Conti Beni, titular Bishop of Canope in Egypt.

4 “It is for you to send a companion for Fr. Ciamin.” - Yes, at once, but where is the money?

5 Joseph Ganivet and Antoine Arvel.

95. [To Father Faraud].1

95:I in Oblate Writings

Is urged to write a narration of all he is doing for the glory of God. The revolution in France. The mission of Ceylon. Departure of missionaries for Canada. Affection.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Faraud

Marseilles,

May 10, 1848.

My dear Fr. Faraud, there is a father beyond the great lake whom you must not forget; know that you are always present to him, whatever the distance which separates you from him, not only at the holy altar where each day he offers the Holy Sacrifice for the family and all the members of which it is composed but during the day’s routine and in the frequent conversations wherein the names of his children, their ministry, their strenuous labours and all the good they do never cease to be present to his memory and on his lips. Why then, dear son, when Fr. Aubert writes to me, do you not add some lines to his letter or, better still, why not write directly and tell me about yourself and narrate what you have done for the glory of God? Twice a year, there being no means to correspond more frequently, is not difficult to manage and you would give me so much pleasure, so much benefit.

You know me little if you do not know how much I love you. Make up, dear child, for your past negligence by putting down your story for me since your departure for the missions until the day your letter is dated. For that you take a large sheet of paper and you write on all four pages and more if necessary or continue in a second letter from the place your story leaves off. There is no detail to which I am indifferent. All that comes to me from my dear children interests me to the highest degree. Give me this pleasure, my dear Fr. Faraud. I ask you this in return for the good I wish you, for the friendship and the paternal love I have for you.

You will have learned that an unexpected revolution has saddled us with a republic which up to now has done us no good and much harm already if only in terms of stagnation instead of prosperity. We were making wonderful progress, our houses were multiplying and the number of vocations increased each day. But now that resources are failing, we have to stop this growth for lack of the wherewithal to feed and lodge so many people. It is really a shame! For the same reason I find myself forced to postpone the sending of new missionaries to the beautiful island of Ceylon where Fr. Semeria is stationed with Frs. Keating and Ciamin, as well as a lay brother. We could do marvels in that country for the conversion of 1,100,000 infidels and the instruction of 150,000 Christians but it takes not less than 2000 francs per person for the voyage and the Propagation of the Faith suffers from the great upheaval which has ruined all the industries, restricted all sources of capital and in consequence diminished all revenues. Our missions in England are so prosperous that had the revolution not occurred, I would have gone to visit them this year. The good father Perron has welded them together by his holy death. They are served just now by Frs. Daly, Tamburini, Naughten, Cooke, Noble, Grey, Walsh, Bradshaw and Hickey. You should know several of these good Fathers as well as Bro. Cauvin whom I am sending this very day to America with four others who entered novitiate after your departure. They are going to embark in a fine ship which is fitted with very comfortable cabins and they will arrive with the help of God at Boston while Fr. Léonard, with the two Bouviers2 whom you knew, one a clerical and the other a lay brother, will embark with one or two others also at Le Havre towards the end of the month and arrive about the same time on your continent. I should think that among all these Oblates of goodwill, the provincial superior will designate some to come to your aid or release some from those already on the continent who will be replaced by the newcomers, only one of whom is now a priest.

I think these details about the family, together with those I have sent to Father Bermond, will give you pleasure. Do as much, I ask you again, on your part. You know that we should all say in the broadest sense *omnia mea tua sunt* since we are all but *cor unum et anima una* as long as we are in Heaven and on earth - that is our strength and our consolation.

Adieu, my dear son, may the Lord pour his most ample blessings upon you, on your brothers and on your holy ministry. May he render you ever more worthy of your sublime vocation and heap upon you spiritual consolations in recompense for the trials that you endure for His glory and the salvation of the souls He has redeemed with His precious blood. I bless you likewise with all my soul.

+ C. J Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Orig. - Rome. Arch. of the Postulation -- I M. Faraud.

2 The register of entries at the novitiate mentions only François Joseph Bouvier; his brother had evidently not been a novice.

96. [To Father Guigues].1

96:I in Oblate Writings

Signature of the future bishop. The manner of administering confirmation.

Guigues

[Marseilles]

May 12, 1848.

I have seen the signature that you have adopted. It would be better to spell one of your names in full, at least one. Initials can suffice for the others but it would be as well that you adopt one to be written out completely.

Regarding the mission of the Red River, our Fathers must at all cost go in pairs...

I recommend that when you administer the sacrament of confirmation, you pose your hand on the head of the one to be confirmed and at the same time anoint his forehead with your thumb. It is very easy to acquire this habit instead of closing the fist, which ought not to be done.

1 Ms. Yenveux I supplement 79, 123; V, 127.

97. [To Father Guigues].1

97:I in Oblate Writings

Complains about the lack of obedience of the Oblates of Canada. Superiors must ask permission before proceeding to build.

Guigues

[Marseilles]

May 22, 1848.

I broach with extreme repugnance the subject of the conduct of our men in Canada. Too long have my mind and heart been wearied thereby. Several times already I have been on the point of taking a severe decision, for it is not tolerable. They are too prone to argue and not enough to obey as conscience demands. Since when must a superior have all the qualities and virtues there are in order to be respected? What authority have the subjects in a community to control his actions, measure his worth and bear judgement on his ability, his experience? When he is punctual and observant of the Rules, has competent knowledge and enjoys the confidence of the Superior General, what more must be asked of him? Is it not moreover a singular thing that outsiders judge the worth of our members? All they should know about them is whatever is external such as their preaching but their personal qualities, their aptitude more or less to be at the head of a community, should be unknown to them. They could not be in a position to judge such matters except through indiscretions which are most culpable.

These are matters which you only skim over in your correspondence with me... It is not sufficient only to say a passing word about your projects, your affairs. You should explain them in detail. I wish you could see the letters of the Jesuit Provincials to the General of their Order. Nothing is forgotten. The Jesuits have constructed at Marseilles a beautiful church and a fine house. Of course they had sent the plans for approval to Rome and that was accorded. But having omitted to show the parlors which they had made and which they had thought suitable, they sought approval for them when returning the plans in connection with other details. Well! Those parlors were not approved. They had to demolish them in order to arrange them as the General had prescribed. You have, you others, built, I am told, a new wing to your house at Longueuil. Who has thought to breathe a word to me about this? It is imperative to regularize relations which go to strengthen more than you think the unity which must reign in all Congregations and the bonds of our fraternity.

1 Ms. Yenveux III, 66; VII, 122.

98. [To the Hospital Sisters of St. Joseph of the H6tel-Dieu of Montreal] 1

98:I in Oblate Writings

Participation in the prayers, merits, etc., of the Oblates.

Charles Joseph Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles

and Superior General of the Congregation of the Oblates

of Mary Immaculate

to the Religious Ladies of the Hotel-Dieu of Montreal

known as the Sisters of Saint Joseph

Greetings and Benediction in Our Lord Jesus Christ:

Although the laws of Christian charity make it a duty for us to pray to God on behalf of all, we nevertheless believe ourselves more strictly obliged to do so in regard to the persons to whom we are indebted for spiritual and temporal services rendered to the members of our Congregation. Wherefore, ladies, on learning of the charity and indefatigable zeal that you have exercised towards the Oblates of Mary Immaculate established in Canada, we wish to give you a solemn and lasting witness of our gratitude. So, confiding ourselves to divine mercy and to the powerful intercession of the Most Holy and Immaculate Virgin Mary, our patroness, by the authority which God has given us, in spite of our unworthiness, we grant you for ever a full and entire communication of all the holy sacrifices, prayers, penances and of all works of piety and zeal which by the grace of God are performed and will be performed in future in the various houses of our Institute as much in America as in other parts of the world, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

We beg that it be the will of Our Lord Jesus Christ to ratify in Heaven this promise and engagement in order that, He, compensating for our unworthiness from the inexhaustible treasure of His merits, may heap upon you, ladies, every grace and heavenly blessing in this life and reward you hereafter with the crown of a glorious eternity.

Given at Marseilles under our sign, the seal of our arms and the countersign of the secretary of the Congregation, the 24th of May, 1848.

+ C. J. Eugene, bishop of Marseilles, S.G.

by mandate of the Most Rev. Father General,

C. Aubert, priest, O.M.I., secretary.

1 Orig. - Montreal, Archives of the Hotel-Dieu.

976. For Father Vincens, superior at N.- D. de L’Osier, Isère.1

976:X in Oblate Writings

Father Vincens will preach the ecclesiastical retreat at Marseilles.

L.J.C. and M.I

Vincens

Marseilles.

June 2, 1848.

Dear Father Vincens, I will write only a word so as not to allow Father Trudeau to pass through without giving him the errand of carrying a testimony of my remembrance and friendship. He is about to leave and I am called elsewhere. I will write you later on when I have more leisure. However, I will not put off for another day without reminding you that I am still counting on you for our ecclesiastical retreat. You know that in waiting for you we did not have any last year; but we will make up for it this year with the greater fervor that your charity will inspire in us.

Goodbye, they are waiting for me, I embrace you and bless your whole family. Do not forget to send me the remainder of Brother Blanchet’s letter.

C.J. Eugene. Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Original: Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M.-Vincens.

977. For Father Vincens, at N.- D. de L’Osier.1

977:X in Oblate Writings

Do not wait for the end of the novitiate to come to a decisive judgment on the novices. Mr. Cailhol and his sister will visit L’Osier.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Vincens

Marseilles.

June 9, 1848.

I think, my dear Father Vincens, that when on the eve of profession we are undecided about the qualities or the merits of a candidate, it is better to send him away. I only regret that we wait a whole year before coming to such a decision. It is hard to feed these people for such a long time as a pure waste.

You will shortly receive the visit of Mr. Cailhol, my first vicar. I do not need to recommend to you that he be received as one of ours; what I want to request is to take good lodging for his sister who is travelling with him and needs much care because of her weak health.

I have received a letter from Father Lempfrit at St. Louis and another from Father Maisonneuve at Gibraltar. They are well.

Goodbye. Father Aubert wants to leave.

1 Original: Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M.-Vincens.

978. To Father Tempier, v.g. Rush.1

978:X in Oblate Writings

Asks for two seminarians to accompany him to a Confirmation.

Tempier

Marseilles

June 15*,* 1848 Thursday. at *5* o’clock..

Two seminarians will be enough to carry my insignia at the general Confirmation which I will give at Trinity this morning at eight o’clock precisely; I am therefore counting on you. I will set out by carriage at half past seven. Come a bit early to read very attentively a long letter which will give you food for thought. as it does to me.2 I shall have to answer during the day, after we are agreed. I can take the two seminarians along with me in the carriage. We will all leave in our choir dress.

Good day.

1 Original: Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M.-Tempier.

2 The Founder writes in his *Diary,* the same day: “Circular letter from the ecclesiastical representatives to the Bishops. They send a schedule to be filled out concerning stipends.” The new republican government intended to eliminate the salaries of the clergy. This scheme was motivated by the fact that, according to the government, the stipends and resources of church boards were sufficient to fittingly compensate the clergy.

979. [To Father Viala, at Limoges].1

979:X in Oblate Writings

Invitation to remain at Limoges.

Viala

[Marseilles.]

June 21, 1848.

I was very much consoled, my dear Father Viala, to learn from your letter all the good you have been able to accomplish in the diocese of Limoges. How does it happen after that that you are asking me to remove you from there? Is it because you are suffering, but just where do we not? You are mistaken to believe that from one province to another in France the climate can be so detrimental so as to make one ill; we are not in Guyana nor in the Pontine Marshes.2 You allowed yourself to be possessed by some preoccupation and, by not reminding yourself that we ought to be where Providence has placed us, you have given in to boredom, and that is the trouble. But, my dear friend, think of our relationship to the Bishop of Limoges. He writes me letter after letter, urging me not to put off for an instant the fulfillment of the obligations we have contracted; at least six able missionaries are needed, and that is the time that Father Courtès has withdrawn.

In God’s name, my dear Father, be calm and help yourself thereto with some supernatural thinking. What should we seek on this earth? to do God’s will. The secret of our happiness lies in conforming our will with his; if our will is cantankerous, we risk losing the merit of our obedience; at least we deprive ourselves of the consolations that always accompany our submission. Reflect that several of our brothers have given up everything and crossed the seas to obey this divine will which was manifested to them through the very superiors who are keeping you in your present post. Those among them who sleep on snow, who drag themselves over ice, who have nothing but a little bread for their food, and on lucky days, a piece of fat to rub on it, do not complain about their lot, and they entrust their health - as all of us have done and all of us should do - to God’s Providence who rules us. So, my dear Father, be patient, do not ask for the impossible, have confidence in our good Father for whose sake we have sacrificed everything on this earth, even our life. Do not doubt that he will come to your aid, that he will give you back your health and your peace of soul, on condition that you live in holy indifference, a quality which assures the happiness of a good religious. You will meet Father Aubert on his way to Limoges, talk to him about everything that concerns the good of the community and that concerns you personally. For now, attend to regaining your health and continue doing the good work you have begun to do so well. Try to overcome the little dislikes and vexations that all of us meet in our lives; be worthy of yourself and your vocation and believe me, it costs me very much to contradict you, but I appeal to your heart and to your piety.

Farewell. I greet you very affectionately.

*P. S..* I beg you to tell Father Burfin that it is impossible for me to answer him today. I will do it the day after tomorrow; I am negative on what he is proposing to me.

1 YENVEUX III. 93-94.

2 Pontine Marshes: region formerly swampy to the south of Rome where the inhabitants were affected by malaria.

980. [To Father Dassy, at Nancy].1

980:X in Oblate Writings

Guide Father Depetro. Father Dassy would not make a good Master of Novices.

Dassy

[Marseilles.]

June 23, 1848.

I beg you to tell Father Depetro that I had proposed to write to him, as well as to you and to other Fathers, since Father Aubert was passing through, but I do not have the time. I again recommend this young Father to you; let him persevere in religious piety. See to it that his music does not waste his time too much; force him to keep busy; supervise his work; he cannot but be grateful for your corrections.

