1830

To Brother Pons at Marseilles[[1]](#footnote-1)

342:VII in Oblate Writings

Oblates are to take as their author in moral theology Blessed Alphonse of Liguori and not Concina.

Pons

[Marseilles]

January 28, 1830.

It was wrong of me, my dear Bro. Pons, to allow you to nourish yourself with Concina being, as you are, inclined to embrace opinions that are far too rigid. Concina will never be the author for our Congregation. Doctrinal uniformity being prescribed for us, we take it especially from the surest authors and prefer to derive from those whom the Church has recognized as having reached heaven a teaching quite contrary to that for which you have taken a liking. Liguori, Blessed Liguori, who is going to be canonized, has been adopted by us as the doctor with whom we ought to be more in agreement. The Jesuits and some other Congregations are still more exclusive than we; I am content for the moment with the term I have employed; so, my dear Bro. Pons, let Concina lie in the stacks of the library and take Liguori in order to temper the severity of the opinions that you have adopted too lightly. You can console yourself for this separation by the thought that you are advancing along the right path, by following in the footsteps of saints. I was hoping to tell you all this *viva voce;* but my conscience prompts me not to leave it until tomorrow, since I’m at fault in giving consent upon too little reflection.

Adieu, dear son, I bless you.

To Fr. Courtès at Aix[[2]](#footnote-2)

343:VII in Oblate Writings

The crosses of deceased Oblates are to be passed on to new brothers.

Courtès

[Marseilles]

March 8, 1830.

They must be passed on to the new Oblates who will profit from such a heritage. I wish to have proper care shown in this distribution.[[3]](#footnote-3)

... Fr. Capmas is working wonders in the Dauphiné.

To Fr. Courtès at Aix[[4]](#footnote-4)

344:VII in Oblate Writings

The cross of Fr. Arnoux must be given to a young Oblate. No exception will be made for anyone unless it be for those who work miracles.

Courtès

[Marseilles]

March 13, 1830.

As I read your modest plea regarding the cross of our Fr. Arnoux, I almost sided with your opinion, feeling that the reasons you gave were well founded, but to decide thus would occasion some inconvenience. We would in fact have to keep a forest of crosses in our houses for I hope, thanks to the goodness of God, that all those who die in the bosom of the Society will arrive in heaven laden with merits after having edified their brothers and dedicated their lives in the service of the Church and the sanctification of souls. Who will be judge of the degree of heroism to which one must attain in order to be preferred, supposing that we wish to grant this only to an excellence that is remarkable. Will these distinctions not have something odious about them in a Society of which all the members work to become saints in the exercise of the same ministry and the exact practice of the same Rules? I for one will not make any such discernment. I see miracles only as a reason for an exception. They will prove, not that those who do not work them are less saintly, or that they have lived less well or have died in the Lord to a less evident degree, but that God is pleased to manifest his glory through them, and so they ought to be distinguished amongst the other predestined who have entered heaven by the little door which opens more quietly or, to put it better, without a fanfare. Thus, up to present, I do not see that we have to make any exception to the Rule that I have established.

To Bishop A. Billiet of Saint-Jean de Maurienne, Savoy[[5]](#footnote-5)

73:XIII in Oblate Writings

Conditions for sending a copy of the Rules.

Billiet Bishop

[Marseilles],

April 17, 1830.

It is only right that you express the desire to know about our Rules. We can show them confidently, since we have them from the Head of the Church who commanded us to observe them by approving them with his praise and Apostolic Blessing. So, I am very willing to respond to your desire. I would only like to know from you whether the Abbé Favre has correctly interpreted your intentions, because we should make our Rules known only with very great prudence and when some good for the Church or the Congregation might result therefrom.[[6]](#footnote-6) If Your Lordship truly wishes to know them in order to settle on our Institute, that would quality; if on the contrary, you are only furthering a simple suggestion made to you without yourself being too concerned about it, that would be an indiscretion on my part. So, I beg you to give me your wishes directly.

To Fr. Guibert at Notre Dame du Laus[[7]](#footnote-7)

345:VII in Oblate Writings

Court sentence against Fr. Capmas. Submission to the will of God.

Guibert

[Marseilles]

May 22, 1830.

First, I rejoice, my dear Father, that you no longer spit blood. It is not surprising that so much agitation and anxiety have undermined your health. There is certainly much to be vexed about in seeing iniquity ready to pounce and hatred against religion and her ministers triumphing even over justice.[[8]](#footnote-8) However let us submit to these unfortunate circumstances and put our trust in God who permits only what is necessary they can never act beyond his will.

To Fr. Jeancard at Aix[[9]](#footnote-9)

346:VII in Oblate Writings

Fr. Jeancard will remain at Aix but he ought to busy himself according to his Oblate vocation.

Jeancard

[Marseilles]

June 4, 1830.

I was delighted to learn, my dear Fr. Jeancard, that your little apostolic journey was not detrimental to your health. I hope that it will have also been of great benefit to your soul. This should be the case regarding all we do dutifully if we know what is best for us. Our greatest repugnances would have no more effect on us than a dream, if we were quite determined not to harbour them despite a thousand pretexts likely to fill us with illusions but of no weight in the scales of religion, the same that will be held by an archangel on the day of Judgement. So let us perform well and even willingly all that the Rule or obedience prescribe to us. We are servants here below of God and of the Church. The steward of the Father of the family cannot always employ us according to our tastes, he has a more pressing duty to fulfil which is that of service itself. What does it matter after all that we do this or that, provided that we act on behalf of God in the sphere which is indicated to us by our superiors. Apart from all these supernatural considerations, which yet have their weight, one should know humanly speaking how to comport oneself and make virtue out of necessity. That is what all people of good sense do. I have seen soldiers who would not be keen on going to Algeria but they went as gaily as the others. A stay at Aix is not as torrid as in Africa and one is not exposed to cannon shot. Seriously one cannot commiserate easily with the fate of him who is wherever duty keeps him. So, dear friend, seeing that I cannot do other than leave you there, be intent on busying yourself with tasks that are in conformity with your vocation. Do not waste time gazing at the moon. Work, you have too much talent not to be gravely responsible for any inaction which nothing can justify in my eyes. Now that you are sufficiently refreshed by the little outing you have just had, get to work as if short of time, as indeed we are in this fleeting life, in the short span of which we have to fulfil our mission

To Bishop Billiet of Saint-Jean de Maurienne[[10]](#footnote-10)

74:XIII in Oblate Writings

Sending a copy of the Congregation’s Rules. Prudence in accepting new establishments.

Billiet, Bishop

[Marseilles],

June 7, 1830.

I ask Your Lordship as a favor to keep the book in your own hands. We would not be comfortable if it were available to anyone other than yourself. I take the liberty of asking that you return it once you have read it.

... On that occasion,[[11]](#footnote-11) I took the resolution never to rush the time of Providence and in the future to allow myself to be led quite gently by it, to let it speak twice, lest I not understand its adorable designs very well.

**To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles[[12]](#footnote-12)**

347:VII in Oblate Writings

Firmness in the direction of communities.

Tempier

[Notre Dame du Laus][[13]](#footnote-13)

July 11, 1830.

… We must never permit these concessions, they are allowed for a while and then we forget to maintain the precept and it is thus that abuses creep in.

**To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles.[[14]](#footnote-14)**

348:VII in Oblate Writings

Joy at learning of the conquest of Algeria.

Tempier

[Grenoble][[15]](#footnote-15)

July 15, 1830.

It is you who have apprised me of the splendid news about Algeria. I read your letter under a tree at Rambaud; I was moved by gratitude towards God, ecstatic with joy .... I admire the promptness of the resolutions of our very dear Bishop; he is always the first to make the right response.[[16]](#footnote-16)

To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles[[17]](#footnote-17)

349:VII in Oblate Writings

Visit to Geneva and Lausanne; reflections on the situation of the Catholic Church in Switzerland. Notre Dame du Laus. The desire to found a mission in Algeria. Marguerite-Marie Alacoque.

Tempier

Fribourg

July 26, 1830.

...We arrived very early in this capital of untruth. I can give you no idea of the painful impression that I felt. The sight of the Catholic Church where I hastened to go and adore Our Lord, only served to aggravate my anguish; the smallness of this church, in the centre of a city so remarkably well built, its apparent poverty in the midst of so many riches; the thought that the fine edifice of St. Peter is in the power of the heretics, everybody I met in the streets marked with the sign of heresy, all contributed to chill the soul and throw me into a deep sadness.

However, I did not wish to deprive myself of the consolation of saying Holy Mass in this land of infidels, and offered the Holy Sacrifice with intentions you can surmise; I avow it was not without some emotion for after all, to offer the holy victim on this boulevard of error, to adore Jesus Christ there, to raise him in the sight of so many rebels, and invoke on them his mercy or, failing that his justice, is worth while, especially when one thinks of the past centuries and the present disposition of minds. Nonetheless it would be impossible for me to live in such a place; we left as quickly as possible, continuing on our road. Nothing is as beautiful as the lake shore that we followed throughout its whole length in magnificent weather; we thus arrived at Lausanne where I wished to see the beautiful cathedral from which our brothers were expelled and which is the pride today of the Waldensians who have not even the monstrous belief of Calvin. What a spectacle is this vast and beautiful church, deserted, uninhabited, which no longer says anything to the soul, of which the majestic architecture is in contrast with the nudity of the sanctuary and the ignobility of the restaurant table which serves as an altar and is the sole object of exterior cult. There still remain however some tombs of bishops and even that of a Pope who seem to be there to protest against the sacrilegious invasion of this once so holy place, today so horribly profaned. What sorrow on leaving this great edifice to see the little church that they have built not far from there. Oh! how much one then feels this hard oppression! To see oneself chased away from a magnificent palace, and reduced to build a hovel compared to this beautiful church, and be obliged to keep silent and even to think oneself fortunate!

