1840

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 1, 1840

January 1:I started my day before daybreak. During my Mass I received the profession of Fr. Perron and Brother Roux who had come to my chapel with Fathers from the Calvaire and the novices.

And then began the grand general reception. It lasted all day. I had to repeatedly raise my heart to God to offer him the wearisome duty of my rank. As annoying as it is, there is a good side to be considered. It is a tribute to the head of religion in the diocese. A lot of people meet him. We exchange a few kind words. We spread a few advantageous opinions like the need for a cathedral, etc. [p. 39]

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 2, 1840

January 2:Letter from Chirac. The Marquis Barthélemy will work for me when it shall be necessary to take some steps for the cathedral.

Letter from the Knight de Collegno. He asks for information about Fr. Rossi.[[1]](#footnote-1) This rascal had the courage to present himself to the Archbishop of Turin with his double title of apostate from the Congregation and fugitive from my diocese to which he is supposed to be incorporated by excorporation from the Bishop of Cuneo, his Ordinary.

Letter from Fr. Courtès. The archbishop is very satisfied with the missions of our Fathers, and how could it be otherwise?

Letter from Fr. Deveronico. He vindicates himself of having borrowed for a prisoner. This is alms that he made ​​on behalf of a person who had given him the liberty to make it in her name when necessary. He explains less well the second loan. He says it is a good turn that he apparently did on behalf of his parents. This is precisely what he should not have done. The rest of his letter expresses good feelings.

Letter from the Abbé Barbarin[[2]](#footnote-2), written from the Saint-Sulpice seminary.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 3, 1840

January 3:My mediation with Madam and Miss Meinier was unsuccessful. These ladies, too irritated by Mr. de Lescases’ methods, no longer want to hear about him. It is therefore necessary that he give up the hope of marrying the person he had seduced. She is determined to keep the child she has legally recognized, and she would prefer death to what she calls the terrible misfortune of becoming the wife of a man like Mr. de Lescases. I am responsible for giving this answer to Mr. de Lescases.

News of the death of the Archbishop of Paris.[[3]](#footnote-3) I am really grieved by the loss of this prelate. We prayed for him at the family evening prayer. I will say Mass for him tomorrow.

Letter from Fr. Caire, our honorary canon.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 4, 1840

January 4:Mass for the poor Archbishop of Paris. A day of visits like yesterday. All our actions can be acceptable to God when we offer them to him. It is out of duty that I do this drudgery. Besides, some good comes from this meeting of the pastor with his flock.

Here is the letter I wrote to Chappuis in response to his second letter. I would have preferred not being obliged to copy it, but Tempier reproached me for not having kept the first copy. Let’s have patience and write: [p. 40]

*I hope, my dear son, that my letter will arrive in time to distract you from doing what your good heart inspired you to do thinking it would be useful or agreeable to me. You will have recognized my principles in the explanation I gave you of my conduct in the whole course of my ministry. I see things from a different point of view than you do. You see things humanly and your friendship would have you obtain for me what men here below usually seek. As for me I only consider eternity and I weigh everything by the measure of the sanctuary. I told you how without wanting it I became bishop of Marseilles. If I had been consulted I would certainly never have agreed to take up such a burden, yet you know from my position that I believe I would find it easier to fulfill the duties of my office in a diocese that I had actually formed, and where, amid the inevitable contradictions when it comes to reforming abuses and building a lasting good, I had so many elements of success that have not failed me in time of need. Under the episcopate of my uncle and during the short space of mine, I did things that no one could achieve in any diocese of France, and I do not think there is one that is less trouble to govern thanks to the paternal means I used and to the spirit that I tried to inspire and nurture among the clergy. Also, the famous Mr. Frère told me this fall, how delighted he was with what he saw during the pastoral retreat he gave us, that he had never met anywhere such cordiality, such a way of being fatherly on the one hand, and filial on the other, so much ease, such abandon, a beautiful unity. Despite this I still find my burden very heavy. What would it be like if I had to start again elsewhere and especially in Paris where a prelate who would do his duty would find insurmountable obstacles, violent contradictions and embarrassments of every kind? I also consider anyone who might want that diocese to be a fool and very unfortunate the one who would be forced to accept it. Furthermore, I would not exempt from sin the man so blind as to take any steps directly or indirectly to obtain a post so dangerous for his salvation because of the extreme [p. 41] difficulty of carrying out all the duties of a true pastor of souls.* *You know that such is our entire mission. Honors, consideration, etc., are only accessories that one needs to know how to despise. You see, my dear son, I open my whole soul to you. This will remind you of the time, when as witness to all my actions, you could read into my soul as into your own heart.*

*January 3rd.*[[5]](#footnote-5) *The great inconvenience caused by the New Year's Day visits which extend here beyond January 1, because of our large population, made ​​me stop my letter several times. I want to finish it today, if I can. I have sufficiently explained the merits of the case with which you were concerned out of friendship for me. I would add that the way taken also had serious disadvantages. What concern would the newspapers have with me? Would it not seem that they were writing under my dictation or my inspiration? That is enough to outrage the stones. Anyone who would have the misfortune to use such a ploy to put himself forward deserves all the blame he would surely attract, but how unfortunate for the one who with his whole soul rejects any thought of elevation as I sincerely do. Moreover, if you still believed me more worthy or capable of performing so difficult a job, what would you have gained in this way? You would have caused murmurings, awakened jealousy, and aroused all kind of passions. The Government does not seek its inspiration in the pages of the newspapers. We must believe that it knows the merit of those it calls to such high office. A scheme may well sometimes deceive it, but would not the government tend to see an appointment that came from the newspapers as a plot? I would never advise taking this path when one wants to promote someone for a position of trust.* *As for myself, I repeat, do not follow that path or any other because I do not consider myself fit for anything; I am hardly capable of the work Providence has given me. Indeed, finally, far from claiming anything or aspiring to further problems, I ask God every day to let me return to private life to concern myself only with my eternity, convinced moreover that I will be [p. 42] more useful to my neighbor by prayer than by all that my zeal inspires me to do for his good.*

*I hope, my dear son, that you will appreciate my feelings and that you will recognize their accuracy. It is my conscience that speaks, but it does not stop me from repeating my sincere gratitude for what your loving friendship inspires you with concerning me. My heart truly rejoices to find you good, sensitive, grateful, and I would be overwhelmed with happiness to see these natural qualities joined to the supernatural virtues which adorned your soul, that I cherished so much, in your early youth.* *This is what I unceasingly ask of God, this is what I long to learn from you yourself when the heavenly light has dispelled the darkness that momentarily intercepted its rays. I live in this hope and I press you against my heart that still loves you with the same intensity and the same depth. Farewell.*

Letter to Mr. Berryer[[6]](#footnote-6) asking him to join our other deputies in favor of our big cathedral project.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 5, 1840

January 5:Letter to Fr. Maillard, provincial of the Jesuits. He apologizes because of the need to remove Fr. Deschamps. I see this as very unfortunate for the success of their foundation in Marseilles.

Letter from Fr. Gariel, pastor of Digne. He writes asking me to purchase a lottery ticket for his work with orphans.

Letter from Fr. Gibelli. He uses his time well in the solitude of Vico. It is a small mission.

Letter from Fr. Guibert. He continues making visits in Corsica with the Bishop of Ajaccio.

I insisted that Matins and Lauds of the Epiphany be recited at the cathedral. I attended both by devotion to this great feast and to give an example. I preferred to dispense with the sermon not to unduly prolong the session. I will do everything to have the faithful celebrate properly the feast so dear to the gentleness which we have lost sight of. These are the kind of thoughts that I hold strongly and will not give in on to anyone.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 6, 1840

January 6:Monday. A beautiful day and a full one for me. First, Mass in my chapel where all my family and my servants received communion. First Communion and confirmation of ten grownups. The ceremony over, I went to the St. Joseph hospice to confirm an epileptic, a sailor, and a young girl who made their First Communion today. Leaving this sad house where all the idiots are gathered, I hurried to the cathedral to attend the solemn celebration of High Mass. After the Mass, I made my public adoration for half an hour, very comforted to see enough people at this Office that had been neglected until now. After dinner I went back to the cathedral to attend Vespers and the sermon. There was a procession of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction. There were many people in the church, which gave me great pleasure because I see realized the hope that I had in mind when I ordered this feast to be celebrated as it is now.

Letter from the Bishop of Limoges,[[7]](#footnote-7) confidential, for information on a subject of my diocese who wants to marry a woman of his diocese.

Letter from Mgr Sibour, Bishop-elect of Digne, inviting me to attend his consecration. His letter is formulated such that we have not been able to understand if I was to be present at the ceremony or to be an assistant bishop.

Letter of the pastor of Alleins[[8]](#footnote-8) to thank me for the great good that the mission has done in his parish.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 7, 1840

January 7: Another letter from C. God bless him. They have gone too far, and I'm afraid they will cause me some trouble, and even embarrass me, since I am very determined to persist in an absolute refusal to any proposal.[[9]](#footnote-9)

Mass for the poor girls.[[10]](#footnote-10) Fairly large gathering. The committee has been appointed. The affairs of this work thrive more and more.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 8, 1840

January 8:Letter from the Knight de Collegno. I sent him a copy of one of my letters to Rossi that will make it possible for the Archbishop of Turin to judge the matter and what he could do about it.

Letter to the Bishop-elect of Digne to accept his offer. I will go to Aix when he tells me. [p. 43]

Letter from the parish priest of Bonneveine. The feast of the Epiphany, celebrated on the 6th according to my recommendation, was most edifying. Both morning and evening there were as many people as on a Sunday, so the good priest is jubilant and with excitement tells me that they sang heartily the *Protector noster[[11]](#footnote-11)* etc.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 9, 1840

January 9:Letter from the pastor of St. Henry. The feast celebrated on the 6th was one of the most beautiful, the church was full all day. The number of people and the devotion were as great as on Christmas Day.

The parish priest of Cayols came to see me. The feast in his parish was as beautiful as it could be. He had six adorers all the time and a much larger number of women, a full church for the Offices, and a very large procession.

At St. Julien, the event was as beautiful as at Cayols.

The pastor of d'Auriol just came to tell me as much about his parish. There were as many people in church as on a Sunday.

General Assembly at the bishop’s house of all charitable works’ committees, that is to say, the Refuge, the Cholera, and the Orphans. After having congratulated the ladies for the good they do in my episcopal city, I explained the purpose for which I had convoked them. It was to forewarn them about a very dreadful surprise. The Protestant ladies, jealous of the good the Catholic ladies are doing, wanted to copy them and so they have formed an establishment for poor orphan girls. Taking advantage of this to attract Catholic children to whose parents they promise wonders, they lead the children into apostasy. Therefore it is no longer possible for Catholics to help such an establishment with their alms. And as the Protestant ladies have the audacity to show up at the doors of Catholics under the pretext that Catholics are begging at their homes, I served notice to the ladies on the committees of our works that they should decide that from now on it is forbidden to seek alms for their work among the Protestants. It will be easier then to deny the Protestants contributions for the maintenance of their institution. All these ladies [p. 45] understood the importance of this communication and resolutions shall be taken in each committee to serve as a rule for all the members of the respective associations.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 10, 1840

January 10:Letter from Fr. Mille. Some new details about the intrigues of the cabal. They wanted to ask, on behalf of the clergy, for Fr. Depéry as bishop.[[12]](#footnote-12) Three candidates nominated by Bishop de La Croix were rejected by the Minister. It is possible that my letter contributed to this rejection.

Letter from Mr. Pavy recommending a schoolmistress to me and asking me to write to the rector on her behalf.

Messrs. Mottet and Blanc came to ask me to stimulate the St. Francis Regis association a little; it is not served with enough zeal by those involved.

Confirmation of a sick person in the city.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 11, 1840

January 11:Letter from Cardinal Pacca brought by Fr. Loewenbruck.

Letter to the pastor of Alleins in response to his and to congratulate him for the blessings to his parish by the grace of the mission.

Visit to the Refuge to show the place to the Prefect.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 12, 1840

January 12:Mass at the Youth Congregation[[13]](#footnote-13) on the occasion of their big feast. I returned in haste to assist at the High Mass in the cathedral.

Letter to the Bishop of Limoges to give him the information he asked for about Mr. Ludovic de Panisse.

Visit of the Papal Legate Pacca, accompanied by the famous Abbé De Luca. He is going to Paris to bring the biretta to Cardinal de La Tour d'Auvergne.[[14]](#footnote-14) He leaves tomorrow. I regret not being able to offer him any courtesy, even though I wanted to oblige his uncle, Cardinal Pacca, in the person of his great-nephew. This excellent cardinal wrote me a charming letter and instructed him to give it to me, with his latest book *De' grandi meriti verso la Chiesa cattolica del clero*, etc., *di Colonia*, plus two beautiful medals, one in bronze representing the interior of the Basilica of St. Paul and the other, in silver, of his portrait. Madam Mellingen wrote to me at the same time. [p. 46]

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 13, 1840

January 13:Letter from Patriarch Mazloum. He finally decided to write to tell me that he has searched without success to get me a priest of his rite, but that he will eventually find one, etc. I no longer have need of one, my choice is made, and the pastor is appointed and installed.

Copy of my reply to Canon Caire:

*It is with great regret, my dear Canon that I am late replying to you; it is not that I am insensitive to your attention, if I am still in time to thank you for your letter and for the greetings you so kindly offered me on the occasion of the New Year, I mean with regard to health and the grace of God. Accept also, my dear Canon, my greetings.*

*I had the pleasure of seeing your brother, the layman, the other day. It is he who gave me the sad news that you had instructed him to give me. Long ago I had lost all hope that we could keep this venerable prelate. We knew each other for many years, and I am very sad. I pray that God gives to the Church of Paris a worthy successor to the good archbishop. The whole Church of France is interested because the first pastor of the capital is the sentry closest to the enemy camp. That is the seat of impiety and the home of all evil doctrines. It teaches error with a loud voice, etc. What bishop would be up to the task of suppressing or at least neutralizing such disorders? My God! It is enough to frighten a St. Ambrose [p. 47] or a St. John Chrysostom.*

*And the newspapers have fun designating this one or that one. For my part I cannot explain from where this hail of odd and unexpected votes for me has come.[[15]](#footnote-15) If I took them seriously, I would not have enough legs to flee. Oh! My dear Caire, if you have any friendship for me, withdraw into your heart the wish you let me glimpse, and wish me death rather than the See of Paris.*

*Adieu, my dear Canon, I recommend myself always to your prayers and those of your holy religious[[16]](#footnote-16), and I embrace you with all my heart.*

I was able to say that I cannot explain where this hail of votes comes from because it is inconceivable that all the newspapers, whatever their color, could have put forward my name as if they had any interest in me becoming the Archbishop of Paris. I expressed my thoughts in this regard in the letter that I have had copied. I would have to be out of my mind to think otherwise.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 14, 1840

January 14:Letter to Fr. Mille. Among other recommendations, that he be wary of M.B.[[17]](#footnote-17), who having been influenced by the abominable conspiracy and scandal of the shady club of Gap and Embrun, could well join the treachery and perfidy.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 15, 1840

January 15:Letter to Fr. Courtès. I propose that he call Fr. Deveronico to the mission at Lafare.[[18]](#footnote-18)

Letter to the pastor of La Ciotat. I recommend to him a young man I am sending him for direction.

