

Before the Revolution

1761 to 1789

Only three of Father Chaminade's letters have come down to us from this period. All are business letters. The first¹ is addressed to the Intendant of the province of Guyenne. Father Chaminade describes to the royal administrator some real estate he had examined at His Excellency's direction and recommends its purchase through a benefactor, who had offered to obtain some property for the seminary at his own expense. The purchase could not be made without a royal permit, for the seminary had been approved by Louis XV in 1761. The required permit was not received for the purchase of these properties, but for that of certain sites and buildings adjoining the seminary which previously it had leased.

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N.A. 0a. To M. Boutin, Intendant of Guyenne, Bordeaux

Autograph letter, Arch. Department² of the Gironde

October 12, 1784, Mussidan

Agmar 218.2.1

Your Excellency,

If we have delayed somewhat in carrying out Your Excellency's orders, this was to make certain of the preference of our benefactor and to safeguard the interests of the seminary. We have finally looked over the property of M. de Villecourt, and we hereby submit a report on its condition and boundaries.

It includes two farms. That of La Roche is situated one-half league from Mussidan on the right bank of the Isle River, which it borders on the west. On the south and on the north³ it stretches along the road which separates it from the property of M. de Gamençon and extends north as far as the parish church of Saint Martin. This farm includes 50 acres⁴ of cultivated land, 23 acres of vineyard, about 40 of brush, and a meadow which, including an island in the river, covers about 20 acres. One-quarter of a league away is the other farm, called Fougerot, an annex of La Roche, which depends upon it for its wood supply and which the seller does not wish to separate. Its area is about 300 acres, of which a small portion has been placed under cultivation, the rest being brush or tall woodland. Only the La Roche farm has a house for the proprietor. The value of the entire property runs to about 60,000 livres.¹ Your Excellency, we did not find any other property in the outskirts of Mussidan which suited the seminary's benefactor. Furthermore, several small houses whose acquisition we are requesting to complete the seminary belong to this property. We have been hoping, Your Excellency, that you will consider our present circumstances and through your powerful patronage give this highly useful establishment the means to support and develop itself.

¹ See "Father Chaminade's Earliest Letter" by Herbert G. Kramer, *Maryhurst Messenger* (March 1957) and an article by Joseph Verrier in *L'Apôtre* (1957), 37:13-17.

² One of the originally 83 major divisions, now more than 90, established at the beginning of the French Revolution (1789-1790) for the purpose of local government and as the basis for representation in the national legislature.

³ "The east" is probably meant.

⁴ The French acre, called also *arpent*, *journal* or *journal* (the term used in the original is *journeaux*) represented the area that could be plowed by a team of oxen in a day, *journée*. As might be expected, this standard varied with the locality. The Paris *arpent*, still in use in French-speaking areas of Canada, was nearly the equivalent of our English acre (.84 of an acre). The *journal* of Bordeaux amounted to .788 of an acre; that of Mussidan was probably not very different.

¹ French pounds, *livres*, although the term *franc* was already in use at this time. The *livre* was worth 19.1 cents at the time of its official replacement in 1796 by the franc, then worth 19.3 cents.

I have the honor of being with the deepest respect Your Excellency's very humble and very obedient servant,

G.-Joseph Chaminade
Business Manager² of the Seminary of Mussidan³

* * *

This letter requests official permission for an extension of time to act upon a bequest, in order to be able to decide whether to accept or to refuse it. It was sent from Mussidan without a date, as was customary in the case of such documents. The note "Communication—Intendant" in the upper left-hand corner was added and signed by M. Giniès, the subordinate official who received it.

N.A. 0b. To the Intendant of Guyenne, Bordeaux
Estate of Mlle Chastanet, Saint-Médard-les-Mussidan, Dordogne
Late June or Early July, 1787
Autograph
Agmar 218.2.2

Communication to the Director of State Properties
to supply an answer
Bordeaux, July 13, 1787
In the absence of the Intendant, Giniès.
My Lord,

The directors of the seminary of Mussidan very humbly ask Your Lordship, declaring that the Widow Carré, nee Catherine Constantin, bequeathed to the seminary of Mussidan the sum of 1,300 livres¹ in her will of November 8, 1784, probated January 21, 1786, in return for a foundation in perpetuity which she established by the said will, of 20 Masses a year and a mission every 8 years;

that M. de Cressonières, collector of amortization duties and estate taxes² of the said city of Mussidan, has obliged them to pay 300 livres for the rights obtained there from;

that in view of the meagerness of the foundation, the remoteness of the date when they will begin to be obligated, and above all in view of the difficulty in which they find themselves to advance such a sum, they presume to ask you, My Lord, to allow them the time to decide to refuse this foundation or to place themselves in a position to make such an advance.

They will not cease to offer their prayers to heaven for the preservation of the precious days of Your Lordship.

G.-Joseph Chaminade,
Priest and Business Manager of the Mussidan Seminary

² The title used by Fr. Chaminade is *syndic*, which occurs also in English; New York, Harvard, and Cambridge Universities still have their syndics, administrative officers. However, even in French the word is rare today, as appears from the fact that Fr. Simler in *Life of Father Chaminade* says he held the title *de syndic, c'est-à-dire d'économé*. Bro. John Garvin (*William Joseph Chaminade*, Mount St. John, 1914), translates it simply by saying Fr. Chaminade "took charge of the stewardship." The term "steward" is less used today than it was 50 years ago; both Fr. Kleist and Fr. Spencer in their versions of the Gospel of John (16:1) translate the Greek word *oikonomos* not by "steward," as in the Douay-Rheims, but by "manager."

³ It was actually a minor seminary combined with a boarding school for non-seminarians (*collège* in French, whether on the primary or secondary level).

¹ See letter no. N.A. 0a (Agmar 218.2.1), n. 5.

² These were feudal fees abolished by the Revolution. The former had to be paid once only by institutions, originally to the estate; the latter, at intervals by commoners after obtaining a fief. Here it is extended even to a non-feudal estate.

* * *

This is a formal petition for a benefice to support the seminary in Mussidan. It has no date or signature and has been written by a calligrapher, as was the custom with such documents. Its date can be approximated by reference to the convocation of the Estates-General in 1789 to present to the king the wishes and grievances of the people desiring large-scale reforms.

N.A. 0c. To King Louis XVI

Original, National Archives

1789

[Not in French Edition]

Generality¹ of Bordeaux, Election² of Périgueux
Seminary Founded at Mussidan and Authorized by Royal Patent in 1761
Registered in the Bordeaux Parliament,³ 1762.

During these precious moments when the beneficence and wisdom of the king allow all the French people to bring their wishes and grievances to the foot of the throne, the directors of the Mussidan seminary and boarding school⁴ have the presumption to break their silence and explain this to His Majesty—that the house which they have founded under his protection has hitherto been supported only by the combined sacrifices of their patrimonial assets; that to support their establishment, to pay the professors and teachers necessary, who number 14 at present, they found themselves reduced to a fixed income of 200 livres, and that after exhausting all their resources they had no hope other than the bounty of His Majesty; that a benefice of some abbey *in commendam* [for what needs to be provided] would give them the means to continue the assistance to the youth of the province, which it has long been receiving there for its education. They will never cease to offer their prayers for the preservation of the precious days of His Majesty and the prosperity of the realm.

¹ A treasury division of France before the Revolution.

² A treasury subdivision of the generality before the Revolution.

³ In France before the Revolution of 1789, *parlement* was not a legislative body as in England, but a court of justice. That of Paris, established by Saint Louis IX (1214-1270), was the supreme court of the land. Feudal lords were officially members, but in practice their functions came to be discharged by trained jurists brought in as their assistants.

⁴ See letter no. N.A. 0a (Agmar 218.2.1), n. 7.

During the Revolution

1790 to 1798

Apart from the letters of direction addressed to Mlle Marie-Thérèse de Lamourous, only a few have survived from the revolutionary period. The oldest of these is a declaration for the revolutionary power behind the tottering throne of the assets of the seminary, for on November 18, 1789, by a decree which placed all the possessions of the clergy at the disposition of the nation, a royal act had ordered that the titulars of benefices and superiors of houses or ecclesiastical establishments must make a declaration of all the items attached to their benefice, house, or establishment. Together with his superior, Father Chaminade does so in the following document.

* * *

N.A. 0c-1. To Father Barrès, Vicar General

No Date

Copy at Agmar 218.2.52

I have the honor of offering to Father Barrès the sincere expression of my profound respect.

I would like to point out to him that I would have dissuaded the Fathers of Families from writing this letter to him, had His Excellency not wished to encourage their zeal by holding out to them the prospect of setting the days for their visits to the prisons.

G.-Joseph Chaminade
Honorary Canon

* * *

N.A. 0d. To the Directorate of the Dordogne

Original, National Archives

February 27, 1790

Agmar 218.2.3

We, the undersigned directors of the seminary of Mussidan, declare truthfully that we are living in a spacious house divided into several rented apartments requiring, however, extensive repairs at our own expense; its original endowment was too insignificant. Its furnishings, almost completely renewed, also represent our funds to a great extent, for we found no resources in the revenues with which it was provided. The letters patent which the king granted it in 1761 and since then in 1781 and 1785, the considerable increase of the buildings, the careful distribution of the classes with their respective prefects, and the activity of the director in maintaining order and moral integrity have made it one of the most considerable establishments of the province. At the present time it is made up of about 80 people, not counting the day-students who come to it for lessons.

In detail, these are the benefits we enjoy, with their obligations.

1. An annuity of 5 livres to be paid by the heirs of Cosme Limousi in consideration of 5 Masses to be said annually, settlement of January 11, 1750
2. A small meadow, called the hermitage, which had been leased for 6 livres, debited to the acquittance of 5 Masses for the repose of a certain M. Gisse
3. An annuity of 5 livres from Jean-Olivier of the parish of Saint Front for 6 Masses for the repose of Mlle Feyrière

4. An annuity of 10 livres of M. Lavergne, heir of M. Bruneau, for 20 Masses for the repose of barber Pierre Dulac
5. A small meadow called Dupeyrié, rather poorly situated, of around 1 ½ acres,¹ in consideration of 24 Masses for the repose of M. and Mme Charles; the foundation of M. Charles is inserted in his will of May 29, 1726.
6. An annuity of 5 livres as acquittance for 10 Masses for the repose of Jeanne Tissandler de La Jambertie
7. An annuity of 5 livres from Jean and another Jean Richon of Sourzac
8. An annuity of 15 livres from Coli or Dominé of the parish of Saint Front for 6 Masses which Father Neulet, superior of the seminary, left in his will of November 22, 1780, for the repose of his soul
9. An annuity of 5 livres from George Bagoi, settlement of June 2, 1756
10. A foundation of 150 livres paid by M. Subrégie for a Mass to be said every Saturday at Notre Dame du Roc and for parish assistant services
11. An annuity of 48 livres from the clergy
12. An annuity of 50 livres from M. Rambeau Dupinier, transaction of May 17, 1771
13. Annuities from the Paris city hall, one of 65 livres payable by M. de Courmon, the other 75 livres by M. Despeignes, both together 140 livres less the acceptance duty, billed expenses, and postage
14. An annuity of 60 livres from the foundation of Chastenet Sergeur of June 8, 1714, paid by Mme du Reclus, for a weekly Requiem Mass for parish-assistant duty
15. A foundation with a capital of 1,300 livres by the Widow Carré, nee Constantin, for a mission to be given by the seminary every 8 years and the celebration of 20 Masses a year for the repose of her soul
16. An annuity of 250 livres which Father Moze and Father Chaminade have pledged themselves to pay the seminary by a deed of October 6, 1782, for the personal effects of the founder sold in their name as recipients of the heir of the founder, authorized hereto by patents of the king, duly registered in the parliament² of Bordeaux
17. A donation of an annuity of 1,500 livres, redeemable by a capital of 30,000 livres, made by M. de Martonne, squire and patron³ of Vergetot and affiliate of the seminary; the act of the donation is dated, March 18, 1784. According to the royal patents granted in the month of October 1781, we will not be able to benefit from this annuity until after the death of the donor.
18. A house and meadowland which the late pastor of Bourgnac has just left to the seminary in his will of January 29, 1787, on the condition that the seminary will pay a certain Perette, his housekeeper aged 46, an annuity of 150 livres. The deeds of acquisition enter the cost of the house at 400 livres and of the meadow at 800 livres. The house appears to be worth more than 400 livres, no doubt due to an increase in the property and the repairs made.
19. A foundation of Father Vatine, pastor of Saint Médard, dated February 9, 1731, providing a cash-endowed annuity⁴ of 35 livres with a capital of 700 livres for help as an assistant of the parish of Saint George

¹ See letter no. N.A. 01 (Agmar 218.2.1), n. 4.

² See letter no. N.A. 0c, n. 3.

³ One who had the right of presentation to an ecclesiastical benefice and the obligation to protect the rights of the Church within the parish.

⁴ The term “cash-endowed annuity” is used to render the French *rente constituée*, which formerly when interest was still forbidden by Canon Law was a method of assuring a fixed income periodically to an individual or to a group. Because this income could not be interest on an investment, it was not a loan but an outright gift, duly notarized, in return for which the recipient agreed to pay a certain amount each year to the donor for life or in perpetuity, *i.e.*, also to his heirs. The annuity for life was called a *rente viagère*. Another form of annuity was the *rent foncière*, which may be rendered “property-endowed annuity.”

20. Last, a cash-endowed annuity of 5 livres to be paid by M. Planteau de Lavaur by contract of May 1756. We owe 11,000 livres of loaned funds or bills payable. The assets and liabilities almost balance.

As superior and business manager of the seminary, we attest to depict the true present state of this house and to be free from any deliberate omission of whatever could contribute to make it known. In witness whereof we have signed.

Mussidan, February 27, 1790

Moze, superior, approving the above written
G.-Joseph Chaminade, priest and business manager of the seminary of Mussidan
approving that written above²

*

Synopsis

<i>Annuities</i>		<i>Obligations</i>
1. current	984 livres	1. 200 Masses, nearly half of them at Notre Dame du Roc or Saint George
2. eventual	1,500 livres	2. 150 livres in annuities
3. to be paid off	150 livres	3. maintenance of a spacious subsidiary building
		4. parish-assistant service
		5. debts to pay off, 11,000 livres
		6. taxes

This synopsis is in conformity with the above-declared.

In witness whereof the same day and year as above,
G.-Joseph Chaminade, Priest and Business Manager of the Seminary¹

* * *

1.² To M. Etienne Lacoste

Businessman, Bergerac

August 16, 1790

Autograph, Agmar³

Monsieur Lacoste,

At some time during the present month, please pay to M. Dubreuil, a bookseller in Périgueux, or to his order the sum of 150 livres for value received in merchandise from the said person, which amount I will apply to your account for arrears in your payments to me according to information received from. . . .

Your very humble and very obedient servant,

G.-Joseph Chaminade, Priest,
Business Manager of the Seminary of Mussidan

[Cover address: M. Etienne Lacoste, businessman, Bergerac]

* * *

² “Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade . . . above-written” is in Father Chaminade’s handwriting.

¹ “This synopsis . . . of the seminary” in Father Chaminade’s handwriting.

² Numbers without lower case letters refer to the numbering of letters in the original French edition.

³ See letters no. 2a and no. 33a.

This letter from this period is of real interest. The Revolution had already broken out, and the oath of loyalty to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy⁴ was beginning to be required. Father Chaminade, then 30 years old and the business manager of the seminary of Mussidan, is writing a business letter to Father Pontard, the pastor of Sarlat. This offers him the opportunity to make a supreme attempt to save his fellow countryman, who is already tottering on the brink of a precipice. For this reason, the conclusion is very discreet and touching. Father Pontard, however, remained unmoved by this appeal; on February 16 he took the oath of loyalty to the Civil Constitution, and on March 27 he became the constitutional bishop of the Dordogne. He soon married and renounced the faith with a great flourish. Nevertheless, he preserved Father Chaminade's letter, calling him, even after his downfall, a "saint."⁵

2. To Father Pontard, Pastor at Sarlat

February 2, 1791, Mussidan
Autograph, Agmar

Reverend Father,

I have just received the full amount of the sums advanced to M. Foucauld. From the account given to me by my messenger of the means he used to collect it, I fear he proved a nuisance to Mlle de Rastignac. If this is the case, I deeply regret it. I did not imagine his zeal would be so energetic. I will be obliged to you if you will make my sentiments known to this respectable woman. I would have done this myself, in fact, if I had not feared a letter from me would be lost if I addressed it to her at Fongolfier.

She instructs me to send M. Foucauld back to his parents. I cannot do this immediately because the child is still confined to bed. However, his health will soon permit him to make this short trip. I would be greatly obliged to Mlle de Rastignac if she will let me know by return mail whether the sentence of banishment is irrevocable.¹ The current quarterly amount of the boy's board should be about due at this time. I am making this remark merely to prevent her from being surprised if she is asked for it later.

I was very happy to learn that all the pastors of your district were resolved to take the oath only with suitable restrictions. You may depend upon it, that in this district there is a firmness worthy of the first centuries of the Church.

Reverend Father, I am with profound respect,

Your humble and very obedient servant
G.-Joseph Chaminade, Priest

* * *

This brief note has no address or signature and is possibly a mere entry. France is still a kingdom, for Louis XVI was not deposed or the Republic proclaimed until September 21, 1792.

2a. Business Note

February 15, 1791
Autograph, Agmar

⁴ This Constitution, decreed by the French National Assembly (July 12, 1790), appropriated to itself control of the French clergy regardless of the Holy See and provided for the recruitment of priests and bishops through elections.

⁵ See a facsimile of part of the original letter in *L'Apôtre* (1927-28), 19:233.

¹ Fr. Chaminade is using figurative language. The meaning is whether the decision to withdraw the boy from school, perhaps because of the poor marks he had received, is beyond retraction.

I have given M. Moynié, the royal notary at Bergerac, the sum of 48 livres to negotiate for me with M. Gravier Lacoste.¹

* * *

Relieved of their functions by a new revolutionary law, the directors of the collège of Saint Charles risked being evicted at any time. As business manager, Father Chaminade went to Périgueux to plead their cause with the directorate of the department. After consultation, no doubt, he presented the following petition, which was referred the same day to the district directorate for its advice. Three days later the latter sent it on to the municipality of Mussidan, requesting its remarks. In the archives of the department of the Dordogne the petition is registered on June 21, 1791, as follows. "Statement of Reverends Moze and Chaminade, superior or professors of the collège of Mussidan, requesting to be sustained in the proprietorship and use of a house and annex, enlarged and rebuilt by them and constituting the said collège today."

**N.A. 2b. To Administrators of the Directorate,
Department of the Dordogne**

June 21, 1791

Autograph, National Archives

Agmar 218.2.5

Messieurs,

Father Moze and Father Chaminade humbly entreat you with the declaration that they are obliged to appeal to the justice and authority of the directorate against a projected seizure which is as opposed to the beneficent views of the Assembly because it is contrary to the sacred rights of property.

In February 1761, the Bishop of Périgueux requested and obtained from the king letters patent to establish a seminary at Mussidan with permission to acquire for this establishment by way of donation a house of Father Dubarail, the adjacent property amounting to some two acres,² and a sum of 6,000 livres in Paris city hall bonds converted into the principle of an annuity so the income could serve to support the house. This law was not acted upon until February 13, 1766, by the donation which Father Dubarail made to the business manager of the clergy of the house in question and of the other items noted in the letters patent—actually not the entire house because by a rare circumstance it happens to belong to two landlords. It was not possible to negotiate with one of them, and the part belonging to him was left alone for a more favorable moment.

The donor, Father Dubarail, died in 1771 after appointing as his heir Fr. Durieu Ducluzeau, who on May 14, 1782, ratified by an express donation on the same day the seminary's possession of the reserved portion and waived all claim to the vestments in the sacristy deriving from the estate.

This house and the properties attached to it doubtless have a certain value. A report of Father Moze reveals the state in which everything existed at the death of Father Dubarail, and we may make bold to propose that the overall value was not in excess of 12,000 livres, and that if in its present condition these items together with the various constructions which have been added have a real value of more than 100,000 livres, this is due to the fact that Father Moze, and after him the Fathers Chaminade, placed their entire fortune into it, all their income and immense sums.

Father Moze was the first to add considerable buildings at the very time that Father Ducluzeau, the heir of Father Dubarail, was superior of the seminary. From 1772 to 1778 he used

¹ See letters no. 1 and no. 33a.

² See letter no. N.A. 0a, n. 4.

24,610 livres of his own personal property and patrimony. The invoice will be submitted. Moreover, proof of his sincerity is the fact that the late Father Ducluzeau gave him a statement in 1782 which agreed to his availing himself of the income of the seminary to reimburse himself for the sum total of his advances, something he either never did or was able to do.

Following Father Moze, the Fathers Chaminade also used their inheritance, their fortune and their earnings, their sister's inheritance, her dowry rights, and very considerable sums borrowed from their brother—altogether amounting to 35,400 livres and more—to add to the buildings of the seminary, to adapt it to its purpose, and to improve its appearance for the benefit of religion, the nation, and their fellow-citizens.

Undoubtedly in advancing such considerable sums, both Father Moze and the Fathers Chaminade were very firmly determined to benefit the nation after themselves; but it would be necessary to blind ourselves and to close our eyes to the light in order not to see that they intended to enjoy their possession during their lifetime. It is nothing but an ultimate destination, and this destination could not become a legal title for the nation except by their death. There can be nothing more evident.

Since that time the decrees which place the former church property at the disposition of the nation have been published. It is believed likely that the National Assembly actually intended to nationalize the property of the old foundations and to turn it over to the nation, rather than to the former founders or to their heirs. But naturally this should apply only to the old foundations pure and simple, whose founders are dead, and in no way to foundations not yet completed or to those whose founders are not yet deceased—namely, to those originally made only in their interest before all others.

Now this is the nature of the one concerning Father Moze and the Fathers Chaminade. There is no doubt they intended to enlarge for the state the original foundation of the seminary of Mussidan by using their fortunes and those of their next of kin to do so, but this enlargement has not been completed. They have built only to provide lodging for themselves first. They spent their entire fortune only to live there first. *Nemo enim praesumitur liberalis in necessitatibus.*¹ Without an express gift, which does not exist, it is not permissible to believe they had intended to donate only to die of hunger, not before their death, the inevitable end where all duties of humanity cease.

Therefore, in nearly similar cases we see the National Assembly, always wise, prudent, and just in its enactments and decisions, deciding without hesitation that those beneficiaries who happened to have built or rebuilt cannot be expropriated, except to the extent that they have been previously reimbursed and indemnified by the nation, lacking which they are authorized to enjoy their possession until their death, in order that the sacrifices they desired to make for the public welfare may not turn to their detriment.

Nevertheless, the district directorate intends to expropriate the suppliants. They therefore make bold to ask for justice from the directorate and to conclude that it will be pleased to direct that the suppliants will be supported and protected in the enjoyment of the properties and buildings in question constructed by them, until the effective reimbursement of the funds advanced, the liquidation of which will be conducted according to the usual forms. In any event, should the said Moze and Chaminades have to leave, they request that at the time of their departure from said house each of them will be provisionally granted an advance of 1,500 livres, payable by the tax collector of the Mussidan district, all attachments to the contrary notwithstanding; and that in said case, the directorate will have the National Assembly consulted regarding this particular situation, or in any event permit the supplicants, while maintaining the opposition which they declare to be raising to the plundering of their estate, to summon the honorable Procurator General before the courts in order to have him enjoined to pay to the

¹“No one is presumed to be liberal in a state of necessity.”

supplicants their said financial advances, even a provisional sum, save contrary exceptions, and you will do justice. . . .

Pèrigueux, June 21, 1791
(Father) Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

This declaration brings that of February 1790 up-to-date.

N.A. 2c. To the Directorate of the Dordogne

July 4, 1791
Autograph, National Archives
Agmar 218.2.5

In February 1790, the directors of the seminary declared a total of 11,000 livres in debts as well as in trust funds. They declared moreover that there were other liabilities, but these were nearly counterbalanced by the assets.

Today, July 4, the state of the account presents a considerably different aspect, but one which the nature of the succeeding events has called for. The debts amount to 5,271-8-2 livres;¹ the assets may total some 2,000 livres. A sum of about 3,271-8-2 livres is therefore required to balance this account.

These are the main causes of this deficit.

1. The illness of M. Castai, which has occasioned very considerable expenses.
2. A payment of 35 or 36 pistoles² instead of the 8 livres and some sous which were formerly levied on the seminary.
3. The increase in the price of food, which reached a record high last year. Even if the boarding fees had equaled the total cost of provisions for the house, they would not have been sufficient for the support of the 18 to 20 people employed by it.
4. We were obliged to advance the vacation one month. As a result, it was necessary to support the entire staff for more than three months without receiving any fees.
5. The boarders returned very slowly, and this year their number has hardly reached the number of people needed to run the seminary.
6. The total deprivation of charitable help.

The 3,200 and some livres would not have been enough to prevent so many disadvantages if they had not subjected themselves to a very austere diet and if they had not some time ago made a loan in their own names. They have not failed to explain to the administration the impossibility of supporting this establishment any longer in the painful pass to which events have brought it. First, they explained it to the general assembly of the administration of the department, and in March they did the same to the directorate of the department.

Capital of annuity due the Widow Laulanie, nee Chaminade	5,000	5,000
Due the Ladies of Saint Ursula of Périgueux	1,000	1,000
Due M. Montjon	2,000	2,000
Due M. F. Chaminade, businessman of Périgueux	2,672	2,672
Due Mlle Janneton of Cinq Sols	364	364

¹ The French pound (*livre*), which was replaced by the decimal monetary unit in 1795, was divided into 20 sous; each sou was in turn subdivided, like the British shilling until 1970, into 12 deniers. The French term *denier* is from Latin *denarius*, from which the British symbol for penny (*d*) was derived. Although the decimal monetary system had been the only official one since 1795, the old system continued in popular use (see letter no. 42) for some time. Even today *livre* is used instead of *franc* in certain French expressions, especially those which refer to annuities.

² Originally a French coin equivalent to 10 livres, later to 10 to 12 livres. Finally, a mere term meaning 10 livres to 10 francs, used in monetary calculations.

The amounts¹ entered as at our disposal in our declaration of February 1790 total 984 only, including the income the seminary was considered to be drawing or capable of drawing from Bourgnac. This income was estimated by the business manager to be 80 livres at the time, and since then he let it out for 10 livres more. These are the partial amounts, which add up to the total of 984 livres.

	<i>Presumed Assets</i>		<i>Real Liabilities</i>	
1.	5 livres	5	Masses	
2.	6	5		
3.	5	6		
4.	10	20		
5.	50	24		
6.	5	10		
7.	5	6		
8.	15	52		
9.	5	52		
10.	150	20		
11.	48	200	at ½ livre	100 livres
12.	50		Perrette annuity	150
13.	134		La Fayancerie rent	250
14.	60		Rent payable to seminary	300
15.	65 mission		Rev. Vatine annuity not yet received by the seminary.	35
16.	250 La Fay. House		Mission annuity null	65
18. ²	80 Bourg.		The Paris annuity is	134
19.	Annuity 35 never received		destined for house maintenance. In this respect it is null and even inadequate because the founding patents demanded a 300 livre annuity for this purpose.	
20.	5			
	<u>984</u> [<i>sic</i>]			<u>1034</u>

May the parish assistant service at Saint George be entered in our favor as a liability? The meadow called Dupeyrié, entered as number 5, is posted rather for what it could yield than for what it actually yields or has yielded up to the present time. Should the fact that we could be considered under obligation to send a priest every Saturday to Notre Dame not be regarded as a liability? Can such as number of small annuities of 5 livres or 6 livres scattered throughout different parishes and dependent upon poor individuals be considered an advantageous income? Despite all these considerations, according to the above-made statement the present liabilities amount to 1,034 livres.

* * *

Following his appearance before the municipality, Father Chaminade supplied further details concerning the financial situation of the seminary and added new remarks to the balance

¹ Autograph of Fr. Chaminade.

² Number 17 is omitted because it will not be realized until after the death of the donor. See letter no. N.A. 0d.

sheet to explain the increase of the deficit since 1790. The debts and credits are entered facing each other, on the inside pages of a folio.

2d. To the Municipality of Mussidan

Between July 4 and 10, 1791

Autograph, National Archives

Debts and Credit of the Seminary of Mussidan

Debts

The 5,000 livres capital of cash-endowed annuity¹ due to Widow Laulanie, nee Chaminade, is entered among the sums claimed by the petition of Fathers Moze and Chaminade to the directorate of the department, as also the sum of 2672-7-7 livres due to M. F. Chaminade, businessman of Périgueux. The seminary is also obligated for an annuity of 50 livres from a capital of 1,000 livres in favor of the Ladies of Saint Ursula of Périgueux. It owes arrears for two years since September 21, 1790.

Other Creditors of the Seminary

Arrears of annuities due to Widow Laulanie, nee Chaminade, not including the current year, due

to M. Durand, businessman at Libourne	395-13-2 livres
to M. Aubanel, printer-bookseller at Périgueux	810-15-6
to M. Dubreuil, bookseller at Périgueux	104-9
to M. Mainard Sr. businessman at Mussidan	338-1-9
to M. Gintrac, bookseller in Bordeaux,	390-11
to M. Montjon	2,000
to Mlle Janneton of Cinq Sols	384
to M. Margardeaux of Beaupouyet	87
to M. Mazieras of Issac	250
to M. Eybrard, local miller	1,184
to M. Dubourg of Lévigac for balance of board	28-9-6
to M. Cherchouly near Thiveirs for the same	40-9
to M. Lavessière for the same	52
to M. Chastaner, butcher	802-5-6
to M. Mayma, shoemaker,	80
to M. Bessines, local businessman	237-14-3
to M. Louis Lévis, storekeeper of Bergerac	<u>57-3</u>
	7655-8-2 [<i>sic</i>] livres

Due to Souffron, hatter, some small articles.

Notice that the account which M. Durand of Libourne had made out for me is for 832-3-6 livres, although it should be for only 810-15-6 livres because in his last account as 167-16-6 livres instead of 145-16-6 livres.

Credit

Due from M. Renier of Abzac for balance of board or of advances	136-8 livres
from M. Aubertie, justice of the peace of the Lesches District	186-18
from the same for damage costs	17-13-3
from Mme Constanin for one month of music for son	3-10
	(overlooked)
from M. Beau for a classical program or book	4-12

¹ See letter no. N.A. 0d, n. 4.

from M. Riguadie for the same	4-12
from M. Romagère for classics	12-14
from M. Domine of Saint Front annuity arrears or expenses, about	60
from M. Subrégie for annuity arrears (account to be made out)	
from Mme Dureches for the same, at least 6 years	360
from M. Gaidon for the annuity of Widow Carré, about 2 years	130
from the Paris city hall, about 1 ½ years	214-10
from M. Cosmas Limousi several years of a 5 livre annuity	
from Jean Olivier the same	
from Jane Tisserand de la Jambertie, at least 10 years	50
from Bagoi the same	
from the clergy about 3 ½ quarterlies	84
from M. Dupinier (account to be made out)	
Dupuy, called the Sourzac dog's paw, should pay 25 livres annuity a year. This has not been entered in the declaration because the seminary has never called him to account due to his great poverty.	
He has arrears over	187-10
The deed of this annuity was notarized by M. Pontard.	
from M. Sansané by a promissory note	72
from M. Maumi by a promissory note (poor)	76-4-6

*

List of New Papers Sent to the Municipality

Sundry Records, 8 items, No. 1

- Account-book for Chastaner, butcher, No. 2
- Accounts for M. Bessenes, No. 3
- Aubanel, bookseller at Avignon, No. 4
- Settlement with M. Mayma, shoemaker, No. 5
- Chaminade, business at Périgueux, 4 packs, Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4, No. 6
- Durand, businessman at Libourne, No. 7
- Dubreuil, bookseller at Périgueux, No. 8
- Sinrac, bookseller in Bordeaux, No. 9
- Louis Lévis, No. 10
- Renier of Abzac, No. 11
- Sundry receipts, No. 12
- Nine items regarding the annuity of Widow Carré and one affidavit concerning the arrears in the annuity from the clergy, No. 13
- Papers of M. Aubertie, No. 14
- Account-book of M. Mainard, No. 15
- Six items, specifically two letters from Bishop Macheco regarding the hospital, waiving of right of way by Simon Parroutaud in favor of M. Pierre Dulac, receipt of auditing, receipt of payment to Perette, promissory note of M. Sansané, No. 16
- Small account book of advances to boarders, No. 17
- Book of boarding fees, No. 18
- Register, No. 19

List of Sums Spent on the Seminary of Mussidan

By Father Moze and the Fathers Chaminade

By Father Moze

1. Sale to M. Magardeau, July 1, 1776, of a farm and meadow	8,600 livres
2. Interest paid by M. Margardeau, 6 years and 8 months	936
3. Sale to M. Boneau, December 20, 1776	550

4. Sale of property to M. Pomerie, March 19, 1773	770-16-8
5. Ditto to the same, May 8, 1775	120
6. Sale of property to M. Branchu, October 14, 1776	525
7. The same to his sister	100
8. The same to Mlle Lespine	400
9. Funds for services at the hospital from 177 [sic] to September 1777	1,750
10. Stipends for Masses during 12 years	1800
11. Interest on property sold during 14 years	8400
	24,610 livres
12. Effects sold with his brother	<u>658-3-4</u>
(1) July 20, 1771, to Jean Boneau	393-6-8
(2) October 13, 1771, to Jean Eychauzier	400
(3) March 14, 1772, to Pierre Léonardet	233
(4) September 12, 1772, to Pierre Léonardet	<u>290</u>
	1,316-6-8
	livres
	Half
	658-6-8 livres

By the Fathers Chaminade

1. Sums received from M. Montjon in 1778, 79, 80, 81	2,400 livres
2. From 1781 to 1779 inclusive, 1,200 livres each year	12,000
3. Sums received from Father le Boeuf	1,600
4. From inheritance	1,200
5. From professional fees	3,600
6. From Masses	2,000
7. From loans from their brothers, more than	2,600
8. From loans from their sister's inheritance	5,000
9. From interest on their estate	<u>5,000</u>
	35,400 livres

* * *

N.A. 2e. To the Directorate of the District of Mussidan

July 27, 1791
Agmar 218.2.6

Reply of Fathers Moze and Chaminade

To the Observations of the Municipality of Mussidan.

Because the municipality has not arranged its observations in any order, so to speak, to avoid confusion Fathers Moze and Chaminade have decided to number each paragraph of the document of the municipality and to insert their reply to each article there. By this means, under the same number the two directorates, one of which has to give its advice and the other to render a decision in this case, will be able to better evaluate the reasons and means used by the two parties.

Number 1. It is very true that Father Moze sold property of his not exceeding 11,723 livres in value, but it must not be concluded from this that he brought to the seminary only 11,723 livres from his patrimonial estate. The credits from his father's estate and the arrears of interest were his patrimony as much as his property, and when he turned over to the seminary the 936 livres of interest owed him by M. Magardeau, it was just as if he had done this with an equal amount obtained from the sale of an additional meadow or any other piece of land, because for

the person who made the sacrifice, the 936 livres derived from arrears was worth as much as 936 livres obtained from the sale of the land.

Moreover, it is easy to understand that Father Moze, working ceaselessly for the seminary, working from morning to night for this establishment and in the public interest or that of the nation and devoting to it the best part of his life, should receive from it at least his board as the reward for his work, according to the teaching of Saint Paul, perhaps ever more broadly expressed in the Gospel, *dignus est omnis operarius mercede sua* [the laborer is worthy of his reward, 1 Timothy 5:18]. Had he worked elsewhere, either as a parish assistant or in any other way, he would at least have earned his living and his support and would have set aside his entire income. Instead of keeping it or using it for his own benefit, he invested it in the seminary. And yet it was his property, his estate, his fortune, as much as the capital assets. Why then, when the time has come to settle accounts with the establishment which he shaped or with its proprietors, should he not reclaim the revenues lawfully belonging to him, revenues with which he supplied them each year? They benefited from these; these have not been lost. Is it just for the nation or any other to be enriched at his expense? *Nemo debet locupletari ex jactura aliena* [no one should be enriched from what is done by another].

Carefully combine these principles, which are all true in moral as well as in political philosophy, in the law of nations as well as in positive law, and it will be evident that far from having inflated his statement, Father Moze has not even entered into it all he could have.

Number 2. The account of the Fathers Chaminade is more considerable and no less just.¹

It is useless to criticize it because of the part which they entered as received from their father.

During the lifetime of their father, it is said, the children have not the least right to claim an inheritance. There is nothing more true, but apart from the fact that a son may receive his share of the inheritance by way of an advance, there are cases where he is justified in requesting it.

One of the Chaminade brothers was married in 1777. Their father and mother appointed him to pay his brothers their share of the inheritance, while each of them kept 2,000 livres and their interest. They subsequently gave up everything. Thereupon, no doubt their brother, being in full possession of everything, was able to be compelled to give them some food, at least.

Is it very strange under these circumstances that all together received directly a modest sum of 1,200 livres as their share of the inheritance? The moderateness of the amount proves the sincerity of the assertion.

Moreover, they borrowed from their brother for the seminary; and although the merchandise borrowed had been destined for the seminary and although their brother thus acquired a direct share in its assets, they are too respectable not to charge this loan to their own estate, if their brother should suffer the least contradiction on the part of the administrators of the nation.

He is already thus threatened, inasmuch as the municipality has taken the liberty to state that the obligations of the administrators of the seminary toward these individuals date with certainty only from April, the time of the presentation of the contract and its registration.

But in this the municipality is mistaken and is reckoning without its host. The books of dealer F. Chaminade are in order; they note the debt and are valid evidence before the law. If the municipality or other administrators ever try positively and seriously to question such a claim, M. Chaminade's books will be promptly produced and the doubts will be dissipated, unless new laws are to be devised with a retroactive effect for the nation to judge cases in which it is to some extent interested differently from how it judges those of the majority of French citizens.

The Fathers Chaminade have dealt with their sister's inheritance in the same manner, sinking it into the establishment of the seminary. Their sister has a note of this debt, which at least

¹ What follows is written in an unknown hand.

would have been sacred in the days of despotism and which undoubtedly it is not desirable to have her regret.

There is no date on this item earlier than April, any more than on the preceding one, the municipality goes on to say. However, it is equally and still worse mistaken, for (1) the mortgage which Mlle Chaminade¹ presents is signed by one of her brothers, who died before the time when it was possible to believe that the creditors of the seminary of Mussidan would one day need to defend the lawfulness of their titles against the administrators of the nation or anyone other than their signatories. (2) The payments of the interest on the capital made to Mlle Chaminade since the date of her title justify her claim. They are established by titles beyond suspicion because for the most part they were drawn up by the debtors of the seminary in virtue of mandates and delegations which the distance separating them obliged administrators of the seminary to send to Mlle Chaminade so she might receive her annuity at Périgueux.

Number 3. Without a doubt, upon entering the seminary each member of the staff promised to work as much as possible for both the temporal and the spiritual good of the seminary, to use the expressions of the municipality, however unsuitable. Upon having himself named to the staff each person dedicated himself to this holy task, and it was no longer permissible for him to be negligent with regard to the temporal goods of the house any more than with regard to the Christian education of the boarders whose childhoods had been confided to him. But this obligation did not make it incumbent upon any one of them to bring his fortune to the seminary or to pour his income into it, any more than his capital, in order to make it temporarily productive. The meaning and the force of such an obligation are merely that each staff member is to direct his efforts toward the faithful administration of the belongings of the house, and not at all to increase them with his entire fortune.

It is therefore not proper to conclude that what each of them has brought with him is to be presumed to have been given to or acquired by the seminary, and still less that it has been so irrevocably given that the pretended donor may not recover and reclaim it on leaving, whatever the event which obliges him to leave the establishment to which he had devoted himself.

The municipality does not render properly what is included in this regard in the record of Father Moze's admission to the staff. Above all, it distorts the meaning. At the time of his admission Father Moze had already brought a part of his fortune to the house; the record contains a mention of it. This is a certificate of acknowledgement which the superiors who admitted him believed they should give him, nothing more. Such a certificate could neither destroy his right nor diminish it, nor could this right be diminished by the imperious circumstances in which he has since found himself, as his colleagues also have.

It is ridiculous to hear the municipality say in this regard that their refusal to submit to the law which despoils them does not authorize them to go back on their gifts in order in turn to despoil the nation.

We would like to have the municipality take the trouble to explain what it understands by "law of spoliation." Nothing of the type has ever been known, and if under some evil influence the national assembly has passed any of this type, it would need nothing more to cause its doings to be detested and to draw down upon itself the contempt of sensible people of all nations. A law should be just, and it is evident that a law of spoliation would be unjust and by no means a wise and just law.

