*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.*

1858

45. [To Bishop Joseph-Marie Bravi, coadjutor of the Vicar Apostolic of Colombo].1

45:IV (Ceylon) in Oblate Writings

His desire to make up to four the number of missionaries in the service of the Vicariate of Colombo and his insistence that the Fathers should not live far from each other.

Bravi Bishop

[Marseilles]

1858

For the moment I ask only one favour of you: that I may be allowed to make up the number of Oblates in service in your Vicariate to four. I would further ask you to place this fourth one in a post near to that in which you have put Fr. Perréard2. I am most concerned that the missionaries do not live too far away from each other. It is an advantage for them, and the people entrusted to their care benefit from it enormously. They keep up their fervour through this mutual help and the souls of the faithful feel the effect of this. The favour I am asking is too much in conformity with the zeal that animates you, for me not to be certain of obtaining it from your goodness.

1 Semeria Journal, Batayron Copy, p. 355, Rome, O.M.I. General Archive. Translated from the Italian.

2 Bishop Bravi had sent two Fathers near to Kandy and had left Fr. Perréard alone near Colombo.

167.To M. Sebaux, Parish Priest of Notre-Dame at Laval.1

167:XIII in Oblate Writings

Father Vital Grandin has been named Bishop of Satala. Poverty and extent of his diocese.

Sebaux

[Marseilles,

1858].2

As I am about to leave, my dear Pastor, I have only time to thank you for your kind remembrance and good wishes. You know what I wish for you. The sentiments you have inspired in me are indelible.

It is quite true that Father Grandin has been promoted to the episcopacy by the Sovereign Pontiff who has chosen him as Coadjutor to the Archbishop of Saint Boniface with the title Bishop of Satala *in partibus infidelium.*

I don’t know if I will be able to arrange it that he be sent to me in France so that I may have the consolation of consecrating him as I had of ordaining him. You would then have the pleasure of seeing that excellent man to whose education, if I remember rightly, you contributed. It is difficult to be more virtuous, and I trust that he will be as good a Bishop as he is a good religious and dedicated missionary. It is not a crown of flowers that they will place on his head. What a diocese he will have to evangelize! From here I can see his palace at Ile-a-la-Crosse, a few pieces of wood cemented together with mud, ice fields and wandering natives after whom he must travel immense distances of two or three hundred leagues to bring a few of them to the knowledge of God and his Divine Son Jesus Christ and through him to the way of salvation.

This poor dear Father will be devastated when he learns what Providence has in store for him. He can try all he wants, there is no turning back. Help him by your kind prayers to resign himself to carry such a heavy burden.

I will do all I can to reply to the letters I have received from his brother, his sister and friends. In any case, be kind enough to let them know that they have not been misinformed by the news of their brother’s promotion.

Please accept, my dear Pastor, the renewed assurance of my most affectionate regards.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1Orig.: Archives of the Bishop’s house in Laval.

2 Undated letter, however from the beginning of 1858, at the time of Father Grandin’s appointment.

244. [To Mgr Grandin, Bishop of Satala].1

244:II in Oblate Writings

Fr. Grandin has been appointed Bishop of Satala. He must accept this appointment with serenity, for it is the will of God. Mgr de Mazenod is expecting him to come to France so that he can ordain him; his journey could inspire vocations.

Grandin

Marseilles,

January 8, 1858*.*

A very brief letter to our very dear Father Grandin, who has become by the will of God and of his representative on earth Bishop of Satala *in partibus infidelium.* Infidels for infidels! the Pope is dispensing you from caring for those that live in the part of Asia where your diocese is to be found so that you can consecrate yourself entirely to the sanctification, and first of all the conversion, of those whom you have gone to seek in the icy wastes of North America. I can see you from here prostrating yourself, your face to the ground, tears pouring from your eyes, humbly refusing the pontifical crown that is to be placed on your head. Be reassured that it is being imposed on you by obedience, and also for you, among the arduous labors of your ministry, it will be more like the crown of thorns of our Savior than the diadem worn by the Emperors of this world. You are a bishop by the will of the Head of the Church and of myself, and God’s grace and help are assured to you. For you, the episcopate has become the way of salvation, for it is through it that you will sanctify yourself more and more, and the fruits of your ministry will become more and more plentiful, so raise yourself up from your abasement and rejoice in the Lord, for the episcopate that has come to you thus is for you truly the *bonum opus* of which the Apostle speaks in his wonderful letters.

So much for what concerns you: now I turn to myself. You know that it is my privilege as a father to lay my hands on all those of my children whom the Lord chooses in our dear family. I have therefore written to our dear and loving Bishop of Saint Boniface to claim this privilege, begging him to be so kind as to make to me, aged patriarch that I am, a sacrifice of the joy that he himself would no doubt have felt in passing on to you the Holy Spirit which he received from me in his turn.

I am counting on having this consolation, and with all the more reason since I have always heard it said that it is as easy to come to France for you as to journey from your region into Canada. Moreover, we will be able to make your episcopal robes and vestments here and to show you to all those who are still hesitating to embrace the so arduous service of the Red River missions. It may be that your journey will be repaid by a fine haul. So do not refuse to give way to my prayers, unless you are prevented by an absolute impossibility, which I can neither foresee nor fear.

I am writing to you in a way in duplicate. Mgr Taché has the task of seeing that this letter reaches you, since I fear that the letter that I have addressed to you by way of Montreal may not have arrived in time to catch the post leaving Lachine.

Farewell, my dear Bishop of Satala, but also always my very dear son, on whose prayers I am relying confidently and for whom I now pray even more especially since Rome has told me that he has been joined to our apostolic college by the approval and choice of the Holy Father, as I await the happy day when it will be given to me to lay my hands on him and to consecrate him in the order of Pontiffs. As I await him, I embrace him with all my heart.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

Sup. Gen.

1 Copy: Reg. letters 1855-1863, Rome. Arch. Post.: DM 10. The next day, Mgr de Mazenod announced this news to Mgr Grandin’s sister Mélanie: “why should you be amazed that a religious as devoted as your Very Reverend brother has been chosen to be Coadjutor of another Bishop who is devoted like him to the service of the Church and to the salvation of the most wretched souls? Yes, it is indeed true that dear Fr. Grandin has been chosen as Coadjutor of the Bishop of Saint Boniface with the title of Bishop of Satala *in partibus infidelium.*

“Young though he is, Mgr Tache and I have judged him worthy to be presented to the Holy See to be raised to this high dignity which for him will be no light burden. But we know him well enough to be sure that he will carry this heavy burden with courage. All that we have to do is to pray to God that this unexpected blow will not crush him, and that he will resign himself to carrying out this task with the same humility that he would have used to avoid it; I mean that I hope his humility will enable him to realise that he must push humility so far as to renounce his own judgement and to accept with resignation what his humility makes him consider as above his merits.

“And so set to work without more ado. I do not know whom I am talking to. From the address that you have given me in your letter I have not been able to tell whether you are a religious; but if you do belong to a religious congregation, I do not know how far their zeal and generosity will go in providing for the worthy celebration of the liturgy and for the adornment of its ministers. Keep me in touch with your plans. As for me, I have done all I can to see to it that I am given the pleasure of laying hands on this dear prelate. However, I dare not be confident that I will succeed. You must admit that you for you part would be very happy to see your brother again, adorned with the sacred character of the episcopate.

“I have not been able to find again the letter that your Very Reverend brother wrote to discover the truth behind the rumors that had reached even as far as him. Be so kind as to inform him of this reply.

“I recommend myself to your prayers and greet you cordially.”

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

(Orig.: Rome Arch. Post.: L. M-Grandin M.)

245. [To Mgr Taché, Bishop of Saint Boniface].1

245:II in Oblate Writings

Fr. Grandin has been appointed Bishop of Satala, and not of Salata; there is an error in the brief The advantages of letting him come to France for his ordination. Blessing of the monument to the Immaculate Conception in Marseilles, Mgr de Mazenod’s interest in the Red River missions.

Taché

[Marseilles]

January 8, 1858.

My dear Bishop, I know that you have left Montreal, and so I am addressing my letter to you to Saint Boniface, first of all to wish you a happy and holy New Year, full of merits and of all the blessings of God. And next I must tell you that at last the apostolic briefs for the election of our Father Grandin to the episcopate have left Rome, as I have learnt from Cardinal Barnabo’s letter to me, dated December 11. The same Cardinal informed me that the Pope had named Fr. Grandin your Coadjutor, but the sending of the briefs was delayed by a doubt concerning his true baptismal names. I had to inform them of them from my own notes. The Cardinal tells me that in accordance with custom the briefs have been sent to the Archbishop of Quebec who has the task of sending them on to their destination. I presume that there is one for you and another for the Bishop-elect, who has been given the title *in partibus* of Bishop of *Salata* (Salatense). This is the name in the Cardinal’s letter, in which he tells me that the see is in the province, or if you prefer, under the metropolis of *Sebaste.* Having consulted the special books that are in my possession, I realised that there is an error in the name. It is not *Salata* that is in the metropolitan area of Sebaste, but *Satala.* I am telling you this in advance so that if there is the same error in the briefs as in the letter of the Cardinal Prefect, you can rectify it by proclaiming the newly elect under the name of Bishop of *Satala,* rather than of *Salata.* I am writing to Rome to correct the mistake they have made.

You will not be surprised, dear friend, if I insist strongly that you grant me the consolation of consecrating this new Bishop, which is a privilege of my position as Patriarch which I claim with confidence. You will assure me of this joy, will you not? Your mission will lose nothing because we will equip our new Bishop from head to foot here, and his presence will produce an excellent effect in his own country. Simply on hearing the news of this appointment which is so great a delight for them, people have written me I do not know how many letters, and are already competing for the joy of offering him everything that he may need.2

His presence will certainly give rise to some vocations, and thus you will be recompensed for the sacrifice that you will have made for me. I am enclosing with this letter to you a little letter for the dear Bishop-elect; be so kind as to pass it on to him by one of the means at your disposal. I am also writing by way of Montreal, but I fear that I may miss the winter post. It is not my fault, for I was waiting to hear from Rome of the delivery in order to know what name to call him by. I was wrong, and I should have written when I heard of his election, and then I would certainly have been in time for the post that leaves Lachine, I am told, at the beginning of winter.

I am in the same state as you, my dear friend: how many times have I wanted to write to you, but for that to be possible I would have needed the permission of all those who were pestering me on every side, and who became more demanding as my work and ceremonies increased day by day along with our huge population, which these days is as high as three hundred thousand souls. You should have seen that population on the great day of the feast of the Immaculate Conception; I had chosen that day to inaugurate the statue of the Blessed Virgin that we have put on a fine column of Carrara marble. 12,000 people took part in the procession, and 250,000 stood and watched it pass along the route, all of them in the most profound recollection. I said Mass in the open air at the foot of the sacred statue. 200,000 souls assisted at this lovely Mass. At the moment of the Consecration you could have heard the sound of a fly flying. It could be said that at that moment heaven and earth were in adoration, for the sun was darting its ray across the sky, a sky as clear as could possibly be imagined, to do homage in its own way to the adorable Savior whom I was holding elevated in a holy transport of ecstasy for more than a minute between heaven and earth so that he might receive the worship of all the Christians who were bowed before him, and in a way of the whole of nature. But what am I doing? I am letting myself go on talking about what we are doing, while I should be urging you to be so kind as to tell me what you and your companions are doing in your heathen lands. Do believe that I take a great interest in your noble ministry. I count your every step, so to say. I associate myself with all that you undertake, I share in spirit in all your sufferings, which I wish I could ease for you without depriving you of the merit that you gain by them.

Imagine how impatiently I am waiting for news of your arrival at Saint Boniface. You must have found more people gathered there than you expected. It seems that the last missionaries were too late to begin the journey to Ile a la Crosse. You will know how to turn this disturbance of the arrangements to good advantage. You will be able to instruct them and familiarise them with the work that you will be giving them, and thus they will be better equipped to acquit themselves well when you send them to their posts.

Farewell, dear Bishop; I embrace you with all my heart.

+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Copy: Reg. letters 1855-1863, Rome, Arch. Post.: DM 10.

2 We possess two replies by the Founder to these letters, one to Fr. Sebaux and the other to a parish priest, probably a classmate of Fr. Grandin.

168.To the Abbe …1

168:XIII in Oblate Writings

Father Vital Grandin has been named Bishop of Satala. Hopes to consecrate him at Marseilles.

Unknown priest friend of Grandin

Marseilles,

January 9, 1858.

You were not misinformed, dear Abbe, when they told you that Reverend Father Vital Grandin had been raised to the episcopacy. The Sovereign Pontiff has chosen him to be the Coadjutor of the Bishop of Saint Boniface under the title Bishop of Satala *in partibus infidelium.* Even though he is still young, Reverend Father Grandin merits in every way the choice that was made of him. To carry the heavy burden laid upon him he must be endowed with great virtue and courage to face every challenge and that is precisely what the good Lord has granted to this dear Prelate. He has always been a model in every position that, though still young, he has been placed. And so the Bishop of Saint Boniface and I have in full confidence presented him to the Holy See to place on his head this crown of thorns which he will have strength to bear. But what chagrin this poor son will experience when he learns what Providence has reserved for him. His friends must pray for him so that he will resign himself to God’s holy will.

What you plan to do by yourself and your fellow disciples will be a very precious homage rendered to the virtues of this excellent prelate. Since I, for my part, want to look after him, I will be pleased to know, after the proceedings, what you will have decided. We have some time before us. He may know of his appointment only in six months. I will do all I can to have him sent here to be consecrated by myself; that would be a fine occasion for his friends to come and see our beautiful city of Marseilles. But I don’t dare to say I will succeed. He is so far away. Ile-a-la-Crosse is another 300 leagues beyond Saint Boniface and it will be the new Bishop’s residence in that diocese which is as big as Europe.

Please accept, etc.

+ Ch. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Copy, Rome, Postulation Archives. This is a former fellow-student of Bishop Grandin at the seminary of Le Mans.

1365. [To Father Fabre, at the Marseilles Major Seminary].1

1365:XII in Oblate Writings

Various business of the diocese and the Congregation. Orsini’s criminal attempt.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Fabre

Paris,

J[anuar]y 20, 1858.

My dear friend, this letter will not have the same fate as the first one that I addressed to you. On the very day that we arrived here,2 I wrote to you, giving you an account of our successful trip and of our first impressions here. Due to the oversight of all sorts of people, my letter stayed on my desk. Fortunately I noticed it at a time when I thought it had already reached you.

When I received your letter today, I immediately took up my pen and even though I manage to write you only a few lines, it will be taken to the mail.

I approve and praise everything you did in response to the telegram s message. One reservation only: you should not have accepted a refusal from Caihol’s maid. You should have forced the issue and, even though the Grand Vicar had been sleeping for some two hours, you should have entered his room and communicated to him what you had to say. In certain circumstances no one’s sleep is respected, not even that of the Emperor or the Pope. Caihol will no doubt have expressed to you his regrets that you did not do this. In all else, you have done things very well. Your circular letter is very well done: it has only one expression that I find unsatisfactory - it is the safe and sound which I would not have used for it is a trite saying. All the rest is excellent.3

If Mr. Caihol had not remained in bed, it would have been proper for him to sign with his colleagues a circular letter which, in my absence, ordered public prayers to be said.

In my portfolio I found Father Tempier’s letter, the one that was to reassure us about the loss of our ten obligations. In this letter, he mentions only the twenty obligations that he had taken, whereas we have always estimated that he had taken thirty of them. All that is left to us is to calculate from the money he has paid out whether it is twenty or thirty; I presume, however, that it is the first figure that is the correct one. We shall verify all that when I return.

From Nancy they are asking me what has been decided concerning Mauroit’s request.4 Father Aubert did not mention anything about this in his reply. Frankly, I don’t remember it. Fill me in on this in your next letter.

I count on you extending compliments to whoever may have some coming. Remember to meet together in Council at least once a week and that each time one of you writes to tell me what was on the agenda.

I finish in haste because I have to go out and will come back only for dinner. Then it would be too late to mail this letter.

Countless affectionate things to all, a special greeting to our sick men,5 a special sign of affection for you from my heart.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

P.S. I beg you, have someone of the bishopric tell Philippe’s wife that he is well.

Also tell Father Aubert that the bookseller to whom he has sent Philippe for the little book on the blue scapular has never heard of the same. Nor could he even tell Philippe where it could be found.

Philippe has done your errand. He has ordered the crosses Father Aubert asked him to order.

1 Orig.: Rome. Postulation Archives. L. M.-Fabre. On January 18. Father Casimir Aubert. the Secretary General of the Congregation, had written to the superiors that the Founder had left for Paris. “called there for the legislative session in his capacity as Senator, and from where he will probably not return before the last two weeks of March.” The “well-beloved Father” offered his apologies for not having been able to reply to so many letters, but he is always glad to receive letters from his sons they are to be addressed “to the Bon Lafontaine hotel… He sees it so important that the Father of the family is in communication with his many children … that he sees the same as one of the most agreeable occupations of his life.” Reg. des lettres 1855-1863.

2 Bishop de Mazenod was accompanied by Bishop Jeancard and by his servant Philippe.

3 A dispatch of January 15 from the Minister of Worship requested that a Te Deum be sung as thanksgiving to God for having preserved the Emperor and the Empress from Orsini’s murderous attack. A circular letter was immediately sent to all the parish priests in this vein; it was signed by Father Tempier as Provost and Vicar General.

4 Ms.: Morroit. Brother Manuel Mauroit had asked so make his 5-year vows. Cf. L. Fabre-Mazenod. January 25, 1858.

5 Father Gourdon of the seminary had been ill but was getting better. Cf. L. Fabre-Mazenod. January 25, 1858.

1366. [To Father Soullier, at Nancy].1

1366:XII in Oblate Writings

The trip to Nancy is postponed for a few days.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Soullier

Paris,

J(anuar)y 28, 1858.

My dear Father Soullier, it seems to me that I foresaw what is happening when I wrote to our dear Father Berne. I was counting on leaving here Monday in order to be with you on the next day. Before writing you, however, I was waiting to know what we would have to do in the Senate to which we have been convoked only once to date. And now, all of a sudden, a Senate consultation was presented to us yesterday, for which we are going to name in each office a commission that is to examine it. Thereafter we will have to assemble to deliberate on it, and this will take several days. I cannot, therefore, absent myself before this affair is concluded. Hence, I must give up the idea of travelling on Monday.

If you see no inconvenience in delaying for a few days the profession of good Father Chalmet, I am quite sure that in the first half of next week we will have finished the main item that is before the Senate. If I leave aside the other items of lesser importance, especially after having been present for this main one, I could take measures to be at Nancy on Sexagesima Sunday. I would arrange to get there on the Saturday. I shall decide only after you have written to me that this arrangement suits you. I only ask you to answer me by return mail so that I know for sure; then I shall be able to reply to the various invitations that are extended to me here.

If you see the least difficulty in deferring the profession of good Father Chalmet, do not be put out; I shall be paying you a short visit regardless, sooner or later. It seems to me, however, that my absence will be less noticed in the Senate if it occurs immediately after the adoption of the Senate consultation.

I hasten to finish so that my letter will still leave in today’s mail. I bless all of you. Goodbye.

+ C.J. Eugene. Bishop of Marseilles.

s.g.

1 Orig.: Rome. Postulation Archives. L. M.-Soullier.

1367. [To the Oblates of Nancy].1

1367:XII in Oblate Writings

The visit to Nancy is postponed till later. Boredom in Paris where he is faced with the world’s vanities.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Oblates of Nancy

Paris,

Feb[ruary] 4, 1858.

What a place, my dear friends, what a place Paris is! I am getting giddy, I cannot take it any more. Here, nothing is ever finished and there is always something to do. Who would have believed the other day when I was told that the Senate’s report on the Senate consultation was imminent - an event for which it was proper that I be present - that I would have had the time to make a little trip to Nancy and return in time for this session which will take place only tomorrow? That, however, is how things stand. Moreover, banking on what I had been told, I hastened to hand in a request for an audience with the Emperor which my business required and now here I am waiting for an answer which may come at any moment: this obliges me to stay put.

It is not at all easy to tell you how vexed I am by these delays. You will certainly grasp it, you, my dear children, who are surely as much put out as I am. What especially grieves me is the delay for our dear Father Chalmet’s profession. Except for this event, I would have planned things either a little earlier or a little later, I would in any case have had the consolation of going to see you. But to feel this dear Father being kept waiting is something intolerable. I must have written you, however, that I could not come to Nancy for Sunday, I cannot even tell you beforehand on what day I shall be free to go there. The presence of the Prussian princes here, the arrival of all these diplomats who are coming from every country to pay their compliments to the Emperor and the Empress almost assure me that I will not get my audience this week. If it had not been requested, I would not worry about it, but, as matters stand, I cannot absent myself. As soon as there is something definite, I shall hasten to let you know. For now, I have only regrets to communicate to you.

Dear sons, believe me, I am doing some strict penance here! I cannot suffer the world which I renounced so readily and here I am forced to be in touch with it - the least I can manage, to be sure, and only to the extent that my position imperiously requires, but that is enough to bore me thoroughly, to make my heart groan at the sight of so much luxury, so much extravagance, so much vanity, so much futility: I assess everything I see by the sacred principles of the Gospel and weigh the value of all this wealth in the scales of God’s holiness. I put in an appearance only in those instances from which I cannot dispense myself. How many serious reflections I make during the short time that these last! I dare say that my soul rises up to God with greater ease than it does in the secret of my oratory. Yes, the contrast of the sight of vanity at its peak with the supernatural thoughts familiar to men of our stamp, with my desires and tastes immediately place me in God’s presence and binds my soul to him whom it is called to love above all else.

I don’t know how I have allowed myself to express these reflections to you. They will at least show you that I consider you fortunate to have been called to live a supernatural life, the only one that is consistent with the dignity of our nature and of our vocation for which we cannot thank God too much.

Goodbye, dear children, may you be blessed a thousand times.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,

s.g.

1 Orig.: Rome. Postulation Archives. L. M.-Oblats.

1368. [To Father Soullier, at Nancy].1

1368:XII in Oblate Writings

The visit to Nancy is deferred until after the audience that the Emperor will give the Bishop of Marseilles. Baptism at Passy.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Soullier

Paris,

February 7, 1858.

I was going to take up my pen and write you, my dear son, that I was planning to leave tomorrow upon leaving the Senate and arrive at Nancy on Tuesday morning. This was the only way to avoid postponing to the Greek Calends this trip which both you and I desire so much. Your letter places me in a new quandary from which I can extricate myself only by deferring my arrival in your midst to after Quinquagesima Sunday.

Telling you all the arrangements I have had to make would be too lengthy an affair. People thought they were doing me a service in not scheduling sooner the audience that I had requested from the Emperor. Now I am anxiously waiting and all signs are that it will be granted to me precisely on the same Sunday on which you are expecting me in Nancy. So I cannot possibly leave here precisely on the day on which I could be called to see the Emperor. Had I been able to leave tomorrow, I would have assisted at the Senate session for the business where my collaboration was important and I would have been back here for the audience as presumed. This planned trip can no longer be arranged like this, for already you are embarked and at work with the candidate. I therefore conclude that nothing is easy on this earth. Thus I give up the idea of undertaking the trip tomorrow and am postponing it until after my audience with the Emperor. I shall certainly inform you at the proper time.