Dispute of the Greeks. They owe less on their church than they were saying.[[19]](#footnote-19)

Letter to the Patriarch to thank him and to ask him to stop looking for a pastor. I have provided for one. [p. 48]

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 16, 1840

January 16:Blessing of the organ at St. Victor. A full church. The ceremony ended with Benediction.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 17, 1840

January 17:Letter to Fr. Bernard. Congratulations on the success of the mission in Lamanon. Specific recommendation that he care for the Marquis of P. to whom God has given the grace to benefit from the mission.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 18, 1840

January 18:Letter to Cardinal Castracane[[20]](#footnote-20) requesting him to authorize Fr. Zogheb to exonerate himself.

Letter to the Bishop of Nancy, currently in New York in America.[[21]](#footnote-21)

Letter from the Minister of Cults, very favorable to the cathedral project.

Letter to Monsignor Garibaldi recommending Fr. Zogheb who is going to Paris; I explain the justice of his claim.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 19, 1840

January 19:I was called to Mr. Canaple’s to hear his confession. This gentleman would speak to no one but me. It is with great pleasure that I went. Leaving his home, I passed by St. Charles to warn Bicheron to be ready tomorrow to bring the Holy Viaticum when I send word to him that I am with the sick man.

Letter to Fr. Courtès.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 20, 1840

January 20:Confirmation in my chapel of a Protestant woman who had converted. I returned to Mr. Canaple to prepare him to receive the sacraments. They were brought to him while I was present. After he made his thanksgiving, I administered the sacrament of Confirmation that he received with reverence and gratitude. I went back for dinner. Just as I was getting up from table Fr. Mie came to suggest that I go to confirm a sick child that had just made its first communion in bed. I accepted the invitation since it was my duty to do so. This is how a bishop passes his day in a city like Marseilles.

Letter from Fr. Pierre Aubert in which he asks me to remove him from the house in Aix. The reasons he gives convinced me to do it immediately. I have written to him via Fr. Telmon who will bring him my letter tomorrow morning and replace him, despite the void it will cause me here. [p. 49]

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 21, 1840

January 21:Assembly of the pastors for the report on the casual.[[22]](#footnote-22)

Bishop Wykerslooth[[23]](#footnote-23) de Schalkwyk, Bishop of Curium, dined with me with one of his cousins and his secretary. He told me some very consoling things about Holland, where he is the only Catholic bishop, including the fact that there are a million Catholics in this kingdom, which is almost half of King William’s subjects. The prince begins to understand that he was very foolish to play Belgium as he did.[[24]](#footnote-24) He nevertheless gives all the places to people of his sect, who are more powerful, but not the richest.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 22, 1840

January 22:Letter to the Provincial of the Jesuits.[[25]](#footnote-25) I do not hide how wrong he was in removing Fr. Deschamps; my letter is polite, but says what must be said.

Visit to Nazareth, to the Ladies of the Holy Sacrament and others.

Meeting of pastors to complete the business started the other day. The meeting lasted from 2:00 until 7:30 pm. I in no way influenced their deliberations. It was a matter that was only of interest to them and the rest of the clergy. All I had to do was to bring up the rate of the casual to get their views on what would be most advantageous to do. It is a fact that there is no city of any significance where the clergy’s casual is much higher. It has to be in proportion to the wealth of the inhabitants, and it is only for the rich class that I wanted an increase so that it would be easier for me to put a few more curates in the bigger parishes that have a real need. The low casual hindered me a lot in making these placements. Is it not fair that the rich provide us the means to provide for the spiritual needs of all? This year, the curates did not get 900 francs of casual nor did the pastors get 1,000 francs. There was no way to increase the number of sharers. With the process we have adopted, we increase the perquisites of the city by fifteen thousand francs without making much noise. Therefore I will be able to place some more curates. [p. 50]

Letter from Fr. Martin. Most interesting because of the details he gives me about the missions he has done. I wish I could copy it in its entirety. Let this letter of January 21, 1840[[26]](#footnote-26) be inserted into the history of the Congregation, so that if the Lord brings someone in its bosom who wants to understand how a faithful account of all that the missionaries did, etc. it can be useful for the edification and the honor of the Society.

Letter from Fr. Bernard. Very comforting for the new details he gives about the mission of Lamanon.

Mass in the Cholera chapel[[27]](#footnote-27), closure of the retreat given to the women who work there. Many communions.

Same day, confirmation of Italians in the church of the Calvaire, instruction in Italian to the large assembly.

After the ceremony, returned to the Cholera to sing Vespers, hear the sermon and give Benediction.

Letter from the Duke of Orleans. I do not have time to copy it. It is a courtesy of the prince. He sends me a copy of the letter that the Minister of Cults wrote to him in response to his recommendation to build my cathedral. These two pieces are very interesting and show the willingness of the government to favor my favorite project. I see with pleasure that this important matter is moving along well.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 27, 1840

January 27:Letter to the King to dissuade him from appointing to the Diocese of Gap a man who follows the errors of Bishop de La Croix.

Letter to the Minister of Justice on the same topic.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 28, 1840

January 28:Propagation of the Faith Council meeting. The results this year are very satisfactory. See the details in the report.

The superior of Nazareth house[[28]](#footnote-28) asks me to add another director to her house.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 29, 1840

January 29:Mass at the first Visitation monastery.

Letter from Mr. C [oulin] asking me to remove him from Nazareth. He explained his thinking better when he visited. I concluded [p. 51] that I will examine carefully how these ladies understand their annual vows of obedience, poverty, etc. I need to enlighten myself on this point because it seems absurd and unacceptable to me that during the year the superiors, in the name of obedience, can dispose of the members’ assets in a way that would compromise them when at the end of the year a member no longer wished to renew her commitments.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 30, 1840

January 30: Letter to the Duke of Orleans to thank him kindly for sending me a copy of the letter that the Minister of Cults had written to him, and that he included in the one he kindly wrote me on this occasion.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

January 31, 1840

January 31:Mass for our dear Father Suzanne. The years do not diminish the memory nor the regret of his loss.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

February 1, 1840

[p. 51] February 1:Visit of Miss Daniel. Her dedication to Mr. Coulin made her fear that Miss Dormoi, superior of Nazareth house, might have warned me about him. She told me that she had provided a lot of money for the Catechism Society and was willing to do more. I knew this, but I now understood better how much this girl was infatuated with Mr. C[oulin] and biased about everything he does. She is without a doubt among those who provided the money Mr. C[oulin] needed to make the pleasure trips he permitted himself under the guise of health.

February 1:A third young lady from Nazareth presented herself this morning to complain again about Mr. Coulin and asked permission to confess to someone else. She confirmed the incredible claim that the priest requires his penitents at Nazareth: 1- to see him as infallible in the tribunal of penance; 2- that they authorize him to use their confession matter when he sees fit. Her testimony on everything else is consistent with what Mademoiselles Dormoi and Bonneval told me. What a tyrannical abuse of power!

Indignant letter from Mr. Coulin who has the audacity to make the most absurd accusations. This letter demonstrates the ingratitude and wickedness of this man whom I have always treated with kindness.[[29]](#footnote-29) We see on every line that he intends to hurt me. His is a troubled mind that I have sympathized with until now, but after so much craziness it's time I treated him with the indifference that he unfairly presumes me to have. [p. 52]

It is not worth recalling his conduct towards all those who have had some dealings with him. His ingratitude towards Mr. Chaix[[30]](#footnote-30) should have given us an idea of what we could expect from him, had we not already known what to expect from such a difficult fellow, whom I do not yet want to believe is ill-intentioned.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

February 2, 1840

February 2:Blessing of candles at the cathedral. Installation of the honorary canon that I named recently. He is the good Mr. Isnardon[[31]](#footnote-31), a veteran priest, a good man.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

February 3, 1840

February 3:Reply to Coulin’s impertinent letter. As busy as I am, it will not hurt to keep a copy:

*I delayed, sir, until tonight to respond to the outrageous letter you sent me yesterday. I hoped that remorse would lead you to retract it. This letter shows me the extent of the feelings you harbor in your heart and proves to me in fact that I was wrong not to treat you the way that you assume very unfairly that I have so far. Always favorably disposed to you, I attributed to your hotheadedness the wrongs for which I should have often reproached you and I nonetheless had a genuine affection for you that made me overlook many improprieties in favor of your good intentions that I liked to point out to you. Now I understand more about your heart. You treat your bishop as you treated Mr. Chaix. I will try to not let it bother me too much. But so that I will not eventually end up sending you to spend a fortnight at the seminary to learn the duties that you fail in too easily when you dare to write to me moved by your bad mood, please refrain from sending me your letters. You can correspond directly with my Vicars General when you have some business to transact, which will not prevent me from giving you in due course the advice I recently recognized you badly need. I greet you.*

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

February 4, 1840

February 4:Letter to the Bishop of Le Mans[[32]](#footnote-32), sending him also one that Father Vaures[[33]](#footnote-33) gave me from Sister Geray.

Letter from Mr. Bautain[[34]](#footnote-34), very complimentary. He sends me 200 francs for the needs of the Diocese of Algiers. [p. 53]

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

February 5, 1840

February 5:Mr. Coulin[[35]](#footnote-35) has returned to his senses. He wrote the following letter to my vicar general:

*... 1- I feel the deepest regret for having written my letter of 1 February, I agree that I have done wrong and I want and sincerely promise not to commit again a similar offense. 2 - I disavow every thought and every feeling expressed in this circumstance or others, that was contrary to the submission, devotion and affection that I have always preached and that I want to continue to practice and teach; 3 - I beg His Grace to forget any and all displeasure I have caused him and I'm committed to work and do everything in my power to make him forget them by my good conduct; 4 - I eagerly desire to get closer to the heart of my bishop, promising to inform him of everything, to consult him in everything and to seek what is good only under his inspiration; 5 - I ask His Grace to do me the favor of burning my letter of 1 February and date my behavior from that day, forgetting everything that has preceded it. Finally I strongly hope to get what I ask, bearing in mind the generous way His Grace treated several priests who had the misfortune to forget their duties towards their first pastor. With this confidence, vicar general, I present myself to His Grace?....*

In view of this letter, I kindly welcomed Mr. Coulin and forgot all his wrongs.

Letter from the Archbishop of Aix inviting me to attend the consecration of the Bishop of Digne. He says he would like to use this meeting to take up the affairs of our churches with his colleagues. I will think it over.

I do not have the time to report the trouble that the second monastery of the Visitation gave me today. I had to spend more than three hours in the convent parlor to learn about the hubbub these good nuns have caused because of some very wise decisions of their superior, my vicar general. The councilors urged me to use my authority to intervene. The result of my visit was the removal of the superior and the choice of Sister Dalmas, superior of the first monastery, to come and act as superior in the second monastery as sister-in-charge according to the rule that foresees this case. [p. 54]

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

February 6, 1840

February 6:Mass and confirmation at St. Barnabas and the Grey Nuns. I still found the inscription: “Oh, harsh eternity” that I had requested be corrected at my last visit, but no, they stubbornly insist on leading these poor girls by servile fear; it would soften their heart too much to let them hope for a blessed eternity. The principles of Mr. Receveur[[36]](#footnote-36) continue in this association. His successors did not hide it; it's by terror that they claim to lead souls.

On my way back from St. Barnabas, I went to the first monastery of the Visitation to arrange for these good religious to temporarily give me their superior whom I will send tomorrow to the second monastery as sister-in-charge to act as superior until we find another.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

February 7, 1840

February 7:The Bishop of Babylon[[37]](#footnote-37) and the Bishop of Tripoli[[38]](#footnote-38) dined at my home with Mr. St-Yves. The Bishop of Tripoli has only fifteen Catholics in his diocese and not a penny to live on in this diocese newly established by the Patriarch Mazloum. He came to France to raise money, unbeknown to the Congregation of Propaganda[[39]](#footnote-39) that had told him to return to Asia. This prelate is still young and was ill-advised because it is a weak recommendation to present oneself under such auspices, and that was merely from looking at the signatures of those who gave him a certificate to attest that he is a bishop and destitute. This certificate was issued by our Greek pastor and Father Joseph Zogheb and some other Orientals who know him. The Bishop of Babylon also knows him, but I did not see that he had signed the certificate; it was well that he had not so as not to compromise himself with Propaganda with which he has already had some troubles to resolve.

Mgr Trioche, Bishop of Babylon, proposes to spend two months in Marseilles. He has many old friends here. I have heard that when these old acquaintances meet him in the streets, wearing no other distinctive sign than his pectoral cross, they address him – to the detriment of his present dignity due to their poor education – with the familiar form of “you” and do not [p. 55] pay him the courtesy and respect due his position. A curate, taking his cross said, “What have you there?” It must have taken much restraint on the part of the prelate to repress such impertinence. I would have wanted him to reply, without anger but with dignity, this cross is the sign of the distance there is between you and me in the holy hierarchy of the Church.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

February 8, 1840

February 8:Letter from Fr. Courtès, satisfying news on the mission at Lafare.

Today a bailiff appeared at my door to serve notice of Sister Marie Caroline Tesseyre’s[[40]](#footnote-40) protest against the abuse she had to endure, etc. I did not want to see the bailiff nor receive his notification. Tomorrow I will find the source of this act of extravagance. I find it hard to believe that the sister who had been removed has gone to this extreme; but rather, I suppose that her brother, the lawyer, is the one who devised this new way of doing things.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

February 9, 1840

February 9:Pontifical Mass at St. Victor. Great music. The huge crowd filling the church behaved well. I also officiated at the pontifical vespers and gave the Benediction. I did not attend the procession, which takes place in the underground church.

