

CHAPTER I

La Seyne-sur-Mer Part II 1853 - 1854

Transition years

Director of the Boarding School

Adoration Society in Toulon

**Spiritual correspondence with Third
Order Members in Lyons**

**New Leadership of the Society of Mary
and the Third Order**

**A “beautiful and noble thought” for the
worship of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament**

Prophet of Holy Communion

January 1853 seems to have been a particularly busy time for St. Peter Julian. He began five letters on New Year's Day which he was to complete only by the end of the month. He excused himself on the basis of work to be done replacing the community treasurer, administering school tests, handling New Year "confusion" and illness.

Two letters addressed to Marguerite Guillot are dated Jan. 31, 1853.

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CO 387

TO MLES. MARIANNE EYMARD AND NANETTE BERNARD
(III 94/145 VI 10)

La Seyne, January 1, 1853

Very dear Sisters,

It's only fitting that my first wishes of the day and prayers should be yours, and that I should fulfill my long standing duty as your godson and brother. To begin with, I wished you a happy New Year at the crib of the Christ Child. You know that it has been my custom every year to say midnight Mass for the two of you. So then, I did offer you to our Lord so that you might be his worthy servants and spouses, and that if his divine Providence should have you pass through Calvary, it would be, my dear sisters, to have you in heaven sooner, and closer to Himself. The years pass quickly and at the end even a long life will seem to be only an instant. However, we find our consolation in knowing that the good works done for [the love of] God and God's own love will always remain. No matter if the world should forget us or try our charity and patience, therein lies the fruit of Christian life.

January 22nd - My dear sisters, I was unable to finish my New Year's letter; I was so busy that I didn't have a single moment and I did not have a treasurer, as he had to be replaced, and it was that time when the accounts and examinations [were to be done], add to that all the confusion of New Year's day.

The days are always too short for the things I need to do. So my letters have all been left aside for over a month. - However, my health has kept up. It must even be strong to be able to sustain everything. However, now that I no longer go to preach to the Adoration¹ of Toulon, I am freer.

Our children are fine and give us many consolations.² They truly love the Blessed Virgin.

The weather here has been very beautiful. The trees have been in flower for some time, the wheat is tall and already beginning to mildew: people are afraid it will be a bad year. You would do well not to sell yours, if you have any left. Oil is very expensive and not good. The price of wine has tripled. Because of all this we have huge expenses. I would really like to know the price of butter at La Mure. We could perhaps send for a crate.

Finally, I am finishing this letter. I've come back to it at least ten times. Fortunately you know all my affection for you and that you are ever present to me in God's sight.³

Your brother,
Eymard, p.m.

I've just received your welcome letter. Thank you, my dear sisters, for your wishes for me;⁴ they are what I treasure most.

¹ A group of adorers at Toulon.

² The students at the Boarding School of La Seyne.

³ Perhaps at prayer?

⁴ New Year's wishes.

I have given the faculties to Fr. Girolet. Now he may receive whomever he will judge to be suitable for the Third Order.

I do so regret not knowing sooner that they wanted to transfer him! He would have done so well at Monteynard! I had bad luck in Grenoble; I didn't find Fr. Rousselot, nor could I see the Bishop who was ill.

Concerning the Pastor, a good explanation might be in order. This good man let himself be disturbed by his correspondents. What can we do? Be at peace and don't believe all the terrible things he had the audacity to say to you, but bear it patiently. The Pastor doesn't have the right to judge your conscience. It is often true that souls beloved by the good Lord suffer from those who should be consoling them. So then, have patience and forget it. But if the opportunity should present itself, present your side of the story. However, until you are advised to the contrary it would seem better not to confess to him. You know how he can hurt.

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CO 386

TO GUILLOT FAMILY
(II 98/395 VI 2)⁵

La Seyne, January 1, 1853

My dear daughters,

My choice comes straightaway to you ahead of any others. I am stealing away for a moment to write and wish you all a happy New Year. What can I wish for you my dear daughters? Worldly possessions? No, the good Lord wants you to be like his Holy Mother was in Nazareth. It's the most beautiful stance we can have in God's sight. It is true, it's a daily martyrdom; add to that, crosses, illness, trials from God and man, then it becomes a genuine Calvary. Oh! You certainly are all on a sacrificial Calvary, and have been so for a long time. I would be overwhelmed with sadness if I didn't know that the good Lord loves you, that you love him and will always love him through everything. So then, be a perfect house of Nazareth.⁶ May Jesus be the King, the divine Spouse of your souls! Mary, the good Mother of your family! St. Joseph, its Protector! and St. John, its beloved Advocate! Live in community, in the spirit of the life of Nazareth. To make it a reality, let your virtues be ordinary virtues, wholly based on charity which means living more for others than for self, on the gentleness of Jesus and Mary who have only blessings [for others], and on a magnanimity which stretches the heart and considers the daily sacrifices of community life as small and hardly worthy of that name. Especially, practice a kind of charity which is ever noble, marked by propriety and thoughtfulness. That is the fragrant flower of charity....

⁵ This fragment of a letter dated January 1 was sent with the letter of January 31.

⁶ The Guillot family had been established as a "House of Nazareth" with a schedule of spiritual practices.

TO COUNTESS ADELE DE REVEL NESC
(VIII 3/26 VII 17)

Boarding School, La Seyne, January 1, 1853

Dear sister in Mary,

Why have I taken so long to answer your kind letter? I don't really know. I have been swept up in a whirlwind of activities. Still, your letter gave me great pleasure. Well, now I shall pay my debt on this first day of the year, when you must be crowded by many visits. You would certainly have received mine - you have every right to it, and I consider myself among those who take precedence with you in God's presence. What can I wish for you, dear good sister! Heaven one day, of course, but not yet. You must weave and adorn your crown every day, with the thorns of your divine Savior and some fragments of his Holy Cross.