You may perhaps tell me that if I gave you a good assistant you could take on this task.2 I believe in your piety, regularity, zeal, but I fear your severity, your demands. Though gentle in appearance, you lack suppleness in your character, you hold too much to your ideas, you do not know how to give way in certain small things that it is best often to ignore in order to obtain major matters more easily. I fear that your command in your usual contacts with the novices might be difficult to endure. You might perhaps not be sufficiently on guard against certain prejudices. In a word, you would have much and perhaps too much of introspection to win the confidence of young men; the latter is of primary necessity in the functions of a Master of Novices who must be considered a saint in his own novitiate, but also a good father. Be that as it may, I agree that you should suspend the planned transfer. Your reasons have impressed me; I am no longer restrained by the great difficulty that I have just described to you.

1 YENVEUX 11. 66; VII. 16\*.

2 The Council of May 21 had decided to close the novitiate at Nancy, in order to send Father Santoni to replace Father Bellon at the seminary of Marseilles, as moderator of the scholastics. After a period of rest, Father Bellon was to be named permanent visitor in England as Father Guigues had been in Canada. Father Dassy wrote on June 6, a long letter stressing the advantages of keeping a novitiate at Nancy.

981. [To Father Vincens, at L’Osier].1

981:X in Oblate Writings

Revolution at Marseilles. The Novices’ lack of fervor.

Vincens

[Marseilles.]

July 1, 1848.

I recognize my failing, most dear Father Vincens; I should have given you news about us to relieve you from the anxiety you must have felt on our account, But there were so many matters to be seen to that I did not follow through on the idea that had certainly come to mind.2 The good Lord has preserved us in the midst of a real danger, and many of our Fathers have nobly accomplished the duty of charity that circumstances imposed on them: they offered their ministry to the wounded of whom most unfortunately have died. Today we had a solemn service for all the National Guardsmen who were victims of this ambush.

The account you give me of this last month does not strike me as very satisfactory. Young men who are just about to end their novitiate should be more advanced in the religious virtues. Their characters should have been corrected, and the eve of their making vows should find them of admirable fervor, which would be guarantee for the Society in favor of those that it will admit to its ranks. What are we to think of this Rambert, who was accepted by favor, reinstated by charity, and is still so imperfect?

1 YENVEUX II. 36; VIII. 81.

2 The Revolution of 1848 at first went by almost unnoticed at Marseilles, but there were a few days of bloodshed, June 22 and 23, when the National Guard and the army came to pull down the barricades built by the revolting workers. cf. *Diary,* June 22 and 23.

19. [To Fr. Casimir Aubert, Visitor in England].1

19:III in Oblate Writings

Anxiety regarding the health of Fr. Aubert who has not written.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Aubert C

Marseilles,

July 17, 1848.

I am, my dear Father Aubert, in a state impossible to describe. I have not received a letter from you since the first one you wrote on your arrival in England. The *Tablet,* which has published a report of the ceremony of the 4th and has mentioned all the Orders and Congregations in attendance, said not a word about the Oblates of Mary, which leaves me to suppose that you were not present at this celebration, nor anyone of us.2 What must I deduce from this? Only that you fell ill on arriving at [Ashbourne]3 to see Fr. Daly and that your condition is alarming enough for neither Fr. Daly or Fr. Trudeau to be able to leave you to go to London. But how can it be explained that neither one or the other of these Fathers thought of writing to me, either to reassure me or to forewarn me with the news of your illness? In no way do I understand this kind of behaviour. All I know is that I am undergoing anxiety, grief beyond all telling.

I have been waiting with the utmost impatience for the news you were to give me. For my part, I would have many things to tell you but I truly do not have the courage. In my imagination you have caught the typhus like Fr. Perron4 in some coach or other that is infected with this malignant germ. For that matter, you were not too well when you left. That irritation of the throat could well have deteriorated into an affliction of the chest. God knows if anyone took care of you as I had you cared for when you caught this malady at the Calvary. In short, none of my pastoral visits has been able to take from my mind these dark presentiments. The alarms they5 keep on giving us do not let me think of anything else...

Adieu, my son, yet another day comes without news of you. I die for want of them. Adieu.

1 The title “Visitor General” is scratched out in the Yenveux manuscript and replaced by “Provincial” but at this date, there was as yet no position of Provincial in England. Fr. C. Aubert was named Visitor by the General Council of May 24.

2 Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M. Aubert.

3 Bishop de Mazenod alludes to the inauguration of the Church of St. George of Southwark and to the sermon preached on this occasion by Wiseman (cf. British Encyclopedia: Wiseman).

4 The place is not named by the Founder but no doubt it was Ashbourne where Fr. Daly had bought without permission, a house in which it was intended to place the novices (General Council, May 24, 1847). At this session of the Council, they had decided to send immediately Fr. Aubert as Canonical Visitor and, at the end of summer, Fr. Bellon as the superior of the houses of England. Bishop de Mazenod wrote on this subject to Fr. Vincens on April 26, 1848: “You will not be surprised that I am not making a visit to England as I had intended. But I cannot refrain from sending Fr. Aubert. We have great interests at stake. It is a matter of accepting a fine establishment for our novitiate and to settle many other affairs. He will arrive in that country towards the end of next month and will remain for the time necessary to constitute our houses.” On August 7, Fr. Aubert was named superior of the house of Ashbourne (General Council of August 7).

5 Fr. Perron, superior of Grace-Dieu, died of typhus at Everingham on February 22, 1848, after sixteen days of illness. (Cf. Mazenod to Courtès, February 26, 1848; to Vincens, February 27, 1848).

6 The word is difficult to read. The second page of the letter has disappeared. The closing line “Adieu, etc.” is written in the margin of the reverse side of the first page.

99. [To Mgr Guigues].1

99:I in Oblate Writings

Consecration of Mgr Guigues: joy of the Founder, unity in prayer. Father Telmon should go to the United States even if he does not know English well. Put an end to protestations against superiors. Saguenay.

Guigues

Marseilles,

July 25, 1848.

It is upon descending from the altar, very dear son, brother and friend, where I have just offered the Holy Sacrifice in union with that which you offer yourself at this time2 in your capacity as Pontiff, in order to draw down on your person, your diocese and your ministry the blessings of God, that I write these few lines. I do not wish to put off until tomorrow the expression of all the sentiments which fill my heart, transported as I am in spirit to your side at this solemn moment when the Holy Spirit works in your soul such great marvels. This beautiful day must be so consecrated to you that only with you shall I be concerned before God or before men. Your letter of June 25 came at the right moment for your writing of such recent origin made you actually present, so to speak, and furnished yet more food for my thoughts which were oriented straightway towards yourself. I hope you will not tarry in writing again to give me all the details that you know will surely be of such interest to me. By the same post, I received news of our dear missionaries whom I had sent to you directly from here. The letter which announces their arrival at Boston the first of July is dated on the 4th. I surmise that our travellers will have set out immediately for Montreal and that they will have arrived in time to give you the mitre that I present to you and which was embroidered at Lyons with the greatest care. It is impossible that Father Léonard who left Le Havre the first days of June may not also have arrived in time to be in the cortege of the ceremony of today, since those who have left from here have made so fine and happy a crossing, it is not to be presumed that Father Léonard may have encountered bad weather. I think how happy this good father will have been to embrace you on this day. Oh, how I would have pressed you to my heart, my dear son, whom I received so young into our family, whom I have seen grow in age, in knowledge and in virtue, whom I have chosen to be my other ego, in whom I have put all my confidence to govern a considerable portion of this family that I have sent so far from me to serve the Church, the glory of God and the salvation of souls. I was thus preparing, without knowing, your accession to the sublime dignity to which the will of God has called you. Fear nothing, dear friend; a missionary Bishop who wishes to be faithful to his vocation and keep the spirit thereof and even, inasmuch as possible, the salutary practices which were so useful to him in the course of his apostolic life, this Bishop is in possession of the *bonum opus* which he has not desired but from which he will derive all the benefit that the first bishops of the Church knew how to profit from, those to whom the Apostle Paul gave his own example and counsels. You are going to prove how much your new dignity, far from blinding you, will change nothing of your customs, of the simplicity of your tastes, of your conduct towards those who were your brothers and who remain such as they bow before the sacred character with which you are invested. You will silence both the jealousy of the wicked and the murmurs of the weak who fail to understand the ways of God in governing His Church and in directing particularly the societies which devote themselves thereto...

[In the margin] - I had written to the Propaganda about the priests to be found in the diocese of Bytown. The reply was that you could keep them. I sent you word more explicitly about this in my last letter. I then had the reply of the Cardinal Prefect before my eyes and I conveyed to you his text. This document and many others have been removed elsewhere during the dark days that we have just been through. Has Brother Tisserand made his vows? On which day?3

I am surprised that you are in a quandary about giving Father Telmon companions who speak English. How is it that all our Fathers in Canada have not made it their duty and their pleasure to learn English? We have thirty Oblates at the seminary and there is not one who is not learning this language. You should hear all these young men conversing. They speak nothing but English in their recreation periods. What does Father Telmon mean by protesting on the grounds that he does not know English? This is a new mentality consonant with the republican spirit of our time. Formerly missionaries were sent all over the world; not one knew the language of the people he was going to evangelize. They set to with courage and they succeeded... So put your people to work at learning English.

Whatever might be Father Telmon’s objection, you will reaffirm on my behalf what I wrote to him directly that I expressly put him in charge of this mission and, if needs be, in virtue of holy obedience, although it pains me considerably to employ this means, given that all members of our Institute like those of so many others should make it their duty to march forward at the first word of the father of the family, putting all their confidence in God and in the paternal blessing of him who has the grace to assign work to each one...

I do not understand the conduct of certain of our Fathers on the subject of the protestation they wish to make to the Bishop of Montreal against a decision of their Superior. What is the point of such an outburst? What is this idea about constraining a superior to give his consent? I protest myself against these doctrines that are diametrically opposed to our Constitutions. Take care not to let them prevail because I would be obliged to repudiate them. The Fathers have given their opinions too freely without being consulted and they have made the unpardonable mistake of giving their views in public. They should be satisfied with writing to me, not ten times as they have done, but once only and then keep calm, leaving to the superior the decision to which they ought to submit in heart and soul, as is prescribed in our Rules to those who are not invested with authority to govern.

There is no excuse for Father Telmon to be so essentially lacking in observance of the Rules by not lodging at our house when he comes to Longueuil. This is a real scandal. I truthfully believe that our Rules are not being read, at least their spirit is not well understood.

.Since you cannot hold out in the Saguenay, I would not have hesitated to accept the parish close to Quebec of which you speak. These are opportunities which do not come a second time.

1 Orig. - Rome, Arch. of the Postulation - L. M. Guigues. The second sheet has disappeared, cf. Yenveux II, 138; III, 43, 78, 98; VI, 93; VIII, l78.

2 Bishop Guigues was consecrated only on July 30th in his unfinished cathedral by Bishop Remi Gaulin, of Kingston, assisted by Bishops Bourget and Phelan.

3 Aimable Tisserand began his novitiate on May 12, 1847.

982. To Father Viala, priest O.M.I. at Limoges.1

982:X in Oblate Writings

Motives why the Founder leaves Father Viala at Limoges.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Viala

Marseilles.

July 29, 1848.

My dear Father Viala, I thought Father Aubert would pass through Limoges when returning to Marseilles. He took another route so as to arrive sooner. You will be therefore deprived of the pleasure of seeing him and speaking to him of those things you had wanted me to know. While awaiting his arrival, I will write you a few words to explain our position and to urge you to build a rationale on what you asked him to explain to me. There can be no question, my dear Father Viala, that the good you have accomplished since you have been at Limoges has gained you the confidence of the lord Bishop, the clergy and the faithful. They have seen you at work and they know what you can do. How could I excuse myself in their eyes were I to withdraw you from the community which serves the diocese and where the members were not supposed to have come there for appearance sake. It was understood that Father Courtès was there only to set up the house, but he was the only one who had to leave; and it is at a time when I have the greatest difficulty in completing the roster that he clamors for, basing himself on the agreements entered into with him, that I would remove precisely the one who has already given proofs of his devotion and of his zeal. It is already a great deal that the personnel of the house remains as it is and I risk sending one or two of our younger men, but if the Bishop saw the arrival of these young men to replace a worker of your quality, he would take the matter seriously. I beg you then, dear Father, take courage; a man’s temperament follows him anywhere. no one can say that you cannot recover your health as well at Limoges as elsewhere. I am convinced that what has caused you the most harm is the anxiety which you allowed yourself to fall prey to. Act according to the Lord’s view and all will go well. Father Ricard who was at death’s door when he was chosen to go and establish the mission of Oregon, placed all his confidence in the Lord, and now he writes that he has never been in better health, and bald though he is, he has not had a cold for a single day, even though throughout the long journey he never slept but on the ground and often in the mud.

Write to me directly if you have observations to make. Believe me, dear Father, that you do not need an interpreter, even less a mediator. In any other situation except that in which we find ourselves, I would not need to be urged; but, as things are, I tell you frankly how I see things. Ponder it well in the secret of your conscience with the help of the supernatural light of the Holy Spirit and your own native common sense; however, I repeat, write to me and do not worry. I could not write before today, and since I wanted to insert this letter into the one I wrote to Father Burfin the other day. there is delay in sending it. Explain this delay to him.

Goodbye. my dear Father Viala. I greet you affectionately.

*+* C. J. Eugene. Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Original: Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M.-Viala.

983. [To Father Dassy, at Nancy].1

983:X in Oblate Writings

Intent of confiding the novitiate to Father Dassy. Goodness is essential to a Master of Novices.

Dassy

[Marseilles.

July-August. l848.]2

I want to confide the novitiate to you. Take firm resolutions that, to the regularity that you must exact from each, you add a great degree of moderation, much goodness, and fatherly sentiments for those who, faithful to the voice of the Lord, leave their country and their family, and give up everything to consecrate themselves to the service of the Church in our Congregation. They must find with us a true family, brothers and a father; we have the obligation to represent Divine Providence to them. Never deviate from these principles. My dear son, I am a bit afraid of your natural temper, a certain severity of manner, reactions that are too quick and too cutting. The Master of Novices must in a way be unaffected, must always act reasonably. If, unhappily, he were only once perceived to be unjust, the confidence in him that must be retained always would disappear.

1 YENVEUX VII. l6\*.

2 Yenveux writes: October 1848. This date is certainly wrong because, since the end of August, Father Dorey was designated Master of Novices, cf. letter Mazenod-Dassy, August 22. At the end of June, the Founder had written that he would not close the novitiate at Nancy, even if Father Santoni were to come to Marseilles and if Father Dassy were not judged as too apt to replace him. It is probably during June that, for lack of a better candidate, he decided to nominate Father Dassy.