Upon leaving I went to administer the sacrament of confirmation to a child who was dying in the house for juvenile prisoners. There are already 45 children in this house between the ages of 10 and 18. It is painful to see this early degradation; we expect much from the assiduous care that I give these poor children through Mr. Fissiaux and Mr. Margaillan[[41]](#footnote-41), his assistant. Already some of these children are showing the good effects of the religious instruction they receive.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

February 10, 1840

February 10:Letter to Sister Dalmas to let her know about Sister Marie Caroline’s writ.

Letter from Fr. Guibert. He so admires his seminarians and his colleagues that he is not afraid to tell me that he would like this situation to continue forever because, he says, *it would be the greatest happiness one can find in this world.*

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

February 11, 1840

February 11:Letter from my mother and from my sister. Confirmation of a veteran soldier at Fort St-Jean.

To Father Mille, superior, parish priest at Notre-Dame du Laus, near Gap. Upper Alps.[[42]](#footnote-42)

707:IX in Oblate Writings

Father Martin’s departure for the mission of Cotignac.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Mille

Marseilles,

Feb[ruary] 29, 1840.

You have preached enough missions for the diocese of Gap this year, so have no regrets if I take Father Martin away from you for the mission of Cotignac. In case he has promised to go somewhere else, let him back out of it. I cannot do without his assistance at Cotignac. The extreme fatigue to which the Lower Alps mission has subjected Father Telmon strictly forces me to take this measure; Father Telmon’s throat is so affected that he would be in imminent danger if he were not given a little rest. So let Father Martin leave at the beginning of the first week of Lent and come here. The mission at Cotignac starts the second Sunday. Don’t give me any argument, the matter is decided. If the situation did not require the presence of the parish priest at N.- D. du Laus on the spot, I would perhaps have called Father Mille, but he must remain at his post. Hence it is Father Martin who must come and I give him his obedience through the present letter.

I do not broach the subject of my sufferings.[[43]](#footnote-43) I know you share them and you ask God for the strength that I may bear them. On the other hand, I am filled with joy on learning of what the Lord has done in our missions. Don’t reserve anything for yourself except the consolation of having fulfilled your duty in a holy manner.

Good-bye. Lots of love to all. I embrace and bless you.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

To Father Courtès, at Aix].[[44]](#footnote-44)

708:IX in Oblate Writings

Illness of Fathers Telmon and Courtès. Impossibility of doing all the missions that have been promised.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Courtès

Marseilles,

March 14, 1840.

In conscience I have made up my mind, my dear Father Courtès, nothing in the world can make me change my decision because I would be sinning by acting differently. Father Telmon will not go to the mission of Cotignac or any other. I had to judge that you could do this mission because even after having spoken about what you call influenza, another name for a cold, you decided to go ahead provided Father Telmon was there with you. Then I retained the competence to judge that things would go equally well with Father Martin whom I had explicitly called, thereby sacrificing two missions which should have taken place in the Upper and Lower Alps. Now you say you have fever. Then there is no more question of undertaking this mission; but what baffles me is that you have allowed the two missionaries to start out: they will not suffice to undertake and bring such an important work to a good end. You should have written to the Parish Priest of Cotignac that since you were ill, the service he was expecting from you would have to be postponed. And since you are really ill, you had no responsibility before God. I needed nothing less than a reflection of this nature to calm myself when I see three missions fall through despite all the effort and changes I made to have this most important one succeed. You are sick. That says it all. If I could have foreseen this setback. I would have had Father Hermitte come down in time and Father Chauvet would not have left for Caderousse; with these two Fathers, Father Martin and Father Françon,[[45]](#footnote-45) the mission of Cotignac would still have been on a good basis.

I don’t say anything more; no one is bound to do the impossible. The good Lord will take our good will into consideration.[[46]](#footnote-46)

To Father Courtès, super[io]r of the Miss[iona]ries, with the Parish Priest of Cotignac, at Cotignac, Var.[[47]](#footnote-47)

709:IX in Oblate Writings

Let Father Courtès take care of his health during the mission of Cotignac. Father Telmon is to stay at Aix.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Courtès

Marseilles,

March 19, 1840.

I am very grateful to you, my dear Courtès, for having given me news about yourself so soon. Having learnt about your decision from your penultimate letter, I would have been anxious. I thank God for the assistance he has given you, but I cannot refrain from recommending that you do not abuse it.[[48]](#footnote-48) You tell me that the church is far away from the rectory: hence you must take some precautions after you have preached lest you expose yourself, all perspiring, to the wind.

I am very happy to tell you for your peace of mind that I am leaving Father P[ier]re[[49]](#footnote-49) at Aix. It was enough for me that he reassured me about the reason that required calling him to me. Without that I would never have thought of withdrawing him from Aix where he was doing well and to your satisfaction. I hope that the improvement in the good Parish Priest’s health will continue. Tell him how much I sympathize with him on account of his being indisposed, a circumstance so awkward that one can’t but help see therein a blow, as it were, from the evil spirit.

With all my heart I greet and I embrace all our Fathers as well as yourself.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

Early April [No date]

[p. 56] **[Early April]**[[50]](#footnote-50)

I take up this journal again with extreme reluctance. After all, what will come of the trouble it gives me? To make known some mostly insignificant facts which I rarely have time to develop and on which I can make no reflection whatsoever. I am in such a state of mind and heart that I value nothing and attach minimal importance to whatever happens here below. How could it be otherwise? I'm surrounded on all sides by the shadow of death; everything tells me that life is but a dream, the grave touches the cradle. What good is there in so much activity to place but a grain of sand on your path as you pass by? You will soon be swallowed up in the abyss that devours generations that fall rapidly one upon the other. I deem it folly to be seriously concerned with anything other than the salvation of one’s soul. And since in the high position I hold, this work is complicated by a multitude of duties that relate to the souls entrusted to me, by countless cases that must be treated with a variety of people, by all the worries of a tedious administration, I am permitted to yearn for a rest that rids me of so many concerns. And when my mind is preoccupied with all these thoughts, they still come to talk to me about the archbishopric of Paris! Great God, what power could reduce me to that end which I reject with all the strength of my being? I want only to rest and this need is so strong in me that I need the sense of duty to move me to fulfill the external obligations imposed upon me by my office. So, far from claiming to succeed better than another in this difficult task, I do not even feel the zeal I would need if I was forced to take it up. [p. 57] Thus, once again, the thought of ever accepting any proposal in this regard is a thousand miles away. I see no future ahead of me. My thoughts go to the tomb where I just placed the precious remains of my venerable uncle. Yet a few years and I will go down into the same crypt to be placed beside him and our ashes will await there together for the great day of the glorious resurrection, as it is written on the stone which will cover both of us: *Hic jacent, etc., expectantes beatam spem et adventum gloriae Magni Dei.*[[51]](#footnote-51)

The thought of the brevity of life, coupled with the growing disgust I have for the human species, could, if I was not careful, throw me into an excess that I should avoid. I am inclined to undertake nothing, either because of the thought of not having time to finish it or because of the thought that it is not worth the trouble of dealing with men who are always ungrateful and unjust. But I must be good to them because they are redeemed.

All is vanity on earth, my dear friend, said the dying Cardinal Archbishop of Reims whom I assisted in his last moments. When I closed his eyes, I had no idea that so soon after, I would have to mourn the untimely death of my dear uncle. All has been written and printed about this blessed death, I do not have the courage to add anything, but the loss of this holy man has deeply affected my heart. One cannot replace such friends!

Letter from the King:

*Paris, this 29th day of March 1840*

*His Lordship the Bishop,*

*The letters you wrote me could not fail to get my attention. I lamented with you the painful loss of the venerable prelate, your uncle, whose eminent virtues I have appreciated for a long time. I do appreciate no less the laudable solicitude which most recently brought you to make known to me your thoughts on a topic worthy of consideration. I wish to thank you, and to renew the assurance of all my feelings for you. Yours affectionately,*

*Louis-Philippe*

Letter to Bishop Garibaldi recommending the Archbishop of Tripoli to him. Another circular letter to all the bishops of France.

Letter from the Archbishop of Toulouse[[52]](#footnote-52) to join a protest in favor of academic freedom for minor seminaries.

March, April, May, June and July have passed without even thinking of writing a single word about daily events, without making any comment on what is happening around me. It annoys some of our people, but it's stronger than me; I feel an overwhelming boredom in being my own journalist. Out of kindness I have tried to take up the task imposed upon me. I was not faithful to it. Will it be otherwise with this new resumption? I dare not assure it.

To Father Courtès, sup[erio]r of the Miss[iona]ries, Rectory, at Cotignac, Var.[[53]](#footnote-53)

710:IX in Oblate Writings

Extend the mission of Cotignac by one week to leave enough time for the men to be converted.

Courtès

Marseilles,

April 6, 1840.

My dear Father Courtès, you must not hesitate to extend the mission by another week if this period is necessary to complete the work you have begun. The matter seems to me more essential than you tell me in your letter, for the reason that the men who did not say no have however held back till the last minute. Your mission will be incomplete and will have failed to some extent if you do not make this last effort to defeat the armed fortress which is tenaciously defending its prey. If all of you remain there, you have a greater chance of success and then you can leave without any regret. The plan of leaving Father Martin alone when you go away has several disadvantages. I have already urgent requests from Upper Alps where he was expected. They will have nothing to say if the mission is extended. On the other hand, to have chosen him to remain would be inexcusable in the eyes of this region which is so ill-disposed through the enemies’ instigations.

The poor Parish Priest’s illness has deprived you of a good worker who would have helped you much. I am not surprised that you could not take care of the earnest need of all the women, but those 300 women will still keep you busy during the week specially dedicated for men, which is one more reason for prolonging your stay at Cotignac and ending the mission a week later. These are needs from which you cannot turn aside. The good Lord will provide for what may not get done elsewhere. The essential thing is to do well what one does, *age quod agis.*

I beg of you to communicate my letter to Father Martin, it will serve as a reply to his which, as well as yours, has given me the greatest pleasure because of the interesting details you give. I am enchanted by what you tell me about Father Françon but I cannot understand Father De Veronico’s timidity: he should do a little more violence to himself.

I greet all of you affectionately.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

*P.S.* Father Bernard has just finished the retreat at Allauch; he has left to preach those of St-Mitre and Stes-Maries. Thus you can see that the Diocese of Aix is not neglected. We can’t do everything everywhere.

[To Father Guigues, at N.-D. de L’Osier].[[54]](#footnote-54)

711:IX in Oblate Writings

Father Pélissier will go to N. - D. du Laus, Father Pont to the Major Seminary of Marseilles, Fathers Magnan and Martin will receive their obedience probably for N. - D. de L’Osier.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Guigues

Marseilles,

June 7, 1840.

My dear Father Guigue[s], I approve Father Pélissier going to give a helping hand to our Fathers at N.-D. du Laus during the time of the great crowds; I am inclined to agree to this act of charity all the more so because I intended to send this Father to that community as part of the transfers which the needs of our different houses require. I would very much like that he be not too adverse to coming to Marseilles and replace good Father Semeria whom I am obliged to send to Corsica along with another Father who, together with Father Gibelli, will constitute the house of Vico which we cannot leave vacant any more.

I would insist very much on the arrangement planned with Mrs. Gallois, it is undoubtedly the best for us. Do everything possible to accomplish it.[[55]](#footnote-55)

Brother Antoine[[56]](#footnote-56) requests me to authorize him to make his final vows. Before deciding in Council about his request. I ask you for your opinion.

I think I can inform you that I shall give you Father Magnan. I would like to give you Father Martin also. I do not wholly commit myself to this. I shall definitely withdraw Father Pont, who will be sent to the Major Seminary of Marseilles.[[57]](#footnote-57) He will go down at the same time that the vacations begin, that is at the end of this month. I shall send you one more man who will remain in place.[[58]](#footnote-58)

[To Father Pelissier, at Embrun].[[59]](#footnote-59)

712:IX in Oblate Writings

Reproaches Father Pélissier who had left N. - D. du Laus without permission and who was asking for dispensation from his vows.

Pélissier

Marseilles.

July 29, 1840.

You are quite guilty, my dear Father Pél[issier]. in behaving the way you do. It is really quite inconceivable that, under the false pretexts your imagination conjures up, you should take the liberty of exempting yourself from the duties of obedience and that it be from Embrun that I receive your letter. I groan all the more before God for this disorder which establishes you in a permanent state of sin because I had called you to come and see me only to share your point of view. I had intended to explain myself to you in a friendly way and if I could not have rid your mind of the prejudices you have unfortunately entertained therein, which, as far as I am concerned, are obviously exaggerated, I would have come to an agreement with you in looking for a canonical means to end this state of affairs. You were already sufficiently to be pitied for nurturing in your heart blameworthy thoughts which had perverted your judgment to the point of making you approve Father Gig[noux]’s wretched behaviour.[[60]](#footnote-60) Thereby you had made yourself. to some extent, an accomplice in his apostasy. You wanted to do more, you wanted to imitate him. It was precisely to turn you away from going to that extreme, that in an attitude of sincere charity, I had called you to my side. I was hoping, in communicating with you freely, to find a remedy for your ailment and put your mind at peace; or, if against my expectation I did not succeed in getting you back on the right path. I was intending as I have said above to provide you with a canonical means to end the matter. You preferred to take the law into your hands by disobeying a formal command of your legitimate superior, you have abandoned your post, and it is from the place you have chosen that you write me to justify your defection, doubly expressed both by the date and the signature in your letter.[[61]](#footnote-61) Take, then, the full responsibility for your damnable behaviour. I shall take counsel without delay about what is to be done. I greet you.

+ Ch. J. Eugene. Bishop of M[arseilles].

To Father Semeria, superior of the Miss[iona]ries, at Vico, Corsica.[[62]](#footnote-62)

713:IX in Oblate Writings

Even if he is rather young, Father Semeria is the superior and must behave as such. Gibelli will be his first assistant and admonitor. Father De Veronico has still to be trained in religious life.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Semeria

Marseilles.

July 30, 1840.