In fact, this is what the defamers of the national assembly said—namely, that its regulations concerning the clergy and their possessions were regulations of spoliation—but it is hardly to be expected to see a municipality acting as their echo.

The national assembly has neither despoiled nor wished to despoil anyone; no decree of spoliation is known among its decrees. The one which serves as a basis and foundation for all the others concerning ecclesiastical possessions declares merely that this type of possessions is at the

¹ According to the custom in France at the time, widows resumed their maiden name and the title *demoiselle* (Mlle).

disposal of the nation. It merely states that the possessions which belong to the clergy and the Church of France at the moment of its issuance are at the disposal of the nation, and since then no other has either been made or issued to authorize the nation to seize the possessions of individuals, to despoil them of their properties to again use expressions of the municipality, under the vain pretext of their being merged with those which have been declared to be at the disposal of the nation.

On the contrary,¹ a host of decrees have been made regarding the former, which all oblige the nation to pay the cost of church properties and which testify powerfully that the assembly did not intend to despoil anyone.

At that rate, one word will settle the difficulty regarding the possessions which the petitioners claim—did or did they not belong to the Church when the first decree was issued? The entire question reduces itself to this one fact. If they had been irrevocably acquired by the Church they are at the disposal of the nation, for this decree has these very precise terms, that all the possessions of the clergy are at the disposal of the nation. If they had not been irrevocably acquired by the Church, to the clergy they are not at the disposal of the nation, for by decree it has at its disposal only the possessions belonging thereafter to the Church.

Now at the time of the decree, the possessions which the petitioners are claiming were neither Church property nor property of the clergy. No matter how much it is supposed that the petitioners had the intention of giving them to the Church, or even if it is pleasing, that they were not brought to the seminary to be reclaimed, nothing of all this constitutes a donation or a sale or any other type of transfer of property. These possessions had not yet either been given, sold, or transferred to the Church by any deed whatsoever. Therefore, they have not become at the disposal of the nation by the decree which places church property at its disposal. No other one has appeared since, whatever the municipality may maintain, which despoils individuals to unjustly bestow upon the nation the belongings of another. At least, the petitioners know of no such decrees of spoliation, and if the municipality knows of any, let it cite these and do so very exactly, for otherwise this could appear to be only an atrocious calumny against the national assembly in alleging that the refusal of the petitioners to submit to the law which despoils them justifies depriving them of their entire fortune.

After this, it is ridiculous to hear the municipality say there is no question here of simple presumption—that everything that characterizes a donation, the will and the fact, combines to establish the gift.

The municipality agrees therefore that a donation cannot be established by presumptions; consequently, deeds are required to justify it. Where then are these deeds which prove that before the pretended decree of spoliation, the petitioners had given to the Church the belongings which they claim? The will and the fact combine, it is said, but where are the documents which prove this will and this fact to establish the pretended gift? The only known fact is that the petitioners brought their entire fortune to the seminary, capital and revenue, and from this fact, the only one true, proved, and agreed upon, the municipality concludes that the petitioners have donated. What does it mean? To whom does it believe it is speaking?

It says further that under the former regime the claims of the petitioners would not have been admissible, and this is the report of the agents of the clergy¹ of 1740. But it is mistaken and harbors a misunderstanding.

¹ The rest is again in Father Chaminade's handwriting.

¹ From 1560 to 1788 the clergy of France held a general assembly every 5 years to discuss doctrinal and financial matters, especially their heavy contributions to the finances of the crown. To assure the continuity of their action and to maintain their influence in the intervening period, two procurators called "agents general" or agents of the clergy were elected from 1580 on to protect the rights of the Church in religious and financial matters in the king's council and in the courts of law. They gave an account of their administration at each assembly and were generally rewarded for their work with a bishopric.

It is mistaken because under the former regime, if one of the petitioners had left the seminary at any time whatsoever, he would not have unsuccessfully reclaimed the amount of the advances made by him. The courts of the time would not have allowed the seminary to be enriched at the expense of those who had brought their fortune to it. M. Greleté of Peix had not brought a penny of his fortune to the major seminary at Périgueux; he had contributed only his labor throughout the better part of his life, and when he left it, his claim against the others at the seminary was not rejected by the Bordeaux parliament.² The former courts, which would not have ridiculously listened to the unbecoming allegation of a law of spoliation, did not despoil anyone. They knew a person who leaves a Society for whatever reason is entitled to take with him the amount he has brought with him, and they always authorized him to do so.

The report of the agents of the clergy of 1740, which never became a law in France and which the courts certainly did not take to be laws, still has nothing contrary to this. It states merely that possessions given and joined to the seminaries do not belong to the congregations which administer them, and it is not very clear what this principle, although very true, could have to do with the present type of contention in which the petitioners, far from believing themselves to be proprietors of the establishment or of any of the assets which have been donated to it, merely claim what they themselves have brought to it and deposited and the advances they were willing to make to it from their entire fortunes.

The repairs and extension of the buildings are without a doubt so many additions made to the former ones. But to conclude from this that these additions fall into the category of the report of 1740 is to presuppose a donation which does not exist. The increases in construction which a contractor makes in the buildings of a seminary are so many additions to its previous buildings. Must it be concluded that as soon as these additions are made, the seminary may keep them without paying the contractor? Undoubtedly not. But why? Because although there is an addition of new constructions to the old ones, there is no corresponding donation on the part of the workman, and there must be donation and union to permit the seminary to appropriate the object. The conclusion follows automatically; the petitioners have indeed added materially to the seminary the repairs and enlargement which they had made with their entire fortune, but they have made no donation. It is therefore impossible to suppose that the seminary became the proprietor of the money spent on these enlargements and that, thanks to a nonexistent law of spoliation, the nation may take advantage of these at the expense of the petitioners and keep the improved property without paying them a just price for the enlargements they have made.

Number 4. The capital is due, and the interest likewise. The municipality agrees in effect that they are on an equal footing, and if it is says a word to point out a difference, that word is wrong. The petitioners are not asking for anything that has been used up, and they freely admit that if their minor capital sums were used up and lost for the house, they would have no right to reclaim them. They do not wish and do not intend to establish and base their claims on anything other than an unshakable principle, according to which no one should be enriched at the expense of another, the Church any more than the nation. They are not reclaiming their advances of capital and interest, except insofar as the seminary which formerly belonged to the Church and today belongs to the nation has become more considerable, richer, and of much greater value through their advances of either capital or interest; *in quantum locupletior factus est* [insofar as it has become more abundant]. Before their advances the seminary was an entity of 100,000 livres; this means it increased 88,000 livres in value. It is not just for the nation to profit from this and for those who have put their fortune into it to lose it. *Nemo debet locupletari ex jacaturâ alienâ* [no one should be enriched from what is done by another].

That the nation should keep and maintain all the additions made to the seminary through the economic efforts of the petitioners—there is nothing more just. They owed their efforts to the seminary, the fruit of their efforts and of their vigilance belonged to it, and without a doubt the

² See letter no. N.A. 0c, n. 3.

nation has the right to take it over; it is its property. But they did not owe the seminary their fortune any more than its fruits and incomes, the interest any more than the capital. They did not give it to the seminary. It is therefore just that when they leave, for whatever reason, they withdraw what they brought to it to the extent that the seminary has become richer because of it, for otherwise the nation would enrich itself at their expense. This would be neither just nor reasonable.

The municipality believes it has a comprehensive answer in the remark which, it says, is extremely simple and which is so in fact—namely that as it says, the petitioners owe an account of 20 years' rental of the house and use of its income because they pretend to have done everything for themselves and nothing for the nation. The preceding considerations reply to this remark of unequaled simplicity; the petitioners do not intend to request reimbursement either for their time, their trouble, their efforts, or for the better part of their lives used in fulfilling the duties of a member of the seminary staff and of an instructor. They do not therefore owe any account of the use of a house which has been more profitable to the individuals of the nation for whom it was established than for those who administered it.

Number 5.¹ The fact that the seminary has actually increased proves better than could be proved in words that the assets of Father Le Boeuf and of M. Montjon were used for the expansion of the seminary. This is an admitted fact; it is an evident fact, a fact whose proof is easy to gather, namely that the seminary buildings have increased immensely since its foundation. They did not grow without any resources and by themselves. The petitioners ordered the expansions; they paid for them; whatever amounts these cost came from their hands. They were not obliged to give an account of their fortune or to explain by what channels the funds they used had reached them and when they say they had received them from so and so, for the existence of the repairs proves they had received them from somewhere, their simple declaration suffices afterward to establish the fact that it is rather from one source than from another. This is enough to authorize them to reclaim the repairs or their value, unless the nation proves that these are the donations of individuals made to the seminary. This is what it will never prove. Meanwhile, it is apparently clearly proven that nothing had been given to the establishment and that everything had been given to the administrators, who did not exaggerate in declaring that they had exhausted their fortune and that of their friends in order to expand the seminary and to establish it.

Number 6. There is no question at all here of funds acquired separately by Fathers Moze and Chaminade. The nation did not seize them, and very likely it will not even dare to try to seize them. There is no deed for it, no donation, no merger. If it is true that the acquirers used some funds of the seminary to pay for objects, the law is peremptory and certain; *res emptā es pecunia mea, non est eius* [the thing bought is from my money]. The seminary or the nation has only to reclaim whatever funds it proves to have been used to make the purchase. The petitioners are prepared to compensate with part of what is owed them. This is all they are obliged to do on this point, and it is surprising that the municipality, which speaks with such ease in another place of the former law, could have failed to recognize the provisions of the edict of 1749 regarding proprietors of mortmain² to the point of putting forward the pitiful fallacies which it permitted itself to advance.

The lack of letters patent alone before the acquisition would suffice to nullify it and to restore their personal belongings to the administrators, once they had acquired it in this capacity. How is it possible to suppose that without letters patent, especially when someone is forced to admit there were none at the time of the sales, the sale made in their own name acquired for the seminary an ownership which it neither would nor could have acquired, even though the acquisition had been made for it?

¹ Here the same unidentified handwriting as above resumes.

² Inalienable property, originally only church property, later also the property of certain corporations.

And the letters patent of 1785 do not prove anything to the contrary. Far from it; they prove very directly that nothing had been acquired for the seminary and that the seminary was nothing but the tenant. They prove the administrators desired to acquire, they received the authorization, but they never acquired and the ownership of the assets never belonged to the seminary. Nothing is clearer.

Number 7. It is impossible to understand what the municipality wished to say in the excess of its observations, and therefore it is completely useless to attempt to reply. The declarations made by the petitioners could be in error, but that error could not damage their right, above all when it is seen clearly that they erred merely in identifying themselves in a way with the house which they looked upon as their work and their property.

But they committed no error whatsoever, and it will be easy to become convinced of this by reading the complete text of their declaration and avoiding the small inconsistency into which the municipality has fallen, which wishes only to read or allow to be seen what it is pleased to select from it without minding this maxim of jurisprudence which a wise administrator should never lose sight of—*nisi tota lege inspecta, incivile est judicare*—“read everything, or refrain from judgment.”

The petitioners say in this declaration first of all that they are living in a spacious house, almost all newly-built at their expense. They add that the furnishings also represent a great part of their funds.

This is word for word what is read in the declaration. To pretend then that they agreed that the seminary owed them nothing—does this not make sport of reason and of justice?

True, in concluding they declared that they owed the 11,000 livres, either borrowed money or money required to settle their account. Moreover, they added that their assets and liabilities nearly balanced.

The municipality uses this as a starting point to criticize them with unparalleled bitterness. “You agree,” it says, “that the house owes only 11,000 livres, and you are claiming 60,000 livres as its creditors. What a contradiction!”

Now where in this declaration has the municipality found the avowal that the seminary owed only 11,000 livres? Nowhere, if you please. It actually found the administrators owed only 11,000 livres by contract or to settle outstanding accounts, but nothing more.

They say we owe borrowed money or the amounts of unsettled accounts. These words, “we owe,” after the first declaration stating that their fortune had been used to remodel the buildings and to furnish the house mean nothing other than this, that apart from 11,000 livres of borrowed money, all the rest had been done at their expense, and not at all that the nation may and should take and keep everything while paying the 11,000 livres owed to strangers.

This is, above all, necessarily the way to explain and understand a declaration made at a time when the administrators had no reason to expect that one day under pressure their conscience would oblige them with reason or from prejudice to abandon an establishment to which they had devoted themselves.

The comment of the municipality is just as inconsistent and misplaced. It is inconsistent because from whatever expressions the petitioners may have, it is clear that they neither said nor intended to say anything other than this, that the current credit established without¹ contract and without² written statements balanced with the debts.

This is beside the point because there is a question at the moment only of right. The accounts will come later.

The petitioners have used the sum 60,000 livres in capital, yields, and income, interest on their patrimony or whatever other resources and assets belonging to them which they could have

¹ The word “without” (*sans*) seems to have been written over by (*par*) in Fr. Chaminade’s handwriting.

² The word “without” seems to have been written by Fr. Chaminade above the same word, which had been written over another word and so appeared doubtful.

used anywhere else; they have used it for the expansion of the seminary. If everything has been used up, so much the worse for them; they must necessarily lose everything. But if it is to be found in the value of the seminary which passes over to the nation, since the nation may not enrich itself by that much³ at their expense, it must reimburse them.

Now this is a fact agreed upon, that the seminary has acquired all of that and even more in value. Reimbursement is therefore due. This is clear. This is the case of the petitioners.

Father Moze, approving the above script.

Mussidan, July 23, 1791

Father Guillaume- Joseph Chaminade, approving the above.

* * *

As the conclusion of Father Chaminade's letter of February 2, 1791, predicts, the professors of the seminary refused to take the constitutional oath and dispersed. Father Chaminade traveled to Bordeaux around the end of 1791. His correspondence, which then became very rare, points to his being there. On July 27, 1791, the Board of Directors of the Mussidan district again sent this appeal to the municipality for whatever further observation it chose to make.

3. To M. Vacquier, Bordeaux

July 19, 1792, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

Would M. Vacquier kindly give the bearer 200 livres in government notes,¹ which I will repay to him upon request? Pardon me for all the trouble I am causing him; I am forced to this by circumstances.

G-Joseph Chaminade, Priest

* * *

3a. A Mortgage in Favor of Mme Marie Fort

March 19, 1793

I the undersigned acknowledge receipt from Mme Marie Fort of the sum of 3,000 livres in government notes, for which sum I allow her from all my present properties an annuity of 150 livres, current from this day forward until I will be pleased to refund the principle of 3,000 livres together with any arrears of the said annuity still due. I reserve the right to withhold each year from the annuity of 150,000 livres the amount of the taxes to which it is subject, and I agree to notify the said Mme Fort three months in advance of my ability to refund the capital.

As security hereby, I appropriate and mortgage my property located at Saint-Laurent on Rue Le Tondu.²

In witness whereof, Bordeaux, March 19, 1793.

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

³ The expression "by that much" (*en*), literally "by it," was added by Fr. Chaminade.

¹ The term used in the original is *assignat*, which was a note issued as currency by the French revolutionary government (1790-95). It was based on the security of the lands which had been seized by the State.

² Le Tondu was a village on the outskirts of Bordeaux.

4. To M. Duranty, Bordeaux

April 6, 1793
Saint-Laurent, Rue du Tondué
Autograph, Agmar

Monsieur,

I am forwarding to you the amount of your bill. I am sorry I was not at my country place at the time you took the trouble to come. My health obliges me to come to Bordeaux, or rather to remain in Bordeaux for several days, for there I am closer to the help my condition requires.

Please let me have your receipt later on, and rest assured that I remain very respectfully,
Monsieur, your very humble servant.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

M. Rivière was a gardener, the neighbor of Father Chaminade at his Villa Saint-Laurent. His name appears in the deed of purchase of this property.

5. To M. Rivière, Bordeaux

April 28, 1793, Bordeaux
Autograph, Agmar

Monsieur Rivière,

I have seen your bill. It is very correct, and I am asking my father to pay it. Please take good care of my trees. I hope my poor health will not prove to be chronic and that I will be able to show you my gratitude in person. My stomach is fairly good, but my head and my legs are worthless.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

The Reign of Terror followed soon after (May 31, 1793). It lasted until the fall of Robespierre (July 27, 1794), which ended the first phase of the Revolution. Thereafter efforts were made to restore peace. Because Father Chaminade had been unduly listed among the priests who had fled the country during the Revolution, he nevertheless had to fear the effects of the laws directed against them.

6. To the Citizen-Administrators of The District of Bordeaux

18 thermidor, year III
August 5, 1795, Bordeaux
Autograph, Agmar

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, priest, calls to your attention his great surprise at learning that he has been listed among the émigrés.³

Please examine the certificate of residence which he received from the city authorities this past 21 messidor,⁴ and you will be convinced that he never left the territory of the Republic.

³ Those who had fled the country during the Revolution.

⁴ The 10th month of the French revolutionary calendar, extending from June 19 to July 18. The 21 messidor, therefore, corresponds to July 9.

This authentic paper makes his stay in Bordeaux go back without interruption to the month of May 1790.³ There can be no difficulty, therefore, in removing his name at once from the list of émigrés, where it could have been placed only at the insistence of some ill-intentioned individual.

He trusts in your sense of justice, Citizens, and hopes you will not hesitate to order his name struck from the list of émigrés.

* * *

*Father Chaminade opened an oratory at no. 14, Rue Sainte Eulalie (now no. 28, Rue Paul Louis Lande) in the house later occupied by the headquarters of the flourishing Catholic Students' Association of Bordeaux. There he received the renunciations of priests who had taken the constitutional oath. This difficult function had been entrusted by diocesan authorities to Father Chaminade, then a priest of 34 and a newcomer in Bordeaux. But his zeal, prudence, and holiness were already evident to everyone. The following documents refer to the exercise of this function.*⁴

Fr. Joachim Rousset, an ex-Franciscan of Libourne, writes to Father Chaminade on August 24, 1795.

Reverend Father,

I learned rather late about the threats of His Holiness against those who had taken the constitutional oath to obey the law. Unfortunately, I am in this number. I acknowledge my guilt. I come with confidence to ask you to let me know what I must do to make amends for this fault, which I committed more through fear than through malice. I am old and so decrepit and full of infirmities that it is impossible for me to travel, but I will act in accordance with the instructions of your early reply. I am now 82 years old, 32 of which I spent in Libourne where I was superior three times and a good friend of your brother, the Franciscan, I will feel all my life that "whoever does not have the Church as his Mother cannot have God as his Father." Fundata est supra firma petram [she is founded upon solid rock].

I am drawing a pension from the government, but very small considering the high cost of living; but I hope God will lend me a helping hand and that as a native of the same region¹ you will grant me permission to retain this pension.

Please, Father, accept the expression of my profound respect and believe me to be your very humble servant.

*

This is Father Chaminade's reply.

7. To Fr. Joachim Rousset, Former Franciscan, Libourne

August 29, 1795, Bordeaux
Copy, Archdiocese of Bordeaux

Reverend Father,

It will be a genuine pleasure for me to be of service to you in your present situation. Your age, your profession, and the positions of trust with which you have been honored in your Order have influenced a greater number to imitate your example. You owe it to yourself as well as to

³ On this date Father Chaminade, although still residing in Mussidan, took up legal residence at no. 8, Rue Abadie, Bordeaux.

⁴ See Simler, *Life of Father Chaminade*, and *L'Apôtre*, 1910-11, 7:309.

¹ The term in the original is *patrie*, which in the Dordogne dialect is *compatriote*. A similar usage in other French-speaking areas is that of *mon pays* in the sense not of "my country," but of "my fellow countryman."

them to take very definite steps toward retracting your errors and repairing the scandal you have given the Church by joining the schism.

I presume you have ceased to exercise any function of holy ministry by way of an initial act of submission to the Church and to its head.

The second thing for you to do is to retract in detail all the schismatic acts occasioned by your taking the oath, and to do this with the sentiments of repentance and obedience toward your canonical superiors which should accompany the declaration. Your age and your infirmities dispense you from coming here in person to make this declaration, but you will send it to me so I may give it the necessary publication. As soon as I have received it, I will outline for you what remains to be done to merit your reconciliation.

Until then, meditate at the feet of Jesus Christ upon the gravity of your desertion from the Church. Probe the wounds of your soul in order to show them in all their depth to the ministry of Jesus Christ, who will have the task of plunging you into the pool of probation. Show publicly to all those you may have led into error the sorrow you feel and the desire you have to repair the scandal you have given; but above all, place yourself completely into the hands of Providence as far as your temporal needs are concerned. A pension which can be claimed only by declaring yourself a transgressor of the laws of the Church cannot in conscience be accepted. In the school of Saint Francis you must have learned that the help of Providence never fails his [Saint Francis'] true children.

I have the honor, Father, of being respectfully your very humble and very obedient servant.

* * *

N.A. 7-2. Letter From Cardinal Busca

August 1796

Printed in Volume 9. Copy at Agmar 218.2.49⁵

Most Holy Father,

Pierre Gard, professor of theology at the university in Bordeaux, and Jean Dufresne, pastor of Saint Morillon, etc., both priests of the diocese of Bordeaux; also Jean Pourquéri, canon of the cathedral church of Périgueux; Barthélemy Bardi, pastor of Dourillac; André Chabane, pastor of Monfaucon; Claude Faure, pastor of Vers; Jacques Léger, assistant at Sourzac; Henri Moze, superior of the seminary of Mussidan; Guillaume Chaminade, director at the same seminary; Jacques Dauziac, canon of Saint Astier; Jean Lacroix, professor of philosophy; Pierre Poujade; and Ignatius Leboeuf, all priests of the diocese of Périgueux. These are all French priests who refused the civil oath and in no way have adhered to schism. Now, humbly prostrate at the feet of Your Holiness, they petition for

1. The faculty of imparting a blessing with plenary indulgence to the faithful in danger of death, and of delegating another priest who will do likewise for them at the time of their own death.

2. The faculty granted to each of them of blessing, so long as they will live, a thousand intercessory rosaries, crosses, or sacred images, etc., and of attaching to them the same indulgences as though they had been blessed by Your Holiness.

3. The personal and perpetual indult of the privileged altar, which each of the petitioners may use three times in any week.

4. A plenary indulgence which the petitioners may apply to the departed, to be gained on any and all Sundays and on the Feasts of Our Lord Jesus Christ and of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary and of All Saints, Saint Joseph, Saint John the Baptist, Saints Peter and Paul, their own holy patrons and the patrons of their parishes; as also on the

⁵ Document given to the archives by Fr. Verrier, September 4, 1987. [The original of this letter is entirely in Latin.]

anniversary dates of their Baptism and Priestly Ordination, provided they confess at least once a week, receive Communion or celebrate Mass, and pray according the intentions of Your Holiness.

In cases where there is a scarcity of confessors, the petitioners humble request the faculty of gaining the aforementioned indulgences even without sacramental Confession, provided they elicit an act of contrition with the intention of confessing at the first opportunity, as has been granted for a year to the faithful of the kingdom. . . .
[Illegible line.]

5. Also, for a plenary indulgence to be gained by the faithful of their parish, where they now are or may in the future be, on all the ferial (*sic*) feasts of Our Lord Jesus Christ, of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, of All Saints, of the blessed postles Peter and Paul, and of the holy patrons of the parish, and on the day on which young people are admitted to their first Communion, provided they confess, receive Communion, and offer prayers according to the intention of Your Holiness.

May God [preserve Your Holiness] . . .

Our Most Holy Lord, His Holiness Pope Pius VI

His Holiness, on the advice of a select Congregation of Cardinals, kindly grants the favors as petitioned, in the usual form prescribed by the Apostolic See.

At the Quirinal Palace
August [?] 1796
Cardinal Busca

*

We, Alexandre Amadeus, by divine grace and by the authority of the Holy Apostolic See Bishop of Blois, etc., have seen the present indult and find it conformable to the Roman original from which it is taken word for word. Given at Auriae of the Spanish under our name and seal, and countersigned by our secretary.

November 21, 1796

Alexandre Lauzières de Thémines, Bishop of Blois

By my order

The Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Bishop of Blois

Lacroix, Pro-secretary

We have seen and approved

The 28th day - - - , in the Year of Our Lord 1822

Alexandre Denis Boiret, Bishop of Letronarne

* * *

A coup on September 4, 1797, suppressed the elections held after the fall of Robespierre which had returned a number of royalists to power; the earlier phase of the Revolution was revived, except that exile was substituted for the guillotine. Father Chaminade was obliged to leave for Spain.

The life of Father Bouet (in manuscript form) has preserved for us a curious letter addressed from exile by Father Chaminade to Mme Randon¹ of Bordeaux. A native of the diocese of Cahors, she had been brought up in Bordeaux at the home of a relative who had her marry a very respectable young man, a baker by trade. She had several children when the Revolution broke out. It afforded her the opportunity to manifest all the liveliness of her faith and the ardor of her charity; during the days of the Terror, her modest home became the place of refuge for faithful priests. At times she took more than 15 together, and when her home was raided on reports of secret informers, she knew how to ward off danger by the calmness of her bearing and

¹ Rigagnon? Only her maiden name is known with certainty.

her extraordinary presence of mind. Hounded in the streets by the mob, heaped with abuse and handed over at last to the revolutionary court, she escaped the guillotine only by a miracle. Wearing eventually by the terrible scenes the Revolution constantly presented to her, she had decided to leave the world and to retire with her husband into solitude, after consecrating her children to God in order to help them keep their innocence unsullied and finally reach holiness themselves. She consulted Father Chaminade about this plan and received the following letter, which shows the prudence and spirit of faith of the servant of God.

* * *

8. To Mme Randon, Bordeaux

April 28, 1798, Saragossa

Copy, Archives of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Bordeaux

You are looking for an answer, mother dear,¹ but you know very well that it is not an easy thing to give one.

All Europe is in confusion, and Spain in particular seems to be on the verge of suffering some dreadful shocks. For the past two weeks already there has been in effect a decree of expulsion aimed at all French, men or women, priests and lay people. All are obliged to leave the kingdom within a month. As a matter of fact, however, since yesterday it is believed that this decree will be revoked. Everything therefore seems to oppose your plan.

I should not have been too far from favoring your coming along without changing anything in your home and without telling anyone, especially since I learned that Mémine was taking care of your children. Such a long trip, particularly under present circumstances, could only involve many difficulties which you must seriously consider before God.

Regarding the complete carrying out of your plan, you must know that even if the French here are not molested, you as well as your husband would have endless trouble in entering communities, and you would surely not succeed. Moreover, what would become of your children?

Still, if you continue to believe such an extraordinary course fulfills the plans of Providence for you, explain to me as clearly as you can all your reasons and the particular ideas you may have. I will weigh them before God, and I hope God in his goodness will make known to me his will in this regard.

No doubt you did not believe anything could be done for that little Alexandre² whom I had referred to you. I am waiting for you to write to me about him. I am very satisfied with his brother.

Your brother,³ who is my companion here, still has the same inclination;⁴ I have not yet been able to bring myself to the point of giving him complete approval, although I have not forbidden him to proceed in that direction. In the short letter you wrote to me, there was a type of ambiguity which made your answer almost useless. You seemed to believe he could join the Trappists for a time and later on leave them in order to preach the Gospel. His intention was not to enter by a temporary retirement [he could do that], but to become a monk, to take vows and live in the monastery, which in the ordinary course of events he could never leave. The purpose of these holy penitents is by no means to exercise the apostolic ministry.

I return to your plan. If you have no doubt, no uncertainty before God regarding the obligation and the time for carrying it out, consider the various means you will need to employ to

¹ This and similar expressions were a precaution meant to dispel any suspicion of dealing with priests.

² Alexandre Duboscq, brother of François Duboscq, companion-in-exile of Father Chaminade.

³ The reference is to Fr. Bouet. The remark contained in note 1 above applied here also.

⁴ The inclination to join the Trappists.

succeed. Weigh clearly the inconvenience which the sale of your houses, etc., would cause your husband and your children. In the meantime write to me in as much detail as you can, and be very careful not to let anything of this plan become known.

Yours very truly,

Madame Randon did not carry out her plan. She continued her life of charity, and at the time of the Spanish War she devoted herself without reserve to the care of Spanish prisoners held in Bordeaux. Her daughter made the acquaintance of a young officer among the prisoners of war and married him. Madame Randon followed them to Madrid, where she died a saintly death on October 4, 1818. She was buried there in the cemetery of the church of Saint-Laurent.¹

¹ See *L'Apôtre*, 1911-12, 8:133 ff.

Spiritual Direction of Marie-Thérèse de Lamourous

1796 to 1800

Marie-Thérèse de Lamourous was born at Barsac near Bordeaux on November 1, 1754, to a noble family whose members had served in parliament.¹ From her pious mother she received a solid Christian education. In 1794 she retired with her father to their country estate at Le Pian, about 10 miles north of Bordeaux. There she carried out a true apostolate among the inhabitants.

Her first spiritual guide had been a Carmelite, Fr. Norbert Pannetier of Saint Louis. Next she chose in succession Father Seraphim, a Capuchin; Father Viguier, a diocesan priest; Father Lacroix, who emigrated to Portugal in 1792; and Father Rauzan.² Finally in 1795 she entrusted her soul to the care of Father Chaminade, who was to guide her until her death on September 14, 1836.

In 1801 Mlle Marie-Thérèse de Lamourous founded the Miséricorde in Bordeaux and became its superior. The purpose of this house was to receive and reform penitent women. This work, which Archbishop d'Aviau called "the marvel of his diocese," became the cradle of a religious Congregation approved by the Holy See in 1880.

The cause of beautification of Marie-Thérèse was introduced in Rome on November 14, 1923. For details, see her life by Fr. Auguste Giraudin, superior of the major seminary of Bordeaux (1912), as well as Simler, Life of Father Chaminade and L'Apôtre de Marie.³

These letters, written by Father Chaminade to Mlle de Lamourous during the Revolution, are ranked among the most valuable pieces of his correspondence, for they show what a heroic degree of virtue these two great souls had already reached at this point in their lives.

* * *

9. To Marie-Thérèse de Lamourous, Le Pian

May 27, 1796, Bordeaux¹

Autograph, Agmar

Pax Christi

My dear Daughter,

With pleasure I grant your desire, so often expressed, to have me draw up for you a plan of spiritual conduct suitable to the present state and dispositions of your soul.

You have already made some progress in virtue. But God inspires you above all with a great desire to belong entirely to him. I must nevertheless tell you, like the angel who urged the prophet Elijah to eat the mysterious bread prepared for him, "You have yet a great way to go." You must still reach the holy mountain of Horeb, that degree of perfection in which you will no longer give in to your nature, your senses, your imagination, or your own mind, but obey God himself who wishes to reign within you as your Sovereign. How great is your happiness, my Daughter! You are beginning to realize this, but you will never know it except insofar as you taste it, and you will never² taste it until you are upon that holy mountain.

The purpose of this letter is not to tell you everything you will have to do in the course of your journey, but rather what you are to observe at the present time. When by the grace of God and your fidelity you have carefully carried out what the Holy Spirit prescribes for you through

¹ See letter no. N.A. 0-3, n. 3.

² See letter no. 38, n. 5.

³ *L'Apôtre*, 1908-09, 5:204; 1910-11, 7:316; 1912-13, 9:121; 1924-25, 16:209.

¹ The date was added by Marie-Thérèse.

² The French text has omitted these words of the original: *connâîtrez qu'autant que vous le goûterez et vous ne*, i.e., "know it except insofar as you taste it and you will never."

my ministry, I will see what else I should tell you. Then you will return this message to me, after adding your dispositions with regard to the various points it contains. In the meantime, I will explain to you little by little what I am merely touching upon here. In this way you will form a plan of spiritual conduct for yourself. We will call it your “guide.”

1. It seems to me you have not yet fully grasped the distinction to be made between the life of nature and of your own spirit on the one hand, and the spiritual or supernatural life on the other.

2. The acts of virtue which you perform are still very imperfect, because they are governed more by your reason or your imagination than guided by grace.

3. You must often ask God to activate in you the powers whose purpose is to move us to perform supernatural acts of virtue. Just as in the natural order our soul acts through its three powers or faculties, namely judgment, memory and will, so also what we call in ourselves “the Spirit” acts through these faculties which we have received in Baptism—faith, hope, and charity.

4. Your imagination has gained great influence over you. It is the principal cause of the habitual anxieties which trouble you.

5. I dispense you from all vocal prayers except the ordinary morning and evening prayers, the prayers said in common and Offices at which you can be present, the prayers imposed as penances by your confessor, and those of some pious association or other, providing they are short.

6. You will add to your morning prayer a meditation lasting at first a good quarter of an hour. You will then begin by adoring God interiorly and by saying to yourself, “Although I am only dust and ashes, I will enter the presence of my God!” If you are alone you will prostrate yourself upon the floor to make the act of adoration. Then you will recite the Creed on your knees with your arms outstretched.

After you have made these preparatory acts, you will keep yourself in the presence of God with the greatest possible recollection. The disposition of your soul in this recollection should be that of a simple sentiment either of faith, of hope, of charity, or of resignation to the will of God. You will conclude your meditation by asking God to give you the grace to remain recollected all day and to act only from motives of faith, etc.

7. You will try to find another quarter of an hour, at least, in the evening to repeat the same meditation.

8. Every day you will make at least one-quarter hour of spiritual reading. You may read *The Spiritual Combat* or *The Foundations of the Spiritual Life*. When you are able to dispose of your time, you may make your evening meditation after your spiritual reading. To become more recollected you may make your spiritual reading seated, but I advise you to make your meditations on your knees.

9. After your night prayer you will make an examination of conscience, with the special object of seeing if you have been faithful to the practice of recollection.

10. You will go to Confession every week if nothing prevents this. You will accuse yourself of your faults with simplicity, with no sign of embarrassment, without any movement of either your head or hands, without exclamations, sighs, etc. After reciting the *Confiteor* and listening to the exhortations of your confessor, if you have any trouble or difficulty in your spiritual conduct you may make this known to him outside the confessional. To prepare for Confession you will recall for a quarter of an hour the daily examinations you have made. You will spend another quarter of an hour in moving yourself to sincere contrition. To this end, you will keep yourself recollected in a disposition of deep humility and sorrow.

11. Ordinarily you will not receive Communion on the days when you go to Confession or after nights during which you have been troubled with impure thoughts, unless a Sunday or a feastday happens to follow them; or on the first days of your periods unless some great feast occurs or you feel an intense desire for Communion; or when you travel or have important business matters, as you would not feel courageous enough to remain recollected at such times.

You will make your preparation and thanksgiving for holy Communion by way of a meditation or recollection.

12. Regarding your bodily health, take all the nourishment you need to maintain your normal strength. Always take three meals, except on days when fasting is an obligation or required by some particular circumstance in which you have been permitted to fast. I am not allowing you to perform extraordinary penances or mortifications such as wearing a hair shirt or sackcloth, or taking the discipline or keeping excessive vigils. By way of compensation I advise you to practice great interior and exterior abnegation. This will be the fruit of your meditations and of the care you take to remain recollected. I have noticed in you a certain taste for simplicity in your manner of dressing and actions; I invite you to continue, but to do away with everything superfluous and to allow yourself only what your situation requires.

This will suffice, my dear Daughter, to settle for some time to come what you need to do. If you had to advance all alone I would enter into greater detail, but because I will have occasion to see you from time to time, I will develop little by little the various points I have merely touched upon so far. I have the greatest confidence that you will advance very rapidly if you are faithful. On several occasions I have remarked to you that you must absolutely abandon all those disturbing ideas with which you allow yourself to become overwhelmed. You return to them continually, under various pretexts; this illusion could become very dangerous for you.

May the blessing and peace of Jesus Christ be with you.

* * *

Father Chaminade's spiritual guidance did not remain fruitless. In December of 1796 Marie-Thérèse offered herself to God as a victim in expiation of the crimes committed during the Revolution. Her personal notes, which are presented here for the edification of the reader, are dated January 1797.

I renounce the devil, his suggestions, his delusions, his deceits. I desire God only, his glory, his honor.

I sincerely renew the offering I have made of myself to be his victim. I wish to live this way all my life and to be his victim in every possible and imaginable sense of the word. I agree to the immolation of every particle of my being with a view to his good pleasure alone and his glorification as my Creator.

Without personal interest I offer him my entire self, my tastes, my inclinations. In a word, in a spirit of sacrifice I offer all that can depend on my liberty, whether interiorly or exteriorly. It is for God alone, who alone is worthy of all our homage.

From my offering I exclude nothing. I abandon myself to him. His glory is the only good I desire. Unworthy creature, miserable, proud, downright sinner that I am through the blackest ingratitude after so many benefits, I still dare to tell him I wish to belong only to him! I know very well that of myself I can do nothing; but God, who has brought me into existence, is all-powerful. God gives me the desire or the wish, however weak, to bow to the blows of his justice; but if any illusion yet lurks in what I am writing here, may this infinitely powerful God, this Father infinitely good, turn it to his glory. May he thwart my enemy and convert to his utter confusion all the foolish fancies with which he would wish to envelop me. If my imagination or my passions are taking the place of proper sentiments in me, may God destroy, stifle, and banish these futile phantoms. May they depart from me and cease to deceive me. May grace come to replace them, the grace of immolation, the grace which will render all the powers of my soul incapable of evil but ready always and everywhere for the sacrificial knife with which I ask God to arm himself, to fulfill until my last sigh his role as high priest.

As the sole reward for my offering I ask of God the grace no longer to offer any resistance; and if my sins, my pride, or my passions cry out and revolt, may my innermost heart, at least, always bow to the blows which I ask him to deal me.

Nothing is excluded from my offering; it is without reserve. I desire to die to everything, to suffer darkness, desolation, privations, etc., as much as the divine High Priest deems best; for I surrender my entire being to his paternal care. All I ask of him is the strength never again to retrace my steps. I ask him not to reject me, not to deliver me to my enemies. I feel I have deserved his indignation, a thousand times unhappy, a thousand times unworthy creature that I am! May he deign to accept as a victim a creature disfigured by such great miseries, a thousand times deserving to be repulsed and compelled to become the prey of the prince of darkness, to be powerless to do anything for her Creator.

Truly, I deserve such a punishment. How many, perhaps less ungrateful than I, have suffered it! But God, you know what I am. You know better than I the depth of corruption which defiles everything I do. You also know the . . . (I am at a loss for the right term) that is making me write this. You know that it seems to me, at least, I would sign it with my blood. But you also know that illusions haunt me, my pride constantly deceives me and I imagine the sentiments with which it inspires me to be my own. Who will deliver me, who will cure me, if not you, O Lord? Do you not wish me to turn to you? Then give me also the grace of always desiring to address myself to you. Accept the miserable offering I am again making to you. If you grant me this favor, I will become more especially yours; I will be your property; you will cultivate it, keep it, and defend it.

Deign, then, to receive this unhappy creature. Receive her as a victim, take possession of her; she is offering herself to you; she is sacrificing her life for love of you. Strike, Lord, cut and immolate her without ceasing. Make your will in her regard known to your friends, to your minister, to her spiritual guide, to all creatures. May your hand guide them. May they redouble their blows if need be. Under your guidance, may they destroy and immolate this wretch who deserves your indignation and their contempt. Take from me all human support, all human consolation, all pleasure whenever you judge it useful. Only give me, or rather I ask you to grant me, only what you will me to have, nothing else.

Still, I ask you to accept my offering and to grant that by your power I may never in my innermost heart recoil from the blows dealt to me. May I draw from it no consolation whatsoever, and if this is one of the knife thrusts I am to receive, I submit here, now, and always.

Here, my God, is what I wish to say to you every moment of my life. Every day I will read what I have written here. Today is January 19, 1797. Each day at least once, while waiting for obedience to guide me in this respect, I will indicate by some type of mark my consent to everything it contains.

O good, O infinitely merciful God, bless this mark, and in consideration of it pardon the revolts which corrupt nature will stir up. I surrender this nature to the blows of your justice, but create in me a pure heart and grant me an upright intention.

You know, O my God, that I first made my offering to you under the protection of Mary and Joseph. They are the ones I ask to tie the bonds that are to fasten me to you and to oblige me never to offer any more resistance. Jesus, Mary, Joseph, please bind me with chains.

* * *

This letter was written by Father Chaminade as he was about to leave for exile.

10. To Marie-Thérèse de Lamourous, Le Pian

September 15, 1797, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Daughter,

They say we die only once. This is true; but what lessons we receive from Providence to forewarn us of this fact and to prepare us for it! And each one of these lessons is a type of death.

What is a faithful soul to do in the chaos of events which seem to swallow it up? Sustain itself calmly by that faith which, while making us adore the eternal plan of God, assures us that all things work together unto good for those who love God.