...There is no doubt that Fr. Guibert possesses better than anyone of his house the spirit of our vocation; he might have sinned in manner but in substance he is right. With only three days to spend in this community, I have had to act with a mixture of mildness and firmness.

... I beg you to say to Brother Ricard[[18]](#footnote-18) that his letter gave me the greatest pleasure; let him be at peace while awaiting God's good time. The Lord will manifest his will to us when it pleases him, we will try to aid his plans but I am alarmed at the smallness of our numbers when considering a colony.

...The Jesuits are counting much on the goodness of God in these circumstances. They are bringing to the tomb of the Lord's servant[[19]](#footnote-19) two of their desperately ill members in the hope they will be cured. I would wish this with all my heart for the sake of most holy devotion to the Sacred Heart.

To Fr. Guibert at Notre Dame du Laus[[20]](#footnote-20)

350:VII in Oblate Writings

Journey to Annecy and Geneva. Joy of arriving at Fribourg in a Catholic country. One must observe the Rule everywhere and practice charity.

Guibert

[Fribourg][[21]](#footnote-21)

July 29, 1830.

I had promised you, my dear Fr. Guibert, to send you news about myself when I had arrived at Fribourg. This is where I now am, since Thursday. Thanks be to God, we have not experienced any untoward incident en route and we have arrived safe and sound at the place of our destination. While going through Annecy, I did not forget to place you under the protection of St. Francis of Sales and of St. Jeanne de Chantal. I made plans so as to be able to say Holy Mass in the venerable sanctuary which contains their precious relics.

I also said Holy Mass in that city of Geneva, the boulevard of the heresy of Calvin, where a Catholic heart finds itself so ill at ease, so oppressed by all it sees and by all it meets. My first care was to go quickly to the church to adore Jesus Christ betrayed for so long a time and blasphemed in this den of apostasy.

I confess I experienced some consolation to find him in this hostile country and it seems to me that the homage I was inspired to give him was such that particularly elevated the soul and united it sweetly to God. I celebrated on the following day the holy mysteries in these sentiments and took pleasure in recognizing our divine Master as the sovereign Lord of all men, even those who rebel against his grace; but, no matter, it would be impossible for me to live in these regions where he is so generally disregarded. Also, my heart was gladdened at the sight of the first cross I perceived as I entered the canton of Fribourg. We recited with joy the *Vexilla* as if we had just found our compass once more. Yet we had journeyed only two days in this beautiful country ravaged by heresy.

It is on these occasions that one feels what it is to be Catholic and the full rapture of this veritable charity which unites us all to our common centre who is Jesus Christ, to whom be honour and glory in all places, at all times and for all eternity!

I am still grieved, my dear friend, by what I have seen at Notre Dame du Laus. May it be God's will that my exhortations have produced the effect that I have the right to expect. I hope that each will have told himself that he is rigorously obliged to observe our Rule strictly. Where would we be if we were only faithful to it in the houses that I can supervise myself? Once that is achieved, we will still be far from realizing the end that we propose; we must be filled with our spirit and live only by it. This is self-evident without it being necessary to explain it. Just as we have in a Society a common dress, common Rules, so must there be a common spirit which vivifies this particular body. The spirit of Bernardine is not that of the Jesuit. Ours also is our own. Those who have not grasped this, through not having made a good novitiate, are among us like dislocated members. They make the whole body suffer and are not themselves at ease. It is indispensable that they put themselves back in their place.

Charity is the pivot on which our whole existence turns. That which we ought to have for God makes us renounce the world and has vowed us to his glory by all manner of sacrifice, were it even to be our lives. It is in order to be worthy of this God to whom we are consecrated that we have vowed to renounce ourselves by obedience, riches by poverty, pleasures by chastity. I have no complaint about this last article. I have little to say about the second, but the first is not understood by certain individuals. Whence the disorders that I have had to deplore. Let us not cease to meditate on this point that is so important; that we are not religious by observing it as badly as we have up to now.

Charity for our neighbour is again an essential part of our spirit. We practice it first amongst us by loving each other as brothers, by considering our Society only as the most united family which exists on the earth, by rejoicing over the virtues, the talents and other qualities that our brothers possess just as much as if we possessed them ourselves, in bearing with mildness the little faults that some have not yet overcome, covering them over with the mantle of the most sincere charity, etc.; and as for the rest of mankind, in considering ourselves only as the servants of the Father of the family commanded to succour, to aid, to bring back his children by working to the utmost, in the midst of tribulations, of persecutions of every kind, without claiming any reward other than that which the Lord has promised to faithful servants who have worthily fulfilled their mission.

Regard the Rule as our code, the superiors as God, our brothers like our other selves. Let each judge himself, correct himself or otherwise regard himself as reprobate. The sentence seems severe but it is certain. Indeed I would give my life a thousand times in order that no one amongst us ever give the scandal of not being worthy of his vocation. To preserve ourselves from this misfortune: *Argue, obsecra, increpa, in omni patientia et doctrina. Deus pacis aptet vos in omnibus.[[22]](#footnote-22)*

The postal rates being very costly at the distance we are from each other, I pray you to share this letter in common with all your community. Have it sent subsequently at the first opportunity to Fr. Tempier. I embrace you all and commend myself to your prayers.

To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles[[23]](#footnote-23)

351:VII in Oblate Writings

Reflections on the occasion of his 49th birthday. Little talent or virtue among the members of the Congregation while St. Ignatius was surrounded by extraordinary men. Said Mass at the Jesuits and at the Redemptorists. Think no more of Algeria.

Tempier

[Fribourg]

August 1, 1830.

As you look at the date on this letter, you will recall my dear friend that I enter today into my forty-ninth year. I was busy yesterday, the whole day, with the thoughts that the circumstance of the end of my forty-eighth year brought to mind. I have groaned, as you can imagine, over a quantity of miseries; I thanked God for many graces, but I was saddened - and it is herein that I have been wrong - to find in my life as a whole a field more vast than that which I have traversed; I meant that it seems to me I have not really fulfilled my course. Is it my fault? Is it a question of time?

The director to whom I confided these regrets seemed persuaded that it is the fault of the times and the misfortune of circumstances. I then complained in a way to God for having given me more thoughts, more desires, more means, more will than strength. If, to be just, I agreed to admit to myself that I had habitually profited enough from the positions in which I have found myself to act, even with some courage, in the midst of obstacles of every kind, I felt rather annoyed in a way at not having been placed in another time, or in some other position where I could have discharged all the energy that was in me, and which wanes through being unsustained.

The great works of a saint like Charles Borromeo have always excited in my heart more satisfaction and joy than admiration. I did not utter it, for fear of pride. I did not dwell on this thought, but fundamentally I have never been able to ward it off, I have never been able to dispel from the depths of my being that in his place I would have done as much. Again yesterday, when the solemnity and length of the ceremonies of the Feast of St. Ignatius, at which they asked me to preside, and the circumstance of it being the last day of my forty-eighth year, aroused in me more devout thoughts and holy desires and allowed me also leisure to reflect under the aegis of Jesus Christ present and exposed, how deep into my soul I plunged! How many and diverse my feelings! I was happy at the altar as I offered the Holy Sacrifice for the Order of Jesuits without forgetting our own family. I congratulated their holy Founder for the marvels he had worked. But how great the help he received! There is nothing like it in our days. Though he had so many heretics and bad Christians as enemies, how mightily he was protected by most eminent Popes and Bishops! Seeing everything as lost in the Church they confided to his Order the fate of the Church: it was thus he obtained all.

But, let it be noted, by what men he was supported! From the first years of their coming together, it could be said of each of them that they did more than he did. I do not speak only of the first companions, I speak of all those who joined them as soon as they became known. It seems that all those zealous to defend the Church so horribly torn apart, who felt they had the ability to be useful to her and the virtue to devote themselves to this great task, flocked to the banner of Ignatius. His company was from the beginning an army of generals. Can we then be surprised at all they have done! I have just read, in twenty-four hours, the whole life of Fr. Canisius, one of these men whom I admire and whom I covet for our times. The emperors, the electors, the bishops betook him to themselves. He made seven journeys to Rome, where all that was good came together, with several other religious of his calibre who, without doubt, concurred with St. Ignatius for the success of all his projects. Can we look around us and see anything similar? We have to labour at training a few children who are mostly incapable of conceiving the great ideals which would raise them above their milieu. Not one of them has anything to give of his own, a stone to bring to the edifice that must be built by concerted effort. Wretched are these times and detestable is the influence of this age on minds! If any of them can produce anything, it is contrariwise and, instead of a soaring achievement attained by the acting in concert of several wills intent on the same goal, we have to watch the dampening and deadening of all the impulses of our souls by the carefulness, cautiousness and scheming we have to employ in their regard in order to utilize them at least in some mediocre sphere where such cold and feeble souls prefer to be.

I finished by asking God to take me out of this world if I am not to do anything more than I have done.

August 2.

I beg you, my dear friend, to burn the page which precedes.[[24]](#footnote-24) This outpouring is all right for you, from whom I have nothing to hide but were someone else to read it, he could interpret it badly and be persuaded that I little appreciate the brothers that God has given us while, quite certainly, there is a good number of them that I esteem. Some cannot be in doubt that while loving them, I would wish them to be other than they are since I do not cease to tell them so and I write to them when the occasion presents itself. For the rest, we must bless the good God for the hopes that we have in the future. The Blessed Alphonse de Liguori was not any more fortunate than we during his lifetime.