You are a disciple of Calvary; you have been sacrificed there for a long time. Continue to let the good Lord do his work: he purifies, cuts away, clears the ground, and removes dangers. He wants to reign alone upon this throne of love in us, for which he paid so dearly.

But dear sister, I still have one word to say, it is this: Be a disciple of prayer - to say that is to say everything - for prayer is the mystic ladder which reaches to Heaven, it is the Cenacle⁷ of graces and of love; it is the golden chain which unites us to Jesus Christ; it is life for our hearts, strength for our souls, the measure of our graces and perfection. Therefore, it is the most [beautiful] wish I could make for you. You formulated a wish for me. You will tell me [what it is], and I will thank you. Goodbye for this evening; it's too late to finish my letter. I wanted to tell you that I placed you on the paten⁸ this morning. Till tomorrow, then, if possible.

January 21st

I am ashamed to be so late to finish my letter and send it [to you], especially at finishing it on such a sad date - January 21st⁹ I am sure we were praying together this morning with the same intention, poor France! Since that 21st January, what upheavals! what crimes! so many tears! At least if it were over. I am afraid that people are forgetting God, since they have a man [to lead them] and think themselves saved once and for all; alas! how great is our need for prayer, both for France and for the new Emperor!

Well, dear sister, what can I say! Your letter was like receiving news from a shipwrecked person. I was beginning to believe that you were close to the shores of the next life, and I was extremely anxious. Then, waiting for news day after day led me to imitate your silence.

Well, I have met Mr. and Mme. d'Averton, with their mother and sister. They made me most welcome. Mr. d'Averton is pleasant; Madame struck me as somewhat timid. His mother was so kind, but as I found myself in a delicate situation, I didn't tell them my name (I don't think they know me). We spoke of you and they were most proper. The whole family returned my visit, and this time we spoke of your dear brothers. They were tactful, and thanked me for my kindness and friendship towards him; but since the mother was there, I felt hampered.

Mr. and Mme. d'Averton came to see me when they returned from Avignon. Unfortunately I was out, but I shall go to see them, and if I can be of service to them I should be happy, for a naval officer needs a great deal of courage to sport the Catholic flag. We have just had a mission in Toulon, given by 16 Capuchin Fathers. There were some fine conversions, and we counted 2800 men at the General Communion. However, return to the faith has not been particularly impressive

⁷ Meeting place.

⁸ offered you to God.

⁹ Anniversary of the French Revolution.

among the naval officers, though there are already a certain number who practice.

I have also seen Mme. Spazzier. I went to see her in Hyeres. That dear fine lady is still far from well. Her precarious health makes me sad, and yet she was so kind. We spoke a lot about you, which was quite natural. I also saw Mr. de St. Simon. He was most friendly. What a pity this gentleman does not have faith - he would [then] be so content in his solitude and privations. Alas! he knows a little about everything, and I fear he is somewhat in favor of everything.

I think that if you were here we would [win] them all over, but especially Mr. de St. Simon. You would have the courage to tell him to return to the practice of faith.

Now, dear sister, what about you? I pity you with your two villages. So many celebrations must have been wearisome for you - there is so much emptiness and futility. But it was inevitable, as friendship always pays its respects, and it is often your turn, because you do not lag behind with your obligations.

I am very glad to hear that Mother St. Eudoxie is well. It was a sore trial for her and her sisters. Another good Work - thanks be to God. I sometimes have news of those good ladies through one of their boarders whose brother is with us - Miss Saurin. When you have an opportunity, please ask them to remember me in their prayers.

As for Father Philippe's request: it is easy to get authorization to enroll [people] with the Scapular of the Immaculate Conception, but someone would need to go to Rome and present a petition to the Holy Father, to obtain this faculty from the General of the Theatines. I will arrange it. I'll try to find someone, there is no problem. For the ladies, the statue you mention may be enough.

You are faithful, I see, to the meetings of the Third Order. Fr. Favre, whom I met here, is replacing Fr. Lagniet. He is to take charge of the Third Order. I am pleased about this: he is a servant of the Blessed Virgin, the man I would have chosen above all others. But, my dear daughter, get yourself an alarm clock. Then you won't have to worry so much about Tuesday. Do this to please me; a bad night is like an illness for you.

I don't need to tell you about the novena for your dear brother. His soul is very dear, ever present to me. At Mass I include him in the memento¹⁰ each day, and when I pray for your brother, I bless his sister.

Keep on serving the good Lord in the simplicity of faith and the confidence of love. Do not seek yourself in your prayers or your Communions, but as they say in the Navy, always go forward, even when the wind is standing; fidelity is the chief merit in piety. Then as we get older, we know ourselves better, and we are more aware of our failings. In youth, piety is energetic, ardent and impressionable; in the prime of life piety consists of sacrifice and the use of reason; later in life is the time for humility and trust.

I always have your retreat before me; I have prepared 5 or 6 meditations, and I am doing my best: I promise you will have it.¹¹

Dear sister, I need not tell you to pray for me - if you knew how much I need it! my soul is as dry as the dust on the highway; so many people, so many things travel over it every day. Alas! where has my time at Lyons gone? That was a time of rest compared to this! The good Lord wants me to be available to 130 people inside, and 200 outside; the parents, the administration, the direction of studies, not forgetting my precious migraine which has kept me faithful company since New Year's day. And yet, it's kind, as it doesn't oblige me to stay in bed.

How time flies! 8 pages, and it seems that there is hardly one. So please forgive my tardiness in writing!

Goodbye, all yours in our Savior,
Eymard

¹⁰ Commemoration of the living and the dead at Mass.

¹¹ In the margin before this paragraph, "I am waiting!" is written vertically.