My dear Father Semeria. I am still waiting for a few words from you. My dear child, you must keep in touch with me. It is true that it was too much for your nascent superiorship to find yourself all of a sudden in charge of two combined communities.[[63]](#footnote-63) You may well be young. you may well be new, you are nevertheless the head who is responsible for all those who live under the roof of our house of Vico. It is useless to abase yourself: despite your humility such is the case, and I think that order is established according to the Rule. You are the superior of the community of Vico. Father Gibelli is your first assistant, your admonitor and the spiritual director of the house. I have not yet appointed your second assistant. I believe that Father De Veronico will do himself sufficient justice so as not to be surprised that I expect him to be more steady, that he become more regular and acquire a more correct conscience before he can be entrusted with any confidential position. You may read this section of my letter to him in all simplicity. You are his superior, so I must inform you of things that concern your men. You will note with regard to him that he needs to watch himself so as not to behave childishly and that his conscience is far too lax in the interpretation he gives to some of his duties or to the Rules. I shall quote to you but one very recent example which I would be happy if you were to recall to him so that he would come to know my disapproval and the reproach I would certainly have made to him, had I known the matter before his departure. It was the eve of the S[acred] Heart, a day of fasting. After having worked with one of his companions to adorn the church, they went down to the refectory where they found only breakfast leftovers. His confrere was wrong in showing his temper. De Veronico, in line with his character, gave the matter another turn, which was just as reprehensible. In the kitchen no one could have foreseen that they were so tired as to need a little more food. The confrere sulked because of his empty stomach but was satisfied with eating a piece of cheese. De Veronico, without being at all shy about it and in a very unbecoming tone, had some eggs prepared for him, deciding. with his normal sneer, that he felt his hunger sufficiently to declare that he was dispensed from fasting. Thus, a double fault with the aggravating circumstance of scandal and flightiness. He should certainly not have done these things even if he felt the need to eat something other than the breakfast food. His duty was to take the trouble of going to see the superior and ask for dispensation from the fast and permission to give orders to the cook, then everything would have been in order and he would have avoided talking like a fool. If he is still like this after so many years of vows, you understand that he cannot be put in charge of directing others. Since my remarks have been prompted only by the duty of seeing to his welfare. I am not afraid to have him know them. It will make him reflect on his need for self-reform and everything will proceed well. Good-bye. my dear Father Semeria. I bless you and all our Fathers. I embrace you.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

The position of Father Guibert in the diocese of Ajaccio requires that he be continually considered in the house of Vico as a visitor, since we have no provincials among us.[[64]](#footnote-64)

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

July 31, 1840

July 31:I see on my desk: Letter to Fr. Delvaux to make friendly reproaches for his refusal to keep my nephew at Brugelette. Letter to Mr. de Mazenod at Chateau St. Marcellin par Sury-le-Comtal, Loire, in response to his very polite letter. Letter to his brother, L. de Mazenod[[65]](#footnote-65), at the Chateau de Vergnon, opposite Condrieu, Isère, to reply to his apologies for not being able to see me on his way to Marseilles, and about several questions concerning our genealogy.

Letter to Ms. Leblanc to tell her politely that I can do nothing for her son Fortuné.

Letter to Fr. Bellon. Letter to Fr. Gibelli. Letter to Fr. Semeria. Letter to Mlle Cornélie de Mellingen. Isn’t that enough for one day? In this last letter I said to this English woman, former penitent of Cardinal Odescalchi[[66]](#footnote-66): *... I learned with pleasure that you have heard from Monsignor Odescalchi. I call him this way because according to my way of thinking, we may well give up being a cardinal to become a monk but when one has received the sacred character of the episcopate, one is still a bishop in the eyes of God, the Church and men [p. 59] for all eternity. Thus, I will never consent to viewing a bishop as a simple priest, or lower his character, which is by divine right above that of the priest, by pretending to confuse them. My regard for the humility of a saint will never let me adopt the usage – which I would criticize even in full council, if called to do so – of calling by the simple title of father, which is proper to the priest, the pontiff who in the hierarchy of the Church of Jesus Christ is always and everywhere higher than the priest and distinguished from him. What I say to you, I have said to the Jesuits whom I love so much that I've settled them in Marseilles despite many difficulties from the powerful who do not like them. I said it to cardinals and bishops who think like me. I would have said it to the pope had I been in a position to be consulted by him. Note that I do not blame a bishop who retires to a monastery, what I want is that he be always seen for what he is, even so ever modestly. A religious order will be more respectable to me in the measure that it renders this tribute to the episcopate. It is not by devaluating that which is highest in the Church by the institution of Jesus Christ that it will be more esteemed. Maybe I upset you by telling you this frankly, but this is what a bishop must be in the Church of God; human considerations should never deter him from professing what he regards as true.*

In the letter to Fr. Semeria, I gave him Fr. Gibelli as first assessor, admonitor and spiritual father. I told him that the position of Fr. Guibert in the diocese requires that he usually be considered in the house of Vico as the visitor, since provincials do not exist among us.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

August 1, 1840

August 1:Another year to add to the 58 already passed. I enter today into my 59th year, which includes 25 years in the world, 25 years in the ecclesiastical state from the tonsure to the priesthood, and soon 8 years in the episcopate. Priest at 28 years of age in 5 months, Bishop at 49 in three months. All these calculations show first that I am no longer young, far from it, and they explain enough the disgust I feel for all things here below. They also remind me of God’s blessings; would to God they do not reproach my little correspondence to grace of my triple vocation. [p. 60]

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

August 2, 1840

August 2:Anniversary of my baptism. Mass inside the monastery of the Capuchin Sisters. These holy women are so devoted to me that I am happy to provide them the opportunity to unite themselves in a more intimate way to my prayers. It is a powerful help to me. I am sure I was not forgotten today in my other convents, but on the day of the Portiuncula[[67]](#footnote-67) it was right to give preference to the daughters of St. Francis.

Community dinner at the Calvaire. Assisted at Vespers in their church. Panegyric of St. Liguori preached by Fr. Mille. The Father did not want to give us the eulogy he had written several years ago. He did, as usual, a remarkable job. He composed a brand new one in the afternoon the day before yesterday, he memorized it yesterday, and he preached today without stumbling.

An amusing incident happened today. After the reading of the pastoral letter I had written for the translation of St. Serenus[[68]](#footnote-68), I spoke to the faithful to help them understand my views better. Among other things, I expanded upon the merits of the preachers I had chosen, and speaking of the Jesuit, Fr. Ferrand, who would preach on Saturday at Trinity, I stressed all the titles he has to attract the confidence of the audience that I wanted to gather for him, I called him an illustrious orator, etc., etc. I finally praised Fr. Guyon who will preach on Monday at the cathedral. I remained silent only about the one who was to preach Sunday at the Trinity because he was present; he was the same one who had just read the pastoral letter, Fr. Telmon, our missionary whose name I did not mention. Very well. Who would have thought that Fr. Ferrand was lurking behind a pillar of the church and was forced to hear his own praise from my mouth? When they told me, after the blessing, I could not help but laugh and everyone joined in. [p. 61]

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

August 3, 1840

August 3:Confirmation in my chapel. Blessing of the chapel of Miss Duranti’s boarding school.

Arrival of the Bishop of Digne, who has come to Marseilles just to see me. It seems that it is a custom that the bishops have adopted; a letter of communion is not enough. They make it a point to visit their brother bishops in the province when they take possession of their diocese. I was not so polite.

Meeting of the city’s pastors at the bishop’s house. I wanted to stir up their interest for the translation of the relic of St. Serenus that I had brought from Biandrate. Although they had received the pastoral letter I issued on this subject, I thought I should insist they give their parishioners suitable notice.

I used the meeting to announce that I would write them a circular letter inviting them to take up a collection for the Spanish priests who flock to my diocese.[[69]](#footnote-69) There are sometimes as many as 80. Alone, I cannot provide for all their needs.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

August 4, 1840

August 4:I took the Bishop of Digne on a tour of the city. He has taken up residence in the Countryside[[70]](#footnote-70) where he is well. I accompanied him to the Providence house for poor girls and to several churches.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

August 5, 1840

August 5:The Bishop of Digne left tonight. On his way to the stagecoach when passing through St. Louis, the prelate fell and hurt himself quite seriously.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

August 6, 1840

August 6:Letter from the Bishop of Le Mans, brought by Mr. Gavot whom I had recommended to him. The prelate told me that Mr. Bourmault, my classmate, one of his vicars general, had been stricken with paralysis.

Letter from my nephew Louis. He announces his arrival here for early September. [p. 62]

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

August 7, 1840

August 7:Mr. Grassis of Digne wrote Jeancard to announce that he will draw 500 francs from me. He asked me to add another 500 francs to the 1,000 francs he has received from me for the ladies at Isnardy. I do not agree with this proposal.

Letter to Césarie to let her know Louis’ decision.[[71]](#footnote-71)

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

August 8, 1840

August 8:Letter from the Bishop of Digne thanking me for my warm welcome. Equally friendly response from me. Pontifical First Vespers at Trinity attended by the Chapter and all the clergy of the city. Sermon by Fr. Ferrand. I was pleasantly surprised to find the three naves of the church filled for the occasion of the exhibition of the relic of St. Serenus. This first gathering was really touching. God will be glorified in his saint.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

August 9, 1840

August 9:Pontifical Mass attended by the Chapter at Trinity church for the feast of St. Serenus that we celebrated today. Great attendance at all Masses this morning. Many people at the pontifical Mass. Pontifical vespers and eulogy of the saint by Fr. Telmon, which pleased everyone.

Solemn public procession for the translation of the holy relic. The procession was very large and very uplifting. The crowd that gathered to see it pass was immense. Superb weather. All the confraternities of penitents and men’s groups were present, including the Youth Congregation. The entire city was impressed with the behavior of these various congregations.

Arriving at the cathedral, I handed the relic over to the Chapter. We sang the *Iste confessor[[72]](#footnote-72)* and the antiphon *Sacerdos*. I said the prayer of Saint Serenus from the throne after incensing the relic. Then we sang the *Ave verum* and the *Tantum ergo* and I finished the ceremony with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. [p. 63]

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

August 10, 1840

August 10:Low Mass at the cathedral: a large number of communions. High Mass. Very solemn vespers that all the clergy of the city attended. Many faithful in the church. Sermon by Fr. Guyon. Like Fr. Ferrand, he did not speak of St. Serenus but in passing. The celebration in honor of the saint was none the less beautiful. I finished with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

August 11, 1840

August 11:Business in town. Director of the new house for the Insane is very polite, and wants to ask for a chaplain for his institution.

Letter to Canon Guien. Before blaming him for being absent from the entire feast, I want to know if he was within ten leagues of Marseilles.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

August 12, 1840

August 12:Letter from Fr. Delvaux. He will keep Eugene at the college out of friendship for me. My reasons do not persuade him. He was angry with the insinuations of my letter that he took seriously.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

August 13, 1840

August 13:I reply to thank him for his anger, which proves his kind feelings for me, I disavow the severe interpretation he made of my words, and I show him why my reasons are good. What pleasure we will have in bringing the whole family together at my place when Louis arrives?

Letter to Fr. Aubert.[[73]](#footnote-73) Letter to Fr. Martin. I agree that we try taking in some students since the novitiate does not fill up, but I do not hide how little confidence I have in such a long and uncertain method[[74]](#footnote-74) of recruiting. At my age I cannot hope to see the results.[[75]](#footnote-75)

The Bishop of La Rochelle[[76]](#footnote-76) came while I was having dinner; he can spend only a few hours in Marseilles. I offered him all the courtesies possible. He agreed to eat a peach, since his dinner awaited him at the Grey Nuns where he had been announced. [p. 64]

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

August 14, 1840

August 14:Sister Geray will be at my disposal to start the work I have wanted for so long to establish. I had thought about it during the lifetime of our Fr. Suzanne whom I wanted to take charge of it. I had spoken later to Mr. Coulin and the Ladies of Nazareth. Let us see whether we will succeed now. It is about founding a home to receive domestics who have lost their status, until they can be placed, and to accommodate young people who come from their countries for work and who face terrible dangers before they find what they need.

Fr. Semeria wrote to me before receiving my letter. His letter is worthy of his beautiful soul. He reports that the Corsicans, grateful for all the good that our Congregation does in their country either at the seminary or in the missions, are saying aloud, “*senza il vescovo di Marsiglia cosa avrebbe potuto fare il vescovo Casanelli?*”[[77]](#footnote-77) This is the highest compliment they could pay our Fathers.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

August 15, 1840

August 15:Pontifical Mass. Papal blessing. Public procession that I did not attend.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

August 16, 1840

August 16:Letter from Cardinal Pacca, very friendly as usual. It was brought to me by Father Barola, his secretary, whom he recommends to me during his journey. The cardinal presents him as a great writer, a professor of philosophy at Propaganda. I invited him to dinner tomorrow. It is a courtesy that I owed to the dear cardinal who honors all of my recommendations. Father Barola told me I could not imagine how the cardinal feels about our friendship. It corresponds to my sincere attachment to him.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

August 17, 1840

August 17:Confirmation in my chapel. The chapel was full. You would think I never confirm. We have to start over every Monday. [p. 65]

Distribution of prizes at the minor seminary. I brought Father Barola there to give him an idea of our practice, so that he can talk about it in Italy when he returns to Rome. He was delighted with everything he saw. The literary exercise interested him very much. He was touched by the paternal words I addressed to the students. In his enthusiasm he asked me to express his feelings to the assembly. I could not refuse this favor, but to prepare everyone for this novelty, I began by introducing him. The music ceased, it became silent and the dear Father, to my surprise and confusion, turned to me and addressed me in these terms, with the emphasis and tone that Italian literary writers are known for in such meetings:

*Tanta tuis inest doctrina et gratia verbis  
Ut capiant animos dulcia melle magis  
Felices animae quarum tibi credita cura est  
Virtutis carpent, te duce, praesul, iter.[[78]](#footnote-78)*

Turning then to the students he gave them a quatrain in Italian of which I did not catch the words. They were words of congratulations and encouragement.

Visit to Madam Rigny who almost died with her daughter, when her coach overturned; the maid died.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

August 18, 1840

August 18:Letter from the Archbishop of Aix. His letter crossed mine. It reflected exactly the opinion I had expressed to him about the requests for a General Council.