Goodbye. I am leaving to do a baptism at Passy2 where I will afterwards give a solemn benediction. At least you must acknowledge that this time the delay does not originate with me. otherwise I would have to make new excuses to our dear Father Chalmet whom I bless and embrace, as I do you and all the others in your house.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,

sg.

1 Orig.: Rome. Postulation Archives. L. M.-Soullier.

2 In this letter, the Founder wrote: “Passy”. This was a municipality in the former outskirts of Paris that were annexed in 1860. In his Ordo. he had plainly written: “Baptism of the little Patras at Poissy. Benediction in the parish and in the Brother’s boarding school.” Poissy is a city on the Seine River. According to REY (II. 672- 673). Patsy is correct here. The Founder presided over a second benediction in the boarding school of the *Brothers of the Christian Doctrine.*

1369. [To Father Casimir Aubert, at Marseilles].1

1369:XII in Oblate Writings

Advice to be given to Father Bermond who is to make the canonical visitation of the Oblates in Oregon.

Aubert C

[Paris],

February 8, 1858.

When you write to Father Bermond, bring home to him that he is wrong in not appreciating the confidence I have shown to him when I entrusted this delicate visitation to him. Remind him, first of all, that it was not possible to leave him at St. Boniface, for the Bishop of the diocese did not want him there and that giving him the responsibility for a commission so important as the visitation of the Oregon missions was an honorable way of withdrawing him from this mission. Tell him that he should have accepted this matter in a very serious way and not commit the wrong of complaining as he travelled about in Canada. Also add that, in order to fulfill his mission conscientiously and to respond to the confidence I have placed in him, he will have to examine everything in the smallest details so that he can form a judgment on such grave interests and to give me reasons for adopting it. He has to go and see certain localities and gather trustworthy information about the others. He is to consider the present and the future, give his assessment in a detailed report which he must prepare carefully and which must speak not only of Oregon, Olympia, Puget Bay, the Cayouses, Yakimas and other places of the diocese, but also on Vancouver and other areas, even of California which the bad conduct of some of our men, known to the Archbishop, has moved us to exclude.!

Also advise him to give himself the time to assess persons well, their qualities, their defects; what we can expect from each one of them; if there are any who are incorrigible. Let him also consider the lay Brothers who, at a certain period, were quite problematical. Let him also get an account of how temporal matters stand. It is horrible how expenses have risen! Father Ricard has not managed to look after the Congregation’s interests. Is there no regulation that could be laid down in regard to these costly journeys? Let Father Bermond be imbued with the responsibility he has in God’s sight so that he will neglect nothing that can re-establish religious regularity and discipline, which are more necessary in the foreign missions than anywhere else. though they are necessary everywhere. Should I have forgotten something in these recommendations, add whatever you yourself feel is useful. Let him impress on everyone that we have to be holy and lead a holy life if we are to accomplish the great work that God has entrusted to us in his mercy.

Among others, Father Ch[irouse] seems not to have any religious virtues. He is a scoundrel and nothing else. Father Ch(irouse)’s company it is that has led astray this other Father who wrote me the odd letter that you are acquainted with. How then can we entrust to them missions which require men of zeal and devotedness and especially men of God? There is reason for grief when we see that the salt has become so tasteless.

1YENVEUX 1. 124; III. 115; VII. 99.

2 Allusion to Father Honoré Lempfrit. who was expelled from the Congregation in 1853. Cf. L.M.-Fransoni. November 24. 1853. in *OBLATE WRITINGS* V. pp. 80-81.

1370. [To Father Fabre, at the Marseilles Major Seminary].1

1370:XII in Oblate Writings

Fathers Cooke and Fox passing through Paris. Father Lynch will not be superior at Dublin. Trip to Nancy is still postponed to later. News of the Fathers in England. Boredom resulting from the visits that he must make.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Fabre

Paris.

February 8, 1858, sent off on the 9th.

My dear son, I shall start, but without any hope of getting very far. I have just come in from my visit to the Minister who kept me with him a good length of time; and shortly I shall have to go out to the Senate where I will probably be taken up until evening.

Don’t think that here you can plan and count on the morrow. I am back at my letter without any hope of finishing it. I shall begin by telling you that Fathers Cooke and Fox have passed through Paris on their way to No[rmandy] where they will take a look at this retreat house which will serve them as a model. Father Cooke has changed our attitude in regard to Father Lynch. He met him in London and found him totally crushed by the mission which I had assigned to him. He claims he would prefer being the second in Leeds rather than the first in Dublin. Father Cooke shares his view completely and....2

The 9th.

I no longer know what I wanted to say with the above “and”. I answered Father Cooke - who is convinced that Father Lynch would be quite a problem at Dublin - that Father Pinet would not be too pleased to have him at Leeds where the community is doing well. Cooke claims that Father Pinet has admitted that he did not know how to bring forth the best in Father Lynch and that all would go well; he insists, however, that he does not want him in Dublin for he fears that, far from maintaining the great regularity established in our house, he would rather reduce it to the state of the other religious houses with which he would be in contact. I did not think it good to be opposed to the Provincial’s view; he would have been discouraged in regard to the projects he has in mind and is actually carrying out.

You will be surprised to learn that I have not yet gone to Nancy. Since I could not go there for the 2nd, which was the day of Father Chalmet’s profession, I was planning to leave [yesterday] after the Senate session so that I could receive his vows today and leave tomorrow [or], at the latest, the day after tomorrow. But then Father Soullier wrote that he and the Father are busy giving a retreat which is to begin today itself: they were presuming that I would be more free on Quinquagesima Sunday and the days following. That is precisely what will not be the case and so I remain undecided as to when exactly this trip will take place. They will be quite put out and I even more.

You did well to write to America in order to keep them going. You have a business sense, it is better that you follow things from Marseilles. I would have liked to learn how things have been going in Buffalo (people are chattering near me). How do we stand in regard to that property which is so problematical? Is it definitively ours or must we continue running the risk of having it taken away from us? How has Father Tempier sent the 55.000 for England? I presume there is something for Liverpool included in this sum. In conscience, we can no longer forget this community. You must know that the proprietor concerned has become a great personage: he has inherited a sort of lordly domain which gives him the right to take possession of the property of those who are in arrear in their payments. Thus he has established himself in a chateau of which he took possession. I certainly advised Father Cooke to see to it that the well situated locale where we are does not pass out of our hands. It seems that our house in Leeds is quite advanced. Sicklinghall, however, is no longer sufficient for the number of novices who want to come there. I count 13 excellent ones in Father Arnoux’s letter. Ah, my dear man, what a letter the good Father Ayral has written me! One has to be an accomplished imbecile to be able to speak or write in such a disjointed manner. What are we going to do with this man? What were we thinking of when we sent him to England? We cannot ever entrust any ministry whatsoever to such an idiot. How could he have been admitted to profession? Alas! his beautiful and long letter explains Father Arnoux’s notes only too well. He has weighty reasons not to venture saying Mass at our good neighbors; saintly though he is, he would cover us with shame. Tell me, what will they do with him in England? I am asking this: they are so charitable at Sicklinghall that they take care not to raise the issue. That is certainly not the case where Father Guillard2 is concerned. He is good for everything. I only regret that out of regard for Madame Blanc, he was assigned as chaplain to this lady; he had been staying at her place six weeks already when Father Arnoux wrote me his report. Madame Blanc has left our vicinity and established herself in Yorkshire. Father Guillard is hearing confessions there and even beginning to preach. Father Arnoux is ever more pleased with him, be it in regard to his virtue or in respect of his talent.

I have written my worthy friend, the Chevalier de Collegno, to consult him about the Piedmont pension. He has informed me about the steps to be taken.3

My dear son, I have written to Tempier and to Carbonnel. The latter will have shown you the contents of my letter, and so I shall not repeat it. I am taking advantage of this day of rest imposed by the weather to converse a few moments with you. The life that I have to live here is truly unbearable, totally against my taste and habit. If it were only a matter of being present in the Senate, that would be a duty like any other which I would fulfill out of love for God; what annoys me terribly, however, are the social duties that flow therefrom. There are visits to receive, visits to make, dinner invitations, obligatory appearances at ministerial evening parties. And, besides, how behind I am in these courtesy visits. I humbly admit that I have not yet made them, except to our good President is who received me in a most friendly manner.

I conclude lest others may take my overly prolonged absence amiss. I saw the Minister of Worship4 and the Minister of the Interior as well: to the latter I was only to speak of one business item, that concerning the hospital.

1 Orig.: Rome. Postulation Archives. L. M.-Fabre; YENVEUX VI. 74.

2 The text breaks off here. Because this sheet has been torn, it is not possible to reconstitute the beginning and ending of certain lines.

3 Ms.: Guignard.

4Ms.: gamine à suivre. We no longer have the second sheet. YENVEUX (VI. 74) has copied the following passages: from “I have written… onwards. The Piedmont pension was a remuneration paid by the King of Turin to the Fathers who were in charge of the Work of the Italians or Piedmontese in Marseilles.

5Mr. Troplong. President of the Senate.

6On the 8th, the Founder wrote in his Ordo: “Visit to the Minister. Positive assurance concerning the great affair”, namely, the appointment of Jeancard as auxiliary bishop to Bishop de Mazenod of Marseilles. It is for this matter that the Founder had asked for an audience with the Emperor.

1371. [To Father Tempier, at Marseilles].1

1371:XII in Oblate Writings

Debts of the Oblates at Buffalo and of the Abbe Fissiaux. Flu at Montolivet. Visits in Paris.

Tempier

[Paris],

February 10, 1858.

That is where I see the sum of Buffalo raised to 15,000 francs and this amount has to be taken from the account of the 30,000 francs to which I am pledged.

You will have to advise Father Fabre of the repayment made by Fissiaux, so that he can reduce by half the amount of my claim on the list he has of my possessions.

It appears that the flu has been raging at Montolivet. These spittings of blood greatly disturb me; they are certificates of premature death. I nevertheless agree to the admission of Brother Derbuel;2 still it is not easy to bear in mind this sad premonition.

I end my letter. It is time to get dressed for an appearance at the Tuileries, and Cardinal Dupont will soon be calling for me. This is a big chore for me, for I do not like the world of the great. Besides, when I am obliged to be in its presence, I perceive its futility and emptiness more than I ever could in meditation. I find it here in its fullest expression… ‘That is all it is! I tell myself. ‘Oh! that is very little indeed! One moment spent at the foot of the holy altar surpasses all this prestige, no matter how brilliant it may be!

1YENVEUX VIII. 34; REY II. 681.

2 The lady-copyist of Yenveux wrote: “Verbuet”. Is would seem that there was no scholastic with such a name, but there was at that time a Brother Derbuel whose health was not very good. Cf. General Archives, doss. Montolivet. Notes sur les scolastiques.

1372. [To Father Tempier, at Marseilles].1

1372:XII in Oblate Writings

Reflections concerning money matters, a servant, and the scholastics.

Tempier

[Paris],

February 11, 1858.

Since my letter of yesterday was not taken to the post, I shall add these few lines to ask you to tell Carbonnel that Naud, when I consulted him yesterday as to how he wanted to be paid, told me that we could deposit 9,665francs in his account at Marseilles, for they will have to send some money to pay the dividends. Let Carbonnel only take care that the one to whom he gives the money will give him a receipt in proper and due form. I don’t remember the name of the clerk concerned. Elie Bonnard is still here, so it is someone else who is in charge of accounts at Marseilles.

There, that is one item.

Next I will tell you that I was told at the Ministry that the Minister of Finances has decided that Bishops who have responsibilities outside of their dioceses should enjoy postal exemptions under the signature of the delegated Vicar General. Mr. Caihol has taken advantage of this in regard to several letters that have been written to me and it is appropriate that he continue to do so. If my own letters have been taxed. Carbonnel. using this decision [of the Minister], could claim a refund.

In his last letter, Carbonnel made a remark that disturbs me a good deal in regard to Alphonse. Carbonnel seems to be dissatisfied with him. Speaking to me like that does not suffice; people should lay things out clearly for me. I ask you to inform yourself on this matter and to apply a prompt remedy. I shall write, if I have to, but if perchance there is something amiss with the man’s morals. I will give up totally on this young man whom I trusted in this regard. Concern yourself immediately with this matter.

Dupuy2 is coming in right now. I don’t know if he will explain his affairs better to you than to us. He is so mixed up that we more or less understand nothing of it all. Besides, my grief is a chastisement for having been stupid enough to listen to him.

I wanted to write a few lines to Father Mouchette; the arrival of Dupuy on the one hand, that of Fathers Cooke and Fox on the other, plus the visit of some Bishops have taken up all of my time. So please tell this to this dear Father and advise him to take good care of himself because of his delicate situation. I give you the same advice.

I assume you are providing our young people with the means to warm themselves, for it is so cold at Marseilles.

Goodbye. I again assure you of my best wishes.

1 Orig.: Rome. Postulation Archives. L. M.-Tempier.

2 Dupuy, an ex-Oblate. was a titular canon of Marseilles.

1373. [To Father Casimir Aubert, at Marseilles].1

1373:XII in Oblate Writings

The Founder’s sadness at spending February 17th alone with his servant. Father Logier does not observe the Rule. A Father is to be sent to Father Noailles at Bordeaux.

Aubert C

[Paris].

February 17, 1858.

Had I been able to continue my letter, I would have expressed to you my sadness on this beautiful February 17, for I found myself alone in my little chapel, with Philippe, my loyal servant, while everywhere else where we are my children were gathered together at the foot of the altar to give solemn thanks to God in memory of the day that our Institute was approved! I have thus begun my Lent with a severe penance. May God in his goodness credit it to my account!

You are not too well informed about what is going on in your Province. Here is what I happen to know. Father L[agier],2 to the great consternation of those who love the Rule, allows people without any reasonable ground to get up only at six o’clock. It is rightly said: if there are reasons to remain in bed, that is fine; but let him not authorize others to break the Rule, especially on Sundays when there are confessions to be heard. I am also told: to have him love the spirit of poverty more would be desirable. He went and made a trip no one knows to where and without saying when he would be back. Priests come to ask him for retreats and our men won’t know what to say to them. At oraison he uses a lit candle like bishops do and that is a scandal to all the Fathers. Everywhere else people are content with one lamp. These are the things that someone who sincerely loves the Rule has sent me. It is good that you know these things. for it is important that abuses of this sort do not set in.

And so it is Father Noailles who informs me how things stand with our great concern. He has informed all the local superiors of the different Institutes of the union that has been achieved. He has proclaimed a novena and communions to draw down God’s blessings on this new phase of his work; and now he has approached me to ask that we select from among our excellent Oblate Fathers a collaborator whom he wants to initiate into the Holy Family - he may even be obliged soon to ask for a second one, for the harvest is great and there is a dearth of workers. And he continues in this vein. *Hic labor.* I have not as yet answered this embarrassing letter. Do you know why? Soon we won’t know anymore how to satisfy so many claims and so many requests.

1 YENVEUX IV. 40; IX. 46\*.

2 The General Council on October 22. 1857, had appointed Father J. J. Lagier superior at N.- D. de Bon Secours.

1374. [To Father Fabre, at the Marseilles Major Seminary].1

1374:XII in Oblate Writings

Joy at receiving Father Fabre’s letter on February 17th. A Father has to be sent to Father Noailles at Bordeaux.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Fabre

Paris.

February 19, 1858.

My dear son. I let you imagine how fitting it was that your delightful letter2 was handed to me on February 17th. On so solemn and joyful a day for all my children, I was in the sadness of my solitude. I alone was reduced to celebrating the holy Sacrifice with my ordinary servant in the small chapel of the hotel where I am staying. I united myself as best as I could to all of you who are spread out over the four parts of the earth, but I felt my cruel isolation just the same. And then came your letter, so affectionate and touching: through a particular effort on your part, you arranged its arrival so that it would be in my hands on the feastday itself. It was handed to me at a time when my thoughts were depressing me even more. You can well understand what a balm this dear letter was for me. Certainly, I already knew your customary sentiments, but no matter, it is so nice to see them so well expressed and felt. They could only add to the affection that I have nourished for you since a long time hence and they stirred my recollection of them and imprinted them, so to speak, even more deeply. So it is that this fine letter was a truly great consolation for me. In dear Father Mouchette’s letter, which I have received today. I see that you went ahead with the good idea of getting together at Montolivet. That was the place to go and rejoice in the midst of a fine community, the hope of our family, who respond so well to the care lavished upon them with so much zeal and devotedness. Father Mouchette’s description of it to me is most consoling. We hope to see good missionaries and holy religious come forth therefrom. The need for such is everywhere felt and soon we will not be able to respond to so many claims and requests.

The Abbe Noailles is presently a source of embarrassment to me. He is reminding me of our agreement by which we are to send him one of our most competent men so that he can initiate him into serving his many Institutes; the latter have been informed by a circular letter of all that has been arranged.

21 [February].

I give up hope of ever finishing this letter. When I came back from the church where we spent a part of the day. I had to dine. After dinner, the visits began. and here the evenings extend far into the night. A person still has to go to bed and that happens never before 11.30 and often only at midnight. Nevertheless. I get up at six o’clock so that I can say Mass at half past seven in the chapel that we have in the house. So I wish you good evening and good night, even though you are already asleep at the moment that I am penning these few lines. So I kiss your forehead and bless you in your sleep.

+ C.J. Eugene. Bishop of Marseilles.

s.g.

1 Letter of February 7. 8 pages in length, kept in the General Archives. L. Fabre-Mazenod.

2 Orig.: Rome. Postulation Archives. L. M.-Fabre.

1375. For Father Mouchette, [at Montolivet].1

1375:XII in Oblate Writings

February 17th in Paris. The trip to Nancy is still postponed to later. Fasting. Care for the scholastic’s health. etc.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Mouchette

Paris.

February 22, 1858.

My dear and very good son. I don’t know which way to turn in order to comply with all the obligations that crush me in this place. With the best will in the world I do not manage to do so. This tells you why I have waited so long to write you. I would have very much liked to tell you sooner how much pleasure I derived from your letters. I read them always with renewed consolation. They are a double source of joy for me: I receive news about you from your own self and through you I learn of the blessings which the Lord has not ceased to shower upon our most dear family. What you tell me about the latter compensated me for the excessive deprivation I suffered on the 17th of this month when I had to celebrate, all alone, in the small chapel of my hotel, the holy sacrifice in thanksgiving for God’s great kindness, of which we are today keeping the 32nd anniversary, if I am not mistaken. You were celebrating this at Montolivet as elsewhere. Daily I receive moving reports about this, and I. all alone on my third floor, united myself as best as I could to the beautiful feast that was being celebrated far away from me. There was, however, a certain moment when we were very close to each other. That is at the consecration when we are all equally in the presence of the same Jesus whose heart at the same time received the vows of us all. This idea consoled me in my loneliness on that day.

Would you believe that I have not yet made my trip to Nancy? Here too is a sacrifice I am obliged to impose upon myself, one that is all the more painful because others have felt it as much as I. They had prepared a celebration, hoping to have me in the midst of this fervent community for the great day of our feast. It was impossible for me to go, and this good Father Chalmet, who finished [his novitiate] on the 2nd and who wanted to make his vows in my presence, is thus held back a good month. This grieves me but force major has kept me in Paris. At least I don’t want him to lose his place of precedence and, whatever be the day on which I can come to Nancy and receive his profession, I want him to precede all those who have made their vows after February 2nd. I tell you this so that you can arrange this matter when you assign the [Oblation] numbers.

I shall not conclude this little letter without telling you again and with the greatest insistence to take great care of your health. You have to speak much, for you have so many under your direction. So. don’t hesitate to freshen up your chest by taking a hot drink in the morning, a warm drink of pearl-barley, for example. Allow such a drink to all whom you notice prone to coughing, or who would need some sustenance during days of fasting: thus even if some milk has to be added -though only a small quantity - to this drink which I see as a sort of remedy and which I therefore authorize.

I explicitly charge you, my dear son, to tell all the Fathers and Brothers at Montolivet all my affection, the pain I feel to be at present absent from them - though in body only. for I am very much with them in heart and spirit. I bless all and you too with all my soul.

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

1 Orig.: Rome. Postulation Archives. L. M.- Mouchette.

1376. [To Father Soullier, at Nancy].1

1376:XII in Oblate Writings

Trip to Nancy on February 26th to 28th.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris. February 24, 1858.

Dear Father Soullier, I am going to crowd my sails lest I have the grief of visiting your house during your absence. I would have liked to leave today if at all possible, we have a session at the Senate tomorrow and we are to vote an important law which deals with measures of general security. I simply cannot be absent in such a circumstance. I have to be in Paris on March 1st, at six o’clock in the evening. So here is what I have decided to do.

I shall leave Friday morning by the express train at nine o’clock. With God’s help, I shall arrive at Nancy at five o’clock. I shall spend the whole of Saturday and Sunday with you, and take my leave on Monday morning at 6.00 am., and that will bring me here a little before the time of my rendezvous at six o’clock. In this way. I shall have the consolation of finding you with this dear family which for the last month has been the promised land that I could not enter, though certainly not because I was wandering around in the desert. I will not say more to you now, the main thing is that my letter leaves by today’s mail. Goodbye.

+ C.J. Eugene. Bishop of Marseilles.

S.g..

1 Orig.: Rome. Postulation Archives. L. M.-Soullier.

1377. [To Father Tempier, at Marseilles].1

1377:XII in Oblate Writings

The Founder’s visit to his sister and niece at Cirey. Snow and cold. Success of his negotiations in Paris The Mirés marriage. The scholastic’s health.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Tempier

Cirey.

March 9, 1858.

My dear Tempier, I assume that I will find a letter from you upon my return to Paris. In the meantime. I am taking the advantage of a brief moment where I am free at Cirey in order to wish you a nice good day. Since I was spending more than two months in Paris, it was hardly possible for me not to visit Cirey. I profited from Eugene’s passing by to go with him and see my sister and my niece. Eugene is returning to Aix today and tomorrow I am returning to Paris so that I do not overly miss the sessions of the Senate: I shall have to leave it very shortly. I arrived here on Sunday morning: this makes a three and one half day’s stay with my family. I found my sister reasonably well, but rather grieved that she cannot observe Lent as she used to do formerly. But, weak as she has been, it will certainly not be I who will allow her not to pay attention to the requirements of her weak condition. She had to keep to her room for two weeks without being able to come downstairs for Mass in the chapel, even on Sunday. She is better now, but she needs a lot of care. My niece is about to give birth. All her children are healthy and in delightful spirits.

Here we have been treated to the sad sight of the earth covered with snow. What a contrast with our smiling countryside, even in winter! The cold, however, is tolerable, though the frost is severe and biting. I suffered from it a little only during the night of Saturday to Sunday in the carriage which took us from Bar-sur-Aube to Cirey. That takes about four hours of rather difficult travelling when the roads are covered with snow and it froze very hard that night. I was well covered up, however, but it was during sleep that I was soon warmed up by keeping myself awake.

You will no doubt have marvelled how in the space of one session with the new Minister I settled our two great affairs. On returning to Paris, I hope to learn that our hospital is in operation and that the Sisters of St. Augustine are in charge of it. The gentlemen of the Commission should have been more grateful for the success which is due to my credit and my efforts. They have even left me without an answer to the letter that I wrote to them. The Prefect and Mr. Martin replied by return mail. If I do not find in Paris a letter from them, I will have every reason to be irked.