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CO 390

TO MISS MARGUERITE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)
(II 96/395 VI 2)

La Seyne-sur-Mer, January 19, 1853

I am writing you a few words in haste, my dear daughter, so that you won't worry. I have a letter here that was begun on the 1st and I still don't have time to finish it. I didn't have a minute: the accounts, the bulletins, the confusion of New Year's Day, and the examinations all kept me busy. I haven't answered any New Year's letters yet; you always come first for everything, so be patient. My health is sufficient to sustain the work I have to do. I don't have a treasurer. We spoke a great deal with Fr. Favre about the Third Order. I hope that everything will go well, he is well-disposed toward it and he promised me to compose a Manual for the Members.

Fr. Poupinel is also fond of the Third Order. It would be important to show him some confidence.

What sad news you give me about Fr. Ch.¹² (his departure for London)! It may not happen. However! God is there, my daughter, even though his instruments¹³ change. Don't let yourself be too disturbed by these sacrifices. I have spoken to Fr. Favre about you and he will receive you as I have. He will help you, for he is even more spiritual than scholarly. His is the most simple and most enlightened heart I know. So, I advise you to go to him if you need to [do so].

Goodbye, my daughter. My respectful and fond greetings to your whole family. I will say holy Mass and pray for all of you.

Eymard

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CO 388

TO MME. NATALIE JORDAN (NEE BRENIER DE MONTMORAND)
(VII 2/5 IV 75)

La-Seyne, January 1, 1853

Madame and dear sister in Mary,

I cannot neglect my dear sister secretary, and I mean to convey, on this beautiful day in the sight of God, everything that Father Eymard could possibly say to his dear sister and daughter in Jesus and Mary. You know my wishes; you have known them for a long time. Continue to grow in the knowledge and love of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the purpose of time and eternity; it is life; it is happiness in exile. To succeed in it, become a disciple¹⁴ of prayer; prayer is the golden chain which binds us to God, it is the hearth of the divine flame, the nourishment of the inner spirit.

However, to become a disciple of prayer, this precious gift must be requested. Patience, humility, simplicity, surrender must be practiced... In a word, we must be the good Lord's beggars. Being so, you will be the richest in God's gifts.

¹² Probably Fr. Champion.

¹³ Change of spiritual director for the Third Order; also change of confessor.

¹⁴ Literally: daughter of prayer.

My dear daughter,

I am ashamed to send you such an old letter. At least it will show you that I didn't forget you, and that the thought of you is ever present to me in prayer. I have been so busy during this time that I barely have time to pray.

I was happy to receive your letter of the 12th. - You know that letters are a reminder. But there is another letter [written] in prayer¹⁵ which is always in process.

I am very grateful for your wishes. Ask that I may become a saint. That is all that matters. - I am somewhat as you were when you were disgusted with the world. I see too much sadness in life. Oh! The more aware I become of human weakness, the more I feel that God alone is father, mother, is kind, is gracious, the Sovereign good and pure joy. Yes, when will we reach heaven! no longer able to offend God and no longer walking on this shifting vicious earth!

I often pray to our Lord and his divine Mother to heal your dear husband and to watch over your wonderful daughter. Please remember me to her.

It is necessary to love God's gracious will in order to [be able to] bear this illness called sadness. One day it will be changed into joy.

You make me happy when you tell me that you are still dedicated to the Third Order, the dear Third Order. If only I could have devoted my life to it!

I will work to prepare your gifts, but you must give me until Easter. If I can pay you sooner, I will do so gladly.¹⁶

If you were here I would give you a good book called: "*Meditations of St. Thomas*" by Fr. Antoine Massoulier, available in Paris, at Sagnier, rue des St. Peres, 64.

Toward God in God.
All yours,
Eymard

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CO 391

TO MISS MARGUERITE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)
(II 97/395 VI 2)

T.P.D.S.¹⁷

La Seyne-sur-Mer, January 31, 1853¹⁸

In this letter, my dear daughter, I want to answer all your previous letters. Even if I should have to come back to it twenty times, no matter! I kept waiting to have a few hours when I would be more or less free and alone. I'm still waiting for it to happen. I did the same thing here as I used to do in Lyons. In order to give you more time, I kept asking you to wait and then was rushed at the end. "What can I do?" - Assume that I am always fully dedicated to your soul, and that my care for your spiritual [journey] comes first. Besides, you are the only one that I am guiding step by step. To begin with, I must thank you for your two notes, the one for Christmas and the other for New Year's. They really touched me, as they express what I want to strive for. They were quite helpful: something like the star.¹⁹ It showed me that I am always part of your spiritual feasts and graces of the moment. The same is true of me toward you. I can't leave you out of my petitions, it's only

¹⁵ Literally: in God's presence.

¹⁶ Spiritual gifts? Ed.

¹⁷ All for God alone.

¹⁸ The fragment addressed to the Guillot family on January 1st was sent with this letter.

¹⁹ Light on the way, like the star of Bethlehem. Ed.

right, it's promised. I don't know if I told you that I had celebrated Holy Mass for you on the Holy day of Christmas. This is my annual gift.

Did I tell you that we had spoken a great deal about the Third Order with Fr. Favre? What makes me happy is that he seemed to esteem this Marian work, and wants to work for its growth. Poor Third Order! It certainly has made you suffer! But if Jesus and Mary are glorified by the members' growth in holiness, we are well rewarded. I never told you about a sacrifice that the Lord required of me for the Third Order. It will explain a restriction I had made in your regard. Reverend Father Superior had told me absolutely that I should not deal with the Third Order of Lyons, and Fr. Lagniet repeated it. That being the case, I could do only one thing: pray for it and refrain from giving advice for its administration. So, my daughter, don't hold what I told you against me; continue to ask me for the advice you may need for the Third Order; however, I can only answer you as your director and no more. What can we do? It's all we needed, but no matter! Let me die as long as he may live and grow; that is my only wish!