100. [To Father Ricard].1

100:I in Oblate Writings

Joy of the Founder on receiving letters from his missionaries. Obedience, fidelity to the Rule. Accept the bishop such as he is.

Ricard

[Marseilles]

August, 1848.2

Nothing is comparable to the joy your letters afford me. One quivers on receiving them, reading and rereading them again and again ever with renewed pleasure, then one has them read to others until everyone is ecstatic. For do not believe that the description you make of your weariness and privation frighten those who long for the missions to the Savages. On the contrary, they are envious of your lot and beg me with even greater insistence that they may go and share it with you. You can be quite certain that I do not think of deterring them from so holy a vocation or of dulling their zeal. Far from that.

Establish from the beginning the invariable ideal of your Institute and a rule of wise conduct, exact and uniform, to which each must conform. In your missions more than everywhere else obedience to the superior and fidelity to the Rules must be observed. Your letter speaks of a trial, that is to say, of the behaviour of your Prelate, so ungrateful for the alacrity with which we have sent him personnel... For the rest, I see in this mission the finger of Providence and am not disturbed by this annoyance. You belong too much to God, my dear children, not to offer Him this sorrow, with so many other sacrifices. You fulfil your great mission independently of the satisfaction which could have been afforded to you by greater cordiality on the part of the one who should alleviate your solitude. I have seen on the map the area you have to evangelize.., with what interest I follow you in your apostolic journeys.

You will observe that in the assignment of duties and responsibilities in our Congregation, we take into account not the age of members nor even their seniority but the aptitude of each to acquit himself of his functions.

1 Ms. Yenveux I supplement, III, 136; VII, 234.

2 Yenveux persists in indicating: August, 1848. The Founder had already received a letter from Fr. Ricard at the beginning of the year. On February 12, he writes to Fr. Dassy: “I have just received a letter from Fr. Ricard. It is dated in the month of August and they still had 200 leagues to travel before arriving at the place of their destination. Our three missionaries and the brother catechist are well but what a journey they have accomplished so far! Let none of us complain of anything when we have an advance party so generous and which makes conquests for Jesus Christ by so many sacrifices but also, what merits they acquire in the eyes of God and the Church! Dear brothers, how admirable they are! Pray hard for them and be proud of belonging to such apostles of the Lord.”

On August 17, he writes to Fr. Semeria in Ceylon: “What shall I say of our men in Oregon and on the shores of the Red River? Their food is a little pork and they have only the ground to sleep on and with that, they are satisfied and happy as men who do the will of God. Fr. Ricard who was dying when he started out has recovered his health and he wrote me recently that he had only suffered from a cold for twenty-four hours in spite of nights spent under the stars, often sleeping in mud. Those who travel towards Hudson’s Bay when it is 30 degrees below, pulled across the ice by dogs, obliged to make a hole in the snow to spend the night bedded in such fashion, entertain you with the account of their adventures...”

4. [To Fr. Étienne Semeria, at Jaffna].1

4:IV (Ceylon) in Oblate Writings

The Revolution in France and Rome is hindering the sending of missionaries. Insubordination of Fr. Keating. Courage of missionaries in the Far North. The Congregation has plenty of students, but is still without money.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Semeria

Marseilles,

August 17, 1848.

My dear Fr. Semeria, I was waiting for a reply from the Propagation of the Faith to give you some definite news, and this reply has been a very long time in coming; this delay must be attributed to causes of which you are well aware, events which have followed swiftly one on another in such a way as to turn everything upside-down, and to leave us in a state of serious disquiet as regards the future. You understand that nonetheless I had to know something positive in order to satisfy both the Vicar Apostolic and yourself. Your questions assumed that the Propagation of the Faith had put into my hands the sums that had been allotted to the Bishop, but, my dear friend, there has been no question of that so far, no news of this kind, and no money. While this is the case, how can I find you Brothers and Sisters, and how can I even send you missionaries? The latter are all ready, and the day on which there is money to pay for their journey they will set sail. Fr. Mouchel, who is very anxious to be one of the band has been working hard at his English and he will astonish you by the progress he has made in that language. The same is true of the others, for only English is spoken in the recreations of our Oblates. I would not refuse to give you some of them for the minor seminary planned by the Bishop, but we need money to send all these people off on a journey. You know that it costs 2000 francs a head. And so I am sad to see that for this year you will have to go without the considerable reinforcements that I would have liked to give you, for in the absence of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, none of whom know English, I think I could have spared some of our own Brothers to join the Fathers and the Oblates who were destined for your mission.

Please make this news known to the Vicar Apostolic, to whom I intend to write by the same post. He too has the idea that the Propagation of the Faith has sent me the money that it had promised him. The truth is that I have not received a sou for his needs.

You assume continually, my dear friend, that I have to go to Rome and you think that I will be able to discuss the business of your mission there. You are wrong: I have no journey to make to Rome and in the present circumstances it would be worse than foolish.2 Furthermore, it is impossible. Even when I could have made the journey, what you said to me was not sufficiently clearly expressed, and so it would not have been possible for me to give my support to any plan. You must realise that we are not on the spot, and that to be understood you need to write to us with great precision, giving a project, a settled plan, supported with good arguments. Realise that the Abbe Reinaud will not have failed to mention it in the report he had to send to Propaganda in Rome, for which Bishop Beni, the bishop of whom you have spoken to me, will probably have made himself responsible. You need to act with great prudence among all the disagreements that you mention to me. Pensa prima che parli.3 This is very suitable occasion for recalling this proverb. I think that the obligation in which you have found yourself of dealing with men will have given you experience, and that in your mind you will have put each one in his place in order to know how you should deal with each of them. I tremble to think of you travelling in Maduré and to Pondichery. Are these not areas where cholera is rife? I would much rather people did not have to travel so far to buy books. As for what is happening within your community, I was greatly pained to hear of the insubordinate wishes of Fr. Keating: I would never have imagined that that young Father, so meek in appearance, could have given you such trouble. Certainly he is not like his fellow-countrymen in this respect, for they are all models of regularity and obedience. What can I say of our men in Oregon and on the shores of the Red River? For food they have a little bacon, they have no bed but the bare ground, and with that they are content and happy as men who are doing the will of God. Fr. Ricard who was dying when he left has regained his health and the last time he wrote to me he said that he had not even had a day’s cold although he was sleeping at night under the stars and often lying in mud. Those who are moving towards Hudson’s Bay, with cold weather registering 30 degrees, dragged by dogs across the ice, forced to make a hole in the snow in order to pass the night with the snow as their bed, delight one with the story of their adventures. May it be so with you, who have a mission that is less hard than that of your Brothers, in spite of the heat which exhausts you. Live in perfect unity, and may the bonds of charity and obedience soften the hardships that are inseparable from your difficult ministry. May the Vicar Apostolic urge the Council of the Propagation of the Faith to make an effort in order to give him the money to pay for the passages of some missionaries, and I will soon send you reinforcements which will bring joy to your hearts and will consolidate the good that you are intending to do. It is not the missionaries that I am lacking, but the money to pay for their travel, and also the money you need to feed them. We have more than forty Oblates, and even more novices, but we have nothing *per andare avanti4,* and we are so in debt that we have no more securities to offer in order to be able to take out new loans. Also, Fr. Tempier is totally discouraged, repeating from morning till night that we have nothing left, that we must send the novices away, and then when the time comes to do the deed I lack the courage even more than he does. We have plenty of stones for building great houses, but no revenue, and it is in this extremity that Propaganda lets us down, for they do not give us any more than they give you. You see, there is much to be sad about, but we must not lose confidence. God knows that all we want is his greater glory and the salvation of the souls whom he has redeemed.

I bless you all and embrace you lovingly,

¶+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1Original: Rome, Archive of the Postulation, L. M-Semeria.

2 An allusion to the Roman revolution and the flight of the Pope to Gaeta at the end of July.

3“Think before you speak”.

4 “with which to go forward”.

984. [To Father Courtès, at Aix].1

984:X in Oblate Writings

Encouragements. Help Father Molinari.

L.J.C. and M.l.

Courtès

Marseilles.

August 18, 1848.

You are truly an admirable man, my dear Courtès. Your weak body marches according to the will of an active spirit, you make it do what you want. I cannot tell you how I rejoice when I see you take wing and show what you are worth. I am all the happier that, everything considered, your health is better when you are active.

I gladly approve what you propose for our poor Father André, and you would do well to profit from the circumstances and bury the body that I thought was already long in the earth. I have not seen Mr. Dupuy, but I don’t think that anything has to be done by the township.

I am glad about what you tell me about Father Molinari. He is severely judged by all; it seems to me that in gaining his confidence we might turn things to good count, but we must not hide the fact that he presents many difficulties rooted in his old habits and difficult character.

Goodbye. I am sending my letter to the mail so that it will arrive this evening.

*+* C. J. Eugene. Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Original: Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M.-Courtès.

985. [To Father Arnoux, at N.- D. de Lumières].1

985:X in Oblate Writings

Affection. Prudence in preserving health. August 15 procession at Marseilles. Ordination of Father Dorey.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Arnoux

Marseilles.

August 20, 1848.

I am grateful to you, my good and dear Father Arnoux, for having excused my silence and for having given me again the consolation of receiving another of your letters before I could answer yours. Overburdened by debts like that I owe you, I closeted myself in today while all the others are at Vespers, and for two hours I have been writing at my ease to the four corners of the globe. I resolved not to postpone yours to another day because you are near and it appears easier to repay you at such a short distance. Experience proves that I often depend on my good will as an excuse, and that I expose my children who are waiting for an answer to the temptation of accusing me of negligence. You are not capable of such injustice. I must only be more eager to give you evidence of my thanks for your good remembrance and of my tender affection for you.

I was pleased to learn that you have given yourself courageously to the holy ministry of serving pilgrims; my only fear is that your health may have suffered. Do not forget that your health is fragile. that it has to be treated with caution.2 So, no matter how large the crowds, never risk staying up the whole night. Go to bed when it is time, and rest as much as you need. By wanting to do too much, you risk pushing yourself to the grave. Do not fear to tell this to the superior who does not know your temperament and who could judge you on appearances only. I congratulate you on putting forth your first efforts on the occasion of the great feast of our good Mother. You will have gathered your good share of the graces she distributes profusely on all who have recourse to her powerful protection. Here we tried to honor her in the best of way we could. I ordered the statue of N. -D. de la Garde brought down to be part of the procession of the Blessed Sacrament which was very solemnly done on August 15,the Blessed Virgin has thus received her share of homage from my diocesan people. Everything went very well, and I find that I have all the more to congratulate myself for having resisted all insinuations that wanted to deter me from having this beautiful procession. Nothing like it had been seen since our processions at the time of the cholera: the same eagerness, respect, and even more, universal joy in all the population. This is not the first time that I recognize that there are graces of state.

Today I ordained good Father Dorey. On this same day, some 22 years ago, one of our men entered into glory.5 Father Dorey is worthy to replace him here below. He has just obliged me to stop my letter by a short visit of thanks, and the dinner bell calls me elsewhere. I leave you then, my dear Father Arnoux, and press you to my heart, which. as you know, loves you tenderly. Do not forget me when you are at the feet of our good Mother at your shrine.

+ C. J. Eugene. Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Original: Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M.-Arnoux.

2 Father Arnoux had spit blood when celebrating one of his first Masses at N.-D. de La Garde. cf.: M-Semeria. May 9. 1848.

3 Father J.-J. Marcou.

986. [To Father Dassy, at Nancy].1

986:X in Oblate Writings

Father Dorey will be Master of Novices in the place of Father Santoni. Conditions for attending a priests’ group at Nancy.

Dassy

[Marseilles.]

August 22, 1848.

Since Father Santoni is taking the direction of the Oblates living at Marseilles. soon to number forty. I am sending to Nancy Father Dorey, a distinguished man, to replace that Father in his function as Master of Novices. He made his apprenticeship at L’Osier and will spend some time with Father Santoni who will finish his formation. I have no need to recommend that all our Fathers keep the greatest reserve vis-à-vis the novices and to abstain from every reflection on the short time that he is a priest. Father Dorey redeems his youth in the priesthood with a great spiritual maturity, very good judgment and an exemplary piety. He is no longer a child, and he has a very serious and proper attitude. Here he enjoys the esteem and the veneration of all his brothers and is not a man to be inconsistent. He is leaving today, but will stop en route for a few days. I am not giving him this letter; it will get to you by mail. I was forgetting to tell you that Father Dorey’s health needs attention; you will have to watch him a bit on this matter, should he be inclined to neglect it.

I have yet to answer you on what you asked me concerning the circle you are meeting with.2 I will ask you first of all if exemplary priests of Nancy go to it. If the good priests did not attend, then you should not either, no matter how honest the meeting may be. And if good priests do attend, you would still have to consider that you are a community man, even more than that, the superior of a regular community having duties to fulfill more strictly than other simple clerics have, duties which are of the more stay-at-home type. which should occupy you every day inside your house. It would therefore project a rather watered-down idea of your house’s regularity if you were to leave it too often and spend your time reading or playing, etc. I conclude then that you should not go too often, nor stay too long in this circle, wherein you feel you gain by your presence.

1 YENVEUX VII. 139: IX. 80.

2 Father Dassy attended the circle “Faith and Light,” made up of clergy and laymen. He promised to attend but once a month “at the time when learned journals published in Paris appear”, (Letter Dassy-Mazenod, September 5, 1848).

101. [To Mgr Guigues].1

101:I in Oblate Writings

Congratulations on his consecration.

Guigues

[Marseilles]

August 25, 1848.

My very dear friend, brother and son... I was united to the great event enacted at Bytown, the 25th or 30th. I was present to such an extent that you can say you were consecrated by four bishops, for the heart goes out farther than the arms can stretch; and it was with the Pontifical before my eyes that I called upon you all the blessings besought by the Church for the new elect. *Abundet in eo...* Nor even did I omit to pronounce with the Church: *qui maledixerit ei sit ipse maledictus, qui benedixerit ei benedictionibus impleatur.* Such is my way, dear friend, to felicitate you for the great dignity to which you have been raised. I take joy therein before the Lord because I cannot remain aloof from that which concerns your perfection and sanctification. And I thank the Lord doubly because I am more than ever convinced that in what has come to pass, divine Providence not only has your good in mind but that of the Congregation which you are called to direct towards the fulfilment of her duties in this part of the world...