These are not the only matters that I brought to a good conclusion with God’s grace. Let this be said secretly - for the Pope requires this secrecy - the Holy Father, in response to the request I presented to him via my letter of the beginning of February. has granted me without the slightest delay the dispensation from the diriment impediment so that in the quality of an apostolic delegate I can marry the Catholic N. with the Jew Mirés. You can imagine how happy I am to have followed up my inspiration and to have obtained such a result. The Mirés family is overjoyed. I wanted to give the Catholic party a few days to prepare by confession for this great event in which I shall officiate upon my return to Paris.

This is not the only favour I have received from the Holy Father. I am expecting yet another which will delight all of us. As always with God’s grace that assists me and moves things in my favour. I overcame without the slightest difficulty the obstacles that were in the way. I leave it that and will tell you the rest later. I have not as yet said anything about this to anyone. You won’t guess it either, no matter how shrewd you are!2

I end my chatter and take up my pen again only to close my letter. Before I do so. however. I advise you not to defy the flu and to take better care of yourself. I would also advise you not to sell all your milk. but to give the community more of it. I have been told that they have been receiving too little of it. That should not be tolerated. Milk must be the chief staple for a community which is fasting. This need has to prevail over the estimate of the revenue the cows bring in. The first privileged customers ought to be those of our own house. I embrace you.

+ C. J. Eugene. Bishop of Marseilles. S.g.

1 Orig.: Rome. Postulation Archives. L. M.-Tempier.

2 This probably refers so the appointment of Jeancard as auxiliary bishop.

169.To the Abbe Noailles at Bordeaux.1

169:XIII in Oblate Writings

The General Council will soon designate an Oblate to collaborate with M. Noailles in the Association of the Holy Family.

Noailles

Paris,

March 15, 1858.

Dear Sir and revered Superior,

I am ashamed of replying so tardily to the letters that you did me the honor of writing. Distracted here by countless matters, by troublesome situations of every kind, and by two trips I had to make, I had relied on good Father Vincens to send you my excuses and to tell you by word of mouth that I had been constrained to put off writing to you.

Now I have just discovered that Father Vincens did not have the pleasure of seeing you when he apparently passed through Bordeaux too rapidly, or perhaps you were not there at that time. I am immediately presenting you my excuses, first of all, and I am asking you to give me time to return to Marseilles to deliberate with my Council about the choice that would best suit your point of view. At the present all my men are on mission. We had to crowd all sails in order to satisfy all the requests occasioned by the Jubilee. After Easter we will be more at ease. So while we wait I join you in prayer that the good Lord may bless our families and our works and especially that he keep you for a long time at the head of those Holy Institutes that your zeal has founded in the Church.

I leave you to busy myself with a report I have been assigned to make to the senate. That will be my last business matter here, for I am in a hurry to return to my diocese for Holy Week.

Please accept, Sir and revered Superior, the assurance of my respectful and very affectionate regards.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

P.S. I asked the Superior of Good Hope of Nancy to remember me to you. Our Oblate Fathers have already had the pleasure of rendering some services to that community. I have also seen our Sisters on Calais Street, whose Superior was somewhat ill. I will regret leaving without seeing her again.

1 Orig.: Rome, General Archives of the Holy Family.

1378. [To Father Berne, master of novices at Nancy].1

1378:XII in Oblate Writings

Admission to vows of some novices. Postulants. Father Guinet.

Berne

[Marseilles],

April 17, 1858.

My dear son, I did not want to give the task of writing you to anyone else. I indeed have very little time for myself, but I have enough to tell you again how happy I was with my stay in your dear community. Not in the least do I retract the promises which the fervor of your novices inspired me to make. The Council has given its warm approval to my view and without any difficulty we have admitted to oblation all the men you have presented to me.2 For this purpose, I grant them the necessary dispensation for the second year of novitiate. I also entirely second your viewpoint by not depriving you all at once of these excellent men whose absence would depopulate your novitiate too quickly. Let them therefore peacefully make their profession and let them stay until the holidays in the house that they have so edified by their good conduct during the time of their novitiate.

I have no hesitation in giving you a favorable answer in regard to the man of whom you spoke in one of your letters. I have again found this request in re-reading your letter. How is it that we did not speak about this matter at Nancy? I gladly agree to sacrifice 300 francs for three years and get a good priest in return. So conclude this matter which has been delayed too long through an oversight.

In Paris I have seen another man whom you had indicated to me. He came to see me and I strongly urged him not to defer too long in following God’s call. He wanted to wait until Easter, I think. Easter is now over, how do matters stand with him? Kindly let me know. 3

If Father Guinet’s health is restored, I will probably give him back to you, but it will not be as novice master. Regardless of what you yourself may think, you are doing very well in this position and experience will only improve you all the more. So do not grow weary doing good in this good post; let us only pray to God that he sent food for your zeal.

Goodbye, my dear son. Daylight is gone but I can just see enough to bless you as well as our entire beloved family. both the actual and the future Oblates.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles. sup. gen.

1 Copy: Rome. Postulation Archives. Reg. lettres 1855-1863. p. 164. Father Berne was appointed Master of Novices in the October 22nd and November 5, 1857 General Council sessions; he was to replace Father Guinet, who was ill. After several months. Father Guinet resumed his responsibilities. During his convalescence, it was Father Soullier, the superior, and not Father Berne, who presided at all the taking of the habit ceremonies.

2 Were admitted to vows: Father G. Simonin, Brother F.- M. Le Bihan, deacon. and Brothers G. Salatin, Y. Le Cam and J. Simmerman. Cf. General Council, April 14, 1858.

3 Two postulants took the habit on April 30: Yves-Marie Nicolas and Auguste Pineau.

246. [To Fr. Pierre Aubert, Superior at Montreal] 1

246:II in Oblate Writings

Occupations of the Bishop of Marseilles. Complaint against Superiors who have not informed the Superior General of a grave lack of regularity among several of the Fathers at Montreal. The Founder wishes to know everything in order to take severe measures.

Aubert P

Marseilles,

April 20, 1858.

One heart is enough for me, my dear Fr. Aubert, to love all the children whom God has given me, but I would need ten hands if I were to tell them all so. I know, and I blame myself for it: I do not write to you as often as I should, but what am I to do? You judge for yourself by the simple recital that I will make for you of the way in which I spend my day. Next Sunday, at 6 o’clock in the morning, I shall go to the church of the Jesuits where I shall find a gathering of a thousand men. I shall begin by administering the sacrament of Confirmation to a considerable number of latecomers. Then I shall offer the Holy Sacrifice, at which all these men will receive communion. For many of them this communion will be their Easter duty. When I come down from the altar, I shall run in great haste to the church of St. Cannat to meet the procession for the feast of Saint Mark and to be present at the solemn Station Mass. I will come back with the procession to the pro-cathedral, the church of Saint Martin, and there I will be present at the High Mass of Sunday. Then it will be time to come to the Bishop’s Residence to dine. As I take my last bite, I will have to set off to be present at Vespers at S. Cannat on the occasion of a feast that is being celebrated there, after Vespers there will be the sermon, and then Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. This will bring me to six o’clock, when I will have to go back to the Jesuit Church for the closing of the retreat of the men to whom I will have given Communion in the morning. I will not leave there until nine o’clock. You see how much is being asked of me in my city of 300,000 souls. And do not imagine that on other days I am allowed any rest. Meanwhile, I have also to concern myself, perhaps more than I should, with the business of the Congregation. For this, some days are set aside on which I work with your brother, and others when I work with my council; but there are few days when I do not more or less have to write to one of this dear family, which today is spread out in so many places.

But, you will tell me, my turn does not come often. This is true, and I must say that you do not offer me much provocation, which cannot be for lack of things to tell me. Alas! You must surely have more to say to me than you say at the moment. Why do you not send me detailed and regular letters as your duty requires? Do you imagine that it is not extremely painful for me to learn, as it were by ricochet2, of the revolts and disorders that have been going on in the Montreal community, and that I know nothing of this by the regular means, that is, from the superiors, who have continually hidden the state of affairs from me? Probably the scandal was known through-out the town, while I remained in total ignorance of it. I am not surprised any longer that there is nobody coming to the novitiate, although you are in a catholic country and surrounded by a large number of clergy. Who would wish to be associated with men who have gone astray and are singing the Marseillaise, boasting of their rebellion and turning their house into a great rowdy barrack-room where drinking and gambling goes on for a great part of the night, where plots are hatched to carry out the most unworthy plans, where all the duties of religious life, of the priesthood, of gratitude, of filial piety, are trampled underfoot? These monstrosities horrify me, but was it right that I should know nothing of them? Should I not have been consulted about the remedy that should be applied to correct such disorders? My dear Fr. Aubert, these are sorrows that penetrate deep into my soul, especially when I think that some of the subjects whom I have sent you, full of good will, inspired by holy zeal, truly religious men like Fr...3 and others, have gone astray along that path, until they themselves have become a stumbling-block for others. I beg you most urgently to give me positive information about all of this. It is not generalisations that I need, but an exact and conscientious account on each individual subject and on the enormities of which several of them are accused. Do not speak to me of the present state of affairs alone, whatever you consider it to be, but go right back to the revolt, the phase that is called republican, when the Marseillaise was being sung and signatures being collected for the schism. Since the Provincial has left me in ignorance of these disgraceful events, I call on you to give me full information on this period of madness, even if you have to write eight whole pages to do so. I know a good deal already, but perhaps not enough to judge of the extreme gravity of the evil. I cannot help thinking that men who could react as they did to the announcement of resolutions taken after a General Chapter by the Superior General and his Council were already fairly gangrenous. So I want to know what they were like before that time, because, quite wrongly, I was not informed about them when the delegates came to the General Chapter. I would like to believe that they were not then known to be so wicked. Do not be content, in the report that I am asking you for, giving you an explicit commission to compose it, with designating people by the initial letter of their names. I could make a mistake, and I am very anxious not to make any error. You can see from experience what is gained by isolating oneself from the center and chief of a family, with regard to the direction of the subjects and the communities of an entire Province. Remember that the sap begins from the root and passes through the trunk of the tree to arrive at the branches and produce fruit. What has happened? During the most vigorous period in the youth of a Congregation that is just coming to birth, in Canada people have fallen into the decrepitude of advanced age, the forerunner of the death of any society. May all the good that there is among you inspire you once more and give new life to all those corpses whose stink I can smell from here. If there is no ground for hope, let me know so that I can decide what must be done. I make this a duty in conscience for you. Correspond directly with me. Farewell, my dear son; you will see from this letter how distressed I am. I bless you and embrace you with all my heart.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

Sup. Gen.

1 Copy: Reg. letters 1855-1863, Rome. Arch. Post.: DM 10.

2 Fr. Mestre, soon after he arrived in Canada, had written a letter giving several facts concerning the lack of religious spirit among the Fathers. The General Council, in its meeting on April 14, thought it advisable to seek reliable information before taking decisive action. The reply of Fr. Aubert, received in June. criticised especially Fr. Rouge whom it was decided to recall to France; cf. General Council, June 28, 1858.

3 Name completely erased.

247. [To Fr. Gaudet, in Brownsville].1

247:II in Oblate Writings

*Fr. Gaudet writes too rarely; however, the father’s affection remains always alive, even if his heart suffers.*

Marseilles, April 20, 1858.

I am deeply grateful, my dear son, to the Parish Priest of Matamorost, who has given me the sweet satisfaction of receiving one of your letters. If you knew the pleasure they give me, perhaps you would not be so miserly in sending them to me. And still you complain about me. You go so far as to ask me whether you have displeased me, attributing my silence to some ill-feeling. No, my dear son, I have nothing to blame you for except that you neglect me too much, and let years pass without giving me the sweet pleasure of a single little communication. But for faults of this kind, it is only the heart that suffers, and one has no less esteem and even affection when one is a father as I am for a son who is too forgetful and does not take sufficient account of the hurt that he is causing to his father in never giving him any sign that he is alive.

Fr. Aubert must have mentioned business matters in his letter to you; I therefore will say nothing of them. This letter has the sole purpose of repeating and proving to you that you are always very dear to my heart, that I love you tenderly, and that while still complaining a little I pardon you for your neglect of me. Finally, I bless you and embrace you like a good father.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

Sup. Gen.

P.S. I forgot to tell you, dear Fr. Gaudet, that I have received your tiny letter and that of the Parish Priest of Matamoros for Rome; but the 150 francs that you sent were not there.

1 Copy: Reg. letters 1855-1863, Rome. Arch. Post.: DM 10.

2 M. Musquiz. At the beginning of the year. Fr. Gaudet had written to say that he could not make the projected foundation in Mexico because of the war, cf. General Council, Februray 13. In his letter of April 20, Fr. Casimir Aubert reminds him that he should now go to Mexico since that country seems “to be returning to a state of order”.

248. [To Fr. Vignole].1

248:II in Oblate Writings

Expressions of friendship. Because of his many occupations, Mgr de Mazenod cannot write often to every one of his children, but they are always present to him in mind and heart.

Vignole

Marseilles,

April 20, 1858.

My dear Fr. Vignole, I wish I could pay all my debts, but how can I find the means to do this? All my children, therefore, counting as they must on my indestructible and fatherly affection, must tell themselves that they are present each day to my mind and my heart, and that they cannot give me more pleasure than by giving me from time to time, and often if possible, their news, that I read their letters with an inexpressible satisfaction, but that it is not always possible for me to reply as I should wish and when I ought. When the moment when I ought to write is past, an infinite number of letters piles up, and duties of all kinds multiply for me. I have to pay attention to everything, and every day I have to recognise the fact that, in spite of all my good will, one man is not enough to do all that I have to do. Still, I begin my day at 5 o’clock and do not end it until near midnight. Happily, in spite of my 76 years of age, God preserves me in a state of health equal to every trial and with a vigor which old age has still not reduced.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Copy: Reg. letters 1855-1863, Rome, Arch. Post.: DM 10. It is noted in the Register that the Founder wrote in the same sense and by the same post to Frs. Olivier and Kéralum. This letter does not seem in any case to be finished; doubtless, there was not time to transcribe it in the Register in its entirety.

249. [To Mgr Guigues, Provincial of Canada].1

249:II in Oblate Writings

Allocations for Plattsburgh. The debt of the college at Bytown. Fr. Tabaret is asking for more Fathers for the college. Basilians at Hamilton. Frs. Naughten and Bourassa. Letters from Fathers from the Red River region, all happy at the nomination of Fr. Grandin as coadjutor of Mgr Taché.

Guigues

Marseilles,

April 24, 1858.

My dear Bishop, it was impossible for me to reply from Paris to your letter of January 28. I received it very late, precisely at the moment when I had most to occupy me, since I was on the point of leaving the Senate and Paris. When I reached Marseilles, I found myself caught up in the functions of Holy Week and Easter. I can assure you that nobody makes allowances for the delays that I have suffered, and that I need nothing less than the amazing health which God is kind enough to preserve me in so as to be equal to the work that is demanded from me every day. I am not dispensed for all that from satisfying the most pressing demands of my correspondence which stretches, as you know, to all four corners of the earth. The letter which I am writing to Fr. Aubert dispenses me from entering with you into the painful details of the affair which has caused me profound sadness.

April 27. 1 have just received your letter of the eighth day of this month, and I am going to hurry to reply, since I believe the post leaves this evening. I consent very gladly to the proposal that you make to me with regard to your Provincial Council. I can understand the inconvenience involved in having to confide family secrets to indiscreet men who have not lost the habit of doing all their business in public.

Although we have to deduct from the allocation that we are requesting for Plattsburgh the sum that the Canadian Province owes to the general fund, nobody will be able to complain against us, since the Province will regard it as a duty to repay to Plattsburgh whatever is in excess to its own debt.

It does not seem to me that there is anything surprising in the fact that you have incurred a debt for the building of the college. Is it not a diocesan establishment? And into whose possession will it pass? The Bishops who will succeed you after more than half a century, if it pleases God to continue to preserve you as I pray he will, will count themselves happy that you have taken trouble to leave them that fine college from which they will profit. I consider Fr. Tabaret too scrupulous. One works in all things with the means that one has at one’s disposal as best one can. To aim at perfection is a foolish illusion. There is strength and weakness everywhere. The difference is that among us there is the habit of complaining about oneself aloud, of underestimating oneself, whereas elsewhere people have a desire to see themselves valued highly. To whom are you speaking about the Basilians? Have we not their meagre establishments before our very eyes? I do not imagine they have given of their best for Hamilton. In any case, you need have no regrets. They will have exhausted themselves with this effort. I think that what you have is better than anything that they could have given you. So have no scruple and no regrets.

I am distressed by what you tell me of Fr. Naughten; we were very happy with him throughout the time he spent here. If we cannot use the English in the countries where English must be spoken, we are very unlucky. I cannot believe that he will not be persuaded by the wise words that you will be in a position to say to him. He has always taken very well everything that I have said to him. You are too skilful to fail to find the means of touching his heart and recalling him to his duty.

As for Fr. Bourassa, I am desolated by his persistence in leaving the ark, and may God grant that he does not suffer total shipwreck. It is always a great infidelity to come to the point that he has reached. I have given him as much rein as I could, but will he take advantage of this kindness to stay firm in his vocation, and has he not in his heart committed to the full the apostasy from which I meant to save him?

What a responsibility will be on his shoulders if, as you say, you cannot replace him in his work in the docks except imperfectly.

Those shameful soldiers then never think of death! Do those words *redde rationem villicationis tuti* not strike fear into them? Their consciences must have become utterly numb! May God grant them light to save them....

I am glad that I have been allowed some time to write to you, and now here is somebody coming into my room in spite of my instructions. Fortunately I am at the end of my paper, but I still had so many things to say to you! I have received letters from all our missionaries (except two) from Red River and also from the good Bishop. All these letters are delightful for the good spirits of which they give evidence. They are all delighted by the choice of the Coadjutor, who is now the only person who does not suspect what is coming to him. I am also receiving letters from all his classmates from Le Mans, who praise the qualities and the virtues of this holy missionary. God be praised!

Farewell, dear Bishop; I embrace you tenderly and send affectionate greetings to all our Fathers.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Copy: Reg. letters 1855-1863, Rome, Arch. Post.: DM 10.

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

176:V in Oblate Writings

Dispatch of documents relative to the needs of the Oblate missions. Special recommendation for Leeds, Liverpool, and Montreal.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Propagation of the Faith

Marseilles,

April 29, 1858.

Dear Sirs,

I enclose the documents which the Secretary General of the Congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate was instructed to compile on the requests we address to you each year in favor of our foreign missions. This report would have reached you earlier if some of the documents we expected from our missionaries in foreign countries had reached the Father in charge of preparing these documents in the usual time. His report, which he could finish only today, contains as usual a brief presentation of the needs of the foreign missions entrusted to the Oblates of Mary and presents the amount of the requests for assistance for each mission.

Gentlemen, it is not necessary for me to insist and prove to you that these documents, compiled according to the information supplied by the respective superiors of our foreign missions, merit your full trust and that, with regard to our grant, you can use them as the basis for your work in distributing the funds of the Missionary Society whose interests are entrusted to your renowned zeal and to your perfect spirit of justice and charity.

Allow me to submit a special recommendation for two important missions, those of Leeds and Liverpool in England, which still require your generous assistance in order to be definitively placed on a solid and respectable footing.

I also call upon your kindness concern in favor of our foundation of Montreal in Canada. On behalf of that mission we submit a request for a direct and more substantial aid than what it receives for its ordinary needs through the local administration of the Propagation of the Faith. In this regard, I must point out that in order to avoid making this grant overly burdensome for the Missionary Society by including it in the budget of our foreign missions, we have reduced the figure initially advanced in the requests for assistance of our other missions, so that the total amount we request for 1858 remains more or less the same as what was requested last year.2 We thus hope that if you yourselves find it necessary to reduce further the grant your Councils will soon approve in favor of the foreign missions of the Oblates of Mary, you will be so kind as to consider the fact that we have already reduced our request.

Gentlemen, please accept the expression of my devoted sentiments and highest regards,

+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles, Sup. Gen.

P.S. The procurator of our foreign missions would be very grateful if your treasurer would send us the balance of the grant approved for 1857, the amount which we received up to now during the month of April.

1 Orig.: Rome, Arch. of the Postulation. L. M.P. This letter was only signed by the Founder. A similar text, dated April 30, is on file in Paris.

2 The sum requested in 1858 amounted to 195 000 francs. Cf. the notes of April 29, 1858.

61. To His Eminence the Cardinal Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide.1

61:V in Oblate Writings

Report of the Visitor to Oregon. The missions of Yakimas and Cayouses, destroyed by the war, cannot be reopened. The missionaries could go to Vancouver or establish a net’s Vicariate in Net’s Caledonia. The illness of Bishop Blanchet. Baptisms and marriages in 1857. Dispensation for reasons of age to ordain a deacon.

Propaganda Fide

Marseilles,

April 28, 1858.

Your Eminence,

Before responding to your letter of December 2, 1857I wanted to wait until I had received the report from the Visitor sent to Oregon2 to determine the exact state of that Mission. I received that report a few days ago. I had to know the actual extent of the tumult due to the tragic war between the whites and the savages and if the missions of to the Yakimas and Cayouses, destroyed by those devilish plunderers, left any hopes of being able to be reopened. That has been deemed impossible. In that case the missionaries who had established these destroyed missions were free and I could have sent them to Vancouver. As a way to obtain some results, the Visitor also advised me to ask the Sacred Congregation to establish an Apostolic Vicariate in New Caledonia3 assigned entirely to the Congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. In the vast reaches of that country there are numerous tribes of savages and the Oblates already know their languages. The boundaries of that Vicariate would begin from 490 latitude and extend to the Russian possessions4 in that part of America. Among the advantages of such an organization, the Visitor considers that most important one of no longer having to suffer those endless spites inflicted by the Oregon bishops upon the missionaries who risk losing their courage and their vocation. Moreover, I have heard that Bishop Demers, who has been thus far unable to gather priests to his side to help him, would willingly move down to Nesqually if Bishop Blanchet, reported to be seriously ill, were to die. The report I have received from our Oblates for last year includes the number of adult Baptisms *(*625*),* children (200), weddings (234) and more than 30 baptisms in the month of January alone this year.

It remains for me to ask Your Eminence to grant me an 18 month dispensation for reasons of age in order to ordain Deacon Giovanni Gallo, a professed Oblate of the Congregation of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. He was born in October 17, 1834 in San Remo in the diocese of Ventimiglia. I have the most urgent need for his ministry in order to give spiritual aid to the 25,000 Genoans in my city, without counting the Neapolitans and Piedmontese whose exact numbers I do not know. As to the deacon for whom I request the dispensation, he is an angel of piety, talented and has finished his studies in moral and dogmatic theology.

Your Eminence, please accept the expression of respect and affection wherewith I remain your most humble and devoted servant.

+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Orig. Italian: Rome, Arch. of Pr. Fide, Scrit. rif. nei Cong., Francia, V. 4 (1857-1861), f. 215.

2 Fr. F. Bermond, OMI.

3 That was the name given to the Pacific Coast.

4 Territories which are today part of Alaska.

170 [To the Abbe Noailles at Bordeaux].1

170:XIII in Oblate Writings

Sending Father Bellon to Bordeaux.

Noailles

Marseilles,

May 8, 1858.