Yes, my dear Daughter, the Lord will not abandon you. If not a single hair falls from our heads except by the will of our heavenly Father, the continual ups and downs which fling you about, the interior and exterior storms which rage relentlessly and seem almost to bewilder you, are only indications of the genuine love God has for you. I do not hesitate to say these are even signs of predestination.

The spirit of darkness will certainly try to persuade you that you must not consider your sufferings to be comparable to those experienced by some saintly souls, and that you cannot hide from yourself the fact that certain causes responsible for them lie within you. But my dear Daughter, it is nonetheless true that in these afflictions God always provides means to purify your will, to detach you absolutely from everything, to give up those ideas suggested by purely natural reason which would lead you to pass judgment on the conduct of Providence in your regard. Likewise, God always provides the means to cause you to practice the most excellent of Christian virtues. These, my dear Daughter, are included in total abandonment into the hands of God, above all when the only results of this most perfect abandonment are affliction, anxiety, uncertainty, etc. Saint Catherine of Siena, whom God left for some time in a cesspool of shameful ideas, of unchaste commotions and feelings, in darkness, etc., learned from the Lord that he had never been closer to her than at that very time when he seemed to have abandoned her. Now, what was the prayer this holy virgin repeated most often before the consummation of her spiritual nuptials? It was "Lord, increase my faith." You know the happy result.

I have often told you, my Daughter, that you will find everything in faith. I have even advised you to make a type of meditation of faith, and I am convinced this is an excellent means of sustaining you and of advancing you in virtue. At the same time, this will afford you a type of interior refreshment and be a preservative against the advice, either too lax or too strict, you may receive from some who would guide you rather by natural prudence than by the conduct of the Spirit of God. Always let fall every idea, judgment, and feeling your imagination may suggest, in order to be led by that holy simplicity which I have always recommended to you.

To remove you further from it, or rather to bring you closer to it, make use of your rule¹ according to the state of soul you may happen to be in, but do so promptly. You have nothing to fear so greatly as whatever may trouble you and especially prevent you from abandoning yourself to God in the meditation of faith and of recollection. By this means God will let you know in a very salutary way everything which displeases him. Every other way of dealing with your faults will do you harm.

Because I am not sufficiently acquainted with the priests of Bordeaux to tell those who guide themselves and others with only supernatural prudence from those who do not, I am at a loss about whom to recommend you. What are you to do then? Pray with confidence and simply go to the one you feel yourself drawn to by a spirit of faith. Another idea has just come to my mind; I will pass it on to you.

In any case, my dear Daughter, may nothing cause you to turn away from the advice your spiritual Father has just given you and which he has explained to you on various occasions. I have complete confidence that with the help of God, in whose presence I have written this letter, I have included in it only what would be agreeable to God and useful to you. I promise to remember you expressly in my prayers. I will not cease to consider myself your spiritual Father who should be

¹ A set of rules of conduct which Marie-Thérèse had received from her directors to battle her scruples and excessive fears. Fr. Chaminade refers particularly to the rule of Fr. Lacroix, who required of his penitent "not to ask anything of anyone and to act by herself, while doing only what she found herself obliged to do, and that too with such certainty that she could swear to it." Fr. Chaminade had confirmed these rules in the following terms. "You will follow them, my Daughter, with simplicity, and I do not doubt that you will come to the point of making your meditation well and of acquiring the liberty of the children of God, a true union with him."

even more concerned about you, the further he sees himself removed from his children at the very time when they need his presence most. I ask our common Father that this removal, effected solely by an order of God's providence, may not hinder the accomplishment of his plans for you. I ask you to recite the litanies of the Blessed Virgin daily, and as your spiritual Father I wish you the grace and peace of Jesus Christ.

P.S. I will be obliged to you if you prudently look after my small temporal affairs.

* * *

From Saragossa Father Chaminade wrote almost every month to Marie-Thérèse. Portions of these letter which she copied have been preserved for us. However, two pages of these excerpts have been lost; a note found among other papers of Mlle de Lamourous refers to one of the lost letters.

10a. June 3, 1798

In a letter from Spain dated June 3, 1798, while again recommending that I follow my rule of life, Father Chaminade directs me to add to it that I am not to go over the past, over what I have already said and about which I may have something more to say, and also over what I may have completely omitted through lack of understanding, reflections, examination, memory, or even through carelessness. I may continue, he says, to pass over details, even those which may be hardest to omit, and to mention only what I can be quite certain was entirely voluntary, basing myself always upon my rule. I may add all this at the end of the other articles.

* * *

These are the portions referred to above. They are reproduced here in full just as they have survived, according to the text in Marie-Thérèse' own handwriting preserved in the archives of the Society of Mary.

10b. October 20, 1798 [10th letter]

Nothing.¹

* * *

11. December 8, 1798 [11th letter]

If only we had the generosity to surrender ourselves entirely to the Spirit of God! How he would guide us! How God would turn everything to our best advantage!

Read Father Rigoleuc,² since you feel he does you good. His writings actually contain a great deal which is excellent. Nevertheless, because they are very succinct and perhaps obscure at times, you must be careful not to believe everything he says is to be taken literally or that it can be carried out in a short time.

¹ Marie-Thérèse merely notes the date and serial number of this letter and adds "nothing" at the top of the first page which has been preserved.

² Fr. Jean Rigoleuc (1595-1658) a Jesuit, a disciple of the celebrated Fr. Lallemand, whose doctrine he has transmitted to us. See Bremond's *History of the Religious Sentiment in France*, book 5.

* * *

12. December 28, 1798 [12th letter]

Are you satisfied with the year which has just ended? In one of your last letters you blame yourself for many acts of negligence and infidelities. You have united yourself, my dear,² to a Spouse who has heaped you with kindness and who has an infinite wealth of this still in store for you; but be careful, for he warns us himself that he is jealous. Be entirely his, for he is yours in such a special manner.

How beautiful, how happy is the lot of spouses of the spotless Lamb! Why does Jesus Christ choose the lovely name of “lamb”? Because like a lamb he has been immolated for us to the justice of his Father. What should the sentiments of a spouse not be toward a Spouse sacrificed for her in order to unite himself to her, to be but one with her! To belong to this Spouse who died for her, who was sacrificed for her like a lamb, living still and nevertheless continuing still to immolate himself, what a mystery of love! How can we be so negligent, dear. - -? How is it that our hearts are so cold, hearts which pretend to unite themselves to the most lovable and the most loving of spouses?

The Holy Spirit has long since been urging you to offer yourself constantly to the Lord as a victim. This is a disposition which will lead to excellent results if you make good use of it. To know what the qualities of the victim and the manner of offering it should be, look at your Spouse. He is a victim, a victim of love. He has offered himself of his own accord and continues to offer himself and us also, providing we unite ourselves to his sacrifice of love. Jesus Christ is so much in love with this condition of victim that he retains its marks in his heavenly glory. This is the way he appeared to Saint John when he wished to show him the happiness and the privileged condition of virgins in heaven. As you know, he still kept the five wounds received on the Cross when he went to heaven on Ascension Day. What does all this mean? You know well, my dear. - - -. This year you must make new efforts to be faithful. You must do your best to adorn yourself with the virtues which are most pleasing to your Spouse: humility, charity, the spirit of sacrifice and abandonment to God’s providence, and purity. Next you must penetrate yourself with a love so ardent, so generous as to move him to unite himself to you as your Spouse, and for that purpose to sacrifice, to immolate himself, to become your victim.

. . . I would like you to borrow for your own use *The Life of Saint Vincent de Paul*. Read in a Christian way, it will surely do you great good and will perhaps be of service to you for the rest of your life. I am sending you some cotton which has touched the statue of Our Lady of the Pillar. May Mary most holy deign to give her blessing to this cotton if God is to desire glory from the cure of your deafness.

* * *

13. January 15, 1799 [13th letter]

I thank God in his goodness for having cured you entirely of your deafness. May God’s holy will be accomplished in you.

Take care of your health. I have a feeling your life must be painful. So many uncomfortable trips, often in such bad weather and on such bad roads, must be real agony.¹ Take good care to reduce them and to ease their strain. Sanctify them by making

² Fr. Chaminade had no doubt written “My dear Friend” (letter no. 16) or “My dear Child” (letter no. 19) or “My Dear Thérèse” (letter 21). The omissions are in the transcription of Mlle de Lamourous.

¹ Marie-Thérèse often traveled from Le Pian to Bordeaux, and the trip across the barren lowlands was not without danger. These travels back and forth were undertaken from motives of charity, as the letter indicates. In the *Life of Mlle de Lamourous* many interesting acts of remarkable devotion are found, even those which on several occasions caused her to risk her life.

them with the same intentions and the same dispositions with which Our Lord and his blessed Mother made their journeys while on earth.

May this activity of your mind and your zeal in being of service to your neighbor not stifle the interior operation of grace in you. May these not interrupt the continual abandonment of yourself as a victim into the hands of God. A certain moderation in the exercise of charity often helps us to do more good than giving full rein to our activity.

Above all, be careful to act only in a spirit of humility and self-abasement. In vain would you offer yourself to the Lord as a victim if these were not already your sentiments. God desires only humble victims. If you wish God to make something of you, then be entirely submissive to his grace, relying on the inspirations of his Spirit.

Be glad you are always feeling the pinch of poverty, in order to imitate somewhat the poverty of Jesus Christ, who did not own even a stone on which to rest his head.

Love to relieve the suffering members of Jesus Christ. In case you are unable to do this, pray for them to the Father of mercy that he may assist them, mindful of the fact that his divine Son, Jesus Christ, did not disdain to adopt them as his brothers.

How much good you could do to others of your gender if you were truly humble and charitable! How many people in Bordeaux are materially, as well as spiritually, uncared for! And worst of all, some of them are vulnerable to losing an eternity of happiness, while losing their honor in this world.² Long live humility and charity, which make us no longer our own but the property of Jesus or of his members!

If the Good Lord brings us together, we will make up our minds definitely what to do with your country home. In the meantime continue to take care of it with humble generosity.³

I was pleased to learn in your letter that you sometimes have been exposed to considerable disrespect, not because it caused you suffering—God knows how much I wish you to be happy—but rather because these are opportunities to conquer human respect, one of our greatest enemies. Furthermore, you are now less removed from our model, in whom we see but humiliations and self-abasement. Courage, then dear - - -, courage! May all your wastelands, briars, shrubs, vines¹ cry out to you, “Courage, courage! Why should you neglect yourself, you who have had the happiness of knowing the truth,” etc.

I leave you with regret. May Jesus and Mary shower you with abundant blessings.

* * *

14. February 1, 1799 [14th letter]

To sufferings of the spiritual order are often joined those of the temporal. So, dear - - -, you are in the grip of all types of trouble. Now, against every blow you must hold up the shield of faith. This shield cannot be pierced by the enemy's darts, no matter what their nature. It seems to me I hear my brave child constantly saying in a spirit of faith, “Yes, poverty is worth more than riches; poverty is the road to heaven; the Spouse of virgins had nowhere to lay his head, etc. Humiliation is the seed of eternal glory; humiliation is the most beautiful adornment of the Christian. Jesus entered into glory only through humiliations.” So be courageous, above all because you have an invincible weapon.

² Here Fr. Chaminade is recommending to Marie-Thérèse the very work to which later she will devote her life.

³ She was thinking of selling this country property, the maintenance of which was a burden because the Revolution had reduced her family to narrow circumstances. Fr. Chaminade advises her against this, in the hope that the property might be useful to them for their future works. The Le Pian property was actually kept and is still of great service. It has become the site of an institution for mentally challenged children and the seat of the district administration, since the merger in 1971 of the Sisters of Mary Joseph and the Sisters of the Miséricorde.

¹ Le Pian is located where the lowlands meet the vineyards of the Médoc, a wine-producing region north of Bordeaux.

I am sorry to break off here. May the Spirit of the Lord inspire you, for you cannot have courage without God's help.

* * *

15. March 2, 1799 [15th letter]

. . . We will never be happy, my dear - - -, we will never have peace of soul until our wills are entirely conformable to that of God. May our submission and our resignation to the dispositions of Providence render us calm independent of changing events.

. . . I am taking advantage of a last minute before the mail leaves to exhort you to give yourself to God more sincerely than ever. Accustom yourself to watching over your heart. Direct all its movements to God alone and to God's service, not with an effort of the mind but with love. Your natural activity may harm this interior life, which makes us seek God in everything and nothing but God.

I leave you wishing you the grace and peace of Jesus Christ.

* * *

16. April 13, 1799 [16th letter]

When I wrote to you on New Year's Day, my dear,¹ I had no intention of binding you to make any vow. I can even tell you sincerely that I was not thinking of this at all and that I wrote to you as I felt at the moment. Is it actually necessary to make vows in order to bind ourselves to Jesus Christ? Is he your Spouse only through vows? Vows are a good thing; they are acts of religion. But after all, God does not ask us all to serve him in the same manner. My dear Friend, you can have the happiness, the honor, and the advantage of being the spouse of Jesus Christ without taking any vows.² You, least of all, should imagine there is in my letters anything other than what I say in them because I prefer to tell you everything, taking for granted that you are openhearted enough to let me know in your answer if I have not foreseen everything. This is truly what you should do.

* * *

17. April 27, 1799 [17th letter]

You understand, my dear - - -, the difficulty of putting into effect the offering you have made of yourself as a "victim." Presumably the more you try to do this, the greater the repugnance your nature will feel. It may even struggle like a victim being slaughtered; but your faith, your love for the Lamb of God who was sacrificed, the knowledge of the value of the sufferings and humiliations which Jesus Christ has divinized in his adorable person, and the justice of God, which must be supernatural considerations, if they deeply penetrate your soul will cause you to smile at what at times seems to crush you. The thought of your present situation often returns to me, etc.

* * *

May 21, 1799 [18th letter]

¹ Here there is no ellipsis. Was this an oversight on her part?

² Fr. Chaminade probably spoke to her this way because of her scruples. Two years later after his return to Bordeaux, he began to permit her to take vows.

Nothing.

* * *

18. July 19, 1799 [19th letter]

Courage, my dear - - -, all your letters give me pleasure, the last one most of all. Do renounce yourself in everything and for everything.

I am working at two bouquets—one for you, the other for myself—which I will bring to the Blessed Virgin on her next feastday. . . .

* * *

19. September 23, 1799 [20th letter]

Let us rise, my dear - - -, above our senses—you by overcoming your impatience to suffer through the power of hope and love, and I by combating my sensibility and compassion through considerations of faith. Because you wish me to tell you everything, I must admit that if I listen to my nature I feel sorry for you, but if I take the viewpoint of faith I immediately say, “Thérèse is happy; she is suffering”—and if at that moment you were here, I should congratulate you even heartily because, you see, my dear Child, although I am the most cowardly and the most sensual of men, I nevertheless have a firm faith that those who suffer are happy. I believe this as firmly as I believe in the mystery of the most holy Trinity.

But in what does the happiness of suffering consist? I will take care not to answer this question directly, for I am afraid I would harm the love of sacrifice with which the Good Lord has inspired you for his sake and that of the divine victim of Calvary and of our altars. I will simply tell you this—take care not to let the fire go out. Often give it more wood. The question of knowing just how you are to conduct yourself in your present position is more difficult to answer.

* * *

There is a gap here due to the loss of the sheet which contained excerpts of 7 letters written between October 1799 and July 1800.

20. July 5, 1800 [28th letter]

Enclosed are 13 small pictures from the life of Saint Thérèse. They are not as beautiful as I should have liked them to be. Still, if they help you to grow even a single degree in the love of God, I should be very pleased with this little find.

I confess it will please me greatly to see you often devote your attention to this great lover of Jesus Christ. Over and above the obligation you already have of doing this as one who is under her special protection and bears her name, the Good Lord seems to have destined you to love him a great deal more than even fervent Christians ordinarily do. Why then would you not give yourself over entirely to the love of God, as Saint Thérèse did with such success? Here is a subject worthy of serious reflection.

I would be very glad to discuss a topic so rich and so rewarding, but I will limit myself to a single recommendation in its regard, namely to probe and examine your heart often to see whether it is influenced by anything other than God or the interests of God. This examination leads to interior mortification, to the spirit of sacrifice, etc., but in the end it brings you to the love of God.

My dear Child, if only I had the happiness of seeing your heart given completely over to love and sensitive only to the interests of the Beloved! What a pity! Divine love

would perhaps have wounded it already if you had a father who was himself deeply penetrated by it. Pray always that the Good Lord may be merciful to him and not permit his sins to be visited upon his children.

* * *

21. July 26, 1800 [29th letter]

Without having anything in particular to tell you, my dear Th - - - [Thérèse], I feel urged to write to you nevertheless. So without knowing what I am going to say to you, I am taking up my pen. I am acting like a mother who would have the vanity to make her daughter very beautiful, or rather to dress her well, but who does not have the means to do this. There is this difference, however, that the sentiment which would make me desire to adorn my dear Th - - -, to make her more agreeable to her Spouse, is not a vain sentiment, although my poverty is only too real. You tell me you have a great desire to please God. I believe this. It is also very necessary for you to have it. It should even be very intense because, my dearest Daughter, the cost of having yourself made attractive is no small one. I could say to you what my deceased mother said to me one day when I was probably fussing about being washed and combed. "To be pretty," she said, "you must pay the price."

Had I not fortunately told you at the beginning that I was writing to you without a set purpose, you would be shuddering; you would be thinking I wish to prepare you to undertake something very trying and very difficult. No, for the time being I have nothing particular to recommend for you, although I am very glad that in general you are ready for anything. It may well be, and there is hardly any doubt, that the Good Lord will have you undergo great trials. And confidentially if he did not do this, who after all would have the courage to do it? Who could humiliate you and make you sink, in a way, to less than nothingness? Who should make you suffer in your entire body and uproot the sensuality which is hidden away in all your senses? Who, etc., etc.? I do not wish to frighten you. Your spiritual father loves you dearly, but would he attach you to the cross and keep you nailed to it until the former self in you has expired? And you yourself, who after all wish to groom yourself and put on the nuptial robe, would it even have occurred to you to wallow for years in contempt and to reduce yourself to such destitution? So you see clearly that the Good Lord must himself take the matter in hand. "Oh, but his hand is so heavy, is it not?" There is no doubt about this, but have you understood clearly to what an extent pride and sensuality have penetrated, what deep roots they have thrust into your soul? Oh, the goodness and the mercy of God, which never appear better than when they seem to overwhelm us!

I tell you, my dear Th - - -, that I will never leave you in peace until I see you smile at poverty, at suffering, and at humiliations. Will you tell me that you find these three terrible sisters very lovely? Etc.

* * *

22. August 26, 1800 [30th letter]

Courage! Time and the years are passing by. We are moving on, my dear Th - - - ; we are getting on in years, you and I; we are both about the same age. Our bodies are wearing out, and so far we have accomplished nothing. There is a question now of starting for good and of doing something for the glory of Jesus, our good Master. Think it over for yourself; I will do the same. It seems to me you would be ashamed to die without having done something truly worth being offered to your Spouse.

* * *

23. September 6, 1800 [31st letter]

I rejoice in the Lord at the good sentiments with which grace inspires you. Have no doubts about my doing everything I can to cultivate them and to make them produce all the fruit Divine Providence has the right to expect of them. I am very glad to note that you are growing more and more in devotion to Saint Thérèse.

* * *

Marie-Thérèse makes no excerpts from the letter of October 11, 1800, in which, without a doubt, Father Chaminade announces his early return. She is satisfied to note, "Nothing for my soul." The next one is entitled by her "The 33rd and last letter." It is not dated, but it cannot be later than the beginning of November 1800. It contains the question of an agreement which will regulate the conduct of their interviews, but its exact nature is not known.

24. October or November, 1800 [33rd and last letter]

I heartily agree to the mutual sacrifice you propose to me, and I offer it from this moment on to the Sacred Hearts of J. M. J. It will begin at our first meeting. Nevertheless there must be nothing affected outwardly, and we will be able to talk about matters which could not be easily be delayed.

*

Following this correspondence between Father Chaminade and Marie-Thérèse, here are some later notes, useful in revealing to us the effectiveness of this guidance. In the first two Marie-Thérèse renews the offering of herself as a victim after she has taken charge of the work of the Miséricorde.

Notes Apparently Dating from 1796

O my God, I have tried to take every means to carry out what you have inspired me to do, and, if I have not discovered completely what I am to do, I am confident that your Providence, to which I submit my conduct, will help me to do what my blindness has prevented me from seeing. What am I without you, O Limitless Power! I cast myself into your arms, O most tender Father; I unite myself with my Savior; never do I wish to separate myself from him. I embrace his cross, I honor, I love, and I reverence it. He has taken it upon himself for me, and it is also for him that I wish to carry it—yes, for him! For although I need most to expiate my own sins, I am surrendering to Jesus the recompense which his mercy is pleased now and hereafter to grant for the sufferings, sacrifice, etc.—in a word, for the cross he judges proper to impose upon me. I am giving it back to him, that he may use it to make amends or to obtain whatever he wills for anyone but me. He is left the complete master for the disposal of everything that belongs to me, all of which I am giving to him. I entrust myself to his tenderness, to his mercy, and I confide everything that concerns me to his divine goodness. I renew the offering I made of myself to him long ago and to which I have been unfaithful. I renew it today even more seriously since experiencing for the past four years that on certain occasions it is difficult to live up to it, and that it is much easier to make the offering while praying than while suffering. This experience and that gained at the same time of my weakness, my cowardice, etc., only encourage me to renew my offering, for I now know it to be even more valuable. Receive then, O my God, the offering I am making to you of myself

and of everything that belongs to me. I offer myself to you as a victim. Do with me whatever you wish, and use according to your pleasure whatever your grace will enable me to merit. I am withholding nothing, as I desire only your greatest glory, and I resign myself to whatever you will be pleased to give me.

Renewed four years after 1796, namely in 1800.

*

Notes of November 21, 1802

May Jesus and Mary live in the heart of their unworthy servant. I, Marie-Thérèse Charlotte de Lamourous, from this day, November 21, until October 8, 1803, offer, dedicate, and consecrate to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary all the good I will do and which will be done for me after my death, so the will of these divine hearts may dispose of everything according to their good pleasure and in favor of whomsoever they please, among the living or the dead. I, Marie-Thérèse Charlotte, formally declare that I voluntarily dispossess myself of everything during this period, with the exception of my determination to be united to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and to love them for their own sakes. I intend also by the present act to renew the offering I made to God in December of 1796 of my entire being as a victim without reserve. At that time I made this offering in expiation of my own sins and those of others; at present, however, and for the length of time determined above, I am making it with no conditions or intentions other than that of leaving its entire disposal to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary while abandoning myself to their mercy, to their tenderness, for all that is or may be in my best interests. In witness whereof I have signed the present act with my own blood, and in proof of the permission I have received to make this offering, the signature of the one whom God has inspired to give it to me will be added below.

Renewed with permission, October 8, 1803, until next February 2, the offerings in the other part as well as the vow of chastity.

Renewed with permission, March 25, 1804, until next May 20, Pentecost, the act as well as the offering with the vow of chastity.

*

Finally, among the successive rules of life which Mlle de Lamourous imposed upon herself with the consent of her director, here is the last one that has come to us, that of 1809.

Interior and Exterior Rule of Conduct

To which I oblige myself not by vow but under pain of disobedience, so as to confess any violations. Furthermore, I pledge myself to give an account of this to my confessor every two weeks, barring a real impossibility, so he may make whatever changes in it he may judge useful to me.

Interior Rule

My main object should be to detach myself from everything created; thus

1. I will work every day at the purification of my intentions and at accustoming myself to sacrifice all thoughts, affections, and sentiments which may nourish in my heart the tendencies which draw me away from my last end, which is God alone.

2. I will perform at least four actions daily, apart from those of a religious nature, as purely as I can because God wills them. I will perform them as God wills them and from love for God.

3. I will ignore all exterior and interior suffering. I will be patient in times of adversity and will change nothing in my conduct. If I cannot make meditation, I will pray vocally. I will make acts of faith, etc., and will ask God to take pity on my ignorance and help me to accomplish his holy will.

4. I will not speak of myself without real necessity, and then I will raise my heart to God in order not to go beyond the bounds of my duty.

5. In treating myself with prudence and gentleness, I will perform at least four acts of interior mortification, even when ill, and will try to be faithful in performing one at the first opportunity each day, offering it to God as a first fruit.

Exterior Rule

1. I will get up at the sound of the bell for rising, barring unusual illness, in order to be able to say the prayers in common and outline the meditation for my Daughters.

2. On rising, I will prostrate myself face down on the floor to adore God. I will make the intention of gaining the indulgences attached to my actions of the day. In offering myself to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, I will place at their disposal not only the indulgences, but also the merits of all my good actions, that they may bestow all of them on anyone they wish.

3. After the meditation I will assist at Mass. The thanksgiving will serve as the first quarter hour of my meditation. I will finish with five *Our Fathers*, to gain the indulgences, the *Magnificat* and one more *Our Father*, according to my custom.

4. After breakfast my first duty in the house will be to visit the sick, then the workrooms, staying longer where it is most necessary.

5. At 11 o'clock I will make spiritual reading for my Daughters and give them an instruction of at least a quarter of an hour.

6. At 11:30 I will leave and spend time alone until noon in devout reading or meditation.

7. In the workrooms, at least three times a week I will take part in the *Rosary* or recite it myself.

8. At 4:30 I will leave to read and mediate until five o'clock. Then I will pay a second visit to the sick.

9. At 7:00 I will give a public instruction to the sick.

10. Before supper, if possible, I will make a quarter of an hour's examen and reflection upon my infidelities during the day and follow this with an act of contrition and with new resolutions.

11. I will subject myself to the hours of the rule, particularly for night prayers, so that the hour of retiring may not be delayed. Before going to bed I will prostrate myself to humble myself for the faults of the day.

May 27, 1809

[The approbation of Father Chaminade follows. It was renewed on several successive dates.]

Renewed for two weeks, June 11, 1809

June 25, 1809

July 9, 1809

October 8, 1809

* * *

Administration of the Diocese of Bazas 1800 to 1802

Soon after his return to Bordeaux in November of 1800, Father Chaminade was appointed administrator of the diocese of Bazas by the Archbishop of Auch. Unable to reside in Bazas, he appointed two priests, Father Fabas and Father Pouget, as assistant administrators. He had chosen them to investigate and regulate the accounts of two laymen he had commissioned to obtain the repairs which had become necessary for the church of Saint Jean in Bazas, but who had fallen into financial difficulties. Father Chaminade added this endorsement to the memorandum and settlement drawn up by the two priests.

24a.

February 3, 1802

Original, Archives Archdiocese of Bordeaux

We, Vicar General and Administrator of the Diocese of Bazas, approve the present decision reached by Father Fabas and Father Pouget in accordance with the powers received from us by virtue of a special commission, and we wish it to be executed according to its form and tenor.

Done at Bordeaux, this February 3, 1802
Guillaume-J. Chaminade, Adm. of Bazas

* * *

S. 24a.

February 3, 1802, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

We, Vicar General and Administrator of the diocese of Bazas, approve the present decision reached by Father Fabas and Father Pouget in accordance with the powers received from us by virtue of a special commission, and we wish it to be executed according to its form and intention.

[Here is the "decision" mentioned by Father Chaminade.]

1. We the undersigned, archpriests and assistant administrators of the diocese of Bazas, in virtue of a special commission given to us by Father Chaminade, Vicar General and Administrator of the said diocese, to take cognizance of and to settle immediately a business matter of the parish council and the matter of the church of Saint Jean in Bazas, went to that town and in the sacristy of the church of Saint Jean in Bazas convoked the lay commissioners whom we had appointed last year to oversee the repairs which were to allow the church to be used for the Catholic liturgy. These commissioners showed us their receipts and expenses, and in our opinion they have accomplished the task entrusted to them by restoring the church to a state of regularity and decency commensurate with the means which the charity of the faithful had given them for the purpose; for this they deserve our praise and thanks.

2. Without authorization it is true yet with very commendable zeal, the commissioners did gather the contributions which the faithful destined for the support of the priests in charge of the church of Saint Jean, under the direction of Father Pouget, the pro-rector, and of his secretary.

From the account of their receipts and the list of subscriptions, we find that they have on hand a sum of 823 francs, 3 bushels and 6 pecks of grain, and 14 bushels and 18 pecks of rye. In order to distribute these they would need to consult Father Chaminade, the vicar general and administrator, who in fact by answering their appeal of August 15

on September 2 pointed out the method to be followed in making the distribution. We have not been able to determine why the commissioners did not hold fast to the method prescribed in that letter. According to the papers these men have produced, it would seem they made a second distribution; this illegality and inequity cannot be concealed because in addition to the lack of authority on the part of those who took this upon themselves, no consideration was given to the status of the ministering priests or to the length of their tenure. Consequently, in the hope of correcting this injustice as far as possible and because Father Pouget, the only person who could complain of the first distribution, agreed to accept the *fait accompli*, etc., we stipulate that Father Pouget, the president of the group of commissioners, will ask Father Chaminade to determine how to distribute the 48 francs and the 18 bushels of grain still in the possession of the commissioners, and of which we constitute them the custodians until the matter is settled.

3. Father Pouget, the pro-rector of Saint Jean, and the commissioners have set up an interim collection box into which the faithful may deposit their Mass offerings for the souls in purgatory. Until August 21 these offerings had been turned over to the pro-rector, who is officially charged with having the Masses said. From the book of receipts and expenses which the commissioners have presented, it would seem that on that day, August 21, according to the testimony of Father Daurensan, a priest attached to the church, these commissioners opened the collection box and proceeded to distribute the offerings to the priests of the city and of the surrounding area, except for a sum of 90 livres of which M. Herman Gast, one of the commissioners, is still the custodian. Consequently, and considering that the commissioners are in no way authorized to make this distribution themselves and that all the rules governing this matter and the particular custom of the diocese indicate the beneficiaries of these funds, we hereby order that a special collection box for the souls in purgatory will be installed in one of the chapels of the church of Saint Jean; that collections taken up in the church will be deposited there in the presence of the faithful; and that the key will be confided to the pro-rector, who will personally allocate the Masses to the priests in charge. As for the 86 francs now in the possession of M. Herman Gast, we agreed with Father Pouget that M. Herman Gast will turn them over to the priests at the request of Father Pouget, the pro-rector.

We further direct that the present ordinance, which sets up guidelines for the future, will be sent to Father Chaminade for confirmation and then placed in the hands of the pro-rector in his capacity as president of all the meetings of the commissioners.

4. Because the year has run its course and because according to the regulations of the parish corporation the commissioners are to be reappointed, and because time did not permit us to proceed immediately to this nomination, we have decided to accept the resignations of M. Rez, M. Funat, M. Anglade, M. Calvial, and M. Doumazilles, and we ask the remaining commissioners to continue in their functions regarding the restoration and decoration of the church of Saint Jean until the ecclesiastical superior has proceeded to a new appointment.

Done and decided in the sacristy of the church of Saint Jean in Bazas, in the presence of Father Pouget and the commissioners, this 18th day of January, the year 1802.

Fabas, Archpriest and Assistant Administrator of Bazas
Pouget, Archpriest of Saint Raphael, Assistant Administrator

* * *

Of the letters written by Father Chaminade after his return to Bordeaux, the first which has been preserved relates to the administration of the diocese of Bazas.¹ It is dated 1802. Archbishop d'Aviau had not yet taken possession of his See. For more information about this prelate who was an honor to the hierarchy of his day, the reader is referred to various passages concerning him in Father Simler's Life of Father Chaminade. His life was written in two volumes

¹ See *L'Apôtre*, 1926-27, 18:411.

by the future Archbishop Lyonnet of Albi.² It was completed in the History of the Seminaries of Bordeaux and Bazas by Father Bertrand³ and by the publication of some of his letters in 1901. In his introduction to A Century of the Church of France, Archbishop Baunard has brought into bold relief the preponderant role of Archbishop d'Aviau in the reaction against Gallicanism.

25. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux

June 19, 1802, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

Your Excellency,

With great pleasure I am availing myself of the occasion being offered to me of sending to you one of my letters to express to you the joy the entire Diocese of Bazas has shared with me upon learning of your nomination as the Archbishop of Bordeaux. You are being awaited generally with an impatience such as is caused by the delaying of an ardently desired good. The happy frame of mind of both clergy and people is a favorable sign of the success awaiting you in your new jurisdiction.

The greater part of the diocese of Bazas has been incorporated by the Concordat with the Archdiocese of Bordeaux, as forming part of the department of the Gironde. For the present I will not enter into any details concerning the condition of this diocese. I will have the honor of presenting to you upon your arrival the lists of the civil districts with all the information I have been able to gather until now regarding the qualities of the priests, as well as the location of parishes and the condition of the churches. Your Excellency, although I am devoting myself to this work with considerable interest, it will still be very imperfect. All types of official papers have been burned, including even the diocesan register of benefices.

It has been only some 18 months since the saintly Archbishop of Auch obliged me, in a way, to accept the administration of the diocese. Due to my sympathetic and respectful desire to be of service to him and still more to the love for this Church with which God has inspired me, I accepted his pressing invitation and added this heavy burden to the numerous occupations already imposed upon me by the condition of the city of Bordeaux and the forlorn condition of its young people, especially.

Your Excellency, may my efforts have provided some glory to our Divine Master, Jesus Christ; may they have even in some slight degree have contributed to the reestablishment of our holy religion and have made it easier for you to cultivate this portion of the Lord's heritage, of which Divine Providence has made you the chief shepherd.

I am, Your Excellency, most respectfully your very humble and very obedient servant.

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade,
Adm. of the Diocese of Bazas

² Paris, Lecoffre, 1847.

³ Bordeaux, 1894, 3 volumes.

The Sodalties of the Immaculate Conception

1803 to 1814

Of the letters written by Father Chaminade at the time of the Empire, there remain only a few poor copies. Most deal with the Sodality. The first is the petition addressed to Pope Pius VII through his legate, Cardinal Caprara, to obtain for the Sodality the transfer of the indulgences formerly granted to the Confraternity of the Workers of Bordeaux. For details of this period see the Life of Father Chaminade and L'Apôtre de Marie.¹

26. To His Holiness, Pope Pius VII, Rome

May 26, 1803, Bordeaux

Original, Agmar

Most Holy Father,

For several years the Church of Jesus Christ has had the consolation of seeing established in the city of Bordeaux and growing considerably from day to day a group of young people, both men and women, placed under the patronage and bearing the name of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, Mother of Youth.

Priests and laity of mature age and solid piety have particularly devoted themselves to encouraging and guaranteeing this salutary work, and we have every reason to hope that by the grace of God this interesting nursery of servants of Mary is called to propagate the spirit of religion and of fervor in the various classes of society in which they are destined to live eventually.

Your Holiness, to whom all the Catholics of France recognize their indebtedness for the return of the public practice of the Catholic religion in their country, will learn, not without intense satisfaction, of the graces which divine mercy has so kindly bestowed upon this interesting portion of the flock confided to your care in an age so exposed to the seduction of bad example, and this also in a country so long given over to the excesses of error and impiety.

Trusting therefore, Most Holy Father, in the broadness of your charity always so preoccupied with the salvation of your children, we ask you kindly to receive the petitions presented to you through the priest who is their director and in accordance with the wish and special approbation of His Excellency the Archbishop of Bordeaux, by the members of this pious association of young people and of people of mature age, both men and women, devoted to this interesting work by a special consecration to Mary. Deign on their behalf and on that of all the members to open the treasury of heaven by permitting them to share the same favors, indulgences, and privileges with which Pius VI, your predecessor of happy memory, had enriched all the members affiliated to the Sodality of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin established in the convent of the Capuchins at Bordeaux.

We do not request any extension of this favor beyond what is urgently called for by the particular circumstances in which religion presently finds itself in France. In consideration of these circumstances, may you be so kind as to authorize this priest or the priests who will in the future be placed at the head of this association by the authority of the Archbishop of Bordeaux or his canonical successors to grant in the forum of conscience and without any publicity the said favors, indulgences, and privileges to all those outside as well as within this association to whom your charity will be so kind as to extend them.

Prostrate at your feet, the suppliant humbly asks your Apostolic Benediction.

G.-Joseph Chaminade, Priest

¹ Year 1911-12, 8:393; 1912-13, 9:121; 1913-14, 10:391; 1924-25, 16:313.

This petition, but without an extension,¹ was sent by Archbishop d'Aviau with the following postscript.

I have the honor of assuring His Eminence, the Cardinal Legate of His Holiness, that the pious association for which this humble request is presented fully deserves to be granted special favors by reason of its regularity and fervor.

Ch. Fr., Archbishop of Bordeaux

[This favor was granted through Cardinal Caprara under date of June 2, 1803.]

* * *

Of the years until the autumn of 1808 only two letters remain, other than rare notes addressed to Archbishop d'Aviau and to David Monier. These are two letters to Brother Frumentius, FSC, discovered in 1943 by Fr. Joseph Verrier.

27. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux

February 25 [1805?]

Autograph, Agmar

Your Excellency,

On February 23 I received the honorable invitation you extended to me in your letter of February 18 to join me to the Chapter and to the clergy of the city at the ecclesiastical conferences which are held on the second Tuesday of each month at the archdiocesan chancery, Archbishop's Palace.

I have a general meeting with the Fathers of Families every Tuesday at the same time. I will make every effort to find someone to replace me. For me, my personal needs and the advice you have been kind enough to give me in your pastoral solicitude are laws I will strive to follow exactly.

I am with deepest respect, Your Excellency,

Your very humble and very obedient servant.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

28. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux

Friday Evening, May 9, 1806

Autograph, Agmar

Your Excellency,

Next Tuesday, May 13, will be the Feast of Our Lady of Martyrs.¹ This happens to be the second of the Rogation Days. In such a case I believe you have advised me to transfer it to the following Sunday. I was on the point of announcing this when I remembered that all the parishes would have their procession on that day. I am very willing to postpone preparations for the feast until the following Sunday, if in this way I should better conform with your views.

I am, Your Excellency, most respectfully your very humble servant.

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.²

¹ See letter no. 71, par. 3.

¹ One of the principal feasts of the Fathers of Families branch of the Sodality.

² This is the first instance of the use of this title in the extant letters of Father Chaminade. He was made Honorary Canon of the cathedral of Bordeaux on June 15, 1803.

[The archbishop adds his answer to this same letter as follows. "Father, I authorize whatever you find suitable to do in this matter.—Ch. Fr., Archbp. of Bord."]

* * *

29. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux

Wednesday, June 22 1808

Autograph, Agmar

Your Excellency,

Year after year you have had the kindness to grant to the Married Women's Sodality the celebration of the Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin. They are taking the liberty of asking you to confirm this permission, which includes that of exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at both the High Mass and Vespers.

I am, Your Excellency, most respectfully your very humble and very obedient servant,
G.-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

* * *

Father Chaminade reports on the failure to acquire the house to which it was intended to transfer the novitiate of the Christian Brothers. He also requests a dispensation from an impediment for a young applicant.

29a. To V. Rev. Brother Frumentius, FSC, Superior General

July 11, 1808, Bordeaux

Venerable Brother,

Your entire Bordeaux family is conducting itself to the satisfaction of His Excellency the Archbishop and of the entire city. I have delayed this letter a few days in the belief that I could inform you that His Excellency had procured a separate house for the novitiate, but there are still some obstacles, not on the part of this saintly prelate who is prepared for all types of sacrifices but on the part of an individual who goes back on his word to obtain a higher price.

A young man of good character, the very virtuous son of a clockmaker in town, has come to the brothers' novitiate. Although without any remarkable talents, he has all the qualities necessary for a good religious. His only drawback is his red hair. Brother Seraphim and the director of the novices thought I should write to you to ask you for a dispensation from this impediment. He has continued to petition for three months now with an unshakable persistence. It is believed here that this will not be a hindrance to his doing good. I should be obliged to you for a favorable reply to his desire.

I am, Venerable Brother, with very deepest respect your very humble and very obedient servant.

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

* * *

This letter has been lost, but from a rough draft of Brother Frumentius' reply some idea of its contents may be gathered.

29b. To V. Rev. Brother Frumentius, FSC, Superior General

October 6, 1808, Bordeaux

Reverend Father,

I have the honor of your letter October 6 in which you attempt to dispel my apparent apprehensions. No, Reverend Father, I have never doubted and will never doubt your zeal for our Congregation after everything His Excellency the Archbishop and you have done and after all circumstances lead me to hope for the future. My only fear has been that it was believed permissible to place subjects without the consent of the superiors of the Institute, and that this might raise an obstacle to the mutual relationship which should exist among them. But on the contrary, I see that your intentions, which I had not grasped as perfectly as I do at present, had as their purpose only the most exact observance of our rules and customs. Consequently, Father, kindly give your zeal all the latitude you please.