I said the Holy Mass, this morning, in a house of his Congregation. What is singular is that I am the only one today who has celebrated his feast. It is transferred to Sunday because of the Porziuncola which draws the faithful into the churches of the Franciscans. The beginnings are difficult from all appearances for everybody. The Liguorian Fathers were first situated in the Valsainte where they could not hold out because of the cold that prevailed. When the seminary of Fribourg was transferred into a wing of the boarding school, they bought the house and church which the seminary had abandoned. That is where they are, although badly lodged, because they rightly insisted on establishing themselves here. Their ministry is to confess in their little church and preach. Most of the Fathers fan out through the countryside to say Mass in the villages. A consequence is that they have their candidates ordained even before they have done their course of theology and the house of Fribourg is like our le Calvaire in regard to studies.

I will spend all day of next Sunday with this community, just as I spent that of Saturday with the Jesuits, on the occasion of the feast of St. Ignatius. They give me, both of them, a most edifying example.

... I see by the letter of Honorat that they are much too concerned with Algeria. Tell the two houses that that is enough. When the time comes, if indeed it comes, then we shall see. For now, let each mind his business, let each prepare for any eventuality by study and by piety and let them await without commotion and without care for the good God to show us his plans.

To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles[[25]](#footnote-25)

352:VII in Oblate Writings

Revolution at Paris, anxiety of the Founder.

Tempier

[Fribourg]

August 4, 1830.

You can understand, my dear friend, how impatiently I await news from you. You did not write on the 30th, the day, by my calculations, when you ought to have been informed of the events at Paris.[[26]](#footnote-26)

You were at fault, for you can imagine the extent of my anxiety after the rumours, increasingly exaggerated one after the other, during the three days that the courier failed to arrive. Yesterday at last, the *Constitutionnel* of the 31st informed us of the state of affairs, by what it said and by what it omitted. Some letters, addressed to Swiss families, whose heads are in the service of France, confirmed in part the accounts of the journalist. Now it remains to know what happened where you are. Whatever they may tell me here, if you think at Marseilles that it would be necessary that I return, you are to send for me. My ailment is not one of those that a change of air can cure; my heart left me rather tired during the course of yesterday; I am well otherwise.

To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles[[27]](#footnote-27)

353:VII in Oblate Writings

Anxiety; should he return to his post at Marseilles.

Tempier

[Fribourg]

August 9, 1830.

Is it conceivable that you have had the obduracy, in such times as we are traversing, to leave me without letters from July 27 to August 4! I told you, in my last letter, to let me know immediately whether my uncle would consider it wise that I return to his side. I repeat the same question; I am utterly out of my element here, being moreover of no use for anything or to anyone.

To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles[[28]](#footnote-28)

354:VII in Oblate Writings

Write three times a week. Praise for Fr. Tempier and Fr. Guibert who remained at their post; reproaches the Fathers at Nimes. Let the scholastics redouble their fervour and their application to study.

Tempier

[Fribourg]

August 13, 1830.

Unless, my dear friend, you may have written letters to me on the 20th, the 27th and August 4th, it is impossible not to be afflicted over your failure to send me news of yourselves of which I have such great need. I am tired of repeating that, in the grave circumstances in which you are, it would not be too much to write three times a week. You can imagine that I think only of you and that I feel here like a fish out of water.

I long for the moment when the doctors will decide that I am well enough to resume my ordinary occupations and share your work. Consult my regular doctor. I am at his orders. Those here are not sufficiently aware of my temperament; but abjure him not to be so concerned with my carcass as to overlook my duties which I cannot discharge here.

I approve your conduct entirely.[[29]](#footnote-29) I did not expect less of you. You have done what must be done. I wish I were able to give the same praise to those of whom you speak to me.[[30]](#footnote-30) Guibert has written to me and has not imitated them.[[31]](#footnote-31) Unless things have happened that you do not mention, I cannot conceive how the chaplain left his post.[[32]](#footnote-32) He did not do his duty in these circumstances; did he not have sick people to care for? That is where I would have remained - beside them. This good example would have done honour to his courage and to his ministry which is wholly one of charity. In the name of God, let none of this turmoil effect adversely the regularity of our people. Let them be concerned with these events only to the extent that is necessary for them not to be aloof from what is happening; but let their piety and the holy practices of their state not suffer the least detriment. On the contrary, may all redouble their fervour and their application to their duties. Maintain vigorously their studies; learning is an indispensable condition to be utilized wherever one may be.

Let them keep to the Rule more than ever; it is only thus that they will draw down the blessings of God on themselves and on others. Speak strongly on this subject to all. I put it to them as a matter of conscience. I see here only people who are regular and perfectly conformed to their state. Why should we not imitate them? All is good for them. *Domini est terra et plenitude ejus.[[33]](#footnote-33)*

...I embrace you and am very vexed to be at such a great distance from you, my uncle and all my friends; out of three thoughts, two and a half are for all of you.

August 14th.

I have been busy for several days looking for a country house. If I find something suitable, I will not let it slip from me.[[34]](#footnote-34)

To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles.[[35]](#footnote-35)

355:VII in Oblate Writings

Intends to buy a house in Switzerland to which the scholastics can be transferred.

Tempier

[Fribourg]

August 15, 1830.

...There is no other choice than to buy a country house or an old chateau which may not be too expensive.[[36]](#footnote-36) I have two in view; they are both situated at four or five leagues from here in the midst of a Catholic population. I regard it as very important to have a fixed establishment. Providence will guide us thereafter according to his adorable designs. In this house there should be some priests who could as need arises bring help to the country priests. They would do in the French region what the Liguorians do in the German area. It is only thus that they could make themselves appreciated. I would establish in the same place our students, for do not imagine that you will be able to keep them together in your sight.

It remains to know, now, if they would be offended here to see several priests living in community. I am going to quietly inform myself.

To Fr. Courtes at Aix[[37]](#footnote-37)

356:VII in Oblate Writings

Foundation in Switzerland. Let all be fervent and faithful to their duties.

Courtès

[Fribourg]

August 15, 1830.

I would have been gone quite a while from here had I not believed that Providence meant me to stay in order to find some means of preserving the family. Without being told to remain, I would have done nothing; could I have thought I was in my place? So little did I think so that I was afraid my absence might be a scandal for several people.

See to it firmly that each performs his duty punctually. It is especially in critical moments that one must be more fervent, more like men of God, irreproachable in every way. The extraordinary graces that one needs would not be granted to lukewarm souls, to earthly-minded men. This life is nothing for those who count on eternity; the essential is to please God, to accomplish his commandments and his counsels, to do in everything his holy will, however costly that may be to one's nature. Our vocation is to do good to everybody; when we will no longer be able to do it in one place, we will do it in another.

To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles[[38]](#footnote-38)

357:VII in Oblate Writings

The singing of the “Domine salvum fac regem”. Let Bishop Fortuné go and rest at Nice.

Tempier

[Fribourg]

August 19, 1830.

I quite expected the difficulty which would face you on the 15th in regard to singing the *Domine salvum fac.[[39]](#footnote-39)* I prefer the conclusion more than all the reasoning and (views of) authorities which preceded. Your council will certainly derive consequences therefrom which I would certainly not wish to adopt. I see in them the doctrine of the *de facto* government. All I ask is that they do not harass my uncle[[40]](#footnote-40) and if it irks him to accept the resolutions at which I foresee they will arrive, let him leave for Italy. It is not at his age that one can stand up to the struggles of the kind for which preparations are underway.

To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles[[41]](#footnote-41)

358:VII in Oblate Writings

If Bishop Fortune judges it opportune to submit himself to the usurping government, he can remain at Marseilles, if not it is better for him to leave.

Tempier

[Fribourg]

August 21, 1830.

I leave everything to Providence but reiterate my concern for my uncle. I think that it will be necessary for him to choose a course that depends on the opinion he will embrace. If he adopts the affirmative on his own initiative, there is no obstacle to his remaining; but if it is in the negative, I think that it would be as well that he leave as soon as possible, for how will he have the strength to bear all the consequences?

To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles[[42]](#footnote-42)

359:VII in Oblate Writings

Be resigned to the will of God in the present difficulties. Interior consolations.

Tempier

[Fribourg]

August 23, 1830.

I found, my dear friend, your letter of the 17th on my return from a short walk. Although I expect each day more bad news, when they arrive it is impossible to ward off a profound impression of sadness, especially when domestic sorrows come and pile themselves on top of the burden already too heavy to bear. I will say to you however that I am not discouraged and that I am afflicted without being laid low. It seems to me that Our Lord will help us by his grace to endure all our sorrows.

This morning, before communion, I dared to speak to this good Master with the same freedom that I would have had if I had had the happiness to live when he walked on earth, and if I had found myself in the same predicament. I said Mass in a particular chapel, I was not impeded by anyone's presence. I exposed to him our needs, asked his light and his assistance, and then I surrendered myself entirely to him, wishing absolutely nothing else than his holy will. I took communion in this disposition. As soon as I had taken the precious blood, it was impossible for me to withstand such an abundance of interior consolations that it was necessary, in spite of my efforts not to reveal before the brother servant what was going on in my soul, to utter sighs and shed such a quantity of tears that the corporal and the altar cloth were saturated. No painful thought provoked this explosion, on the contrary, I was well, I was happy and if I was not so miserable, I would believe that I was loving, that I was grateful. This state lasted quite a long time; it was prolonged during my thanksgiving, which I only shortened for a reason.

I concluded from this that our good Saviour had wished to give me proof that he accepted the sentiments that I had just expressed to him in the simplicity of my heart. I share with the same simplicity what has happened with you, for your own consolation and for your encouragement. Do not bring it up again to me, and continue to pray for me.

To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles[[43]](#footnote-43)

360:VII in Oblate Writings

Bishop Fortune de Mazenod ought to leave Marseilles as soon as possible.

Tempier

[Fribourg]

August 24, 1830.