I must now2 tell you, dear Sir, about Reverend Father Bellon whom I am sending you to be initiated under your direction into the knowledge and the management of the works which make up the Association of the Holy Family; he is to represent the Congregation of Oblates of Mary Immaculate both to you and to the members who make up the higher administration of these Works. I have already introduced him to the General Directress who has no doubt already mentioned this to you. He is a man of quality under every aspect, who leaves nothing to be desired in terms of knowledge and piety. He is of mature age, since he is over forty, and has had occasion to prove himself at length in the direction of communities for he was Director or Superior of a Major Seminary for more than fifteen years. His good character and excellent mind will make him a wise and enlightened cooperator in your hands as well as your faithful representative in the diverse works which you have created. In spite of my wanting to send him to you immediately, I was obliged to delay his departure for Bordeaux till the end of the month. This Father is Superior of one of our houses in Marseilles and we need two or three weeks before I can withdraw him from that position.

Sending Father Bellon to Bordeaux and introducing him to the direction of your works can be considered as the culmination of the transaction that has occupied us for six months and has been happily concluded by the agreement of affiliation of the Association of which you are the Founder and the Congregation of Oblates of Mary Immaculate. The affiliation makes the two families into only one so that they may help each other working, each in its own sphere, for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. By the fact alone of this union, very special bonds are established between us which, even though they must ordinarily pass through Reverend Father Bellon as intermediary, can also be carried on directly with me; this will from time to time give me the pleasure of corresponding with you by letter and of receiving you in person on the occasion of your visits. In this regard, I beg you to consider yourself from now on as one of us and to tell yourself that you will be at home every time that you come to Marseilles.

Please accept, etc.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Copy. Rome, Postulation Archives DM X: Register of Letters 1855-1861, pp. 180-181.

2 We omit the first part of this long letter which speaks about the foundation of the two works of the Holy Family at Marseilles.

171.[To Bishop Menjaud of Nancy].1

171:XIII in Oblate Writings

The Oblates want to continue working with prisoners.

Menjaud Bishop

Marseilles,

June 4, 1858.

My dear Lord,

I realize the anxiety you must have been cast into by the strange report of M. Marguet. You will allow me not to feel bound to reply to that document, it would be too painful for me to comment on it. Truly I no longer understand good M. Marguet! But, let’s not talk about it, there would be too much to say!

Prison ministry is too much in line with the goals that the Congregation of the Oblates of Mary has adopted for itself for us to abandon a service that we have kept up in most difficult times and at the price of sacrifices which I don’t need to recall. We were hoping to continue it when the present situation is in place, a situation that makes it easier and just as meritorious.

Whatever M. Marguet may say about the contrived plan to remove from us this work, which you yourself recognize as having been well carried out by our Congregation, we can give you one of our Fathers who is especially dedicated to it. There is nothing against him having his living quarters and bed close to the prison, and there is no doubt that a good religious will show at least as much zeal and dedication as one of the priests at M. Marguet’s disposal. Only I must not hide from you that I would be very put out if this Father were exposed to the mean pestering of the Sister who egged M. Marguet to take the step which your heart has reason to disavow.

I have given Father Provincial orders to put the Father destined for this service at your disposal. Please accept, etc.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Copy, Rome, Postulation Archives, DM X: Register of Letters 1855-1861, p. 189.

1379. [To Father Mouchette, at Montolivet].1

1379:XII in Oblate Writings

Advice in helping a scholastic.

Mouchette

[Marseilles],

June 17, 1858.

I have just had a lengthy session with our poor man who is ill. Though he is still sick, he is doing better. We agreed that he would resume the community’s exercises in common and that he will give as much edification as he possibly can. I am sending him back to you. Always receive this dear Brother C2 with great kindness and goodness.

God may perhaps give us the grace of calming down his spirit. He accepted my entire reasoning and agrees that it is his duty to observe the Rule.

1YENVEUX VI. 126.

2We have Father Mouchette’s notes on the scholastics for the months of May and June. The copyist has written “At this time there were 4 Brothers whose name began with the letter “C”: Cansillon, Carli, Constansin and Courbet. Father Mouchette especially complained about Carli.

1380. To Reverend Father Mouchette, moderator of the Oblates of M[ary] I[mmaculate], at Montolivet.1

1380:XII in Oblate Writings

Imminent visit to receive the profession of two Brothers.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Mouchette

St-Louis near Marseilles,

June 21, 1858.

Dear son, your wishes are orders for me and so on Monday I shall come to Montolivet and take part in everyone’s joy.

It has been a bit more difficult to arrange things in regard to the ceremony on the day of St. John the Baptist. I was already engaged to say Mass at the minor seminary and administer the sacrament of Confirmation there. I am writing to the superior that I shall indeed be coming to confirm his students, but that I shall have to say Mass elsewhere. According to this new arrangement, I will advance by one half hour my visit to the minor seminary. I cannot advance it further on account of the parents. From there I shall go to Montolivet where I shall say Mass for the profession of two Oblates.2 I shall take my dinner with you and later I shall go to confirm the students of the St. Thomas boarding school. In this way I shall reconcile everyone’s interest.

Goodbye, my dear son. I hold you to my heart and gladly give you my blessing as well as to your *ordinandi.*

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,

sup. gen.

P.S. I can hardly arrive at Montolivet before 8 o’clock.

1 Orig.: Rome. Postulation Archives. L. M.-Mouchetse.

2 Brothers J.-B. Gazard and J.-B. Bartes. Cf. Notes of Father Mouchette, May 1858.

86. [To Fr. Boisramé, master of novices at SicklinghalI].1

86:III in Oblate Writings

*Remarks about certain novices and advice about any candidate with a history of disordered sexual conduct.*

Boisramé

[Marseilles]

June *25,* 1858.

As usual, your letter has given me the utmost pleasure. This I look forward to each month even though, because of interruptions which are likely in my situation, I may not reply for some time.

As I note from the account you have made that you do not view your novitiate in a favourable light, it is to be hoped that your good instructions, your example and vigilance will improve the state of affairs and that we shall see these novices enter somewhat more into the spirit of their religious vocation, that especially of the militant Congregation we are.

You should have sent Brother [Mc Keever] away a long time ago. We are not bound by gratitude to the point of burdening the novitiate with a useless member who shows no sign of promise. What can be hoped from a man of his age and character? You must try to part good friends, that is all.

It surprises me that amongst your novices there are none of the sort who possess some talent; not one of them is passable. This is most unfortunate because even though virtue is preferable to talent, missionaries should not be without the latter. Do not overlook that they need to acquire all necessary knowledge and that this takes effort and goodwill... Let Bro. G[ibney] not neglect his studies - at the age of *25* it would be just as well he thinks of it! Let him reflect on all that he has to learn. At that age, one should learn Latin in two years.

About the ruling you ask me for, I admit to always having had an extreme repugnance to see any person who has unfortunately committed adultery or fornication entering, I do not mean only our Congregation, but the ecclesiastical state. What would this mean in the case, not of an isolated occurrence or unfortunate incident, but of a series of abominations spread over one, two or even more years.

As a general rule, I would say no. Not only because such conduct makes one unworthy of admission to this holy state but because it is much to be feared that the ministry would be an occasion for utterly deplorable relapses, given the new situation of a man used to the kind of acts which the chaste, God-fearing man has in rightful horror.

If someone had lived in this criminal state after having become an ecclesiastic, I would have no advice to give other than directing him towards the Trappe or the Chartreux. Never would I admit him to the Congregation.

If we had to do with a man of the world who had become neglectful as a result of straying from the practice of his religious duties and whose conversion was evidently the effect of the grace of God, his change of heart being such that not only he repented of his faults but had them in horror, thus giving grounds for hope that his past misconduct would become more of a preservative for him than a proneness to evil, if there were to be perceived in him a very energetic determination, an immense desire to repair the enormity of his sins by penance, zeal for the salvation of souls and an efficacious desire for his own sanctification, then I would leave it to a watchful and conscientious judge to pronounce on such dispositions when evaluated following an attentive and prolonged study of the person in question. For admission into a Congregation like ours, we must make sure by considering not only the good of the person but what use could he be to the Institute and how could he compensate for whatever is lacking to him in the matter of innocence and holiness of life before his conversion.

Bro. G[illigan] pleases me. You will easily be able with your usual kindness to encourage him to amend his rudeness which, after all, is only a fault of character and education which he will correct.

1 Ms. Yenveux VII suppl. 13, 17, 31; VIII, 18, 33, *55,* 68, 72, 176; B 2. A letter copied by Yenveux and of which only brief extracts are extant, without the possibility of identifying the novices as their names are omitted. Certain texts simply bear the date “June, 1858”, the sense of others is difficult to grasp, e.g.: “Do not be afraid to be suspicious” VII supp. 13; “Bro. O’Connell needs to be restrained. You did well to dispose of this irregular discipline” VIII, 55; “Be patient about Bro. O. It is a job of patience - that of novice master” VII suppl. 17; “Let Bro. M[urray] be careful about his affectivity. He must not let this tendency end in particular attachments, let him avoid that. Should the inclination be directed at a virtuous brother, it must be combatted”

250. [To Fr. Rouge, in Montreal].1

250:II in Oblate Writings

Mgr de Mazenod is a merciful father to his children, but does not grant a dispensation from vows to Fr. Rouge, who must rather, in the name of obedience, come to Marseilles.

Rouge

Marseilles,

July 8, 1858.

My dear Fr. Rouge, I have read with the greatest attention and the deepest possible affection the memorandum that you have sent me dated June 19. How can you have decided, my dear son, to thrust the dagger so far into the heart of him whom nonetheless you call several times your father? Are you not afraid of being unjust, in giving way to a resentment based on false suppositions, hearsay, and lying reports? If you love me as you say you do, should you have lived so long under the weight of a crushing preoccupation, and allowed me to remain ignorant of a suffering which it would have been so easy for me to alleviate? Can it be that a father would cease to love his child merely because he had something to reproach him for? What am I doing? If I had to repeat all the points in your memorandum, I would write a letter longer than the one you have written to me. So I will limit myself to telling you that, so far as I am concerned, there is nothing so true as the pain, sorrow and misery of seeing you in this state of exasperation which is setting you on a false road and exposing you to the danger of losing your soul. You know, my dear son, that I will never incur the blame of helping you to attain such terrible unhappiness. You ask me for a dispensation from your vows; you have committed a grave fault in deciding to follow this idea. Can it be that the undertakings that you made solemnly before God do not have to last as long as your life? Did you not take the oath, *usque ad mortem perseveraturum,* etc.?

And can one play with God and with what is most sacred, after the sacraments, in our holy religion? Was it because you saw apostates around you that you have been tempted to become one yourself? May God preserve you from that, my dear son! I have too much love for you in my heart, although you do me the outrage of doubting it, for me to wish you to assassinate yourself; I would be killing myself as well if I were to prevaricate in that way. Have I the power to grant you such a dispensation without canonically valid reasons? What would have become of us if it were enough to feel a certain discontent, to have come through one’s own fault to find the holy yoke of religion heavy, for one to wish to break the bonds that bind us to God in the Congregation to which the mercy of the Lord has called us, he who is the receiver of our vows and oaths, who has adopted us on the basis of those oaths and to whom we belong irrevocably? No, my dear son, it is not possible.

Your position has become difficult and disagreeable where you are, but there are ways of remedying that. The whole earth is ours, I might say, in a certain sense, that is to say that wherever there is a house of the Congregation, you will be at home; you will be at home and in your proper place above all, when you have come to see me, if that is necessary, so that you may come to know me better and receive from my own mouth the expression of my true feelings which you have misunderstood. Face to face with me, leaning on my paternal heart, you will be able to tell me whether I am not for you what I should be, that is to say, the most loving, affectionate, and let me say the most merciful, of fathers, for I have certainly things for which to forgive you.

Come then, my dear child, as soon as you can, to my side. This is not a simple invitation that I am making to you, but a command which I make to you in virtue of holy obedience. Set out as soon as you receive my letter, and make for Marseilles; I want to be the first person you see. So come directly to the episcopal palace or to the country, from where I am writing to you now. It is with me that you will be able to acclimatize yourself again in that part of the world which you left so long ago, and to regain your first fervor and all your good habits of life.

In expectation of the moment when I will embrace you, I send you my blessing.

1 Copy: Reg. letters 1855-1863, Rome, Arch. Post.: DM 10.

251. [To Mgr Bourget, Bishop of Montreal].1

251:II in Oblate Writings

Fr. Rouge should be refused entry into the diocese of Montreal if he leaves the Congregation. The sadness that the Fathers in Canada are causing; everywhere else the Oblates are good religious.

Bourget Bishop

Marseilles,

July 14, 1858.

Monseigneur,

Allow me to renew a correspondence with you that has too long been interrupted regarding the position of my family which I had placed under your fatherly protection when it pleased you to call them to be with you. It has often been in my mind to write to you for confirmation of the judgement that I had to make on many matters that were presenting themselves to me under a disturbing aspect. It seemed to me that distance had relaxed certain bonds which are never weakened without trouble ensuing. Hence the scandal of several apostasies, for that is the true nature of certain forced dispensations which have been made necessary by expulsion provoked by reprehensible conduct. What a great evil these apostasies are! But I have said to Mgr de Charbonnel and to Mgr Guigues himself that they were to a certain extent encouraged by the ease with which they have received these infidels into their dioceses. How I love the saintly Archbishop of Valence who one day called to his palace all the secularised monks that were in his diocese to tell them to go back to their monasteries. When several of them refused, imagining themselves secure because of the secularisation that they had extorted, he told them to go and seek their fortune elsewhere! And so I ask you, Monseigneur, to be so kind as to leave no hope to any of our subjects who, having fallen into laxity and blind to the value of the sacred undertakings that they had vowed for their whole lives and confirmed by oath, seek a dispensation which I cannot in conscience grant, not to give them any hope of being received in your diocese. What leads me to address this plea to you, I will tell you in all confidence, is the request that has been made by one of my subjects that I should grant him a dispensation from his vows. And why? Because he has lost the spirit of his state in life in occupations that are foreign to it and have absorbed him, making him a bad religious. I cannot grant him this dispensation without prevarication, and so I will not grant it. In response to this blameworthy request, I am sending to this subject an order under obedience, telling him to come back to me to renew his strength. Although the tone of my letter was fatherly throughout, I have reason to fear that this poor child may persist in the unhappy path on which he finds himself, and not obey my command, although it obliges under pain of mortal sin. Monseigneur, come to my aid and if this poor child turns to you to be admitted into your diocese, make him feel the enormity of his fault and encourage him not to fear to come and rest on the breast of his father. Do not mind his unjust complaints, for they are greatly exaggerated and most of them would fall back on him if one were to discuss them. Ah, Monseigneur, I say this with sorrow, profound sorrow: our Fathers in Canada are not like their brothers in Europe! In France and England they edify everybody, and I am unable to satisfy the requests of all the bishops who are asking for the help of some of them. I am surrounded by saints, quite literally, and God is everywhere blessing their holy ministry with the conversion and sanctification of souls. Peace reigns in all our communities, with mutual esteem and a respect for those whom God has appointed to govern others. What a difference in Canada! I would have to continue for too long if I were to tell you of all the sufferings that they cause me; a critical and independent spirit has established itself at Montreal, at the very least. It is terrible to see how they judge their superiors; I do not deny that there are some good subjects, but there are a few leaders who are spreading a very bad spirit, and it is one of those that I am recalling.

You know, Monseigneur, with what confidence I have dealt with you ever since the very beginning. Be so kind as to write to me giving me, quite plainly, your feelings on everything that you know concerning our Fathers. It is the house of Montreal and he who is leaving it that give me the greatest concern. If there are subjects who need to be recalled, I shall not shrink from doing it. What I fear is to send subjects into that atmosphere where more than one has lost the good spirit that he had when he arrived.

My dear Monseigneur, forgive this explosion of my heart, for you can recognise in this lack of self-control the man who has always identified with you, who has shared all your views, and who has never ceased to love you with all his heart.

+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Original: Montreal, Archiepiscopal Arch.: Oblates. This is the last letter that we have from the Founder to Mgr Bourget. He replied promptly to Mgr de Mazenod, whom he found ‘in great anxiety’. This letter of August 7, similarly the last that we know from the Bishop of Montreal to his colleague in Marseilles, is touching for its delicacy and kindness. The Bishop says that he does not accept secularised religious in his diocese, that Fr. Rouge has not asked him for anything, and that so far as he knows the Oblates in Canada have never even dreamed of breaking with Marseilles, a schism which he would not tolerate. “As for their conduct in the diocese”, continues the Bishop, “they are always as zealous as ever and God continues to bless their apostolic labors. Their unity with the priests of the area becomes ever more close and affectionate. This is also doing a great deal of good for the cause of religion. As for their relations with their religious superiors, I can say nothing about that, since it has nothing to do with me. I can however assure your Excellency that I never hear them complain against those who govern them, or complain of each other. Finally, I may be wrong, but it seems to me that the Oblates of Montreal have not lost the good spirit which may reign in the other houses of the Company, that they are attached to you as good children should be to so good a father, and that they are truly worthy of your fatherly tenderness.

“So I urge your Excellency to grant them the place that they have always had in your heart, by putting the best possible interpretation on anything in them that may have displeased you.”

252. [To Mgr Guigues, Provincial of Canada].1

252:II in Oblate Writings

Pamphlet from Fr. Rouge requesting dispensation from his vows. The bishops have too easily accepted unfaithful religious. Fr. Rouge foretells further departures from the Congregation.

Guigues

Marseilles,

July 16, 1858.

My dear Bishop, have I calculated well or badly? I was waiting to receive a new letter from you before writing myself. Now today I cannot wait any longer. I have to inform you that I have received what can only be called a pamphlet from Fr. Rouge which I have read very attentively, and which has obliged me to reply by return of post to send him an order recalling him to be with me. That is not what he was asking for. On the contrary, the conclusion of his long letter of 26 pages was a request for dispensation from his vows. Since, thanks be to God, I do not have a conscience as broad as those gentlemen who consider themselves authorised to ask for a dispensation when through infidelity to their duties they have come to feel distaste for their vocation, I have guarded myself carefully against giving way to so blameworthy a request. Disregarding, therefore, all the unworthy things that his memorandum contains, I have written a letter to him in a thoroughly fatherly tone to tell him of the order that I make to him under obedience to come to me. These poor children have so lost sight of their most binding obligations that I fear that he may refuse to obey an order which nevertheless obliges under pain of mortal sin. I have therefore written to the Bishop of Montreal to warn him against allowing this Father to entertain any hope of being received in his diocese. We would have fewer apostasies to regret if the Bishops, including yourself, had not made the mistake of offering refuge in their dioceses to men whom they should have sent back to their communities or cast out of their dioceses. I cited to Mgr Bourget the example of a saintly Archbishop of Valence who expelled from his diocese all the secularised monks who refused to return to their monasteries, although their secularisations were more legitimate than forced dispensations that have been provoked by misconduct on the part of subjects. Fr. Rouge tells me that he will not be the only one to leave the Congregation, which leads him to ask God to remove me from this world soon, to spare me the distress of seeing the Province of Canada go down into the grave before me. I am saying nothing of the pamphlet in which you have all been so fully criticised, of which I will tell you later.

I can see from this that a certain letter which was written to me and of which I informed Fr. Aubert of Montreal for him to pass it on to you was not as exaggerated as that Father imagined.

I am so busy that I am forced to stop there for the moment. I think our Fr. Aubert must have written to his brother. I will not seal my letter before I have seen him to discover whether he has anything to say to you.

I embrace you and I end here.

+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

Sup. Gen.

1 Copy: Reg. letters 1855-1863, Rome, Arch. Post.: DM 10.

1381. [To Father Bellon, at Bordeaux].1

1381:XII in Oblate Writings

The new tasks of Father Bellon are consistent with his tastes. Regrets that the Congregation does not yet have its own Annales and Necrology. Necrology.

Bellon

[Marseilles].

July 20, 1858.

I learned with pleasure that the tasks I have entrusted to you correspond to your taste and that you are meeting up with good material for edification in the persons whom you are to direct.2 They will benefit greatly from the zeal that you apply for their good. For myself, I fear that you are overburdened. Beware of overexerting yourself. Would one instruction a day not be sufficient? And these *Annales* which you undertook to edit, is this not a surplus of work you could have left to Mr. Noailles who is so much relieved because of all the things for which you have accepted responsibility? These Ladies are fortunate indeed to be better served than we are. It is the Congregation which needs you to busy yourself with its *Annales,* since you are suited for this kind of work. One of the things that sadden me is seeing the years flow by without leaving a trace of the marvellous things the Lord is working through the ministry of our men in all parts of the world. I am unable to bring our people to order on this point. And yet, that is what is done in all the other Congregations. The Jesuits especially do not fail in this. It is the same thing for the *Necrology!* How often have I not reminded people to concern themselves with it seriously! No one says “No!”, but everyone allows himself to be carried away by events. Since I am speaking to you about this, try to recall the things you remember and make some notes of all the deceased Fathers and Brothers with whom you have lived. If each one contributes to a common centre this tribute of fraternity, we could then compose an edifying work which would bring consolation to our souls, for people die very holy deaths in the Congregation. What a saint this dear Father Amisse who rose to Heaven after having, during his life and long illness, aroused the admiration of all who had the good fortune to be living with him! The life of Brother Camper is finished, we will soon be taking it to the printers. You will distribute it in your communities and will find food for their piety therein. What a good effect it will produce in the region which gave us this angel. who can be favorably compared to Aloysius Gonzaga, Berchmans and others of this kind!

1 YENVEUX IX. pp. 47~48\*.

2 The General Council on April 14th appointed Father Bellon as “the auxiliary of Mr. Noailles with the Association of the Holy Family”. Concerning the rank he occupied in she Congregation as the Superior General’s representative, cf. General Council of June 8th.

87. [To Fr. Noble in Scotland].1

87:III in Oblate Writings

Regrets that Fr. Noble does not write and give news of Scotland. Recollections of his visit. The fewness of vocations in spite of the regularity and zeal of the Oblates.

Noble

St Louis near Marseilles,

J[uly] 21, 1858.

Dear Father Noble, had I written to you each time I thought of doing so, you would have received a volume by now. But it is difficult for me to do what I like. Even today, which is set aside for the community of Montolivet to spend under my wing and for me to have the consolation of being chaplain of this dear family from six o’clock on and also interviewing most of them one after the other, I have had to write several business letters and thus find myself nearly having to postpone again the little talk I was longing to have with you.

I know, my dear son, that you once wrote me a very small letter. I received and read it with the greatest pleasure but why such restraint? You must have something to say about your interesting Scotland. You have already done much good even in Edinburgh. And you know I am insatiable for details of this sort. I take so much to heart the success of your ministry and the blessings that the good God sends upon your work.

What about the fine church that Mr. Hope is building for you? Has his generosity extended as far as adding a suitable house for the missionaries? I am truly happy to recall the few days I spent in your region, so interesting in regard to the true faith which is being planted there under your solicitude and zeal and thanks to the good example of the excellent families who will make this soil fertile with adorers of Jesus Christ in spirit and in truth. Indeed all my journeying in Scotland, England and Ireland left indelible impressions in my mind and heart. Just to consider the good done by our Congregation, is that not reason enough to fall on our knees and thank God? I sometimes transport myself in spirit into our different communities and I am seized with admiration as I embrace the past, present and future, and I would think I were dreaming if I did not well know that it is real, that I have seen these things with my eyes and that what exists now is a setting forth to what will come to pass later on. What is lacking is enough men to accomplish our mission.2 Some are being trained, I know, at Sicklinghall but it will take time for them to become active missionaries. I am surprised that in view of the immense good that our Congregation is doing in British countries in both worlds, not one priest comes from this so fertile Ireland to place himself under the banner of Mary Immaculate. They go to the Jesuits, the Lazarists, etc. Is this then because these Orders do more good than us? Would it be that fervent souls wanting to embrace the religious state find not enough regularity? But it seems to me that in general they have nothing to reproach us about. I see exemplary virtue in our men, devotedness without limit. What more do they ask? We cannot, we who are born yesterday, count on the celebrity of any religious ancestors of ours. But what does it matter if, by the grace of God, we present to view real evidence of regularity in our conduct, zeal for the salvation of souls, the spirit of obedience and sacrifice, in fact everything that makes the good religious? What would we not obtain if only there were more of us? If we do not do more, it is the fault of those who do not come to our aid.