* * *

Archbishop d'Aviau showed the same agreeableness at all times. This is a note which he wrote to Father Chaminade on January 28, 1807.

The almanacs or calendars for next year did not fail to furnish matter for some observations which had been presented to me regarding the great number of days of devotions granted to the Chapel of the Madeleine and its advantages over the parish churches. I grant the Exposition for the Vespers of the Purification in the hope that the scandal will not be noticeably increased. Regarding evening prayer during Lent, as a matter of fact I hoped to see it established here as it has been in Paris and elsewhere. You may be able, Father, to talk it over with your neighboring pastors, because the better way would be for this prayer to be made in common in each parish. Should they find some inconvenience arising from this in their parishes and should you find none in your chapel, your chapel would serve with all edification.

I have the honor of greeting you, Father, while recommending myself to your holy sacrifices.

Ch. Fr., Archbishop of Bordeaux

* * *

This note describes M. David Monier, whose name often appears in the correspondence of Father Chaminade.

M. David Monier is one of the most unusual characters connected with the beginnings of the Society of Mary, in which he played a very important part. Born in Bordeaux in 1757 to an honorable family which gave two priests to the Church, he became a lawyer and had just been admitted to the bar when the Revolution broke out. He then went to Paris, where he was afire with enthusiasm for the ideas of the day. However, the excesses of the Reign of Terror shocked him into joining the forces of reaction. Soon he rushed into the most daring adventures all over Europe, in the hope of restoring the monarchy to France. Arrested in October 1799 and thrown into the prison of the Temple, the former headquarters of the Knights while awaiting execution, he was finally set free, but he returned to Bordeaux disgusted with politics and more indifferent than ever in matters of religion.

“A man of great talent,” writes Fr. Jean Lalanne, “and of fearless audacity, a most brilliant, irresistibly persuasive conversationalist who had seen everything in his day and had forgotten nothing, experienced in handling the weightiest as well as the thorniest matters.” This was at the very time when Father Chaminade, on his return from exile, was organizing his remarkable associations of young men and married men. David Monier was brought into contact with him and very soon came under his influence. He made a long retreat under the direction of his new guide and emerged transformed. His life became entirely consecrated to works of charity and of the apostolate close to Father Chaminade, whom he called “his venerable Father” and at whose service he unreservedly

placed his pen, his gifted tongue, and his experience. For many years he was Father Chaminade's most active secretary, Writing for him with great ease, but in a style often obscure, letters, memorandums and regulations, thus permitting Father Chaminade to devote his attention more freely to the care of souls. Father Lalanne has said that M. David's oral style was as good as his written style was bad. By his talks and conferences full of doctrine and eloquence, "M. David," as he was called for short, was in fact a valuable assistant of Father Chaminade even in the direction of his religious Societies; for after his conversion the former disciple of the *philosophes* had passionately set himself to the study of Scripture, Church History, and the ascetical writers and had a required a remarkable competence in them. Finally, with his knowledge of law and his experience, M. David rendered Father Chaminade the most valuable services in all matters of administration and litigation.

M. David first exercised his zeal in the Sodality. From 1804 on, he was its mainspring. At the time of the foundation of the Daughters of Mary he played a part no less active. After writing out their Constitutions and regulations under Father Chaminade's guidance, he paid the Daughters of Mary several calls to comment upon them.

"How could I describe to you," Sister Thérèse wrote to Father Chaminade, "the good done to us by the visit of your respected son, M. David Monier? He gave us a conference which left us all with the most vivid and the most salutary impressions. Each of us took notes of what she found most striking, so that reading them from time to time we may all pass from knowledge to practice." When the time to found the Society of Mary had come, M. David did not hesitate to request admission. Because he was already past sixty, Father Chaminade advised against this, so on September 5, 1818, he merely united himself to the founders with this humble declaration. "In your presence, Father Director, I pledge my complete devotedness and constant fidelity to the Institute of Mary for all the days which still remain of my life on earth." But he kept insisting so much that at one of the following retreats, that of 1821, he was admitted to the profession of perpetual vows and joined the community on Rue des Menuts. In the Society of Mary the role of Brother David consisted not only in drawing up regulations—for example, the first Constitutions of the Society of Mary, submitted to the Archbishop of Bordeaux for his approbation, and the Direction for the Institute—he was the chief instrument used by God for the development of the work. Under the guidance of Father Chaminade, whom, however, he drew at times into acting with unaccustomed haste, Brother David negotiated the first foundations at Agen, at Colmar, and at Saint Remy, starting points for the first three provinces of the Society of Mary. His extravagant imagination and his attachment to his own ideas later were to give rise to serious difficulties for him and his venerated spiritual father. Yet the faith which was so deeply rooted in his soul always brought him back to the line of duty.

The last years of his life were spent in retirement. He lived at the Madeleine in a room located above that of Father Chaminade. He died there on January 16, 1849, a year before Father Chaminade, assisted by Good Father Caillet and by the religious of the Madeleine. Long afterward the memory of this little man lingered, with his ruddy complexion, piercing glance, and lively gestures, his hair still tied with a ribbon after the fashion of the former regime and falling back over his long Prince Albert. David Monier had received from Father Chaminade an ardent devotion to Mary. Numerous addresses written by him still witness to this fact, as also the introductions to the 1815, 1821 and 1825 editions of the *Manual of the Servant of Mary*. His memory will always be inseparable from that of the early days of the Society of Mary.

* * *

Father Chaminade gives David Monier suggestions for the preparation of an address to the Sodality.

30. To M. David Monier, Counselor-at-law, Bordeaux

Monday Morning, August 19, 1806

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Friend,

It occurred to me that to make your treatment of the Feast of the Assumption more complete, you may do well to read in full the passages of former authors who have spoken about it, and especially the notes of M. de Tillemont on this subject.

I am sending you the first volume of what we call the *Montpellier Catechism*.¹ All the quotations found in the translation are given there in full. I have put the bookmark at the page where they begin.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

This note calls upon David Monier's legal knowledge for drawing up a contract.

30a. To M. David Monier, Counselor-at-Law, Bordeaux

Wednesday Morning, May 27, 1807

Autograph, Agmar

I have the honor of bidding M. David Monier good-day and of notifying him that I have agreed with Mme Fouignet to pay her in cash the sum of 1,500 livres as settlement in full, so nothing further may be asked of me under any pretext whatever. I ask him to take the necessary precautions to render this arrangement permanent.

G.-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

* * *

N.A. 30-2. To M. Lafon, Deacon, Prefect of the Sodality

1808, Bordeaux

Printed in Volume 8-2 and Volume 9. This is from Volume 9.

Copy, Agmar 218.2.35

I am told, my dear prefect, that you have a fine sermon on the Passion. Would you be willing to preach it in our oratory on Good Friday? I know that we would listen to you with pleasure and interest.¹

* * *

N.A. 30-3. To M. Lafon, Deacon, Prefect of the Sodality

1808, Figeac

Printed in Volume 8-2 and Volume 9. This is from Volume 9.

Copy, Agmar 218.2.36

I will not say much about the Sodality. Your correspondence with several of the sodalists must have acquainted you with its ups and downs. However, I do note with pleasure a return to

¹See *Spirit*, no.103, note.

¹ Excerpt from the police interrogation of M. Lafon made in Paris, October 5, 1809. (Archives of the Préfecture de Police, AA. 318). This document was given to Agmar by Fr. Verrier on April 10, 1982.

the original spirit. There is evidence of a greater unity and more enthusiasm; the officers seem to understand that less discussion and more action is the formula.²

* * *

This is the first of Father Chaminade's letters we possess concerning the reestablishment of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in Bordeaux. It is evident¹ that several letters preceded it. He advises the acquisition of a separate house for the novitiate and recommends two of his former sodalists for admission to vows as Christian Brothers.

On February 4, 1808, Archbishop d'Aviau had written to Brother Frumentius concerning his and Father Chaminade's interest in the reestablishment in Bordeaux of schools conducted by the brothers. "I will always have at heart to uphold your holy Rule, whose advantages are known. Moreover, I believe I can say these are also the dispositions of that respectable priest, Father Chaminade, and with this conviction I have placed him in particular contact with your dear brothers."

30b. To V. Rev. Brother Frumentius, FSC, Superior General

March 9, 1808, Bordeaux

Venerable Brother,

Your solicitude may have been disturbed by my latest letters. Only with regret did I decide to write them to you. Because I do not wish to do anything except with you and according to your views, I believe also that I should keep you informed of everything. Today I have nothing but consoling news for you. The novitiate established with your authorization under the auspices of His Excellency the Archbishop is doing as well as we could ever have wished it to. It consists at present of seven novices. Brother Paulinus,¹ their director, enjoys the confidence of everyone; all respect him and obey him with pleasure. Brother Seraphim² seems very content and has the satisfaction of seeing the number of these good and fervent novices increase. His only regret is that the house of Sainte Eulalie where the entire community and two schools are located is so small. He would like to have a separate house assigned to the novitiate, and reasonably so. This becomes more necessary as we hope the number will increase more and more. I have consulted His Excellency the Archbishop. His kindness and zeal have moved him to adopt this plan; I hasten to submit it to you. I have in mind a house which is in the neighborhood of that of Sainte Eulalie. I am awaiting your reply to carry out the plan.

Our entire correspondence, Venerable Brother, is submitted to His Excellency. The establishment of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in Bordeaux is his favorite work, so to speak. His interest in it is deeply felt. You and I should consider ourselves very happy to help in realizing the holy prospects which inspire him. Bordeaux has already reaped very precious fruits from it; eight schools¹ which have opened enable about 800 children to instruct themselves and prepare themselves for the practice of virtue.

² Excerpt from the police interrogation of M. Lafon made in Paris, October 5, 1809 (Archives de la Préfecture de Police, AA. 318). This document was given to Agmar by Fr. Verrier on April 10, 1982.

¹ As also from letter no. 38, "On Numbers 63 and 64."

² Guillaume Darbignac, in religion Brother Paulinus, one of the first sodalists of Father Chaminade, appointed Master of Novices when the novitiate of the Christian Brothers was opened in Bordeaux in 1807.

³ He had been sent with another brother from Lyons in 1806 by Bro. Frumentius to form with Bros. Paulinus and Lafargue the first community of Christian Brothers in Bordeaux after the Revolution.

¹ I.e., classes, see Joseph Verrier, "La Restauration des Ecoles Chrétiennes a Bordeaux sous le Consulat et l'Empire," *L'Apôtre*, 1953, 35:115.

Brothers Paulinus and Eligius² asked you at the beginning of this year for permission to pronounce their vows. I have the honor of attesting to what their modesty forbids them to believe, that they deserve this favor, that they truly have the spirit of their state, and that they also have the talent and the knowledge they have been putting it into practice according to the full rigor of the Rule for more than six years, not counting a first year of examination and preparation. Never during this long interval has there been either variation or disinclination. I have never lost contact with them; I have guided them in the choice of their state; I have tested them, and the long trial which they made of it was almost always under supervision. I could say much more in their favor, but you have had the opportunity to hear them spoken of for the past several years. They have always been true to themselves. Your Order will make a really good acquisition in them.

I am very respectfully your very humble and very obedient servant,

G.-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

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The archbishop added the following note to this letter.

Venerable Brother, Father Chaminade wrote and addressed this letter to you after consulting me. I am very well satisfied with the novitiate, but it is too cramped in the Sainte Eulalie establishment, and I will gladly go to some expense to make it more at ease in the nearby house referred to, without any change in its guidance.

I recommend myself to your prayers, Venerable Brother, and greet you with all my heart.

Ch. Fr., Archbishop of Bordeaux

In his reply Brother Frumentius expresses his gratitude to Father Chaminade and his full confidence in his guidance; he grants permission for the admission to vows of Brothers Paulinus and Eligius and the acquisition of new quarters for the novitiate.

In the autumn of 1808, thanks to M. Lafon, a sodalist of Bordeaux,¹ Father Chaminade was brought into contact with Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, his future collaborator in the Sodality and in the founding the Institute of the Daughters of Mary. From one of the noblest families of Gascony, Adèle was born in the Château de Trenquelléon near Agen on June 10, 1789. Obligated to emigrate during the Revolution (1797), she spent part of her childhood in Portugal and in Spain. Returning to France when she was only 12, at the age of 15 she became the soul of a pious association for the re-Christianization of the country. Her active correspondence with her associates has been preserved in great part, containing a wealth of interior life and apostolic zeal.

The meeting of Adèle and Father Chaminade was to be fertile in the fruits of salvation. She placed herself under his guidance, and her Agen Association established close contact with the Sodality of Bordeaux. In 1816 the Association gave rise to the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, whose motherhouse was set up in Agen and whose first Mother General, under the name of Mother Marie de la Conception, was Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon. She died January 10, 1828, and the Institute of the Daughters of Mary was approved by the Holy See in 1888.

² Louis-Arnold Lafargue, a follower of Fr. Chaminade as early as 1796, had been elected the first prefect of the Bordeaux Sodality in 1801.

¹ Hyacinthe Lafon (1766-1836), born at Pessac-sur-Dordogne about 30 miles from Bordeaux, was an aspirant to the priesthood and had already been ordained a deacon when the Revolution broke out. He donned civilian clothes and dedicated himself to teaching. In 1801 he joined the Sodality and served three terms as its prefect. In 1808 he taught in the secondary boarding school at Figeac Noailles, was arrested, and was imprisoned. In 1812 he was party to the abortive plot of General Malet against Napoleon, but he managed to escape. Under the Restoration he was rewarded with an appointment as assistant instructor of the royal pages and made a knight in the Legion of Honor. In 1826 he was ordained a priest and retired to his native region.

For details regarding Adèle, see her life by Fr. Henri Rousseau,² L'Apôtre de Marie,³ and the biography Adèle by Fr. Joseph Stefanelli. Father Chaminade's letters to Adèle have been preserved, thanks to the care of the Daughters of Mary. The first letter, which is undated, supplies details about the Sodality of Bordeaux, with which the Agen Association desired affiliation.

31. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Château de Trenquelléon

Autumn 1808, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

Mademoiselle,

I have received with equal pleasure and interest both your letter and the list of the young women who desire to be affiliated with the Sodality. I was noticeably touched by the fervor which seems to reign among so great a number of young, unmarried ladies. When I made known the wishes of your pious society at a general meeting of the Young Women's Sodality and read the names of its members, all observed the joy and the interior satisfaction I felt, and all shared them with me. They promised to look upon you in future as part of the Sodality and to remember you daily in their prayers, etc.

The Young Ladies' Sodality has a Mass of its own every Sunday and feastday. It is customary during the Mass to place on the altar a book containing the names of everyone. Those of the postulants and of the affiliates are not entered in this book. To give you a proof of the particular interest which your society arouses in us, your names and those of the young women you will receive in the future will all be entered in this book, which has no other purpose and which is reverently kept in the church of the Sodality.

M. Lafon did not give me a clear idea of your society. He knew it only very imperfectly himself and was not able to pass its regulations on to me. So I should be obliged to you, Mademoiselle, if you will allow me to have a copy of them. Because of this imperfect idea presented to me by M. Lafon, I sent him notes for the married women affiliated to the Sodality instead of those intended for the Young Ladies.

The complete Sodality is composed of five branches, if we may actually call the different types of meetings "branches." The first is that of the Young Men. It is the most numerous. The second is that of the Fathers of Families, distinct from that of the young men although linked with it to some extent. M. Lafon is in the first. He has served several terms as its prefect—that is, its chief officer. The third is that of the Young Ladies; the fourth is that of the Married Women, called here the Ladies of the Retreat from one of their principal practices, which is to devote one day each month, the first Wednesday, to the exercises of a spiritual retreat. The fifth is that of the priests. Let us go back to the third, which should be of greater interest to you.

The Young Ladies' Sodality, which has more than 250 members not counting the postulants and affiliates, is divided into two large sections, the first and the second. Each section is subdivided into four groups. Each of the eight groups bears the name of one of the mysteries of the Blessed Virgin. Thus, we speak of the Conception Group, the Nativity Group, etc. Each group has its own special officer; each section, its general officer; and the Sodality, its supreme head whom we call the Mother. Mlle de Lamourous is the Mother. Barring good reasons to the contrary, members are admitted only up to the age of 30. The fact that your society has the same practice led me to affiliate it to the Young Ladies' Sodality in particular, although you share the prayers and good works of the entire Sodality.

The Ladies of the Retreat have as their daily practices the act of resignation to death and the prayer of Saint Bernard to the Blessed Virgin. The young ladies recite daily the Little Offices

² Paris, Beauchesne, 1921.

³ 1909-10, 6:425.

of the Sacred Heart of Mary with a *De Profundis* for their deceased sisters. I advise your entire society to recite this Little Office every day in place of the prayers I had suggested before. This Office is quite short, but very beautiful and appealing.

I had a conveniently sized book entitled *Manual of the Servant of Mary* printed in Bordeaux. In addition to the Offices, prayers, and instructions of the entire Sodality, it contains most of the Offices of the Church. If you wish, I can send 50 to 60 well-bound copies to Agen for you. We must sell them for 3 livres apiece here because of the considerable expense this edition has been to us.

With this, Mademoiselle, I will close for the time being. I will acquaint you gradually with our customs and practices. If I could only allow you to experience the happiness of belonging in a special manner to the Mother of God! We pride ourselves here in the title of Children of Mary. We believe we form part of her privileged family.

All I have the honor of telling you or I may still be able to tell you later on is intended generally for each member of your society.

I am, Mademoiselle, respectfully

Your very humble and very obedient servant,

G.-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

* * *

32. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Château de Trenquelléon

December 23, 1808, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

Mademoiselle,

In due time I received the letter you had the kindness to send me, along with the copy of the regulations of your pious society, and I have made both known to the Young Ladies' Sodality. I was eager to find a suitable moment for the honor of answering you.

All our sodalists are overjoyed and greatly edified by our little correspondence. They have asked to me to express to your society their sentiments of gratitude for the share they will have from now on in the First Friday Mass.

By its constitution, your society very much resembles the Young Ladies' Sodality, and by its principal practices the Association of the Ladies of the Retreat, whose aim is a continual preparation for death. This is why they daily recite the act of resignation to death, which you will find in the *Manual of the Servant of Mary*, and why they have a day of retreat each month, the first Wednesday. The act of resignation is recited publicly on this day before the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. On the first Wednesday of January they try to receive Communion with the dispositions they would like to have when receiving Holy Viaticum.

Our young women have asked me to acquaint you with *The Association of the Actual Love of Mary*.¹ Because this practice does not demand any time, but merely attention and zeal, they believed it would greatly appeal to your society. This practice is not a rule of the Sodality, but something optional which they adopted nearly two years ago. I will neither praise it nor enlarge upon it here, as it has been set forth in print in a little book, *Motives for Confidence in Mary*, which must surely have come into your hands by now. If you do not have it I will have a small excerpt from it made for you, enough to give you a good idea of it.

I have appointed a correspondent for you, Mlle Lacome, the oldest daughter of the Lacombe de Puigueraud family.² She will be able to give you all the details you wish. She knows several of your associates and must also be known to them. She is zealous for the glory of Mary.

¹ See *Spirit*, no. 153.

² Concerning Mlle Felicity Lacome de Puigueraud, see the life of Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon.

Her intense eagerness to increase our membership made her accept this commission with great pleasure. She lives in Bordeaux with the Sacred Heart Community,³ on Rue Lalande. We live on the same street.

Mlle de Lamourous received the marks of your kind interest and respectful attention with great satisfaction. On her part, she wishes to express to you her tender regard for both you and your entire society. She is ill just now, but there is no danger.

Sometime in January I am going to send Mme Belloc⁴ a dozen copies of the *Manual of the Servant of Mary* by some trusted boatman, without any other notice than this. The amount will be collected from her eventually.⁵ I will be greatly obliged to you if you will kindly notify her of this in advance and assure her of my respectful remembrance.

For the young women who may find themselves too burdened with prayer by the recitation of the Little Office of the Sacred Heart of Mary, I agree to their replacing it with the prayer of Saint Bernard to the Blessed Virgin, *Remember*, etc. Invite them to repeat, whenever they can, the act of consecration to the Blessed Virgin that all sodalists recite in public on the day of their reception and which they renew publicly also and as a group twice a year.

I am with respectful affection,

G.-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

* * *

32a. Proposed Reply to His Letter from the Minister, January 19, 1809

January-February - - -, 1809

The documents which the Minister asked to be produced lead to the belief that Father Chaminade may have explained his position poorly because His Excellency did not understand that there was nothing further to be done than to add the royal sanction to the ecclesiastical and administrative acts which in 1804 validated the prior existence of the oratory in question.

In fact, the oratory of the Madeleine was successively held by several different priests before the time of the Concordat. As a consequence of the reorganization of the Church of France in 1802 and of the law of germinal in the year X, it became necessary to obtain authorization for the exercise of worship in this chapel from the dual power. The decree of the archbishop which enunciated the consent of the prefect, which addressed the request of the faithful interested in the continuation of this oratory, the assent of the three respective pastors—everything shows that the preliminary conditions had been fulfilled, that there was nothing missing but the seal of sovereign authority for carrying out in their entirety the dispositions of the law. The question formed today by Father Chaminade is confined to this area.

A single hypothesis would be able to modify the communication to the vestry council, then to the municipal council which is indicated by His Excellency; this would be such if the expenses or the exercise of worship were the responsibility of a vestry, and secondarily (in case of insufficient revenue from this source) the responsibility of the city. This is what would happen if parish services were held in the said oratory, just as in an auxiliary church.

But the Chapel of the Madeleine does not fit into this case. The chapel building was sold during the Revolution. Its rental is the responsibility of the chaplain, as are all the expenses of worship. It does not enjoy any subsidy; no parish services are held there. In spiritual just as in

³ The Daughters of the Sacred Heart, founded during the Revolution by the Milles Vincent, a community which later joined the Madames of the Sacred Heart of Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat.

⁴ Mme Belloc, wife of a doctor of Agen, a childhood friend of Adèle's and one of the most active members of the Little Association. She became a widow in 1812 and from that time on devoted her life entirely to the education of her four children and to good works.

⁵ See letter no. 33.

temporal matters, this chapel is truly a private oratory; it was designated as a subsidized oratory only to extend its use to several parishes south of the city of Bordeaux whose churches are rather distant.

It is also evident that the faithful of the three parishes and their pastors were heard concerning the usefulness and necessity which existed for continuing this chapel, but not in order for any parish services to be held there. The neighboring pastors had no inspections to carry out there. Neither did the vestry councils have any reason to take on responsibility, which insufficient revenue would have required them to assume. Furthermore, it would not be known which parish was one to which an appeal could be made because the oratory individually provides service to the parishes of three pastors, without being subsidized by the three of them together or by the collective assemblies of any of them separately.

The priest who celebrates the holy Mass there voluntarily supports the costs of existence of his chapel. No commitment, no other obligation than his zeal binds him to be of service. He will do this as long as he is able and willing. The oratory is essentially his property. It is public only by the admission which is extended to the faithful of the neighborhood.

The location makes this admission useful; it is the reason which led to authorization in time. The authorization sought before the king can only be to maintain the establishment under the title of a private oratory and to admit the faithful for exercises other than parish services, without change to the vestry councils.

Consequently, His Excellency will believe that he should be satisfied with the original agreement of the neighboring pastors, the opinions of the archbishop and the prefect, to propose to His Majesty the approval of the continuation of the oratory of the Madeleine which usefully serves the faithful.

* * *

The following letters reveal how overburdened with work Father Chaminade was; they often limit themselves to answering the questions of the correspondent in the briefest terms, with disconnected sentences.

**33. To Mlle Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon,
Château de Trenquelléon
February 28, 1809, Bordeaux
Autograph, Arch. FMI**

Mademoiselle,

I am recovering from an illness which has interrupted all my correspondence for some time.

During my convalescence I did not stop forwarding your letters to the Young Ladies' Sodality. It would take too long if I were to express in writing all the sentiments of affection and esteem with which the Third Section¹ inspires them. "The Third Section"—this is what I would like to call your entire society, and I am going to use the opportunity, or rather take the means, to make you full-fledged sodalists. I will have the honor of informing you of this before the end of Lent. Please let me know the officers elected for each group, as well as the chief officer. It will be best to reserve the name of Mother for the head of the three sections.

I am sending you immediately six *Manuals of the Servant of Mary*.

¹ Each of the 5 branches of the Sodality of Bordeaux was made up of two sections; see letter no. 49. The Sodality of Agen was, therefore, the third section of the third branch.

Enclosed you will find an extract from the booklet on the *Association of the Actual and Perpetual Love of Mary* about which I had the honor of speaking to you.² All the affiliated young women who desire to adopt this pious practice will kindly let you know the hour of their choice. I will postpone having the roll of the Sodality drawn up until I have received your list.

Our young women are very appreciative of the request you made for their names, and more particularly of the motive which led you to make it. I have a remark to make to you on this point and will try to think of doing so some other time when I again have the honor of writing to you.

The melody of the “Hymn of the Sodality” is the same as that of the famous song of the people of Marseilles, “To arms, citizens. . . .” The young women are also looking for the melody of one of your hymns.

I am enclosing in this letter a reply Mlle de Lamourous has the honor of sending you. Had it been less bulky, I would also have enclosed the reply of Mlle Lacombe. I will send it along with the Manuals.

A short while ago we lost five sodalists—two very virtuous young men, one in Bordeaux, the other in Paris; two young women, one in the country, the other in Poitiers, both of them also very virtuous; and one of the Ladies of the Retreat, who died as she had lived, very holily. We are in the habit of having a solemn Requiem Mass for each sodalist in the church of the Sodality as soon as we receive the news of his or her death, and an anniversary Mass for each class of sodalists. The one for the Young Ladies is offered on the first free day after the Feast of the Annunciation; the one for the Ladies of the Retreat, after the Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin.

Each member of the Sodality who has the means signs for a small contribution each month. These small contributions are used to defray the general expenses of the Sodality and those special to each class. They also serve to provide for the wants of the sick and the needy on certain occasions. Do you believe our dear associates would like to share in these good works? I leave the decision to your zeal and prudence. Possibly they may not all be sufficiently convinced of the excellence of these works.

The Young Ladies’ Sodality will from now on consider Mlle Anne Fourteau and Mlle Phillipine Loric as affiliates. These young women now enjoy all the benefits and advantages which come with affiliation. Continue making conquests, Mademoiselle!

M. Lafon greatly appreciates the marks of your kind remembrance. I have the honor of offering you the assurance of his respect.

Here is the address of Mlle Lacombe: Lacombe, Sr., Rue Lalande, c/o Sacred Heart Community, Bordeaux.

Your good and esteemed mother is affiliate to the Ladies of the Retreat. These women were particularly happy to admit her because of her personal worthiness, and also because she is your mother. They know of your society and of our correspondence.

I have the honor here of assuring Mme Belloc in particular of my respectful remembrance. If she has not yet received a small money order for 36 livres,¹ she will surely do so in the near future. I handed it over a few days ago in payment of goods purchased. During this fair I will try to send the six Manuals by some businessman of Agen, thus avoiding all expenses. I am very well pleased, I can even say I am greatly consoled, to see this respectable women join to her household occupations the practice of works of zeal.

We made the novena as soon as we received your last letter. From time to time I will recommend prayers for the conversion of that Protestant father.²

² See letter no. 32.

¹ See letters no. 31 and no. 32. Letter no. 1 concerns a similar transaction.

² Adèle was working at the conversion of a Protestant family and in fact had the consolation of seeing them return to the Church.

I believe I have discussed all the points contained in your letters. Please continue confidently to keep me informed of everything.

I have the honor of assuring you of my devotedness as well as of deep respect of with which I am Y.V.H.S.¹

G.-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

* * *

33a. To M. Peloux, Financier

March 16, 1809, Bordeaux

Autograph Rough Draft, Agmar

Monsieur,

Your aunt has inspired me with the greatest confidence in you. This prompts me now to take the liberty to apply to you for the necessary information concerning a financial matter of mine in your hometown.

Toward the end of 1789 or during the first months of 1790, Father Le Boeuf, a priest living at Bergerac, signed over to me two “cash-endowed annuity contracts”² which M. Gravier Lacoste³ and his father-in-law had drawn up in his favor. At the time of the transfer, payments were several years outstanding—I do not recall any longer just how many; I believe the capital of the two contracts was hardly more than 3,000 livres. I do not have either of the contracts or the deed of transfer. I had to leave everything with M. Moynier, a notary public in your city, a reliable person whom Father Le Boeuf had recommended. On February 15, 1791, I paid him 48 livres in advance⁴ to cover possible expenses in connection with the transaction of M. Gravier Lacoste. I have at hand only letters of Father Le Boeuf, M. Moynier, and M. Castaing, the joint friend and legal advisor of M. Moynier, Father Le Boeuf, and me. I have also a letter of M. Gravier Lacoste of June 15, 1790, in which he describes his sorry plight along with the soundness of my credit, based on his wife’s patrimony.

Touched by the troubles of M. Gravier Lacoste and somewhat reassured by his promises, I did not wish to crush his dependent children with expenses. Then the repeated blows of the Revolution made me leave this matter in the background. I am afraid today I may be unjustly blamed for my silence.

It would be a question, Monsieur, of discovering, without the Gravier Lacoste family’s knowledge, first where these contracts and their deeds of transfer to me happen to be (should M. Moynier or M. Castaing not have them, you might inquire who passed them on); second, what are the dates of the agreement in favor of Father Le Boeuf as well as the transfer to me by Father Le Boeuf; third, what is the value of said contracts and how long arrears have been due; and fourth, briefly, what is the condition of the Gravier Lacoste family.

Confidentially, Monsieur, I feel that due to the remoteness of the date of these contracts, still further delay will place this family in a position to claim prescription against me. I will truly be obliged to you if you exert every effort toward gathering and forwarding to me the most exact possible information, so I may at once adopt the means best suited to regularize my position.

Pardon me for all this bother. I am taking so much liberty upon the invitation of your aunt. If in turn I can be of any service to you here, I am ready to prove to you that I am only too eager to be, Monsieur, very truly yours.

¹ Your very humble servant. See letter no. 4 and letter no. 28.

² See letter no. N.A. Od, n. 4.

³ See letters no. 1 and no. 2a.

⁴ See letter no. 2a.

* * *

**34. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon,
Château de Trenquelléon**

March 28, 1809, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

Mademoiselle,

I received your letter of March 21 with as much interest as I did those which preceded it.

I will begin by answering a question you put to me in a postscript to a note of February 4 and which I overlooked while writing my last letter. You ask me if I was not formerly at the *collège* of Maffi-in-Périgord. I never knew any Maffi in the Périgord region. However, I presume you have confused Mussidan with Maffi. I spent at least 20 years in the seminary and boarding school of Mussidan in Périgord.

You are anxious to know by what means I intend to make you once and for all Children of Mary. Your eagerness both pleases and edifies me. I was thinking of letting you know about this only sometime after Easter; I am going to satisfy your desires right now. A round which would take in from four to six of the chief towns where there are groups of the Little Society, our present third section, would seem to me a way of seeing all my new children in as many groups or meetings as the places we chose to visit. Each group would be received, etc. I have not yet tried to foresee, still less to overcome the difficulties, so to speak, such a project would necessarily entail. I am so desirous of bestowing upon you the favors and privileges granted to the Children of Mary that I disregard the discomfort of this long trip. You may consider for yourself first whether carrying out of this project is possible within a tolerably short space of time, for I have very little time at my disposal; second, how it could be carried out; third, what precautions should be taken. These things must be spoken of little, if at all, until the project is ripe and we have come to an agreement on all points.

Regarding the list of the hours chosen for the *Actual and Perpetual Love of Mary*, please send it to me when it is completed. Should anyone forget her hour or be unable to observe it, she could replace it with another hour. But no one should wear herself out over it. Wherever we may happen to be or whatever our occupation, we can easily observe the hour if we have truly entered into the spirit of the practice.

I am very willing to approve the proposed officers if they have been generally accepted. The choice seems to me very good. As for the duties of their respective offices, I will have the note regarding them sent on to you as soon as the process of their nomination has been completed, unless its completion coincides with the carrying out of our project. In that case I would bring along with me all the instruction, I would explain, etc.

I greatly appreciate, Mademoiselle, the good work you and your dear associates have begun.¹ This work is even eminently worthwhile, and I should certainly regret its being abandoned, unless the children disappointed the hopes of their benefactors. It would seem to me, nevertheless, that a middle course may be followed to accomplish everything up to a certain point. For example, could you not use two-thirds of the contributions for the education of the two children, and the rest for the purposes I have had the honor of pointing out to you? The two-thirds would soon come near the original amount because first, since this good work was begun several have entered the society and swelled the contributions; second, others will enter, etc.; and third, several of the former members, who could surely have joined in this good work, may not even know of its existence.

¹ The reference here is to their in a Catholic boarding house two poor girls, born of a Catholic father and a Protestant mother. See Henri Rousseau, *Adèle de Trenquelléon* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1920), pp. 229-30.

The nomination of the group officers will make the general correspondence of the society very easy. Please note clearly that I am not giving any orders here, but I am merely proposing in all simplicity what seems to me good and useful.

Please have the kindness to convey my regards to Father Larribeau.² I am still bound to him by a sense of the most sincere and deepest respect. This pastor would be the assistant moderator of the society, at least as far as the third section is concerned, although he deserves to be head moderator; but it is impossible to do otherwise until Providence again affords us some easy way of communicating with the pope.

Mlle de Lamourous had a slight relapse just recently. I passed your letter on to her privately. I have also acquainted the young women of the Sodality with its contents. They all ask me to express their feelings of affection for the third section. They were delighted last Sunday to sing the new hymn which you sent them.

I join with the Ladies of the Retreat in assuring your good mother of our respectful regard for her.

We are even happier at your new conquests, as they are becoming ours as well. The names of these devout young women are going to be entered in the roll of the third section.

I have just sent you by a boatman from Agen by the name of Boi six more copies of the *Manual of the Servant of Mary*. I have the honor of assuring Mme Belloc of my respectful remembrance. In a few days I will send her a small money order for the 12 copies.

I am, Mademoiselle, with respectful devotedness,
Your very humble and very obedient servant,

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. This letter was not yet sealed in the envelope when a serious accident happened in our little church called the Madeleine. Around 8 in the evening of Holy Thursday, one-half hour after the services, the building caught fire. A great number of valuable effects were destroyed. The one who gives can take away, and the one who takes away can give again. May God's holy name be ever blessed!

* * *

34a.

[In the printed volume, this is a duplicate of 35a.]

* * *

**35. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon,
Château de Trenquelléon**

April 1809, Bordeaux¹
Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Daughter,

Your uneasiness on my account, as well as that of your devout affiliates, fills me with gratitude. By it you give me a new proof of the interest you have in me without any personal merit on my part, but only because God in his goodness has willed to make use of me to impart to you a number of new favors and a greater wealth of graces. For my part, I cannot help being consoled and edified and giving thanks to the Lord for this.

² The pastor of Lompian, near Trenquelléon.

¹ This letter could hardly have been written before Pentecost 1809 (May 20).

I am far from having lost sight of your dear affiliation. Only an excessive amount of work has made me put off from day to day the pleasure of corresponding with you. Although I had fairly well foreseen the obstacles you point out regarding the plan we have at heart, I did not neglect to tell you about them; first because in that way I show you my goodwill, and in the second place I was glad to see if these obstacles were as real as they seemed to be. Often difficulties disappear upon being explained. You note very well the difficulties discovered with respect to fervent affiliation. There are others which would hardly be easier to overcome. Nevertheless, let us not give up a project which can only give rise to good sentiments and draw closer and closer the precious bonds which unite us. Furthermore, it may lead us to perfect our work in other respects.

Let us hope for all types of success from the protection of our Mother. Under her auspices we have succeeded here in matters far more difficult.

I am not authorized by the Sovereign Pontiff to delegate the power of receiving affiliates. Patience, zeal, perseverance! Let us hope everything will be arranged in its own good time. I have done everything I could for you, unless you wish that in my capacity of Missionary Apostolic for France I would adopt you all as my Children; but in a way, have I not already done so? From feeling rather than from reflection, in speaking to you have I not called you “my dear Daughter”?

We must not use pressure either for collections or for contributions. Those to whom God will give a strong desire for the support of the work will know how, little by little, to set aside small sums and from time to time pass them on to their officers.

I am going to send you, still to the same address, six copies of *The Servant of Mary*. You may leave the *louis d'or*² with Mme Belloc. I will collect it by a draft on her for the *louis* as well as for the books.

I enjoyed your little story about Condom very much.

The sodalists make their act of consecration in a body publicly twice a year, on the Feasts of the Conception and of the Annunciation, between the sermon and the Benediction, the Blessed Sacrament remaining exposed. You realize I am speaking of the Young Ladies' Sodality; the married ladies or Ladies of the Retreat, the married men, and the young men all have different celebrations at which they renew the same act of consecration.

Mlle Lacombe received Mlle de Lachapelle's¹ letter in good time. I will remind her to answer it. I will pass your note on to Mlle de Lamourous.

I am answering your letter immediately after receiving it. When it was handed to me, I was on the point of seeking privacy for a few hours in order to dispatch a number of matters long overdue, and from this privacy I have the honor of answering you. My preoccupation at present prevents me from giving free rein to my feelings regarding the Little Society. Please do me the favor of telling its members that they are all enshrined in my heart and are often present to my mind before the holy altar. In all of this, my dear Daughter, you have a very special part, for you represent the third section and give so many evidences of zeal for the glory of the Mother of God.

G.-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. Please let Mme Belloc find here the assurance of my respectful remembrance.

* * *

35a. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux

May 6, 1809

² The *louis d'or* was a gold coin first struck by Louis XIII in 1640. Later the 20-franc piece, worth \$3.86, was called this.

¹ Charlotte de Lachapelle of Condom later became a Daughter of Mary under the name Mother de l'Incarnation and was superior of the boarding school in Condom.

Your Excellency,

This year the Feast of Our Lady of Martyrs falls on the Saturday before the Sunday within the Octave of Ascension. Saturday is a day little suited for gatherings, above all because there already has been one feast during the week before. If you deem it appropriate, I will postpone the Feast of Our Lady to the next day, Sunday.

I am, Your Excellency, with deepest respect your very humble and very obedient servant.
Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

Archbishop d'Aviau added these lines to this letter.

I consent on this occasion to what Father Chaminade here requests, and I pray that he will let me know the meaning of these words from a letter of M. LeBlois. "The observation which Father Chaminade had the goodness to make to me concerning my change have made me decide to address the present to you, Your Excellency, to know if the archbishop wishes to send me to Noailles, etc." I have the honor, etc.

Fr., Archbishop of Bordeaux

* * *

36. To M. Pierre Pierre
Commissioner General of Police, Bordeaux
Sunday, September 24, 1809
Autograph Rough Draft, Agmar

M. Superintendent,

M. Lafon had me called to hear his Confession immediately after his arrest, as his confessor was away at the time and even far from Bordeaux.

I did not believe I should refuse him the help and consolation of my ministry, so the following evening I went to the prison. Realizing later that the police might be interested in knowing the reason for the visits M. Lafon was receiving, I did not want to continue my services to him without informing you of their object and without having your formal consent. I am ready to call on you, if you believe these considerations may require a longer interview.

I am with profound respect, etc.

* * *

The arrest of M. Lafon and the orders of the Emperor for the suppression of all prior associations threatened the very existence of the Sodality. Father Chaminade allows his anxiety to appear near the end of the following letter.

37. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon,
Château de Trenquelléon
November 7, 1809, Bordeaux
Autograph, Arch. FMI

My very dear Daughter,

I greatly appreciate your concern with news about my health. If I have kept you and your dear sisters waiting for so long, it is not precisely because of illness, although for some time my health has not been of the best. I delayed, first because I intended to send you a Directory suited to each of the officers; this is the name we give to the instructions destined for each office. But

very important matters intervened, followed by retreats which I usually conduct during the vacation.

I am beginning to dispatch what is overdue and am turning my attention first toward the third section, which is so close to my heart. All the news I have from it, directly or indirectly, I have passed on to the first two sections. The expression of your sentiments regarding contempt of the world, its vanities, its trappings, often even of its indecent styles, cannot fail to be very useful in your meetings, provided there is no evidence of affectation. You have an occasion for such an expression when, for example, you tell me about some new affiliate. You would have had a very good one when informing us of the death of Mlle Aminthe Motier—I have recommended her to the prayers of the Sodality and have prescribed special prayers for three days.