According to the last thing you relate[[44]](#footnote-44) to me as having happened before the episcopal place, I would no longer stay in my palace; I would be out of there the following day. In no other place have they committed such violence. Here we have the Cardinal Archbishop of Besancon.[[45]](#footnote-45) I have seen one of his priests this very day who told me nothing of this sort happened to them. Once again, I do not think my uncle ought to stay in a house where they have proved to him that he is not the master.[[46]](#footnote-46)

To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles[[47]](#footnote-47)

361:VII in Oblate Writings

Insists that Bishop Fortune de Mazenod leave Marseilles.

Tempier

[Fribourg]

August 26, 1830.

I have intimated to you in several letters, my very dear friend, that my opinion would be that his Lordship depart for Italy in order not to be exposed to all the troubles that, at his very advanced age, could affect his morale to the point where his health would suffer considerably. I persist in having this opinion. Nice not being far he can very easily make the journey and its closeness would provide him the opportunity of not being a stranger to his diocese as long as the troubles last, and to return promptly as soon as his presence would be judged necessary. I insist on this project with all the more reason in that the same policy has been taken by a certain number of his colleagues who had less reason than he to decide on this wise means of reconciling several interests. The plausible motive that he could give would be the violence that they did to him the other day. His domicile was certainly violated when they forcibly did that which he refused several times to have done. This violence has not been exercised against anyone in all his diocese. How is it that it has been permitted in regard to him? Since they have treated him in such cavalier fashion in this instance, it is not difficult to foresee that they will not be more accommodating to him on further occasions. At his age, such shocks will not be felt with impunity; it is then only his natural right to avoid them by withdrawing for a time.

Remember that if he does not follow this advice, he will regret it. Sensible as he is, there is no other decision he could take, which will not disquiet him, perturb his mind more or less and have an adverse effect on his temperament.

To Bishop Billiet of Saint-Jean de Maurienne.[[48]](#footnote-48)

75:XIII in Oblate Writings

Wants to meet the Bishop. The Holy Father directed Father de Mazenod to continue his work.

Billiet, Bishop

[Fribourg],

September 1830.

I would have liked to consult you, for I am imbued with respect for and confidence in your person ... I drew near to your place convinced you were filled with God’s spirit; and since I want to be led only by that spirit, a grace I daily ask Our Lord for at the holy altar immediately before Communion, my sole desire has been to confer with you.[[49]](#footnote-49) I will try to make up for it in writing, but it isn’t the same thing.

Your Lordship has seen the directive that the Head of the Church has given me to continue my work, the expressions he uses are as touching as they are powerful.[[50]](#footnote-50) So, I must not neglect anything on my part to carry out the mission he gives me in confirmation of the one I had already received from his holy predecessor; it would seem purely and simply easier to establish several of our men at Nice to start working there.

To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles.[[51]](#footnote-51)

362:VII in Oblate Writings

Words of encouragement for Fr. Tempier in the difficult circumstances in which he is.

Tempier

[Fribourg]

September 2, 1830.

While my application is on its way towards Berne,[[52]](#footnote-52) my very dear friend, I come as is my wont to discourse several moments with you. Before speaking to you about business, I will encourage you in your trials and all the perplexities into which you are plunged by present events and by all those with whom you have dealings. It is precisely in such circumstances that one ought to make one's soul soar as high as it can go, sustaining its constancy and energy, multiplying all the resources of our intellectual faculties so as never to allow ourselves to be cast down by adversity, or overcome by the obstacles and difficulties. I know that our ministry of peace often presents painful difficulties because it is attached to all the duties of conscience, but God will communicate to us the light of his spirit if we invoke him with confidence. After all, tribulations are envisaged by Providence as a means of sanctification for the elect. Far from acquiescing to the tedium of life mingled with the bitterness of adversity, it is then that one must resolve to live in greater conformity with our divine model and serve his Church with the most perfect disinterestedness. A day spent in this disposition gains more merit for us in heaven than years in happiness and prosperity. I simply communicate to you the thoughts that are most familiar to me in the sorry position in which I find myself. They are true, let us not be convinced otherwise.

To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles.[[53]](#footnote-53)

363:VII in Oblate Writings

Profanation of mission crosses. Doctrines of Lamennais

Tempier

[Fribourg]

September 13, 1830.

Oh! how concerned I was at Mass this morning with all these profanations which have been done to the cross of our divine Saviour.[[54]](#footnote-54) The hairs on my head bristled on hearing of these infamies. It is worse than in the other revolution. Be it God's will that this may not draw down in response a comparable malediction on our unfortunate country! As for me, I would consider myself an accomplice of this sort of apostasy if I consented, as they have done in several places, to the removal of the adorable sign of our redemption. The Catholics by virtue of their beliefs have the right to raise up this cross, the worthy object of their adoration and no one can lawfully take it away from them. In my opinion, there is a greater scandal in the benevolent compromise between the civil and religious authorities whereby the image of Jesus Christ is clandestinely made to disappear from the midst of his people, than in the profanation perpetrated by a horde of evildoers who smash it to pieces. I doubt that they have had the courage to propose this odious confiscation at Marseilles, but I would not swear that it was the same at Aix. That is their affair, I have never given myself the right to vent my opinion in that region where, however, I am not a stranger. They tell me that the Messieurs of the seminary have adopted conciliatory opinions. They are men of very little merit in my eyes. It is possible that by dint of such illogic they may succeed in changing the accepted meaning of words; then this will be different but, in that eventuality, I would wish that they leave God aside and not implicate him disrespectfully in all these human vagaries and vicissitudes.

... If the doctrines of M. de Lamennais are the same as those avowed by his disciples, I renounce him completely.[[55]](#footnote-55) I am revolted by the trends of the *Memorial* and the *Revue.* Into what sort of principles do they want to drag the Catholics? As soon as our subscription is finished, cease to renew it. I do not look forward to anything better in their new journal for which they are circulating their prospectus.[[56]](#footnote-56)

Great God! Into what aberrations the human spirit sinks by dint of wishing to assimilate the most contrary theories! They finish by losing all reason.

To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles[[57]](#footnote-57)

364:VII in Oblate Writings

Purchase of the chateau of Billens. Description of the property.

Tempier

[Fribourg]

September 20, 1830.

...After many costly trips, for one does not travel gratuitously in this country, I have reached a decision and have concluded a very onerous transaction, but one which had to be undertaken if I did not wish to risk being left with nothing by way of a settlement. They have arrived at an advance agreement, save for my approbation, on one of the most agreeable dwellings of the canton. I have visited it and admit that I find it charming, both in regard to the site and the conveniences that go with it. It is at quite a short distance from a small town and within reach of a village. The view looks over a pretty plain towards foothills which rise to the high mountains of the Gruyere but at a distance far enough not to be oppressed by them. The house has a pretty garden in front; from the ground floor one reaches, by a charming path, a little wood in which a stream meanders. A greensward has been cleared in its shade with benches that invite walkers to sit and contemplate the beauties of nature.

Beyond is a fine stretch of grass where calmly browse the cows of the farm which is situated a short distance from the chateau. Over there is the barn for the cows, and that for horses, hay lofts, threshing floor, repair shop, chicken house, dairy and all the farming equipment. Shall I tell you what? Three wagons, a sleigh, an elegant carriage, for all these objects had to be included in the expensive sale which was imposed on me. You will realize there was no question of hesitating, and that I ratified the contract that had been drawn up to bind the seller.

The distance is not very great since the other day I left at half past five from our chateau and arrived at Fribourg at a quarter to nine. However they reckon six leagues. You can see that they are not the leagues of Provence.

To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles[[58]](#footnote-58)

365:VII in Oblate Writings

The Founder takes possession of Billens where everything is ready to receive the scholastic brothers.

Tempier

[Fribourg]

October 10, 1830.

It is today that I take possession of Billens. I went there the day before yesterday with my mother who remained to arrange a thousand details. I would wish we could settle in on the 15th, the feast of Saint Theresa and St. Cannat. Having signed the contract on the feast of Saint Defendant[[59]](#footnote-59), patron or at least saint of the diocese of Marseilles, I would be happy to enter the house on the day we celebrate the feast of another patron of Marseilles. There are many things to do but, for the moment, we will sleep on mattresses; the bed boards of pine only cost ten francs; they are small but very pretty ....

To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles[[60]](#footnote-60)

366:VII in Oblate Writings

Arrival of the scholastic brothers at Billens and blessing of the house.

Tempier

Billens

October 15, 1830.

Imbued with sweet emotions that the Lord never fails to produce in our souls when we try to approach him, I must not forget, my dear friend, that you are perhaps put out at the delay of my letters.

I had gone to Billens the day before yesterday to prepare the beds of our students. Despite any precautions we might have taken, it was necessary for them yesterday on arrival[[61]](#footnote-61) to sleep on the floor on mattresses I had had made to be placed on beds which had not yet been fabricated, for workmen in this country take things easily. Yet this did not prevent them from having a good sleep. This morning I blessed the house and chapel where I enshrined the Blessed Sacrament. Devotion seemed to me at its best and we gave Our Lord a welcome from the depths of our hearts. I have reason to believe that this good Master has well accepted our humble homage and has been pleased with our surrender and our confidence. For my part, I have been filled with consolation, and as I acknowledged myself to be unworthiest of all, I conclude that they must have amply shared in the happiness of this memorable day.

We placed ourselves under the special protection of our good Mother, of Saint Joseph, of Saint Cannat and Saint Theresa. After a short instruction fitting the occasion, I said Holy Mass; all took communion with great piety. We then had the benediction of the Most Holy Sacrament.

To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles[[62]](#footnote-62)

367:VII in Oblate Writings

His joy living with the scholastic brothers. The fare.

Tempier

[Fribourg]2

October 24, 1830.