Here comes Fr. Aubert, I leave him room to say something to you. I finish by embracing you with all my heart.

+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Orig. - Rome, Postulation arch. - L. M. Noble; Ms. Yenveux. VIII. 8.

2 The second sheet of this letter no longer exists and the rest is copied by Yenveux. The letter is also transcribed entirely in the Register of extracts of letters 1855-1863. p. 194.

1382. [To Father Tempier, at Montolivet].1

1382:XII in Oblate Writings

The Founder is obeying Father Tempier and taking a rest. Invitation to dinner. Father Chauviré will remain at Fréjus.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Tempier

St-Louis near Marseilles,

21 J[uly], 1858.

My dear Tempier, I bow before the prescriptions of my well-beloved admonitor and, as proof of my docility, I am pleased to inform him that yesterday I went to bed a little after ten o’clock and that I only got up this morning at half past five: this adds up to a total of seven hours in bed. I admit that I find that exorbitant, but I have humbly obeyed. I would, however, prefer to settle for six hours plus the promise to do all I can to take a fifteen-minute siesta during the day.

You would do a favor to my sister and to myself, dear Tempier, if you were to come to St-Louis on Saturday to have supper with us. Otherwise, there is no indulgence of Carmel for us and even, as you know, no communion for my sister. You won’t forget that dinner is at six o clock. You could warn the Oblates who come to you for confession that they come on the morning of your departure for the city. In any case, we shall plead the right of pre-emption.2

I received two letters from Father Vincens and one from Father Chauviré. The conversation Father Vincens had with the latter has certainly induced me to modify my decision. I will show you these documents and you will see with me that it is better that Father Chauviré return to Fréjus: his reputation and the honor of the Congregation demand it.3

Brother Bouquet is in a hurry to get back and so I conclude by embracing you.

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

1 Orig.: Rome. Postulation Archives. L. M.-Tempier.

2 The “right of pre-emption” had a number of precise meanings in the Middle Ages. e.g. a lord’s right to take back a manorial estate by reimbursing the buyer, priority right so buy a property. etc. Here the Founder wants to jest and is using the expression in a very broad sense: the right that he has, prior to the scholastics, on Father Tempier who has for a long time been his and his sisters’s confessor.

3The General Council on July 18th had decided so withdraw Father Chauviré from the major seminary of Fréjus. A seminarian had accused him of “inexcusable behaviour”.

1383. [To the newly professed].1

1383:XII in Oblate Writings

Congratulations. Greatness of the Marian and missionary vocation.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Newly professed

St-Louis near Marseilles,

July 24, 1858.

My dear sons, you are quite right to congratulate yourselves for the happiness you have experienced in consecrating yourselves to God in the Congregation which has Mary Immaculate as its Mother. This is a grace of predilection, a true guarantee of your predestination to eternal bliss. The saintly death of all those whom the Lord has harvested from our midst has proved this to date. But before going to Heaven, what good things you are called to do here on earth!

And so with great pleasure to rejoice at your vocation, convinced as I am of your constant fidelity to respond to this special grace of God’s mercy in your regard. My dear children, I leave you to consider how happy I am to be able to count you among the number of those whom the Lord has given me as sons in a family which is soldiering in the Church under the banner of Mary. In advance I calculate, so to speak, all the good that you will be able to do in the course of your life.

You will be enriched not only by these merits of your own, but, because of the solidarity within our family, you will be enriched by all that is meritorious accomplished in the works of your brothers in all parts of the world.

Goodbye, my dear sons, I bless you from the abundance of my father’s heart.

+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,

sup. gen.

1Orig.: Rome. Postulation Archives. L. M.-Oblats. We know only of Brother J. H. Zabel and perhaps Brother Constant Vallet who made their vows at N.-D. de l’Osier at the beginning of July.

1384. [To Father Rise, at Montet, Switzerland].1

1384:XII in Oblate Writings

A foundation in Switzerland is out of the question. News.

Rise

[St-Louis near Marseilles],

July 24, 1858.

My dear Father Bise, here I am at St-Louis to clean out, if possible, my portfolio. I am now coming to you who gave me the pleasure of writing me two letters. First, I congratulate you on the amelioration of your health. Even though I maintain that all healthy climates are good, nevertheless I understand that the satisfaction of seeing one’s native place influences morale, a factor that has so much power over our physical makeup.

As soon as I received your letters, I submitted to my Council the project you are proposing. One cannot deny that it is rather an attractive one. Still, we did think that accepting it would mean forgetting that it would be a matter of making a foundation in the revolutionary Switzerland, in a canton which, Catholic though it is, has chased out the Jesuits, Redemptorists and so many other religious communities and which would certainly not tolerate seeing them succeeded by another religious Congregation. Besides, how do we establish ourselves in someone else’s house? If the charitable person who is willing to give us hospitality were to die, what would become of us? How can we presume that even while alive this person can take on feeding and supporting the missionaries: these latter would not receive in their ministry in the parishes, which are usually quite poor, the resources to provide for their needs. All these considerations plus the shortage of personnel and the factor of distance have prevented my Council from giving a favorable vote to your proposal and I admit that I found it impossible to come to a different conclusion than they did. The region is not sufficiently at peace. The majority of the good has not sufficiently curbed the seditious minority: the latter have not given up hope of acceding to power, which they would use much more energetically than those did who managed them so carefully. Hence we risk to reawaken passions by our presence, a presence which would be denounced as a jesuitic attempt.

Then, my dear Father Bise. I had to add that we can hardly form a community made up of two Fathers only. What regularity can be observed in such a situation? What exercises corresponding to the Rule can be made in such a context? Such an isolation would be too harmful to the men concerned: if we had the men, we would be withdrawing them from the midst of a community where the Rule is being faithfully observed and we would be throwing them into a situation that is abnormal, so to speak.

Such are the conclusions of our deliberations which I communicate to you in all confidence. The time may perhaps come later when we can take up this project again with more hope of success. We must allow the good to gain more strength in the canton; among our ranks we will always find men of zeal and devotedness.

I don’t know if you have been informed of the saintly death of our dear Father Amisse and also of the edifying demise of a scholastic Brother.2 Thus the good Lord has been harvesting for Heaven in our little family. In the midst of our sorrow, it is consoling to foresee them as being among the Blessed.

Goodbye.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,

sup. gen.

1 Copy: Rome. Postulation Archives. Reg. des lestres 1855-1863, pp. 194-195.

2 Father P-J. Amisse passed away as N.-D. de l’Osier on July 7th and scholastic Brother J.-B. Baland died at Nancy on June 27th.

88. [To Fr. Robert Cooke, provincial of England].1

88:III in Oblate Writings

Congratulates him on the success of his missions. Fewness of vocations. Remove Fr. Hickey .from the novitiate. Fr. Bennett, superior of Sicklinghall. Plan to build at Dublin.

Cooke

[Marseilles]

July 30, 1858.

I had proposed to take advantage of the departure of two Fathers2, whom I am sending to Sicklinghall to perfect themselves in the English language and thence to proceed to our foreign missions, in order to address some words of remembrance to a number of our dear Fathers of England. But the desire that possessed them to go and say a last farewell to their families caused them to disappear at the moment I least expected and now I have only a few moments to get letters off to Paris where they are to meet before crossing over to you. I shall only have time to write to you and perhaps, if I am not disturbed, some lines to our good Father Arnoux.

I begin by congratulating you for the blessings that the good God has conferred upon your fine mission. I perceive it is causing several bishops to vie amongst themselves to get you into their dioceses but, dear Father Cooke, do not forget that you are not strong in health and you must make your physical resources last. You evidently tire yourself out in your missions. It would be enough, even if not too much, to preach once a day and rest on Saturday, the day accorded by the Rule for missionaries to look after themselves and see as well as confer with each other. If the good God touched the hearts of some fine young priests and they came to join you instead of going to try their prospects each on his own account in the foreign missions, you would not need to go and fetch from Scotland our Fathers sent to evangelize that country, but our novitiate sees nobody arriving and frankly the novices there at present do not strike me as offering a very reassuring future. They are quite backward in the matter of knowledge and very little advanced in respect of virtue. They would therefore greatly need not to be distracted from the good teaching and the spirit that the novice master tries to inculcate in them. Yet there is found at Sicklinghall a real drawback, as Father Master must have told you, in the presence of Fr. Hickey. The inconvenience is too considerable not to require prompt action. This Father is without doubt not bad but he is out of place in a novitiate. His health, he says, does not permit him to attend a single exercise of the community, apart from the evening prayer. That is already bad enough and would justify withdrawing him from the sight of the novices. But that is not all; he is always with the novices, which is quite contrary to our practice. If this were at least in order to edify them, but no; nothing edifying ever comes from his lips, rather he often talks politics and indulges in fooleries enough to make them roar with laughter. He even tells stories sometimes which are not in the least edifying. This is prodigiously harmful to the novices who are showing recalcitrance towards the rules and measures taken by Father Master, and are being supported in this by Fr. Hickey who does not scruple to blame the novice master and say they are right. This state of affairs has lasted too long. All I am deciding here is that Fr. Hickey must be immediately withdrawn from Sicklinghall. It is up to you to place him where you think best.

I feel as happy as ever about the choice we made of Fr. Bennett as superior at Sicklinghall. This good Father for whom I conceived a singular esteem when I saw him in Ireland and England has not deceived my hopes. I would wish to have many Englishmen of this type. One must hope the good God will send us some. Already we have to be thankful to the Lord for what we possess and the good account you are able to give me of all our communities overwhelms me with joy.

I note the promise you make to write me a little more often. Be convinced that you write marvellously well in French and that I have no greater pleasure than to read your letters. Only you must excuse me when I do not reply immediately, it is never my fault. At this moment, I have more than sixty letters on my desk. So my correspondents must have a little patience. I never delay when there is something urgent.

I desire as much as you to see the Dublin house constructed just as you have planned it but do not forget that we must not risk a second episode like that of Leeds. One must no doubt have confidence in Providence but one must not tempt it. We have applied to the Propagation of the Faith, we will see what they reply. If you are not allowed to take up a subscription, it would be sovereignly imprudent to want to proceed. It is vain to say that the money is on the way, I know it is held up at some point and while we wait, we do not know what will happen and are obliged to take desperate decisions.

You have never told me how is it that the Archbishop never speaks again about the parish he wanted to establish at Inchicore. You are in fact rendering a kind of parochial service without receiving revenues.

I see that it will not be possible for me to profit from this occasion to write to Fr. Arnoux. Pray tell him that I shall not defer doing so. In the meantime please give him a thousand affectionate assurances on my behalf as well as to all those of our Fathers who are with you. I bless them as well as yourself with all my heart.

+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles, Sup. Gen.

1 Copy in Reg. of letters 1855-1863, pp. 196-197. Rome, Postulation arch., DM X.

2 Fathers C. J. Louis Grandidier and L. Simonet. Cf. General Council. June 28.

89. [To Fr. Arnoux, superior at Inchicore].1

89:III in Oblate Writings

Success of the missions in Ireland. Put moderation into one’s activities and prudence in regard to constructions.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Arnoux

St. Louis, near Marseilles,

July 30, 1858.

I had renounced, my dear son, the idea of writing you at the time of our sending the two Fathers to Sicklinghall but now Fr. Aubert hopes to find them at Paris while they are making arrangements for the journey to England. Fr. Aubert has himself written and sent a Brother to bring my letter just as I was thinking there was no more time to write. I certainly would have been sorry to postpone again my reply to what you wrote me from Dublin on the 18th of this month. I will not have much time but no matter, you will at least see my goodwill and give me credit.

I have learnt with interest about the personnel of your house. All the persons who make it up interest me and here and now I express all my affection for them. I admire the zeal of dear Father Fox but I think he is wrong not to save some hours for study. That is to say, I am of your opinion. Were you to confess 48 hours a day, you still could not cope with all the demands. Anyway there has to be a limit to the exercise of zeal. It is more than enough during a mission to be entirely at the service of the people but within the precincts of our dwelling, all needs must be cared for - whatever concerns the missionary personally must not be neglected. As for the good Father Egan, it is all right for him not to preach if they cannot hear him, but not to confess, that is a little too much. This is a ministry than can be exercized at an age much more advanced than his.

It is too much to give four instructions in the retreats that you give to sisters. Why accustom them to such a programme? You end up by exhausting yourself without good reason.

I perceive you have done the impossible in your fine mission of St. Lawrence. All you tell me is admirable, astonishing. Even considering we are accustomed to being witnesses and instruments of the marvels of God in our missions! Who would have thought that in such a Catholic country you would have found so many unconfirmed Christians? For that matter, I meet with a similar surprise at Marseilles. I think the Archbishop of Dublin must have been impressed by the good that God has done through your ministry and must have congratulated himself for establishing the Oblates in his diocese and city. I hope that the good effect resulting from this news and the remembrance of what happened at the Augustinian’s and elsewhere will prompt…

I advise Father Provincial to obtain subscriptions before assuming the risk of building. The example of Leeds makes me tremble and I do not wish to be thrown a second time into the predicament which we thought we could never get out of and which left us quite mauled.

1 Orig. - Rome, Postulation arch. - L. M. Arnoux; Ms. Yenveux I, 44; II, 87;

2 The second sheet of this letter has disappeared but Yenveux gives an excerpt from it.

172.To Titular Bishop J. Novella of Patara.1

172:XIII in Oblate Writings

Qualities and conditions required for entrance to the Oblate novitiate.

Novella Bishop

Marseilles,

August 23, 1858.

Recalling your stop at Marseilles,2 it was with pleasure that I received your very fine letter of August 10. I am replying to it immediately.

I would gladly accept a good priest who is able to do ministry in the missions among non-believers. But how can I assess his worth at the distance that we are removed? The age of the man you speak of is a bit advanced, but if he has the required qualities, age is of little importance, even though it might be a hindrance in learning languages.

Since the Congregation of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate is an Order of Gospel workers, it is only right that, since they are to preach to others, they must be of impeccable conduct. A priest who had to expiate scandals in his conduct would not be suited for such a holy ministry. We are not looking for men with outstanding talents; nevertheless, they must be capable, well instructed, of good character, zealous for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. It would be fitting for the candidate to bring something with him, for the Congregation has no funds and is not rich. However, it places no conditions on this point. However, one must know that in the Congregation, after a year of novitiate we make perpetual vows of religion with a fourth row of perseverance.

With your experience, Your Lordship can judge if the priest in question has the required qualities for admittance. Question him, examine him: it would be too unfortunate if, after a costly trip, he would not be accepted because he lacked one of the conditions indispensable for his acceptance.

I can’t understand how this priest in his far-away province3 knew of our little Congregation, and how he had the thought of preferring it over so many other Congregations closer to him. I want to mention that he must bring with him all the certificates to prove his good conduct, his priestly character, etc.

Very revered Lord, I have now only to beg you to accept the homage of my respect with which I am your humble and very devoted servant.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Copy of the original ttalian, Rome. Postulation Archives DXM X: Register of Letters 1855-1861, p. 197.

2 Bishop Novella. O.F.M. Ref., had just recently returned from China where he had been Bishop.

3 According to the Register, this priest was from the neighhorhood of Naples. There does not seem to he any Italian priest who entered novitiate in 1858 or 1859.

1385. To Mister Fabre, vic. gen, and sup[erior] of the m[ajor] seminary, at Marseilles.1

1385:XII in Oblate Writings

Convokes him to St-Louis for a Council meeting.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Fabre

St-Louis near M[arseilles],

August 24, 1858.

My dear Father Fabre, I did not expect your request that I go to l’Osier. When one has available such an agreeable countryside as mine is, to which one can come and take a rest close to one’s father, it seems useless to look so far afield for this rest. Nevertheless, I do not forbid you from undertaking this journey; we have too much business on the table, however, for you to leave before it is taken care of. So, I am calling Father Tempier, Father Aubert and yourself for a rendezvous at St-Louis for Thursday.2 I would like you to be here for breakfast at 10 o’clock. Because of this, the Bishop of Ceramis3 would have to stay at Marseilles: he intends to go there tomorrow. If the Bishop cannot take part in the secretariat session, I would be satisfied if you came after you have finished with the secretariat. When we start doing our business too late, we cannot finish anything and everything remains at a standstill.

You won’t forget that tomorrow our titles will have to be presented at Bonnard. I wish you a good evening.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,

s.g.

1 Orig.: Rome. Postulation Archives. L. M.-Fabre.

2 Several important matters were treated in the General session of Thursday. August 26th: the reform of the school at Vico, personnel of the college of Bytown, project of a foundation at St-Die, advice for Father Boisramé, the novice master in England.

3 Jeancard, the auxiliary of the Bishop of Marseilles. He was ordained on October 28th.

1386. [To Father Fabre, at the Marseilles Major Seminary].1

1386:XII in Oblate Writings

Permission to go to N. - D. de l’Osier.

Fabre

[St-Louis near Marseilles],

August 28, 1858.

What does it matter, my dear friend, whether I grant a permission gladly or not: when it is granted, one must suppose that I had sufficient reasons to fight against my reluctance, which, after all, is based only on a principle of the general order that can admit exceptions. I assure you that the desire you have to make this trip is a sufficient motive for me to admit such an exception. So make your trip without any scruple.

1 YENVEUX III. *65.*

253. [To Fr. Gaudet in Brownsville].1

253:II in Oblate Writings

Convalescence of Fr. Gaudet. Request for details concerning Matamoros, Notre Dame du Refuge and San Antonio. Fr. Tabaret is in Europe and has obtained six Fathers for the college in Bytown. Salutations.

Gaudet

Marseilles,

August 28, 1858.

Your letter of the third of this month reached me today, the precise day of your feast. I at once fulfilled the errand that you gave me, although to tell the truth there was no need for it, since you are in my thoughts every day in my poor prayers at Mass and in the evening before the Blessed Sacrament. This time you gave me the opportunity to thank the good God for your recovery. I was very distressed to learn that you have been ill for so long. Have no scruple, my dear child, in ordering for yourself meals in accordance with your needs; nobody can take offence at that, for you would do the same for anybody else if he had need. Above all you must take care of yourself.

I approve of the arrangements that you have made for Matamoros. It is a perpetual mission with the aim of serving and converting souls. All that I would wish is that you should never leave a Father alone in this ministry; there must always be at least two together, and they must follow the Rule exactly, for otherwise a priest alone would grow stale and lose the habits of religious life. That is why I shall insist that they retain frequent contact with their community at Brownsville, that they go there to make their monthly retreat, and for direction with the Superior.

I would have liked you to have given me some information on what you call Notre Dame du Refuge. Is it a shrine? What are your plans? Would you prefer to establish yourselves later on at Monterey? I wish the Bishop of that diocese had come to Marseilles and spent a few days with me.2 He could have told me about any plans that he might have for us. In the meantime you have done very well in working for the salvation of the people of Matamoros and profiting from the good dispositions of the priest there,3 whom I am glad to see you do not regard as similar to his predecessor. You do not tell me anything about San Antonio, but it seems to me that that is a position that you covet. Could the Bishop do better than to give it to you? When will these good bishops realise that most of the priests and ecclesiastics whom they come looking for in Europe have no other vocation than the desire to gain money or make a position for themselves? That is what should have made up Mgr Odin’s mind to establish you at San Antonio. I see both from your letter of June 6 and from that of Fr. Parisot that this post would be very important for us. Would it not be a good idea to press the Bishop a little? The good that our two Fathers have done there in the six months that they have stayed there is proof of what could have been achieved through the ministry of our men.

You told me in your letter of the 6th that you hoped to be able to have the roof on your church by July. You do not tell me if in fact you have managed to establish yourselves there. It is a great step to take possession of the building; the fittings can be added gradually. It is the house that I would like to see soon in a state to receive you: it seems that with the funds that you have been promised you will be in a position to press well ahead with your work. Do not the Sisters still owe you something?

You have not been at all deceived in hearing that Fr. Tabaret has been sent to Europe to recruit subjects. He will return with a little colony, an immense sacrifice that I have had to make to save the college at Bytown from ruin.3 This is necessary, but you know the repugnance that I have always felt for this sort of establishment. One only has to read the primitive Rule. I gave way in the case of America because I was assured that it was necessary for the service of the Church in that country.

I would very much have liked to have written some lines to our dear Fathers, but you cannot imagine how busy I have become. Every day new business arises. Am I not going to be obliged to hold two ordinations consecutively in order to meet the needs of our missions? And nonetheless I have ordained 8 of our men to the priesthood at the end of the academic year. We are not equal to the immense amount of work that is being imposed on us, and when one thinks that it is France that has to meet all these needs, there is reason for disquiet. I cannot happily accept the fact that a country as Catholic as Canada does not provide subjects so as to be able to stop recruiting them in France. However, there are now four subjects whom I must send them. Happily, they are for Bytown. I would not have the courage to send them to Montreal, so greatly do I fear the bad spirit that reigns in that house. I have recalled from there Fr. Rouge, who I hope will soon be with me. There are also others who could well come to regain their strength in the bosom of their father whom they have too much forgotten. And still they accuse me of prejudice against them. God knows if I need to reproach myself for not loving them. I charge you expressly to say a thousand kind words to each and every one of our Fathers. I am always intending to write to them, but I have so many things to attend to that truly I often do not know which way to turn. At this very moment a young man of 19 years of age has come to disturb me. And I had only just been able, on September 16, to resume my letter to you begun on August 28.

And so I end in haste with a blessing for you all.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

S. G.

1 Copy: Reg. letters 1855-1863. Rome. Arch. Post.: DM 10.

2 Mgr T. Amat, Bishop of Monterey.

3 The Rev. E. Musquiz.

4 Fr. Tabaret left in the autumn with Frs. Tortel, Dedebant and Pian. Frs. R. Cooke and Charpenay rejoined them during the winter; cf. General Councils of August 26, September 6, November 20, and December 2 and 14, 1858.

173.[To Bishop Caverot of St-Dié].1

173:XIII in Oblate Writings

The Congregation, overwhelmed with debts, cannot make a foundation in the diocese of St-Die.

Caverot Bishop

Marseilles,

August 31, 1858.

There is not a single member of the Congregation of Oblates of Mary who would not consider himself happy to work for the sanctification of souls in your diocese. We have always experienced true sympathy2 for St-Die, a profound veneration and sincere attachment for its Bishop. It must be said, My Lord, that the desire to prove these sentiments by placing a dedicated community under your shepherd’s staff exerted a sort of fascination on good Father Vincens, so much so that he forgot that the Congregation is so overwhelmed with debts that it is impossible for it to undertake the least expense. A cry of alarm greeted the reading of Father Vincens’s first letter in my Council, because it is impossible for us to take out any new loans in the state to which we are reduced. Good Father Vincens ended up by recognizing that himself, and was obliged to cut back on promises which are very difficult to carry out.