Mr. Pastorel[[79]](#footnote-79) sent me the lithographed portrait of the venerable Father Etienne to whom I had given the abbatial blessing at Aiguebelle. He died full of years and merits at the age of 96. He remembered me until his last moments. I invoke him with confidence. [p. 66]

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

August 19, 1840

August 19: A stay in the countryside. Visit of the Duke of Sabran and his wife. Consultation with Madam the Countess of Monteil. My well thought decision is consistent with the verbal response that I gave her.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

August 20, 1840

August 20:Could I forget an anniversary at once so painful and so comforting? I offered the Holy Sacrifice to raise up in glory into heaven rather than to give relief to our holy Father Marcou, a martyr of charity for the salvation of souls and whose passage to a better life was so remarkable.

Letter to Sister Geray. This is to allow her to look for companions for the charitable work for the Domestics that I agree to confide to her.

Letter to Cardinal Fransoni,[[80]](#footnote-80) reply with information requested on Vitagliano[[81]](#footnote-81) because of his request for the title apostolic missionary.[[82]](#footnote-82) Good information, but I do not see what this title will give him.

Letter to Fr. Gilles Pastorel, Trappist, to thank him for sending me a piece of the venerable Father Abbot Etienne’s clothing and a lithography of his portrait. This holy abbot died at the age of 96 in the odor of sanctity. Fr. Pastorel reminded me that it was I who had blessed him at Aiguebelle.

Letter to Cardinal Pacca. Reply to his nice letter recommending Father Barola his secretary.

Letter from Fr. Aubert. He saw Lumières in passing. The community is well. He has arrived at Laus.

Letter from Fr. Ricard. He wants me to go to Lumières. The business of Mr. Demarre’s[[83]](#footnote-83) house requires it. He told me of the miracle of two blind men who instantaneously recovered their sight through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin. One was blind as a result of smallpox. The other had cataracts, which fell off as two scales at the time of the invocation.

Sister Geray created a ridiculous scene. She demanded [p. 67] a certificate as founder; it is not reasonable to give it to her before the foundations of the work are laid. Besides, we have yet to provide her with a house and furniture; therefore the title of founder at this time would be too pompous and a bit unjust to demand.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

August 25, 1840

August 25:Pastoral visit to Allauch. This region has proven to be excellent.

Letter from Mgr Chatrousse, bishop-elect of Valencia, inviting me to attend his consecration on September 21.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

August 26, 1840

August 26:Reply to the Bishop-elect of Valencia to congratulate him and thank him. I tell him that it was I who had suggested to the Minister of Cults to raise him to the episcopate. I would gladly go to his consecration, but since it is not necessary, it is possible that I will not be able to get away from some commitments, etc.

Letter from Fr. Joannis, pastor of Mormoiron.[[84]](#footnote-84) He gives me an account of the persecution suffered by the Carmelites of Marseilles in 1792.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

August 27, 1840

August 27: Letter from Fr. Bise, distressing in content and style. Under the pretext of an imaginary perfection, he grumbles, he complains about the ministry entrusted to him, he threatens to go to the pope to ask to be sent to the foreign missions, etc. What an illusion! A poor child who cannot give even the simplest sermon, pretends to fly on his wings to foreign missions; and then with how much virtue to face all the dangers of these hot countries! Good God, what a mess! Humility, obedience, holy indifference, has he never thought of acquiring these? If one had even a shadow of them, they would not write like Fr. Bise just wrote to me, far from it, they would not even think of it.

Letter to Sister Geray. I worked it out as she wanted, but appropriately. She insisted on this document to address some nuns who will join to this work a service for persons who are ill at home. [p. 68]

Letter to the unfortunate Gignoux[[85]](#footnote-85) dispensing him from his vows. We should have expelled this man long ago. But we will always be incorrigible when it comes to mercy. I do not have the courage to copy my letter.

Letter to Fr. Bise. A mixture of criticism and friendship reminding him of his duties.

Letter to Fr. Courtès who complains about Fr. Chauvet in several of his letters and has asked for Fr. Françon[[86]](#footnote-86).

Letter to my nephew Louis asking him to fix exactly the day he will arrive here.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

August 29, 1840

August 29:Letter from the Marquise of Cordoba for a good work.

Letter from Mr. Wuilleret containing some things on account and in payment for Billens. Mr. Badou, who acquired the property, is paying.

Letter from my mother. She is very happy with Jean Marbacher who I placed in her service to replace, if necessary, his brother who I do not trust anymore because of his age.

Letter from the Archbishop of Monreale.[[87]](#footnote-87) This prelate was kind enough to answer all the questions I had made in the name of the Marquis de Villeneuve about the altar of St. Louis and the relics of the saint that are located in the metropolitan church of Monreale.

Letter to the Count of Panisse requesting the address of Mr. Villeneuve who had asked him to have me give a message to the Archbishop of Palermo.[[88]](#footnote-88)

Pastoral visit to St. Menet where the children from Accattes, Camoins, Treille and Eoures[[89]](#footnote-89) had gathered; the same day to Roquevaire where the entire population filled the church. At Auriol the children from Bourine, Peypin and La Destrousse. On my way from Auriol to St. Savournin I stopped at La Destrousse to inspect the church; all the people were waiting for me. The parish priest of Gréasque gave me a pleasant surprise by coming to meet me with most of his parishioners. [p. 69] It was thus that he obliged me to enter the church and speak to his people. I arrived a little late in St. Savournin where all the people were waiting for me. The next day was a day of celebration for the parish. Nobody went to work. As a good and gentle pastor of souls I took advantage of their good disposition to remind them of their duties. The crowd walked me halfway when I was leaving. Having been warned that the people of Belcodène were waiting for me at their chapel, I went there. I do not think a Bishop has ever visited this place. I arrived at Gémenos in the evening. The next day I confirmed the children there. I left for Aubagne passing by the home of Mr. Gaudin where I stopped to bless the chapel that was built for the use of poor Cardinal de Latil, his uncle, who never had the pleasure of enjoying it. The apartment where I assisted the good cardinal and saw him die will become in a few days the bridal chamber, without anything changed except those who dwell in it. I made this remark in passing. At Aubagne the usual troubles between the pastor and the curates. From Aubagne I went to La Ciotat. The people crowded around my coach so much that I had to get down. I led them to the church where I gave Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament as a reward for their eagerness. The children of Ceyreste came to be confirmed. I also confirmed at the convent that is thriving. I then went to Cassis, where I arrived very late; however, the people showed great eagerness and as at La Ciotat I had Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament for them. From Cassis I returned to Marseilles via Gineste.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

September 13, 1840

September 13:Back in Marseilles, I received the visit of Mr. de Liancourt, the prime mover of rescue[[90]](#footnote-90) who was anxious to see me.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

September 14, 1840

September 14:I confirmed I don’t know how many people in my chapel. The Ladies of the Refuge came to consult me on their new acquisition, etc. I saw the parish priest of St. Lazarus, who annoyed me with his plan to set up his family in the parsonage, which we would [p. 70] have built at great expense seemingly for the greater convenience of this family, while the curates would be relegated to the second floor of the house without the possibility of doing even their household tasks. I was upset with this plan despite the urgency of the reasons the pastor alleged. I took time to give a definitive answer, and it really seems so unsuitable that I do not feel in any way inclined to give him what he asks.

Letter from Mr. Martin, private secretary of Mr. Thiers[[91]](#footnote-91) to ardently recommend Mr. Vidal, the pastor of Cassis, who longs to be placed in the city.

Letter from Fr. Bise, always strange in the way he expresses his desires.

Letter from Fr. Honorat with details on the attendance[[92]](#footnote-92) at Lumières for Christmas.

Letter from Father Leblanc. He asks me to write in his favor to the Archbishop of Paris[[93]](#footnote-93) whom he says likes me and respects me. I did not need this encouragement to accommodate Leblanc who always takes care to remind me of the right he has to my friendship. Unfortunately, this good priest is living proof of the obstacles parents can be to doing all the good we are called to do. After missing the vocation that called him to the Congregation, they are the reason that he is never satisfied with his lot because he does not earn enough. The parish of St. Eustache is too little to satisfy the claims of a mother, a brother and sister, but I think he makes 3 to 4,000 francs. They need the parish of St. Sulpice or St-Roch[[94]](#footnote-94), and that is Leblanc's request and perhaps it would be good to recognize that a parish might be good for him; he is a most carefree, simple man, but what the love of family can’t do: *Si mei non fuerint dominati tunc immaculatus ero*.[[95]](#footnote-95)

Letter from the Bishop of Valencia to thank me for deciding to attend his consecration. Just thinking of this trip [p. 71] tires me, but I have to undertake it in the interests of the Congregation.[[96]](#footnote-96)

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

September 16, 1840

September 16:Letter to Mr. Martin. Reply to his letter recommending Vidal to me.

Letter to the Bishop of Digne asking him to release Mr. Maurel, the pastor of Les Dourbes, who is asking to enter the Congregation.[[97]](#footnote-97)

I have started having spiritual reading which must be attended by all the servants in my household. It is mainly for them that I have introduced this practice. I never succeeded in giving them an instruction on Sunday as I had intended. The Offices which I usually attend prevented me from doing so. By this reading I hope to compensate for what I could not do otherwise. My nephew and niece were the first readers.[[98]](#footnote-98) It is a good example for those who may be charged to do it after them.

Letter to the Marquis of Villeneuve-Trans with the reply of the Archbishop of Monreale to my letter which contained several issues for which Mr. Villeneuve was eager to have a solution.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

October 1840

[October][[99]](#footnote-99):Since my return from Vienne, where I went to attend the consecration of the Bishop of Valence I made pastoral visits to St. Loup, St. Charles and Mazargues. The children and the entire assembly everywhere were attentive and gave the same intelligent responses. I ask nothing more to prove that there is no other method to follow than the one I have adopted, that is to say, to speak to people in their natural language.[[100]](#footnote-100) It is not enough to talk of their attention, it is a kind of rapture to use the expression of a priest who himself was delighted to see what was happening before his eyes. May God always give me successors from the area and may they be well convinced of the necessity to follow my method.

Queen Cristina[[101]](#footnote-101) arrived in Marseilles. One would have hoped that the public would despise this woman enough not to rush to see her. But curiosity won out over decency and fairness. An eager crowd follows her around. It is true that they give her no sign of sympathy. Not a single cry or cheer can be heard. The crowd looks and lets her pass.

[To Father Ancel, at Montgenèvre].[[102]](#footnote-102)

714:IX in Oblate Writings

Invitation to return to the Congregation. Father Mille will receive him and help him. His accepting a position outside the Congregation renders him liable to expulsion.

Ancel

Marseilles.

October 17, 1840.

Sincerely, my dear friend, how can you expect that I in conscience can grant you the dispensation you request, if it rests on such futile reasons as you set before me. I thought I was dreaming when I received your letters.[[103]](#footnote-103) Could it not be said that you are ignorant of the primary principles of theology and that you consider as a joke the most sacred commitments that exist on earth? Though bound by the vows and an oath, you act independently of these formidable obligations. You look after your interests not only outside of but in formal opposition to the obedience you have vowed and which binds you to your lawful superiors. and it is after having settled on an illegitimate, illegal, anti-canonical measure that you inform me without embarrassment that you have accepted a post on your own authority outside of this Congregation which you call mine[[104]](#footnote-104) as if it were not as much yours as it is mine, as if you had not solemnly sworn in the presence of O.L. Jesus Christ to live and die in her bosom. I will not dwell on this, my dear friend. I would not know how to make sense of such aberration; I appeal instead to your reason, to your common sense, your heart, your religious conscience. No. in conscience I cannot without any legitimate reason grant you the dispensation you request.

Unfortunately you have placed yourself in a situation wherein you are liable to dismissal because, according to canonical principles, what the devil has induced you to do, that is, living outside the Congregation against obedience and accepting a post without your superior’s authorization, etc. are things equivalent to apostasy. Who would have expected this? I who was thinking of you in view of soon entrusting you with the superiorship of one of the Congregation’s houses.[[105]](#footnote-105) I who esteemed you. who loved you, that I should be reduced to the extreme misfortune of seeing the Council impose on you the extreme penalty you have deserved, a penalty which S[ain]t Thomas compares with excommunication: *expulsio juxta D. Thomam comparatur excommunicationi.* What would I do to divert you from this misfortune? I have not laid your case before the Council. I shall submit it to the Council only when it will be clear that I cannot count on your return. I have only to have recourse to my affection for you to act with such kindness, but in case I need to. the decretals of Popes authorize me to act thus: *Superiores* ...*nihil intentatum relinquant ut lucrentur animas fratrum suorum fere in profundum malorum delapsas. ante quam gravissimum atque extremum expulsion is remedium experiantur.[[106]](#footnote-106)* The evil has undoubtedly reached its highest point, for you are in a state of mortal sin and you disregard this in an attitude of dreadful confidence. For God’s sake, my dear friend, look within yourself and heed my voice, which is that of a father and a friend. Go to Notre-Dame du Laus. get in touch with the superior whom you trust. I shall give him all the powers he needs to re-instate you. Thereafter, if it is deemed opportune to grant you some special permissions temporarily, we shall try to arrange everything as best as we can, but once again, for God’s sake, for the sake of your soul, don’t continue to take the path which leads to perdition and thereby also afflict my heart and those who love you. Good-bye. I pray to God that he may make you docile to my voice and I affectionately greet you.

+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

October 25, 1840

October 25:The queen went to hear mass at St. Charles. The parish priest did not have time to consult me. He took it upon himself to give her the honors that I might have been reluctant to consent to grant her. He went with his clergy to receive her at the door of the church, he presented the holy water (that positively he should not have done, at most he should have sprinkled her himself); he accompanied her to the sanctuary where he had prepared a kneeler with carpets and cushions. But what is absolutely reprehensible, he had her kiss the paten before the communion of the priest who celebrated before her. [p. 73] I was aware of all these things and about to send my comments to the pastor, when the prefect came to visit me. The prefect came to visit for two purposes: 1 - to ask me in the name of Queen Cristina for permission to celebrate Mass in a room of his mansion, Her Majesty wanting to hear Mass every day; 2 - to approach me about paying a visit to the queen, if it were necessary.