Regarding your letter, we brought up the question in a meeting of whether truly Christian women were to rejoice or be sad at the death of their friends who die in the love of God. We seemed to understand that the greater their friendship, the greater also should be their joy. I may believe this is also the sentiment of the third section. Nevertheless, at your leisure you may consult each one of its members through the officers at the head of the groups. You could then give me a summary of their opinions and of the reasons supporting them. Meanwhile, do not let the delay caused by these consultations prevent you from writing to me about anything which may be of interest to you; but, my dear Daughter, never any mere gossip. If I noticed that you and your devout companions had anything else to do but pray, I would take care to give you a lesson.

You must have received the four *Manual of the Servant of Mary* which I had sent to you. I also made out the small money order for the 15 livres you told me about, as well as the one for the Manuals.

Speaking of material things, an idea occurs to me with which I wish to acquaint you. I own a little property near Bordeaux where grapes are grown which produce a wine which is generally very popular. It is called Haut-Brion Saint-Laurent, because it is located in that part of the Graves¹ district called Haut-Brion² and near the old chapel of Saint-Laurent. I have been selling some of this wine locally and for some time now even further away. This year I had some sent to Cahors, to Figeac, to Paris, and elsewhere. It is a general favorite. The oldest vintage I still have is in its fifth year. Due to the drop in the price of wine I let it go this year for 500 livres a barrel at the winery. If you could have some sold for me in your area of the country, you would gratify me. By the way, it is easy to ship anywhere along the Garonne.

I am, my dear Daughter, with all the feelings of a tender father,

G.-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. Please assure your mother of my respectful remembrance.

* * *

Father Chaminade's were only too thoroughly justified. On November 17 the police raided his home, seized his papers, and prohibited the meetings of the Sodality. Father Chaminade did everything he could to save it. His first attempt was made at the Police Superintendent's.

38. To M. Pierre Pierre
Police Superintendent, Bordeaux
November 21, 1809, Bordeaux

¹ The Graves (“gravel”), derived from its diminutive form *gravelle*, is a sandy and gravelly region of vineyards to the southwest of Bordeaux on the left bank of the Garonne.

² The finest red wines are those of Château Haut-Brion. White Graves wines are sold under the names of the estates where they are produced.

Autograph Rough Draft, Agmar

M. Superintendent,

I noticed you were impressed by the hasty report I had the honor of making to you about the regrettable consequences which would follow upon the suppression of the Sodality. As you know, I submitted to this without a complaint, and I would have remained silent about it regardless of being aware of the good these youth gatherings have done, had you not invited me to furnish you with a brief report on it to be brought to the notice of His Excellency the Minister of the State Police. Your invitation somewhat soothed the bitterness of my soul and gave me a ray of hope.

In the remarks I take the liberty of passing on to you, I seem to speak only of the Young Men's Sodality, because you had the kindness to tell me you believed the Government would allow the Ladies' Sodality to continue and because everything that can be said about the former applies even more to the latter. How many scandals have been averted these past nine years!

I am with deepest respect, Monsieur, your very humble and very obedient servant.

*

Here is the text of the memorandum, in the form of notes which accompanied this letter.

Notes on the Sodality Furnished by Father J. Chaminade,
Honorary Canon of the Church of Bordeaux
Original, Agmar

To judge this association by others organized at different times, which have nothing in common with it but a certain terminology, would be to misunderstand it. The Bordeaux group was organized before the Concordat, when the Catholic religion was still subject to a sort of proscription. Its practices began only after the local authorities had been notified. These were submitted, moreover, to M. Portalis, the Minister of Religion, by the Vicar General of the diocese. The publicity given to the Sodality from its beginnings is thus an initial guarantee of the fact that there was nothing contrary to the interests of the Government, either in its methods or in its purpose.

Its object was to preserve young people from the corruption of vice and to withdraw from it those who may have had the misfortune of falling into it. For this purpose it was believed useful to hold meetings on holidays at the hours when young people are most idle. These meetings were public and always remained so. The time was taken up by talks, discussions, or papers on some point of religion or morality. The person who was called the prefect and his two assistants had no other function than to maintain order and discipline.

Attendance at these meetings, as also at certain devotional practices, had always been free. The clergyman who held the title of director had no other authority over these young people than that born of confidence. His well-known character, his moderate principles, his conduct in all the circumstances of his life, whether during the Revolution or thereafter, all served as guarantees for the authorities.

Considering the Sodality in itself, in its practice of piety or in its meetings, no ground for fear could be found, no fanatical religious ideas, no negligence in the respect or submission due to the laws and their guardians. Nine years of irreproachable existence would make all further proof unnecessary, but we appeal with confidence to the testimony of the State Superintendent of Police, whose vigilance over everything that is of interest to the Government or concerns morality has always been focused upon this institution.

Not only did it present no danger; on the contrary, it was unquestionably useful in preserving morals by the improvement it produced among the young people. Should the Government be pleased to consult the local authorities, it will be convinced that no other

institution has done greater good in this regard. In the religious or moral instructions given to its young people all the sentiments that make for better sons, better citizens, and better subjects have been impressed. To cooperate with the welfare work among these young people, a number of exemplary married men had been associated with them and helped them in their desperate need, often snatching them from the cruel choice between misery and crime.

What we are saying about the young men is even more true for the young women. For several of them, the Sodality has been a safeguard from corruption. Their innocence has been shielded in the midst of the dangers so widespread in this large city.

In view therefore of its great usefulness in maintaining morals among youth, the suppression of the Sodality is a distinct disservice to society. Deprived of the instructions and of the good example received there, the majority of the young people who are still virtuous will be corrupted by idling about on holidays, associating with loose companions, frequenting dangerous public places, and even as a mere consequence of extreme poverty. We will see the list of scandals, perhaps even of crimes, lengthen and will have ample reason to bewail the loss of an institution which was dear to all decent people.

*

Numerous papers had been seized by the police from Father Chaminade's quarters during the November 17 raid. The inventory of these items has been preserved. It consists of 72 items referring mostly to the Sodality— regulations, addresses, etc.—and closes with this remark. "No. 72. Several engravings, of which we are holding the only two, which M. Chaminade said were known by the name of Heart of Jesus." Some of these documents seem to have attracted the attention of the police, and Father Chaminade believed it was advisable to write the following note in his own defense.

Observations Furnished by M. G.-J. Chaminade
On Various Items in the Inventory of His Papers
Autograph Rough Copy, Agmar

On the First Eight Items. The first 8 notebooks contain only very rough notes, some extracts or portions of extracts. There is very little order and sequence in them. When Father Chaminade had to speak on a topic touching morals or religion, he jotted down a few ideas on a loose sheet of paper. When he thought he had mastered his subject, he stopped writing. Most of these writings have had no editing whatsoever. All of these loose sheets were collected a few months ago by his secretary. Two of these notebooks had not yet been covered.

The same observation applies to Father Chaminade's other small notebooks. He never wrote any of his talks or instructions except to select a theme or idea, and most of the time he did not even write down his selection.¹

On Number 23. Justifying Memorandum.¹ This memorandum was drawn up in a time of trouble to quiet qualms of conscience and to acquaint Catholics with the true principles designed to make us submissive to and dependent upon public authority. Father Chaminade recalls the plan of this only very imperfectly. He merely remarks that it is not surprising that certain precautions were taken to attain the proposed objective. To judge this writing, it is necessary to consider it as a whole together with its objective, not just a few expressions deemed necessary for the type of

¹ These notebooks are kept in the archives of the Society of Mary. Several passages have been reproduced in *Spirit of Our Foundation*.

¹ This was drafted in collaboration with M. Mutardier and M. Gassiot regarding the legality of the oath of the year III (November 27, 1795). This document no longer exists. Possibly handwritten fragments on obedience and conscience recovered in 1909 were part of it.

reader the speaker had in mind. This document makes known the principles of Father Chaminade and the spirit of moderation which has always animated him. . . .

On Numbers 43 and 44. The two small notebooks contain an answer given by a certain individual to various assertions which had troubled him. The answers were not delivered. Father Chaminade put an end to the worries of both parties² verbally. At least, this is what he thinks he remembers.

On Number 58. Father Chaminade never read this notebook. He recalls that during the first year of the Revolution a priest whom he did not know and whose name he has forgotten brought it to him for examination. He waited for him in order to examine it with him, but he never saw him again.

On Numbers 63 and 64. The Christian Brothers were admitted into the city of Bordeaux. The task of helping and expanding this new establishment was entrusted to Father Chaminade. Subjects for the various schools called for by the city had to be found and trained. At first, Brother Frumentius had been unfavorably disposed toward these measures. I wrote to him and at the same time to Father Rauzan, asking the latter to see him. This was the reason for letter number 35.³ The secret to be kept and confided only to the archbishop referred to the director of the Bordeaux establishment, because he did not seem at first to understand why certain measures needed to be taken. After all parties had been heard there was perfect agreement, as is evident from the letters of Brother Frumentius.

On Number 67. You will kindly permit Father Chaminade to withhold the name of the person who wrote him this letter, although he recognizes the handwriting. It is a confidential letter. The writer is his penitent, and it is easy to see from the very form of the letter that the troubles of conscience which lead its author to submit to him still further difficulties spring only from his frequent presentation, even in the tribunal of penance, of the principles which oblige us to respect and submit to the supreme power which governs us and to those vested with its authority.

On Numbers 68 and 69. The small church of the Madeleine is private property. Father Chaminade holds it as a tenant. The lease runs for 5 years. The church was built by the archbishop as a secondary oratory. Located near the limits of three large parishes, Sainte Eulalie, Saint Paul, and Saint Eloi, it was requested by a large number of members of the three parishes. The three pastors agreed to its construction, as well as to its control. The prefect of the department was consulted.

[The observations on number 70 were attached to a sheet which bore the title "Association of the Twelve." This sheet has been lost.]

On Number 71. Observation on the sheet entitled "Association of the Twelve."

The dangers to which youth is exposed, the daily increasing breakdown of morals, and the general distress of the times led me some three years ago to jot down on a loose sheet of paper a plan for an association of twelve young men, the most solidly grounded in virtue I could find. I expected them to be a sort of leaven among the young men, keeping always alive the principles of morality and religion. The original ideas were never even put into shape. As a matter of fact, no meetings of the twelve were ever held.

Some fairly strong or obscure expressions need a brief explanation because at the time, I was writing only for myself.

1. "In the event of its suppression," as stated in this note, "the Sodality would survive among the twelve."

At the time I was in serious straits respecting means of support. Time and again I

² The person who had made the assertions and the one who had attempted to answer them in writing.

³ Fr. Jean-Baptiste Rauzan, founder of the famous Society of the Missionaries of France and a sodalist of Fr. Chaminade's, had been appointed by the Archbishop of Bordeaux to arrange with Bro. Frumentius of the Institute of the Christian Brothers for their coming to Bordeaux (1806-07). Fr. Rauzan's letter is in the National Archives. It is printed in *L'Apôtre*, 1953-54, 35:112-13.

considered myself on the verge of abandoning my work. I envisioned the painful necessity of personally disbanding the Sodality in order to take up some gainful occupation in town. I did not wish to lose the fruit of my past efforts.¹ I would achieve these results if the institution of the twelve continued despite this dissolution. Some prudent people encouraged me. I sold various objects which, strictly speaking, I could dispense with; I received an amount of money from my family; I recovered from this dark distress. Things remained unchanged.

2. In the plan I was forming, this association of the twelve, their meetings, their discussions were to be “secret”—that is, the young men of the Sodality were not to notice anything, otherwise the zeal of the twelve would have been ineffective and the young men would have taken them for unwelcome watchmen.

3. The zeal of the twelve was to redouble at the time of the “missions.” In the Sodality this term “mission” designates the assignment secretly given two or three of the most fervent sodalists to contact and stir up the most tepid, the most careless, or to bring back those who had gone astray.

4. Correspondence with sodalists away from Bordeaux was to be entrusted to them, in order to fortify their virtue against the scandals likely to be met with in the various places to which they may have traveled.

5. This is the clear and candid explanation of this short note which, moreover, should show the concern of my heart for the preservation of the morals of youth. I submitted without a protest to the suppression of the Sodality. My submission to the orders of the Government was beyond question at all times. My desire is truly to be useful to society, but never in ways that are hidden and obscure. This is why everything in the Sodality has always been public. This is why the meetings of the twelve have not taken place. Everything that is secret, all that seems to border on the mysterious, however good it may have seemed, has always been repugnant to me.

Full of interest at the time in this project of association, I jotted down on a bit of paper the names of some young men in whom I believed I had noticed signs of sturdier virtue.

6. One of the twelve, chosen by his associates, was to be the moderator of their undertakings and, as it were, their very center.¹

* * *

N.A. 38-2. To Archbishop d’Aviau of Bordeaux

December 14, 1809

Printed in Volume 8-2 and Volume 9. This is from Volume 9.

Copy at Agmar 218.2.53

Comments presented to the Most Rev. Archbishop of Bordeaux

By Father Chaminade, Honorary Canon, on the letter of

His Excellency, the Minister of Worship, dated December 14, 1809.

Marginal notation: Secretariat, second office, no. 1607

1. Up to the moment of its dissolution, the Sodality established nine years ago in Bordeaux enjoyed the tacit approval of the authorities. At the time it was founded, notice was given to the commissioner general of the police; the first vicar general of this diocese submitted it to the Minister of Worship.

¹ These lines were crossed out. “This lack of a livelihood made me fear the early collapse of the Sodality and led me at the same time to forestall losing the fruit of my past efforts.” He personally made corrections between lines as follows. “This lack of a livelihood was going to oblige me to disband the Sodality either by returning to my home or by taking up some gainful occupation. However, I did not wish to lose the fruit of my past efforts.”

¹ See *Spirit of Our Foundation*, vol. 3, no. 219.

2. This Sodality has had only one purpose, that of forming young people to virtue by the practice of their religious obligations. It has never varied from this purpose; never has anything foreign to this purpose been introduced into its religious practices or its meetings. I here call upon the witness of the police themselves, who were able to supervise these in all their detail because both religious practices and meetings were always open to the public.

I point out, moreover, that the customs adopted and followed without interruption since its origin made impossible the introduction of any abuse that might seem to justify such severe measures. No meeting, even of only four or five members, could be held without the presence of the Director, and he never dispensed himself from that supervision. Even if his own dispositions had not made it a duty for him, his own safety imposed upon him the obligation of not allowing anything to be introduced which was foreign to the purpose of the Sodality.

3. It seems that one of the members of the Sodality has had connections which displeased the government. His faults are personal and individual. Not only has the Sodality never shared them, but it is also still unaware of the nature and purpose of such connections. Only the measures taken against this individual have led it to suspect the existence of these connections. Even now, the greater number of members remain ignorant of this matter.

4. The commissioner general of police has extended to the Sodality of Young Women a measure which was not even deserved by that of the Young Men. It does not seem the reasons for this measure could apply to young women, who by very reason of their gender should have been exempt. They found in their association the means of preserving themselves from corruption, so widespread in this day. There is reason to fear that deprived of this help, perhaps many of them may become a scandal for society and an occasion of shame for their families.

5. Because His Excellency the Minister of Worship, by character as much as by office, is the protector of all priests of irreproachable conduct whose attachment to the government is without question, Father Chaminade dares to claim his protection, basing himself on these two qualities of His Excellency. He further hopes that if unfounded harassment should be leveled against him, he will find a support in His Excellency himself.

* * *

The efforts of Father Chaminade to save the Young Men's Sodality proved futile. He made a supreme effort to save at least the Young Ladies' Sodality and that of the postulants by resorting to the influence of Archbishop d'Aviau with Cardinal Fesch, Archbishop of Lyons, the uncle and grand almoner of the emperor. Father Rauzan happened to be in Lyons at the time and could lend his support to the attempt.

39. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux

After December 14, 1809

Autograph Rough Draft, Agmar

Your Excellency,

To spare you the trouble of looking through the various notes I have written to enlighten Their Excellencies the Ministers of Religion and of the State Police, and in conformity with the views of Father Rauzan, I am availing myself of the liberty you have granted me to present for Your Excellency's consideration what I deem suitable to place before and petition His Most Eminent Highness.¹ Your Excellency need only suppress, alter, or add whatever the friendship with which you honor me and your wisdom will prescribe.

First of all, I would have His Most Eminent Highness acquainted with the event which is alarming so many good people, the suppression of the Sodality whose devotional exercises for the

¹ The postulants of the Sodality.

past nine years have been performed so quietly and with such abundant fruit. You will only be paying homage to the truth in assuring His Eminent Highness that the clergyman who was given the title of director never meddled with political matters, but touched upon them only for the purpose of forming faithful subjects and of teaching them the same principles of respect and submission to the supreme authority and its representatives, etc.

1. His Most Eminent Highness will not be surprised at your request that he solicit the reestablishment of the Sodality as it was, if you inform him of the impossibility of ever otherwise compensating for the good it was doing, not only for religion but also for the Government; that for the past nine years there has never been any complaint about it, although from the first its meetings had always been public; that nonmembers had always been courteously welcomed in its meetings; that representatives of the police were usually present at them; that the abuses deemed possible by the Government because similar ones may have been found in some other sodality are practically impossible in that of Bordeaux because by its very constitution, no meeting of any kind can ever be held without the director being present; that the misconduct detected by the Government in M. Lafon, a Bordeaux sodalist, is completely personal and utterly his own, for neither the Sodality nor its director have ever in any way had anything to do with his connections or correspondence.

2. Should His Majesty refuse to rescind his order for the suppression of the Young Men's Sodality, at the request of His Most Eminent Highness the Minister of Police may permit the meetings of the children.² By "children" we mean the boys who have made their first Communion but who are not yet 16 years of age. Their meetings are impossible in the parishes, as experience has proved only too clearly. Without the Sodality these meetings will at least³ be very difficult to hold and will not produce the same results because of the lack of good example and motives of emulation the children found in the Sodality. I will always strive to safeguard the greatest possible number from vice.

3. The Young Ladies' Sodality was suppressed at the same time, but this is only an extension by the State Police Superintendent of the order received from His Excellency the Minister of Police. His Most Eminent Highness could at least have the order confined to its original extent and permit the existence of this Sodality, which has preserved so many young women from the corruption of vice.

4. All my papers, seized by the State Police Superintendent, are in his office. His Most Excellent Highness could very easily have the superintendent ordered to return them to me.¹ They have been examined over and over again. Was anything ever found in them except the sincerity and good faith with which I permitted the seizure of everything which might reveal what I have always been?²

Father Rauzan, who has the honor of being with His Most Eminent Highness, could give him all the information he might desire. For further evidence you may join to your letter these copies, first, of the Minister of Religion's letter together with the circular of the Minister of Police to the State Police Superintendent; second, of my remarks for the Minister of Religion; third, of my notes for the Minister of Police, with the letter I wrote to the superintendent when I sent him these notes.

Your Excellency will see whether you could still add by way of comment that you would not request the restoration of the Sodality of Bordeaux if the general procedure of suppressing sodalities did not manifest a motive not applicable to this particular one, and that His Majesty

³ The *neanmoins* of the original is possibly a slip of the pen for *au moins*.

¹ These papers were actually returned.

² The succeeding lines, which were crossed out with a few unintelligible ones being omitted, read as follows. "If Your Excellency deems it pertinent, you might add that Father Rauzan, who is with His Most Eminent Highness, could supply full details concerning both myself personally and the Sodality . . . and explain the great evils produced by its suppression. He was a frequent witness of what is happening."

would be pleased to find fewer offenders than he thought and to be able to preserve the institutions whose character guarantees against abuses and contributes effectively toward perfecting a small portion of his subjects and attaching them to religion and to his own person.

* * *

This appeal was ineffective, and it could not have been otherwise because Cardinal Fesch was powerless to save even the Missionaries of France, whose foundation by Father Rauzan he himself had sponsored and with whose work Napoleon had been so well pleased that of his own accord he had granted them subsidies to defray their expenses. Like the sodalities, they were sacrificed by the emperor to vent his spleen upon Pius VII.³ Until the end of the Empire Father Chaminade limited his correspondence to what was strictly necessary, as letter no. 40 implies.

* * *

This note was added to a letter addressed to Father Chaminade by his brother.

39a. To M. David Monier
Counselor-at-Law, Bordeaux
Friday Evening, July 6, 1810
Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

I hesitated at first to send you my brother's letter for fear of being bothersome. I thought it over and quickly convinced myself you have too good a heart to feel any annoyance at the way I am handling this matter. M. and Mme Lalanne are leaning on Tuesday for Mont-Dore¹ and will

³ The Society of the Missionaries of France was established in 1808 at Lyons, where Cardinal Fesch, who took a special interest in the foundation, had invited Father Rauzan upon the recommendation of Archbishop d'Aviau. Before long, however, the Society was suppressed by Napoleon, despite the favor he had previously shown. In 1814 after the fall of Napoleon, it was reconstituted in Paris at the suggestion of Cardinal Fesch. At this time Fr. Rauzan was joined by Fr. Forbin-Janson, later Bishop of Nancy, who eventually founded the Association of the Holy Childhood. The reestablishment was greatly encouraged and aided by the advice of Fr. Liautard, founder of Collège Stanislas (a secondary boarding school and minor seminary along the lines of that of Mussidan; letter no. 0a, n. 7). Upon the resignation in 1824 of Fr. Liautard, who had been appointed by Louis XVIII as private tutor to the young Duke of Bordeaux, the entire staff of this famous school, to be assumed by the Society of Mary in 1855, joined the Society of the Missionaries of France. The revolution of 1830, which definitely dethroned the descendants of "the Sun King" Louis XIV, once more completely undid the work of Fr. Rauzan. He left France and went to Rome, where Pope Gregory XVI encouraged him to found a new Society to be known as the Fathers of Mercy. In 1839 Bishop Forbin-Janson was invited by Bishop Hughes of New York to introduce the Fathers of Mercy into the United States. They began their American apostolate in the diocese of New Orleans, later founded a college in Alabama, then came to New York City to look after the growing French population in Manhattan, where they took charge of Saint Vincent de Paul Parish, and in Brooklyn, where they conducted Our Lady of Lourdes and Saint Frances de Chantal parishes. Their headquarters was established in Our Lady of Lourdes Parish and continued there until 1960.

"In September 1960 the Fathers of Mercy relinquished all their city parishes and became a mission community in the strictest sense of the word. "Our Constitutions are in the process of being changed and approved by the Sacred Congregation of Religious in Rome" (letter of Fr. John O'Brien, CPM, Mission Procurator, December 14, 1961, to Bro. Adolph Kalt, SM). Their General Administration was then transferred to Cold Spring, New York. Outside foreign mission territory, their entire membership at the time was in the United States, where they also engaged in home mission work. They too added the vow of stability to the other religious vows. Since 1968 they are no longer listed in the *Annuario Pontificio*.

¹ A thermal station in the Auvergne Mountains in southeast central France near Clermont-Ferrand. Since the time of the Romans, it has been sought by those suffering from respiratory troubles. It is now also a center for winter sports.

pass through Périgueux. If your account is ready, they could take it along with all pertinent papers.

Very friendly greetings.
G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

40. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Château de Trenquelléon

August 27, 1810, Bordeaux
Feast of the Piercing of the Heart of Saint Thérèse
Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

Both of us have long been silent. I had neither seen nor heard anything of your good messenger since she handed me your letter. Now she appears at the very moment when a person who has some papers you would have welcomed is away in the country.

About a month ago I forwarded to Agen the four small volumes you had asked me for. My representative called twice at your esteemed friend's home to see her but was not fortunate enough to meet her.

The person in whom you are interested,¹ through whom we became acquainted, is doing fairly well. He has lately allowed himself to be heard from. We have great hopes of seeing him again, possibly before the end of the year.² I believe I am interpreting his sentiments in recommending him to your prayers and to those of your friends.

I recall, my dear Child, that once you asked me what the young women who held office in the Sodality were or what they had to do. Whatever may be the motive of your curiosity, I will answer you in a few words. Each officer became a kind of center to which the young ladies confided to her care directly resorted. Thus, a group officer took care of all those who made up her group. A head officer looked after all the group officers who were in her section and settled all the difficulties which might arise in the groups. A good officer was expected to watch constantly over the maintenance of fervor among her companions, encouraging them to be exact in observing the practices and customs of the Sodality, inspiring them to frequent the sacraments, and reminding them of the various feasts and General Communion days. The Young Ladies' Sodality was generally very edifying. Divine Providence permitted its suppression. I did not complain about this, although I did regret it because of the good it had accomplished. Since its suppression, the virtue of its former members has been less doubtful. They conduct themselves very well, as a rule. There must not be many among them who have forgotten their consecration to the Blessed Virgin.

I invite you, my dear Child, to make this act of consecration with all your heart on the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, if you have received this letter. This would also be good advice to give to all your friends. In a way, I am surprised at the graces and blessings received by all those who make it wholeheartedly and who persevere in the sentiments which inspired them to do so. How happy are the true children of Mary! The Mother of Jesus truly becomes their Mother. Perhaps, you will say, "But Mary cannot be my mother as she was the Mother of Jesus." Without a doubt this is so, if we fail to consider things from the spiritual point of view. But we should look upon her divine maternity much more from the spiritual than from the natural viewpoint. According to the words of Jesus, Mary was more blessed for conceiving

¹ Hyacinthe Lafon, prisoner in La Force, a Paris prison dating from the Revolution but suppressed in 1850.

² At this time efforts were being made to have Hyacinthe Lafon freed, for Alexis de Noailles, who had been sentenced as the leader in this matter, had been at large since April when he had been granted an amnesty on the occasion of the emperor's wedding.

him spiritually than for doing so according to the order of nature. If you do not quite understand this truth, which I have barely touched upon, I will gladly come back to it in another letter.

I am, my dear Child, your good Father in Jesus Christ Our Savior,

G.-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

* * *

These are the remaining extracts from a letter of Father Chaminade in which he congratulates the newly-elected Superior General of the Christian Brothers, gives a brief history of the reestablishment of the Christian Brothers in Bordeaux, and relates how their novitiate has been finally transferred from its original location to his own Villa Saint-Laurent.

40a. To V. Rev. Brother Gerbaud, FSC, Superior General

December 19, 1810, Bordeaux

Venerable Brother,

Since your promotion to the generalate I should like to write to you first to express the archbishop's and my satisfaction at your election. We already know with what wisdom and zeal you have worked for the good of your Institute. Your circular to all the houses fills us with consolation. We have found there again the true spirit of Father de La Salle. As my letter was to be sent together with the one which Brother Paulinus planned to write to you, it was delayed because of his illness. After the various letters you had written to our dear Brother Seraphim and which were passed on to me because of the contents and still more so because of various delicate circumstances, I have taken the liberty to write to you directly to acquaint you exactly with the true situation of the brothers in Bordeaux and the purposes of their establishment. I will number the topics as they occur to my mind.

1. Long before it was possible to hope the Institute of the brothers might reappear in France, two young men¹ embraced this state by divine inspiration and followed the Rule faithfully except for the habit. The brothers appeared in Lyons. The archbishop requested some for Bordeaux. Brothers Seraphim and Alexander were sent by Venerable Brother Frumentius. They were at first received at the residence of the young men. The city returned to them the former house of the brothers at the Sainte Eulalie gate and had six schools² opened. Brother Seraphim had had a few members come from Toulouse. . . . Two other schools were opened in the seminary buildings. Brother Seraphim had a number of other brothers come. . . . The archbishop requested the Venerable Brother Frumentius' permission to establish a novitiate in Bordeaux. The permission was granted. I was charged with establishing and looking after it. . . .

2. The Sainte Eulalie house did not seem adequate for lodging the brothers engaged in the school and the novices in addition. The archbishop wrote again to Venerable Brother Frumentius and received permission to separate the houses. From the beginning he had also obtained for Brother Paulinus the title of Director of Novices. The difficulty of finding suitable quarters led me to offer the archbishop a portion of a country house which is very close, only 12 or 15 minutes from the house of the brothers of Sainte Eulalie and of the parish church. This small country house is a real solitude, entirely surrounded by walls. In the part occupied by the novitiate I had repairs made which were necessary for healthy living and for being independent of the portion which I reserved for myself and for the country people. I had a chapel made adjoining their

¹ See letter no. 30b. Lafargue began his initiation into religious life following the Rule of Saint Jean-Baptiste de la Salle under Fr. Chaminade's guidance, May 6, 1801, and opened his first school in Bordeaux January 2, 1802. Around the middle of 1802 he was joined by Darbignac. See Joseph Verrier, *L'Apôtre*, 1953, 35:118, 119.

² See letter no. 30b, n. 4.

quarters. The Blessed Sacrament is kept there. I say Mass for them every Thursday, unless some feast prevents me. This part of the house can accommodate only 12 novices. . . .

3. A few days ago, our dear Brother Paulinus acquainted me with a prospectus which you had had passed on to Brother Seraphim. . . .

4. This year the Sainte Eulalie house met at the novitiate for its retreat.

5. His Excellency the Archbishop, Father Boyer, his first vicar general, and I desire only the prosperity of your Institute. We desire also to have it serve as a support of religion without any change in its forms and customs. . . . Brother Seraphim is a very good religious, full of the spirit of his state. . . .

Pardon me, Venerable Brother, if I have wearied you with too many details and too lengthy reflections. I wish to have you see my love for your Institute and the confidence I have in you, together with the esteem I have for the wisdom of your administration. I will add only my very sincere wish for a happy year and the assurance of the profound respect with which I am, Venerable Brother, your humble and very obedient servant,

G.-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.
Rue Lalande

[In a letter dated December 31, 1810, Brother Gerbaud thanks Father Chaminade for his service to the Institute and informs him that he must transfer the novitiate to Toulouse because of imperial restrictions which obliged him to limit the number of novitiates, and that consequently a house for 30 novices had become indispensable. He promised to supply as many brothers already formed as needed in Bordeaux and relieved Father Chaminade of all responsibilities toward the Christian Brothers, apart from the general supervision of the satisfactory conduct of the schools staffed by them.]

* * *

41. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Château de Trenquelléon

March 11, 1811, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Daughter,

Busy as I am, I will not let this opportunity pass without writing you a few words at least.

I received your letter with real pleasure. The details you give are proof to me that you are attentive to everything. Be prudent in whatever your zeal inspires you to do by way of continuing the good work you have undertaken among your friends.

Your friends! There are, nevertheless, some of them who scarcely deserve the name. Friends are expected to share the same sentiments, and these are far from doing so. What is more opposed to the spirit of Christianity which animates you than vanity and indecency in dress? I should be greatly tempted to tell you to no longer recognize them as friends. But before breaking with them completely, reprove them severely; some of them may nevertheless be willing to correct themselves.

Furthermore, it seems to me more suitable for you to take as friends only young women. Married women are happy only in the company of those in the same state of life. Still, should a young woman with whom you happen to be on intimate terms marry and wish to remain your friend, why would you wish to break with her?

Our friend¹ is still in Paris. His matters there are not yet settled.

I must leave you now. The Lord's blessings be upon you and your friends. This wish comes from the tenderness of a father who is entirely devoted to you.

¹ There is still the question of Lafon.

* * *

Father Chaminade settles the accounts of the novitiate of the Christian Brothers with Archbishop d'Aviau, who had assumed responsibility for this. The novitiate was about to be transferred from Villa Saint-Laurent to Toulouse.²

42. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux

April 27, 1811, Bordeaux
Autograph, Agmar

Your Excellency,

I have the honor of sending to you the short list furnished by Brother Seraphim³ in response to the letter of the Minister of Religion. This is the second list he has sent me; the first seemed to me too imperfect. I doubt whether it will be satisfactory to you; but to have it in the form which was acceptable July 30, 1808, I should be obliged to you if you would have a search made in your secretariat for the former model. I will have it filled out promptly.

I have just settled the accounts of the novitiate of the brothers. I find myself with a credit balance of 1,587 livres, 5 sous, 9 deniers.⁴ In my last dealings with Brother Paulinus⁵ I retained for myself on the one hand the arrears of the annuity which were to accrue to the benefit of the novitiate and which I will try to have entered to your credit; on the other hand, I withheld a small sum of 100 livres which is fully guaranteed. Taking for granted the remittance in full of all these funds, all that would still be due to me would be 1,027 livres, 5 sous, 9 deniers.

I am most respectfully Your Excellency's very humble and very obedient servant,
G.-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. If the account is made out in sous and deniers, this is only for the sake of exactness of the copy; it is not a surcharge.

* * *

43. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux

May 2, 1811, Bordeaux
Autograph, Agmar

Your Excellency,

I had intended to send your letter to Father Daurensan¹ when his counsel asked me as a favor to delay its dispatch. Fearing this might displease you, I wrote to him that it was difficult for me to delay Your Excellency's answer, etc. He sent me the enclosed reply, which I take the liberty of passing on to you. A little later the lawyer himself came and gave me information which very strongly justified the last trip Father Daurensan made to Bordeaux. If the facts are as he related them to me—and they are easy to verify—Father Daurensan could hardly have done otherwise than to come and prosecute. During a period of apparent peace, his opponents were

² See the note after letter no. 40a.

³ Superior of the brothers in Bordeaux.

⁴ See letter no. 2c, n. 1.

⁵ See letter no. 30b, n. 2.

¹ Former assistant pastor of Bazas, a close friend of Fr. Martin de Bonnefond, pastor of Marmande and a renowned preacher in the dioceses of Bordeaux and of Bazas. This letter concerns an authorization requested by Fr. Daurensan to appear in court. On Fr. Daurensan, see Durengues, *M. Martin de Bonnefond*, pp. 26, 65, 100, and the correspondence of Fr. Sasausse with Fr. Chaminade.

secretly undermining his position and would have outrageously ruined him had he not taken countermeasures in time. I had previously been unacquainted with these circumstances; they are very serious.

I am sending your secretary the financial status of the Christian Brothers which His Excellency the Minister of Religion is requesting from you.

I have learned, Your Excellency, that the Council was definitely set for June 8 or June 9. Until then I will not cease to ask God to fill you with the spirit of fortitude and intelligence which will be so necessary to you in the face of a circumstance which will undoubtedly be the most important of your life, and also the most difficult.

Upon your return to Bordeaux, Your Excellency, if you have a moment to spare I would like to acquaint you with a small document. This will only take a few minutes.

I am most respectfully Your Excellency's very humble and very obedient servant,
G.-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

* * *

How Archbishop d'Aviau realized the hopes expressed by Father Chaminade is a matter of general knowledge. At the Council of Paris, says Msgr. Bernard,¹ the Archbishop of Bordeaux was unaffected by the glibness of the courtesan Maury, and all the prelates were thrown into consternation upon hearing him hurl this thundering challenge at the imperial prelate, "Well, judge the pope, if you dare! Condemn the Church, if you can!" The archbishop was saved from prison only by his reputation for virtue. "That man is a saint," the prefect of police had told the emperor. "If you lay hands on him, everyone will be against us."

As for the work Father Chaminade is supposed to have composed at this time, it is impossible to determine which one is meant. These additional letters to Adèle are the only ones preserved from the last years of the Empire. There are frequent references in them to the suspicious scrutiny by the imperial police of everything with any connection to the Sodality.

44. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Château de Trenquelléon

October 24, 1811, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

The reception of your last letter dated October 14 gives me great satisfaction. The one before was lost by the person bringing it. You will realize from this small mishap what discretion we must use in writing. Do all the good you can, directly or through others, but by word of mouth. Enflame your friends with enthusiasm, get them to do all the good you think they can, provided it appears to be in the plans of Providence. But never let your correspondence have any other purpose than to spur each other on to virtue. If you happen to have something special to tell the others, reserve it for a favorable meeting, etc.

I myself write very little, practically nothing, which could not be displayed in broad daylight in case of an accident. Do not interpret my silence as a sign that my sentiments have cooled. You have a special place in my heart; each of your friends also has her own niche. When you happen to see any of them, assure them of this again and again, as they do not seem sufficiently convinced of it. I seemed almost a stranger to the young women of Tonneins who came this summer.

I have not yet seen the person who lost your letter. She wrote to me, and I had someone call on her. I understood that she was being made uncomfortable by her mother.

¹ *Un Siècle de l'Eglise de France* (Paris: Bookshop of Saints-Peres, 1907), p. 35.

Mlle Lacombe is doing some good to the young women. She is winning over to virtue and religion all those who come to her. Several see her often. Judging from the confidence and intimacy which reign among them, you would say that she is their mother.

The woman with eye trouble may replace the prayers she is unable to read by reciting 15 *Our Fathers* and *Hail Marys* in honor of the 15 mysteries of the Rosary and recalling one of these mysteries at each *Our Father* and *Hail Mary*.

The Manuals being sold at Tonneins and elsewhere must be a pirated edition. I had 1,000 copies printed at the time on the condition that no more would be produced. I paid accordingly. This fraud does me considerable damage. I still have on hand a great number of loose copies which I have bound as the demand arises; but at present this is practically nothing. I will send as many copies as you believe you can sell to Agen or to Tonneins, whichever is more convenient for you. Make whatever arrangements are best.

I remain very respectfully yours, my dear Child, and give you my fatherly blessing with all my heart.

P.S. I have the honor of offering your mother the assurance of my respectful remembrance.

I am greatly pleased with what you have told me about the Mystery of the Presentation.

* * *

45. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Château de Trenquelléon

April 19, 1812, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Daughter,

I do not wish to allow the bearer of your letter to leave without giving you a small sign of life, despite the additional work the exercise of my ministry gives me.

I have received your various letters with ever-renewed pleasure and interest. Use every opportunity you have to write to me, if only to say, "I am well; everything is going along nicely" or "All my family is well," etc. Do good with as much courage as prudence.

Your good friend, Mlle Lacombe, has been ill since the beginning of winter, but in spite of this she is doing more work than two healthy women could. God blesses everything she does.

Here everything is moving along, although with difficulty. My dear Daughter, often recall this saying of Scripture, "What things you will sow, those also will you reap."

May the grace and peace of the Lord be with you always.

P.S. Please assure your mother of my deep respect.

The bearer has been asked to bring you six Manuals. In a few days I will send a small draft for their price.

* * *

**46. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon,
Château de Trenquelléon**

July 29, 1812, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Daughter,

A few days before receiving your last letter, I had the honor of writing to you in behalf of M. Roland. I assume you received the letter, thanks to the precaution this gentleman must have taken to ensure its reaching you. He expects good results from it.

I will do my best to find a worthy wife for your brother, realizing your own ideals and those of your mother. I would be obliged to you if you will furnish me a type of sketch of your brother—his age, build, personality, character, virtue, financial status, etc., for we must not try to unite those who are incompatible.

I perceive with real pleasure, my dear Daughter, that fervor is being maintained among your friends. You will have the consolation of seeing them persevere in the practice of virtue and piety if you stay in touch with them frequently. Never allow them out of sight, first by praying for them and then by corresponding with them. Urge them to meet and to write to each other, but only with a view to inspiring each other to love God.

While writing these last words, I thought it might be possible to get some notes to you, either by the boats or by sending them to Agen. Even if there were no letters, these would keep you informed. You would make use of them for yourself and for others also. Neither you nor anyone else can be compromised by the exchange of mere notes having absolutely no purpose other than the service of God or the glory of our heavenly Mother. From today forward, I am having Mlle Lacombe see to this. It will be up to her to ask me what to furnish for her bulletins. Let us always try to swell the number of the Children of Mary. Let us steel ourselves against the assaults of hell.

I am, my dear Daughter, with respectful and profound fatherly feelings.

* * *

March 12, 1814, Bordeaux opened its gates to the Duke of Angoulême,¹ and a few days later the Government of Louis XVIII was proclaimed in Paris. These events filled Father Chaminade with joy, as it appears from the following letter, whose date must have accompanied the conclusion on a sheet which has been lost.

47. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Château de Trenquelléon

April 1814, Bordeaux²

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

God's mercy has finally declared itself in favor of France, with Bordeaux enjoying its first fruits. Is this because devotion to the Blessed Virgin is highly esteemed in Bordeaux? Because she is constantly honored and invoked here by a great number of the faithful of every age, gender, and condition in life? I should make bold to believe this, if we Children of Mary were also more fervent in the service of God. I am nonetheless filled with joy at the thought that it was a faithful sodalist³ who had what I believe was the first white flag to flutter in France hoisted above the belfry of Saint Michel's in this city. My dear Child, let us cling more closely than ever to the cult of our heavenly Mother. Yes, Mary is truly and lastingly our Mother!

Mlle Lacombe died on January 23,⁴ or rather she began on that date to live the life which is alone worthwhile. Her virtue never wavered or weakened toward the end. As soon as she

¹ See letter no. 50, n. 2.

² This date is more probable than that of the French edition.

³ Biographical note. Jean-Baptiste Estebenet (1777-1848), dean of the past prefects of the Sodality, was the principal of one of the best-reputed boarding schools in Bordeaux. After 1830 he entered the Society of Jesus and died a member.