Let me tell you about myself: I don't know what to say about my health. My migraine headaches have returned quite frequently since Christmas. However, I can bear them and do some work, although without enthusiasm. I still don't have the courage to begin answering the stack of letters I have on my desk; it frightens me just to see them. I hardly have time to pray to God. If I didn't rise at four o'clock, it would be nearly impossible for me to recollect myself. Then, I feel that with all these people, the spirit of recollection leaves me.

Oh! At least, I can really practice the spirit of self-denial... sometimes it makes me sad; if I dared to hope for solitude or heaven, I would do so wholeheartedly. However, I promised the good Lord I would not ask for anything, or refuse anything. So, you can see that you need to pray for me. You do so, I'm sure. Then we must preach on Sundays and every day speak to the children. However, that agrees with me; at least we are speaking about God. So, that is what my life is like. Then [as you know, there are always] little domestic problems due to character defects and human weakness which can be found everywhere. Oh yes, how far-reaching they are! God is so good to love us in spite of them, urging us to practice charity and patience!

Poor letter! How many times it has been put back on the drawing board! However, that shouldn't stand in your way, nor decrease your writing by even one letter. Your letters always please me and they always come first.

1. You are upset because my answers are vague. You are afraid that it might be²⁰ no, no, besides you aren't obliged But you know that one of my principles is to leave the soul somewhat to itself, in order that it may be freer to follow the impulse of grace. In case of doubt, I can also know the soul's feelings and needs better by its repeated requests.

I don't mind your having a Child Jesus.²¹ I forgive you for it, provided that you don't go back to that.²²

However, it's time for me to close my letter. I read your last note, my dear daughter. You are quite right to scold me a little. This time, I disappointed everyone. I've just finished a letter to V. R. Fr. Superior which was dated the first. No, no, I don't forget you... All the other letters I write are not worth the half of yours. I repeat again, you are the only one that I am guiding step by step.

Sincerely yours in our Lord, your devoted Father, united in the love of God,

Eymard

P.S. Be assured that your letters please me very much. The longest ones are the best. Let your pen and your soul flow as they will.

I am sending you a little letter . . . and I am including one for Fr. Champion. So you are still enduring mental suffering, my poor daughter! So many crosses, so much anguish! Bear them well

²⁰ The suspension points in this letter and in many others to Marguerite Guillot indicate that the text was erased or rendered illegible.

²¹ A small statue.

²² Certain devotions and practices.

for God, in union with Jesus tempted in the desert, sorrowful in the Garden of Olives, alone on the cross. Don't let yourself be upset by self-examination or by reasoning over your temptations. Leave the house when fire is in it, and go hide yourself in the wounds of your divine Spouse. May all possible glory come to our good Master through you. May he sustain you in this difficult war. Take heart! The day of victorious love will come some day!

I won't send you my letter dated the first. However, on second thought I will send you a fragment of it, as proof....

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CO 392

TO MISS CLAUDINE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)

(II 99/395 VI 2)

La Seyne, January 31, 1853²³

It has taken me until January 31, my dear daughter, to answer your kind New Year's letter and the preceding one you had sent me with Fr. Champion. Thank you very much for both. If I have been so long in answering, it's because time has been so short for me, that is, so full. I can hardly believe that I have owed you an answer for two months.

Thank you for your wishes and those of your household. It means a lot to me. Pray very much for me. That is all that I expect from your charity!

I'm very happy to learn that you made a retreat, and that good Fr. Champion directed it. Then I was overjoyed to learn that a house of Nazareth would finally be opened and that you had gone back to the Rule. It is well that you were chosen as assistant. Under the heavenly Superior, you have nothing to fear. Our good Mother will do everything. You will need to change something in the first Rule, since your situation has changed: i.e., the Sunday council, and the accusation of faults at direction. What you are doing is very fine.

By entrusting you to Fr. Champion, I was sure that you would find him to be a good father, and a "Master Conrad."²⁴ I am grateful to God and very much at peace to realize that you are in his care and that he is wholly dedicated to your spiritual good. Be very obedient and humble, and you will find great peace.

Praise God for your difficulties! Martyrdom is the most beautiful triumph of divine love, and spiritual martyrdom is the greatest of all.

Goodbye, my dear daughter. Continue to pray for me. I need it. My health is not good, but I keep on going. The good Lord knows what I need. Pray for our Boarding School; things are going reasonably well.

All yours in our Lord,
Eymard

P.S. My respects to your whole family.

²³ It is difficult to follow the Saint's correspondence for January 1853. This appears to be the second letter of Jan. 31.

²⁴ evidently a colloquialism.

TO MISS MARIETTE GUILLOT (SR. ANNE-MARIE DU SS)
(III 2/21 VI 1)

La Seyne-sur-Mer, January 31, 1853

My dear daughter in Jesus and Mary,

I was very pleased to receive your welcome letter, I was expecting it. I read it and understood it easily. So put your self-love aside. It was much easier to read than my sister's.²⁵

I am very happy to learn that you are now back with your sisters. You really need that. Now you will be a little calmer and have fewer worries. However, my good daughter, remember that you will be happy only in heaven, and that we will always suffer on our Christian Calvary in this land of exile.

You made a retreat. Thank God for it. We always benefit from it. Then also, you are now a member of the Third Order of Nazareth. Yours is the first convent.²⁶ Be very docile and obedient.

Yes, my daughter, continue to receive Communion, as I had told you. Don't be scrupulously attached to certain days, but replace them when you haven't been able to [do so] on the ordinary days. But you are so poor! So much the better! Be convinced that this is your ticket of admission with Jesus, the King of the poor. - But I am full of faults! Thank God that you know them. Bear them humbly and patiently, as being the cross of penance which God is giving you. Oh! Be sure that the most sublime virtue is the one which helps us to carry our cross and keeps us humble and confident at our Lord's feet.