I gladly agreed to the first of these requests and tomorrow I will give orders accordingly. On the second point, I answered frankly that it was repugnant to my sense of propriety, and I would almost say to my conscience, to present myself to the queen, first because this woman horrified me less by her private conduct, which is only too public,[[107]](#footnote-107) than by her political acts, that I regarded her as the cause of all of Spain’s disasters, that I found her responsible for all the injustices, the disorders brought about by her ambition, and the pressure she brought to bear on Ferdinand to establish the Salic law[[108]](#footnote-108) in his states; that she had signed decrees of proscription, that she had authorized the despoiling of the clergy and the atrocious persecution they suffer, etc. Finally, she was the main instigator of the schism[[109]](#footnote-109) that ravages Spain; therefore I found it impossible to go pay my respects to a person of that caliber, that I do not think that a bishop could afford to permit himself to do so without compromising his honor and even his conscience. The prefect was taken aback by my frankness, but he insisted on telling me that I would please Cristina and even the king who had recommended that they [p. 174] try to help the princess forget her unfortunate position. I firmly persisted in my refusal, which, I understand, disappointed the prefect very much as it probably will disappoint those who had pushed him to approach me. It is not a bad thing to have occasions to put these gentlemen in a position to understand what a bishop is.

I quote a phrase from a letter of Mr. Boyer[[110]](#footnote-110), director at St. Sulpice seminary: *I charge my nephew to be my spokesman, to express the feelings of friendship and respect which I hold in your regard. They are due to you as our friend and our former student who has become our father by the will of God and his Church.*

I wish that I no longer had to record new apostasies. Those of Gignoux and Pelissier have their own characteristics. It is horrifying. Here is another unexpected, inexplicable one. It is about Ancel[[111]](#footnote-111), a man about 50 years old I believe who after a year of novitiate made his oblation about two years ago, and was placed in the major seminary of Corsica, much to his great satisfaction. Now he writes me from Montgenevre[[112]](#footnote-112) where without a word he has agreed to be a royal chaplain. Informing me of this escapade as if it were the most natural thing in the world he asks me, without further ado, for a dispensation from his vows. On what is his request based? On the fact that he cannot bear that men younger than he are ahead of him, as if the Rule was unknown to him? How to answer such madness? I took pity on this poor head, and wrote him a fatherly letter urging him to return to his duty. (See this letter in my correspondence.)

[p. 75] My letter made some impression on him, judging by his reply, but he persists nonetheless in his request, resigning himself even to expulsion, which I had suggested he consider as the only way to break his bonds. It is pitiful. I write him again proposing to authorize him to live outside the houses of the Congregation under certain conditions that I mention. (See my letter in the correspondence.)[[113]](#footnote-113)

The letters I receive from Aix[[114]](#footnote-114) are really distressing. They only confirm further all the harm that the poor direction of a local superior has always done in this house.[[115]](#footnote-115) All the subjects who have been there complain loudly and it is not without reason. The latest arrival, Fr. P…[[116]](#footnote-116) goes into some pitiful details that prove his good will and wisdom; see his letters of ... September and November 10, 1840. In the first of these letters, he denounced the harm without having yet discovered the source, in the second, he put his finger on it.

[To Father Tempier, superior of the Major Seminary of Marseilles][[117]](#footnote-117)

715:IX in Oblate Writings

Though it is late, let Father Tempier come to hear his confession.

Tempier

Marseilles.

October 31, 1840.

One may sometimes be distracted, dearest Tempier, but to forget that today is Saturday. the usual day for confession; furthermore, that it is the eve of our great ceremony[[118]](#footnote-118) that should naturally be preceded by confession; *tertio,* that last evening, realizing that it was too late. I told you that we would meet again this morning at 7 o’clock. and it is already 8 p.m.

All these combined complaints force me to compel you mercilessly to make the pilgrimage to the bishop’s house this very evening. And so I pray God that he have you in his holy and worthy keeping and especially that he grant you a little more memory.

[To Father Ancel, at Montgenèvre].[[119]](#footnote-119)

716:IX in Oblate Writings

Call to repentance. Refusal to grant the dispensation from his vows. Decision made in his regard.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Ancel

Marseilles.

November 12, 1840.

My dear friend, why are you obstinate in disavowing a title which you still hold and which you cannot give up without a great betrayal of trust?[[120]](#footnote-120) Believe me you who are still my dear friend, that your behaviour in this matter has both grieved and laid me low. I cannot, in the space of one letter bring you back to those principles which you have strangely disregarded. Moreover, what could I tell you that you do not know as well as I do? And yet it is despite this knowledge that you have blinded yourself to the point of becoming so guilty. What should have been done to keep you in the line of your duty? You could have been open with me during your transit to Marseilles. instead of….[[121]](#footnote-121) However. I don’t want to say anything which, by reminding you of your mistakes. may sadden you. I would have gone to great lengths in a frank and conscience-filled conversation to bring peace to your heart, regarding the things that most disturbed you. Even now I would be in a position to broach all these things verbally, in a private conversation with you, but there was nothing that I did not do to avoid an extreme position which, after all, would not calm your conscience because, as I have already written you, I cannot dispense you for the reasons you allege, and because you are obliged under pain of mortal sin to avoid all that could make you liable to being expelled. *Peccat mortaliter si non adhibet diligentiam in cavendis defectibus ob quas se dimittendum vel ejiciendum praevidet.[[122]](#footnote-122)* But I shall not prolong this reasoning any further because I have decided not to invoke principles which obviously put you in such a deplorable situation.

While waiting for you to come and talk with me, here is what the Holy Spirit inspires me for your welfare. I think you will recognize therein the true charity I have for you and the sentiments of an affection which you will certainly blame yourself for not having sufficiently appreciated. Leaving aside a condemnation for all that is contrary to the sacred canons in your behaviour and wanting to provide you with the means to return to favour with God whom you have offended grievously by your unfaithfulness to the vows and the oath you have made, I shall give the necessary faculties for your reconciliation to the confessor of your choice, on condition that you, being repentant of the fault you have far too long maintained, be sincerely disposed to submit yourself, as it is your essential duty to do, to the decision which I will be in a position to take in your regard. Compliance of your will must be in some way prior to and independent of what I am going to inform you. for it is a strict obligation that cannot be conditional, and also because in matters of conscience we must act in good faith with God and those who represent him here below. Here, then, is the decision I am taking and God knows, only for your good, without cutting you off from the corps to which you belong and to which you are attached by bonds that are more indissoluble than you have seen fit to think. I would authorize you until further orders to remain in the post you now occupy. Such authorization will safeguard the vow of obedience and the oath of perseverance. To honour the vow of poverty, you will use with great moderation, the income from your position and any other income you may have, and you will give what is over and above your simple necessities to the poor or to the Church.

Finally, you will write me at least twice a year and give me a full account of your behaviour. And, in the meantime should you have a favourable occasion to come and talk with me, I would advise you to take it; surely in the view of the concession I have just made, independently of the sentiments you certainly know that I have for you, I don’t think you have any grounds to fear me very much.

I end this letter here. It should tell how much good I wish for you. but it cannot possibly make you understand the suffering you cause me.

In the name of the good Lord, take hold of the plank I hold out to you in your terrible ship-wreck. Your salvation is at stake.

Good-bye, my dear friend, I pray the Lord to enlighten you and to lead you by his grace into the arms of him who is reaching out to you and who embraces you.

[To Father Vincens, at N.-D. de L’Osier].[[123]](#footnote-123)

717:IX in Oblate Writings

Those from the diocese of Grenoble could make their novitiate at N.D. de L’Osier. Mrs. Val’s legacy.

Vincens

[Marseilles,]

November 12, 1840.

You know, my dear Father Vincens, that all we ask God is to send us priests after his heart, who, filled with the holy desire for the joy of living in conformity with the divine Master’s counsels, wish to travel the same path the Apostles and the favoured disciples who followed them had trod. The person you mention in your letter to Father Tempier seems to be of this calibre. The way you praise him places him totally in this category. Hence, I can only bless the Lord for inspiring him to associate himself to a Society of evangelical labourers whose number is not sufficient to reap the great harvest entrusted to it by the Father of the family. Since M[elchior] B[urfin][[124]](#footnote-124) has the qualities fit to fulfil this great ministry, and his good character will make him appreciated in our communities where we love one another as brothers. I have no hesitation to agreeing that you give him a room where he can make a fire since this arrangement is necessary for his health: the latter is precious to us from the first moment he is a member of the family.

I maintain my decision of allowing those whom the diocese of Grenoble will send you to make their novitiate at Notre-Dame de L’Osier. When the good Lord will send you some, you may let me know of it so that I can advise you on what must be done in their regard.

I don’t know if Father Tempier has replied to you about the conditions proposed by Mrs. Val. They seem to me rather onerous. I wish that this lady had a little more trust in God’s mercy and that she would at least be satisfied that the Mass she asks for cease at the death of the priests who are now at L’Osier, and as long as one of them is at the shrine. Let me explain: I would not want this obligation to be transferable to those who may in the future replace[[125]](#footnote-125) those who are there at present; those actually there have no more obligation once they leave the shrine. Try to settle the matter as best as you can.

Good-bye. my dearest Father Vincens. the time I spent with you and your confreres was too short. I embrace you affectionately.

+ C.J.E.. Bi[shop] of M[arseilles].

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

November 16, 1840

November 16:What is the Archbishop of Paris thinking? The order he has just issued on ecclesiastical dress[[126]](#footnote-126) is an attack on our much revered practice. It is no doubt inspired by those priests with new ideas who surround him and whom he allows to influence him. The Bishop of La Rochelle was right to protest indirectly against such a pernicious innovation. *L'Ami de la Religion* responded with impertinence to the Bishop of La Rochelle’s order. It is clear that Mr. Picot is no longer the editor. It is true that neither Mr. Genoude nor Mr. Combalot[[127]](#footnote-127) nor others take pride in wearing the cassock, but these cronies could have got authorization by other means. The consequences of this new practice that they would like to introduce under the authority of the Archbishop of Paris seemed serious enough to me to confer with other bishops. I wrote to the Archbishop of Besancon and to the Archbishop of Toulouse[[128]](#footnote-128) [p. 76] to let them know my way of thinking and to sound out their feelings. My first thought was to write directly to the Bishop of La Rochelle to console him for the insult he had received and to encourage him with my support. That is not to say that I might come back to this thought. In the meantime I will see what the two archbishops will answer me.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

November 19, 1840

November 19:It was not possible for the clergy of Marseilles to remain insensitive to the disasters devastating so many regions.[[129]](#footnote-129) I thought I should stir up their charity. So I called the pastors to the bishop’s house to share my ideas on this subject with them. The gentlemen are perfectly in agreement with my views. They agreed to give 50 francs each; they thought the curates could give 15 francs each; the pastors of the diocese 50 and rectors 25 per head, their vicars 10 francs each. It was calculated that the Chapter could provide 500 francs and each chaplain 10 francs. Despite my commitments, I thought I should not give less than 500, even though we read in the newspapers that the Archbishop of Lyons, in the center of the devastation, only gave 1,000. He undoubtedly could have done more.

To Father Semeria, superior of the Miss[iona]ries, at Vico, Corsica.[[130]](#footnote-130)

718:IX in Oblate Writings

Joy at learning that Father De Veronico is behaving well. Thanks Father Semeria and Gibelli who have never saddened their father’s heart. Obedience. Faculty to bless rosaries. Brother Luigi’s forthcoming ordination. Vocations.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Semeria

Marseilles.

November 19, 1840.

My dear Father Semeria. you could not have given me more interesting details than those contained in your letter of the second. So you have prefaced with a good retreat the exercises of the holy missions which were to follow immediately afterwards. I have no doubt the good Lord will bless your labours now that you have been so invigorated by the holy fire that enlightens and purifies. In particular, you have been very satisfied with Father De Veronico’s dispositions, what pleasure you give me! So it is true that the evil was not without remedy and it sufficed for this dear Father to get out of the atmosphere of Aix and then get back on his feet and to walk in step with the most fervent of his brothers. Tell him how happy I am. Now he will realize that he has regained the right place. I also congratulate Father Gibelli for the graces he received during your retreat and I rejoice over the satisfaction he experiences at now being in the midst of a community, which, though very small, provides nonetheless, all that is needed to live happily. I join all of you in spirit to enjoy a few moments of consolation in compensation for the immense sorrows I experience on the other hand. May you be blessed, my dearest Father Semeria. and you, my dearest Father Gibelli. Neither of you have ever saddened your father’s heart. May this witness be a first reward for your good behaviour and an additional title for what you are expecting from the supreme distributor of graces. the just judge who will reward each according to his deeds.

I cannot but approve what you did during the retreat. I think, however, that you could have exposed the Blessed Sacrament even though you were such a small number; why should you be deprived of a favour which the rest of your brothers enjoy? The prescription of the Chapter regarding the day’s obedience must be followed to the letter. It is always an impressive act of regularity to present oneself before the superior, disposed to receive an obedience. We must present ourselves before him with the biretta in hand, and if he has nothing to prescribe, he removes his own and then greets the community which respectfully retires in silence.

I don’t remember if I had granted you the faculty to bless rosaries, crosses and medals; it seems to me that you had asked for it. I grant it to you and your two confreres: two thousand for the rest of the year and 3000 for next year. I think you need this because of your missions. Brother Luigi, your future collaborator is indeed a real gem. I shall make him a deacon at the Christmas ordination. Don’t you find more of this calibre in the areas you evangelize? Pray to our saintly Morandini that from Heaven he chose someone for us. And so make our blessed Albini also work some miracle. What is the good of the pictures we have sent you? Don’t sleep on them. Good bye. dear children. I press you to my heart, embrace and bless you.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

November 20, 1840

November 20:The abbot of the Trappist monastery at Aiguebelle having written to ask me to say 200 Masses for him, we distributed them among ourselves to come to the aid of these good Fathers. I wrote to him offering to place another hundred on his account.

Letter to Fr. Semeria.

I convened the Chapter. They agreed to the proposal to subscribe for 500 francs.

My intention is to make our subscription available to Their Lordships the Archbishops of Aix, Lyons and Avignon and to the Bishop of Valence. [p. 77]

I could not express what I experienced in conferring the sacrament of confirmation on a young man of 25 who must have his leg cut off tomorrow. He entered the Church only a fortnight ago, and yet I would willingly say he managed to attain the height of perfection. It is unbelievable. The miracle of grace is visible and somehow tangible. His father is no longer Protestant but in name. The sight of this wonder converted him, and he promised his son that he would prove it later.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

November 22, 1840

November 22:Consecration of the Carmelite church under the patronage of St. Joseph, St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross. The ceremony was very beautiful and the rain had stopped. But because I celebrated the Holy Sacrifice after the consecration of the church we did not leave the church until 1:30. We had started the ceremony at 8:00.