1 Ms. Yenveux III, 43.

120.[To Bishop J.M. Doney of Montauban].1

120:XIII in Oblate Writings

Personnel of a Major Seminary.

Doney Bishop

[Marseilles],

August 28, 1848.

For service in a Major Seminary, it is customary that are appointed: a Superior, a dogma professor, a moral professor, a philosophy professor, a professor of Sacred Scripture who looks after ceremonies, etc., and a bursar. The Superior that I have in mind can teach Hebrew if you wish this language to be studied in your seminary.

1 Yenveux (11,10) wrote that the Bishop of Montauban had manifested a desire to confide his Major Seminary to the Oblates.

20. [To Fr. Bellon in England].1

20:III in Oblate Writings

The probability of having to abandon the house at Ashbourne.

Bellon

[Marseilles]

September 15*,* 1848.

God has not blessed this acquisition made in spite of the prescription of our holy Rules. Being an enterprise of a sort too human, it has suffered the fate of human affairs.2

1 Ms. Yenveux VII, 128.

2 The property of Ashbourne had cost 220.000 francs. To pay this sum, they could not count on the aid of the Work of the Propagation of the Faith, the revenues of which diminished considerably after the Revolution of 1848. The Congregation, burdened with debts, was absolutely unable to assume this new obligation. The Founder wrote to Fr. Semeria, in Ceylon, on August 17. 1848: “Do you know we have more than forty Oblates and still more novices but we have nothing left for future investment, being so much in debt that we have no more security to offer for new loans. So Fr. Tempier is totally demoralized. He frets from morning to night that we have nothing left and we will have to dismiss the novices but, when it comes to doing so, my courage fails even more than his. We possess much masonry, large houses but no revenues and it is in this extreme need that the Propagation of the Faith leaves us in the lurch for they are not giving us anything, any more than they are giving to you Prosecuted by the seller whose accounts he could not settle, Fr. Daly had to cede to him in 1852, by way of compensation, the house of Penzance, acquired in his own name but paid for by the Congregation.

102. [To Mgr Guigues].1

102:I in Oblate Writings

Establishment at Pittsburgh. Future of the Congregation in the United States.

Guigues

[Marseilles]

September 15*,* 1848.

If we succeed at Pittsburgh,2 we will soon have other establishments in the United States. Already proposed is the seminary of Detroit. When we have a third establishment we will form a new Province; this is all the more desirable since already our Fathers in the United States have difficulty in receiving directions from Canada. It is true they have little reason to be especially grateful. Never has anyone thought of presenting such miserable personnel. If Father Telmon complained only of that, he would be right... I take occasion in speaking of this to recommend that you greatly insist on our Canadian Fathers correcting their accent and taking as a model the pronunciation of the English with whom they live. They are young enough to succeed in this if they willingly pay attention to this matter. How many of our people from the provinces have corrected their accent while living at Paris.

It appears that the Bishop of Pittsburgh insists that our Fathers serve a church in the central part of the city where he wishes them to be placed. Let us not be particular and since Providence has permitted us to expand, let us take care of each mission which God confides to us.

1 Ms. Yenveux I supplement, 71; II, 138.

2 This reference is to a seminary

987. [To Father Dassy, at Nancy].1

987:X in Oblate Writings

Father Dassy is preaching too often. Project of accepting a mission in Algeria. Form Fathers Depetro and Michelier for preaching. First Oblates coming from the novitiate at Nancy. Have them learn English.

Dassy

[Marseilles.]

September 18, 1848.

It is true, my dear Father Dassy, that it is a long time since you have written to me, but I know how to sympathize with the occupations of a man who has to preach 105 times in one month. Only I allow myself to point out to him that that is too much for someone who must not prematurely kill himself. Even if you say you do not feel tired, it is too much. I gladly saw you give the retreat exercises at Pont-à-Mousson. I hope that the fruits of salvation it brought these young men will bring some of them to us. We have such a large field before us! And now Algeria is calling us! This mission has fallen to us since you know that right from the conquest I wrote to the Chief Chaplains and to the Prince de Polignac, offering our services which would then have been accepted except for the upheaval that broke at that same time.2

So do not tire of giving good formation to the men I send you. I sent Fathers Depetro and Michelier to Nancy only in the hope that you would give them your care, but if you are continually on the go, I am mistaken in my expectations. So program some time for yourself and attend to this duty which is meant to produce happy results for the Church and the Congregation.

Must it be said that you can never take one of our young Fathers with you and initiate him to our ministry! That is intolerable. Do all you can to break the ice. Be sure to tell these pastors that you are frugal by profession and that it will not be much of an expense to have at their table one missionary more. I see this as very important.

I authorize you to request faculties for Father Depetro, but I recommend you do not yet send him to do the ministry of confession. Only for the convenience of Father Dorey do I grant this permission. all the while asking Father Dorey to do without it as much as he can, at least reserving confidence in these extraordinary matters to when you pass from one mission to another.

You ask me if I am happy with what are no doubt the first fruits of your novitiate. I am delighted with them, and the novice Lavalle has been unanimously admitted to make his profession on Christmas Day, along with MacDonagh and one other.3 I learned with pleasure that you have received two clerics and that you expect a third, I see many advantages in that the newcomers are at the novitiate with the older ones who are already formed and doing well, In that way good traditions can be perpetuated.

I will not close my letter before tomorrow. It is very late tonight. In any case, tell him many things from me as well as to Father Depetro. No matter how imperfect his knowledge of the English language, enjoin him to perfect himself in it and even though he should teach the novices no more than the principles of grammar. I insist very much that he spend a few hours every week with them. Knowing English is essential for us in most of our foreign missions. Arrange this with Father Dorey. The finality of this little work places it entirely in the supernatural order.

Goodbye. my dear son. I embrace you tenderly and bless you as well as the whole family.

1 YENVEUX 1.95. 86\*; II. 89; IV. 224; VII. 139; VIII. 61. 132. 179.

2 Reference to the capture of Algeria on July 4, 1830 and to the July Monarchy. 1830, cf. *Oblate Writings,* V. pp. 3-7.

3 J. P. Lavalle entered the novitiate at Nancy on December 16. l847. The name MacDonagh does not appear in 1847-1848 in the Register of Admissions at Osier or at Nancy. A Francis MacDonagh had entered the novitiate in 1841. In the margin, next to his name, we read: “has left then returned, but was not received.” The third was Patrick Dalton who entered the novitiate on December 24. 1847. The newcomers in August-October, 1848. arc: C.G. LeTournois. A.S. Paillier, and J.-B. Georges.

988. [To Father Courtès, at Aix].1

988:X in Oblate Writings

Father Coste wants to leave Aix and become a Carthusian.

Courtès

[Marseilles.]

September 23, 1848.

Now I can no longer put off speaking to you about Coste.2 He has asked me in writing to come and speak with me. His letter was couched in such strong terms that I hastened to reply in the affirmative. He came like the wind, so anxious was he to communicate his pet project. I am telling you this in secret. You understand how we must handle such flighty heads. Well! he was in a hurry to urge me to authorize him to do what? Guess.., to become a Carthusian. Is he not cut out for this solitary life? Good Lord. I did not think he was so lacking in judgment! The matter had to be decided immediately. I tried to calm this agitation and did not have too much difficulty in proving to him that his impulse did not have common sense. That doesn’t matter! He can no longer, he says, remain at Aix, the ministry he is doing is harmful to his soul, etc. I explained to him why, if he were more modest, less fiery, more humble, more faithful in following the spirit even better than the letter of the Rule, he would, like so many others, do good without being in any danger. In summary, I told him, after giving him the paternal advice he needed, that I could not authorize him to do something so foolish. But he still persists in asking me urgently to withdraw him from Aix. I responded by telling him that, to distract him from his anxieties, I would send him on the mission we promised to give at Gréasque.

1 YENVEUX II. 223.

2 Yenveux writes C. According to Father REY (II. 306. note I), the mission at Gréasque was preached by Father Viala and Father Coste. The Founder ends this letter by saying that he will send this Father Coste to Gréasque; thus, it is to him the Founder refers here.

103. [To Mgr Guigues].1

103:I in Oblate Writings

The Bishop can be a religious superior and as such ought to live with his community. Obedience is badly understood in Canada. Fr. Trudeau will pass the winter in England.

Guigues

[Marseilles]

September 26, 1848.

I was united to you during your consecration which, though it happened so far from me, I saw as taking place before Our Lord Jesus Christ who received simultaneously our homage and our thanksgiving... The diocese which has been confided to you and the people who will form your flock, far from turning you away from your vocation, on the contrary establish you therein in a more perfect manner. You can well say now that you are by divine right the first missionary of this vast country of which you are the pastor. You are wholly by nature the superior of the missionaries who work under your direction; you are the chief who marches at their head. Were I in your position, I would change nothing in my habits, nor in my relations with those who are your brothers by vocation and your collaborators in the great work of the conversion of souls. For their part, they have only to add deference to the obedience which they have already professed towards you as their legitimate and regular superior since, in our Congregation, the episcopate is not an obstacle to the exercise of this right. I myself am bishop, superior of the whole Congregation by the consent of the Sovereign Pontiff; the Bishop of Viviers is one of my assistants in the government of this same Congregation. Your missionaries and you then form but one and the same family, having only the same views, the same interests.

Accordingly I can easily reply to one of your questions: is it proper that the Bishop live in community with the missionaries or must he separate himself from them and live by himself? Undoubtedly the Bishop must remain at the head of his community: 1) because he is its superior; 2) because he will have much more facility in directing them and will more easily be able to maintain unity of thought and action in the ministry that they will have to exercise throughout the diocese. I would add that any such separation would be a sort of scandal in a country where the Bishop of Montreal is seen to live in community with his Canons. It is therefore fitting that you manage only one house as you are but one community... the very reason of economy imposes a necessity on you to live together as the father with his children.

I have received a letter from Fr.2 with which I am not pleased. Obedience is little or badly known to our Fathers in Canada. They know not how to submit themselves without complaining and they always have to put their own feelings ahead of the orders of their superiors. This is a sorry state of affairs, diametrically opposed to the spirit and the letter of our Constitutions and indeed to the very essence of the religious spirit.

On the subject of being at the service of the Catholics of Bytown, we know it is quite repugnant to our Fathers to serve in a manner too similar to the parish ministry. They have been known to say on other occasions that they were made to be missionaries, not parish priests. One should be able to organize their service as a kind of mission but in such a way that our Fathers might never be less than two together with a brother to cook their food; if they could be three or more, that would still be better; let us not overlook that the members of our Society wish and ought to live in community... we do not lack members but we must always take care to employ them in a manner consonant with their vocation.

Father Trudeau has urged me to let him spend some time in England in order to perfect his knowledge of English. I have always been quite satisfied with him in every way. He conducted himself perfectly throughout his novitiate and has never belied himself a minute since his profession. He is a charming man. Unfortunately his health is not strong. I shall send him to you without fail next spring.

1 Ms. Yenveux II, 185; III, 44, 98; IX, 212.

2 The name was omitted by Yenveux.

989. [To Father Dassy, at Nancy].1

989:X in Oblate Writings

Qualities of Father Dorey. Teach and have Fathers Depetro and Michelier preach. Faults of Father Dassy who remains without an admonitor at Nancy.

Dassy

[Marseilles.]

October 14, 1848.

I am delighted by all that you tell me of Father Dorey. I know his merits. I recommend you give him great latitude in the exercise of his functions. That he consult you is good, but you must never interfere between him and his novices, that would ruin his authority completely.

You tell me again, dear friend, that if the new Master of Novices followed in the steps of his predecessor, you are afraid you could not stand it. That is a bit strong. That makes me worry lest you require of the new Master of Novices more than you have the right to ask. Be careful then not to take advantage of his inexperience. I can not tolerate a conflict of powers that is dramatically opposed to both the spirit and the letter of the Rule. Father Santoni exercised the functions of a Master of Novices for too long a time in a house governed by a capable and experienced superior not to know the limitations of his powers.

I approve very strongly that you be severe for sermon composition by Father Depetro, and that you not allow him to compromise himself in the pulpits of Nancy. However, even before he attains the degree of perfection that you aim for, I would like you to try him out in some community or some village, lest he be discouraged, lest he be bored. I would say the same thing for Father Michelier whom Father Tempier did his very best to restrain. He is going gladly to Nancy, convinced that at first he is to be edified in such a well-run community, but also that you will help him in his work which he keenly desires to do well.

I recommend kindness in your governing. Do not tire your people, be charitable and patient. Be firm when you must, but never be hard.

I will tell you in passing that the theme of your last letter has spoiled it in my view.2 I was not at all happy with it, and again who knows what escaped you in the five or six lines you erased? I did not try to figure them out. I prefer not to know, but you are, my dear son, much too petulant, also too touchy. You give yourself over at times to conjectures which are false; but even if they were true, you would be wrong to complain because finally you yourself are not faultless and that if there were something in your conduct or your management which were not laudable, I would have to be informed so that I might give you advice, and in all that there would be no reason for you to feel humiliated nor would you need to be forgiven. I am going to show you how you happen to be mistaken in your suspicions or your conjectures. You tell me that Father Santoni is no doubt going to accuse you when he speaks to me. Well, I attest that he has said nothing to me about you but good things.

I must speak frankly with you: I consider it a very awkward necessity that I am obliged to withdraw Father Santoni from Nancy, because you are going to find yourself at the head of a community composed of young priests, so that you have no one who can make the least remark to you, and that is a misfortune. So you will have to make your examen with more attention than in the past. I would advise you to make a particular effort at foresight; in that way you will become your own admonitor and you will fill in for what will not be done by a man whom I must name but who according to all appearances will be your admonitor in name only.

Goodbye. my dear son. You will no doubt thank me for my paternal advice; it will prove to you how much I love you and I do love you very much,

1 YENVEUX VII. l48. l54. l80-181; VIII. 51.

2 The Founder is answering a letter of September 24, but also another of the beginning of October: the latter has not been found.

990. [To Father Dorey, at Nancy].1

990:X in Oblate Writings

Duties of the Master of Novices. Virtues to inculcate into the novices.

L.C.J. and M.I.

Dorey

Marseilles,

October 15, 1848.