I am still in ecstasy, my very dear friend, with the happiness which I have enjoyed during the nine days that I have spent with the family at Billens. I was deprived for such a long time of living thus with all these angels, whose worth I have experienced to the full. My presence was very agreeable to them and they never tired of assuring me thereof. I think also that it was useful to them for several reasons, if only to accustom them by my example to some indispensable privations, which are for that matter well worth it in exchange for all the advantages which are to be obtained in this agreeable dwelling.

The bread is of wheat and rye but very good; the quantity they eat is enormous. The people here, who eat little of it because it is dear and because their potatoes are excellent and make up for it, are astonished. Imagine that I have been obliged to have dough mixed twice in the same day. The wine is very bad in this country and very dear; the peasants likewise drink very little of it; they find themselves better off for this. The privation is not felt; besides it is too much in keeping with poverty for anyone to allow himself to regret it. When all the people of the area where one lives do not use a given thing, it would be unpardonable to regret it. At Billens, the water is of the best quality; everybody finds it good and is content with it; they take every day a copious and very good soup at lunch; it is the custom of the country; they have it likewise in the evening.

To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles[[63]](#footnote-63)

368:VII in Oblate Writings

Do not renew subscriptions to the “Memorial” and to “L'Avenir”. Several French bishops show trust in the pseudo-prophet Martin.

Tempier

[Billens]

October 26, 1830.

...When our subscriptions to the *Memorial* and to *L'Avenir* are expired, I do not wish them to be renewed. Write this to Notre Dame du Laus and to Aix.[[64]](#footnote-64) I am not in a mood to pay so dearly for the extravagances of the school of M. de Lamennais and I would be inconsolable should anyone amongst us be taken by these crazy notions. It is a great pity to see a man of his genius waste time writing newspaper articles in order to establish a ridiculous system which presumes that Catholics are in power in France while not even having a party, which indicates greedy men, who do not ask for better, to divest the clergy of its modest salary, and a very legitimate right, since it is only a feeble compensation for the immense goods that have been taken from them under the pretext of rendering them more independent, though they are made more dependent than ever, in that they no longer have any sustenance and no one will give them any. Much more could be said about this. Let him rather busy himself bringing to completion the works which Europe awaits with rightful impatience. Therein lies the vocation of this great man, and he is not responding to it.

... I indeed feel regret about the Bishop of Nancy[[65]](#footnote-65) and similarly the former Bishop of Strasbourg;[[66]](#footnote-66) they are both up to their necks in prophecies. Cardinal de Rohan is quite involved with them too, and Abbe Pferrin,[[67]](#footnote-67) with others of the Grand Almoners and I know not how many lay people; Count O'Mahony as much and more than they. When one talks with them, they speak thereof however with much calm, like people who believe themselves sure of their position. The Archangel said so to Martin;[[68]](#footnote-68) what more do you want? In the meantime, you have to swallow absurdities and, worse still, you have to put up with frightful calumnies which would put Louis XVIII, Charles X, the Dauphin maid, etc., in the class of the greatest scoundrels amongst men. No matter, Martin has said so; it is not to be doubted. I am, amongst all these people, the unbeliever *par excellence.* They offer excuses for me because I have neither seen nor heard; and I smile at their credulity. For the rest, we will not have to wait to see who is wrong because one of the prophecies already has to be fulfilled before the end of November. But this one, I believe, is not Martin's because everybody joins in the prediction of the future. Alas! good sense only makes us foresee things too much, without having recourse to good souls abused by their imagination, without believing in prophecies, for which I avow myself to be the most unbelieving of mortals.

To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles[[69]](#footnote-69)

369:VII in Oblate Writings

The Pope's decision concerning the pledge to be made to the new Government. Martin's prophecy.

Tempier

[Billens]

October 28, 1830.

Do not compromise yourselves further with the authorities of your country.[[70]](#footnote-70) If the Pope states that you can do something, you remain free to do it or not, but a bishop cannot forbid it. It is no dishonour to modify one's opinion when the head of the Church gives his instructions. If the decision of the Pope is what they have told me, my opinion is no one should give an order, but simply let this decision be known and abstain from forbidding what it authorizes. One must be consistent in one's positions. The Pope, doctor of the Church, has pronounced himself, let that suffice for our consciences. It is not a question, it is true, of a point of dogma. It is not therefore a question of infallibility, so each is free not to do it. But also, it is permitted to each to conform himself to the decision of the first authority there is on this earth! According to the charter, the oath can no longer be considered as something sacred; it is a formality that is required, a transitory promise meant only to last as long as this temporary state of affairs subsists. It is incontestably this our legislators intend, and with the principle of the sovereignty of the people, one cannot interpret it otherwise. It is all a question of agreement amongst men, especially as to what the terms are worth. You will agree with me how delicate the matter is; when conscience can be more facile than honour, one is often embarrassed; one must therefore not be precipitate.

... If I were to believe the prophecies of souls who meddle with reading the future, I would tell you that after two years, but in less than three, of troubles and frightful disorders, calm will return. The famous Martin has said so; but you know my little faith for all that is not revealed in Holy Scripture. That Martin has said so is indubitable; that it will happen is to be seen.[[71]](#footnote-71)

To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles[[72]](#footnote-72)

370:VII in Oblate Writings

Feast of All Saints at Billens. Fervour of the community.

Tempier

Billens

November 1, 1830.

I will not get much done on my letter today, my very dear friend, for I can only employ the time of the family supper which is even somewhat advanced, but it would cost me too much not to discourse a few moments with you on such a beautiful day when our angels have been so fervent and have crowned their holy retreat in the most touching manner, especially in present circumstances. I kept you present in this charming little chapel where, from six o'clock in the morning, after our hour of oraison, we have begun this ravishing exercise which transports us heavenward, or at least brings Heaven so close to us that we could believe we were there, so tangible is the presence of God our Saviour to all our hearts. The tears which flowed from all eyes witness the sentiments which animated them and the supernatural happiness that was experienced. However we have kept to the fore our situation and have spoken to our Lord of our absent brothers for whom, by my order, prayers are said every day in the litanies which follow the examen. No matter, this very remembrance rendered the ceremony more touching, and all there remains for me to desire is that everyone be as well prepared everywhere and facing the present with hearts as ready. I could go on endlessly if I wished to speak to you of all the good there is to say about everyone without exception. They are just what I could have wished, without however presuming to flatter myself about them. They have realized all my hopes, as much in respect to virtues as to bearing and conduct.

November 3.

Our dear children left me no time to say more to you yesterday. They do not wish to lose a single one of the moments that I have still to remain with them.[[73]](#footnote-73) One has no idea of all the gestures of deference and affection they show me; it is truly a touching thing; so I feel very keenly the sorrow of leaving them, the more so because this community life amongst youths so fervent is something so sweet that one perceives none of the little privations that it imposes; it is truly a paradise on earth.

As for the place, it is delightful, we are never tired of it. The habitants adore us; they are ravished with the beauty of the ceremonies and of the eloquence of our preachers. Yesterday, the service at the parish was most solemn; the rector has vestments worthy of a cathedral. As I could not profit from his invitation to officiate, he sang high Mass with a deacon, sub-deacon and assistant priest, incense bearers, acolytes, etc. Never had they seen that in the village. Fr. Mille[[74]](#footnote-74) preached marvellously. I officiated in the evening and led the parish in the procession of the dead which is, in this country, the most touching thing in the world because of the piety and faith of the faithful. I would never finish if I wanted to enter in the thousand details which would assuredly interest you very much.

... I have let you know long ago my attitude about the crosses; better to die than take part in this apostasy.

To Fr. Mille and the Scholastic Brothers at Billens[[75]](#footnote-75)

371:VII in Oblate Writings

Visit of Bishop de Forbin-Janson to Billens. Affection of the Founder for his sons. Discretion to be used in corresponding with France.

Mille and scholastics

Nyon

November 17, 1830

God alone, my dear children, can know what a sacrifice has been imposed on me by the touching and insistent friendship of the excellent Bishop of Nancy. I had promised myself several hours to enjoy your sweet company, my heart felt the need to be expansive, to express to each of you the sentiments of this tender affection with which it is filled for children so worthy of all my love. It was necessary to suppress, to stifle somewhat this outpouring of a soul which powerfully felt the need to communicate itself, and on leaving you I had to bear away my sorrow, my regret, without any of the consolations that I hoped from your last embraces and the moments I had saved in order to devote them to you entirely. This sacrifice has been so painful that I have dared to offer it to the good God in expiation of what perhaps is excessive in the affection that I have for you, if however one can love too much the children who have never given me the least reason for displeasure, who advance with fervour in the way that God has traced for them and who give such fine hope to the Church and our Congregation which they serve already so well by their regularity and their good example. Dear children, may God keep you always in the dispositions in which I see you! May you ever grow in wisdom and virtue since the store thereof is inexhaustible. You know that the attachment of your father is proportioned to the efforts that you make to approach more closely the perfection for which we all ought to strive.

...One well sees that you have not yet acquired a right idea of the circumspection with which one must write in times of revolution. It would be impossible to let pass a certain number of expressions apt to compromise those who write to me and those who receive the letters. So, my dear children, I beg you to content yourselves henceforth to give news of yourselves to your parents through Fr. Tempier. The matter is too important to leave it to your inexperience. Mazet, for example, did not realize that he committed an extreme imprudence by relating that the Bishop of Nancy had come to visit you as soon as he arrived in Fribourg. He did not know apparently that this holy Bishop is proscribed, that a price has been put on his head by the brigands of his diocese, that they spy on all his movements and that all those who have too intimate relations with him become suspect. When necessary, one ought to fear nothing but, without necessity, one ought not to. Others, in addressing some of our Fathers, call them by their real names, others express themselves unconcernedly about what goes on at Billens; in short, in spite of my recommendations, you have all more or less committed some imprudence.[[76]](#footnote-76) So here I am obliged to take to Nice your letters so as to have them pass more easily or to transcribe them if there be need to suppress what should not have been written.