Sudden death of poor Mr. Blanc[[131]](#footnote-131), pastor of Holy Trinity parish. He felt ill at midnight, at 8:00 a.m. he was dead. I sincerely regret the death of this good priest. He was a good Israelite *in quo dolus non est*.[[132]](#footnote-132)

Erection of the cross after the mission given by our Fathers in St. Marcel. The good behavior of the men to whom I distributed Holy Communion proved how much they benefited from the holy exercises. The weather was superb and the crowds very large. The neighboring parishes, with the exception of St. Loup had consistently provided many listeners for the instructions; they made the most of the grace of the mission to be reconciled with God, and they increased the number of communicants this morning. It is impossible to witness any greater order and tranquility for the ceremony of planting the cross. The silence was so perfect in [p. 78] the meadow where I solemnly blessed the cross that you could hear all the words of the blessing everywhere. The people’s farewell to the missionaries was very touching.

To Father Courtès, superior of the Miss[iona]ries, Carmelites’ Square, at Aix, B.d.R.[[133]](#footnote-133)

719: IX in Oblate Writings

List of preachers for the forthcoming missions and retreats.

Courtès

Marseilles.

December 2, 1840.

It is never easy, my dear Courtès, that a person manages to make some arrangement in the midst of so many difficulties that arise everywhere from the moment one gets to work. The mission of St-Marcel is about to end. Sunday I am going for its closing. The two that are being preached at Digne are also ending, but a third one will immediately begin at Malijai: it will be followed by one more promised at St-Andre in the diocese of Gap. Father Telmon will go to give a retreat at Revest-du-Bion along with Father Chauvet. A few days later. Father Bernard will preach the mission of Vernègues, together with Father Perron, if possible. Due to certain local circumstances, the retreat of Revest will start on the 15th of this month. The mission of Vernègues has been arranged with the Parish Priest for the 28th. In the meantime you have sent Father Bise to Rognes and it seems that you yourself had been at La Fare. No other mission can be preached in the diocese of Fréjus except the one of Aups because we cannot exempt ourselves from giving the retreats of Cotignac and Istres.

The mission[ar]ies who are to give the mission of Aups are Fathers Courtès. Aubert, Telmon and Chauvet. You are the only one who can give the retreat at Cotignac.

Father Bernard is engaged for a major retreat at Allauch. Father Telmon will go to Istres.

After this campaign. I shall do what I can to form a house at Aix. In this I find some difficulties that are hard to overcome.

I end my letter here, otherwise it will not get off. Good-bye.

+ C.J. Eug[ene], Bish[op] of M[arsei]lles.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

December 8, 1840

December 8:Mass in the chapel of the Refuge. Large gathering of these ladies. After saying a few words about the feast, I paid tribute to the memory of Mr. Blanc their director, and gave them Mr. Tempier to replace him.

Vespers at the seminary on the occasion of the feast.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

December 9, 1840

December 9: A **l**arge delegation of vestrymen from St. Charles asked me to keep Mr. Bicheron as their pastor. They fear that they will fall under the domination of Mr. Delestrade[[134]](#footnote-134). I reassured them on that.

I am still filled with distaste to continue this diary. I can only continue by forcing myself to do it. I need time to add some reflections on the day’s events and I am unable to find that time. I could see an advantage in analyzing my letters as well as those I receive, but I would need a secretary for it, and that is precisely what I lack.

Diary

Oblate Writings XX

December 12, 1840

December 12:The Archbishops of Aix and Avignon wrote to thank me for what we did for the flooding in their dioceses. The Bishop of Valence did not wait for my letter. Based only on the announcement in the newspapers he took the initiative to respond. I still think we did better in Marseilles than anywhere else. Elsewhere the bishops [p. 79] ordered collections. We took it upon ourselves. If the example of my clergy had been followed everywhere, we could have provided almost a million to these unfortunate people upon whom the hand of God laid heavily.

Letter to Fr. Bermond to recommend he take care of himself, to dispense him from fasting, etc. He wrote me a very pleasant letter, the first few pages had me chuckling, but when towards the end I read that his chest pains had become serious again I became serious and worried.

Letter from Fr. Guibert. He forcefully rejects the charges that Mr. Ancel[[135]](#footnote-135) makes about the community. He tells me that this poor head sometimes comes up with heretical propositions that they have all the trouble in the world to have him recognize. Guibert finds him well placed in the freezing fog of Montgenevre.

Letter from Fr. Mille. The mission at Malijai is not going as well as the one at Le Brusquet.[[136]](#footnote-136) His colleagues are discouraged. People do not come to hear their instructions, probably to escape the influence of grace. The good God allows this trial to keep the ministers of mercy humble. This has its good side and then the justice of God is carried out on a rebellious people. If they persist in their blindness, the appearance of the missionaries, sent by God among them, will be God’s death sentence upon this obstinate people.

Reply to Fr. Mille along those lines. [p.80]

The Archbishop of Lyons replied with a short letter that I cannot show my clergy because it does not mention them.

The Bishop of Belley has asked for my help. He would like to neutralize the efforts of the Allignol brothers[[137]](#footnote-137) in Rome.

Circular letter to announce the establishment that I have been thinking about for a long time for female domestics. I join to it the announcement of an institution for religious nurses[[138]](#footnote-138) of which there is a great need in Marseilles. I have every reason to believe that the two foundations will be well received.

Baptism, abjuration, first communion and confirmation of Madam Pastre in my chapel. This neophyte’s feelings of touching piety more than compensated for the fatigue of a ceremony that lasted more than two hours, if one can call fatigue the great ministry that I carried out with such consolation.

Letter from Cardinal Pacca.

To Father Mille, miss[ion]ary, with the Parish Priest at Malijai, via... Lower Alps.[[139]](#footnote-139)

720:IX in Oblate Writings

*Indifference of the Christians at Malijai. Founder’s encouragement.*

L.J.C. and M.I.

Mille

Marseilles.

December 13, 1840.

My dear friends, I share the pain brought to you by the indifference of the people whom you are evangelising. I do not, however, approve the discouragement into which I understand you have fallen, you who are accustomed to be the instruments of God’s mercy.[[140]](#footnote-140) You have lost sight of the fact that you can at times be. like the Master who has sent you, witnesses to his justice. Thanks to the Lord such cases are rare, but they do come into the line of your ministry. Hence this should not surprise you. Thus, far from dwelling on the thought of withdrawing as though you had been conquered, it is necessary that you stay there to accomplish your work. It is perhaps in this case a sentence of rejection which can be promulgated only after the normal course of your exercises; even in such a case you will have been God’s ambassadors who have fulfilled their mission faithfully. Discouragement is a weakness. If you analyse it well, you will find it is caused by self-love. The Lord, in giving you the lofty mission of sowing, planting and watering, has reserved to himself the granting of the growth and maturity when it pleases and as it pleases him. Do then, what you have been commissioned to do and leave to God that which belongs to him alone. At most, bring down his merciful action by your urgent prayers and turn him away from executing his justice.

The two positions you propose to me are good and acceptable if the case should arise, but I beg you to maintain the dignity of your ministry and not make any complaint. Be moderate especially with regard to what you say in the presence of the Parish Priest. I cannot recommend sufficient discretion always and everywhere with regard to these Gentlemen. Elsewhere we have made great and irreparable mistakes in this matter.

Good-bye, my dear friends. I unite my poor prayers to yours and I greet all of you affectionately.