⁴ Mlle Lacombe did not die January 23 but January 25, from this transcription of the official record of her death made by Fr. Verrier from document in the archives of Bordeaux. "Official death notice no. 255 of the city of Bordeaux (south) in 1814. "On January 26, verbal notice of the death of Marie-Thérèse Lacombe de Puygueraud (roughly 34

seemed beyond human help, we had agreed that she should never betray the happiness she experienced in suffering a great deal and the joy she felt at going to her heavenly home. During her life her yearning for penances and humiliations was insatiable. She thrilled interiorly with joy as she noticed the hour of her death being delayed more and more, enabling her thereby to suffer still more before her final departure. She lived nearly a month in very acute pain. During the last eight or nine days she could not move without the aid of a companion. On the last day, this person noticed that when the patient realized the time I usually visited her was approaching, she had herself turned in order to suffer even more and to deprive herself of the pleasure of seeing me. She had long been making one of the stations of the Way of the Cross every hour, and during the last three weeks of her life, at each station she offered her sufferings for one of the Young Ladies' Sodality groups. I have never witnessed a livelier and more lasting zeal for the salvation of young women. Cloaked with great modesty and deep humility, for the past several years she had been ceaselessly busy instructing them, encouraging them, rendering them all kinds of services, and praying for them.

For a week now I have been returning to this letter without being able to finish it. If your uncle has left, I will ask your cousin to send it to you.

I missed a great deal in not being able to see your brother.¹ I met his father-in-law at his inn without realizing it. Because he went simply by his title of Mayor of Agen, I was not aware of his relationship. I should have congratulated him on his new son-in-law, just as I should have congratulated your brother on his marriage. I believe your sister-in-law assists you in your good works. Please let me know how matters stand.

From now on we will no longer bother to plan convenient means of corresponding, but whenever we are able to write we will use the mail, unless there is some difficulty in doing so. As for the expense this correspondence may entail, we will make provision for it.

Another week has just passed without my being able to take up my pen. Patience! Still, I must confide to you an inner feeling I have had for a long while and which may have caused some delay. I would say to myself at times, "Let us see how Mlle Adèle will take these delays in answering her letters, if . . . , if . . . , if come what may, she is still completely convinced of my sentiments toward her and toward all the young women she leads." For my part, I believe that the religious bond which unites us is forever indissoluble. I will explain myself at greater length at the proper time and place.² I wish to finish this letter by all means and put an end to the small trial I had in mind.

Please send me a complete list of all the young women, their family name, Christian name, age, home, or rather their address, and the status of their parents. Be certain all the family names are very legibly written. Indicate the officers and their groups, and those also who have made their Act of Consecration.

As a reward for this work, I promise that as soon as I have this, I will have the names of the young women entered in the Mass Book. We call "Mass Book" a large register, neatly bound, in which until now the names of the young men sodalists were written. The young women had a Mass Book of their own. In the future all the names will appear in the same register. On Sundays and holidays after the recitation of the Office, when I have gone to the altar to celebrate Holy Mass, the first three chief officers of the Young Men's Sodality come to the lowest altar steps and

years old) was given to the commissioner. She was a native of Saint-Cibard, in the department of the Gironde, unmarried, and died in Bordeaux at no. 4, Rue Lalande, at 5 o'clock yesterday morning. She was the daughter of Simon Lacombe de Puygueraud, a proprietor, and Jeanne Montard de Lassaigue. The official declaration was signed by Simon Laclaverie, a proprietor, and Charles Leberthon, the processing officer, both witnessing the document; and they both signed a verbal report filed at the town hall with the records division. Signed: Labroue, Assistant to the Mayor."

¹ Charles de Batz de Trenquelléon, who had just married Mlle Adèle de Sevin, daughter of the mayor of Agen.

² This is a first reference to the projects for religious foundation entertained by Fr. Chaminade. In fact, see the letter of August 30, 1814, in which he admits that since 1813 he has been considering her for his projected foundation and the meaning of these words, "I will further explain myself," seems clear and to the point.

the prefect hands me the book and says aloud, "Reverend Director, the young men devoted to the worship of Mary recommend themselves to your prayers. May their names be transported from the altar of the Lamb immolated for us to the Book of Life." The book remains on the altar during the Holy Sacrifice. I will see what is to be done to complete the work of organizing you. Let me hear from you often and in sufficient detail. Always speak to me with the frankness and sincerity of a child to its good father.

Mlle Chagne¹ has replaced Mlle Lacombe. Not only has the Sodality lost nothing by this replacement, but in all justice it must be said that it has gained greatly. It seems the Good Lord created her for the express purpose of filling this difficult position. Sweetness, firmness, prudence, uprightness of mind, humility, docility, engaging manners, knowing when and how to speak, well educated, the most stubborn characters end by yielding to her. All love her and respect her as their mother. Many of the young women attribute the happiness of having her at their head to the prayers of Mlle Lacombe.

* * *

The next letters involve the reestablishment of the Sodality. In the letter of June 4 there is the question of a person named Lafon, distinct from the Sodalist of the same name. Apparently he was a priest of the diocese, and from these lines it is clear that at this time Father Chaminade still acted as an intermediary in diocesan matters. But now he will free himself more and more from this work in order to devote himself entirely to the Sodality and to his future religious foundations. Regarding difficulties with the board of trustees of Sainte Eulalie's, the parish within which the Madeleine was located,² the Life of Father Chaminade gives details.

48. Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux

Saturday morning, June 4, 1814

Autograph, Agmar

Your Excellency,

Yesterday evening I received an answer from M.¹ Lafon. Despite all the diplomacy I used in communicating your answer to him, it seems to have piqued him. I have the honor of forwarding to you the first letter he wrote to me.

I have also received from you a resolution of the board of trustees of Sainte Eulalie's. I will draw up my answer early next week. I am not at all surprised that Satan is beginning to bestir himself. It is a small indication that with courage and prudence it is possible to do great good for religion by continuing the work of the Sodality on the level reached at its restoration.

Because I can now more regularly consult you without fear of compromising you by the disclosure of the thoughts of my heart, I will tell you everything with the confidence of a child in the best of fathers.

I am most respectfully Your Excellency's very obedient servant,

G.-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

* * *

¹ This young woman undoubtedly belonged to the Chagne family, at whose house, no. 8, Rue Abadie, Fr. Chaminade maintained his legal residence during the Revolution. See letter no. 6, n. 3.

² See "Observations on Numbers 68 and 69" in the list of Father Chaminade's papers seized by the police, p. 102.

¹ According to French usage, no distinctive title must be given to diocesan priests, although "Monsieur l'abbé" is often used. Hence the uncertainty concerning the status of "M. (Monsieur) Lafon."

This letter discusses the reprinting of the Manual of the Servant of Mary, for the editions of 1801 and 1804 had quickly sold out, a proof of the vitality of the Sodality.² The 1801 edition was over 50 years ago by Fr. Louis Cousy. The “Contract of Reorganization” is the “Contract of the Youth of Bordeaux” signed April 30, 1814, shortly after the abdication of Napoleon by the members of the Sodality, restored to life.³

49. To M. David Monier
Counselor-at-Law, Bordeaux
Tuesday Morning July 19, 1814
Autograph, Agmar

My dear Friend,

M. Hirigoyen came to me yesterday on behalf of his friend, M. Duguet, a printer in Libourne, and asked me to award him the contract for reprinting the Manual. He was taking upon himself, so to speak, to induce his friend to be satisfied with 110 livres per page of print. I offered him 100. He is to write to him by tomorrow’s mail for his final word. Moreover, M. Hirigoyen would like to have us consult other local printers to make certain M. Duguet is a giving us a better price than any other. This M. Duguet, he says, is a very good printer. Before buying the Libourne presses he managed the printing establishment of M. Beaume for many years.

M. Artaud and I no longer disagree on any point except the cost of the tiling in the hall on the first floor. I am offering him 300 livres, expecting him to have the tiling done. He wants 300 livres and the job to be at my expense, although he would supply a little lime and sand he has on hand. I am a bit fearful that someday I will regret my delays.

Several of our men are asking for the Statutes or Contract of Reorganization. The register had been bought. If it did not appear, this was because Father Vincent had been ill. One of the advantages of this small document is the solemnly adopted article concerning the assistance to his parish, etc. After all, as you remarked, it is hardly necessary for everyone to sign their own names, or for the names of those who are connected with the society to be entered below them. The document contains absolutely nothing new, only a clearer expression of some practices and of the sentiments that brought about their adoption.

Greetings to you as friendly as ever, etc.

* * *

49a. To M. David Monier
Counselor-at-Law, Bordeaux
Friday Morning, July 22, 1814
Autograph, Agmar

My dear Friend,

I am in agreement with M. Artaud regarding the rent for the house which we looked at together the other day. I am giving him 300 francs a year. The first floor of tiling will be done at joint expense—that is, I will pay half the cost of the materials he will need to buy and of the labor. The lease will run for five years. The rent will be due from the day on which he tells us he can let me have the keys.

I will be obliged to you if you forward the contract to me in duplicate, as you know better than anyone else how it is to be drawn up. It may include a receipt for the first quarter. I will pay when I sign it.

² See *Spirit of Our Foundation*, no. 171.

³ See *Life of Father Chaminade* and *L'Apôtre*, 1914-19-20, 11:1.

With best regards I am your friend and devoted servant,

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

[Cover address as on letter 30]

* * *

49b. To M. David Monier
Counselor-at-Law, Bordeaux
Monday Evening, August 22, 1814
Autograph, Agmar

My dear Friend,

Mlle Isabelle would like to take up again the matter of Mlle Lacombe's will. More than anything else, she is afraid of finding herself at fault regarding the collector of the registration tax collector of Libourne.

Do you believe M. Artaud would sell the house he is renting to me? If you believe you can deal with him, do what you think proper, but as if acting of your own accord and not as an agent. I have not yet had the contract notarized; I will try not to forget it.

Have you any news about our printer? I will be obliged to you if you take care that he does not overreach me.

Very friendly greetings.

G.-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

* * *

In the summer of 1814, two Paris Sodalists, Count Jules de Polignac and Count Alexis de Noailles,¹ members of the retinue of the princes,² secured an introduction to the Bordeaux Sodality. They were offered the titles of honorary prefects with the gold-plated silver medal of the prefects of the Sodality.³

50. To Count Jules de Polignac, Paris
September 29, 1814, Bordeaux
Autograph Rough Draft, Agmar

¹ Jules, Count (later Duke) of Polignac, 1771-1847, was a brother of the prime minister of Charles X, whose policy upheld by the king precipitated the revolution of July 1830. He emigrated during the Revolution of 1789; he was a party in 1804 to an abortive plot to overthrow Napoleon, was arrested, and was condemned to death. With his sentence commuted to life imprisonment, he succeeded in escaping and became the aide-de-camp to the Count d'Artois, and he reentered France with the allies. He held an important position at court during the Restoration and retired to his estates after 1830.

Count Alexis de Noailles, 1783-1835, son of Viscount Louis de Noailles, who had distinguished himself in America with his brother-in-law Lafayette during the American Revolution, was one of the first and most devoted members of the Paris Sodality. In 1809 he was the heart of resistance offered to Napoleon's oppression of Catholic consciences and at the risk of his life did not fear to disseminate copies of the papal Bull of excommunication while the pope was a prisoner in Savone. Thrown into prison, he was released due to the efforts of his brother, Count Alfred de Noailles, aide-de-camp of Maréchal Berthier, who had fought in the American Revolution and then became one of Napoleon's marshals. Elected a deputy in 1815, he placed his powerful influence completely at the service of religion. He continued his cordial relationship with Fr. Chaminade and worked with him for the creation of normal schools in several departments in south central France; but the revolution of 1830 which overthrew the government of Charles X put an end to all their plans. His death followed soon after in retirement.

² The princes at the time were: the Count d'Artois, brother of Louis XVI and Louis XVIII, whom he succeeded as Charles X, and his two sons, the Duke d'Angoulême, the last dauphin of France, and the Duke of Berry.

³ See *Life of Father Chaminade* and *L'Apôtre*, 1914-19-20, 11:6.

My Lord,

The council of the Young Men's Sodality of Bordeaux is entrusting to M. Estebenet,¹ one of its former prefects, the honorary prefect medal. It was struck for you in accordance with the resolution which the council recently had the honor of forwarding a copy to you. Had you been present, I should have had the sweet satisfaction of investing you myself with the livery of the Blessed Virgin and of suspending upon it the emblem of the authority you are receiving in the Sodality of Bordeaux. This rank imposes upon you the obligation to support to the best of your ability the family of the august Mother of God and never to permit the introduction into it of any abuse which might alter the nature of its constitution. The prefects are regarded as the foundation and pillars of the Sodality. They are often invited to become ever more perfect models of true sodalists.

I had intended to write to My Lord de Noailles, but I am pressed for time. M. Estebenet is leaving with the mail. Please allow this letter to be intended for both of you. I had the honor of writing to him in Lyons. I suspect M. Franchet, his secretary, did not give him my letter, with what motive I do not know.

I am with respectful esteem,

* * *

¹ See letter no. 47, n. 2.

Foundation of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary

1814 to 1818

An important correspondence begins in August 1814; this leads to the foundation of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary two years later. Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon had just made known her intention of consecrating herself to religious life, together with several of her companions, and she had asked the local director of the Sodality, Father Laumont, the pastor of Aiguillon near Agen, to draw up a Constitutions with this in view. Father Chaminade happened to be preparing certain religious foundations in the heart of the Sodality in Bordeaux; he informs Adèle of his plans.

51. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Château de Trenquelléon

August 30, 1814, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

For the greater glory of God and of Mary, Our Mother!

My dear Child,

I received your short messages in due time through the courtesy of M. Grammont of the Royal Guard. This young man, whose name you did not tell me at the time, had made an appointment with me, but I have not seen him again. I asked for him through one of his companions, who from the description I gave of him recognized the person I meant. I do not know whether he did anything about the matter; at any rate, I have had no further news of him. I regret this fact because it seemed to me we should have done some good.

I had the lists of the four groups¹ entered, and I notified the entire Sodality, etc. Because I was awaiting the outcome from day to day, I did not acknowledge their receipt.

I did not receive the other letter you refer to in your last letter, dated August 13. At the same time I received a very edifying letter from Father Laumont and, three or four days later, a fairly exact list of our entire family upland.² It will be promptly inscribed in our registers and transcribed from them into the Mass Book.

My dear Child, be faithful to your calling. Work at increasing the family of Mary, but while swelling its number take care not to neglect nourishing the piety of the earlier members and having them grow in virtue and in fervor.

Father Laumont informs me he will send me your Constitutions in the near future. You could tell me at the same time how they are being observed, whether they are well-adapted to the people who are to make them a rule of life, whether they seem too strict, too inconvenient, or whether they seem inadequate, etc. We must make serious efforts to ensure regularity in this foundation.

My dear Child, you desire your group to be established as a religious community. I will reveal several things to you in strict confidence.

1. Last year when I expressed a strong desire to see you, it was especially for the purpose of acquainting you with a plan which, although not completely the same, nevertheless greatly resembles it. Several years ago we had already begun to carry it out. Several young women live like religious, take vows, wear a religious habit under their ordinary clothes, etc. Mlle Lacombe was one of those religious. Up until now, I have never allowed the group as a whole to take vows for more than three months, and I did not believe it was advisable to permit a perpetual profession. I will have an occasion to acquaint you with my motives for this policy. This religious association was made up of the majority of the officers; the sodalists are not aware of its existence. Religious communities, it seems to me, would not fulfill the purpose of this institution.

¹ See letter no. 31.

² In the Agen district.

We will often return to this important purpose. In the meantime, let us continually request the light of the Spirit, that we may only do what God wills.

2. We have here among the Ladies of the Retreat a young widow of humble rank but of rare virtue, with whom it seems God communicates in a special way. She has kept telling me for the past two months or so that several communities are going to be formed in the Sodality, etc.

I must close here, to make use of the chance I have to send you this letter. I have the honor of greeting Father Laumont. I will not delay answering him. I should be very glad to receive your Constitutions as soon as possible. Do not make any important move toward an establishment without letting me know about it beforehand. I will not delay writing to you to tell you further what I cannot write at present.

I have just seen all the leaders of the Sodality. All of them, especially Mlle Chagne, have asked me to pass on to their dear sisters the assurance of their most cordial friendship.

The sash is worn day and night, even at the time of burial.

I cannot reread this letter; I am kept so busy. I greet all our dear flock and pray to the Lord to bestow upon it the abundance of his blessings.

* * *

Father Chaminade is even more explicit with regard to his plans.

52. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Château de Trenquelléon

October 8, 1814, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

Father Laumont wanted me to send to your address an answer which he requests of me. At the same time I will add a few words for you, also. Work continues to increase here, and the time elapsed between my last letter and this one has made me forget where I stopped. I know I was unable to finish telling you everything I had in mind.

The young widow of whom I spoke to you continues to speak to me about religious foundations. She criticizes me for scarcely answering her. She is astonished that I am not going ahead. I am acting in this way purposely to try her.

Although I am sometimes late in answering your letters, do not fail to write to me everything that might interest our dear Daughters. Be zealous and persevering! With the protection of our august Mother, we will succeed in fulfilling the designs of God for us and for them.

I am taking up my pen to write to you after several days of interruption, during which I received your short messages dated September 25. I have not received your Constitutions, and I am speaking to Father Laumont about this.

I am going to tell you my secret in its entirety. Could a father still withhold anything from one of his daughters who surrenders herself without reserve to his direction? Fourteen years ago I returned to France as Missionary Apostolic throughout our unhappy land, subject however to the approval of various Ordinaries. There seemed to me no better way of exercising these functions than by establishing a Sodality like the one now in existence. Each sodalist, man or woman, of whatever age or condition in life, is required to become an active member of the mission. Several sodalists of each branch of the Sodality, although still living in the world, would constitute a small religious Society. Men and women officers to run the Sodality would always be found in these Societies. A number of these religious men, as well as women, have desired to live together. There was every advantage in this. Right now several would like to live a regular community life, abandoning all temporal concerns. This inspiration should be acted upon, yet care must be taken that it does not essentially change the work of the Sodality, but rather helps it along. A few

sodalists have entered different religious communities. We have noted this with pleasure. When the women's officers informed me of this with a certain feeling of regret, I told them for their consolation that we are playing "the one who loses, wins." But here we have something very different; these are sodalist religious, or rather, sodalists who while remaining active sodalists wish to live the regular life of religious. This is why I told Father Laumont that your Constitutions were to be carefully drawn up, and that I should be very glad to see them.

You may pass this letter on to Father Laumont. You realize how much detail this type of plan should include when complete. Although up until now I have always busied myself with all the branches of the Sodality, I have nevertheless taken greater care of that of the young men as being the most difficult and the one which for all that could best contribute to the end I had proposed in the mission.

Write to me soon, my dear Child, if your desire to be a religious includes the views and sentiments of a little missionary. Open your heart completely and with great candor at all times. Who are the ones among you who may have a vocation to become religious?

I must leave you now in order not to miss the next mail too. May the blessings and peace of the Lord be upon you and all of your dear flock.

[Cover address: To Mlle Adèle de Batz, Trenquelléon, Château, Port Ste. Marie]

* * *

After receiving this letter, Adèle discussed the matter with her companions, and it seems they had no trouble in accepting Father Chaminade's ideas. They sent their projected Constitutions, the work of Father Laumont, to Bordeaux.

53. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Château de Trenquelléon

December 1, 1814, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

From day to day I have been awaiting the result of the council which was to be held at the time you wrote your last letter. I passed this letter almost immediately to the small group of your sisters who are especially consecrated to the Lord.

I was not able to attend to your—or rather our—Constitutions until I after several retreats which I had to give, or at which I had to assist. I will have to go return this again a week from today.

The first draft of the Constitutions which you sent me is still far from perfect, according to your own observation. I would have passed on to you that of our young religious, except for the fact that after mature examination I saw it needed further development.

Two important considerations led me to this work. The first is the determination with which, it seemed to me, several of you were beginning to bind yourselves by vows. The second is the fact that here some are in a position to bind themselves by perpetual vows, which means that they are going to begin a true religious Order. Until now vows were made at intervals of three months. I was with them to settle every difficulty, or even to dispense them from their vows in case of necessity. But annual vows and, even more, perpetual vows—I may die and furthermore, you are far from me. You need Constitutions sufficiently developed, detailed regulations, etc. All the basic points for the Young Women and for the Ladies of the Retreat are sufficiently settled to allow us to proceed in the near future. Nevertheless, I still need to add many rules by way of development. Those referring to Christian modesty are the most advanced. You understand that apart from articles of Constitutions, rules are necessary, even though these articles are themselves rules.

It is my wish that on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin or during its Octave you and your dear companions will limit yourselves to making the one vow of chastity for six months. By then, and I hope even by the Feast of the Purification,¹ to be able to have you sufficiently prepared to begin a regular novitiate. Patience and courage! I am so busy that entire weeks pass without my being able to take up my pen.

Please give Father Laumont my best regards. You would do well even to give him my letter.

I forgot to forward to you Mlle Chagne's answer to the letter addressed to her for the Sodality. See how greatly I need kind indulgence?

I am with sincere devotedness very truly yours,

[Cover address: to Mlle Adèle de Batz Trenquelléon, Château, Port Ste. Marie]

* * *

In the spring of 1815, Father Chaminade seems to relegate the projects of foundation to second place. He is preoccupied with what is most urgent, above all the development of the Sodality of Agen.

54. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Château de Trenquelléon

March 14, 1815, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My very dear Child,

In spite of all the answers I owe you, I will need to be brief. I have just written a very long letter to Mme Belloc, with the recommendation that a copy would be sent to you together with a copy of communication that I presented to His Excellency the Bishop of Agen.¹

The Sodality is approved by your good prelate in all its classes and forms, as you will see from the copies Mme Belloc will send you. Because you are less easily reached by the bishop than by Mme Belloc, and furthermore because I named her head of the Agen group, of the Ladies of the Retreat as well as of the young women, it was urgent to instruct her. Everything will move along very well, but there will be troubles and difficulties. Still, how should we prove to God and to Mary our zeal in their service, if it meant nothing to us by way of hardship? Love is nourished by the labors undertaken for the glory of the Beloved.

The Viscount de Montmorency² was publicly received as a sodalist last Sunday with the Marquis de Dampierre³ and Chevalier Mirambec. The ceremony was very edifying. I did not

¹ Thus, already within two months.

¹ Bishop Jean Jacoupy (1761-1848), born at Saint-Martin de Ribérac in the diocese of Périgueux, was a fellow-countryman and friend of Fr. Chaminade. He governed the diocese of Agen for nearly 40 years (1802-1840), then retired to Bordeaux, where he died.

² Viscount Mathieu, later Count of Laval and finally Duke de Montmorency (1766-1826), one of the last representatives of the family from which also came the first Bishop of Canada and of most of the present United States, François Laval (1708), their common ancestor being Guy II Montmorency-Laval-Loué (1484). The Montmorency family, which continues on the distaff side in the house of Luxembourg, provided 6 constables (first officers of the French crown), 12 marshals, several admirals to France, and a number of bishops and cardinals to the Church. Although a boy of 15 at the time, Viscount Mathieu crossed the sea with his father as a member of Lafayette's expeditionary force to fight for the American colonies. After Yorktown he returned to France, full of democratic ideas and was elected a deputy of the Estates General of 1789. The massacre of the king's Swiss Guard on August 10, 1792, which marked the downfall of Louis XVI, caused him to emigrate to Switzerland. He returned to France in 1795 after the end of the Reign of Terror. Upon the restoration of the monarchy he rallied to its support and in 1814 became the aide-de-camp of the Duke d'Angoulême (see letter no. 50, n. 2). The following year he was made a peer of France and entitled to a hereditary seat in the upper chamber of the French Legislative Assembly established in 1814. At the peak of his political career he became Minister of Foreign Affairs and president of the Cabinet (1821-1822). The French Academy opened its doors to him in 1825, and the next year he was entrusted as tutors of the royal grandson, the 6-

think to present the petition of Father Laumont because I will have the honor of drawing his attention to it in writing, but I hope to make up for this generously.

You may look all over the larger localities where groups could be formed large enough to make them regular and able to conduct Sodality exercises publicly. Be certain to use great prudence. Try always to have an understanding with the pastors. Always consult Father Laumont. Write to tell me everything that happens. Above all, do not rush anything. With the copies Mme Belloc will send you, you or Father Laumont will be able to reach an agreement with the pastors.

For the time being, I am not saying anything to you about the vows, but be calm and help those do the same whom you are by a twofold title to have as companions and sisters. I am keeping you in mind.

With respectful attachment, I am your Good Father in our Lord Jesus Christ.

[Cover address: Mlle Adèle de Batz]

* * *

As Father Chaminade was writing these lines, Napoleon, who had escaped from Elba, was marching on Paris. "The Hundred Days" (March-June, 1815) between his phenomenal return and definitive defeat at Waterloo put a halt to everything, activities as well as correspondence. In fact, Father Chaminade was arrested and confined at first in the Fort du Hâ, the prison of Bordeaux built along the lines of the Paris Bastille. Later he was ordered to go to Châteauroux. The first letter which follows this upheaval is from September. Father Chaminade is more eager than ever to spread the Sodality and busy with organizing the future religious community.

55. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Château de Trenquelléon

September 7, 1815, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My very dear Child,

At last I am getting around to you. I can say in all truth that despite my long silence I have never had you and our dear devout family upland so much in mind. Over and above our entire backlog of business, regular and special, a number of valuable opportunities for developing and extending our work turned up. I believed it was my duty to profit by them. "The harvest is great."

During his stay in Bordeaux, the Viscount de Montmorency was one of the most regular and edifying of our sodalists. We bestowed upon him the rank and the modest insignia of an honorary prefect of the Sodality.

We had two copies of the new *Manual of the Servant of Mary* bound for our august princes¹. M. de Montmorency did the presenting. He is the one entrusted with suggesting to them, little by little at the opportune moment, the interest they should take in the work of the Sodalities. Upon leaving, "Madame" gave orders through M. de Montmorency that a few odds and ends of the bouquets she had received should be given to me. Our young sodalists are now

year-old Duke of Bordeaux. He visited the city of Bordeaux in 1815 as a member of the retinue of the Duchess d'Angoulême.

³ The Marquis de Dampierre, a young man greatly devoted to Sodality activities, who will become prefect of the Sodality of Agen.

¹ The Duke and Duchess d'Angoulême. The Duke d'Angoulême (see letter no. 74, n. 2) married his cousin Marie-Thérèse, the daughter of Louis XVI, called "Madame Royale." The duke was personally responsible for the cheers with which Bordeaux welcomed the return of French royalty on March 12, 1814, a month before Napoleon's abdication; the duchess backed the southwest's resistance to Napoleon when he reappeared in 1815. The couple had just visited Bordeaux shortly before this letter, to show their gratitude of the loyalty of "The City of March 12th."

using them to make four bouquets for the Blessed Sacrament. There is a framed engraving which I will always leave on my mantelpiece.

I had believed I could entertain the Bishop of Agen at the time of his stay in Bordeaux. I was disappointed. I met him with the archbishop just as the clergy were going to pay a visit to the prince and princess. He had the kindness to go out of his way to greet me. He left the next evening. He is still unaware that I had gone to his hotel to pay him a visit; I have not been able to write to him yet. You are the first of the upland people to whom I am writing.

Do I hear you saying, "Then you intend to neglect us?" Why no, my dear Child. I am putting off several other works of equal importance for the sake of this one. I have in mind to give it priority over all business beyond Bordeaux. Let us take a little look into the matter.

1. With regard to the junior and Young Men's Sodality, because in Agen they must not be distinct, I doubt this can be properly organized if the Marquis de Dampierre, who was appointed its first prefect, is not assisted. It seems to me some retreat exercises should be conducted at Agen for the juniors, to stir them up, etc. However, the bishop must see the need of this.

2. In going to or returning from Agen, I would follow whatever route and make whatever stopovers you may wish in order to see the greatest possible number of your Children. I would have liked very much to speak personally to the pastors in whose parishes the groups or portions of groups appeared publicly, to regularize their meetings etc., but I am afraid these details might do more harm than good. So have an understanding with Mme Belloc, work out a little plan, and bring it to the attention of anyone whom propriety or duty suggests. Do whatever you would need to do if you were going to have it carried out; but still, before you do this, send it on to me so I may make my observations, if necessary. I promise to return it to you promptly.

3. What I am saying for the Young Women applies also to the Ladies of the Retreat. In small localities, the Young Women might join the Ladies of the Retreat. Whatever would be open or public could be held in common. These meetings, made up of a group or part of a group of young women, would constitute the Sodality of this or that locality.

You are anxious for me to speak to you of your total consecration to the service of Mary and of the obligations flowing from this. My dear Child, before deciding on the subject I would like first to see the places and, above all, the people involved. As for your Constitutions, I would not like to ratify them before seeing you and explaining them to you. Presumably we will not put this into effect publicly, either, before we have at least set it before the pope and the king.

While the Revolution was in progress, an excellent man¹ had engaged in the formation of men and women religious, all of them living in the world. He had the principles guiding these institutions printed in Latin. Their regulations have remained in manuscript form. I succeeded in obtaining a copy of the printed publication. I am going to read it very thoughtfully. Then I will reread what I have already written for you. I will possibly submit these small manuscripts to the criticism of two or three people whose wisdom I know.

My dear Child, do not be annoyed at these delays. I should even be uneasy if the ardent desire you have of consecrating yourself to God were too hasty. Still, it will be a good thing to accustom yourself as well as your close friends to the rule of life which you are to follow. This experience may even help us see clearly on various points. I will write to you on this subject as soon as I can.

The Manual of the Servant of Mary has been reprinted in sufficient quantity to permit you to obtain as many copies as you need. I am thinking of storing them at Mme Belloc's. They sell for 45 sous. I could also send some to M. Clairac at Tonneins. The reading and rereading of the

¹ Probably Fr. de Clorivière (1735-1820), author of a pamphlet published in 1792 with the title *Societatis Cordis Jesu Specimen*. Prior to the restoration of the Society of Jesus in France, he had devoted himself to the formation of men and women religious living in the world in associations called "Society of the Heart of Jesus" and "Society of the Heart of Mary." Fr. Chaminade may have come in contact with him either through a mutual friend, Fr. Lasausse, a Sulpician, or directly on the occasion of Fr. Clorivière's visit to Bordeaux in 1814.

“Introduction to the State of a Sodalist” is to be recommended. This will be found at the beginning of the second part of the Manual.

I should have many other things to tell you, my dear Child, but I prefer to save them for another time, so this first letter may not be delayed any longer.

It just occurred to me that although this letter was written for you alone, it would be good to pass it on to Father Laumont and Father Larribeau, if the latter’s health has not broken down under the strain of the work he had planned, and to Mme Belloc, who could herself confidentially acquaint the bishop with it. We can share all our secrets with this pious prelate; he sincerely desires what is good. Our confidences and candor will please him. Moreover, he has the grace of state to direct works of this kind. All the reflections which may be made to you or to Mme Belloc should be gathered and sent on to me.

The necessity of establishing Sodalities is beginning to be felt in various dioceses. There are new requests and new offers in several cities. We all shout heartily, “Long live the King!” but we should even louder interiorly, “Long live Religion!” Tell all our Children that in me they have a tender father.

I offer you in particular my most complete devotedness.

* * *

While Father Chaminade was writing this letter, Bishop Jacoupy of Agen, afraid of seen the new community slip away from his diocese, urged Mme Belloc to find a house at Agen. In the note in which Father Chaminade conforms to his desires, the name “Daughters of Mary” is used for the first time.

56. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Château de Trenquelléon

September 11, 1815, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

I approve your renting the house of which you spoke. But because you are soon to enter the state to which God deigns to call you, you must absolutely come to spend some time in Bordeaux; I cannot say how much, but still enough to allow you to be clearly taught with regard to all religious observances and to acquire the saintly habits yourself. However busy I may be, I will give you all the time needed to fulfill our purpose.

His Excellency, your bishop, to whom I ask kindly to offer the assurance of my respectful devotedness, will realize the necessity of this trip. As soon as you can undertake it let me know by mail, so I can look for a suitable lodging for you.

May you and your dear companions not cease to pray that the Holy Spirit may enlighten us and that we may not deviate in the least from the designs which he has upon us. Renew the act of consecration to the Blessed Virgin daily, all of you. So you are going to be Daughters of Mary and publicly appear to be such. You may abandon your heart to joy and begin to burst forth in acts of thanksgiving.

The last mail must have brought you one of my letters.

Accept, my dear Child, the assurance of the tender and respectful attachment of your Father in Jesus Christ.

* * *

The form of the new Institute becomes more precise. Father Chaminade also abandons the idea of having Adèle come to Bordeaux, even though the lease for the desired premises in Agen could not yet be obtained.

57. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Château de Trenquelléon

October 3, 1815, Bordeaux
Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

I do not believe there was any contradiction in my last letters. If in the last one I permitted you to settle the rent of the house that seemed to you suitable for your first community, this was not to have you enter it immediately, but rather not to let an opportunity slip by which we could not hope to find at will. The loss of the rent is not to be considered serious in such a case. I invited you to come to spend a little time in Bordeaux in order to hasten the formation of your community. You must have realized the need for this. My intention was to have you stay here with some religious sisters, see the other establishments of the same type, and consult the Founders, both to gain experience yourself and to profit from that of others.

You would like to have a general notion of what your little Order should be. Very true! To gain a correct idea of it, in the first place you must consider what you should have in common with the religious of all the Orders, for you are to be religious in the full sense of the word; in the second place, what you are to have in particular that will distinguish you from all the other Orders.

You will truly be religious, for you will profess the vows called vows of religion, and you will need to practice the virtues which have inspired you to make them and which should be their mainstay. Mary, the august Mother of Jesus, must be your model, as she is your patroness. From this follow the most essential exercises and practices of the religious life.

As to what in particular is to distinguish you from other Orders, it is zeal for the salvation of souls. The principles of religion and of virtue must be made known; Christians must be multiplied. You will definitely not have to teach children, visit and care for the sick, or conduct a boarding establishment. Leave such works, however excellent they may be, to other groups more established than you. "But what are we to do then?" You will need to instruct in religion and train in the practice of virtue young women of every state and condition in life; to make of them true sodalists; to hold meetings, either general or by selections or groups, etc.; to have the young women make short spiritual retreats; to guide them in the choice of a state of life; etc. Your community will be composed of entirely¹ of "missionary" religious. We are to recognize the candidates who are suitable for this state. We are to recognize the candidates who are suitable for this state, etc., in the light of these prospects.

From this brief sketch you can see, my dear Child, that the Sodality will suffer no harm from your religious profession. Quite the contrary!

So, now consider already what type of preparation you are to bring to such a holy state which is to give you a share in the apostolic spirit.

May you and all the true Daughters of Mary receive in abundance the blessings of Jesus Christ Our Lord.

P.S. I had sent a dozen Manuals to Mme Gignoux at Aiguillon. M. Clairac took 13 dozen to Tonneins. Please give me Mme Belloc's address in Agen. I will send her some. Tell Mme Belloc confidentially that she has a large place in my heart; that I have a burning desire for her to go to heaven only accompanied by a great number of souls saved by her. I will answer the items in your letter. I am going to make a short personal retreat; I will not forget you. Following this, retreats and retreat exercises will follow for young men, lasting until the November 10 or 12. Meanwhile, I will see whether I can make definite arrangements to leave for Agen, etc.

¹ Here Fr. Chaminade effaced the words "of the religious sodalists or, if you prefer. . . ."

P.S. 2. Write to me what you and the others think of the short sketch I am giving you about the Institute of the Daughters of Mary.

[Cover address: Mlle Adèle de Batz, Trenquelléon Château via Port Ste-Marie]

* * *

This note is addressed to Archbishop d'Aviau, proof of the ever-watchful solicitude of Father Chaminade for rendering service to those in need.

58. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux

Tuesday Morning, November 14, 1815

Autograph, Agmar

Your Excellency,

I take the liberty of recommending to you Mme Gignoux, the bearer of this note. She is truly commendable because of her worthiness as a good Christian and a good mother of a numerous family, and also because of her loyalty to the royal family. She intends to go to Paris to solicit a position or assistance. Everyone tells her to request from you a short letter to Her Royal Highness, the Duchess d'Angoulême. She has decided to do this with my help. I willingly yielded, for I have the advantage of a long acquaintance with her. In no case will she ever discredit anything you may say in her favor, nor will she ever compromise you in anything.

I am with the deepest respect Your Excellency's very humble and obedient servant,

* * *

In December, the foundation of the Daughters of Mary seems near.

59. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Château de Trenquelléon

December 6, 1815, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

Your charity and the conviction that you and your good sisters have of my entire devotedness must have excused my long silence.

I told you in my last letter that the retreats for the Young Men would keep me unusually busy until around the middle of November. Before I had even finished, I was asked to give another retreat at the major seminary. I considered it my duty to accept. There I caught a severe cold, from which, I may say, I have not had time to recover. We have already reached the solemnities of the Octave of our heavenly Mother's Conception—they keep me even busier than a retreat. Next come all the feasts of the Christmas season.

I believe you are too good, my dear Child, to ask such indiscreet questions as "Why do you take on more work than you can accomplish? Why do you make promises to us that you are unable to fulfill?" I am not exaggerating at all when I say that for more than three months I have not spent a day without thinking of my dear family up-country. But the course of Providence, made known by that of circumstances, did not seem to permit me to do much more for you than to send a few letters.

The delay of My Lord the Duke d'Angoulême's passing through Agen is another reason for the postponement of the trip I wish to make there myself. It seemed to me hardly proper to go there or to be present under those circumstances. After all, he will pass that way; our feasts will be going on at the same time. Through certain arrangements I am making little by little, I will be able to be absent from Bordeaux with less inconvenience.

Your Constitutions are completed.¹ There remain only the various special regulations, and I intend merely to outline these. I will give them a final touch after I have seen you and after you have all been finally settled. Before recopying these Constitutions myself, I have just had a copy of them made to pass on to a few well-advised and intelligent people for their criticism. After I have their opinions, I will say Mass over them and then recopy them. I will do the same with regard to the General Regulations.

I am seriously thinking of leaving for your location during January. The passage of My Lord the Duke d'Angoulême may have attracted M. de Dampierre. People thought so, and already more than a month ago I had been asked for a letter of recommendation for him. In this short letter I am letting him know of my plan. If you happen to see him, you or Mme Belloc might get him to stay or to return at a time which we will determine in detail. His Excellency the Bishop perhaps may be more successful in persuading him to do this. At any rate, I am determined to leave at the stated time. I see clearly that I will need to make more than one trip.

As for the free teaching of the children, you can promise it. I was misinformed about the population of Agen and about the assistance of this nature which the city could give.

His Excellency the Bishop will perhaps come see the prince, or he will follow him. I will inquire about this, and if he comes to Bordeaux I will arrange to have at least one meeting with him. Please offer him the assurance of my respectful devotedness and entire obedience.

I am in Jesus and Mary entirely at your service and that of your dear family.

[Cover address: Mlle Adèle de Batz, Trenquelléon Château via Port Ste. Marie]

* * *

60. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Château de Trenquelléon

December 15, 1815

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

Our letters must have crossed en route. Surely, you must have received my last one a few days after sending yours of December 4.

Your telling me all about your new conquests pleases me greatly, and I hope the Lord, in Mary's name, will bless our humble labors. Do not be afraid to tell me all the precautions you believe I should take in the interest of our mission. I say "our mission," for we are long since marching under the same standards, and you are moreover almost in a position to enter into engagements so precious before the Lord, and to receive such a special character, etc.

In haste I am writing these few words to you simply for your consolation. We are about to close the Octave of the Immaculate Conception. I will add that here and elsewhere I draw more satisfaction from the Young Men and from the men in general than from the women, except where you are concerned.

Continue to prepare yourself, and prepare well all your dear missionaries; "the time is drawing near."

May the Lord pour out upon you and your daughters His most abundant blessings!

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

[Cover address: Mlle Adèle de Batz, Trenquelléon Château via Port Ste-Marie]

* * *

Some delays are caused at Agen, where the information is judged insufficient and where, in addition, suitable lodging has not yet been secured.

¹ This reference is to a first edition of what is now called "The Grand Institute." See *Spirit of Our Foundation*, no. 813.

61. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Château de Trenquelléon

January 11, 1816, Bordeaux
Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

In my general mailing¹ during these first few days of the new year, I remembered Fathers Larribeau and Laumont with the liveliest interest. My young secretary, who as yet knows imperfectly how closely I am linked with these priests, has likewise only imperfectly expressed my sentiments in their regard. In sending them their letters with seal and address, please have the kindness to make up for this deficiency. I prefer to make good in this way because it gives me the opportunity to write to you myself, as to the child of my heart.