Geneva, eight o'clock in the evening.

It did not suffice to busy myself part of the day with you while reading the letters that you have written, and in discoursing with you while the horses were eating their hay; I do not wish to retire before saying to you a few words more.

My dear children, here I am already two days' journey from you, each day separates me further from my cherished family; you are all present to me, just as you are, and most willingly I concern myself about you before God! That is where I give you rendezvous. Speak often of me to our common Father who is, with his divine Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, at the centre of our hearts; love him, ever let us love each other more in him.

I recommend to dear Fr. Mille to speak to me of all, of each of you in all his letters; as long as I am at Nice you need not stint yourselves. Each in turn can write me two lines on his own account in each of these letters; but do not expect me to write to you, it would take too long for my impatience. In several days Fr. Mille can address me a letter, by general delivery, at Nice-on-sea, Savoy, without however giving me in the address qualities other than those known by everybody ....

My very dear children, I love you, I embrace you and I bless you with all the effusion of my heart.

To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles[[77]](#footnote-77)

372:VII in Oblate Writings

Snowstorm while travelling from Turin to Nice.

Tempier

Nice

December [2],[[78]](#footnote-78)1830.

Our journey which had been very pleasant as far as Turin finished by our being plagued with a thousand annoyances. The weather was superb at Turin. It began to cloud on Saturday, the day of our departure.[[79]](#footnote-79) We arrived on the evening of the same day at Limon, the last stop at the foot of the mountain; snow began to fall. We had, to crown our misfortune, one of those coachmen more brutish than human.

The postmaster had him told there was still time to leave because the snow had only been falling a few hours; he was careful not to tell us that; he let us sleep in peace at Limon. During the night, the snow had its way and when we had to leave in the morning, we were told that the mountain was closed by the quantity of snow that had fallen during the night. There we were completely stuck. I consulted the postmaster who assured me that it was now impossible to pass through.

I was on the point of returning to Coni when we saw from afar the carriage of Cardinal de Rohan who was on his way to becoming entrapped like us. I explained our position to him and that in which he was placed himself. It irked him to take the road back in order to proceed by way of Savona; that is the decision that we ought to have taken; we had been strongly tempted to follow this route when we left Turin; now it was necessary to decide promptly because the snow was falling in large flakes. The postmaster, when consulted, did not hide the difficulty of the enterprise; he said however that it would not be impossible to succeed by muscular energy; he took charge of it himself, the Cardinal having been recommended to him by the postmaster general. From that moment, there was no more ground to hesitate, it was up to us to follow behind the Cardinal and to take advantage of the tracks that a gang of roadmen was going to dig out so that his carriage could pass through. We ourselves took some mules and several men to aid our coach and off we started, unfortunately two hours too late. We went up bit by bit through the ruts in the snow which had been dug ahead of the first carriage. But what striving and difficulty to arrive at the summit of the mountain! What awaited us there was what they call *la tourmente* that is to say, a most impetuous kind of gale which whips up the snow, obstructs vision and sometimes hurls down men, mules and carriages. We would have risked this new danger if daylight had not failed us. But the accidents inevitable in such a trip, the ropes which part asunder, the mules which refuse to advance, the harness which breaks and causes frequent delays! In short, it was night when we arrived at a little shelter which the King of Sardinia had had constructed, three years ago, as an asylum for those who would find themselves in our predicament. No one has perished since the good King had this excellent idea.

The Cardinal greatly desired to cross over; it was a case of descending as far as Ca, another hut situated below the three bends which are the sharpest and most difficult on the slope of Tende. The postmaster refused, declaring it was impossible. We were obliged to admit, two days later, that he was right. So we stayed cooped up there in the hope of descending the mountain on the following day; but the blizzard kept roaring on and we had to huddle in this miserable inn with-scarcely enough to prevent ourselves dying of hunger. The Cardinal and his chaplain shut themselves up in their carriage that they had pulled into a lean-to shed where the numerous band of mountaineers who had escorted us had settled around an enormous stove whence the smoke had no escape and filled the house to the point of making us all shed tears and (our eyes) smarted greatly. So the night passed. In the morning, we were no further ahead. The postmaster, who shared our lot, told us again that it would not be possible to go down the first three curves which are most dangerous because the wind, covering over and instantly filling with new snow the ruts that the men would open with their shovels, there was no means of getting the carriage through. There was no question of moving ours which was condemned to stay the whole winter.

Had I been alone, I would have risked going down on foot, with two men to help; but I could not abandon my mother and my sister. We resolved to share the lot of the Cardinal; that was the wisest decision that we could take. The day was thus spent in the boredom of this irksome position and in the discussion of schemes as to how to get out. Our men withdrew to their cabins with orders to come back the following day if the wind abated a little; we invoked the holy Virgin for that and recited the litanies.

The wind lessened during the night and ceased entirely as the day dawned. Promptly at ten o'clock, they brought skids on which to place the carriage of the Cardinal. I had begged him to take with him Mme. de Boisgelin and her son; my mother took the seat behind with the priest and as for me, I started off gaily in my shoes; but scarcely had they sledded forward ten steps, the priest and my mother were alarmed and wanted to get down. Ten minutes later, the sled broke and the Cardinal preferred to go on foot, as well as my sister, and there we were floundering on the summit of this frightful mountain, with snow up to the knees. Two men supported the travellers and helped them appreciably. I had none at my service because I had left mine in charge of our bags. I only fell twice into the mattress of snow and, after pushing on for a quarter of a league, we saw clear sky, something we had not had for three days. We went on foot as far as Tende, in water and mud up to our knees; but I was so pleased to be extricated from the snow that nothing displeased me ....

At last, at nine o'clock in the evening, we arrived at Nice and were taken to our respectable and beloved uncle; and after a good supper, of which we had an extreme need, we went to rest, thankful to God that no one took ill, not even my mother, who was wonderful at an age as advanced as hers.

To Fr. Mille at Billens[[80]](#footnote-80)

373:VII in Oblate Writings

Difficulties of the journey from Turin to Nice.

Mille

[Nice]

December 2, 1830.

...The snow began to fall when we arrived at Limon which is at the foot of the ascent. The postmaster hastened to tell our coachman that he should go through immediately otherwise he would have no more time; that worthy kept this a secret to himself and had us pass the night quietly at Limon. The next day, the pass was closed by deep snow. We were about to take the road back in order to proceed by way of Savona when we saw approaching the carriage of Cardinal de Rohan and thus coming into the trap like ourselves. He found it too hard to turn back and insisted on trying to pass. The postmaster did not dare refuse him; he sent twenty men ahead to clear the snow and tripled the teams to pull the carriage. We thought we should take advantage of such considerable measures and follow in the wake of this Prince of the Church; we climbed to the top of the mountain with unbelievable difficulties, but daylight was lacking when we had most need of it and a blizzard began to blow; one would say it was like the most impetuous of our hurricanes. Courage failed our mountaineers and they declared the danger would be grave if we wished to advance beyond the house of shelter so we stayed there and remained two days buried under the snow, seeing neither land or sky because of the wind which made the snowflakes whirl in every direction. We could only extricate ourselves by descending the mountain on foot, with snow above our knees and, lower down, mud and water above the ankles. After five hours walking, we arrived at Tende whence we set out for Nice in the middle of the night in an open carriage. At last, December 2, at nine in the evening, we entered the city and went directly to our respectable and beloved uncle whom the Cardinal, who on arriving several hours before us, had already informed. On seeing him so well, we were consoled for all the mishaps of our journey and thanked God that no one took ill, not even my mother who did wonders for one so advanced in years.

To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles[[81]](#footnote-81)

374:VII in Oblate Writings

Death of the Archbishop of Aix.

Tempier

Nice

December 4, 1830.

I had great sorrow in not being able to preside myself the office for the Archbishop, for I sincerely mourn this good Prelate.[[82]](#footnote-82) I share your fears regarding the choice of his successor and for several reasons; that is why I will not forget to prepare a shelter for those who will likely be asked to depart.[[83]](#footnote-83) I have proceeded with this matter since my departure from Fribourg and I am not without hope of succeeding, if our prayers obtain God's protection; there are great difficulties to overcome, but what obstacles can thwart the prayers of souls who only wish to please God?

To Father I Anthony Grassi, S.J., at Turin[[84]](#footnote-84)

76:XIII in Oblate Writings

Ministries of the Congregation and the dioceses in which it is working. Hopes to form communities in the Kingdom of Sardinia, in Sardinia, Savoy and at Nice.

Grassi

[Nice],

December 11, l830[[85]](#footnote-85)

Right after I had arrived at Nice after a long and very difficult journey, I considered before God in the best disposition possible I could muster the interesting topic of our long conversation at Turin. I don’t think I am mistaken in seeing therein the way that Divine Providence seems to be indicating to us, that is, in the States of His Majesty to use a Congregation which is by duty devoted to the salvation of the most abandoned souls as well as to the special education of clerics.

I did not overlook the difficulties which one may encounter in carrying out a project whose consequences ought to be so beneficial to the Church and the State. Since, however, we wish to strive only for God’s glory and the salvation of souls redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, my trust is such that I fear nothing, not even the dangers which threaten those who dedicate their lives to the reform of morals and discipline in the territory where you propose that we exercise our holy ministry.