+ C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1. Joseph Rossi, born in 1800 at Demonte (Diocese of Cuneo or Coni), an Oblate on August 15, 1830, priest on December 25, 1830, left around 1836. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. L. Arsène Barbarin (1812-1875), a native of Marseilles who became a Sulpician. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Bishop H. Louis de Quélen, died December 31, at 61 years of age. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. André Caire (1797-1856), native of Marseilles, was a priest in Paris. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. A letter with no date, begun earlier and continued on January 3rd. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Antoine Berryer, a deputy. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Bishop Prosper de Tournefort (1761-1844), a native of the Vaucluse, linked to Aix and Portalis. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Alleins (Bouches-du-Rhône) [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. It is probably from A. Chappuis, former member of the Aix youth association, a lawyer at the Ministry of Finance in Paris. He wanted the appointment of Bishop de Mazenod to the archbishopric of Paris. Cf. below, January 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Is it the Nazareth, founded in 1837 for poor girls, to prepare them to become maids or domestic servants (See *Encyclopédie des Bouches-du-Rhône*, Vol. X, 1923, p. 548) or is it the one led by the Ladies of Nazareth? Cf. below, footnote 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. *Protector noster aspice Deus et respice in faciem Christi tui* (Ps 83), sung probably as a prayer for the bishop. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Bishop La Croix d’Azolette was appointed Archbishop of Auch, December 4, 1839. It is Bishop Louis Rossat who was appointed to Gap in 1840, replaced in 1844 by Bishop Jean Irénée Depéry, a friend of Bishop de La Croix. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. The Youth Congregation of Mr. Allemand. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. H.R.J. Charles de La Tour d’Auvergne (1768-1851), Bishop of Arras from 1802 to 1851, created a cardinal December 23, 1839. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Fr. Rey writes the following about this: “The candidacy of the Bishop of Marseille for the See of Paris was more serious than he thought when he wrote these lines A letter from the coadjutor of Nancy, Bishop Menjaud, dated March 4, assures him of this. ‘One day, said the prelate, I saw your name on the list of candidates for the See of Paris Ah! Utinam! It would have been a delight for Paris, for the Church of France, and for the one who will always be truly yours’.” (Rey II, p. 82, note 1) [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. In Paris, Canon Caire directed the Sisters of Notre-Dame and later the Ladies of St. Joseph. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. The Founder wrote “M.B.”. It is possible that he is speaking of an Oblate who was friendly with the clergy of Gap, but we know of only two, who had left the Congregation, Frs. Gignoux and Pélissier. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Lafare (Vaucluse). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. The church of St. Nicolas of Myre. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Grand Penitentiary. Bishop de Mazenod had known him in 1832, when the prelate was Secretary of the Congregation of Propaganda. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Bishop Charles de Forbin-Janson made a preaching tour in the United States and in Canada from October 1839 to September 1840. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Casual: the total of the stole fees from the parishes. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. According to several authors the name could also be written Wijkerslooth or Wijckersloot. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Play: gamble or venture. Belgium had been attached to the Netherlands in 1814, under the Protestant King William I of Orange, who reigned from 1815. His inept policies led to an uprising in Belgium and to its independence in 1830. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. This letter of January 21st was copied into the Register of administrative letters. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Many of Fr. Martin’s letters to the Founder have been preserved, the first is this one of 21 January. He was a member of the Laus community. He said that the Oblates preached 6 missions in the Diocese of Gap in 1839-1840. He also speaks about the case of Laus and concludes saying that the King is thinking of Bishop de Mazenod for the See of Paris. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Chapel of the house for Cholera Orphans. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Bishop de Mazenod speaks of the Nazareth Ladies in his Diary on December 18, 1838. It is, apparently, the community who ran the Nazareth asylum that welcomed the slave girls bought by Father Olivieri on the market of Alexandria in Egypt (Rey II, p. 310). [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. F.-X. A. Coulin, born at Cassis, Diocese of Marseilles. He was a novice and an Oblate scholastic from 1819 to 1822. Ordained a diocesan priest in 1824, he was for a long time an curate at Notre Dame du Mount, while being very active in the charitable works. He remained on good terms with Bishop de Mazenod and corresponded with him until 1861. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. F.-H. Chaix, born in 1867 [*incorrect date in French footnote*], was Vicar General of Marseilles when he died on March 11, 1837. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Jean-Baptiste Isnardon, curate at the cathedral and honorary canon. Deceased in 1842. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Mgr J.-B. Bouvier, Bishop of Le Mans from 1834 to 1854. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Ms: Vore. It is probably Fr. François Vaures, OFM Conventual, who Bishop de Mazenod will meet in Rome in 1845. Cf. *Oblate Writings* 17, p. 168. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Louis E.M. Bautain (1796-1867), priest, professor at the Faculty of Arts of Strasbourg and professor of moral theology at the Faculty of Theology at the Sorbonne. He was one of the main representatives of fideism. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Coulin’s name is scratched out everywhere on this page. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Antoine S. Receveur (1750-1804), founder of the Society of Christian Retreat, which includes priests and nuns, also known as Gray Brothers and Grey Nuns. The Founder spoke of these religious in 1837, Cf. *Oblate Writings*, 18, pp. 220, 222. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Bishop Laurent Trioche, from Marseilles, had been appointed Bishop of Baghdad. Bishop de Mazenod judged him severely in a letter to Bishop Barnabo on January 28, 1853. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Bishop Tetungi, Greek Catholic Archbishop of Tripoli and Syria. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. At this time, the Catholic Churches of the East “depended” on Propaganda. The Congregation for the Oriental Churches was established by Pope Pius IX in 1862 “within the Propaganda”; in 1917, Benedict XV made it “autonomous”. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Cf. *supra*, February 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Henri Joseph Margaillan (1815-1873) was vicar and rector of several parishes. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Original: Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M.-Mille. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. “Sufferings”: the behaviour of Fr. Gignoux, the Bishop and a section of the Clergy of Gap towards the Oblates of Laus, cf. J. M., January 10, 1840. Nevertheless, many priests of the diocese remained friends of the Oblates, cf. L. Martin-Mazenod, undated, end of 1839. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Original: Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M. - Courtès. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Mss.: Franson. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. The second page of this letter has been lost. It may have contained some reproaches to Father Courtès who did not want to go to Cotignac in accordance with the order he had received from Father Tempier. On this subject Father Martin writes: “Courtès had been deeply affected by Father Tem[pier]’s letter. I believe that the influenza was not the only reason that made him want a rest. There must have been others, for his dislike for going to Cotignac seems to be very great,” cf. L. Martin-Mazenod, March 12, 1840. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Original: Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M. - Courtès. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Only Fathers Martin and Françon left for Cotignac, but were soon joined by Father Courtès, who was sufficiently cured. Father Martin wrote to the Founder on March 31: “Father C[ourtès] is really a strange person ... just looking at him and listening to him you would say he is going to give up the ghost, but in the pulpit he makes more noise than all of us. For his welfare, I wish him this kind of influenza ... thus your Lordship can be reassured you did not send him off to martyrdom ...” [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Pierre Telmon. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Bishop Fortuné de Mazenod fell ill on February 12 and died on the 22nd, at the age of 91. Fr. Rey speaks of the prelate’s last moments and adds: The Founder then suspended his Diary and “did not take it up again but once in the first days of April to copy the letter of condolence from King Louis-Philippe. He prefaced this insertion with some thoughts that show how more than a month after the fatal blow, the wound was still bleeding.” (Rey II, p. 86) [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. “Here lie, etc…. who await the blessed hope and the coming of the glory of our Great God.” (Titus 2:13) [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. P.T. David d’Astros, Archbishop of Toulouse from 1830 to 1851. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Original: Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M.-Courtès. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Original: Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M.- Guigues. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. A home had been opened to receive the pilgrims at N.-D. de L’Osier. While waiting to find some women religious, they were planning to entrust it to some ladies. This Mrs. Gallois was evidently one of them. On this subject, Father Dassy writes to the Founder on March 21, 1840: “Our home is functioning ... but what an embarrassment for us when it comes to choosing the ladies who are to take charge of it...” [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Probably Brother Antoine-Dominique Jouvent who had begun his novitiate on June 15, 1838. He made his perpetual vows on February 17, 1842. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. The Founder’s plans were not to be disturbed. Nevertheless, in his letter of July 8, 1840, Father Dassy dared to write: “How sorry we are to see Father Pont leave; he is so edifying, so zealous, so humble, so ready to do anything. No doubt, Father Magnan will do very well, but three changes, one after another! Gignoux. Pélissier. and Father Pont also. Allow me, my dearly beloved Father, to request you to leave him a little longer… but my dearly beloved Father, I forgot that I did not have the grace of state to give you the slightest advice and you will forgive me these five lines which only the good of the Congregation and regret at seeing good Father Pont leave could induce me to write.” [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. The second page of this letter has been lost. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Copy made by Father Cas. Aubert in the *Registre des Expulsions et des dispenses*, Rome, AG., p. *57.* Father Mille had gone down to Marseilles at the end of July to give notice of his defection. He took along a letter of Father Martin to Bishop de Mazenod dated July 26 in which we read: “How heart-broken you must be, my dear Father, by this new disloyalty. I sympathize with you as much as I can and ask God that if he must test you some more, he send you crosses that are less painful and heavy.” [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Father Pélissier, a native of Embrun in the diocese of Gap, had written two letters to Father Allard in which he justified Father Gignoux’s behaviour and laid the cause of his disloyalty upon his brothers and the Congregation. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. This letter is dated July 22, the day, no doubt, on which the Founder had requested Father Gignoux to present himself at Marseilles; it came not from N.-D. du Laus, but from Embrun and it was signed: Father Pélissier. He had retired to his family. We have two other letters of the ex-Oblate Pélissier to the Founder, one of September 20, 1840, in which he thanks him for the dispensation from his vows, the other of January 9, 1858, in which he expresses his friendship and best wishes for the Congregation’s welfare. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Original: Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M.- Semeria. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. The seminarians of Ajaccio had gone to spend their vacation at Vico. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. The letters of Father Semeria are preserved in a bound note-book. The last line of this letter is written in the margin and is covered by the threads of the binding. They cannot be read. The copy that was made in 1926 carried the following text: “as a visitor who had still to remain with us.” We have preferred the text written by the Founder in his *Diary,* July 31: “In the letter to Father Semeria ... I tell him that the position of Father Guibert in the diocese of Ajaccio requires that he be continually considered in the house of Vico as a visitor, since we have no provincials among us.” [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. We have a copy of this letter to Louis de Mazenod, younger brother of Felix, July 24, 1840. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Cardinal Carlo Odescalchi had entered the Jesuits. Cf. Rey II, 88. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Plenary indulgence was granted by Pope Honorius III on August 2, 1221 to all the faithful who on that day would visit the shrine of the Portiuncula, the first house of the Order of Saint Frances, near Assisi. It later became a perpetual indulgence. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. The Bishop had obtained this relic in 1839. He waited a year to make the solemn translation to Marseilles in order to prepare a rich reliquary. The pastoral letter is dated July 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Queen Maria Cristina, Queen Regent of Spain, had unleashed a persecution against the clergy (Rey II, 92). See *infra*, October. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. The St. Louis country house, the bishop’s summer house. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Césarie de Boisgelin, sister of Louis, the Jesuit scholastic. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Hymn from the Roman Breviary for Confessors. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Probably Casimir Aubert, the master of novices. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Uncertain or risky. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. An allusion to the first attempts at a juniorate at N.D. de Lumières. Cf. Rey II, p. 89. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Clément Villecourt, Bishop of La Rochelle from 1836 to 1855. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. “Without the Bishop of Marseilles what would Bishop Casanelli have done?” Casanelli was the Bishop of Ajaccio. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. “There is so much doctrine and grace in your words that they are sweeter than honey. Blessed are the souls that have been entrusted to your care, under your conduct, their leader, they travel the path of virtue.” [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Fr. Gilles Pastorel, a Trappist, with whom Fr. Tempier had dealt at the time of the acquisition of N.D. de Lumières. Cf. *Oblate Writings* 18, pp. 46-48. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Giacomo Filippo Fransoni, Prefect of the Congregation of the Propaganda from 1834 to 1856. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Pierre T. A. Vitagliano (1801-1871). He founded the House for Orphans and the Congregation of the Oblates [women] of Mary Immaculate. At his death, he was provost of the Cathedral Chapter of Marseilles. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. A title recognized by the Congregation of Propaganda in 1743, and given to the missionaries who were alumni of the pontifical colleges in Rome and priests specially assigned to serve in the missions. There is a category of apostolic missionaries *ad honorem*; this is what Mr. Vitagliano wanted. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Former owner of the property at N.D. de Lumières. Cf. *Oblate Writings*, 18, p. 167, 173. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Mormoiron (Vaucluse). [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Word scratched out. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. Jean Françon (1807-1888), priest on June 16, 1832, an Oblate on June 29, 1840. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Bishop Domenico B. Balsamo, OSB, Archbishop of Monreale in Sicily. (Bishop de Mazenod wrote Montréal.) [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Archbishop F.M. Pignatelli, a Theatine. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Ms.: Néoures. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. “Mover” meaning the one who operates an enterprise. “Rescue” refers to maritime rescue. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Thiers (1797-1877), a Marseilles politician who was president of the council at the time. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. The number of pilgrims. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Father Leblanc had been a member of the Youth Association in Aix. The Archbishop of Paris was the recently appointed Bishop Denis Auguste Affre, who was killed during the revolution of 1848. D.A. Affre was in the seminary at St. Sulpice at the same time as Eugene de Mazenod. Appointed Archbishop of Paris May 26, 1840, he was consecrated bishop on August 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. St. Eustache, St. Sulpice and St. Roch are parishes in the city of Paris. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. Ps 18:14. “Let them never control me, then I shall be blameless, innocent of grave sin.” [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. The Founder wanted the Oblates to preach missions in this diocese, certainly to evangelize but also to make themselves known and to get vocations for the Congregation. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. Les Dourbes (The Alps of Upper Provence). Mr. Maurel did not enter the novitiate. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. On the occasion of the Jesuit, Louis de Boisgelin’s visit to Marseilles Bishop de Mazenod gathered his entire family for a few days in early September at the St. Louis country residence. The only one missing was Eugene de Boisgelin, a student with the Jesuits in Brugelette. See Letters of Bishop de Mazenod to his mother, August 11 and September 5, 1840. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. Bishop de Mazenod took part in the pilgrimage for the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, September 8, at Notre Dame de Lumières. He remained there until the 13th. Back in Marseilles on the14th, he left for Vienne in Isère a few days later to attend the consecration of Bishop Chatrousse on September 21. From there he went to stay at Notre Dame de l’Osier from September 23 to 28. Fr. Tempier and the Abbé Dupuy accompanied him. Cf. Rey II, p. 89-90. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. Note the use of the expression “natural language”. It reveals well his thinking and behavior. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. Cf. above, August 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. Copy made by the Founder. Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M.-Ancel. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. We still have some of Father Ancel’s letters to the Founder: November 11, 1838, September 13, November 2 and December 10, 1840, February 12, 1841. Due to some injustice done to him at Gap where he had been a priest for some years (cf. note 67 of letter no. 678). he joined our Congregation and made his vows on the first of November 1839. Having been sent to Ajaccio, he soon complained that Father Guibert and the Fathers treated him as an “old idle talker,” as “fat Jean.” In the Act of dismissal, where the reasons for his expulsion are stated, we find the following: “At the end of the academic year, during which he had given enough trouble to the superior and the Fathers of the Major Seminary of Ajaccio, due to his difficult character and certain ridiculous and erroneous opinions Yet in one of his letters to the Founder. Ancel writes that he had not thought that such a father could have such sons, sons who were ashamed to call themselves Oblates and to wear the cross, who do not live poorly, etc. While beseeching the Founder to grant him dispensation from vows because he had been appointed the director of the hospice royal du Montgenèvre. he begs him to forgive him and to maintain his friendship. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. “mine”, that is Bishop de Mazenod’s Congregation. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. “I, who was thinking of you ... of the Congregation’s houses” was erased by the Founder. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. Decree of the S. Congregation of the Council. September 21. 1624. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. History records her affair with her bodyguard with whom she had ten children. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. The Salic law. Rule of Frankish origin (of the Salic Franks) that excludes women from the right to royal succession. It was repeatedly applied in the kingdom of France. The Carlist wars arose because of its application or non-application in Spain, where the royal family was Bourbon, therefore of French origin. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. April 10, 1842, Bishop de Mazenod issued a pastoral letter prescribing prayers for the Church of Spain. On page 5 he writes: “It is not possible for us to see, without taking a painful interest, what was once a most flourishing portion of Christianity, about to be torn violently in the spiritual order from its ancient foundations, to be forever separated from the Church of God. How not to be astonished at the split that would be made on behalf of temporal power that assumes the right to place itself like a wall of separation between the bishops and the vicar of Jesus Christ….” [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. Denis Pierre Boyer, Sulpician (1766-1842). Eugene de Mazenod had him as a professor at St. Sulpice seminary. Boyer was the uncle of Bishop Affre. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. This name and the two preceding are scratched over in the manuscript. [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. Upper Alps. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. This letter is published in *Oblate Writings* 9, p. 150-151. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. A word scratched out. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. Most of the Fathers who lived in Aix complained about Fr. H. Courtès who was superior of the house from 1823 until his death in 1863. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. It is not known with certainty who this Father P might be. The last fathers to arrive in Aix were Fr. Telmon, sent to replace Fr. Pierre Aubert, and it seems also Fr. Françon whom Fr. Courtès had requested, and Fr. Perron. It is perhaps him that the Founder designates as Fr. P. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. Original: Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M.-Tempier. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. November First marked the end of the annual retreat and renewal of vows. [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. Copy: Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M.-Ancel. [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. Father Ancel used to sign his letters: “Ancel, Canon”. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. He had stopped at Marseilles during his trip from Ajaccio to Gap. to which place he had permission to go for some family matter. However, he did not breathe a word about his plans. cf. *Registre des Expulsions et dispenses*, p. 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. We do not know the source from which the Founder quotes this passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. Copy: Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M.-Vincens. [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. Melchior Burfin. a priest, began his novitiate at L’Osier on February 17. cf. L. Dassy-Mazenod, July 1841. [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. The one who copied this letter had read: “*et tant qu’il y en aura qu’un d’eux au sanctuaire. Je m’explique : je ne voudrais pas que cette obligation fut transmissible à ceux qui pourraient etre dans le cas de remplir les présents* ...etc.” [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. "Since the Revolution of 1830, the priests often wore secular dress. From the beginning of his episcopate, Bishop Affre tried to impose a return to the ecclesiastical habit, but conceiving it in a much broader way. An ordinance of October 22, 1840, taking into consideration the regulations of the Church, and especially those of the Council of Trent “which require only a modest attire that can be distinguished from that of lay people” and that “although a long garment is most commonly prescribed, it may, without departing from the spirit of the Church, be replaced with less inconvenient clothing,” prescribes that any cleric, in holy orders, should now be obliged to wear the cassock, the short cassock or a frock coat...." Cf. Limouzin-Lamothe and J.Leflon, *Bishop D.-A. Affre ...* Paris, 1971, p. 86-87. [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. M.P. Joseph Picot (1770-1841), historian and journalist, a long-time director of *L'Ami de la religion et du roi, journal ecclésiastique et littéraire.* A. E. de Genoude, Cf. note 17, December 13, 1839. Theodore Combalot (1797-1873), professor, writer and especially a preacher. He was invited to preach several times in Marseilles. A combative person, he had troubles with several bishops. [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. Bishop Jacques M.A.C. Mathieu, Archbishop of Besançon from 1834 to 1875 and Bishop d’Astros, Archbishop of Toulouse. These two letters dated November 16, were copied in the registry of administrative letters of the Bishop of Marseilles. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. Floods caused by the overflowing of the Rhone. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
130. Original: Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M.-Semeria. [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
131. C.F. Mathiew Blanc (1769-1840). [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
132. John 1:47. “Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit,” Jesus speaking of Nathaniel. [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
133. Original: Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M.-Courtès. [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
134. Placide Bicheron (1796-1868), longtime superior of the minor seminary. Antoine Delestrade (1789-1849). [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
135. The names of Guibert and Ancel are scratched out. [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
136. Malijai and Le Brusquet (Alps of Upper Provence). [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
137. The Allignol brothers were two priests of the Diocese of Viviers, authors of a brochure entitled, *De l'état actuel du clergé de France.* They considered themselves victims of unjust prejudice on the part of the episcopal administration. Bishop Guibert, appointed bishop of Viviers in 1841 reached an agreement with them in 1844-1845. [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
138. The circular letter was printed December 16. Both works were entrusted to the Sisters of Hope of Bordeaux, a branch of the Holy Family founded by Mr. Noailles. Cf. Letter to Ms. Latouche, Superior General, December 30, 1840. [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
139. Original: Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M.- Mille. [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
140. The Founder writes in his *Diary,* December 12: “Letter of Father Mille. In the mission of Malijal things are not going as well as in that of Brusquet. His confreres are discouraged. People didn’t come to listen to their instructions [↑](#footnote-ref-140)