Would you be the only one, my dear Father Dorey, who did not receive a short letter from me via Father Michelier, whom I am sending to Nancy to complete your little community of Fathers? I must, on the other hand, answer two of your letters which I received with the greatest pleasure. There you are, installed in your lovely task! What more beautiful ministry than that of forming in virtue, especially in the religious virtues, the chosen souls called by God to walk in the footsteps of the Apostles to spread the knowledge and the love of Jesus Christ! How much a person profits for oneself in leading others to perfection! This has turned out to be your lot. Rejoice over it, my son, and count on God’s help in this valuable ministry.

You will have to give me an account each month of the conduct of your novices, each one by name. At the same time, you will give me your opinion on their dispositions, character, the hopes they give you, etc. You will consult me on that which appears doubtful to you. Unless there is an urgent case, you will not send anyone away without forewarning me. You will receive those whom you judge, in agreement with the local Father Superior. as inspiring some hope of becoming apt to the service that the Congregation has as mission to fill in the Church. Even though you are as young as you are, you must, nevertheless, be a father to your novices, you must be close to them in their difficulties and encourage them, but not spoil them. They have to acquire habits of mortification, get used to leading a somewhat hard life, and not seek comforts because we are called to a ministry which does not include any. Insist much on mutual love, on helping one’s neighbour, and especially one’s brethren. Let them understand very well the truth of the words: *inimici hominis domestici eius.*2 Excessive love for relatives has ruined many a vocation and destroyed many budding virtues. It goes without saying that they must be imbued by the duties of obedience, so as to bring about this happiness, this peace of soul in all circumstances, which is the lot of a religious who has this virtue; it must reach the point of perfect detachment, willingly accepting through compliance of spirit, everything that obedience, that is, what God prescribes through the voice of the superiors, and not even desiring anything other than what is asked of us. You must inspire a great love for our divine Saviour Jesus Christ, which is manifested especially in the Sacrament of the Eucharist which we must try to adore perfectly; also a filial devotion to the most holy Mother of God, who is our Mother also in a special manner; a devotedness to the Church that can stand any test, which includes the zeal that must distinguish all the members of our Society. for the salvation of souls, the direct object of our vocation. Since we must discover all these advantages in the blessed Congregation that has given birth to us, you can understand the kind of love each one of us must have for it. On this topic, I cannot help quoting to you from a letter I have just received from our dear Father Vincens: “I can fathom all the recesses of my heart. I find only one love there which for me is what religion is all about, namely. the love for our Congregation. I have only one desire, that of bringing glory to God and for me all the means of glorifying him are summed up in the Congregation. Hence it is her that I love, etc.” How touching these sentiments are! And they are true. Yes, for us all the means of glorifying God are summed up in the Congregation. Such an opinion of a man of God must be meditated upon by all those whom the Lord has called. through an inestimable grace, to sanctify themselves in the Congregation.

Goodbye, my dear Father Dorey. I am forced to leave you. So I finish by blessing you with all my heart, as well as all our dear novices.

+ C. J. Eugene. Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Original: Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M.-Dorey.

2 Mt. 10:36.

21. [To Fr. Charles Bellon].1

21:III in Oblate Writings

Act of nomination as superior of the house of Ashbourne and of the Oblates of England

Charles Joseph Eugene de Mazenod

Bishop of Marseilles

and Superior General of the Congregation of the Oblates

of the Most Holy and Immaculate Virgin Mary

To our beloved son in Christ, Charles Bellon

priest of the same Congregation

Greetings and Apostolic Benediction

Your piety, learning and prudence being well and truly known to us, we on whom it is incumbent to govern the entire Congregation of the Most Holy and Immaculate Virgin Mary, choose and by these presents name and constitute you superior in the house situated at Ashbourne, the headquarters of our province of England, and enjoin each and everyone of the Reverend Fathers and Brothers who comprise the family of this house to receive you as the Vicar in whom we deposit our authority and to show you obedience, affection and reverence whereby members of a religious house are bound to honour their legitimate superior.

Moreover, it being necessary because of the distance and of many difficulties, by no means light, which can occur, that one amongst us replace the Superior General in his relations with the houses already existing in England or which will be established therein in the future, to whom either local superiors or their subjects will then be able to have recourse, you, Reverend Father, known as a man of estimable gifts and of proven affection towards us and our Congregation, are chosen by us to fill this post and we constitute you Provincial2 of the said houses.

Wherefore shall you possess: 1. All faculties that our Rules and Constitutions grant to local superiors according to paragraph VII of Chapter One of the third part; and to Visitors during a visitation, according to paragraph VI of the same chapter.

2. We confer on you the special faculty of expediting in our name the dimissorials in virtue of which members of our Congregation can and are enabled to receive no matter which ecclesiastical order.

3. In fine, within the limits of our province of England, we trust you to replace the Superior General, who shares with you his entire jurisdiction, saving always the supreme right of his authority and excepting the following cases: 1 - the convocation of the General Chapter; 2 - the expulsion of any Oblate; 3 - the admission of novices to perpetual oblation; 4 - the foundation of new missions and houses.

In the conduct of provincial affairs, you will be aided by local superiors of divers houses in the capacity of assessors, whom you are obliged to consult at least by letter.

In regard to all transactions and all that concerns the state of your province, you shall take care to render us an exact account each month and more frequently when such can conveniently be done.

Proceed then, beloved son, under the aegis of obedience to the post which is assigned to you, striving day and night to show yourself to be an excellent superior and to fulfil, in regard to our members who serve God in this region, by your words, your ardour and your deeds, the duties of a good Pastor and a thoughtful father, careful above all to maintain amongst them unity in the Holy Spirit and in the bonds of peace while promoting without cease the will and the practice of regular obedience. To this end, we implore from Heaven the powerful aid and plentiful providence of the Immaculate Virgin our most loving Mother.

Given at Marseilles under our sign and seal, the 18th day of October, in the year of the Lord, 1848.

1 Ms. Yenveux VII, 113-114. Original Latin text translated by Rev. Joseph Rousseau.

2 The Founder uses the words “province” and “provincial” even though in fact, provinces were only established in the Congregation in 1850. The Anglo-Irish Province was constituted on April 24, 1850.

115. To the Members of the Central Council of the Propagation of the Faith.1

115:V in Oblate Writings

Thanks expressed for the dispatch of a bank draft. Bishop de Mazenod has depleted his personnel resources for the missions, the 100 Oblate students, and the poor of Marseilles. It is not just for the Oblates to receive no assistance and for everything to be reserved to Bishop Bettachini. Warfare in Oregon. The lives of the missionaries are in danger.

Propagation of the Faith

Marseilles,

October 24, 1848.

Dear Sirs,

I have received the bank draft you were kind enough to send me and I thank you for it. Fr. Aubert, who must have seen you when he was in Lyon, will have told you about my present situation. I have exhausted my personal resources for the 100 Oblates who are not yet ordained priests or novices or brothers whom I must nourish, educate, and clothe. I advanced a rather substantial sum for the journey of those missionaries who left for the island of Ceylon, and I am overwhelmed by all the unfortunates who turn to me in their extreme distress. I can therefore do nothing more for the missions. Nonetheless, I receive urgent requests to send men from all sides and I can well understand the need. I am asked for six to go to Ceylon, and the insistence on the part of Bishop Bettachini reaches what I venture to consider harassment and yet this holy bishop, according to what you have written me, wishes to take for himself the entire grant you assign to Ceylon.

Gentlemen, allow me to protest against this pretension. By no means is it up to Bishop Bettachini to impose conditions upon the Propagation of the Faith which offend the rights of a third party. Gentlemen, you are not the commercial representatives of the Apostolic Vicar of Jaffna, but the benevolent dispensers of the alms donated by the faithful which you distribute according to the needs, not only of bishops and Apostolic Vicars, but also of the Religious orders assigned by the Church to evangelise infidel countries. I feel too deeply the drawback of having been deprived of the grant which had been assigned to the Oblates of Mary for the island of Ceylon not to ask you the favor to reverse your decision. I needed that grant to pay the travelling expenses of the missionaries which the needs of the mission demand and which His Excellency the Apostolic Vicar Bettachini requests with such constant insistence. Having been deprived thereof, I had to leave that mission in a state of suffering and I will be able to do nothing for it as long as the Propagation of the Faith does not provide me the means to pay the passage of the missionaries. It will cost no less than 2000 francs for each of them, and both His Excellency the Apostolic Vicar as well as the superior of the mission are asking me for 6 missionaries.

Please note, Gentlemen, that I am asking for nothing for the missionaries once they have reached the island. My request concerns their costly travelling expenses alone. Moreover, don’t you grant separate grants to the Jesuits, the Lazarists, the Capuchins, etc. ? Why should the Oblates of Mary be treated in a different way than these Congregations and Religious Orders? This exception is hurtful and you are too just to wish to inflict it upon a deserving Congregation of the Church which I represent before you.2

I will take up the needs of Oregon at a later date. These missionaries do not appeal to your aid, they say, to construct beautiful churches as in the United States, but to construct huts where they can shelter themselves from the inclemency of the seasons and to purchase the poor food to support their efforts and not die of hunger. They already penetrated among the savages and reached the point of gathering the latter around them when the woeful war of the Americans came to dash their hopes. When they wrote to me it was their intention to push deeper into the hinterland, beyond the reach of the combatants, to exercise their most worthy ministry with fewer obstacles. May God protect them from other sorts of dangers.

Gentlemen, please accept the expression of my high regard wherewith I remain your most humble and obedient servant,

+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

P.S. Bishop Bettachini has sent me a letter of credit, but it is to pay his debts in Lyon and provides nothing for the journey of the missionaries.

1: Rome, Arch. of the Postulation, L. M.P.

2 The Council of Lyon took umbrage over this lecture of sorts and responded in a way that offended Bishop de Mazenod who no longer wished to correspond with that Council. (Cf. The letter to the Council of Paris, November 26, 1849). Fr. Tempier was appointed to correspond with Lyon (Cf. his letters of February 20, March 10, and April 10, 1849). Subsequent to the letter dated February 20, 1849, Bishop Bettachini accepted the Founder’s position since he sent instructions to the effect that the sums for Jaffna be given directly to the Bishop of Marseilles. Normal correspondence with Lyon resumed in 1850.

7. [To Canon Lowenbruck in Rome].1

7:V in Oblate Writings

Ordination of Italian religious in Marseilles. Complaints against the Blanchet brothers in Oregon. Opportune to appoint Fr. Pascal Ricard, O.M.I., bishop of Nesqually and a Jesuit as Apostolic Vicar of the Rocky Mountains. Inform Bishop Barnabo of these projects in a confidential way.

Lowenbruck

Marseilles,

October 26, 1848.

Dear Canon,

I was very upset during your last trip to Marseilles because I was only able to be with you for a few moments. I had to ordain one of those poor Jesuits who, as a religious without Sacred Orders, the authorities in the States of the King of Sardinia want to conscript. Intolerance has reached such a point that bishops who take it upon themselves to ordain religious are threatened with dire treatment. That is what brings them all to me, since I will not be intimidated. I have already done about a dozen *extra tempora* ordinations to save these good religious from persecution, and do not complain about it, whatever fatigue that may entail.

During our brief visit we did say something about an item that is very important for the service of the Church and the salvation of souls. I would now like to talk about it at greater length and I leave it up to your sense of discretion to share this with Bishop Barnabo, and with him alone, should you deem it advisable. You can well understand how important it be that, while being well informed, he never let people even suspect that he learned what is happening in Oregon from me. The bishops of that area, who are very close indeed, would never forgive our good Oblate Fathers of Mary who already suffer enough as it is. First of all, I don’t know whether Bishop Barnabo is aware of the characters of the two Blanchet brothers; one is the Archbishop of Oregon City, and the other is bishop of Walla Walla. They are two dominant figures before whom all must give way. They have adopted a system, into which they have drawn Bishop Demers of Vancouver2 whereby they see themselves not only as pastors but as the masters and owners of all religious establishments existing on the land under their jurisdiction.

Since they recognize no privileges of Congregations or religious Orders, they strive to lay their hands on everything the religious possess, at least what they receive from the Propagation of the Faith, and that is all these religious have. This system disturbed the Jesuits to such an extent as to jeopardize their mission. Now it is the turn of the Oblates of Mary. These good Prelates, who presently aspire to retirement, do not understand that by trying to assimilate the Congregations and Religious Orders to the free priests they have with them, they destroy the sinew of regular discipline and undermine the development of the resources of their zeal for the propagation of the Gospel. I am not privy to the Jesuits’ grievances but I know that they have had plenty to complain about with the bishops’ way of doing things. Now I see, to my great distress, that these Prelates are also giving the Oblates of Mary reason for dissatisfaction and anxiety. And yet these are very devoted men who have left everything, their family and countries, to dedicate themselves to the conversion of unbelievers. I think that bishops, who most certainly cannot do everything by themselves, should consider themselves fortunate to have such helpers and take better care of them.

I have been informed that Bishop Demers of Vancouver Island, is coming to Europe. He will undoubtedly come to Rome to have the Sacred Congregation approve a number of projects. Among others, and to perpetuate this sort of monopoly the bishops have in Oregon, he will propose a Canadian priest (they are all Canadians) for the see of Nesqually.3 That would be the bitter end! In such a case, both the Jesuits who have already done so much good and the Oblates of Mary Immaculate could depart, because the claims of these bishops are unbearable. What remedy is there for this disorder? People should be firmly convinced that there is no other way than to raise a member of one of the religious Congregations working in the area to the See of Nesqually. The Jesuits say that their Institute does not allow them to accept an episcopal see. The choice should therefore fall upon one of the Oblates of Mary and naturally upon the present superior who is a very pious man, full of common sense, and fully devoted to the service of the Church. He is Fr. Pascal Ricard, born on May 16, 1805 in Allauch, in the diocese of Marseilles. He was ordained priest in 1831 and is provincial superior of the Congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in Oregon. This wise measure would give religious priests a protector and would enable both the Jesuits and the Oblates to exercise their zeal in full freedom without being exposed to the obstacles encountered in the outlandish claims advanced by the Canadian bishops who have laid their hands on this entire vast country. If I could venture my opinion as to what ought to be done for Jesuits, one of them could be appointed Apostolic Vicar for the Rocky Mountains. That would be the only way to deliver them from the impediments they encounter in their holy ministry.