Believe me, my Lord, that this inability to support your wishes is truly heart-breaking for me personally: I attach so much value to entrusting to your paternal kindness a portion of the family that the good Lord has given me.

My Lord, kindly accept my sincere regrets at the same time the homage of my deep respect and affectionate attachment.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Copy, Rome, Postulation Archives DMX: Register of Letters 1855-1861, pp. 197-198.

2 Register: and.

1387. [To Father Vincens, at Arras].1

1387:XII in Oblate Writings

He should give more details about his visit to Quimper and Arras. The Congregation is too indebted to make a foundation at St- Dié. Seminaries of Quimper, Arras and Romans. Jesuit behaviour at Valence. News from Canada.

Vincens

[Marseilles],

September 1, 1858.

My dear Father Vincens, I have just replied to the Bishop of StDié2 in a sense that corresponds with your own views. I expresssed to him our regret that we could not second him in his view and respond to your desire. What, dear Father, were you thinking of when you were on the verge of committing yourself to such an exorbitant expenditure? In a moment of fascination, you forgot what a state the Congregation’s finances were in. We have nothing else to do than to preserve the monuments of St-Die at our own expense! No one in the Council. moreover, was in favor of a project such as that which seduced you for an instant. Let us think no more about it. How come you gloss over so easily on your mission at Quimper? If ever a person expected some interesting details, it was for this occasion. That your retreat succeeded, that we knew in advance; but how many things could be mentioned about your relationship with this Clergy that the Bishop had described to us as so opposed to our Fathers. And wouldn’t we be curious to know the Bishop’s attitude and the topic of his conversations with you? How would you not have induced him to manifest at least some regret, if not to undertake a just reparation? What kind of an establishment is possible with such a man as bishop?3 Did you meet no one who was interested in us? Didn’t the Viscount4 tell you anything? You didn’t meet a single young man of good will whom you could direct to our novitiates? That is simply not possible! So why don’t you tell us these things, aware as you are how impatient we are to know all these things.

And now you are at Arras. Between one retreat and the next, set aside a few moments to inform us of what you have done and what you can hope for. You say that the Bishop5 is looking for a Congregation to which he could entrust his seminary. Why not apply for it? Is our adverse fate at Quimper so difficult to explain? I don’t think that the Bishop of Arras looks upon him as a great man. I know that he complained about him concerning his way of acting in the Great Academic Council. Being called to take on another seminary is something we would really need in order to restore our reputation and recover from the massive blows [we sustained] from Quimper and from Valence. At Valence, things have come to the stage of regrets. They [claim] they did not want to do any harm, but the documentary evidence exists. Even the Jesuits are looking for some excuse to downplay their infamous conduct. In the meantime, they have taken from the diocese three of the best men in the seminary into which they entered *perfas et nefas.* I am going to do two ordinations, one right after the other, and *extra tempora* to fill up the [number of] men we have to send to Canada.6 I give you the following as an item of good news: Father Rouge, moved, as they tell me, by the letter that I wrote him in reply to his pamphlet and request to leave the Congregation, has embarked to come and see me.7 Once he has arrived, I shall also summon Father Bernard and thus we shall weaken this centre of complaining and resistance that is doing so much harm in Canada .

Goodbye, I embrace and bless you with all my heart.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Copy: Rome. Postulation Archives. Reg. des lettres 1855-1863. p. 198.

2 Bishop Charles Jean Fillion was appointed to the see of St-Die on January 30.

3Bishop Nicolas Marie Sergent was Bishop of Quimper from 1855 to 1871.

4 Viscount de La Houssaye, priest, professor of moral theology at the seminary of Quimper and a friend of the Oblates.

5 Bishop Pierre Louis Parisis was Bishop of Langres from 1835 so 1851 and of Arras from 1851 to 1866.

6 At the time Father Tabaret left for Montreal with Fathers Torsel, Dédebant and Pian.

7 Father Rouge arrived in Marseilles in the beginning of September. Even though the Founder received him as a son, he did not persevere in the Congregation.

1387a. To Father Antoine in Canada1

1387 note:XII in Oblate Writings

L.J.C. et MI.

Antoine

St-Louis near Marseilles.

September 8, 1858

My dear Father Antoine. I lived the moment in which I had so let the excellent Fathers I am sending so Canada leave without giving them a few lines that are meant only for you. Matters proceed at such a pace here that there is no way of finding the moments of rest one would need in order to have the leisure to be with one’s own. To give you an example proving this, no later than yesterday when I had stayed in the city after the pontifical service of the previous day. I began my day by giving Confirmation... taken in my carriage and we came for supper in my country place where I can tell you he slept very well this last night. One has so be a father to understand the pleasure I experienced in seeing this dear son again; you will never comprehend the love that I bear for you. No matter how much trouble and even grief persons may give me, love always predominates. When one sees the elder son, one’s heart fills with joy, one has only sentiments of affection to express, there are no more reproaches so be made, one has so do violence to oneself so remember some wrongs. That, my dear child, is the kind of person I am, that is what I have just experienced. This tells you, my dear son, that in writing to you, I have only sentiments of affection so speak to you… I have been detained longer than I would have liked, it is so easy so come here from the city. And so I have only time so tell you again that I love you a great deal, so embrace and so bless you.

+ C. J. Eugene. Bishop of Marseilles.

sup. gen.

1 This letter was found in the General Archives after the publication of Letters so North America *(OBLATE WRITINGS* II). Only a few paragraphs of this letter - which is quite torn - remain.

1388. [To Father A. Rey, at Briançon].1

1388:XII in Oblate Writings

News. Authorization to settle family affairs.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Rey

Montolivet,

September 8, 1858.

My most dear son, I am answering you very briefly from Montolivet where I have come to ordain five of our men.2 We took advantage of our being together in this house to treat of the ever complicated affairs of the Congregation.3 So I cannot converse with you as I would have liked. The Fathers who are on their way to Canada are here waiting for my blessing: I give it with my whole being but also with great regret at seeing these excellent Fathers going so far away from me. The ordination this morning was a very moving family reunion. Had you been there, you would certainly have been as deeply moved as I was.

To pass quickly to your business. I give you every authorization you need to terminate your business,3 but do hurry. Goodbye.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles, s.g.

1 Orig.: Rome. Postulation Archives. L. M.-Rey. The person to whom this letter was addressed is not specified in the letter. Father Fabre filled up the three pages on which the Founder did not write. A number of details allow us to conclude that the letter was sent to Father Rey. professor at the seminary of Marseilles.

2 Ordained were Fathers J. S. Gallo. F. J. E. Bonnefoy. J. M. E. Pian. V. J. M. Piraud. B. Jean Dédebans.

3 The following matters were treated in the September 6th meeting of she General Council: study of the report on the novitiates, project of a foundation at St.- Did reform of she school at Vico, affairs of Canada and Oregon.

4 Authority to alienate his goods. Cf. L. Rey-Fabre. I and 7 September: Fabre so Rey. September 8.

254. [To Fr. R. Olivier in Texas].1

254:II in Oblate Writings

He must send a report on their activities with a view to preparing the Annals of the Congregation. The importance of the mission at Matamoros, Mgr de Mazenod is the oldest priest in the diocese and among the Oblates.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Olivier

St. Louis near Marseilles,

September 16, 1858.

My dear son, I have asked Fr. Gaudet to be so kind as to pass on to you from me a thousand tender expressions of affection, but since I am being allowed a moment of peace, I take advantage of it to tell you directly how much I love you.

I wish I could look forward to having enough time to write to each one of you individually, but I am quite certain that I will not have reached the bottom of this page before some busybody comes to disturb me. It is quite in vain that I have come to take refuge in the country, for Marseilles is so near and it is so easy to come here that I am continually at people’s mercy. What did I say? At the very moment when I was writing those words to you somebody knocked at the door. Fortunately it is one of our men, for otherwise I might have been angry. It is dear Fr. Balain who has come from La Blachère, where he has spent part of his vacation working for the salvation of souls. I took the opportunity to speak of nearly all of you, whom he knows. He was followed by Fr. Brun, then by Fr. Aubert, so that here we are *en famille* to busy ourselves concerning you. We have not forgotten Fr. de Lustrac; we spoke of your missions, while desiring that you should all send more detailed reports about them. Remember that all these reports are to be used to compose the Annals of the Congregation, and that meanwhile we are enchanted and edified to read them. So do not imagine that they would be a waste of time; find a few free moments to do this little piece of work for us. The Jesuits never fail to do this, and every four months they reproduce the various reports that they receive and distribute them to their different houses.

From what Fr. Parisot has said in his letter to me, how glad I would be to see you at San Antonio! The only thing that I am anxious about is that you should not undertake more work than you can manage. However, I was very glad to see that you are working at Matamoros. Untold good will be produced in a region that has been so scandalised by the conduct of the former priest of Matamoros by the presence of zealous religious who, living holy lives themselves, devote all their energies to the instruction and conversion of souls. My dear children, there is a magnificent mission there which will bring down on you and on us the most abundant divine blessing. I have come to Marseilles to finish my little letter, where we are going to perform our last duties for the good M. de Lander, who has come to the end of his long career. I have thus become the oldest priest in my diocese, just as I am the oldest priest in the Congregation since the death of the good and much lamented Fr. Mie. That means that I am coming near my own end; remember that before God.

I bless you with all my heart.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Copy made in 1892 by Fr. A Martinet, in the Register of Acts of Visitation of the residence of Roma in Texas.

90. [To Fr. Boisramé, master of novices at Sicklinghall].1

90:III in Oblate Writings

The excessive severity of Fr. Boisramé. Let him be mindful of the immaturity of young people and know how to encourage them by understanding and mildness. Fr. Hickey.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Boisramé

Marseilles,

September 30, 1858.

I am, dear Fr. Boisramé, behind with everybody. Time is really lacking to me to cope with a correspondence so extensive, in the midst of an immense population which exerts without mercy its right over every moment of the life of its Bishop. Yet I have been wanting to write to you for a long time. Your letter to which I wanted to reply was there on my desk; the great number of those which came after it each day did not make me lose sight of it. Today I seize and quickly deal with it so as not to subject it to the outrage of seeing others pass it by, supposedly because they are more pressing. Well, my dear Father, I hasten to say that I find you somewhat severe towards your novices.2 No doubt it is necessary, especially in England, to instil in them the spirit of mortification but one must not, however, go too far in putting them to the test. You will risk discouraging them and losing their confidence if, by your repeated acts, they can and actually become persuaded that you exaggerate. Truly it was too much to object to those who were parched with thirst that they slake it with a little water! It is you who tell me this. It is evident, I repeat, that you are much too severe. What you told me in your last letter about Bro. Murray proves this to me, as much as this demand of yours regarding the mortification of thirst. You ought not to refuse anyone who asks the permission to drink. Mortifications of this kind are not to be demanded. Such requests ought to come from the member himself when the good God inspires him and even then it is not always appropriate to permit them.

As for the trouble with Bro. Murray, you ought to limit yourself to observing it but take care not to rise from your place to go and verify it. You should act in a manner as not to take any notice except to profit from the first opportunity when close to him to joke a little about his fervour.

If by the exigencies in question you upset our novices, you will have to consider yourself much to blame. I tell you once more, the spirit of mortification should not be demanded but inspired, each one being allowed to follow his own initiative without any pressure. These are exaggerations which have given rise to the murmuring of which you complain. The murmuring is blameworthy, it is true, but you could have avoided it by being less demanding.

So change your ways, my dear friend, and you will arrive at your goal by condescension, mildness, thoughtfulness, marks of interest and affection. You know the proverb: more flies can be caught with honey than with vinegar. The novices must be persuaded that they have in you a father who truly loves them, who is concerned for their health and well being, who even knows how to diminish the severity of the Rule in view of their needs. Once this persuasion is established, you will obtain everything from them without seeming to try.

Permit yourself only rarely and for grave reasons to make public remonstrances. They are more apt to exasperate than to correct. Keep your reprimands, if it is suitable to make them, for a private interview and even then, make them with much mildness and care. Do not begin by scolding. On the contrary, begin always by assuring the person of the interest you take in his good and the sorrow you experience in being obliged to bring him to realize that he has conducted himself badly in such or such a circumstance. The human heart is made this way. God himself does not enter it by force but knocks at the door: *Praeb,. fili mi, cor tuum mihi.*

These, my dear son, are my replies to the questions you put to me. Do not be afraid to accept them and conform your conduct thereto.

I have asked Fr. Provincial several times to rid you of Fr. Hickey. I believe that he has trouble finding a replacement for the service of the parish. I fear that here again you exaggerate the evil. What harm is there in fact if this Father, who does not see well enough to read, takes the missal in his hands? The first rubric is to be able to read. If it is for this alone that you have not given him Masses to say, this motive is futile.

I revert to the content of your letters: if Bro. Murray is disaffected after having shown himself so attached to his vocation, this comes from your excessive severity.

As for the other brother who is continually depressed, etc., you must restore his courage by making friendly overtures to him. Persuade yourself that your combat is more with the demon who tempts all these young people in all sorts of ways than with the little difficulties that each of them have. Know how to perceive their imperfections as instigated by the evil spirit who wants to turn them away from their vocation and do not fall into the trap. All is won by hell if they become discouraged. So concede something to their weakness and do not wish to make perfect men of them before the time.

Adieu, my dear son, I unite myself to the fervour of your good retreat and bless you herewith with all my soul.

+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

P.S. Do not allow mortifications at table. Young people need to eat and the fare is not excessive.3

1 Orig. - Rome. Postulation arch. - L. M. Boisramé Prosper.

2 This counsel given to Fr. Boisramé was in consequence of a decision of the General Council’s session of Aug. 26, 1858: “Most Rev. Superior General communicated a letter he had just received from Rev. Fr. Boisramé, in charge of the novitiate in our province of England. According to the account rendered by this Father about the members who comprise this little family, the personnel is far from being satisfying in regard to either piety or talent. It is true that the details given by the master of novices to substantiate his judgments are somewhat too minute and reveal in him an excessive severity, an attitude that is too exacting and even a little narrow. The same remark has already been made in regard to the accounts given in previous months. In consequence the Council thinks it would be well if this young Father, still in the first fervours of the exercise of his functions, be warned to put more condescension and mildness in the direction of his novitiate and our Most Reverend Superior General has kindly undertaken to write him to this effect.”

3 These last lines were written in the margin of the first page.

255. [To Mgr Guigues, Provincial of Canada].1

255:II in Oblate Writings

The Founder has recalled from Canada certain Fathers who were setting a poor example, they have been replaced by 5 good subjects. When will Canada be self-supporting?

Guigues

Marseilles,

October 1858.

My very dear Bishop,

Quite by surprise, I find that time has caught up with me in such a way that I have only a few minutes to write to you if I wish to catch the post which leaves this evening to reach Liverpool the moment the boat leaves. I must explain this difficulty to you. I have had to write fifteen letters to send to the missionaries who have just left for Ceylon. I am at St. Louis, and Fr. Aubert sends me an urgent message to remind me that the fateful moment has arrived since it is night and the letter that I was planning to write to you has still to be put in this evening’s post.

You must have received my orders for the subjects of whom I am relieving you;2 my letter is for no eyes but your own. In exchange I am sending you some men of whom you will be able to make the best possible use. God knows what I have had to do to give you men of this quality. I have had to undo two important houses, a seminary and a novitiate, and to upset many people. These are not the men who are setting out, who on the contrary are admirable for their obedience and their devotion, but rather men who, with good reason, are annoyed by the choice which I have made to their detriment. I have brushed all considerations aside to satisfy you, but in the name of God I hope that people will be content and appreciate the sacrifices that I have had to make. Nothing is so tiring as to hear nothing but complaints and murmuring even when one is wearing oneself out to give satisfaction. We must not lose sight of the fact that we are still a young family in the Church, and that we are hardly able to do all the work that has come our way. If we were as old as the Jesuits and had as many subjects as they, be sure that we would not wait for you to implore us before we sent you some of them; but in our present state, we have to make a void elsewhere in order to supply you with subjects. When I think that I have only been able to send two subjects to the great mission in Ceylon, and that I am sending you five, while a Catholic country like Canada should be providing us with subjects in great numbers! Praise God! The express courier is coming to take my letter, and I conclude by expressing to you once again my tender affection.

P.S. I will compensate at another time for the brevity of this letter.

1 Copy: Reg. letters 1855-1863. Rome, Arch. Post.: DM 10. In the Register, the date is given simply as: October 1858.

2 Mgr de Mazenod writes to Fr. Vincens on this subject on August 1, 1858:

“I am sending you the good news that Fr. Rouge, touched, I am told, by the letter that I have written to him in reply to his pamphlet and his request to leave the Congregation, has embarked and is on his way to me. When he has arrived, I will also send Fr. Bernard the same order, and so we will weaken that centre of murmuring and opposition which is doing so much evil in Canada.” It has not been possible to discover what other Father was recalled later.

256. [To Mgr Grandin, Bishop-designate of Satala].1

256:II in Oblate Writings

The nomination of Fr. Grandin is God’s will; let him then come as soon as possible to be ordained bishop before the Founder dies. All rejoice at his nomination.

Grandin

[Marseilles,

October 1858].2

My dear son, I am always in great difficulties when I have to send a letter to you. Only Fr. Aubert can tell me how to proceed, and when he is not with me I lose courage. However, I wish you had received in time the invitation that I sent you to come to be consecrated by me as soon as possible. I was justly impatient to lay my hands on you, and I had reserved that consolation for myself by writing to Mgr Taché, while fully realising the sacrifice that I was asking him to make. And now I receive your letter of July 22 in reply to the one that I wrote to you to tell you of the choice that the Holy Father had made of you to be Coadjutor of Saint Boniface. Why, I asked myself, is it not he who comes to me instead of his letter? It would have been good if the boats that carried his letter had carried him, and you would not have lost that opportunity to come in answer to my call.

It is not a matter of blaming you, for you are definitely and rightly Bishop-elect of Satala and Coadjutor of Mgr Taché there is no question of going back on that, and even if you were to humiliate yourself again, I have, no regrets at having presented you to the Holy See. Certainly, in making you a bishop I have not lightened your burden, but I have fulfilled one of the duties of my position and made use of my right, of which all are well aware, and if there were anything that could cause me distaste and even disgust it would be to learn that there is anybody who does not applaud my decisions and who is so foolhardy as to have opinions and feelings other than my own.

Be reassured by the judgement of those who know you. You ought to be abashed in the sight of God by the unanimity of the expressions of approval, or, I might almost say, the transports of joy, of all your fellow-countrymen. Your former superiors and your classmates are delighted by your elevation. They all want to help to put together the clothes you will need as a bishop, and have gone so far as to ask something impossible of me, which is to have you consecrated in the country where you are now.

The mission will lose nothing by your journey to Europe. It will have nothing to pay to equip you. But this long delay irks me as well as them. I do wish I had not been made to run this risk at my age. This is something that should have been taken into consideration. I am 77 years old, and at this age can one promise oneself another year of life?

In order to punish you for only writing me a few lines, in spite of my urgings, and for not having given me any news of your work, which is truly unforgivable, I in my turn will write no more to you than these two pages. It is true that I have an excuse which you lack, which is that I have to write at the same time to a great number of our men. As I conclude, I beg you not to wait until I am dead before you obey my call.

I embrace you with all my heart and send you my blessing.

1 Copy: Reg. letters 1855-1863. Rome. Arch. Post.: DM 10.

2 This letter is undated in the Register, but is copied among the letters of the month of October 1858.

174.[To the Abbé Noailles at Bordeaux].1

174:XIII in Oblate Writings

Father Bellon’s character and qualities.

Noailles

Marseilles,

October 2, 1858.

Very dear and esteemed Father,

I don’t know how to explain the incredible delay in this reply to the fine, edifying letter that you had the kindness to write me during the course of my visits. I would fill up my paper if I were to set out all that could excuse me, but it is better that I start with business immediately.

To convince you of Father Bellon’s opinions either of you or of your holy work, I would have only to show you his letters. There is not a single one which does not prove his respect and confidence in you, his attachment, I might say his admiration for your work. He is heart and soul dedicated to it and you can rely on him as on another myself.

Consider his reserve only as an effect of his extreme modesty. Father Bellon is candor itself; he doesn’t even know the word for what you would call politics. He only lacks a bit in worldly ways since he has incessantly spent his innocent and holy life in the secret of God’s house and in seminaries. You will render him a service by initiating him with lessons from your experience on how to deal with people. He would not tend to suspect enough the malice or shrewdness of those whom he meets, for he doesn’t even suspect any evil.

I think as you do that, there being a house of his Order at Bordeaux, it is fitting that he live there; this does not hinder him from being able to stay temporarily at your place on certain occasions or when work demands it.

I have already been interrupted three times since I took up the pen to write you, now night has fallen and it is time to return to the city. Tomorrow I will be busy during the morning and in the evening with religious ceremonies in two churches. The day after tomorrow I must say Mass at the Capuchins and from there return to my community. So it is better that I finish my letter here rather than leave it three more days on the waiting-list. This is how it usually happens that I can never do anything that I would like. That is the situation in which God has placed me so I should not complain; but you do understand that it excuses me for not being punctual in my correspondence. Please excuse me then and accept, etc. ...

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Copy. Rome, Postulation Archives DM X: Register of Letters 1855-t86t, p. 200.

1389. [To Father de L’Hermite, at N.-D. de Clery].1

1389:XII in Oblate Writings

Booklet on N. - D. de Clery. Sending Father Richard. Importance of Missions. Life of Brother Camper. L’Univers.

L’Hermite

[Marseilles],

October 5, 1858.

In the whirlwind that is all around me, I am happy, my dear son, when an urgent reason determines me to do what I have been long thinking of doing and from which I am hindered by incessant business which diverts me therefrom. And so it is that today I leave aside everything else and will come to you, first to thank you for the lovely little gift you gave me of your little booklet on the shrine of Clery.2 I had already read, with the interest I give to everything that comes from you, the articles that you had published in *l’Univers.* Nevertheless, I reread this with renewed pleasure. You would have done well generously to make this same gift to all our houses; perhaps you have done so.

This letter will be brought to you by Father Richard who will be a member of your community. This Father possesses very good qualities and you can draw benefit therefrom; he is, however, a bit new in the ministry of the missions. I withdrew him from the seminary in Ajaccio, as he prefers to get initiated into the apostolic life. On this point, I recommend that you do not entirely dispense yourself from this precious work. It is the principal end of our vocation. I would not gladly see a superior of our communities abstain therefrom. Certainly, we must not attempt things that are beyond our strength, but, after measuring things and having oneself assisted in proportion to the need one perceives for the same, it is appropriate to engage in this combat, the more so because you know how to execute this duty very well.

Father Aubert must have told you what I think of the unfortunate quarrel people pick with you regarding *l’Univers.* It comes about all the more inopportunely in that I was counting on having you write an account in this newspaper of the life of our Brother Camper, which is under press, indeed, its printing is almost finished. I have not given up entrusting you with this task, but I am quite put out that you will not be able to sign it. Nevertheless, you have to yield to the inconceivable injunction laid upon you by the authority that you must respect and whose dissatisfaction, perhaps anger, you would arouse if you did not give in with good grace to its indications which you can consider as orders.