I am still waiting for an answer to the last letter I wrote to you. Do not get in touch with Father Laumont, or vice versa, to make your remarks about each of the sodalists who intends to enter the religious state.

Although my occupations have not lessened, I have arranged my affairs in such a way as not to delay those upland.

My the Lord pour out upon you and all of our numerous family abundant blessings.

*

This package of letters was ready to leave when your letter arrived.

I had no intention of making a mystery of your Constitutions, and still less to have you assume obligations the scope of which were unknown to you.

Now really, my dear Child, do you not know what is essential in you new Order? First, you know it is a religious state, in which you take the ordinary vows of religion and in which you become in a very special way the Spouse of Jesus Christ. Secondly, you know that if real

¹ To understand several expressions in this letter, it is necessary to keep in mind the fact that postal service was not yet organized as it is with postage stamps, gummed or "self-sealing" envelopes for first-class mail, etc. Letters could be sent by mail coach (see letters no. 47, 52, 56) to towns and villages along its route. Cities had their own local service, but there was no rural delivery before 1828. Before the introduction of the postage stamp in 1858, the cost of delivery, which was rather high, was borne by the addressee; it was based upon the distance and the number of sheets sent. There were no ready-made envelopes. Each writer improvised his own or left one side of the letter blank for the address and folded the sheet accordingly, as is done with air-letter forms today. Sealing wax was the only means of securing privacy for the message.

Fr. Chaminade often used the postal service, but its cost (see letter no. 84) frequently caused him to use opportunities for delivery that would be less of a burden to his correspondents. His letter of February 6, 1819, to Adèle, for example, opens with these words. "My dear Child, although I am very busy. I am taking up my pen in order to profit by a convenient departure for Agen and to save you a few sous in postage." Letters were sometimes sent by boatmen to places along the waterways (letters no. 34 and 46), or at other times by some trustworthy person who was traveling to the letter's destination (letters no. 39, 39a, 44, 57). Several could be sent in one package to one of these, who would see to the distribution of what was not for them personally. This explains why Fr. Chaminade's early letters to Adèle were addressed to Mme Belloc (letters no. 32, 33, 34, 37). Later correspondence was addressed to the Château de Trenquelléon via Port-Ste-Marie (letters no. 40, 45, 52, 53, 57, 59, 60).

Because there is a question here of general New Year Greetings, sealing with wax would be too time consuming for most of the envelopes with nothing of a particularly private nature in them. Moreover, the envelope may have had merely the name of the addressee (letters no. 41, 44, 54) if the person's address was known and there was no need for a special honorary mark of distinction, such as that of a wax seal and a full address.

Fr. Chaminade's secretary had evidently judged that Fr. Caribbean (letters no. 34, 55) and Fr. Laumont (letters no. 51, 52, 55) were not in this category, perhaps not even knowing they were priests, for in French "MM"(Messers.) would not reveal their clerical status. Therefore, with an excuse for writing personally to Adèle, Fr. Chaminade asks her to supply the missing address and seal in order to add the marks of distinction deserved by these two priests.

sodalists must become missionaries, then with all the more reason must religious do this. Thirdly, you know the august Virgin Mary is your patroness and that you are her Daughters.

A constant effort to advance in the practice of the Christian and religious virtues and to win souls for God—these are the two principles whose consequences must form the basis of your modest Constitutions and all the regulations based on them.

Your Order will have no type of strictness in the practice of penance; but this will be great because of the practice of the religious virtues and in the care to be taken that the works of zeal are not harmful to the interior spirit.

I am greatly inclined to give you at first only provisional regulations. We will make these final only when experience has guaranteed beyond a doubt that we have reached our goal. This is also the view of the Founder of the Order of the Associates.¹ I would have done the same for your Constitutions if I had resided with or near you. But as things are, it is proper for them to be decided upon and authorized.

I notice you are confusing the Constitutions with the regulations. There are several institutions in which no distinction is made. Regarding the Order of Institute of the Daughters of Mary, the Constitution is merely an explanation of the object, the nature, and the means of this Institute—in a word, of its “organization.”

From this brief survey, my dear Child, you will conclude that there has been no undue haste in my plan to establish you at the time of my first trip. Supposing that your choice is definitively made, as I have done, I am convinced your spiritual Fathers will have nothing against it, if they consider all the circumstances. It was also to prevent all anxiety that I had asked for short letters from each person and private notes, etc.

I thank you for your remarks, nevertheless, for I feel they are rather the result of fear of failure than lack of confidence.

In general, the first reading of the report you make of all our applicants pleases me well enough. I will reflect upon it and then tell you what I think. In the meantime I may gather further information, either through their individual letters or through notes.

I am closing, for the mail is about to go. May the grace of God be with you.

You must copy for yourself the procedure of the meetings which I am sending to Father Larribeau. To reduce postage, I am not using an envelope. Fold their letters in a respectable way.

* * *

Difficulties seem to be disappearing, and Father Chaminade's journey is again on the agenda.

62. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Château de Trenquelléon

January 23, 1816, Bordeaux¹

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My dear Child,

At her request, I am sending you my answer to Mlle Poitevin,² so you may have it passed on to her without her parents noticing it.

Today is the anniversary of the death of Mlle Lacombe. I have just said Mass for the repose of her soul. Her memory is blessed by all our sodalists.

¹ Fr. Vlechemans (1795-1831), a Vincentian before the Revolution, founded the Congregation of the Associates of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (*Congrégation de la Réunion à Sacré-Coeur de Jésus*) in 1799.

¹ See letter no. 69, n. 3, as this autograph letter was not dated.

² One of the future religious, Mother Aloysius Gonzague.

I am very satisfied with the brief sketch you give me of the women, both young and old, who desire to make up our little community. I hope all will turn out well. You will understand that if older women are received, this will only be at the beginning; to do so later would not be proper. From now on, have everyone say the *Veni Creator* and the *Ave Maris Stella* every day, so the Spirit of God may deign to enlighten me and give me the wisdom and counsel needed to arrange all things according to God's desires.

On the way back to Agen or on my way back, I should like to stop a little where this may be useful for our work. Which route should I take going or coming? I will not bring any hired help along, but I am thinking of taking a sodalist who may assist me in a number of ways. Would it be good to take the stage as far as Marmande? I do not believe it will be necessary to make any stop before that. At Marmande, could you possibly have two horses provided for me, if there is enough time to go wherever we will agree on going?

I will not delay my leaving beyond the time required to make all the necessary preparations by correspondence.

I am very sincerely your Father in Jesus Christ.

P.S. To quiet certain apprehensions whose existence your letter supposes, before sealing my letter I will add what has been my general point of view.

We are going to agree on everything without delay, but yet without undue haste.

Above all, I should have liked to know and to prepare the subjects.

You are going to Agen, then, to prepare your house the way I hope to point out to you. You will live there with five or six or even fewer of those who are the most determined and who are free with respect to their parents. For some days you will follow a small provisional timetable, while continuing to arrange everything. The rest will all come to Agen, living in town or in the community. I arrive, we have the number of exercises necessary for, etc. Before leaving, the community, more or less numerous, is established etc., etc.

Above all, my dear Child, do not worry, do not trouble yourself about things. Let us hope the Lord will bring to completion a work which is being undertaken solely for his glory and that of his divine Mother.

The devil could easily raise up for us difficulties which we do not even foresee.

[Cover address: Mlle Adèle de Batz, Trenquelléon Château via Port Ste-Marie]

* * *

Madame Belloc, at the time believing it is possible to disengage herself from her family ties,¹ was one of the aspirants to religious life. This excerpt from a letter of Father Chaminade was sent on February 16, 1816, by Adèle to Mlle de Lachapelle.

63. To Madame Belloc, Agen

February - - -, 1816, Bordeaux

Copy, Arch. FMI

My dear Daughter,

You are going to leave the world, to die to the world while nevertheless remaining on earth to work at your own sanctification, for the glory of our good Master and that of our tender Mother, and this during the Easter season. You have Lent as a period of preparation for it. Do you not find in this a great resemblance to the mysteries which took place at this time? It was then that Jesus Christ died, then arose from the dead. After the Resurrection, he spent 40 days perfecting the great work of his divine mission.

¹ See letter no. 32, n. 4.

Sustain and encourage your Children with the hope of soon seeing their wishes fulfilled. Communicate with them frequently, either orally or in writing. At one time you will enliven them with the desire to consecrate virginal hearts and bodies to the divine Spouse. At another, you will depict to them the excellence of the state they are embracing; they will be associated with the work of redemption, participating in the apostolic spirit and burning with the zeal of the missionaries. At still another time, you may speak to them of the advantages of life in a religious community, of the happiness of living in retreat. At all times, move them to esteem the incomparable grace of leaving Babylon and of renouncing the vanities of the world, etc., etc.

* * *

Father Chaminade speaks to Adèle about the house M. Jean-Baptiste Diché the elder, deputy of the royal procurator in the district court of Agen, had finally leased in her name on February 2, 1816. The deed as well as the warrant of attorney have been preserved.

64. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Château de Trenquelléon

February 19, 1816, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My Dear Child,

Do not worry about anything. Let us only take care not to hinder the work of God by our imprudence. Furthermore, let us always remain in peace by entering always into the plans of Providence. We should expect a great number of contradictions, but, etc.

It would have seemed more prudent to me if those with whom you drew up the lease for the house had themselves made the arrangements with the former tenants at the same time they were leasing to you. In the future, my dear Child, do not conclude any important matter without first consulting me and then going into all the appropriate details to inform me of it accurately. In this way I will be in a better position to advise you. You cannot possibly have enough experience to judge soundly all the cases which will arise until your Institute has begun to function regularly and definitively. As to the house, I was pleased to learn that it is very spacious and that there was a large block of buildings which you did not lease because of the repairs they required. You would have done well to explain to me in greater detail from the beginning what this building was and to send me an imperfect plan of it, or at least a fairly exact idea of its size. In this way you would have kept clear of several arrangements I would have been in a position to make, in order to provide you with the means of doing there the good works that are the main object of your institution. Without seeming to do so, take great care to prevent the disposal of the remaining buildings which you have not leased.

I do not have the slightest intention of sending you a superior from here, but I do intend to send you Mlle de Lamourous shortly before my departure, to guide you through all the preliminaries to your organization as a community. This woman is highly experienced, readily tactful to a nicety, and very exact. She seems to be the very person to make all the preparations, so that upon my arrival I may devote myself exclusively to instilling in you the spirit of your state, etc. Our main difficulty lies in the fact that this woman is almost chronically in poor health.

While you are waiting for Father Larribeau's letter to be found, you may give him a copy of the procedure of the meetings.¹ I take it for granted you have made a copy for yourself. Otherwise, I will send him another one. I am not surprised at the resistance of the pastor of Tonneins. Send me a brief description of the condition of the group in this town, at least the number of its members with the name and character of their head officer; then I will see what is to be done.

¹ See the last paragraph of letter no. 61.

The reflections of your friend would have some consistency if your Institute had the same object and form as one of the former Orders. However, it will not be very easy for you to disabuse her, unless you have carefully considered and tried the one you are going to constitute. Be patient, for her fears about your original society² are also very ill-founded. Membership in the one involves absolutely no commitment concerning the other. By obtaining for them additional lights and graces to know their state of life more clearly, this may merely offer an occasion for aspiring to membership in the latter. The same holds for the Sodality. "Religious" sodalists will soon be distinguished from the "secular" sodalists.

May the grace and peace of the Lord be always upon you and upon all your Children!
[Cover address: Mlle Adèle de Batz, Trenquelléon Château via Port Ste-Marie]

* * *

While preparing the various elements of the new community and making all the arrangements for its approaching installation, on the occasion of his journey Father Chaminade took pains to hasten the establishment of the Sodality at Agen. The first sentence of the following letter refers to this.

65. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Château de Trenquelléon

March 15, 1816, Bordeaux
Autograph, Arch. FMI

The Marquis de Dampierre sent me word that he will be at Agen this coming April. I had him informed by mail that I also hoped to be there and as the time drew near, I would write to him more in detail what we would need to do for the success of our enterprise.

I intend to write to the Bishop of Agen only after you have received a complete copy of your Constitutions and regulations. I will probably send you the letter to deliver to him.

As you say, the furniture is to be very simple, very modest, as seems proper for virgins who have left everything and have accepted voluntary poverty. Eventually we will try to make this uniform. Meanwhile, should there be some notable difference, as for example a more elegant bed among the effects of one of higher birth according to worldly standards, it would be good to assign it temporarily to one of less distinguished birth according to these same worldly standards. But all this should be done tactfully and without the least affectation. If anyone has among her furnishings a bed or any other article not at all compatible with religious poverty, if possible this should be replaced and the article in question reserved for retreatants. The community must not dispose of anything belonging to a religious until after her perpetual profession.

It is fitting to give this first convent the name of The "Conception" of Mary. We will reserve that of "Saint Joseph" for the second convent to be established.

The young women who take part in this first foundation¹ will have a great advantage over those who present themselves later. The description you give me of the 18-year-old applicant is very interesting.

I have received a letter from Father Larribeau. Please assure him of my respectful regard. I have not yet had the honor of writing to him because I must set aside all correspondence which is not urgent, with a view to hastening the completion of our work. I suppose you pass our small correspondence on to him and Father Laumont. This is my desire. There are several other

² See the introduction to letter no. 31.

¹ The word used in the original is "formation," but Fr. Chaminade seems to refer here rather to the formation of the Institute than to the spiritual formation of its individual members, as in the next to last paragraph of the preceding letter where the original text, *celui que vous allez former*, translated "the one you are going to constitute," clearly refers to the projected Institute. See also the concluding words paragraph 3 of letter no. 70, which read in the original "*avant que le monastère ne soit entièrement former.*"

Sodalities being organized in other dioceses. These also take up my time, but you realize that I am helping without any ill-will.

The health of Mlle de Lamourous seems somewhat improved. At Villeneuve d'Agen we may have some facilities for organizing a Young Men's Sodality, which could be associated with that of Agen. I will investigate the situation by mail before I leave and then let you know what we may expect.

I am ever faithfully your Good Father in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

[Cover address: Mme Belloc,² nee Diché, Agen]

* * *

In this note there is a question of the preparation for the Feast of Our Lady of Martyrs, celebrated on May 13 by the Fathers of Families.

66. To M. David Monier, Counselor-at-Law

Monday, May 6, 1816, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

My dear Son,

Here it is Monday already, time to begin what we have agreed upon—activity with zeal and prudence. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament all day, High Mass at eight o'clock, and Vespers, sermon and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament at three o'clock. The sermon will be preached by Father Ducasse, the Titular Canon of Bayonne, a Doctor of the Sorbonne.

Perhaps at the same time we may discuss the funeral of Dr. Métiver,¹ which will take place on the Thursday after the feast, May 17.

Me totum toto pectore crede tuum.²

[Cover address M. David Monier, Counselor-at-Law, Bordeaux]

* * *

66a. Warrant from Deed of Sale

Warrant of Attorney to M. Perès, Bordeaux

May 6, 1816

I, the undersigned Guillaume Joseph Chaminade, Honorary Canon, resident of Bordeaux, Rue de Lalande, hereby empower M. Perès, attorney, to bid for me at the auction session of the district court of Bordeaux and to acquire for my account and benefit the house located in Bordeaux, no.1, Rue Lalande, forming the fifth lot of the properties belonging to the estate of the Lafaye heirs, of which the final adjudication is to be made at the said session of the 13th inst. I authorize him to bid for the said house up to the sum of 3,500 to 3,600 francs over and above the auctioneering fees, and in the event of a favorable adjudication to make the declaration of the fact required by law. I promise, furthermore, to make the adjudication my own and personal matter and guarantee him complete indemnity in this matter.

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

Done at Bordeaux, May 6, 1816

* * *

² The address, according to French custom, adds the word "widow."

¹ Dr. Métivier, a physician, had been a member of the Fathers of Families since 1807.

² Believe me wholly and wholeheartedly yours.

N.A. 66-2. To the President of the Tribunal

May 6, 1816, Bordeaux

Printed in Volume 8-2 and Volume 9. This is from Volume 9.

Copy at Agmar 218.2.37⁶

I, the undersigned, G.-Joseph Chaminade, Honorary Canon, living in Bordeaux on Rue Lalande, hereby authorize M. Perès, attorney, to bid for me at the auction of the tribunal of first instance of Bordeaux, and to decide in my name and for my account concerning the house situated in Bordeaux, no. 1, Rue Lalande, being the fifth lot of goods being auctioned by the Lafaye heirs, of which the final adjudication is to be made at auction on May 13. He is authorized to bid on said house to the amount of 3,500 or 3,600 francs, in addition to the costs of the auction. If the adjudication is in my favor, he is authorized to act as required by law. I further promise to make the adjudication my own personal business and guarantee it, releasing him from any and all indemnity in this matter.

G.-Joseph Chaminade

* * *

Marie-Thérèse de Lamourous had arrived in Agen on May 25, 1816, at the same time as the aspirants to religious life, whereas Father Chaminade announced his arrival for June 5, Pentecost Wednesday. May 25 is celebrated each year by the Daughters of Mary as the foundation date of their Institute. But Bishop Jacoupy hesitated to approve the Rules submitted by Father Chaminade and asked for the opinion of Archbishop d'Aviau.

67. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux

Friday, May 31, 1816, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

Your Excellency,

I am taking the liberty of sending you a type of analysis of the first two parts of the *Institut of the Daughters of Mary*. To meet the wishes of the Bishop of Agen, I would be obliged to you if you will express your impressions of it and whether you approve of them in substance. I say "in substance" because I am rather dissatisfied with this first draft. I intend to rewrite the entire work at a more suitable time. Moreover, the copies I am having very hastily made are full of mistakes and at times I do not even have the leisure of rereading them, as for example, the one I have the honor of sending to you. Preparation for the Feast of Pentecost has me preoccupied, and I glorify God for this. I intend to leave for Agen next Wednesday. I am with the most profound respect Your Excellency's very humble and very obedient servant,

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

* * *

Following the Revolution, the hesitation of Bishop Jacoupy hinged upon the advisability in France of religious vows which are binding for life. Desiring a Congregation available in the diocese for all types of exterior works, he feared that according to the general rule then followed, perpetual vows involved enclosure. Determined to safeguard her vocation of "missionary" above

⁶ Registered in Bordeaux, May 13, 1816. Received: two francs, 20 centimes (signed) Oroyer (Departmental Archives of the Gironde, Bordeaux: U 654, folio 532). Adjudication Jan.-June, 1816. Original by Fr. Chaminade. Document consigned to Agmar by Fr. Verrier, SM, April 10, 1982.

all else, Adèle was ready to yield to the prelate's reasoning and resigned herself to make only annual or at least only temporary vows, but Father Chaminade was unwilling to accept this proposal.

68. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

June 1, 1816, Bordeaux

Copy, Arch. FMI

My Dear Child,

I am interrupting for a few minutes the numerous preparations for the great Feast of Pentecost.

I bless the Lord for the great zeal with which he inspires you to consecrate yourself in a special manner to his service. You are impatient to be united to Jesus Christ as his spouse. Your heart is upright, and this is essential. Jesus will not fail to understand this, but your mind is not yet free from error.

You speak to me about annual vows in place of perpetual vows. Oh, my dear Child, what is marriage in the order of nature? Does it not call for an indissoluble union? Still it is only a symbol of that special union with the divine Spouse into which those enter who consecrate themselves to Jesus by religious profession.

It never occurred to me that you and your dear companions desired to be only half religious. In fact, the dispositions the Holy Spirit has placed in your hearts are very different. With God's holy grace, I will soon explain to you all these beautiful things. Yesterday I obtained a passport with a young man whom I am taking along—he too wishes to become a religious, but not by halves.¹ Pardon me for repeating an expression which may cause you pain. I have just copied for you a passage from an address by Father Fleury on the monastic state. In it you will see that our predecessors had very different ideas about the vows, etc. His Excellency the Bishop and Father Superior² especially will approve of it. As for yourselves, the love of Jesus Christ must show you what the learned seek to know by considering causes and effects, etc.³

Enclosure is a consequence of the perpetual nature of the vows, but do not weary your heads about the matter. Let your hearts act. Everything will turn out for the best and Jesus Christ, who wishes to possess you completely, will not permit his ministers to be mistaken.

Regarding the classes, there are a few remarks to be made; your limited experience has not allowed you to make them. Continue to be patient. I must leave you now to go to the altar, where I will not forget you or our Good Mother.¹ Tell her the Miséricorde is doing very well and that the person she expressly recommended to me is doing likewise.

May all the blessings of the Lord be poured out upon this new convent.

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

* * *

This is the passage of Father Fleury which Father Chaminade transcribed at the end of his letter.

The most general cause of laxity among religious is the fickleness of the human mind and the scarcity of firm and faithful people who persevere long in the same resolution. This is the reason for the vows, so wisely introduced to settle our natural restlessness, vows which constitute the essence of the religious profession.

¹ Doubtless one of the first members of the Society of Mary, probably M. Bidon.

² Fr. Mouran, a former Vincentian, spiritual director and later superior of the seminary at Agen (1766-1844), had just been appointed superior of the newly-formed community.

³ By deductive reasoning.

¹ Marie-Thérèse de Lamourous

Now so these vows may not be rash, with the same wisdom severe trials were ordered. Far from attracting seculars to the religious life, as was believed not only permissible but even meritorious in these latter times, the ancients used every possible means to deter those whose vocation was not solid. Saint Benedict expressly commands this. It is not really necessary that there be religious in the Church, but if there are, they must tend to perfection. They may not be mediocre Christians.

The Carthusian Blessed Guigues was right in saying, "If it is true that the way that leads to the life is narrow and that few find it, the religious institute which admits the fewest members is the best and most sublime, while the one which admits the largest number is the least worthy of esteem."

A lax monk . . . a man whose life is a constant contradiction. He has promised a life in seclusion and silence, and he seeks company and conversation. He has promised, etc.

Fleury, *Discours sur la Vie religieuse au XIVe siècle*, at which time [the 14th century] he says this institution was in the state of its greatest decadence. This essay is in the eighth on Church history, volume 14 of the Nîmes edition. The passage quoted is on page XXIV (and XLV), no. 12 of the essay.

* * *

At this same time Father Chaminade was seeking the support of Archbishop d'Aviau.

69. To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux

Monday Morning, June 3, 1816, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

Your Excellency,

From my correspondence I have reason to suspect that the Bishop of Agen has preconceived opinions in favor of annual vows and opposed to perpetual vows.

Merely annual vows could not suit the Institute of the "Daughters of Mary." They desire to make a religious profession, and their Institute subjects them to trial sufficiently long and continuous to arrive at moral certitude regarding their vocation.

I have just had transcribed for you the chapter of the third part of their Constitutions which refers to the vows. The sequence of trials and the rigorous examination of their vocation are the object of other chapters, which I will also have copied. Should Your Excellency not be as convinced as I am that the perpetual character of the vows is, as it were, the very essence of religious profession and that for women enclosure is the necessary consequence, I would be obliged if you informed me of this before letting me know in writing what you think of the Institute itself. I would then take the liberty to place before you the considerations I have made on this subject.

Your opinion will dispel all difficulty at Agen; His Excellency the Bishop has already made this clear.

The very small number of candidates who are to take the habit will make perpetual vows at the same time. For years already they have been prepared for this in many ways. I cannot imagine there could be a true foundation otherwise. They already have a number of postulant; these have been undergoing preparation for some time now, but they will be further tested. Article no. 87¹ of the chapter which I have the honor of submitting to you refers to chapter three of the same part. This reference has no other object than to point out the exception to be made for the Founders.

¹ This is the number in the manuscript, but number 287 is written in pencil in parenthesis. The manuscript number is that of an earlier edition, which has not survived.

Your Excellency, I have the honor of being with the most profound respect your very humble and very obedient servant,

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

* * *

As appears from the following transcription of the rough draft, the answer was not encouraging. This was written by Archbishop d'Aviau on the reverse of the letter.

June 3, 1816

Father, I will very willingly and very exactly demonstrate to His Excellency of Agen what he may expect of you for his diocese. I will do this by acknowledging the advantages your Sodalities and your persevering labors have been procuring for my own these many years, but I will not undertake to determine the opinion of this respectable prelate with regard to the perpetual character of religious vows under present circumstances. Just as there are reasons for them—and you will know how to make the most of these—there are also disadvantages which have more than once troubled me at the height of the revolutionary crises. Are we to consider ourselves sheltered from similar storms, as long as we are without an authentic and stable agreement between the two Governments?¹ If it pleases the Lord finally to grant us this tranquility, this assurance so greatly desired, would that not be the proper time to ask in what way a new religious Order would be useful to the Church? You probably know, Father, what two ecumenical Councils, the Fourth Lateran Council and the Second Council of Lyons, have decreed on this point, namely, “Let no one in the future found a new religious Order; but let the one who desires to enter religion join one of the Orders already approved.”² Nevertheless, I do not deny that several beautiful institutions are of a later date. What I wish to say to you is that this matter calls for mature counsel and authority. However, if the decision is finally made, I should not be in the least reluctant, when it came to making the rules and regulations more precise, of explaining and sanctioning them. In all this, I should certainly consider myself excusable in view of studies, the successive attempts of the groupings, so to speak, of a Saint Ignatius, a Saint Francis de Sales, a Saint Vincent de Paul, and other great people. At least I might be permitted to leave the responsibility to those who are not octogenarians. Therefore, I will not return the notebooks given me for my information. Do not take this badly, Father, but be pleased still to accept the sentiments which make me very sincerely your very humble and devoted, etc.

* * *

Faced with this reserved attitude of Archbishop d'Aviau, Father Chaminade had to postpone any final decision. Meanwhile, he contented himself with installing the new community in its own quarters without having its members take the religious habit or pronounce vows. On June 5³ he left for Agen and remained there until June 24.¹ After his return to Bordeaux, he completed by letter the instructions he had given his Daughters, especially those concerning their works.

70. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

July 20, 1816, Bordeaux

¹ That of the Church and that of the State. The Concordat of 1817 was being negotiated at the time.

² The original has this quotation in Latin as follows. *Ne quis de caetero novam religionem inveniat sed quisumque voluerit ad religionem converti, unam de probates assumat.*

³ See introductory note to letter no. 67 and the letter itself.

¹ This latter date appears in the following note in Adèle's account book (*Cahier vert*, Arch. FMI). “I owe Father Chaminade 200 francs for his traveling expenses to Agen, June 24, 1816.” The entry is crossed out, no doubt to indicate that the money has been paid.

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My Dear Child,

I am going to write to you whenever I can be left at leisure.

Mlle de Lamourous has had the letter Sister Stanislas wrote to her conveyed to me—you yourself had also written about her. This letter pleased me greatly. Take particular care in the formation of this young sister. Above all, I wish her to develop a very deep foundation of humility.

You are provisionally authorized to admit into the inner enclosure any person who, under present circumstances, could not be refused without serious inconvenience. Have no scruple about the permissions you may have given. Rest assured as soon as you have realized their necessity or great suitability. I imagine such cases will arise more than once before the monastery² is completely established.³

I would like to have a doctor describe the condition of your interesting patient, and all the remedies that have been prescribed for her to date. I will consult here and possibly also in Paris. I have obtained the prescription for the remedy which has done some good to the young man of whom I spoke, but I will seek advice before sending it. As for his brother, I cannot do anything because I have not received any information presented to his superiors, but what are the contents of this request? Who are these superiors?

I note with pleasure the separation of the Married Women from the Young Ladies. On the first Friday of the month, however, you may allow them together, and also on some other occasions, but rather rarely. These Sodalities will do good in town, especially after we have given them the expansion they can and must have.

Mlle Lhuillier,⁴ who must have written to you, will be able to help you a great deal. She is aflame with zeal, speaks with great ease, and is even reproached for being too kind. It will be very difficult to disengage her, but she is acting with great firmness and determination. Moreover, you must not hope for anything from her home. Her mother, who has established a fashionable boarding house for young women of a certain social standing and has no need of hiring a professional manager as long as her daughter is with her, will be making a great enough sacrifice.

This letter was begun at least a week ago. The expectation of a conveyance, always ready to leave and never leaving, made me lose a great deal of time in sending things up-country.

Mme de Lagrace of Auch¹ writes to me for permission to send Mlle Laffort immediately to Agen to enter as a religious. She has 2,000 francs in cash. This is the first time I have heard of her. She does not tell me her age, her character, etc., merely that she has a great distaste for the world and that she is in danger living with her parents, who have no religion. Prudently gather all the information you can about her. I will do the same on my part. Mme de Lagrace seems to be a truly excellent Christian, but she is an enthusiast.

In the same mail I received an answer to the letter I had written to Father Desterac through Mlle de Lachappelle². Neither he nor the clergy of Condom, he says, consider it at all advisable for me to go there to make any kind of beginning. In fact, according to him, any such attempt would even be harmful because the people have been too demoralized by the Revolution. Any activity, therefore, among the women would be dangerous. I find it difficult to follow such

² *Le monastère*

³ Code of Canon Law, c. 488 and Supplement of the Catholic Encyclopedia—Canon Law (N.Y.: The Encyclopedia Press, 1918), p. 67c.

⁴ A postulant from Bordeaux who later became Mother Emmanuel.

¹ This woman headed the Married Ladies Sodality in Auch.

² Mlle Charlotte de Lachapelle of Condom already belonged to Adèle's Association of Piety. She had been among the first enrolled as future members of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, but for several years she suffered the opposition of her family before she could realize her ambition. Only in 1821 was she able to enter religion under the name of Sister de l'Incarnation. See letter no. 35, n. 3.

reasoning, but I must nevertheless trust to the prudence of the clergy of that city. Perhaps Father Desterac spoke only to the priests of his church. You are somewhat acquainted with Condom. Without compromising this good priest in any way, look around to see what could be done. Father Castex,³ for example, may be able to write to me in his own name as well as in that of several young men or married men, etc.

His Excellency has replied to me and informed me of his visit to you. He seems satisfied. It is to be presumed that he will not delay in giving you a definitive reply. I will have the honor of writing to him in a few days and of sending him a brief note which may help him to reach a final decision.

If you should meet with difficulties in putting your Constitutions into practice and in observing your regulations, and should there be a question of matters unforeseen, etc., take note of everything and inform me of it, so that if necessary I can arrange things.

Because your novitiate yet has so few members, give your conferences only as much time as suits the instruction and formation of your novices.

Please tell Father Mouran¹ that at least for the present, it would be better to hold on to the very simple organization which exists among the Married Women and Young Ladies and not to make them resemble the Men's Sodality in that respect. I will acquaint you with the plan that is generally to be followed in Sodalities of women; or rather, I will explain why it seems I have not given any to you as compared with the Men's Sodality. Urge him to give his complete attention somehow to the Men's Sodality, and let him know you will do everything necessary for that of the women, etc. The same holds for the preparatory group.

I am almost always talking to you about the others, my dear Child, and only a little about yourself. And yet, this is what interests me most. How I desire to see you reach a high degree of perfection! Penetrate yourself more and more with the spirit of your Institute, whether by studying it, by explaining it to others, by meditating upon it, or by having others do so. I really intend going to see you fairly soon and having with you the number of interviews necessary for you to understand perfectly the course you have to take and have others take. Meanwhile pray, meditate, advance in the contempt and renouncement of self. It will nevertheless be a pleasure for me to see you often allowing your heart the happiness of loving God and of making God known and loved.

I do not need to call to your attention² that the holy Name of Mary should naturally be found everywhere; that whether you pray alone or in common, whether you exhort, instruct, or hold sodality meetings; whether, etc., nothing should please you or your dear Daughters unless the holy Name of Mary is found in it.

I am stopping with regret, my dear Child, and am asking you to tell all our dear Daughters that they have a father who truly desires their happiness, that they are very often the object of his solicitude, and that he calls down upon you and upon all of them the blessings of Heaven.

P.S. I am astonished that M. Diché did not leave for Paris immediately after receiving the news of his dismissal. With good testimonials from Agen, with recommendations for Paris, he would have halted the nomination of his successor. For my part, I should have given him at least half a dozen letters.

[Cover address: Adèle de Batz, Superior³ of the Daughters of Mary, The New Establishment, Agen]

³ Chaplain of the hospital.

¹ Superior of the Daughters of Mary as well as director of the Sodality of Agen.

² The French edition has *dire* instead of the *avertir* of the original.

³ This is the first letter in which Adèle is addressed as "Madame Superior" by Fr. Chaminade.

* * *

71. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

August 11, 1816, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My Dear Child,

I have just received your letter and am taking advantage of a departing carrier¹ to write you a few lines.

All you tell me about our little community interests and pleases me. Go right ahead. The work of God will develop completely. Patience. . . .

Membership in the Sodality is required in order to share the spiritual benefits granted to us. The postulants who have received the blessing recite the Little Office of the Sodalists. Continue for Sister Marthe. . . .²

Should there be a question of giving catechism instruction to that 14-year-old, have it done. Whoever is assigned to it will readily find the means to correct her evil dispositions but should do nothing more for the time being.

You did the right thing with regard to Sister Saint-Vincent.³ You may follow the same line of conduct in all similar cases. I believe both of you must be very pleased with the regulations regarding the parlor. I felt much the same myself when, speaking of Sister Saint-Esprit, you called it⁴ a “deep solitude.” Progress regarding Vespers is entirely satisfactory. I will make the article about the Hours Devotion clearer.

Do not admit servants into the Sodality,⁵ at least not yet, until we have definitely agreed on all that concerns people of this class. Accept only young women of quality and women employed in the manual arts, whose financial circumstances justify the hope that they will never take a job as housemaids.

Mlle Lhuillier has tastefully recopied for you the *Constitutions*¹ of the *Daughters of Mary*. I was going to send them to you, but I decided to follow the advice of a friend who is highly educated and strongly attached to the Order of the Daughters of Mary.² He believes I should reread them myself with the mind of an unmerciful censor, that afterward we should critically discuss all the articles, etc., and that a copy should then be sent to His Excellency the Bishop for, etc.

Mlle Lhuillier is acting with great discretion, delicacy, and determination. She asked me this morning what she should do with her piano. I thought she should bring it to the community. I

¹ See letter no. 61, n. 1.

² This sentence was left incomplete by Fr. Chaminade. He was in the habit of substituting conventional dots for the words he believed were unnecessary to express. See the introduction to the revised edition.

³ Mlle Cornier de Labastide, who was to succeed Adèle as Superior General of the Institute.

⁴ The French edition here has *l'avez appelée* instead of the *l'avez appelé* [*sic*] of the original, which calls for a pronoun, “it,” instead of “her” demanded by the French edition, together with the consequent astonishing conclusion that Fr. Chaminade was pleased that Sister Saint-Esprit (and not the parlor) was a “deep solitude.”

⁵ No doubt because they would not be free to attend many of the meetings and to engage in the various apostolic activities of the Sodality.

¹ The original reads *Institut de Marie*. The term *Institut*, however, is ambiguous. It has a twofold meaning, as explained in this note on the title of Appendix A, vol. 1 of *The Spirit of Our Foundation*. “The term *Institut* in classical language means the *Constitutions* of a religious Order or the Order itself. Fr. Chaminade uses the word in both meanings. Thus the first *Constitutions* of the Daughters of Mary was often called by Fr. Chaminade *The Institute of Mary* and the *Institute of the Daughters of Mary* or simply *Institute*; and the first Rule of the Society of Mary is called the *Institute of Mary*.” See letters no. 59, n. 1 and no. 73, n. 1.

On the other hand, before 1825 the Society of Mary was often called by Fr. Chaminade *The Institute of Mary*. After that date he used the term to designate the two foundations together, which were then known as the *Society of Mary* and the *Institute of the Daughters of Mary*. See *Spirit*, p. 611, n. 1.

² The person in question appears to be David Monier. See the biographical note at letter no. 30.

will tell you why in due time. She has no other musical instrument. She is considered very capable in both vocal and instrumental music. She is better on the harp than on the piano, so she told me, but she has none of her own. She has learned Italian and knows several other subjects which will make her useful to you, French grammar and above all spelling. But what makes her still more valuable is the humble opinion she has about this and her love for God and the Blessed Virgin, etc.

I must close here. Totally yours, one and all, in Jesus and Mary.

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. The bearer, M. Duprat, a member of the Fathers of Family, will give you two dozen Manuals and will take care of all your communications on his return. Enclosed is the answer of Mlle Lhullier and a number of rules for the women in charge of material things, which you do not have.

* * *

The next letter was occasioned by an incident involving the Men's Sodality of Agen, an account of which can be found in the Life of Father Chaminade. In the course of his stay at Agen for the purpose of founding the Daughters of Mary, Father Chaminade had established there a Sodality for men, which immediately met with complete success. That was too much for the enemies of the faith. "The devil, jealous of all that is good," writes Adèle, "has just raised a storm against the Men's Sodality, which was doing an immense amount of good. Many were seen hurrying off to Confession, dangerous places were being deserted etc., when one of the presidents committed the fatal imprudence of making an unguarded speech, with the result that the civil authorities thought it necessary to suppress the group." Father Mouran, the director of the Sodality, immediately dispatched the following account of the incident to Father Chaminade.

I was about to give you details concerning the Sodality when on the 15th of this month Father Gardelles, our superior, received a letter from the mayor's office with orders "that this society from this very day put an end to every kind of meeting and that the church will be closed at nightfall as in the past." That same evening Father Gardelles and I were at town hall to give the necessary explanations. Yesterday His Excellency, our bishop, was at the office of the prefect with his vicars general, and today I myself had a long conversation with this official and with the mayor. I learned that we are held to be an unauthorized association. They are afraid of serious trouble. No one wants to risk his own job, etc. We have done everything we could to save this excellent organization, but without the least success. It is too bad the prefect of the Sodality, the Marquis de Dampierre, had to stay in the country with his dying mother. Tomorrow I will let him know what is happening. The Good Lord's work had not yet met with any opposition, but I took it for granted that it would do so. Still, I did not expect that the most straightforward explanation of our intentions and proceedings would be unable to dispel the storms which might have been raised against it. Now more than ever, Father, we need your advice to guide our actions. His Excellency is deeply affected, but it seems he would prefer to have us write to Paris ourselves. Should we do this? You are the father, the founder of this worthy association. We are already greatly indebted to you. Add to all the good we owe to you that also of tracing the course we are to follow. The Women's Sodality is doing marvelously. There is no talk about it yet. I am even inclined to believe it will not be discussed. But will hell be less hostile to it than to us?

*

Father Chaminade had David Monier write the following reply.

72. To Father Mouran, Agen

August 24, 1816, Bordeaux
Rough Draft, Agmar

Reverend Father,

Your letter and M. Lacoste's,¹ both dated August 17, reached me only on the evening of August 22. I cannot imagine what could have been the cause of such a long delay. M. Lacoste promised me details by a later mail, which should have reached me already had there not been a similar delay. Will it come today? I hope so, but I cannot afford to wait for it if I want my answer to your first letter to leave by today's mail. God grant that it will not be delayed.

My regrets regarding this delay come from the fact that I was unable to reassure you promptly upon your recent experience. A second source of chagrin in this matter is my complete failure to see what decision you could have made after the fruitless explanations regarding the honesty of your intentions¹ and of your dealings with the mayor.

Speaking from the point of view of religion, I do not need to remind you that we must be resigned to the will of God and offer all our tribulations to God in a spirit of sacrifice. Our divine Savior has sufficiently warned us that we should have to suffer many persecutions in his name, and we must believe this prophecy will be fulfilled throughout the ages. But he will not permit the gates of hell to prevail against his holy religion. Let us remain faithful, whatever the trials to which we may be exposed.

Here are two things you should ask of the affiliates² to the Sodality: first, a complete resignation to the adversities which God permits, not without reason, and which we must endure with great patience; then, an unshaken fidelity in the midst of trials, by which we show that our hope is in the promises of our divine Savior, Jesus Christ, and that all our strength lies in the hands of God.

May none of our Children forget that we should perform the works of religion in the spirit of religion.

When Saint Paul the apostle was persecuted and sent to prison, he by no means failed to resign himself from the beginning. But afterward, not wishing the weaker brethren to be scandalized on his account, he determined to set forth briefly that he was being persecuted for a good cause. This is the second duty you must perform. For my part, I have not only the intention but also the obligation to make the truth known, since I have chosen you for this work and drafted its plan.

The next mail will bring you the carefully prepared list of addresses which you are to sign and a sketch of the complete line of conduct you are to follow. Yesterday was the only day left to me for this work because of the vexing delay of your letters, and it was too short to complete it.