I’m sure you understand, dear Canon, that the more I speak to you with an open heart and only in view of what is good, all the more should you take the necessary precautions so that the Oregon bishops never ever know about this my appeal to Bishop Barnabo through you. I have full trust in his discretion: please remember that you must speak to him alone. I know through experience that no secrets are kept in offices and secretariats, and you know that all would be lost if the Sacred Congregation should not approve what I propose and the bishops got wind of it. I place my full trust in your wisdom.

There are so many things I could say about other missions, but I will stop here. I will feel that I have accomplished a lot for the glory of God and the salvation of poor savages if I obtain what I have just communicated to you. If I can realize a longstanding desire to come to Rome and meet Bishop Barnabo, whose acquaintance I would like to make, I could discuss many interesting aspects of this subject with him.

Adieu, my dear Canon, and please accept renewed assurance of my affection and friendship.

+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Orig. Rome, Arch. of Pr. Fide, Sent. rif. nei Congressi, America Centrale, V. 14 (1845-1848), ff. 750-751. M. Lowenbruck was honorary Canon of Marseilles but did not live there.

2 Ms. Vancouvert.

3 Ms. Nesqualy.

991. [To Father Lavigne, at N.-D. L’Osier].1

991:X in Oblate Writings

Reproaches Father Lavigne who refuses to obey.

Lavigne

[Marseilles.]

October 27, 1848.

My dear friend, your letter hurts me deeply...It shows me a deep discontent against your superior, the good Father Vincens, whom everybody loves and esteems as he deserves. I readily forgave you the bit of ill-humor that you held against me because I had gone contrary to a few of your ideas; my heart of a father was full of love for you who are doubly my son. Your letter is an enigma for me.

Beware of a secret enemy who imperceptibly invades a person, almost without being noticed, and troubles the soul and confuses the mind, namely, self-love. Dear family member, meld yourself in some way with your father, your superior, have with him but one heart, one mind, one spirit. And see if the Lord does not bless you, if you are not happy with that love which is given only to those blessed with that degree of charity.

You speak of several Fathers who are discontented. Ah! do not hope to do much good in God’s Church when you are yourself so imperfect. I shudder over it before God, for I cannot expect anything good from such people. In analysing this discontent, I find the seed of a thousand faults and the absence of those key virtues which should characterize religious.

There is one point on which I can give a decision without any other explanation. You speak to me of formally refusing the position which was confided to you. It is the first time, my dear friend, since the start of the Congregation that I have heard such an evil-sounding word: a formal refusal. Dear son, retract that word, it is not religious. It is a principle in our Congregation that we neither demand nor refuse any position at any time. The will of the superior is seen as the will of God. We should be perfectly detached, always disposed to give the example of that sort of submission which does voluntarily that which is prescribed. *Non sufficit imperata facere, sed etiam imperantis voluntati propria conformanda,*2Those are the words of the Rule we have vowed to obey. *Nullum postuletur inunus nullumque recusetur, sed mere passive se habent quisque, superioris curae se committens circa ea qua sibi agenda sunt.*3The Rule says it well: *Verumtamen rationes exponi possunt onera recusandi* (that which is already less perfect). *quod summa fiat modestia et animi demissione.4* You must see that this in no way resembles a formal refusal. But read further: *Istis expositis, attendenta erit superioris voluntas ac si Deus ipse decernere.*

1 YENVEUX III. 78. 98.

2 Rules of 1826. pars II. Chap. I. parag. 3. art. 3.

3 *Ibid.,* art. 10.

4 *Ibid.,* art. II.

121.[To Father Roothaan, Superior General of the Society of Jesus].1

121:XIII

Complaint against Father Strickland, S.J., who wanted to supplant the Oblates at Jaffna. Good relations between Jesuits and Oblates in Oregon.

Roothaan S.J.

Marseilles,

October 28, 1848.

Very Reverend Father,

I received a letter from the Superior of our missions on the island of Ceylon which includes some facts about which I must inform you. The person who wrote is truly a man of God, incapable of exaggeration and a friend of your Society as are all my sons, to the point of having made a trip to Negapatam to visit Bishop Canoz, the Apostolic Vicar of Maduré, to petition him for two of your Fathers for one or two years.

*[We omit here Father Semeria’s long letter, transcribed here by Bishop de Mazenod, in which this Father declares that Father Strickland S.J. had come to Jaffna to offer the service of the Jesuits to help Bishop Bettachini to stamp out the first symptoms of opposition from the Goanese priests. In fact, he proposed the establishment of a college and the appointment of a new secretary for the Bishop, a friend of the Jesuits, as a replacement for Father Semeria; he had even advised Bishop Bettachini to write to Marseilles not to send him any more Oblates].*

I have no doubt that in reading this letter, Reverend Father, you will experience pain. The work of God must not be accomplished in this manner. I am upset that they did not name the one among your Fathers who conducted himself with so little tact; it would have been appropriate that you know of it so that you could have given him the advice he truly needs from his Superiors, so that he may conduct himself with more charity and in a less compromising manner - for it would be disturbing if one were to think him to be so determined in his improper actions only if he were acting with his Provincial’s approval. It is with this system of infringement that a person makes himself disagreeable and brings blame on the whole corps, for which only those who have provoked it by their imprudence and misdirected zeal are responsible. When the Archbishop of Oregon City asked me for men from our Congregation, I refused him vigorously for the sole reason that the Jesuit Fathers were already serving his diocese; later I gave in to the wishes of the Bishop of Walla-Walla in the conviction that he had no other religious groups to evangelize the unbelievers entrusted to his zeal, basing myself on the principle which, it seems to me, that the Church usually adopts and which it has learnt from the Apostle Saint Paul: *Sic autem praedicavi Evangelium hoc, non ubi nominatus est Christus, ne super alienum fundamentum aedificarem.2*

I would have preferred to communicate these complaints to you by word of mouth, Reverend Father; what seemed to me your too extended absence, however, obliges me to write to you.3 I beg you, dear Father, not to allow yourself to be tempted by the requests of all those who come to visit you. Come back to us as soon as possible, you know how happy we will be to see you here; it seems to me that it is an acquired right of which you should not deprive us. As for myself personally I am happy to converse with you; my good sentiments towards you date for a long time and nothing can change them. Please accept this assurance and pray for me.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

P.S. To compensate for what I have written about the unfortunate procedure of this English Jesuit Father, I am pleased to transcribe for you what the Superior of our Oblates of Mary in Oregon wrote to me: “Good Father Accolti, with whom I have been staying since our arrival in the Walamet, manifests the most cordial friendship. This good spirit between the sons of Jesus and those of Mary has so surprised our Bishops that they could not but say that they never believed it possible to have such union between members of two corporations. They had dreamt of rivals and saw only brothers. I assure you that I would have to write you a very long letter if I were to inform you of all the evidence of the most sincere friendship which all the sons of Saint Ignatius have given us both in the United States and here. Father Joset wrote me a letter in which all the beauty and kindness of his heart are evident: I am keeping this letter as a precious relic, etc.”

Father Ricard then speaks to me about the memoire of the Apostolic Vicar of Oregon, who become Archbishop of Oregon City; he told me that if I did not know about it, you would be able to show it to me. This good Father didn’t know that you were obliged to leave Rome and were really not able to carry papers of that nature with you. I do not want to end this letter without expressing to you my fullest gratitude for the charitable deeds of your Fathers in Oregon. You see that they are not dealing with ungrateful people; and certainly, if Bishop Barnabo agreed with the viewpoints in the letter you sent to him from Marseilles, your Fathers would find in the one chosen all the facilities desirable to exercise their holy ministry with that liberty and proper independence needed to do good work.4

I repeat, my dear and Very Reverend Father, the assurance of my affectionate friendship.

1 Orig.: Rome, General Archives of the Jesuits: Maduré t-XIII, 14.

2 Romans 15, 20.

3 The Revolution of 1848 had forced Father Roothaan to leave Rome. He found refuge for some time in Marseilles.

4 The Jesuits and Oblates in Oregon had proposed Father Ricard as the future Bishop of Nesqually, cf. *Oblate Writings,* 5, p. 23.

Father Roothaan replied on November 7, 1848 and closed with these words “Oh! how I needed the consolation that you had the kindness to add by the P.S. regarding Father Accolti’s conduct in Oregon.”

104. [To the Members of the Provincial Council of Canada].1

104:I in Oblate Writings

Administering and distinguishing between the goods of the diocese and of the Congregation at Bytown. Quarterly reports of houses.

Provincial Council of Canada

[Marseilles]

November 1, 1848.

Here is what I believe should be decided in a question where the Provincial Council is in disaccord with the Bishop of Bytown.

I believe it preferable and even indispensable that the Bishop live in community with the Fathers. I would look upon it as a kind of scandal were it otherwise. In material possessions it would therefore be better that there be fusion rather than separation between the diocese and the Congregation, the diocese being in a way identified with the Congregation, its bishop and priests belonging to the same Congregation. Hence, the Bishop receives all the revenues of the Church of Bytown and from these funds, he provides for the needs of the diocese of Bytown and for those of the Congregation. In managing thus, it is evident that the Bishop does not act as provincial but as bishop and therefore he must not be submitted to the control of the Council.

But as the Congregation has a past in Bytown and one must foresee that she will have a future there, something must be settled in both respects. As for the past, it is evident that the Bishop can claim nothing from the Congregation of the allocations made to our Fathers by the Propagation of the Faith nor of the particular revenues by means of which the Congregation has acquired buildings and other goods...; as for the future, the Bishop can acquire in the name of the diocese a cathedral, a seminary, etc., with the aid of the revenues proper to the diocese...

Such is my response to your letter written jointly. In all such discussions of affairs, always show on your side much deference in your way of proceeding. I am given to understand that the Bishop was wounded by the tone that I suppose was used in his regard. I would be very disturbed were you to cause the least distress to so good a Prelate... One can discuss what one regards as a right but it must be with moderation and with every kind of considerateness... I conclude by observing once more that while there might have been a difference of opinion between you and the Bishop in the matter of finances, this must not alter the relations of confidence and affection which must always inspire each one of you. I excuse the good Bishop for having raised his claims a little high... but I fear that you may have repulsed him with some degree of rudeness; this will not do. I hope that the observations I have made and which I have weighed thoroughly in a spirit of perfect equity will suffice to calm this initial movement of sensibility on both sides. Remember that while distinguishing between the pecuniary interests of the diocese and of the Congregation, you must have but one heart and one soul. You wish on both sides only the glory of God and the sanctification of souls. This is the purpose of your sacrifices. Go forth together then and seek to attain this unique goal of your views and your hopes.

1 Ms. Yenveux VII, 125-126, 247.

5. [To Fr. Étienne Semeria, at Jaffna].1

5:IV (Ceylon) in Oblate Writings

Fr. Strickland, S.J., and some collaborators of Bishop Bettachini are trying to eliminate the Oblates from Jaffna. This Vicariate is not to be left without express instructions from Marseilles. It is impossible to send missionaries since the Vicar Apostolic will not give the money that he has received for this purpose from the Council of the Propagation of the Faith. Death of Fr. André. There are forty-four Oblate students in the major seminary at Marseilles. News from Oregon and Corsica. Ordination of Piedmontese Jesuits at Marseilles. Ordination of Bishop Guigues.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Semeria

Marseilles,

November 3, 1848.

My dear Fr. Semeria, I do not know how to express to you the pain that I felt on reading your letter dated September 8. Had it not been you who told me, I would not have thought possible the behaviour of the English Jesuit whose name you forgot to give me so horrible it is!2 But you must realize, my dear friend, that he is not the only one who is to blame, and I am very much afraid that your simplicity and good faith may have fallen victim to a plot more finely woven than that of the imprudent envoy. What was the significance of the journey you were kind enough to make to ask for help? You have been so good as to pull the chestnuts out of the fire. What will you say when you learn that Bishop Bettachini, using no doubt a secretary other than yourself, had written to the Fr. Provincial here to ask him for some Fathers from the Society, and that it is in response to his request that he has decided to send reinforcements to Bishop Canoz3 so that he can without difficulty detach some religious of his order to send them to your Vicar Apostolic, who had asked for them with such insistence? This is what the Father Rector has told me today, as a thing quite certain. The only thing that gave me great surprise was that he added that the Fr. Provincial was unaware that our Fathers were in Ceylon. This mistake is hard to understand, and I would rather blame his memory, with which I would rather find fault than with his good faith. It remains to be explained to me how the Fr. Rector of Marseilles knew that I had grounds for complaint against his confreres in Ceylon. However that may be, it was too serious a matter, both at root and in all the details, for me not to write about it to the Father General, whom I know personally very well. You can understand that I did not think myself bound to keep secret something that was known already by the entire Jesuit Province in Southern France. I complained forcefully of the behaviour, so lacking in delicacy, of the English Jesuit, and I was quite annoyed at not being able to give his name. I then laid down the principles of conduct that have been followed since Saint Paul, who was the first not to wish to build on foundations laid by others. *Sic autem praedicavi Evangelium hoc; non ubi nominatus est Christus, ne super alienum fundamentum aedificarem,* and even today the Church takes care to divide the countries to be evangelised among the various orders that are charged with extending the kingdom of Jesus Christ. But it seems that the Jesuits have the privilege not only of introducing themselves where others are already established, but of chasing them away in order to take their place. But no! That is certainly not the intention of their Father General who is a religious filled with the Spirit of God and whose advice was certainly not taken in this affair, which is so disedifying.4

As for the rest, I am not in agreement with you: far from thinking, as you do, that they will not try to play again the trick that has already been discovered, I think on the contrary that they will return to attack and that they will succeed. It is so easy to send away from Maduré or the coast Fathers who were sent for no other reason than to go there, since the journey is not so long nor so difficult. Until now they have shown respect for that island, but since it was you yourself who called them, they have a good reason to offer. And so, see how often one false step brings regrettable consequences! I would not wish to cast doubt on the sincerity of a certain person, but when I think over what the Father Rector of the Jesuits said to me here, there comes into my mind without my wishing it what M. Reinaud wrote among his complaints about him. May this warn you to watch where you tread, but above all, whatever happens, do not think of leaving that part of the world without having received from me an express order to do so.