Concerns of economy in the distressful situation of the Congregation had led me to take the decision to prescribe that our houses subscribe only to the semi-daily edition; nevertheless. I do consider this newspaper - in spite of the wrongs for which I reproached it publicly when necessary as one that is useful to religion whose cause it ably defends. So what does one do? You cannot pit yourself against the Bishop of the diocese in which you are living at the head of one of our communities.3 You will have to bear this sort of violence in order to avoid a greater evil.

I fully expected to be disturbed before finishing my letter which has to leave today. I conclude, for people are here to discuss business. Let them give me at least the time to embrace you affectionately and to bless you and all our men. Remember me to the de Poterat family.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,

s.g.

1 Copy: Rome. Postulation Archives. Reg. des lestres 1855-1863. p. 201.

2 M. de L’Hermite. OMI. *Un pélerinage à N.-D. de Cléry,* Orleans, 1858. 106 pp.

3 The misunderstandings between Louis Veuillos and Bishop Dupanloup are famous. They were especially concerned with the role of the classics. Canon J. Leflon speaks of it in his work *Eugene de Mazenod…v*ol. 3. pp. 309 ff.

1390. [To Father Gondrand, at the chateau of Tournay in Normandy].1

1390:XII in Oblate Writings

Reasons for being late in answering a letter he received. Sadness at learning that Father Gondrand’s health is shattered. Authorization granted.

Gondrand

[Marseilles],

October 6, 1858.

My dear Father Gondrand, it is not my fault if I have not replied sooner to the letter that you sent to me quite a long time ago. I did not know to what address I should send my reply. I requested Father Aubert to ask Father Nicolas to inform us of your whereabouts. There was some delay in all this correspondence. In the meantime, your letter remained on my desk and hundreds of others got continually ahead of it. You are perhaps a bit anxious now, who knows, you may even be accusing me of indifference; I am, however, quite innocent and do not deserve any reproach.

I have since learned that you are in Normandy, I believe, and have thus proposed to write you. But you know how little master I am of my moments in the whirlwind in which I find myself, unceasingly impelled from one side to the other both by the demands of my diocese and by those of the Congregation. In short, here I am yours for some time which, I am sure, people will cut down, so accustomed have they become to giving me no rest.

Your letter, my dear son, certainly gave me pleasure in the sense that it was in some way an act of communion with me; yet, how much the account of your ills and miseries afflicted and saddened me! Thus, far from getting better as you had hoped [would result] from the kind of life you had requested to lead, you are yet more tired because of it and in some way exhausted; and yet I find you disposed to continue this work which is edging you to the wall! What can I tell you, except to urge you to take stock of your forces and not be determined to kill yourself! .

In view of the your deplorable state of health, I bless God that he has brought you to meet this charitable family2 which has accepted the holy mission of caring for your shattered health. It will receive the reward promised to those who receive a prophet in the Lord’s name, namely, the reward of a prophet himself.

May you derive, my dear son, from this noble and Christian hospitality all the good results that your good hosts expect therefrom. But I repeat: if, for example, your strength allows you to preach once, you are not to preach twice and then come down a dying man from the pulpit where you have utterly spent yourself.

I thought that when you left our communities I had given you an authorization equivalent to that which you request of me in your letter. With pleasure I forward you the testimonial that you would like. I shall draw it up in the sense that you have indicated to me, that I shall do without any problem at all. You know very well that I have never disavowed you, even in the cases where (at Lyon, by the Cardinal) your sermons were not applauded.

Goodbye, my dear son, I embrace you with all my heart and give you my fatherly blessing.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,

s.g.

1 Copy: Rome. Postulation Archives. Reg. des lestres 1855-1863. p. 201. On October 14. Father Gondrand replied: “I thank you very much, my Lord, for the good letter that your heart has recently written to me. Each of these fatherly favors strengthens my determination to remain ever worthy of you and of the rules of behaviour that you have so wisely given so your children.”

2 On this point. Father Gondrand replied on October 14: “My noble hosts have been very flattered and say they are very thankful for the several delicate words your letter includes in their regard. . . . I ask you for a special blessing for this family of St-Denys which has had fine ancestors and deserves fortunate descendants.”

1391. [To Father Tempier, in Switzerland].1

1391:XII in Oblate Writings

Happy to learn that Father Tempier had a good trip to Geneva and to Sion. illness of a scholastic and a seminarian. Preparations for the consecration of Bishop Jeancard.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Tempier

Marseilles,

October 15, 1858.

From the M[ajor] Seminary.

You know, dear Tempier, that I always worry when I know that you are away on a trip all alone. I was also quite impatiently waiting for the letter dated from Sion that I received from you yesterday. Your trip has been good, I thank God for that. You did not tell me what effect your ecclesiastical dress had on the people of Geneva as you crossed this alleged Rome of the Reformation.

I am not at all surprised at the fine welcome you received from the worthy Bishop of Sion. I charge you to present my respects and thanks to him, for I consider done to me the things that people do to you. Father Fabre, at whose desk I am writing this, asks me to tell you - and such is my view also - that you not be in a hurry to return. Since you are on the spot, carry out your business affairs, don’t allow the bad conditions of the region to affect you too easily. The main thing is to see clear in the matters before you and to know on what one can count. Your presence is more needed where you are now than here where you are being replaced in everything.

Today Father Fabre paid out the enormous sum of 14,000 francs.

The M[arquis]e du Plessis would like to buy M. Ancey’s chapel. Only the money is lacking, I believe.

We spoke of you this morning at the Carmelites where, as you know, I go in accordance with a foundation to say Mass on the feast day of their holy Mother to the detriment of our own holy Patron to whom I pay my dues tomorrow. 2

Everyone is well here, except the young Bonifaci who at Montolivet has several times vomited blood. This is another mourning that is in store for us, for what other can be the result of such repeated occurrences? I went to visit him as was fitting. His sheets had just been changed, but they were still wet with blood to such a degree that it caused pain just to see them.3

Father Fabre has this morning administered [the last rites] to Rizaucourt who will soon succumb to his sufferings. He could still last for several weeks, however.4

At the episcopal ordination we will have, besides the two assisting prelates, the Archbishops of Aix, Avignon and Tours.5 I thought it fitting to invite the Archbishop of Avignon, this pleases him very much.

Today I am urgently writing to the Bishop of Digne, but I have no hope that he will be able to come on account of the imminent feast of All Saints; besides, there is no railway on this route. Nevertheless, I thought I should make this act of courtesy towards this prelate. We shall be exactly fifty people at table. You can see that, when necessary, I can say: the plague on avarice.

So, enough for now. I did not resist the pleasure of chatting a little with you, no matter what business matters are crowding me. Goodbye until we meet again. In the meantime. I greet you with affection and bless you with all my heart. Father Fabre greets you.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles, s.g.

1 Orig.: Postulation Archives. L. M.-Tempier. Father Tempier was in Switzerland probably so examine the feasibility of making a foundation there as repeatedly requested by Father Bise.

2 St. Teresa and St. Cannas.

3 This Oblate died on November 17th.

4 F. A. E. Rizaucours, a deacon, died on November 14th.

5 As this ordination on October 28th were present the two assisting Bishops Jordany of Fréjus and Ginoulbiac of Grenoble, and the Archbishops of Aix, Avignon and Tours, namely. Their Lordships Chalandon. Debelay. and Guibert.

46. [To Bishop Étienne Semeria, in Jaffna].1

46:IV (Ceylon) in Oblate Writings

Departure of Frs. Mola and Lelons. The qualities of Fr. Mola.

Semeria

[Marseilles,

October 16, 1858].4

... The two missionaries allotted to you are about to leave; the third2 has fallen sick and his illness, which seems to affect the chest, does not allow me to run the risk of sending him to a climate such as yours. But one of the two is Fr. Mola whom you already know and who will be useful for your mission. You were already informed that he had come to the novitiate. He has spent a year there and greatly edified everyone. He did not expect to be sent back to Ceylon; apparently he would have preferred to remain in Europe, but he did not say a single word which might suggest the least repugnance. He has not even let me know personally that he would have preferred any other destination. On the contrary, he set to with a will and arranged everything necessary for the journey himself. I found him really admirable and in the contacts I have had with him he has seemed charming, altogether pleasant and full of good sense and reason. I was careful to say that you linked him a lot, that you had always given me a good report of him etc., and he assured me that he was very attached to you. I am going to write to Propaganda to let Cardinal Barnabo know that he belongs to our Order. I shall stress his good qualities and the edification he has given during his novitiate.

1 Semeria Journal, Batayron Copy, p. 353, Rome, OMI. General Archive.

2 This letter was carried by Frs. Mola and Lelons who left on October 16. Cf.:Semeria Journal, Batayron Copy, p. 353. Fr. Bruno Peillon had been chosen for Ceylon, cf.: General Council June 8 and 28 1858.

47. To Rev. Fr. Bonjean, missionary Oblate of M.I.1

47:IV (Ceylon) in Oblate Writings

The success of Fr. Bonjean’s ministry. He should put a limit to his zeal. The arrival in Ceylon of Fr. Mola.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Bonjean

Marseilles,

October 16, 1858.

I shall be brief, my dear Fr. Bonjean, because I have much to write, but no matter: it is enough for me to express to you in a few words the feelings which I hold so strongly for you. I bless God for your fidelity in replying to the grace of your vocation and all the good which has been brought about through your ministry in the family of the holy Immaculate Mother proves to you how much God is able to bring his call to fruition. The only thing which causes me concern is that I hear that you are tired. This proves that you must know how to place limits even on the most legitimate zeal. Never work beyond your strength; you have to last out for the great service that the Church expects from our Congregation and for the salvation of those poor souls that are so much abandoned in your beautiful island where infidelity and heresy still hold sway.

I am sending you an excellent auxiliary2. His experience and devotion will be of great value to your mission. I consider that you and he are the key workers in this great task and those I send after you will have only to follow in your footsteps. I can only be delighted for you in that you have as your head a Prelate such as our dear and beloved Bishop of Olympia. You must all work together to conserve him. His health is very feeble and his zeal is excessive. Make sure that you can restrain him, since we need him to live.

May you all be preserved also in order to continue to bring about the glory of God by working for the conversion of these poor souls which without you would not be saved.

I leave you, my dear Fr. Bonjean, with my blessing given from the very bottom of my heart.

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

S.G.

1 Photocopy of the original: Rome, Archive of the Postulation L. M-Bonjean.

2 Fr. Mola, a former missionary in Ceylon, who was returning there after completing his noviciate in France.

1392. [To Father Caille, at Autun].1

1392:XII in Oblate Writings

Concern for Father Soullier’s illness.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Caille

Marseilles,

October 27, 1858.

My dear Father Caille, I am writing to you from the major seminary on the first piece of paper I can lay my hands on in order to ask you for information about our dear patient. How come that after informing us of his serious illness you have left it at that? You can well imagine that from that time I haven’t been at ease and each day I expected to receive a letter from you keeping me informed about the condition of this dear man. It is even by chance that I learned of his illness. People were content with writing to Father Vincens, as though I am able to remain a foreigner to events of this kind, I who am so fondly attached to all of you. Since I received this terrible news I have not ceased asking God to keep this dearly loved son for us and to grant him relief. I violently support the fact that I am so far removed from him and that I cannot look after him myself or at least regularly visit him and console him by my presence. Please, Father Caille, do not delay any further to let me know what the situation is: I impatiently await more news from you. I take advantage from this sad occasion to assure you again of my affection.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles, s.g.

1 Orig.: Rome. Postulation Archives. L. M.-Caille. Father Caille had in July joined Father Soullier in the new community at Autun. Cf. L. Vandenberghe-Soullier. July 4, 1858.

257. [To Mgr Taché, Bishop of Saint Boniface] 1

257:II in Oblate Writings

Rapid growth of the population of Marseilles, and increase in the amount of work expected of its Bishop. Two more Oblates have died in Texas. One must be content with the subjects sent on missions, even if they are not all perfect. Mgr Grandin is awaited. Admission to vows. Request for reports by the Fathers on their work.

Taché

Marseilles,

November 15*,* 1858.

My very dear Bishop, you will never reproach me as much as I reproach myself for the delay in my correspondence with you. But you would excuse me kindly if I could tell you how many times I sigh after you and am turned away, I could not tell you how much, from expressing my feelings to you in writing as I would like. The fact is that the demands made on me become heavier every day. Imagine that our population has grown this year by thirty-five thousand souls, and that in the commune of Marseilles alone we are three hundred and fifty thousand souls. You can judge from that the increase of work in a country where activities, and in consequence the number of functions at which the Bishop must always appear, are on the increase. And this door, which must always be open, to the great detriment of my relaxation and free time! However, this makes no difference to the fact that I am very behind in writing to you, and yet I cannot help saying that this is not for lack of good will. Could you doubt that, my dear friend? Do you not know how much my heart is ceaselessly preoccupied with you personally and with the Fathers on your so difficult mission? One thing alone consoles me, and that is that at least you are all in good health in that climate and way of life that make me shiver, while our Texas mission has already eaten up five of our precious subjects, and at the very moment in which I write to you, I am still weighed down by the gravest fears for those who remain on the battlefield to fight the epidemic which is decimating that region. Fr. Gaudet himself has had an attack, and although he was able to write me two lines in Fr. Parisot’s letter which informed me of the death of Fr. de Lustrac and a brother, he was not yet recovered, and I have received no further letters since.

The last letter I have received from you is from the month of June. I have not the heart to reproach you, but in your solitude, in comparison with the position I am in, you will grant that I might well have said something.

Fr. Frain wrote to me in August. I would have liked to write him a few lines, but how can I reach him? I will put my little note in the same envelope as this letter to you. My dear friend, what would you like me to say to you on your observations regarding some of the missionaries that I send you? Perfection is not easy to find. Granted the great difficulty of finding men of good will who will give themselves to such enormously arduous work, I count myself lucky when one presents himself who, far from being frightened, desires to consecrate himself to it. So I take them as they are so long as I consider them virtuous and devoted. The wise thing for me and for you to do is to be content with them. Perhaps they do lack something, but they will acquire it with a little practice; good will aided by the help of God, will do much to bring this about. Do not let us demand the impossible.

I would have been very pleased, I will not pretend otherwise, if instead of receiving a letter from Mgr Grandin I had seen him arrive in person. Apart from the satisfaction which I claim for myself, I have told you that the mission would benefit from it, seeing the dispositions that people are in with regard to him in his own country and elsewhere. So when will you send him to me? Remember that you must think of my age and not tempt God.

Fr. Fabre does not accept your reproaches, and claims that he is in the right as far as you are concerned. There must therefore be some misunderstanding.

You have done well in receiving the vows of the Brother whom you have judged worthy of making them; in such a case, however, when the novitiate is over and you have asked for his admission, judging his good dispositions, and you have received this novice’s vows, he then becomes by his profession bound to the Congregation until the Superior General makes his reply; the Congregation is not bound except by the consent of the Superior General. Decide on your conduct according to these rules.

I missed the opportunity of the departure of the last Fathers whom I have sent to give a sign of life to all our missionaries in your Vicariate. I will try to remedy this lack little by little. The facts is that I am disturbed at every moment. Only yesterday I had to lay down my pen in order to preside at a commission for important matters in my diocese. At the moment when I am writing to you today, I have to leave to receive a religious profession, which will keep me all morning at the convent. It is like this every day. So I leave you, and I will try to finish my letter during the day.

One loses the thread of one’s thoughts with all these interruptions. But I would like to tell you that your letter of the month of March pleased me greatly because of the judgement that you make on each of our missionaries. This enables me to suggest very gently whatever is necessary, when I am able to write to them. What I still desire is to obtain some news of their work and yours. Such a report is required as a general rule, but it cannot be other than advantageous for your mission in the hearts of those of our men who are not afraid in the face of difficulties, provided that they lead to the conversion of souls. If you judge it opportune to recall your mission to the interest and attention of the faithful, you are the only person who can take the responsibility of making the facts known by showing the whereabouts of the places where you are working, etc.

Farewell, my dear Bishop; I press you to my heart, and bless all our Fathers.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Copy: Reg. letters 1855-1863, Rome. Arch. Post.: DM 10.

258. [To Frs. Maisonneuve and Tissot].1

258:II in Oblate Writings

Write more often. Their work is admirable. Fidelity to the Rule. All the Oblates in the world are united by prayer and in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. Success of Oblate activities everywhere. Three new missionaries sent. Canada should provide other subjects like Fr. Lacombe.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Maisonneuve and Tissot

Marseilles,

November 24, 1858.

My dear Fathers Maisonneuve and Tissot, could you not seize one of the feathers of those pretty birds which your skill in hunting enables you to catch in order to use it to give me some news? Can you imagine that I am indifferent to being deprived of news for so long? Then you must have quite forgotten what I have never ceased to be for you. You are doing wrong to take me as the pattern of your correspondence with me. You know that in my position it is quite impossible for me to send a letter in reply to every letter that I receive from the missionaries whose duty it is to keep in touch with me. It must be enough for you to be assured that I am never more happy than when I receive the letters of my dear children, but it would not be right to be severe with me because I have not made an exact reply to a letter that you have written to me. Your good hearts will tell you that I will count myself happy when I am able to write one letter to you for three of yours, and you will in fairness take account of my good will and accept that in place of the others. Furthermore, you have so many interesting things to tell me. The tiniest detail of your work transports me with joy. What you are doing is admirable in my eyes, since it is done by you who are my children and are acting with such high motives, so meritorious in the eyes of God. The only thing that I do recommend to you is not to neglect your holy Rule. However far away you are from the centre of the Congregation, remember that you must live the life of the family of which you are a part. It is a consolation at the ends of the earth, where you are, to think that you are living the same life as and in intimate communion with your brothers scattered over the entire surface of the globe. You are on the opposite side of the world from Ceylon - well, you have brothers there in union with you working for you just as you are working for them, who repeat every day the beautiful prayer: *Deus qui caritas es, da natis,* etc. *alterum alterius onera ex sincera dilectione portare,* etc.... *Servos tuos, Domine, congregatos in nomine tuo, et de uno pane participant es, da unanimes considerare invicem in provocationem caritatis et bonorum operum,* etc.... *Memento congregationis tuae quam possedisti ab initio. Oremus pro fratribus nostris absentibus. Salvos fac servos tuos,* etc.... We raise the same prayers to heaven, we are inspired by the same feelings. You are present to us just as if we could see you. Have we not a common meeting-place at the altar during the sacrifice and every time we place ourselves in the presence of Our Lord.

I need you to tell me that you are in good health despite the rigor of the climate in which you are living, and that you are repaid for your pains by the blessings that God showers on your ministry. Any news on this subject will charm me and edify all to whom I communicate it. Do not be afraid of being too detailed about such things. It is all of interest since it comes from you and conduces to the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

I was talking to you of your climate which makes me shiver when I think of it.... Well, it is a great consolation for me to see that you have endured it unharmed while I have the sadness of learning that Texas has just devoured two more of our men, a Father and a Brother, which makes five victims of that terrible climate. Like the first, these last have died, I know, like saints. It is always thus that men die in the Congregation, but if they reach heaven with colours flying, it is no less painful a loss for us, and I personally need you to pray for me so that I may obtain the grace of perfect resignation to such cruel sufferings. I would like to give you some happier news as I write to you. So I will tell you that the missions being given by our Fathers are innumerable and that everywhere God has heaped blessings on them. There is not one that has not had complete success through the grace of God. In England and even in Ceylon the method that we follow in France has been adopted, and the same fruits have been gathered. We are equal to the work, and even less to the requests that are made by many bishops to have missionaries in a fixed place in their dioceses. We have only yielded to the insistent and repeated requests of the Bishop of Autun who has provided a very convenient establishment for the Congregation. We must also stretch ourselves in order to gain subjects; Fr. Tissot’s Savoie is no longer providing anyone. And yet Switzerland, its neighbor, is calling for our help, of which it has a great need. I have sent you two more priests and a brother.25 If Canada, instead of draining us, were to see a few vocations coming to birth, it would be easier for me to come to your aid more powerfully, but in order to provide what in Canada they claimed was absolutely necessary for them to make any progress, I have had to undo one of our novitiates and one of our seminaries. Please God that another Canadian priest will be willing to follow the example of our dear Fr. Lacombe! How gladly I would welcome him!

I have resisted well the disturbances that have happened since I took up my pen to write to you; and now, see, I have come to the end of my piece of paper. I have only enough room to embrace you and to bless you.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Original: Winnipeg, Arch. OMI. Provincial House

2 Frs. C. Mestre and J. Moulin and an Irish brother; cf. General Council, June 8, 1858.

1393. [To Archbishop Guibert of Tours].1

1393:XII in Oblate Writings

Invitation to come each year for a rest at St-Louis. Bishop Jeancard. Archbishop’s skill in managing to obtain Government subsidies.

Guibert

Marseilles,

November 25*,* 1858.

My dear Archbishop, it will not be said that a letter from me will arrive in your postal package at Tours wherein I have not also added a few lines for yourself.2 Here we are back at our painful situation, an immense distance one from the other. One thing consoles me a little, however: you were able to see for yourself that the solitude of St-Louis could be a good place for you to stay, a place to which you could safely come and take some rest after the ceaseless work of your holy ministry. The canons grant you three months, I stipulate half as much in order not to suffer a refusal. This is something that I take for granted: you cannot refuse me such a thing in my old age. After my death you are free to go and look elsewhere for a just and proper relaxation from your ordinary tasks. You won’t be committing yourself for a long time: how long can one still live when one is almost 80 years of age? I must not, however, be thankless to God’s kindness, for he is keeping me in constant good health. I keep on going at my [usual pace]3 and if this keeps on, I do hope to be able to greet you in Tours this winter; but it will be to have you ratify your promise to come and spend your summer vacation with me at St-Louis as long as God gives me life here below.

The Bishop of Ceramis is getting accustomed to his new state. I persist in thinking that I did the proper thing in raising so worthy a man to this dignity and in keeping him close to me. He has a good spirit of adaptation and, taking everything into consideration, he is in his right place; and if God continues to give me good inspiration and to help me, neither he nor the Church will lose anything thereby.

I am pleased - and not at all surprised - to see that your matters are following the course which your skill has given them. You will soon be able to rest on your laurels. You and only you could have succeeded in such a complicated business. I will certainly need some of your talent when the matter of obtaining a few thousand francs for my auxiliary will arise; you will surely come to my assistance when I shall have to tackle this delicate matter. Daylight is gone and I can no longer see to pursue this conversation with you. I embrace you with all my heart.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Orig.: Rome. Postulation Archives. L. M.-Guibers.

2 Bishop Jeancard or the Secretary of the Bishopric had no doubt written so Tours in the Founder’s name so thank Archbishop Guibert for his presence in Marseilles on the occasion of the episcopal ordination of October 28.

3 In starting the second page. the Founder forgot to complete the sentence he had started on the first.

259. [To Fr. Faraud].1

259:II in Oblate Writings

Write more often. Where is Fr. Grollier? News of the Oblates in Texas, Ceylon and France. Many deaths.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Faraud

Marseilles,

November 26, 1858.