In the meantime, I do not want you to allow credence to be given to the supposition that yours may be looked upon as an unauthorized association, that it was rightly suppressed as such, or that no other mischief could come of this than that of a mistake on the part of the official who ordered you to give up each and every type of meeting.

The law requires "government approval" for the organization of an association with religious objectives. The wise and religious-minded government under which we are living would certainly consider it a calumny if we were to say that it does not approve of an association in which everything breathes the love of God and the most inviolable attachment to the royal family of Saint Louis. It is not difficult to see that such an association can have no other enemies than those of God and of the king.

¹ Councilor of the prefecture of Agen, an official whose duties corresponded roughly to those of a member of the governor's cabinet in the United States. He was one of the most zealous members of the Sodality.

¹ The French edition has *votre intention*, but the original has *vos intentions*.

² Members of the Sodality of Agen, which was affiliated to that of Bordeaux.

But not to leave the least shadow of an excuse for the charge of being an unauthorized society, it is sufficient to say that I myself, accompanied by the head officer of the association, went to the prefect's to meet the requirements of the law, and that neither the prefect nor the other people who were present can fail to bear witness to the very kind "approval" we received from him.

The meeting place was not the private, inner chapel, but in the building which is a parish annex.¹ No other activity was carried on except under the control of the Minister of Religion. Whether it was a matter of catechism, instruction, lectures, talks or public discussions, the police were hardly to interfere unless by way of protection. They were at fault in acting otherwise. Now all this is to be said with the charity which is our life, excusing the mayor and taking upon ourselves the blame, if necessary, for not having explained to him our purposes as well as we could have. Still, it is true that very often I was in a position to call on him, and that before leaving I recommended visiting him so he might be thoroughly convinced of the object of the association and of the circumstances he as magistrate could then ask to have explained to him.

The rest I am leaving for the next mail. I have only enough time to recall the necessity of resignation and the sentiments with which. . . .²

*

A leaf of a notebook accompanies this letter. It is in the same handwriting and gives the juridical details concerning pious associations.

Penal Code.³ Art. 291. No association of more than 20 people whose purpose is to meet daily or on certain specified days to occupy themselves with religious, literary, and other objects may be organized except with the approval of the Government and subject to the conditions which it will please the public authority to impose upon said society.

Art. 292. Every association of the above-described nature which has been organized without authorization or which, after having obtained authorization, has infringed upon the conditions imposed upon it, will be dissolved.

Moreover, the heads, directors, and administrators of the association will be punished with a fine of from 16 to 200 francs.

Art. 293. Heavier penalties will be imposed if there has been provocation to crimes and misdemeanors, without prejudice to the prosecution of the culprit.¹

Art. 294. Every individual who, without the permission of the municipal authorities, will have granted or consented to the use of his house or of his apartment, in whole or in part, as a place of assembly of the members of an association, even authorized, or for religious services will be punished with a fine of from 16 to 200 francs.

¹ In France, where it was difficult to create new parishes before the law of December 9, 1906, established the separation of Church and State, parishes which had grown too large were often relieved by the creation of subsidiary chapels or parish annexes. The annexes were distinguished from the subsidiary chapels or parish mainly by the fact that they ministered to a smaller group; both could have resident priests with the status merely of assistants to the pastor who resided in the locality of the parish church. In this they differ from mission chapels in the United States, which have no resident priest and are usually not visited by a priest except on weekends or Sundays for Confessions, Mass, and religious instruction. The point made here by Fr. Chaminade is that these meetings were not secret because they were not held in the seclusion of a private chapel, but in a place of public worship which was open to all, although it belonged to the seminary.

² The rough draft ends abruptly here and is unsigned.

³ This code, published in 1810, is the last of "The Five Codes," commonly called *Code Napoléon*, which is still in force and has greatly influenced the laws of Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxemburg, the French and the Italian-speaking Swiss cantons, Greece, Romania, Italy, Spain, Spanish America, Haiti, the Province of Quebec, Canada, and the State of Louisiana.

¹ This article is merely summarized, not quoted in its entirety.

Penal Code of February 12-22, 1810. The infraction of these laws is a misdemeanor, the fine being a correctional penalty when it exceeds 15 francs. Arts. 1, 9, 11 and 466 of the said code.

Law of November 9, 1815.

Art. 7. The following are declared seditious acts . . . the manufacture, wearing, distribution of cockades of whatever kind, and of all other types of rallying signs forbidden or even unauthorized by the king. Sirey² 1816. Part 2, pp. 10-11.

The Saint-Omer² Declaration of May 2, 1814. "Freedom of religion is guaranteed."
The Constitutional Charter of Paris, 1814.

Art. 5. Each one professes his religion with equal liberty and obtains for it the same protection.

Art. 6. Nevertheless, the Catholic, apostolic, and Roman religion is the religion of the State.¹

Art. 68. The Civil Code² and presently existing laws which are not contrary to the present charter remain in vigor until they are legally amended.

Organic Articles of the 26 messidor, year 9.³

Art. 6. Recourse will be had to the Council of State in all cases of abuse on the part of superiors and other ecclesiastical persons. The cases of abuse are . . . violation of the laws and regulations of the Republic . . . all initiatives or all proceedings which, in the practice of religion, may . . . arbitrarily trouble the conscience of the citizens . . . degenerate to their detriment into oppression, injury, or public scandal.

Art. 7. Recourse equally will be had to the Council of State if any attempt is made upon the public exercise of religion, as well as upon the liberty which the laws and regulations guarantee to its ministers.

Art. 8. Recourse is within the competence of all interested people. In default of any particular complaint, it will be exercised by the prefects as part of their office.

Public officials, ecclesiastics, or people desiring to avail themselves of this right to recourse will address a detailed and signed report to the State Councilor, etc., and upon his report the case will be studied and definitively concluded in due administrative form or returned, according to the requirements of the case, to the competent authorities.

Sirey at 2. Part 2, pp. 26-27.

[Although seconded by the bishop and the prefect, Father Chaminade's efforts failed because of the inertia of the Ministry, and the Men's Sodality would resume its activities only in 1820.]

* * *

² Probably Jean-Baptiste Sirey, French jurist (1762-1845) and author of important works on jurisprudence.

¹ In his *Histoire de France contemporaine* (Paris, Hachette, 1911, v. 4, p. 21) Ernest Lavisse, a member of the Académie Française, declares that the intention of the king was doubtless to give the religion of the majority a privilege of honor and the right of precedence with more titles to claim royal protection and the favors of public authorities, but that it was not accorded the privilege of greater liberty than the other religions.

² The Civil Code, promulgated in 1804, is the first of The Five Codes.

³ July 14, 1801. The "Organic Articles" were 121 in number. They constituted a law regulating public worship. Catholic worship was the object of 77 of these; the other 44 concerned Protestantism. They were published together with the Concordat on April 8, 1802, and were considered inseparable from it by various French governments which succeeded each other up to 1905, which the articles were abrogated together with the Concordat. Pope Pius VII protested as early as May 24, 1802, that they had been promulgated unknown to him and were unacceptable in that form. They actually gave the State power to exercise considerable control over the Church. In practice, however, they remained largely a dead letter.

The next letters are aimed at firmly establishing the Daughters of Mary. From the letter of September 6 we see that Father Chaminade has reached a clear and definitive idea regarding enclosure. He retains it and makes it the object of a special vow, admitting a dispensation whenever serious circumstances might require it.

73. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

September 6, 1816, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My Dear Child,

Your letters console me. I see and I thank God for it, that you all are acquiring the spirit of your Institute and all of you wish to be true Daughters of Mary. You desire a definitive consecration in order to be able to devote yourselves to the works your zeal moves you to undertake. I am not exaggerating when I say that this is exactly what I desire more than anything else in the world. In the midst of my interminable occupations, I am almost continually thinking of the little convent. To hasten still the work I am doing for you¹ I have canceled a retreat I was going to give, I interrupted my correspondence, etc. Next week I am going to write to the Bishop of Agen and send him your Constitutions; I am going to apply for their approval, etc. Patience meanwhile!

In the 48 articles, which sum up the entire Constitutions, you will find the solution to many difficulties.

There is no harm in the community's willingness to instruct the women you speak of. But it must be done in an orderly way. Do not open the door to dissipation. Let the instructions be well prepared, simple and within the grasp of everyone concerned, full of earnestness, moving their hearts while enlightening their minds. You may also replace Mlle de Rissan² without assuming any title³ or any obligation to continue. As for the schools, there will presumably be question of them in my correspondence with the bishop.

For lack of a conveyance I am having someone bring Mlle Lhuillier's letter to you. She is still in good health. As soon as her mother gives her consent, I will send her by coach to Agen.

See to it very carefully, my dear Child, that all advance in interior recollection and in the spirit of prayer. I greet them all and give them, together with you, my most cordial fatherly blessing.

P.S. The more I think of the stand we have taken with regard to enclosure, the more I am satisfied with it. If you were to imitate the Carmelites and include the obligation of enclosure with the three principal vows of religion, you would not easily attain your proposed objective, perhaps not at all. We must always keep in view the ends of the Institute and the times during which we are coming into existence. We will always respect the Carmelites and all the older Orders. We will help them all we can, but we will have no regret that we do not resemble them in every respect.

[Cover address: Mlle Adèle de Batz, Superior of the Daughters of Mary, at her Convent, Agen]

* * *

¹ The preparation of the abridged edition of the Constitutions, called the *Petit Institute*.

² Mlle Amélie de Rissan, one of the oldest friends and associates of Adèle, greatly wished to enter the newly-founded Institute. Unable to do so for reasons of health, she wished at least to be associated with the Institute. Accordingly, she became one of the first members of its secular Third Order branch.

³ Such as "president" or officer of any kind.

Father Chaminade writes about two important questions concerning young postulants and lay sisters, who are known in the Institute as Companion Sisters.

74. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

September 30, 1816, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

My Dear Child,

Quite a few days have passed since I wrote to you last. I yielded to the entreaties of our young sodalists and gave them an eight-day retreat with two lengthy religious exercises each day. These were public. I was rather pleased with the results. Last Monday about 200 Young Ladies or Married Women fervently renewed their baptismal vows. The ceremony was very long, but edifying.

The retreat did not cause me to lose sight of the interests of our dear convent; above all, concerning Mlle L. - -¹ and a girl from Nantes who would like to follow her good mistress and also be a spouse of Christ. As soon as the mother of this interesting child of eight discovered what was going on she boarded a coach, and after reaching Bordeaux spoke out strongly in favor of Mme L. and against the young lady.² The storm has subsided. Today she is all for the young lady and is of great service to us in influencing her mother. She agrees, moreover, to have her own daughter brought up as a religious etc., but for this consent of her husband is needed. She is writing to him by the next mail.

You may perhaps laugh at the idea of raising children as religious. Recall what I believe I told you on one occasion, that the Orders, whether of men or of women, were never more flourishing than when they trained their subjects from their earliest years. We will enter into all the appropriate details regarding this matter in due time.

Remain in peace, awaiting with patience and submission the development of the designs of God. Instruct the children of an age to make their first Communion. Work and keep yourselves always occupied in the presence of God. Penetrate yourselves more and more with the spirit of your Institute.

Regarding Companion Sisters, my dear Child, let us not be overhasty in admitting them, above all when they have passed the prescribed age. We will certainly find among the young working girls some who will be suitable for us.

I am firmly convinced that the Companion Sisters should observe enclosure as the other religious do, and that for business matters there should be those who were formerly called "turn-box attendants."¹

However, let us all resolve to admit into the Institute, in whatever capacity, only those subjects who truly have its spirit and who are suited to the tasks to be assigned to them. If you lack subjects, ask God for them after the example of Saint Stephen, Abbot of Citeaux.?

Meanwhile, if there is too much work in the house for the Companion Sisters, see that they are helped, and in this, occasionally give the example yourself. Do not fear that you will compromise yourself. Saint Bonaventure was washing dishes when the ambassadors of the pope brought him the cardinal's hat.

I agree with you that no Companion Sister, not even the sister at the turn-box once you have such a religious, should go to the creek or have the washing done.² Upon my first visit to

¹ Mlle Lhuillier. See letters no. 70, no. 71, and no. 73.

² Mlle Lhuillier and her idea of going to the convent.

¹ The French word is *tourières*, sisters who were on duty at the *tour*, *turn*, or *turn-box*, a revolving box set in a wall so that objects could be passed through and received by people who do not see each other. Such *tours* were also formerly used in foundling hospitals to receive abandoned infants.

² The meaning seems to be "to go to the creek to do the washing herself or have it done by lay women."

Agen I will have a wash-house built for you, as we did at the Miséricorde. In the meantime, continue to do as you have been doing up to the present time.

In conclusion, I wish you all types of blessings.

Joseph³ Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. Tell Sister L.- - to disregard her temptations. Why should she attach so much importance to them, now that she knows them to be mere suggestions of the evil spirit? She belongs to Jesus. She belongs to Mary. There is nothing to fear. Tell her never to bother about those temptations, not even to believe it worthwhile to examine them, to consider them!

* * *

About this same time there was a question momentarily of leaving the Refuge, a former establishment of the Good Shepherd sisters, and of moving the young community to the convent of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, also known as "Orphelines of Saint Joseph." These were on the verge of extinction for lack of subjects; but they had the advantage of authorization. This is discussed in the following letter.

75. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

October 26, 1816, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

My Dear Child,

I am too greatly attached to the little convent you are now occupying. I do not have the least taste for changes. Nevertheless, if the city cannot come to any agreement with you for either its sale or permanent lease, why let pass the chance to secure another convent, which I suppose is larger, more convenient, and better situated? Look into with Father M. [Mouran] and Mme B. [Belloc]. First of all, make sure this convent is exactly what you need; determine the final price and the conditions of the sale. Otherwise make no commitment, unless it is conditional. Then ask Father M.- - to guide you in the procedure required to have the project explained to the mayor and the city council. They will doubtless answer that they can make no transfer without the authorization of the Government. However, it will not be difficult for them to obtain this, if they truly wish to. When the city finally comes to definite terms with you, do not forget that a city is always a minor and can, therefore, always reclaim its rights. Keep me always completely informed.

Make appointments to the various offices, but only on a temporary basis. Change them from time to time. In this way you will be able to better understand the abilities of each of your Daughters and how to form their wills. I will not delay in making their definitive appointments. First, however, I will send you a model which the higher superiors may use to keep their small records. I do not believe they are doing this yet. Nevertheless, it will prove very useful to you in promoting wise administration and in many other ways, as you will soon come to realize.

I just recall that I have not yet answered you regarding the disadvantage of having all the personal linen in common use. There will no such disadvantage, or if there is, it will be of small consequence and will need to be endured. There will be no trouble, if the linen destined for the infirmary has its own mark and is used only for the sick, and if you divide all the other linen into two or three groups, more or less according to the size of each religious, with the number of the group marked on each item.

Most devotedly yours,

Joseph Chaminade¹

³ This is not an autograph signature.

* * *

Soon Father Chaminade had the happiness of having the first member of his Bordeaux Sodality leave for Agen to join the Daughters of Mary. This was Mlle Lhuillier, who was to take the name of Sister Emmanuel. He returns to the important question concerning the type of young postulants to be accepted² and the works to be undertaken.

76. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

November 10, 1816, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

My Dear Child,

Herewith I present to you the first subject from the Bordeaux Sodality who has decided upon entering the Institute of the Daughters of Mary. See that she becomes a perfect religious. You must keep her well occupied and train her in the practice of the virtues without prejudice to her occupations. You will move her to do whatever you wish by suggesting all those motives that stir the heart to love of God, devotion to Mary, and the salvation of souls.

It seems to me that our little S. - - - and our two pious Germans write rather poorly. You might have them learn to write, for they are young enough to succeed. Let Sister Emmanuel teach them writing and spelling. Tell them their Good Father hopes to see their modest talents used for the glory of Jesus and Mary.

Have courage, my dear Child. Work steadily at the "mission" you have received, yet without prejudice to the interior life which you are leading and in which you are to make steady progress. In an Institute such as the one you have embraced, a superior who would be guided entirely by human wisdom would hardly get very far. The Spirit of God should habitually enlighten and enliven you. Without too intense an application of mind, your meditation should be all but continual. From time to time when you feel yourself interiorly drawn to meditation, devote yourself to it and persevere in it, providing your principal duties do not suffer in consequence. What happiness for a superior to be able to go to God and speak to him, to consult him, to receive his orders, like a Saint Teresa! There is no Institute whose superior has so many responsibilities and who as the need arises can yet give so much time to prayer, for she can always be substituted for, should she desire this, at least once she has properly qualified subjects.

I have noted with pleasure your plan for the Young Women's Sodality. Make "little missionaries" of them. That is the end in view, but do not tell them about it. You can also skillfully prepare religious who in time will become real missionaries. It would be a good thing to have another religious as your assistant for the Young Women's Sodality, in order to train her for this particular good work. If Mme B. - - ¹ gets along with the women, it would not be a bad idea to train someone else also. You must certainly realize what an important good work the Sodalities are, above all, if they can be organized as I desire and when it is possible to do this. I will often return to this point.

We have several young women here who are inclined to enter the religious life, due either to the retreat or to the example of Sister Emmanuel. You might allow or even tell her to write to them. Mlle C. - - ² might act as a go-between.³ This young woman, my dear Child, is very

¹ No autograph letter bears such a signature.

² See letter no. 74.

¹ Belloc.

² Chagne. See letters no. 47, no. 51, and no. 53.

³ That is, as the correspondent for the group with Sister Emmanuel. She had been appointed to succeed Mlle Lacombe (see letter no. 47), who had originally been designated by Fr. Chaminade as the Bordeaux Sodality's correspondent with Adèle (see letter no. 32).

virtuous. If the separation from her daughter were not the death of her 80-year-old mother, she would shortly become a religious. All she lacks is the religious habit. I have just enough time to sign this letter,

Your Good Father

P.S. If there are in town any young women of quality whom you could not recruit for the Sodality, try to reach them by offering to help them continue their education as day students. By offering them the elements of grammar, French and Italian, music, geography etc., you may attract them more easily than through devotions. I hope Sister Emmanuel will not confuse the end with the means and that she will succeed in making them at least good Christians. What I am telling you is not meant to be put into practice at once. Take your time and gain your bearings. Always act prudently. In the ordinary course of prudence, it is better to have others ask you for things than to offer them.

If you have help given to the day students, your young religious who may still need a great deal of instruction must not attend. Never tolerate such association.⁴

Very probably it will not be very long before truly Christian parents of quality will offer their young daughters to God to become religious and to be reared as such, should God be pleased to call them and they on their part correspond to their calling. These should be the only boarders accepted, and even these only in case they give evident signs of a vocation and have a true aptitude for the education suitable for them. The ordinary boarding fee for them is to be set at 400 francs; their wardrobe is to be charged to their parents. They should be given a simple black uniform, something like the one you have now.¹ These junior Daughters of Mary will be cloistered. If they conform to the ideal of the Institute, they will remain as boarders until the age of 16. If at that time their vocation is judged to be genuine, they will take the habit of novices; otherwise they are to return to their parents. I urge you to cultivate among all our dear Children a taste and even a desire for this type of life as religious boarders, for in time it is a reliable way of making the Institute flourish greatly. What pitiful education is given to young women of quality these days, above all in the area of religion and piety!

* * *

A second sodalist in Bordeaux, Mlle Isabelle Moncet, was leaving for Agen. She was to receive the name of Sister Anne. Because Bishop Jacoupy still hesitated to declare himself in favor of the foundation, Father Chaminade permitted his Daughters to satisfy one of his demands and begin a small school.

77. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

November 18, 1816, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My Dear Child,

Mlle Isabelle's things have been gone since November 14. I am sending you a copy of the waybill, in case they arrive before her: 30 francs in all, with the consignment delivered to the convent. Mlle Isabelle will leave by the first conveyance available, or by stagecoach if other means fail. She will inform you herself concerning her financial condition. I am having her take

⁴ The purpose of this emphatic prohibition issued by Fr. Chaminade was to shield the young sisters who might not have been reared in "society" from the embarrassment to which they would be exposed in the company of young "gentlewomen" (*demoiselles*). The reputation of the Institute might also have suffered.

¹ The future religious were not yet wearing a special apparel.

every suitable precaution so neither you nor she may have any trouble on this account. I hope you will have a good subject in her. The only question will be what occupation to give her.

I have just received Father Mouran's answer. I note with pleasure your patience and resignation. I hope all the delays and reluctance of your good bishop will not halt the execution of the purposes of Providence. If the Institute were destined to do only very meager good, you would meet with far fewer obstacles. The devil, the special enemy of Mary, is the same for all her children. Still, do not fear.

It seems there is a question of having you present a petition to the government for permission to purchase the house you occupy. His Excellency the Bishop says the minister will forward this petition to him, etc. This entire prospect is hardly to my taste. I fear they may have you make some false move or other, from whose consequences it will be very difficult to escape. There is not the slightest question of soliciting the Government at this time for an authorization, either for the Institute or for the community of Agen. I have agreed with the prefect of Agen that we would present this petition to the government through him, once the community has given sufficient proof of its usefulness and he himself, as well as the city, can vouch for that fact, etc. The city would like to sell you the house, and it must have the authorization for it. Very well, let the city request the permission to dispose of this house on conditions to which both parties will agree. What is more simple? Base its petition on the necessity of lodging a community that will be so useful to it, etc. This petition will certainly not be transmitted to His Excellency the Bishop.

Because His Excellency is so uncertain about giving you the approbation needed to the natural perpetuation of our establishment, begin a school, but quietly, step by step. Accept only a half-dozen children at first. In proportion to their progress and the proficiency of the teacher, admit others, one at a time, by twos or threes. Do not be hasty. See that good care is taken of the children and that this work is done without display of any kind. Make no commitments, either with the parents or with the public.

You may pass this letter on to Father Mouran. In doing so, please give him my very best regards. His letter has greatly edified me. I feel deeply grateful and obliged to him for all the attention he is giving to the Sodalities, and particularly to our dear little convent, which is so close to my heart. I will answer him in similar terms. I must close now. The day before yesterday in the evening I began a retreat for the men.

Tell all our dear Daughters that even though I do not write to them individually, I have all of them in mind while writing to you, and that I do not forget them at the holy sacrifice of the Mass. Accept herewith for yourself and for them the blessings of your Good Father.

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

[Cover Address: Adèle de Batz, Superior of the Daughters of Mary, at her Convent, Agen]

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78. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

November 29, 1816, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My Dear Child,

I have just received your letter, and good Sister Anne is about to leave. They are preparing her lunch. Her best¹ meal each day is her morning coffee with milk. This is true of almost all our Bordeaux women. Although she has begun to break this habit, you will do well to order her to take some several times a week, until her health no longer suffers from this privation.

¹ That is, her favorite meal, because coffee was a luxury then. As such, it could not be permitted in a religious community, where soup or a piece of bread and some fruit was usually consumed instead.

Make steady progress in self-mastery, my dear Child. In fact, be all to all, a true Mother. May all find in you enlightenment and consolation. Even though some should come to you weak-willed and wavering, always receive them with kindness. By motives of faith you will lead them to forgo an all too natural consolation which may slow them on the road to perfection. But they should be very certain of always finding you ready to receive them. The very idea will lift them up in the midst of their temptations etc. I ratify all you have indicated to me regarding the arrangement of your timetable.

May the blessings of the Lord be abundantly showered upon the Mother and her Daughters.

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

[Cover address: Mlle Adèle de Batz, Superior of the Daughters, Agen]

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78a. To M. Perès, Attorney, Bordeaux

December 9, 1816, Bordeaux

Autograph, Agmar

Monsieur,

On Saturday evening I received the enclosed summons. If I am under any obligation toward the Lafaye family, please inform me of this. Kindly appear for me also, as directed, before the mayor. Please, Monsieur, accept here a fresh token of my utmost regard.

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

[Cover address: M. Perès, Attorney of the District Court, Bordeaux]

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79. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

December 10, 1816, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My Dear Child,

By this same mail I am writing to your good and Most Reverend Bishop, to ask his advice and his authorization for my little mission at Auch¹ and my two trips to Agen, because I intend to stop off there in traveling to or from Auch. In conformity with this reply I will clarify with you definitively. We are progressing slowly, as if by rowing, but what can we do? The wind is against us. Let us adore the dispositions of Providence, even in the chastisements which it seems still to reserve for our unhappy and criminal country.²

You may be able to invite the young woman from Condom and possibly also Mlle de Lachappelle to come to Agen during my stopover there. What is detaining Mlle de Rissan? Several subjects have presented themselves here, but they do not meet all my expectations. I prefer to proceed more slowly and to approach our objective without any additional obstacles. Moreover, I do not regret that before any further expansion we will be able to have a few meetings together. Nevertheless, proceed with our older members, for they certainly have the spirit of the Institute.

¹ The See of Auch had been suppressed by the Concordat of 1801 and its territory joined to that of Agen. It was not reestablished until the conclusion of the Concordat of 1817.

² This is an allusion to the misery which afflicted all of France at the end of 1816 because of an almost complete crop failure and an unbearable burden of taxes, and also to the anxiety arising on the political scene from the accession to power of the newly-elected House of Representatives.

I did not reply to you regarding the work to be assigned to Sister Anne. This was to leave you more at liberty to vary her work in view of acquainting yourself well with her humble talents and her character. She is what they call a good child. She responds well to good treatment. Win her heart, and you will enable her to make all types of sacrifices for God, for the salvation of her neighbor, and for her own advancement in virtue.

As the Good Mother of all your Daughters, without discrimination be constantly alert before God to all their needs. In temporal matter grant them everything the Rule allows. Even foresee their needs, and do not wait until these are pointed out to you. Although all should act, come what may, according to the spirit of mortification, and on your part you should instill this spirit in those who lack it, you are not directly to prescribe any mortifications other than those of the Rule. You must wait until they request them and you have reason to believe the Spirit of God prompts them to do so. Still, even then it may be wise to test them by some refusals.

I will write to Mme Belloc at once. Please assure all your Daughters that they have a Good Father who prays a great deal for them and who is often greatly concerned about whatever may help them tend toward the goal of their vocation. My dear Child, this Good Father is very especially altogether yours.

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. I have heard Sister Anne repeatedly praised for her skill in nursing the sick.
[Cover address: Mlle Adèle de Batz, Superior of the Daughters, Agen]

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This note concerns the celebration of Christmas in the community.

80. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

Before December 25, 1816, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

Say the entire Office of the Blessed Virgin on the Feast of Christmas: Matins and Lauds during the night, the Little Hours in the morning, Vespers and Compline in the evening. The Little Hours may be chanted and will replace the Little Office of the Sacred Heart of Mary.

Should there be too many other things to do, you may merely chant Compline also.

See whether on the principal feasts of the Blessed Virgin you cannot find time to say the entire Office of the Blessed Virgin without singing Lauds and Vespers. I have often thought of proposing this for Sundays, but I would not wish to cause your Sunday works of zeal to suffer.

* * *

Near the end of December Father Chaminade received good news. Bishop Jacoupy had permitted the Daughters of Mary to take the religious habit.

81. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

December 30, 1816, Bordeaux

Autograph, Arch. FMI

My Dear Child,

I consent to your continually wearing the habit of your holy Institute, and I feel great satisfaction at the thought that all of you are clothed with it. Hereafter only a horrible persecution

could compel you to leave it, or also. . . .¹ But let us not be too foresighted. Let us keep to the course marked out for us by Providence. All the delays, all the difficulties you experience will be to your advantage.

Apply yourself to the formation of new subjects as they enter. Although you have your general Rules, the particular rules and even those which yet may be added will not suffice for you if experience, observation, the knowledge of characters, the very spirit of the Institute, and its proposed end fail to teach you how to exercise your authority. This maturity of conduct, if we may call it that, is not a matter of a few days.

Once we have decided to found other communities, and I hope God grants us the grace to do so, you and a number of others must be like living copies of the Rule. Because the ends of this Institute are all of the supernatural order, I would not want you to possess a purely natural wisdom, but that wisdom which comes from above. Therefore, you must ceaselessly beseech the Father of Lights for it, and you will obtain this by great fidelity to the movements of grace and great purity of heart.

Do not have Mlle Desgrange take the habit of the novitiate at once, just the black apparel. She has written to her father in Paris for a small sum to pay for her trip and to cover the slight outlay called for by the new apparel. This young lady has courage and character; she is very understanding. I hope you will make a good religious of her, but avoid undue haste. In general, grace must not be anticipated, but seconded in each subject, just as we must do in our own case.

A few days ago you spoke to me about white mantles for the solemn ceremonies. That would be entirely to my taste, but I should say “white” or “ash gray.” For traveling the mantle should not be white. We will return to this topic later.

It would be a good idea to introduce the custom of having each person write me a short New Year’s letter, not to compliment me after the fashion of seculars, but to declare her devotedness and to open her heart like a loving child. This would be doing in writing what could otherwise be done in person at the time of the regular visits. You have a note about this.

I have the impression there are still many things to tell you. They will all come in due time. Express to the entire community in my name whatever you feel my heart would say to them, if I had time. I have not forgotten that I owe replies to Mme Belloc and Mlle Poitevin,¹ to Sister Emmanuel and to Sister Anne. Please greet them for me.

May Our Lord Jesus Christ, through the meditation of Mary, our patroness, deign during this new year to shower his most abundant blessings upon you and all your dear Daughters.

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

[Cover address: Mlle Adèle de Batz, Superior of the Daughters, Agen]

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Hardly had Father Chaminade dispatched the preceding letter when letters arrived together from Adèle and from Father Mouran informing him that Bishop Jacoupy was offering the Daughters of Mary the convent of the Orphelines of Saint Joseph, of which there had already been a question several months before (letter no. 100). The transfer was to be made on the condition that they would continue the work of this declining Congregation. This note in David Monier’s handwriting illustrates the first impressions of Father Chaminade at this news and shows the prudence he manifested in matters of business.

82. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon and Father Mouran, Agen

December 31, 1816, Bordeaux

¹ Fr. Chaminade had originally added here, then crossed out, the words “perhaps some.”

¹ See letter no. 62, n. 2.

Copy,¹ Agmar

I believe there is no harm in accepting the house offered, on the condition that we would install the Institute in it. Neither is there any great objection to paying a moderate pension to the sole surviving good sister in the former convent. It may be a good and useful work to admit to the Institute of Mary the remaining young postulant of the Orphelines.

All of this may be good and intended by God. But in each of these matters, certain rules of prudence are to be observed. As far as this hasty answer permits my classifying them, and except for other eventual observations of the sort which may escape the initial survey, here they are.

1. Regarding the acceptance of the house offered, I am inclined to believe it belonged to the establishment known as "The Orphelines." I have no way of knowing whether this establishment was legally authorized or merely tolerated.

If the establishment called the Orphelines was not authorized, only the pleasure of interested parties is required to replace it by another. Accordingly, in case the Orphelines truly have no legal existence, the consent of the surviving sister and of the people having some right to the buildings would be enough to arrange everything. But some type of document would still be necessary.

If the establishment is legal, as I have reason to suppose it is, the grant could not be legally made except by royal authority. Evidently His Excellency the Bishop can institute proceedings in this matter and, we may say, enjoys the established right of disposal in favor of a similar establishment. But the protection and offers of His Excellency do not constitute a final grant and would not confer a legal title.

Furthermore, as long as the Institute of the Daughters of Mary is not approved by civil authority, that is, by the king, is it incapable of acquiring anything corporately.

What I intend to imply by these observations is not that we should refuse His Excellency's esteemed and gracious offers. It seems to me simply to be suitable first, not to think of leaving the present house until the transfer of the other has been regularly made. As I have said, this calls for a knowledge of the rights of the Orphelines in regard to it, the declaration of their dissolution or extinction, and the authorization of the new corporation of the Institute which constitutes this same body.

For the time being, Mother Superior would accept the cession which His Excellency the Bishop would be kind enough to make, with the consent of the prefect and upon the recommendation of the mayor. This could be done with the stipulation, expressed by all parties concerned, that it will be relinquished at the request of Our Lords the Ministers, and that His Majesty will be petitioned for the authorization of this Institute, the declaration of the extinction of that of the Orphelines of Agen, and the granting of the buildings and properties to the one replacing it. The motives of public utility will be stated in the provisional document without the insertion of any praise of the new Institute.

2. The agreement with the good sister who is withdrawing will also be temporary and determined by a consensus of opinion concerning the amount of her pension. Mother Superior would agree to it, just as she would accept the transfer of the premises, subject to the approval of the superiors and of the authority of the king over the establishment.

3. The young postulant who is requesting admission should have the qualities required by the Rule, notably Articles no. 25, 26, and those following. She is actually disqualified due to her voluntary entrance into another Institute (Article 27 of the *Institut of Mary*). But she may be relieved of this disability by the General Chapter of the convent, according to Article 28.¹ Thus, she may qualify for admission. I have no doubt that she actually does so, judging by the report I

¹ By David Monier.

¹ The French has "228", which does not correspond with the number in the copy in the archives.

have in a letter received today. However, in spite of this presumption there should be no question here of human considerations, of mere utilitarian views, and of natural propriety. Her admission as a novice should be deliberated in accord with the prudence of God and the fervent spirit of the Institute. The other promotions to be granted to her may eventually be determined in the same spirit.

4. I have not yet expressed myself regarding the admission of orphans into the convent, a proposition made in the letter. Because no type of good work is forbidden, every variety being recommended in the Institute, charity toward orphans would not be foreign to it. But this work must be neither exclusive nor more recommended than others. This would, moreover, be something to arrange in conformity with Article 20, paragraph 4 of the Rule, which deals with retreats for day pupils and with late first Communions. It would be essential to see to it that this admission of orphans does not become a cause for pretext for the disaffection of the different classes of society. We must not be too hasty with this admission, in order not to reverse the purpose of the Institute by utter specialization.

5. Almost as much is to be said concerning the project of a boarding school for the education of certain classes. We must not become involved in a work of this kind without due reflection and without aligning its realization with the general objectives of the Order.

6. The idea of beginning two establishments of the same type in the city of Agen would bring on the most serious trouble because of (1) the considerable difficulty of finding enough personnel to place at the head of each single grade without putting ourselves in the position of having them duplicated; (2) the constant tendency on the part of civil authorities to merge the two convents; (3) the fact that the merger, becoming a necessity sooner or later, would not be easily brought about due to the natural difference of spirit in both houses and the inevitably baneful effect of the disturbance resulting from the relocation of one of them and its subordination to the other.

In submitting my observations to His Excellency the Bishop, I am very far from being able to add to his wisdom and his pastoral charity. His Excellency will kindly excuse whatever defects these observations may contain and make the necessary corrections. Uniting myself with his goodwill toward the Institute, I ask God to animate him with his holy grace.

* * *

While waiting for the question of the Orphelines to be settled, Father Chaminade continued to give wise counsel.

83. To Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Agen

January 14, 1817, Bordeaux

Copy, Agmar

My Very Dear Child,

I am writing you this letter apart from our regular correspondence because it is for you alone and concerns the administration of the convent.

In compliance with my previous request, five of our saintly sisters have informed me about the interior state of their souls, and those holding office told me of their satisfaction or difficulties with their respective duties. I have answered each person individually. I am sending you the letters addressed to them, as I have reason to believe each will share the contents of hers with you, although I have asked this only of the Mother of Zeal.¹

Her letter may be gradually applied more or less to a great number of cases, for it is better to adopt a principle of frequent application than to return for advice concerning each incident.

¹ Mother Thérèse Yannasch, future superior of the convent at Tonneins, where she died November 3, 1823.

Each sister in her place of appointment may experience the same misgivings about her ability, the same longing to be replaced by someone more capable. All must be encouraged to persevere in submission to the will of God, determined to do their best and praying that the proposed good may be accomplished. The evil which doubtless would still more oppose the ends proposed in the Institute would be the frequent changing of those in office and the diversity of administration which this would produce. You, my dear Child, who should be alert to everything, assure yourself of an upright intention as being the first requisite for every responsible position. Support the Mother of Zeal in her good purpose of wisely developing the spirit of prayer, of learning more and more to discern spirits, and of reconciling mildness with firmness in all her actions. May everything be conducted according to these principles without any thought of change, except when absolutely necessary.

The doubts of our Mother of Zeal regarding her vocation have ended exactly as was to be expected. If they return, you must remind her of her former trials and have her entertain sentiments of deep humility. These trials recall our human frailty and lead us to find our strength solely in confidence in God. Regarding the reproaches of conscience concerning time lost or badly used during mental prayer and the examination of conscience, exercises in regard to which the mind is so often mistaken, we must immediately repent of the past and put the present and future in order. We must not waste time debating the frequency of our failings. Concerning mental prayer and the examination of conscience, we must have recourse to the Rules and develop habits based on these, without being bent upon a search for other ones. The Institute, the entire Institute—in it we have enough to occupy us. The Rules are the essence of the Institute.¹

See to it, my dearest Child, that this is the spirit of all our Daughters in Jesus and Mary. A well-informed Mother of Zeal is a powerful means of inspiring the entire body of the community to throb with life.

Our dearest Sister N. - -² has obtained great graces, and I do not doubt that they will serve to sanctify her. But be careful not to allow her to fall prey to discouragement and dejection in the ever-possible event of her being deprived of the delights she is now experiencing. Have her exercise a more habitual confidence concerning the state of her soul. At the slightest decline of her spiritual delights, let her know that after lavishing his gifts, God questions his creature to ascertain whether she values God himself, or affection. Let her know likewise that God is to be loved in aridity and in afflictions, when God seems to abandon us, as well as when we can sense and savor God's love. I do not doubt that if properly guided, this sister will become a great saint someday. Her submission to and her confidence in her superiors, despite her own views, have greatly benefited her. She should regard the trial which God permitted them to make³ as her rule of conduct for the future.

Dear Sister N. - - - has also had her troubles and her temptations. But who does not have them in this world? God permits it to be so. We must ask God for the grace to emerge from these trials more worthy of him. Speaking of this sister, I believe she is deceiving herself concerning the cause of her struggles. It is not pride that rules her, although as a child of Adam she inevitably has her share of it. What is certain about her is that she has not lacked either prayers or the grace to struggle against it. Her return to tears of repentance sweetened by love leads me to believe that the tempter preoccupies her with herself, to prevent her progress in the love of God. I have written to her at length because her condition deserves unstinted attention. But for you, my dear Child, as the guide of our sisters, the following brief expression of my thought suffices. Sister N. - - - is less tormented by the demon of pride than by the one who wants to turn her away from her present responsibilities and other similar ones. To this you must oppose "forgetfulness of self," for this will end the struggle and at the same time instill the love of God to fill her heart.

¹ See letter no. 71, n.6.

² The names are missing in the copy which is our source.

³ I.e., of her submission to and confidence in her superiors.

Our young sisters, N. - - - and N. - - - also, who wrote to me will receive from your hand my two answers, enclosed here. These young subjects doubtless did not imagine that they were expected to speak to me of their studies and particularly of the preparatory virtues and of the maxim concerning them, all of which are the beginning of the Rule.¹ I am not finding any fault with them because they were unable to guess such demands of propriety. You should not speak of this to the Mistress of Novices either, as she may feel bad that she had not thought of this herself. But my dear Child, in the future see to it that each of your Daughters is able to report to me on the condition of her education and of her spiritual exercises, on the improvement of these or of their proposed virtues. In this way your letters from time to time will convey to me the spirit of the convent and enable me to revive the spirit of the Institute, if necessary.

You may have those of our sisters who did not write to me do so at once. As for those who do not know how or who cannot write, nothing prevents their directress or any of the other Mothers who enjoy their confidence from sending me a note in their name individually and separately. I would receive it as someone receives news about children who do not know how to write.

May our divine Master through the meditation of our august patroness deign to pour out upon you, my dear Child, and on the entire community his most abundant blessings!

Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

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¹ The reference is to the original Rule, composed in 1815 for the Daughters of Mary by Fr. Chaminade's secretary, David Monier, (cf. pp. 54-56). Article 48 of this Rule begins, "The novices must learn in succession two kinds of virtue, the virtues of preparation and the virtues of consummation." Article 51 lists four of the former, called "obedience" and "bearing with mortifications." Here "mortifications" means the trials of everyday life, especially those arising from our dealings with our companions (cf. *Spirit*, nos. 415-424). Article 52 points out the duty of the Mother of Zeal to help the novices understand all the advantages of these principles by short maxims, of which the following are examples. "She who cannot keep silence, cannot control her soul" (Article 53). "Those who do not know what recollection is to have no idea of God's power in the human heart" (Article 54). Articles 55 and 56 suggest similar maxims to facilitate the practice of obedience and that of bearing the trials of life (cf. *Ecrits de Direction*, vol. I, Fribourg, 1956, pp. 2-4).