Since I know you well, I can say that to please God you need only to imitate St. Martha's role, to do everything to please God without examining things too closely. Do the best you can, and everything will be better. The love of God, like faith, has its own mysteries. - Goodbye, my good daughter, be assured that you and the others²⁷ are always very dear to me in our Lord, and that you are always present to me in God's sight.

A thousand fond regards to your kind and dear mother. Tell her that I think of her every day, and that I will always love her family.

All yours in our Lord,
Eymard

Miss Mariette Guillot
Lyons

²⁵ His sister did not know how to write correctly.

²⁶ Because all the members of the Guillot family were Third Order members, their household was constituted as a "Nazareth".

²⁷ The Guillot family.

TO MR. LEO DUPONT
(U2)²⁸

[La Seyne], January 31, 1853

Dear Sir and brother in our Lord,

You were so kind as to write to me at the time of the death of our dear esteemed friend, Mr. Marceau. I have been deeply grateful to you for it ever since. I kept hoping that the good Lord would give me the opportunity to go to Tours to see and comfort Mme. Marceau who is like a mother to me, and also to see you. Our Lord did not will it. May his holy name be blessed!

You may know that we are busy gathering a few details of the holy life of good Mr. Marceau, in order to make it known to the faithful and especially to his companions in arms. Pray that if it is for the glory of God, everything will succeed. We would need to find an experienced and very Catholic author²⁹ to put the final touches on it.

I was happy to learn that Adoration is established at Tours. We also have it at Toulon and our Lord has willed to give me the honor of working for this beautiful Work. We have eight hundred women adorers and one hundred men.

What happiness if devotion to the Blessed Sacrament were to spread everywhere! We need divine fire to wake up so many drowsy Christians.

Dear Sir, I wish to ask you to be kind enough to make a novena for the healing of the President of the Women's Adoration of Toulon.³⁰ She is very ill and is unable to walk as a result of rheumatism. I promised her that you would begin it on January 25th and finish on Feb. 2, the feast of the Purification. I was counting on your charity. Then I recommend to your prayers the [members] of the Third Order of Mary of the Interior Life in order that Mary may perfect them, and spread this work.

Finally, I really need your prayers (for myself) since I am responsible for a large boarding school at La Seyne near Toulon, where we are educating many children for the Navy [personnel]. I lay claim to your help because I hardly have time to think of myself. Please ask our Lord for me for his holy love and for the spirit of the Interior life.

As for me, I can only ask the good Master to accept your sacrifice for his glory and for the salvation of souls and to fill you with a thousand heavenly blessings.

I am in our Lord, dear Sir,

Your very humble servant,
Eymard,
Superior of the Boarding School
and Marist Priest

Mr. Dupont, Tours
Oratory of the Holy Face,
kindness of Mme. Marceau

²⁸ Previously unpublished

²⁹ Literally: pen.

³⁰ Mme. Duhaut-Cilly.

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CO 397

TO MR. BETHFORT³¹
(VII 3/3)

February 8, 1853

Dear Sir,

How good of you to remember me so kindly! It's a pleasure for me to repay you in kind and to wish you all the blessings of Heaven and earth. You deserve them so! God loves you.

I would have been so happy if I had had the pleasure of welcoming you and having you [here] with us a few days. I am grateful that you thought of it, and if the same opportunity should recur, think of Toulon. If I were to go in your vicinity during the holidays, dear Sir, be sure that you would have my first visit. My prayers are for the protection of your little Angel: may God watch over her, and one day, may she be your consolation.

Please remember me to Madame and to Madame her mother, and believe in my sentiments of esteem and affection, I am

Dear Mr. Bethfort,
All yours,
Eymard

P.S. Please give me news about yourself from time to time. It will always please me. As for me, I am fine as well as my 112 children. I have a beautiful mission here. - Pray for me.

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CO 395

TO MISS ELIZABETH MAYET
(VII 6/17)

La Seyne, February 8, 1853

Dear daughter,

I am writing to thank you for your very kind letter. It really pleased me, because the whole Mayet Family is so kind. So I love it as my own. All the news which concerns it interests my heart. I went to see dear Fr. Mayet at Hyeres. He is the angel of the house. Everyone loves and esteems him. He is like a good father who sets everything in motion; how fortunate they are to have him! He is portly and joyful. However, his poor voice can not vibrate yet.

Oh! What a sacrifice. I scolded this dear Father, he speaks. [a lot?] I refrain from going to see him too often, pleasure hurts him.³²

I received a charming letter from Mme. Emma. I am lazy, I haven't answered her yet. Today, I am paying all my debts.

So, dear Mme. Chaudier is now in eternity. What a holy soul! She will pray for the Third Order. I recommend it to her so often.

And so the dear Third Order will have two Directors instead of one: Fr. Favre and, in his absence, Fr. Poupinel. What a consolation for me! May I die, provided that it grows, spreads the

³¹ Lawyer, Chalon-sur-Saone, member of the Third Order of Mary, Lyons.

³² Makes him speak in spite of his larynx problem.

love and praise of Jesus and Mary! Then, they wrote to tell me that they will gather the children of Mary for a meeting from time to time. That consoles me.

As for you, dear daughter, be the simple child of the Blessed Virgin: simple, poor, always happy with everything, always gracious toward all the Angels whom the good Lord sends to you, to bring you his orders, or a cross. The most beautiful life is the one which makes us love more perfectly both Jesus crucified and Mary at his feet. Well, this has been your path for a long time. May the grace of our Lord sustain you and lift you to the burning heart of your divine Spouse.

My fondest and most devoted respects to the whole Mayet Family, to whom I wish heaven and earth, the blessings of Abraham and those of St. John.

Goodbye, my dear daughter.

All yours in our Lord,
Eymard, S.