My dear Fr. Faraud, how can I reach you? I lose myself in this ice where I have no compass to guide me. However, I do want to prove to you that I am not dead yet, old though I am, and that I have not ceased to love you being on the earth, for I will love you as long as I live. But allow me to say to you, my dear child, that a letter from you from time to time, which would fill me with joy and consolation, would act as a guide for me to find you in this desert. I admit that you are not the only one culpable of a forgetfulness which my heart laments, but that only hurts me the more. Good Fr. Grollier, too, has given me no sign of life for a century. Is he with you or five hundred leagues away? I know nothing. I would like to remind him too of me. Oh no! You do not answer the love that I have for you, my dear children; you have so many reasons to explain to you the delay in the arrival of my letters, even if the only one were the difficulty of seizing the moment in order not to miss the only post for six months, with all the preoccupations that distract me so often from what I would rather be doing. But you, you know exactly when this post is due in the region where you live, and so why do you not take advantage of it to give me your news and to keep me in touch with what you are doing?

I have sent you a little help. If I did not have to fulfil so many needs at once, I would have tried to do more, but death has not spared other missions as it has, thanks be to God, spared yours. We have just lost our fifth subject in Texas, and may it please the Lord that the next post, which I am awaiting impatiently, will reassure me concerning the health of Fr. Gaudet, who was very ill.

In Ceylon, which is, as you know, your antipodes, we have lost three men. These are difficult gaps to fill, and yet we must make provision. I have also refused three Vicariates Apostolic for which Propaganda wanted to make us responsible. We cannot fulfil all our engagements. In France we cannot always refuse everything, because we need to stretch ourselves to attract subjects to feed our novitiates. What would become of us if we did not? It is with this in mind that we have set up an establishment in the diocese of Autun, a line we are casting into that part of France where we are unknown. Let us not however forget to pray unceasingly the *Dominum messis ut mittat operarios in vineam suam.* We must also pray to the good God that he will not take away from us those whom he sends us even when he finds them ripe for heaven. We have lost one after the other in two years five of our young Oblates, each more holy than the others. These are huge losses. Some of those would without doubt have come to you.

Farewell, my dear son; although I am far away from you I bless you and embrace you with all my heart.

+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

Sup. G.

1 Original: Rome, Arch. Post.: L. M-Faraud.

260. [To Fr. Gaudet, Superior at Brownsville]1

260:II in Oblate Writings

Cry of sorrow at the news of the death of Fr. de Lustrac and Bro. J. M. Garcias. Illness of Fr. Gaudet.

Gaudet

Marseilles,

November 26, 1858.

What a terrible blow, my dear children! I am not made for this sort of unhappiness, and I have the feeling that I will never get used to it. The loss of dear Fr. de Lustrac and the poor Brother was enough already, and now I will have to wait for your next letter under the crushing burden of the threat to the life of our good Fr. Gaudet. He was not even convalescent the day when he took the precaution of adding two lines in his own hand to the letter of Fr. Parisot to soften a little the blow which he knew would cause me a good deal of fear. But what has happened to him since then? Would you be so kind as to tell me by the first possible post? How long these days of waiting are going to seem to me! In the name of the good God, reassure me as soon as possible. Hours are like days for my heart, and days are like weeks.

Cruel Texas mission, what terrible wounds you are inflicting on my soul! This is the fifth victim that you devoured, and what has become, I repeat, of the sixth whom you have struck with such fierce blows? My God, forgive me this cry of anguish! I do not presume to murmur against the dispositions of your Providence, and I know, with an assurance that is more than confidence, that you only call to yourself those whom you take away from us in order to reward them with eternal happiness, but this heart, so sensitive, that you have given me, so loving, could it not be torn apart by so early a separation?

Moreover, how are we to fulfil the task that you have laid upon us if you take away to heaven the instruments that I use to gain glory for you and salvation for the souls whom you want to save through our ministry?

And you, my dear children, excuse my weakness; perhaps I should show myself more generous, and bear with greater courage the greatest of all trials that the good God could impose on me. It seems to me that it would cost me little if it were a matter that involved me alone, but I cannot help lamenting when those whom God has given me are taken away at the height of the battle, and I might even be tempted to say before their time, were that not an expression that would offend God, who is nonetheless, I confess, the master of our lives and of events; I would blame myself severely for my cry of pain if I had never been allowed to contemplate our divine Savior in the Garden of Olives asking his heavenly Father to take away from him the cup from which he was to drink.

Farewell, my dear children, and may the Lord Jesus Christ our Master guard and bless you. Amen.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

S. G.

1 Original: Rome, Arch. Post.: L. M-Gaudet.

62. To His Eminence the Cardinal Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide.1

62:V in Oblate Writings

Bishop de Mazenod left his sons in the unhealthy Vicariate of Jaffna in the hope of one day sending them to evangelise the whole island. They are working with success but many are sick. Copy of a letter which indicates Bishop Bravi’s opposition to the Oblates and his wish to organize the Vicariate of Colombo without their participation. The scandal to be caused in the island by the presence of two vicariates, one rich and the other very poor. Religious who leave for the missions by vocation are worth more than unattached priests who are often attracted by other than apostolic motives.

Propaganda Fide

Marseilles,

December 3, 1858.

CONFIDENTIAL

Your Eminence,

I availed myself of the same messenger to write to you about the affairs of the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition. This other letter concerns me in a direct way. I have always considered you as a friend who returns the same immense affection I feel for you and my cordial trust in you is too great not to address myself to you with an open heart, as we say in France.

On the basis of precise declarations that I could recall, I had always flattered myself that the day would come when the whole island of Ceylon would be entrusted to the zeal of the Congregation of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. I had to nourish that hope within me in order to endure with resignation the privations and the most arduous difficulties of the unfortunate vicariate of Jaffna. Three of our men have already died from their efforts and I can see others exhausted by the fatigue of those distant missions and the fevers of the unhealthy climate. It is true that their ministry is not like that of so many others who know how to do little and take it easy, it is truly an apostolic work. If the reports they send me, which make me cry with fondness and admiration, were shorter, I would send them to you for your edification and joy as Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda Fide.

It can be said that these missionaries really strive to propagate the faith. They consume their health and lives to win over souls to Jesus Christ and, with the grace of God, work wonders in conversions not only among the Catholics who have neglected their duty for so many years, but also among the heretics and pagans. That is the situation in the missions of Baticaloa, Tricomali, and others. If I were younger I would feel able to coming to Rome simply to meet with you in the greater interests of religion in the countries subject to your jurisdiction as representing the Head of the Church in those areas. Since I believe you are already of the same opinion, it would not be difficult for me to convince you as to the difference that exists between missionaries who go to the missions to create their own position and many to make a little money and then bide their time doing very little or nothing at all, and the other missionaries inspired solely by zeal for the salvation of souls, sent out by obedience and working for the glory of God with no personal gain. *Ex fructibus eorum cognoscetis eos.*2

I repeat that I had justifiably flattered myself to see the Oblate Congregation one day exercise its zeal in the two vicariates, which I would readily see reduced to one, both for the greater good which would have resulted, as well as for the possibility to transfer exhausted or sick subjects from the unhealthy vicariate of Jaffna to that of Colombo according to the needs of their health.

Instead! According to what I hear, the policy Bishop Bravi has bragged about so much has won the day! God knows if it is for the greater good of souls. An experienced missionary, who wrote to me from Alexandria, doesn’t think so and neither do I. Here is an excerpt from his letter: “In Alexandria, in the Convent of the Holy Land, I learned that the prelate Bishop Bravi had come from Rome to make his coadjutor and successor is Fr. Sillani from S. Stefano del Cacco. The good friar who spoke about him was convinced that he had already been consecrated. This fact convinces me that Bishop Bravi makes no mystery of his intentions and that perhaps Fr. Sillani does not speak about them in a less explicit fashion. A certain Fr. Cingolani passed through Alexandria on his way to Ceylon after an absence of a year and a half. His task was to find missionaries of any nation and color for the vicariate of Colombo, miserably bereft of evangelical workers. All of these circumstances lead me to a series of reflections which are neither the most encouraging nor the most pleasant. If the vicariate of the South is strengthened and consolidated in its present state, I am afraid that this dear island of Ceylon will present the Church with the spectacle of two Churches, diametrically opposed in their spirit and the principles upon which they are based. I am familiar with the spirit of those in the South and I fail to see how the contrast between the vicariates can bring about the glory of the Lord in anyway, except for what He can draw from the misery and perversity of men. For example, where will these poor and materially minded Indians assign importance when they see before them two Apostolic vicariates; one rich in all human resources, ablaze - pardon my use of the word - with external glory, proud of its programme and its advantages, and with what I would call an insulting smile on its lips for the other vicariate of the North which extends along the coast with long stretches both deserted and inhospitable, poor in all human resources and which by principle rejects all those advantages that could accrue from a less scrupulous programme, beautiful in its poverty and simplicity, but a hidden beauty which is most certainly pleasing to the angels but not apparent to these materialistic Indians. There is certainly something very consoling for us in all of this, but I cannot help but think that for a long time, for an indeterminate period of time the struggle of the Spirit of Christ against that other Spirit which is not of Christ will hold souls in suspense. For a long time to come, the true conquerors will assume the appearance of the conquered, and before the victory comes about there will be much to suffer. Patience is necessary, but many offences will be committed against the Lord, and that is not a matter for patience.”

What more can I say! My *conviction* remains unchangeable. I state it before God in all simplicity. For the good to be done for the conversion of souls there can be no comparison between a Congregation founded in the Church to that effect and for that need, and these improvised vocations of men who had never even considered that possibility before they were led to weigh the temporal advantages to be gained in terms of independence, profit, honors, etc. In fact, when did a Sylvestrian ever become a Sylvestrian to go to the missions among the infidels. If I am not mistaken, the Sylvestrians are a very small branch of Religious who, I learned in Rome, have very little to do and do very little. Once they reach the missions they no longer live like Religious, but like the others who are secular priests and, according to what I hear, not that fervent.

I do not forget that I am speaking in full confidence as a bishop to a Cardinal Prefect, and to no one else. I imagine that Bishop Bravi will soon be seen returning to Rome to rest upon his laurels. Someone should ask him how many conversions he has made. That is not important, he has been successful in his so-called policy. It remains to be seen if the Kingdom of Jesus Christ has progressed much in his vicariate.

Meanwhile, due to his abstinence in not wishing to call other Oblates besides the four he was obliged to accept by Propaganda Fide, I had to recall one Oblate who was an excellent subject when I sent him, but who suffered from the isolation. I have refrained from replacing him since I have received no request in that sense from the Vicar who apparently is not concerned about providing the missionaries with the means they require to remain fervent since he deprives my men of a companion who would be very useful to his confreres. Perhaps I am mistaken and I hope that I am, but I have ventured to speak to Your Eminence as I feel impelled to do so in full confidence and simplicity. It will be up to you to judge and take the necessary steps as required.

It is impossible to be brief when there is so much to be said. Nonetheless, I beg your pardon for the length of this letter.

Your forgiveness will be further proof of your kindness towards an old but most affectionate servant and friend.

+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Orig. Italian: Rome, Arch. of Pr. Fide, Scrit. rif. nei Cong., Indie Orientali. V. 16 (1857-1858). ff. 1172-1173.

2By their fruit you shall know them.

1394. [To Father Soullier, superior at Autun].1

1394:XII in Oblate Writings

Invites him to write more often, to inform him about his health and the apostolic work of the Fathers in Autun.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Soullier

Marseilles,

December 7, 1858.

If I were given the time to lament, my dear son, I would not have waited until today to draw your attention to the fact that a century has passed since you have last written to me. I would overlook your forgetfulness if it did not occur after a grave inconvenience, after an illness which we considered for some time to be dangerous. It is possible that you have given the Reverend Father Provincial news about yourself; since, however. I have not bequeathed to anyone the affection I bear you, I admit that my heart would have been grateful if you had thought to console it.

I would also have liked to learn some details about your new position and the ministry of our men in the new area they are evangelizing.

I shall not undertake to give you any news here: I have time only to remember myself to you and embrace you. It goes without saying that I bless you from the bottom of my heart.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Orig.: Rome. Postulation Archives. L. M.-Soullier.

261. [To Fr. Bermond, Visitor in Oregon].1

261:II in Oblate Writings

It will take some time before the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda accepts the idea of a Vicariate Apostolic entrusted to the Oblates in Vancouver. The General Council approves of the Visitor’s plans, but he must stay where he is; he will soon be named Vicar of the Missions.

Bermond

Marseilles,

December 20, 1858.

My dear friend, do you think that at Rome they move as fast as among your Indians? It does not take days or weeks or months, but years to arrive. See how long it took for the Congregation to decide about the Vicariate of Jaffnapatam. The suitability of the project was recognised, but the execution of it had to be waited for, and nevertheless it was approved in principle, and twice I happened to find myself on the spot to deal with the matter in person, a matter which I knew better than the one with which you are concerned. So be patient and do not be discouraged by inevitable delays. Here, there is no point in pretending that I will not have great difficulty in arguing, in writing, for the establishment of a new Vicariate Apostolic in an area where Propaganda is regretting having made too many bishops. I would have to be able to deal with the matter in person, face to face, to have any hope of success: now, you know that at the age of 77 years it would not be easy for me to undertake a journey like that to Rome. So we must be content with dealing with this matter officially by letter, as with any other business. I must admit too, for all that, that I have not enough documents to make out a good case for your proposal, and to combat the objections that will certainly be raised against me if I press the button too hard.

I have been able to introduce myself to begin with by the good will that we showed in accepting Propaganda’s invitation to us to come to the aid of the Bishop of Vancouver. I do not know whether you know that I had at first refused to undertake this mission because of lack of subjects. Now that you have arranged matters so that we are able to cooperate with Propaganda, I am making much of this kindness of ours, but to be allowed to leave the new Bishop to fight all alone while we set ourselves up somewhere else to work in our own way - you can see that this is not easy, and that we must not make our establishment in the region you have chosen depend on the success of the project you have proposed, although it is certainly a very good one.

This line of thought leads me to express to you my great satisfaction at the skill of your negotiation, and at the wisdom of your opinions in the course of action which you have chosen, which I sanction with all my authority. I hope you have not made the mistake of leaving your post before receiving my consent. The letter I have just received, which has decided me not to await a reply from Rome before writing to you, proves the necessity of your remaining still in the same place since my approval must be obtained for the agreement made with the Bishop of Vancouver and a decision must be made for the transferal of our establishment at St. Joseph in Olympia. I am very much inclined to agree with what you consider suitable and advantageous, but nobody has yet read your letter, to which I am beginning to reply in one of the rare moments of relaxation that I am allowed, and as you know, the matter of which it treats must be discussed in Council. (My relaxation has not been long, and I will resume later).

I come back to you before I have been able to make your letter known to my Council, which will have to give its consent for the abandonment and sale of St. Joseph; I wish to tell you more explicitly that I have not failed to write to Propaganda in the sense that you have indicated to me. The silence that the Cardinal Prefect has observed until now is one of the reasons for my delay in replying to you. However, I did not press the matter in Rome, since a later letter from you informed me that the frenzy of the gold-seekers, precisely in the area where you were wishing to establish yourselves, was preventing you from carrying out this plan for the moment. Now that you come back to the matter, I will make another attempt at Propaganda, but I am expecting to meet the objection that I mentioned to you at the beginning, that they have made too many bishops and dioceses in that region to be tempted to remove from the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Vancouver yet another part of the territory that belongs to him. But are they more likely to reply to me this time than last, in that system of caution and silent reserve that they observe? I do not dare to hope so, and even less so since the Cardinal Prefect has taken the trouble to send me the dispensation for age that I asked him for in the same letter as that in which I explained to him what you had told me with regard to the Vicariate of New Caledonia~~, without saying a single word to me on that matter. No matter, I will return to the attack so that I will have no reason to blame myself.

The letter that I have just received from you dated October 22 has given me the greatest pleasure, as usual, and all the information that you have given me has interested me infinitely, but I would only have liked you to explain to me how you have constituted the two establishments of which you speak to me, the one on the Island of Vancouver near Victoria, and the other on the bay, not with regard to persons, about whom you tell me, but with regard to material matters. Has the Bishop of Vancouver given you a place, or have you bought it? Are there any whites in that area? Does the one on the bay belong to us? Or are we under canvas there? And so on. You tell me also that we must keep some subjects in reserve in order to be able to introduce ourselves into New Caledonia, and that it is partly for that reason that you did not wish to adopt Fr. d’Herbomez’s plan. You are right a thousand times over. But if the time has come to move into New Caledonia this cannot be a small matter, and how is it that you can have even had the idea of withdrawing at such a decisive moment? Did not Fr. Aubert write to you also to tell you to guard against the idea of leaving that post before I had formally notified you of my intentions? You yourself are well aware, without vanity, that you have done well, and that I was not deceived in my expectations when I gave you this mission. I knew what I was doing, because I had the conscientiousness to know the value of the subjects whom the good God has placed under my government and because I have always done justice to you, whatever the prejudices that have hidden this from you. My pen is running away with me! Did you not go so far as to write and say that I did not love you? Me not love you? For me to say such things to you is the equivalent of assuring you that I have forgiven you the injury that you did to my heart. I shall stop there, since, among other things, I am obliged to go to a meeting of Frs. Tempier, Courtès, Vincens, Aubert and Fabre to read them your interesting letter and tell them of your agreement with the Bishop of Vancouver.

December 21, 47th anniversary of my priesthood. I have come back from the house of the Capuchins to celebrate the anniversary of my priestly ordination as is my custom, and so I will bring this letter to an end. Our Fathers, like myself, have given their approval to all that you are doing, but they do not think that the property of St. Joseph should be sold before an establishment has definitely been made elsewhere. It seems that the good Fr. Ricard has been very generous in kindly yielding a part of that property, which however had certainly been acquired for us. Can it be that nothing can be recovered from the other properties which passed into the possession of the Brothers3, and which at one time so turned their heads that it seemed that they must have thought of themselves as the owners? I have always thought that Fr. Ricard allowed things to develop too much of their own accord and that he had no economic sense in the management of temporal affairs, and, it seems, very little nerve in spiritual ones. Use your faculties as a superior to put matters in order everywhere, establish a regular system of accounting, and teach them what you rightly say they know nothing about, to conduct their missions more economically. It is much to be desired also that certain of our Fathers conduct them in a manner more in conformity with the spirit that ought to animate a religious, keeping clear of everything that might have an air of commerce or industrial speculation. It is for you who are on the spot and have all authority to correct abuses and to establish rules of conduct to set everything in order both in person and by writing.

After another interruption, I come to the conclusion of what I wished to propose to you. I can see that there are important projects that have only just begun, and you have given me indications of others which will clearly call for all the application of him who has conceived them. You have shown me difficulties that will arise and which cannot at all be solved by the indecisive character of that Father of ours whom you appointed to fill the breach. How can we hope for a successful outcome if you are not involved?... Therefore it seems to me that I could not do better than to invest you with a more lasting authority than that of Visitor, by naming you Vicar of our missions in Oregon. In this way I will be showing you the extent of the confidence that you inspire in me and of the satisfaction that I have felt with regard to your whole administration.... The post is about to leave, and I have only time to seal my letter. Next month I will send you the official document of your appointment, which will include the new administrative constitution of the Vicariate. My dear son, be sure to say a thousand affectionate things to all our Fathers in Oregon. I embrace them and bless both them and you with all my heart.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

Sup. Gen.

1 Copy: Reg. letters 1855-1863, Rome, Arch. Post.: DM 10.

2 Name given to Canada’s Pacific coastal region.

3 Brothers J. Surel and G. Janin

1395. [To Father Bellon, at Bordeaux].1

1395:XII in Oblate Writings

Wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Bellon

Marseilles,

December 23, 1858.

If I don’t … (I was interrupted for two hours). I most likely wanted to tell you, my dear Father Bellon, that I am ashamed for not yet having answered your last letters. (Another interruption).

Surely this time, dear Father Bellon, I shall finish my conversation with you. Our dear Father Audruger, who was to leave before Christmas, was kept back on business here in Marseilles. I have already given him two letters for you, and yours remained on the shelf. As this Father came in to receive my blessing before setting out on his way, I asked him to wait a moment so I can wish you a good Christmas feast and a good New Year. That is all I can manage at the moment. An incredible thing: at the very moment I am writing these lines, two people have come in and I have made them sit down so that I have the time to give you my deep affection and to express my regret that I am so pursued by some bad spirit who wants to prevent me from enjoying a few seconds of conversation with a cherished son who, for that matter, does not need me to repeat things in order to be convinced that he has all my affection.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Orig.: Rome. Postulation Archives. L. M.-Bellon.

175.[To Bishop Marguerye of Autun].1

175:XIII in Oblate Writings

Glad that the Oblates are doing well at Autun. Plan for a trip.

Marguerye Bishop

Marseilles,

December 26, 1858.

My Lord,

How your charming letter helped me spend a beautiful feast day! You can not tell me anything that gives me more pleasure than the news you had the kindness to give me of our missions. How much I thanked God for the blessings he showered on the ministry that you have entrusted to our dear Oblates. I rejoiced doubly for I understand the satisfaction experienced by your Bishop’s heart.

Our Fathers did not leave me uninformed of the goodness with which you console them and I certainly will not limit myself to thanking you only in writing: I want to do that by word of mouth. For that I will try to organize a short trip as far as Autun, should I have to go there from here in springtime, even though it would be easier for me to go there from Paris when I am convoked to the Senate. But at that time the Missionaries are giving Missions and it would pain me not to seem them while passing by so close to them. I would also like to express my gratitude to your clergy who, taking example from their Bishop, gave such a gracious welcome to those newcomers who were coming in the name of the Lord and the call of the Chief Shepherd to help and comfort them in their work. These friendly deeds witness to their good spirit and give honor to the direction given them by their leader. All those things delight me and give me strength, ancient and very old as I am, to undertake my planned trip to Autun.

Please accept, My Lord, along with my good wishes for the New Year, the homage of my affectionate devotion.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Copy. Rome, Postulation Archives DMX: Register of Letters 1855-186l, p. 213.

176.[To Bishop Marilley of Lausanne and Geneva].1

176:XIII in Oblate Writings

The Oblates accept to make a foundation at Montet.

Marilley Bishop

Marseilles,

December 30, 1858.

My Lord,

At the same time that I received your letter dated at the end of last month, I had just addressed one to Reverend Father Bise, the content of which solely centered around the matter that Your Grace officially proposed to me. Since my conclusion completely agrees with the views and wishes expressed in your letter, I think that Father Bise, who was aware of the interest you would attach to such a conclusion, will have already informed Your Grace about it. However, I did not thereby regard myself as being dispensed from writing to you myself in reply to the fine letter that you wrote to me to ask officially that several Missionaries of the Congregation of Oblates of Mary come to settle in the canton of Fribourg. I perceive, My Lord, that in the situation that the political troubles have created for the Catholic religion in Switzerland, you add a very special interest to provide for a certain portion of your diocese the help of apostolic laborers who might make up in some manner for the absence of active Religious Orders who have been forced to leave the canton of Fribourg because of persecution. Because I, for my part, want to support Your Grace’s concern, I am disposed, in spite of the great need that the Congregation has for men, to give you three to form a small establishment envisaged at Montet. I also agree that this establishment be formed according to the manner and conditions that you indicate in your letter and which Father Bise had already communicated to me. I must however point out to you, what I also told Father Bise, that this beginning of an establishment of Oblates of Mary in your diocese can only take place after Easter, a time in which the apostolic work of our Missionaries for the winter campaign shall have been concluded, when it will be easier for us to dispose of two men who are to serve as Father Bise’s companions.

I beg you to accept, along with my best wishes for the New Year, the homage of my deep respect and all my most affectionate regards.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1 Copy. Rome, Postulation Archives, DM X: Register of Letters 1855-1861, p.214.