I am thus disposed, Reverend Father, if His Majesty so wishes, to place at his disposition all the members of our Congregation that he deems useful for his service and that of his people in Sardinia, as well as in any other portion of his states, whether to assist in their conversion by the conducting of holy missions, or by regular instruction and hearing confessions in the residences that His Majesty will designate as our living quarters, or finally by working diligently under the guidance of Our Lords the Bishops in the formation of clerics in seminaries [of those dioceses] which have one. Already several years of experience in several countries[[86]](#footnote-86) is a sure sign for me of the blessings that the Lord will shower on the zealous efforts of these evangelical laborers. I would need to write volumes were I to report the marvels that God has deigned to work through their ministry, especially since the Sovereign Pontiff has solemnly approved their Institute and placed this family among the Congregations recognized by God’s Church.

These effects have occurred in the dioceses of Aix, Marseilles, Nimes, Fréjus, Digne, Gap, Grenoble and even that of Nice. If the facts spoke less clearly and were not bolstered by the witness of the entire populations of all those areas, I could give undeniable proofs of the same. All the bishops of those different dioceses have personally attested to the usefulness of this Congregation and to all the good it has already done in their respective dioceses where it has been at work for fifteen years with a success due to God alone, for the sanctification of souls, by giving holy missions, taking care of poor prisoners, charitable hospices, seminaries, every work of mercy, in a word, that the bishops entrust to them.

Thus, at Aix, for example, besides the church that belongs to their house, where the members of the Congregation attached thereto offer divine service and every evening after prayer give an informal instruction to the people, they are assigned to give religious instruction to prisoners, hearing their confessions, something unheard of before, and when one of them is condemned to death, they accompany him to the scaffold. Besides that, they do the religious services at the hospital for incurables, for foundlings, for charity and at the college. At Marseilles, besides the service at the church and in prisons as at Aix, they instruct the people from Genoa in Italian and they direct the Major Seminary which is recognized as one of the best in France. At Nimes, besides the church services and the difficult missions in the Cévennes, which are sprinkled with Protestants, the Bishop has wished to assign to them the camp of 1400 condemned prisoners, a degraded group, who have some notion of morals and religion only from the time that they were confided to the charity of the members of our Congregation who, in this den of thieves, have worked true miracles of conversion. Everywhere else the most difficult works of the holy ministry are entrusted to these religious, and if I am to believe the reports that the bishops testify to, they acquit themselves in a way that fully satisfies the solicitude of these vigilant first Pastors.

Would someone want to oppose us as foreigners? The members of a Congregation recognized by the Church, whose Superior is named by the Pope, are Catholic before all else. Their lives are dedicated according to the spirit of their vocation to the service of souls without preference for persons or nations, their ministry is entirely spiritual, they belong to the country that adopts them, and live there under the protecting mantle of the law as faithful subjects, solely occupied with the purpose of their heavenly mission which strives to accomplish every duty, whether to God or to the Prince, his representative among men.

The Apostles were foreigners in the countries to which Our Lord Jesus Christ assigned them to preach the gospel. Religious who laid the first foundations of their Orders in various parts of Christianity were also foreigners and were not rejected because of that.

No one more than I will praise the wise measures that result in keeping a State from the contagion of evil doctrines and the influence of perverse men who trouble society elsewhere and shake its foundations; but would it be reasonable to suppose that one equally fears what is good, proven, what could only be useful and advantageous?

I will not end this long letter without pointing out something that I find remarkable. At the same time that Your Reverence spoke to me about the good that our Congregation could do in Sardinia, the Bishop of St Jean de Maurienne wrote to have it introduced into his diocese, and the Bishop of Nice proposed through his Vicar General that we give him some men whom he could establish in the former abbey of Saint-Pons to give spiritual exercises to the clergy and holy missions in all parts of the diocese where they speak a special dialect which is the same as Provencal, one that several members of our Congregation know perfectly.

So, it may be that our Congregation, if it pleases His Majesty to adopt it, will devote at one and the same time its ministry in the service of souls in Sardinia, in Savoy and in the county of Nice, and thus assist with all its might in sanctifying the people who are happy to live under the fatherly dominion of so good a King.

To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles[[87]](#footnote-87)

375:VII in Oblate Writings

Let Fr. Tempier be prudent in his relations and correspondence with the civil authorities. State of the Founder's health.

Tempier

Nice

December 24, 1830.

I would have wished that some expressions be removed from your letters[[88]](#footnote-88) and especially that you had not thought of printing your claim in a newspaper. That a journal speak of it, all well and good, but that you arrange for it to do so brings some disadvantages to mind. In short, I think that in the circumstances one must be strong but measured in one's terms, first in order not to give anyone a hold on us, then so as not to seem moved by an irascibility that they could attribute to the frenzy of being defeated, for we must not overlook the fact that they put us in the category of the vanquished. It is this tone that is moderate, but firm, that I advise you to take in the reply that you will make to the inconceivable and truly ridiculous letter of Monsieur Merilhou.[[89]](#footnote-89)  I think one must keep the heaviest words for the last extremity. I admit nevertheless that there is reason to lose patience.... A little word on freedom could be inserted appropriately. We cannot hide from the fact that the persecution is beginning. Write to us immediately after Christmas; I fear some scandal on that holy night and they will not ask for better than to make you responsible for it.

... It is unbelievable how the morale influences my sorry person physically. My heart is heavy, it beats with difficulty and too fast.[[90]](#footnote-90)

To Fr. Tempier at Marseilles[[91]](#footnote-91)

376:VII in Oblate Writings

Desire to return to Marseilles.

Tempier

Nice

December 31, 1830.

Are you surprised that these wretches insult you when they treat the bishop as a fugitive,[[92]](#footnote-92) a bishop with the age and merits of my uncle! It all makes me desirous to return as soon as possible and be beside you, but I am still waiting for the reply from Turin.[[93]](#footnote-93) Believe me I am very vexed that my uncle is still here while the civil authorities weary his administration with their petty exigencies and their ridiculous pretensions, but it seems that the bishop has decided to remain for the winter at Nice unless the situation worsens and hastens his return. That is what pins me down here where every day I tell my woes to the waves of the sea which seem to me to lap the house in which you dwell by its side.... The pleasure I will feel on seeing you again will put my heart at ease once more.

1. YENVEUX, VIII, 181; RAMBERT, I, 499. Bro. Pons was a scholastic studying at the seminary of Marseilles. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. REY, I, 482, 483. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The Founder ordered that the name of the deceased Father or Brother be engraved on the upper part of the copper plate which covers the arms of the cross (REY, I, 482). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. REY, I, 483. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Yenveux IV, 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. On the way back from Rome in 1826, Father de Mazenod passed through Chambéry to meet the Abbé Favre, Superior of a community of Missionaries in Savoy, to whom he proposed uniting the two Institutes (cf. *Oblate Writings* VII, 104-114). In August 1828, the Founder received a letter from Father Favre who invited him to Chambéry: there was hope of a foundation and a fusion. Father de Mazenod immediately made the trip but obtained nothing from the King, Father Favre or Bishop Martinet of Chambéry. We understand from this letter that now that he didn’t count very much on the possibility of an establishment in the States of the King of Sardinia. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. REY, I, 482. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. On his return from a retreat preached at the minor seminary of Embrun, the horse which Fr. Capmas was riding took fright and knocked down a man who died several days after the accident. On May 22, the court of Embrun, presided over by anti-clericals, condemned the missionary to three months imprisonment, a fine of 50 francs and 1200 francs damages. The appeal court of Gap later brought in a judgement of complete acquittal in favour of Fr. Capmas (REY, I, 482). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. YENVEUX, III, 92; IV. 232; REY, I, 484, [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Yenveux IV, 41; VII, 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. A trip made in August 1829, cf. *supra,* note 34. The following July 11, soon after the French Army took Algeria, Bishop Fortuné de Mazenod wrote to the Grand Aumonier and proposed that he send to Algeria the Oblates whom he still called Missionaries of Provence, cf. Marseilles, Archives of the Archbishop’s House, Register of Administrative Letters, Vol. 2, p. 295, no. 98 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. REY, I, 485 [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. The Founder was absent nearly seven months from Marseilles He undertook this journey into Switzerland, July 6, on the explicit orders of his doctors and of Fr Tempier (Leflon, II, 338-339), moreover it was a good opportunity to help his sister, Mme de Boisgelin to take her mind off the sorrow caused by the death of her daughter Nathalie (letter of Fr de Mazenod to his mother, June 15, 1830). The July Revolution then took place which, during its first years, was very anticlerical. Fr de Mazenod decided it would be well to purchase a house at Billens, in Switzerland, and to bring the scholastics there On his way, he stopped at Notre Dame du Laus where he made a canonical visitation and encouraged Fr Guibert who had some difficulty in establishing strictness of observance according to the Rules. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. RAMBERT, I, 544, REY, I. 486 [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. The Founder, his sister and his mother remained at Grenoble from the 12th to the 17th [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. It was on Tuesday the 13th that the Founder received the news of the capture of Algiers. Fr Tempier told him that they had learned this at Marseilles at noon on the 9th. “At two o'clock, all the bells were rung by order of the Bishop [who] is preparing a pastoral directive”. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. RAMBERT. I, 544-545, REY, I, 485, 486, 487, 488 REY (I, 487) copies, without giving a date, two lines probably taken from this same letter in which the Founder describes the journey from Annecy to Geneva: “The route most picturesque, the fairest and most verdant, the most beautiful and varied that one could wish for”. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Bro. Ricard had written to him: “...on learning of the capture of Algiers you could not restrain your tears; as for me, I assure you that since hearing these happy tidings I rest no more .... Right at the beginning of this war, you showed very clearly that if it were possible, you would establish a mission in these infidel parts; a surprising success has just crowned the efforts of our troops and not doubting to see your plans soon realized, I have not been able to await your return in order to solicit the great favour of crossing the sea ...” (REY, I, 486). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. At Chambery, the Founder met the Provincial of the Jesuits of France who had to go to Autun to be present at the opening of the tomb of Marguerite-Marie Alacoque. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. YENVEUX, I, 23; III, 5, 113; IV, 25; V, 131, 205; RAMBERT. I, 545. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. The travellers arrived on July 21st at Fribourg where they stayed until mid-November. Louis de Boisgelin was there, boarding at the college of the Jesuits. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. 2 Tim. 4, 2; Hebr. 13, 20; Deus autem pacis ...aptet vos in omni bono.” ...convince, rebuke and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching ...may the God of peace equip you with everything good . . . [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. YENVEUX, I, 27; V, 35; VIII, 13, 192; IX, 28\*; RAMBERT, I, 546-548; REY, I, 488. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Fr. Tempier wrote in the margin of this letter, probably after the death of the Founder in 1861 “I did not at the time dare to tear up this letter and throw it in the fire, as my venerated Father bid me to do, still less will I do it today”. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. RAMBERT, I, 549-550. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Allusion to the July Revolution (27-29) 1830 which brought about the fall of Charles X and the accession of Louis-Philippe (July Monarchy). [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. RAMBERT, I, 550. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. RAMBERT, I, 550-552; REY, I, 489. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Fr. Tempier had written on August 8th: “Our motto is prudence and moderation, but vigilance, firmness and courage” (REY. I. 489). [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. At Nimes, the clergy was threatened. The Bishop, Canons and also the Oblates had left the city (REY. I, 489). [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. At Notre Dame du Laus, all was calm. cf. Guibert to Mazenod. August 6th (REY, I. 489). [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. The letter of Fr. Tempier has not been preserved. It is not easy to determine to what this refers. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Psalm 24:1 The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. These three lines of August 14th are perhaps taken from a letter distinct from that of the 13th. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. RAMBERT, I. 552. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Fr. REY (I, 489) wrote that the Founder had formed on his arrival at Fribourg the plan to found a house in this Catholic canton of Switzerland. Fr. Rambert seems rather to say that this idea came to him after the July Revolution. “Most of the best minds in France were persuaded.” wrote RAMBERT (I, 552), “that the Revolution of 1830 would not be long in falling into the excesses of that of (17)93.” [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. RAMBERT, I, 553. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. RAMBERT, I, 558-559; REY, I, 490. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. The new civil authorities had demanded the singing, on the feast of August 15th, of the *Domine salvum fac regem Ludovicum Philippum.* This would have the effect of making the Church recognize a *de facto* government having supplanted a *de jure* government. A grand council, convoked at the bishopric, decided on the singing of the *Domine salvum fac regem* without designating the head of the government, and that they would maintain this policy until a decision was made by the Sovereign Pontiff (REY, I, 490). [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Bishop Fortune de Mazenod was 81 years old. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. RAMBERT, I, 559. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. YENVEUX, IV**,** 79; RAMBERT, I, 561. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. RAMBERT, I, 559-560; REY, I. 491. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. The Lieutenant-General, the General in command of the National Guard, the Mayor, etc., had come, on August 20th, against the will of the Bishop, to hoist the tricolour flag before the Bishop's house. Letter of Fr. Tempier to Fr. de Mazenod, August 20th (REY, I, 490-491). [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Cardinal de Rohan. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Bishop Fortune de Mazenod did not leave Marseilles for Nice until September 21st. He was accompanied by Fr. Dupuy. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. RAMBERT. 1. 560; REY, I. 491 [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Yenveux VII, 33. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. An excerpt copied by Yenveux himself and rendered ambiguous, as he undoubtedly modified the text according to his practice. The Founder seems to say that he has and has not met Bishop Billiet.