You keep asking me to send you missionaries; but you would be even more ready to agree that, for as long as you do not find me the money for the voyage it will be quite impossible to send even one. Is it not pleasant that the Vicar Apostolic, by an unheard-of deception, has caused to come to himself all the funds that the Propagation of the Faith should have divided between the Congregation and himself, that he is keeping all that money, and that still he does not cease asking me to send him missionaries? What does he want me to do with the 300 francs that remain from the money for his ticket? Had he not intercepted the sum that was meant for us, it would already have been used for the passage of our Fathers who were intended for your mission. May it not be that he has used this money to pay the travel expenses of the Jesuits whom he has asked for from the Provincial at Lyons? Once one knows the inside story, any conjecture is allowable. However that may be, while I do realize the usefulness, the advantages, the necessity even, of sending you reinforcements, as long as the Vicar Apostolic does not send the money, since it is he who has got hold of it, our missionaries will not be able to set off. It is even more disagreeable because they are being held up, and if this state of affairs continues I will not be able to help using them for other work. Secondly, you urge me to go to Rome as if it were easy for a Bishop to leave his diocese, especially in the present circumstances. I do not see many Bishops passing through on the journey to set me an example. I cannot count one since our revolution, while before there was a veritable procession. No my dear friend, a journey like that is not so easily made as you think, and had I been able to make it, Propaganda would never have given a sou towards the expenses of a missionary from France. I am far from advising you to seem to consult Reinaud, but it would be politic to avoid a rupture with him. He knows the country well already, especially the people with whom you have to deal. If one draws a little close to him, he will let you into the secret of their intrigues. It is hard to talk like this, but how is one to ignore the plain truth?

I have been disturbed so often since I took up my pen to write to you that I was really afraid that I might miss the post which leaves tomorrow. I do not have Fr. Aubert with me any more, for he has gone to England to organise our new province there, and so do not be surprised that you do not receive any letters from him by this post. Perhaps he will write to you from England, where he will be staying until after Easter. He would not in any case have said anything to you other than what I have said.

Have I told you that we have lost our good Fr. Andre, who died a holy death in terrible suffering? As always, when our men go to heaven they send us replacements. This year we shall have 44 Oblate theologians in my major seminary and 12 philosophers at L’Osier; most of these good lads desire nothing other than to work in the missions to unbelievers, and so you can see that it is not subjects that we lack, but, as I shall go on repeating for all eternity, the money to send them to their destination. I have had letters from Oregon, and Fr. Ricard and his companions are doing wonderfully there, the young Fathers Pandosy and Chirouse have been made subdeacon, deacon and priest in eight days in the very fort of Walla-Walla; and that is what I never cease to do here, where I am ordaining all the Jesuits of Piedmont and of Genoa, who would be set marching5 religious though they are, if they were not in orders, but the Bishops of those areas cannot ordain them without compromising themselves: and so I think I have held fifteen ordinations to rescue these poor religious from embarrassment. I said as a joke that these days I hold ordinations instead of my morning prayers. That is how I treat these Jesuits, and you can say so to that Englishman, who is well aware of it, but he is not the only one who is to blame. I do not want to speak to you of Corsica. I have taken Fr. Rolleri away from there: he did not see eye to eye with the Bishop. That house at Vico is too much of a burden to us, and so I am leaving there only two missionaries, and waiting for a time later on to remove them, if we can establish ourselves elsewhere, in a house which will be really ours, and where we can be the sole masters. This plan has been formed after reflection and by common agreement, but the Bishop does not know our hidden purposes, so do not say anything about it to anybody whatsoever.

If you read the English papers you will see that Fr. Guigues was consecrated on July 30; since then an establishment has been made at Pittsburgh in the United States. This is the germ or foundation of a new province.

Goodbye, my dear Fr. Semeria; you know the pleasure your letters give me, and they are never too long, so do not deny me them. I embrace you with all my heart as well as our other Fathers.

¶+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

I had written to Bishop Bettachini,6 but my letter was written in a bad mood, and reflected the impression of so much that had gone wrong that I have not sent it. I would very much have liked to write a word to Fr. Keating, but I simply haven’t the time. I urge him to live always worthily of his beautiful vocation. If he does not want to forget his French, let him write to me in that language.

1 Original: Rome, Archive of the Postulation, L. M-Semeria.

2 Bishop Bettachini wished to entrust to the Jesuits a college at Jaffna, even though Bishop de Mazenod was willing to take responsibility for it. Suddenly, Fr. Semeria learnt that the English Jesuit Strickland had taken the opportunity of a voyage to the Indies to hatch an intrigue against the Oblates with the Benedictine Garcia, an enemy of the Oblates. Both urged Bishop Bettachini to ask the General of the Jesuits for Italian subjects who had been expelled from Italy and were without work. Since the arrival of the new Oblates promised by Bishop de Mazenod was thus rendered superfluous, they too put pressure on the Vicar Apostolic to countermand their departure. Moreover, Strickland intended to found a college at Jaffna, a project already known to Fr. Semeria; but in order to get rid of Fr. Semeria, who wanted to start a minor seminary, the Jesuit urged Bishop Bettachini to send the superior of the Oblates to a mission in the centre of the island. Cf. J. Leflon, *Mgr de Mazenod,* English Translation vol. IV, pp. 177 ff.

3 Bishop Alexis Canoz, S.J., Vicar Apostolic of Maduré

4 Fr. Roothaan replied on November 7 to the letter of October 28. Bishop de Mazenod copied an extract from this reply in his letter of November 22 to Fr. Semeria.

5 That is, obliged to do military service.

6 What follows is written in the margins of pages 1 and 2.

105. [To Father Telmon].1

105:I in Oblate Writings

Superiors must correspond regularly with the Superior General. Future of the Oblates in the United States.

Telmon

[Marseilles]

November 5*,* 1848.

I beg you all to put order into your correspondence with me. You should have kept me up to date with all your activities. Never in any Congregation or Religious Order can it be maintained that local superiors might insist on not corresponding directly with their Superior General (especially when he has reminded them several times of this duty) in order to keep him informed of the state of their community, of the activities of their ministry, of the financial condition of their house, etc.

In founding the house of Pittsburgh in the United States, you are laying the foundations of a new province but you must act with moderation, without prejudice, without passion, not yielding unhesitatingly to optimism but neither assuming a pessimistic attitude, a detestable disposition with which one can in no way be enterprising and can achieve no good.

1 Ms. Yenveux VII, 36, 247.

6. To the Revd. Fr. Semeria, Oblate of Mary Immaculate, Missionary Apostolic, to Mgr Bettachini, Bishop of Toron, Vicar Apostolic in Ceylon.2

6:IV (Ceylon) in Oblate Writings

At the request of Bishop Bettachini, the aid of the Work for the Propagation of the Faith has been given entirely to the Vicar Apostolic and not to the Oblates, who are unable to send missionaries for lack of money. Frs. Ciamin and Keating are asked to write from time to time.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Semeria

Marseilles,

November 8, 1848.

My dear Fr. Semeria, I want to take advantage of the letter that I am sending to the Vicar Apostolic to put a few lines to you in the same envelope.2 I wrote you a long letter a few days ago, but it does not matter, for this is too good an opportunity to be missed. Since my letter left here, I have received a reply to the one that I had sent to the Council of the Propagation of the Faith at Lyons. They tell me in this letter that Bishop Bettachini expressly recommended them to reserve for him the whole allocation for the island of Ceylon and that he had even asked that they should make no mention of the Congregation in the Annals. I refrain from making any remark about this, but I have made my view known to the Vicar Apostolic. I was asking for funds from the Propagation of the Faith to pay the travel expenses of the missionaries for whom Bishop Bettachini is asking. You know that I have lost fifteen hundred francs from my own pocket for your journey. The Propagation then replies to me that the Vicar Apostolic has reserved everything for himself. But they add, and quite rightly, “Is it not natural that, if Bishop Bettachini is anxious to have Missionaries, he should provide for the travel expenses of the subjects for whose help he is calling? Nevertheless, in default of other resources, he can authorise the Councils to put into the hands of the Superior of the Congregation a portion of the allocation made to him by the Work or else authorise a direct allocation to that Congregation, a course of action to which in the present case we see no obstacle other than the desire which this venerable prelate has expressed to us so formally, for he does not wish us to make a direct allocation to a Congregation, and at the same time he forbids us to mention it in the Annals.”

And so the money of the Propagation of the Faith will be used to buy chandeliers, and not only will no money be made available for paying for the travel of the missionaries, but I will be allowed to pay fifteen hundred francs out of my own pocket without any attempt being made to reimburse me. Having negotiated in such good faith with Bishop Bettachini, I was far from expecting such extraordinary behaviour on his part. I am wounded to know that such strange precautions are being taken against me. What does he think people want to do with the money of the Propagation of the Faith if not to make possible the journeys of the missionaries for whom he is asking to serve in his Vicariate? And can I hold back so many devoted men whom other missions are clamouring for, while I wait for him to see reason? This is all very strange. Must there not be some snake in the grass hidden somewhere? After what you have told me, one can expect anything. And so it is absolutely essential to know what one can count on. It is annoying to find such stumbling-blocks on one’s path when one is devoting oneself to the salvation of souls and responding generously to so pressing an invitation as that which was made to us. At that time I made no other condition than that he should protect and act as a father to those members of the family whom I thought I was placing in the arms of another like myself for care and affection. Now I am left with the fear that I may have shown myself too trusting, and the worry of wondering how things will end. My dear friend, I await fuller explanations from you, but above all press for an end to the embargo on the funds of the Propagation of the Faith, for I cannot repeat too often that we need money to pay for our missionaries’ journeys. Look what a delay this unfortunate tactic has caused in sending those whom, for good reason, you regard as so necessary. The missionaries would be already at your disposal, and when we shall have to come back to this business, at least some of them will no longer be available. I do not wish to miss the post today, especially for the letter that I am sending to Bishop Bettachini. So in haste I end, embracing you very affectionately and blessing you with all my heart. Please point out to Fr. Ciamin that he has not written to me since the two lines he added to the first letter that I received from you. From time to time a little word from him, and from Fr. Keating, would give me the greatest pleasure. He must surely have something interesting to relate concerning the mission that has been entrusted to him. Never be afraid of writing too much. When I have finished reading your letters I turn the paper over and over to see if there are not a few more lines left to enjoy. So, my dear son, I cannot thank you enough for the punctuality and the nature of your letters. Goodbye again: I press you to my fatherly heart.

¶

+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Original: Rome, Archive of the Postulation, L. M-Semeria.

2 This letter to Bishop Bettachini has not been found.

7. [To Fr. Étienne Semeria at Jaffna].23

7:IV (Ceylon) in Oblate Writings

He sends an extract of the letter of the Superior General of the Jesuits to Bishop de Mazenod. Infidelity of Fr. Ciamin, who must be recalled at once to Jaffna. Prudence and patience to be exercised in the difficulties of the Ceylon mission.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Semeria

Marseilles,

November 22, 1848.

My dear Fr. Semeria, a little difficulty delayed the departure of my letters. Somebody had forgotten to stamp them, and they went to Paris, from where they were sent back to me from the central office with advice that I should stamp them if I wished them to reach their destination. This mishap gave me time to receive the reply that the Fr. General has made to the complaints that I had made to him. I am sending you a copy of this letter for your guidance. There is no need for you to show it to Bishop Bettachini, since he would then see that we are no longer ignorant of the requests that he had made to the Fr. General to call the Jesuits to Ceylon, even after your arrival there. How these Fathers will manage to pay their travel expenses, I do not know at all. Will Bishop Bettachini give them the necessary money? That is what I do not know. It would be a bit much, I admit, to give them what he is taking away from us. I have told you that the Propagation of the Faith was very disposed to allow us what we needed, and that they were only turned from this plan by the prohibition of the Vicar Apostolic. What you tell me of Fr. Ciamin makes me think. That is the trouble with having left him alone. You simply must call him back to you in order to recall him to his duty. Otherwise, the Vicar Apostolic must be asked to send him back to Europe. Such apostasy in front of your very eyes would be intolerable. If you see him even slightly tempted to such an infamous course, anticipate him, and let the Vicar Apostolic make it clear that in such a case he could not approve his presence in his island or even allow him to celebrate the Sacred Mysteries. You will not find it difficult to convince Bishop Bettachini that this step is essential, and that the mere threat will be enough to keep the faithless man to his duty. My dear friend, with all my heart I feel sorry for you, for you have found so many difficulties and annoyances in a place where you should have found only consolations and encouragement. But remember that the work of God must always arouse the hatred of Hell and of all those who are filled with the infernal spirit. I understand that you must feel the need of somebody to consult, and I would gladly send you somebody, but you know what it is that prevents me. As you wait, trust in the Lord and in our good Mother, pray with confidence for the illumination of the Holy Spirit, reflect carefully before you make any decision, beware of false friends, do not be afraid to be on your guard with regard to everybody; do not share confidences with anyone. For the thousandth time I will say to you: find us money for the travel-expenses of our Fathers, and at once I will send you some, though not as many as you would like because I regard it as important that they should have finished their studies in theology in order to be more useful to the mission and never to compromise themselves; if we were to hurry them too much, we would run the risk that they would never learn what they must know. Goodbye, my dear son: I am in a hurry to send your letters to the post in order not to miss it yet again. I regret that I am already late enough. Do not follow my example in writing to me, but do it as often as you can. If Bishop Bettachini is a little annoyed at my letter, take it upon yourself to calm him down, for I thought I had to write to him as I did.2

1 Original: Rome, Archive of the Postulation, L. M-Semeria.

2 Here is the extract of the letter from Fr. Roothaan copied by Bishop de Mazenod: November 7, 1848.

Monsignor,

It was only yesterday evening that I received the letter that Your Excellency did me the honour of writing to me on October 28. In the midst of the deep distress that reading the letter from Ceylon caused me, I thank you, Monsignor, a thousand times for this communication. The acts of the English Father are such to rouse the indignation of any man, and I am certainly more distressed than I can say, and I am sure that that will be the feeling of Bishop Canoz and his other missionaries; nor can I doubt the sincerity of the reproaches that are said to have been made to the Englishman by his companions. No, no, that is not the spirit of the Society. It is true, Monsignor, that for some years there has been talk of forming an establishment of the Society in that island where the need is so great. Bishop Bettachini spoke to me about it often and at length when he came to Rome, and after his return to Jaffna he wrote to me about it again: I received his letter at Marseilles. How is it that he can have left me in ignorance of the fact that he had some Fathers of your Congregation with him, Monsignor, and there was a plan to form an educational establishment for these same Fathers? I must say that I do not understand this, but this does not in any way detract from the hateful character of the steps taken on the spot by this English Father. Oh! What need I had of the comfort that you were so good as to add in a postscript in speaking of the conduct of Fr. Accolti in Oregon! It came at the right time. He has acted like a true Jesuit, and the other, not like a Jesuit, but like an Englishman...