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CO 396

TO MME. EMMA PERROUD (NEE MAYET)

(VII 5/7)

February 8, 1853

I thank you kindly for your letter, my dear daughter. I can't tell you how pleased it made me. I love your family and your soul like my own soul.

Thank you for your wishes and prayers for me. I need them in the midst of my 110 children, but God supports me. I have all the strength I need for my duties, I surprise myself. Migraine headaches visit me from time to time; it's a good thing. It obliges me to make up for lost sleep and get some rest. The pain has left me. I only have one: that of not serving the good Lord as I ought. This place teaches me my faults and weaknesses. I understand better than ever the needs of the poor mother of a family, busy all day with her household and with everyone.

I understand that if we do everything for God, for his Love, these constant sacrifices must make us very pleasing to him. Therefore, my dear daughter, do everything for God, in union with Jesus and Mary. Work in God's presence. Give him honor and praise for all you do and you will be a disciple of Nazareth.

As for your direction; it is very simple because it is easy to know you. When you go to Lyons, try Father Favre. He is a holy Priest who is very enlightened. He is very simple, very gentle; he really understands the human heart. However, if you should be afraid of him, put direction aside. - He is a close friend of good Father Mayet. Stay with Father Neron. He knows you, introductions are unnecessary. The details of a good direction are simple:

1) We give an account of our state [of soul], our occupations, then of our exercises of piety, especially our meditation, how we do it, what we experience, how we fail, and then, ordinarily make a resolution.

2) We speak about our temptations and difficulties, and ask about the best way to benefit from them.

3) We speak about our [spiritual] attraction, whether we feel some urgings of grace which are strong and gentle, constant and spontaneous, that is, if we feel some inclination toward a virtue, or a mystery of our Lord.

Well, when a director understands the interior life, the character of God's graces, he can direct a soul well.

Yes, my dear daughter, receive Communion and steal a few moments from time to time to gain strength. Our Lord can do a great deal in us in a short time. Then he has such a great love for the poor, for Christian mothers, that you will be well received.

Always go to the good Lord very simply but generously, firmly and gently. Keep an open account with divine mercy³³ and God will be pleased with you.

At Hyeres, I saw good Father Mayet³⁴ - I found him well - but especially loved, cared for and respected. The most tender mother could not do better. He really deserves it. We correspond. I have news from him often; he is happy. I'd like to see him more often because he is so kind!

I am pleased with all the news you give me about good little Marie. She is your Angel. Keep her with you as long as you can. - This is not in view of loving a child for oneself: but where could she be better? For her own happiness, I hope that this dear little Marie will never leave you.

A thousand and one regards to good Mr. Perroud,³⁵ our dear brother in Mary. Yes, he is a Third Order Member, the medal is only secondary, and it's so easy to obtain one and to request one from Father Favre or Father Poupinel.

Goodbye, my dear daughter, be assured that I am very happy to receive and get news about you. We prayed very much for your dear husband. Thank God for leaving him with you. May he watch over him and bless him always.

All yours in our Lord,
Eymard

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CO 398

TO MME. GAUDIOZ
(III 2/2)

February 9, 1853

Dear sister in Mary,³⁶

Thank you for your kind letter, for your wishes³⁷ and prayers for me. I like to offer you the same and to bless you. You know that I cannot pass Bellecour³⁸ without stopping to say hello on the way. It is my favorite house. The thought of a retreat for you and Mr. Gaudioz really pleases me. It is a good thing. We need it, especially when we have so much business and responsibility.

Dear sister, continue to make the good resolution to never be discouraged, to always renew your confidence in God. Then, begin and say: take heart! Today I will be gentle, generous, faithful to my prayers, and at night the good Lord will fill you with his divine consolations.

Alas! My daughter, life is such a Calvary, a state of continual sacrifice. To remain faithful we cannot lose sight of heaven above and of Jesus, our good Savior, who loves us and helps us to follow him, of Mary our good mother who precedes us and helps us to Calvary and leads us to Jesus.

Thank you for your lovely picture. It made me very happy. As for me, I can only bless you, you and your family, and say that I am ever in our Lord, dear sister,

Devotedly yours,
Eymard

P.S. My profound respects to your dear sisters.

³³ Perhaps: to receive divine mercy.

³⁴ Her brother.

³⁵ Her husband.

³⁶ The sister of Marguerite Guillot.

³⁷ New Year's wishes.

³⁸ Home of the Guillot family.

TO MR. CLAUDE GAUDIOZ
(III 1/3)

February 9, 1853

Dear friend and brother in Mary,

I am truly sorry that I kept you waiting for an answer. You are always papa Gaudioz to me. Recently I've been very busy with sick people and business of every kind. Excuse me, for friendship's sake.

It certainly would be very comforting to see you, to share your sorrows and joys. I can only share in them by praying to God for you and your dear family, calling the blessings of God and the Blessed Virgin upon your work.

Your thought of making a retreat, dear friend and brother, really pleased me. Oh, try to steal a few days from your numerous occupations, and go close yourself in for five or six days at La Favorite, under the direction of good Fr. Maitrepierre or Fr. Champion. There, your soul will rest a little in prayer and pious reflections. Then, you can cast a glance on the principal failings of your life, but briefly and without anxiety, and it will help you. When we are constantly in the midst of society, we become weak. If we, in spite of the holiness of our sacred ministry, didn't make a retreat every year, and brief ones during the year, our souls would dry up. And then, at the moment of death we will be so happy to say: I made a good retreat!

On the first days of the retreat be careful not to weary your mind. Go into it simply and with good will. I will pray very much for you. I would be happy to learn that the role of the Justice of Peace would only be one of encouragement.

Love one another. Bear with one another. May the more perfect one anticipate the needs of the other in order to have more merit, and all will go well.