After the July Revolution, the Oblates suddenly left Nimes and feared for the house at Aix where Archbishop de Richery had just died. That is why the Founder tried to prepare the way for a foundation, whether in the diocese of Cagliari, in that of St-Jean de Maurienne in Savoy (at that time part of the states of Piedmont-Sardinia), or in the diocese of Nice, cf. Rey I, 498. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Letter from Pope Pius VIII of August 26, 1829. Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, Letter Pius VIII-Mazenod, cf. infra, Letter no. 77. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. YENVEUX. V, 61; RAMBERT. I, 562; REY. I. 491. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. The reference perhaps is to papers necessary for the acquisition of the property of Billens of which the deed of purchase was signed on September 25 (REY, I, 492). [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. YENVEUX. III. 200; V, 103; RAMBERT. I, 562-563; REY, I, 492-493. 495. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. At Paris and in several large cities, the revolution was very anti-clerical: the assaulting of priests and high ranking prelates, pillaging of episcopal palaces, convents, residences of Jesuits, of the house of the Missionaries of France at Paris, destruction of Calvaries, statues and numerous mission crosses. Cf.: Jean Leflon, *Eugene de Mazenod*, II. 344. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. The Founder was particularly opposed to the ideas of the separation of Church and State. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. The newspaper *L'Avenir* of which the first number appeared on October 16th. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. RAMBERT. I, 553-554. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. RAMBERT. I, 554. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. September 25th. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. RAMBERT, I. 555; REY, I. 491. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. The first group of scholastics had left Marseilles on September 8th. Others followed at intervals of several days. All fourteen of them passed through Notre Dame du Laus and thence proceeded by different routes to their destination (REY, I, 492). [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. RAMBERT. I. 555-556 Fr REY. (I. 494) cites two other lines of this letter in which the Founder said that he would soon leave to join his uncle at Nice “I ought to assume my share of the solicitude and anguish that weigh on the others”. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. RAMBERT. I. 565-566, REY, I, 495-496 According to the context, this letter might have been written at Fribourg where Fr de Mazenod met several French exiles. We believe however that he would have written it rather after returning to Billens in order to join the community for the annual retreat. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Most of the Oblates were Lamennaisians. in particular Fr Touche who was incorrespondence with Felicité (REY, I. 494) [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Bishop de Forbin-Janson. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Bishop Thann [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Secretary of Cardinal Rohan-Chabot. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Martin, a visionary, who announced the return of Louis XVII [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. RAMBERT. I. 563-565, REY, I, 494-495. Rey dates this letter as of October 22nd and 24th while Rambert writes the 28th We prefer to follow Rambert who copies two extracts from this letter, each time with the same date It is he, besides, who narrates more in detail all the happenings of the journey in Switzerland. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Fr de Mazenod and the diocesan administration had decided not to pronounce the political oath demanded by the functionaries of the State and which, besides, had not been required of the clergy. In his letter of September 29th to Cardinal de Rohan, the Pope expressed himself as being contrary to their stance. The Founder hastened then to invite Fr Tempier to submit to this decision and thus to remove at least this point of dispute with the civil authorities [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. REY (I. 495) and RAMBERT (I, 565) quote this paragraph without indicating the date We include it with this letter of the 28th since the allusion to Martin inclines us to believe that the Founder had already informed Fr Tempier of these prophecies [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. RAMBERT, I. 556-557, 563. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. The Founder, his mother, his sister and nephew Eugene de Boisgelin left Billens on November 16th. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Fr. Mille was named superior of the community at Billens. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. YENVEUX, V. 123. 177; RAMBERT. I, 566-567; REY. I, 496. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. The scholastic brothers had given the Founder letters for Marseilles; he read them during the journey from Billens to Geneva [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. RAMBERT. I. 568-571. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Letter of which Rambert has not indicated the date but which narrates the journey from Turin to Nice as does that sent to Fr Mille and is erroneously dated December 12th. Rey writes that the travellers arrived at Nice on December 2nd The Founder had to begin this letter on the very day of his arrival. He would not have waited until the 12th to relate these details [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. November 27th was a Saturday, Rey writes that they left Turin on the 28th. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. REY, I, 496-497. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. REY. I. 498. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Archbishop C. A. de Richery. of Aix, had died suddenly on November 26th [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. The house of Nimes was closed (letter of Fr Tempier, Sept 3rd, in REY. I, 497) but that of Aix did not seem to be in danger The Founder, in his travels in Switzerland and Italy, tried however to prepare the way for other foundations outside France, in Sardinia, m the diocese of Saint-Jean de Maunenne and in the diocese of Nice (REY. I, 498) [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Yenveux VII, 70-72. Father Grassi (1775-1849) had been a missionary in Russia and in the United States of America. He held many important posts in Italy from 1817 to 1849, especially that of Rector of the College of Nobles at Turin, Provincial of the Jesuit Province of Turin and Confessor to King Charles Felix of Savoy and to the Queen. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Yenveux wrote: September 11, 1831. From the context, this letter most have been written at the beginning of December 1830. After a difficult trip from Billens to Turin, the Founder arrived at Nice on December 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. The Congregation had only directed the seminary of Marseilles up to that time. “The experience of several years in several countries” refers to the ministry of preaching missions and the word “country” is taken in the Italian sense of a village or hamlet. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. REY. I, 499-500 [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. In the Register of administrative letters of the Archbishopric of Marseilles, are preserved numerous letters of Fr Tempier to the civil authorities who tried on every possible occasion to create difficulties The letter of Fr. Tempier to which the Founder alludes concerned the dispute which arose following an incident provoked by young people during a service in the church of St Theodore, November 28th. Jean LEFLON *(Eugene de Mazenod,* II, 344-396) narrates in detail the difficulties between the episcopal administration and the civil authorities following the July Revolution of 1830. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. The Minister of Worship, who required that there be no assemblies in churches except on Sundays and on four religious holidays retained by the Concordat of 1801. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. A great many concerns affected the Founder: the chaplaincy of the College of Aix had been taken from the Oblates, the house of Nimes closed, Fr. Capmas had fallen gravely ill. Fortune had also been ill for several days. etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. REY. I. 500. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. They threatened to discontinue the financial subsidy paid to Bishop Fortune if he did not soon return to Marseilles. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Reply to the request to establish a house in Sardinia. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)