Please receive, Monsignor, the assurance of my most profound respect, my heartfelt thanks, and the devotion with which I have the honour to be Your Excellency’s... etc.

8. [To Bishop Barnabo, Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide].1

8:V in Oblate Writings

The wish to go to Rome. The message entrusted to Canon Lowenbruck. It would be advisable to raise a religious to the new See of Nesqually: Fr. Pascal Ricard. Do not communicate these reflections to the Oregon bishops.

Propaganda Fide

Marseilles,

November 23, 1848.

Very Reverend Monseigneur,

I had always hoped to be able to come to Rome to render homage to our Holy Father, towards whom I am borne by the deep sentiments of my heart, but increasingly adverse circumstances have made it impossible for me to leave my diocese.2 The regret I experience is further heightened, Most Reverend Monseigneur, because I so much want to meet you personally since I already know you not only by name, from having read it in Propaganda documents, but also by your merits from what I have been told by people I know who have had the pleasure of dealing with you. Perhaps peaceful days will arrive and allow me to make the trip. In the meantime, I have taken advantage of the occasion presented me by having to write to his Eminence, the Cardinal Prefect, to enclose this brief letter addressed to you and confide something to you. I did not feel able to broach the matter directly with you. That is why I wrote to the Apostolic Missionary Lowenbruck, an honorary Canon of my Cathedral, asking him to talk privately with you and transmit what I had told him about the Oregon Mission. Since then I have received a letter written by Canon Lowenbruck the day he left Rome. I realized that he had not received my letter and I deemed it opportune to instruct M. Ferruci3 to remove my letter from the mail and give it to you to read. I regret having to do things in this shameful way, but when the glory of God and the salvation of souls are at stake, there is no evil in expressing oneself with simplicity and speaking with an open heart. You will consider and weigh the matter before God; and what you decide thereafter will be well done.

I feel that the system followed by the Oregon bishops is not good. I also feel that if future bishops are chosen in Canada from among the friends of the present bishops, the monopoly will become so strong that no remedy will any longer be possible. The idea of providing the Religious, and the religious Congregations, with a protector by raising a member of one of these Congregations to one of the Sees is certainly an excellent way to maintain a proper balance and to do the most good. If the present system used by the bishops were to continue and grow in strength through the arrival of an additional support, I can envision the day when the Jesuits and the religious from other Congregations will be forced to withdraw and, in that case, the missions entrusted to more or less edifying secular priests will deteriorate. Pray consider the fact as well that a bishop from a religious Congregation, accustomed to living a common and regular life, will not strive to ensure his own ease and comfort, but will continue to be a missionary, and will walk at the head of his men in the search for the lost sheep.

If these considerations seem good to you, and were you to judge it more opportune to appoint, for example, a missionary of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate to the See of Nesqually, the religious I would venture to suggest that the Sacred Congregation consider the provincial superior, a mature and pious man of solid doctrine, good common sense, and unshakeable zeal. The Jesuit Fathers in Vancouver, those of St. Francis Xavier if I’m not mistaken, could give you very favorable references on the man I am proposing but it takes a long time to receive news from that distant country. I am sure of what I have said because I have read a letter in this sense from one of those Fathers. The name of this Provincial is Pascal Ricard, born in Allauch in the diocese of Marseilles, baptized on May 16, 1805 and ordained priest in 1831.

You must understand, Monseigneur, just how important it is that the Oregon bishops never know I have expressed myself so frankly, to you according to my conscience and in full confidence, for the good of that important mission. The bishops would be very upset indeed and then woe be tide the poor missionaries.

Please accept the sentiments of esteem and veneration wherewith, Most Reverend Monseigneur, I am your humble and devoted servant.

+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Orig. Italian: Rome, Arch. of Pr. Fide, Scrit. rif. nci Congr., America Centrale. V. 14 (1845-1848), ff. 749-752.

2 The Pope resided in Gaeta after the assassination of Pellegrino Rossi on November 15, 1848. He stayed there until April 12, 1850.

3 M. Ferruci was the agent for the diocese of Marseilles to the Roman Congregations.

1.[To Bishop Pavy on Algiers]1

1:IV (Africa) in Oblate Writings

Fr. Tempier is sent to Algeria. The Oblates have been founded to put themselves at the service of the Bishops, but must live in community.

Pavy Bishop

[Marseilles]

December 4, 1848.

In order to look after the foundation of Blida2, I am sending you M.Tempier the oldest member of the family of the Oblates of Mary. You will be pleased with him; he is a man of experience, eminently wise and of very good counsel; you can rely on him as you would on myself for advice about the arrangements to be made.

I have founded our Oblates of Mary only to put them at the service of the Bishops with whom they must cooperate most faithfully, without any other purpose than the glory of God and the sanctification of souls. They are men of zeal and devotion. All they ask and it is in the Bishop’s interest to grant them this is to live according to their Rule in community, in order to maintain their regularity and fervour and to help each other fully to accomplish their duty.

1 Ms. Yenveux III, 143; IX, 211.

2 The Founder always writes Blidah.

2. [To Fr. Viala, at Limoges].1

2:IV (Africa) in Oblate Writings

Fr. Viala is asked to come to Marseilles as soon as possible to receive “an extremely important mission”.

Viala

 [Marseilles]

December 6, 1848.

My dear Fr. Viala, a word from you would have pleased me a great deal.2 I am writing to you today to call you back to my side as soon as possible. I have a mission of great importance to entrust to you, and you will have organise everything for it and receive my instructions. So, do not commit yourself to any retreat whatsoever. You must even finish the one you may at present be engaged upon as soon as possible. I need you here by the 10th of this month, or the 11th at the latest.3 If only you knew the prospect that is opening up before you, you would tremble with joy. Fr. Tempier has already left to prepare the way. Truly God is showering down his blessings on our Congregation; he is putting into our hands, as it were, the means to accomplish our vocation wonderfully. Our whole job is to make our standards correspond to such signal favour. Come quickly, then, so that we may discuss these important matters at our leisure. I have not the time today to tell you more about them. It goes without saying that should you have accepted any engagement you must excuse yourself on the grounds of the express orders I am now sending you.

Farewell, my dear Fr. Viala, I await your arrival with impatience. Begin your prayers to God that he may bless the work which is entrusted to us. I send you affectionate greetings.

1 Ms. Yenveux IX, 213.

2 The Founder had heard indirectly that Fr. Viala was unhappy with his position in Limoges: he had written so him on July 29 to ask him to stay at his post, even if his health were not good.

3 Fr. Viala did not have to leave so early for Algeria, but the Founder needed him to preach a mission at Gréasque. Cf. Letter of January 17, 1849.

992. [To Father Burfin, at Limoges].1

992:X in Oblate Writings

Care to be given to the Brothers.

Burfin

[Marseilles.]

December 9, 1848.

Designate one of our Fathers to take particular care of the Brothers. giving them at least one instruction a week on their general duties and obligations as religious.

1 YENVEUX VIII. 227.

22. [To Fr. Charles Bellon, superior of the Oblates in England].’3

22:III in Oblate Writings

Gladness over the good news. Endeavour to attract Englishmen into the Congregation.

Bellon

[Marseilles]

December 15*,* 1848.

My good and very dear son, your letter was balm for me in all that it said to uplift me. Even if our temporal affairs are not brilliant in England, at least a good spirit reigns amongst our Fathers and the edification afforded by their regularity can perhaps produce as many conversions as their words. I bless the Lord for this with all my soul and look forward with consolation beyond words to the still greater good that will ensue...

We only have Irishmen. So try and attract Englishmen in great enough numbers for us to furnish to the four quarters of the world.

1 Ms. Yenveux VIII. 5.

106. [To Father Telmon].1

106:I in Oblate Writings

Reproaches Father Telmon for writing so little and for being unfair to his Superior General.

Telmon

[Marseilles]

December 18, 1848.

Just the sight of your handwriting made me tremble with joy. When I see the writing of those I love, it has more effect on me than their portrait would have. You act nevertheless as if you had no idea of how much I love you. Otherwise would you remain so long without writing to me and, when you do write, would you write as you do? Not only are you unconcerned about afflicting me with complaints and incessant grumbling but not one of your letters fails to include some painful barbs directed at me which wound the most sensitive part of my heart, that wherein lies the tender affection I have for you... I implore you, my dear son, never say such things to me and moreover, never think them. It is now twenty-seven years since I adopted you and since you have been living in my heart and you are on the verge of believing that my idea is to abandon you! If you were fair, you would say: My Superior, my Father loves me so much that in spite of the bitterness I have caused him, in spite of behaving in a manner for which he could reproach me, his heart has never changed and, counting on the substance, he is not deterred by the manner, however harsh it is. This is so, my dear child. I assure you that if I were the only one to suffer, I would put up with it and, loving you such as you want to be, I would say nothing. But you would not believe what harm you do in yielding constantly to your caustic mood which spares no one and superiors still less than simple confreres... Do not be irritated by what I say, my dear son, I owe you the truth and who else would show you the faults you have amid so many good qualities that no one appreciates more than I?

1 Ms. Yenveux V, 160. The Founder had received a letter from Fr. Telmon, December 10. He wrote that day in his Journal: “Letter from Fr. Telmon. Always disagreeable with his complaints and displeasure. Yet it is a fine mission that has just been confided to him at Pittsburgh. It is true that the two companions that the Bishop of Bytown has given him are not good for much. So Telmon is obliged to do everything but why show so much distaste? The establishment at Pittsburgh could become very interesting. One must be patient in all things.”

993. [To Father Courtès, at Aix].1

993:X in Oblate Writings

Wishes for the New Year.

Courtès

[Marseilles.]

December 25,1848.

This is all I can say to you on this holy day spent entirely in church. I officiated yesterday at First Vespers, then during the night, and today both in the morning and in the evening. Thanks be to God, this is never too long for me. That is the only place we can abstract from the world and be occupied solely with Heaven. That is my time of rest.

Goodbye. dear son. I wish you a good remainder of the feast and a Happy New Year.

1 YENVEUX IV. 65.

9. [To Bishop Barnabo, Secretary of the S. C. of Propaganda Fide].1

9:V in Oblate Writings

The joy to have received an answer to the letter of November 23 and to know that Bishop Barnabo shares his views on the opportuneness of raising a religious to the See of Nesqually. Qualities and virtues of Fr. Semeria whom an English Jesuit would like to replace at Bishop Bettachini’s side. The Jesuits plan to open a house in Ceylon. They should not establish themselves at Jaffna. News of the Pope who had written a personal letter and may come to Marseilles.

Propaganda Fide

Marseilles,

December 30, 1848.

Very Reverend Monseigneur,

It was a deep consolation for me to receive your kind reply. I was afraid that the current situation would force you to bow before the storm. That would have been disastrous for those poor missions which are in such need of your wise direction.

I note with pleasure that you do not reject the solution that strikes me as the best way to keep the peace and insure the good of the distant missions. Otherwise, those “blessed” bishops would be on their own, to their own detriment and even more that of souls, to remain alone with the few secular priests who ended up there in a way known to God alone, since the religious Congregations could not further withstand such despotism and claims which are so little in conformity with Canon law.

A bishop chosen from among the members of an Order or a Congregation would maintain a balance and would give the Congregations the necessary proper freedom, in conformity with the Holy Canons and necessary for maintaining dependence upon their Superiors, fidelity to the Rules, and the indispensable fervour for the good of souls. This suffices as far as Oregon is concerned.

Since you invite me to be open and sincere in what I think about the missions, I will not shy away from confiding in you again, this time regarding the missions in Ceylon.

You know that Bishop Bettachini took some missionaries of the Congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate with him. One of them is Fr. Etienne Semeria, an exemplary man whom I heartily recommend to the Sacred Congregation should you one day need to select an Apostolic Vicar from among the missionaries.

Bishop Bettachini holds him in such high regard that he made him, so to speak, his secretary, because he is a good theologian, writes well, and is a man of great piety, endowed with solid character. Now what can I really say? A certain English Jesuit, who is too zealous for his Order, plotted with two Spanish or Italian missionaries in an attempt to remove Fr. Semeria from the bishop’s side and assume control. Fortunately their plot met with failure because His Excellency refused to adopt such a measure in evident contrast with his kindness and his own interests. Nonetheless, the Jesuits will most likely move into the island as has been their wish for some time. I could say a few things about this. Would that they could all be prophets! I do feel, however, that it would be important to allocate the missions in such a way as to avoid discord. I would therefore ask you to entrust Jaffna and its environs to the Congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate and assign another mission to the later arrivals, the Jesuits.

This division would be all the more opportune if, in the future, Bishop Bettachini were to become Apostolic Vicar of Colombo. The Sacred Congregation could then appoint the superior of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate Apostolic vicar of Jaffna, the mission already entrusted to that Congregation. I do not know if I am taking undue advantage of the liberty you gave me to express my ideas for the greater good of the missions with frankness and simplicity. Forgive me if I have gone beyond the limits, even though there are many other things I would like to tell you viva voce.

I am sure you will be glad to receive news of the Pope. He had His Eminence Cardinal Antonelli write to me and, not satisfied with that expression of his goodness, he showed the fullness of his benevolence for me by writing a letter of such fatherly concern that I was moved to tears. He was in good health. Who knows, perhaps I will have the chance to prostrate myself at his feet and be held close to that chest where such a good heart throbs. Can you shed light on this sentence in his priceless letter: ..... I do hope, however, that it will be possible to manifest the sentiments of our heart in a more consoling way to you and your people just as now, with great affection, we grant you the Apostolic blessing”.

I would have much preferred to render homage to the Pope in Rome, but were Divine Providence to lead him to France, what a joy it would be for me to receive him in my own house! Oh yes, what we wouldn’t do to alleviate the sorrow of such a Pontiff, so beloved a Father!

Very Reverend Monseigneur, please accept the homage of my sentiments of respect and affection wherewith I remain your most humble servant!

+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Orig. Italian: Rome. Arch. Pr. Fide, Scrit. rif. nei Cong. Indie Orientali, V. II (1847-1848), ff. 977-978.