I embrace you with my whole heart. From time to time give me news about yourself and believe me ever, dear friend and brother,

All yours in our Lord,
Eymard

P.S. My religious regards to your sisters. Poor women! They must really need you!

TO MME. CLOTILDE THOLIN-BOST
(IV 11/52)

All for God alone

February 9, 1853

My dear daughter,

I am also writing to tell you my wishes and hopes³⁹ at the feet of our Divine Master, the offering which I renew every day at 7:00, when it is my honor and happiness to serve as a priest at the altar of love, on the mystical Calvary. Therefore, I ask that Jesus may rule and live in you in the fullness of his spirit and love. Oh! How joyful Heaven must be, how pleased the Blessed Trinity

³⁹ Evidently New Year's wishes.

must be to listen when a Christian soul cries out: “No, it is not I who lives within, it is Jesus who lives in me! His truth, whether veiled or luminous, lives in my mind, the reflection of his virtues and sufferings come alive in my imagination; his heart crowned with thorns, opened by the lance, burning with love, his divine heart absorbs, penetrates, enlivens my heart; the sacred wounds⁴⁰ of his body impress themselves on my body like a divine seal of his eternal covenant with me. His will is the rule, the life, the instinct of my will. I abide in Jesus and Jesus abides in me. As long as there is a single suffering, feeling, desire, or affection to sacrifice to you, oh my God, leave me on the Calvary of life. I will have time later for joy, now I want to suffer with you, not to say, because of you; but then! Yes, because of you, oh devouring and consuming fire!”

This, my daughter, is what we ask our Lord to become through his grace and love; ask it for me. Oh I need it so! I would need to sleep very few hours, in order to be able to renew my strength⁴¹ at night, for the losses of the day. The soul suffers and loses touch with itself when it is involved in a way of life which is too externalized.

I’m very happy with the news you give me about your children; you are their best teacher. The three first classes of Latin consist only in studying and applying principles of Grammar. Write and tell me how far they have progressed and I could suggest some helpful book. The essential thing is to make them report everything by means of grammatical and logical analysis. To make them apply the known rules of syntax in essays and train them always to speak French correctly, to avoid trivial expressions in conversation because that would warp their taste. I’m happy to hear the good news you gave me concerning Mr. Tholin. May our Lord help him to grow more and more in the knowledge of his love! I wish your good sister were happy, but do not press her too much. This heartfelt sorrow happened for her own good, in one sense. God will complete the good begun.

Goodbye, my dear daughter, I don’t need to tell you that your letters are welcome.

All yours in our Lord,
Eymard

P.S. You would do well to buy the little book: *Elementary Latin Exercises and Methods Applied to Latin Grammar of de Lhomond*, by J. Geoffroy, Paris, from the author, rue St. Louis 27, at the Marais.

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CO 402

TO MR. CREUSET

(V 5/8)

[La Seyne-sur-Mer], March 17, 1853

Very dear friend and brother in Mary,

Thank you for your letter, for your kind greetings. They touch me deeply and I wish you the same with my whole soul.

What sad news you are giving me; your wife is very ill! Oh! Oh! What trials you are experiencing from our Lord! How heavy the cross must be! As you know, St. Paul says: *Quoniam per multas tribulationes oportet nos intrare in regnum coelorum.*⁴²

That is the path to Heaven for the one who carries the cross with Jesus! Bear yours well, dear brother. The way is not long, the rest is eternal; the crucifixion last a few hours, the glory which follows it is eternal! And then: God wills it. May this divine word sustain, strengthen and console you...

⁴⁰ Literally: stigmata.

⁴¹ Spiritual strength through prayer.

⁴² “It behooves us to enter the kingdom of heaven by means of many trials.”

We will all pray for the healing of your dear wife. On the feast of St. Joseph, we will begin a novena to obtain that grace.

You did well to leave that small place at St. Regis. Providence is very kind; trust in its kindness, it will always go before you.

Continue to be a good Third Order member, all good things will come to you from it. It is true that the duties of [your] state [in life] must pass first.

I am writing a few words to your dear wife.

Goodbye dear friend, news from you will always please me.

All yours in *Christo*,
Eymard, S.M.

Mr. Creuset
rue Louis-le-Grand, 12
Lyons

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CO 403

TO MME. CREUSET
(V 6/8)

[La Seyne-sur-Mer], March 17, 1853

Madame and dear sister in Mary,

I am very sad to learn that you are ill, and I would really like to be in Lyons to go to comfort you and help you to carry your cross.

Trust in Jesus and Mary, my dear sister. Unite your sufferings to our prayers: on Saturday we will begin a novena to St. Joseph for you and for your healing.

Your part, my dear daughter, is to draw all possible profit from your sufferings. Unite them to the sufferings of Jesus and Mary. Christian suffering is the purgatory of the faithful soul. When we are suffering, we don't have the courage to reflect, nor to pray, but we can bless God, and honor him even more perfectly by submitting to his holy and ever gracious Will. Please, my dear daughter, look at Heaven, the eternal and divine [Heaven] which Jesus is giving you. Take courage and have confidence. In Heaven you will be so happy to have suffered something for the love of our Lord Jesus!

I am leaving you to go to say Mass and to pray for you.

All yours in our Lord,
Eymard, S.

TO MISS MARGUERITE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)
(II 100/395 VI 2)

La Seyne-sur-Mer, March 17, 1853

I am finally free [to write to] you. Some of my professors have been ill, some of the children too. Adoration⁴³ to take care of, etc., etc., impossible to have a quiet moment to think. At last, I do have a moment and it is yours. I know that you are patient and compassionate in your charity and that your little reproaches are only rightful complaints, to make me remember you, as if I could forget you.

March 19 - Today is your feast day as a Third Order Member. I wished you well and wish you good St. Joseph's very special protection, his spirit and his love for Jesus and Mary. Our whole house is making the month of St. Joseph as devoutly as possible, and we are experiencing its very comforting results: our children are truly devout. I really love this great saint. - I assume that you prayed to him for me.

21st - Now about your letters. I never would have believed that I could be so far behind, and yet my thought goes to Lyons everyday.

1. Thank you for having thought about me on St. Agatha's day. It is indeed my beautiful baptismal day, and the eve, my poor birthday.

2. I liked what you told me about my spiritual needs, that is true charity. Yes my daughter, pray very much for your Father, he needs it and is very grateful. I don't need anything else, I have enough sufferings to constitute a small cross and enough strength to work: what a beautiful situation! in my opinion it's the most beautiful, and I thank the good Lord for it.

Good Friday - This poor letter is taking very long, isn't it? My dear daughter, you know it's only for lack of time that it is so. I have just finished the morning Offices, I have a brief moment, it will be for you alone.

The idea of a retirement home for the elderly single Third Order Members always appealed to me. I had spoken about it with one of the sisters who has had this thought for a long time, Miss du Rousset. I could see much good in it, but also, many difficulties. First of all it would require a good leader and money. Today, this thought still appeals to me, but I think the time for it has not come yet. It would require a Priest who would be wholly dedicated to it, and Fr. Superior General might not give one. Here is how I understand the Third Order in its full perfection:

1. To establish a Third Order religious house for women which would be like a center for the lay Third Order members, a place where they would come for renewal. And if they met the required conditions, they would be admitted into the community. 2. A similar house for men. Perpetual Adoration would be established there as the nourishment and center of piety. 3. Then houses of Nazareth for those who wouldn't have a taste for community life or who weren't able to leave the world. I would establish a house of Nazareth especially where it would be impossible to establish a Third Order community. The important thing is to have a center for the Third Order. Until now, the director has been its center in Lyons. He should be only its soul, to give it its impulse. A family center is needed.

My love for the Third Order leads me to wish that Father General would assign me to that branch with another priest, so that we might devote all our time to its direction. I would try to spread the work everywhere. That, my daughter, is my whole thought. The good Lord hasn't willed it yet. Shall he [do so] later! Whatever he wills and nothing other! One thing is certain, if they wrote to me saying: "Dedicate yourself to the Third Order," I would leave immediately and gladly. The good Lord sees my heart, he knows what I need. That another should do it, doesn't matter to me! provided that Jesus and Mary be loved and served, and that spiritual persons be sustained and strengthened.

⁴³ The Adoration group of Toulon.

Yes, follow your attraction. However, if the establishment of such a house depended on your consent, it would be well to give it. Works which are not proper to the nature of the Church itself, even those which come from God, begin imperfectly, and then gradually become more perfect.

Concerning your perpetual vow, so be it! May God give you grace and strength. I approve it.

In having the Rule observed in your house, you are doing something which is very pleasing to God. So even if it goes against your feelings, make this sacrifice.

The way of crucifixion is your way. Your love for our Lord must always be crucified, if you want it to be pure and united to its Spouse, that's how it was for Jesus and Mary.

Continue your direction on your knees; humility and mortification are the fruit of the cross. Your grace, your success and your peace are linked to your simple, blind obedience, and with our Lord Jesus Christ.

If Fr. Ch.⁴⁴ advises you to go once to Fr. F., in order not to stand out, do so. Mention me to him. Foreseeing this might happen, I had said a few words to him about you. He is good and simple. My daughter, your temptation is very distressing, God wills it in order to crucify you, to purify you as in a fire. Stay very close to Jesus by means of the cross, and you will come out of it triumphant and pure. Always be gentle, be a lamb toward your sisters and toward everyone. May an air of simplicity, and if I dare say so, of indifference, make you seem a bit unfeeling in the midst of opposition, as if you didn't notice it, or as if you were not sufficiently intelligent to see or grasp caustic words.

Yes, take steps about your business affairs, without being too brusque. Yes, you have the right to claim all the back rent. The note of 1851 is not retroactive: five percent is the legal fee ... [*two lines erased*]. This poor woman's work is a very good one. God will provide for it and will not allow anything to happen to you. If you can prudently do so, urge her to be prudently thrifty.

May God bless Miss Jaricot, that poor disciple of Calvary! Yes, God will bless her, for when the grain of wheat has died, it bears fruit and becomes a beautiful plant.

I come now to your letter of March 7th. Continue to love the Third Order. It's your crown, but 1. Don't give up the assemblies, that is your right. The rule sets the nominations for every three years; a change of director has nothing to do with it. 2. My opinion is that you shouldn't leave the Council on your own. You could go see Fr. Favre and offer him your resignation. If he accepts it, fine; otherwise, stay on. I will write to you again. I want to send this letter today, so that you may receive it on the holy day of Easter.

A thousand and one best wishes, in Jesus and Mary, to your household. My health is satisfactory.

All yours,

(...)

Eymard

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CO 404

TO MISS MARGUERITE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)

(II 101/395 VI 2)

May Jesus Eucharistic be praised and loved

La Seyne, April 30, 1853

Excuse me, my dear daughter, for such a long delay in answering you. It has been impossible for me to do so since Easter. I've been ill, and in the midst of many tasks. It was (so as not to leave you worried) a bit of everything: migraine headache, neuralgia, a cold. Now, I am better. So, I had put aside all the letters that needed to be answered.

Let me tell you that I wouldn't want to die before seeing the fulfillment of a beautiful and noble thought which the good Lord has placed in my heart, regarding the worship of Jesus in the Most

⁴⁴ Fr. Champion.

Blessed Sacrament. It is so great that my human nature is almost afraid of it; but so beautiful that I rejoice at the thought of it and I am encouraged to sacrifice anything for it. I'm not telling you what it is, but I am praying and asking God to make me worthy of it. I would like our Lord to tell you about it [himself] and make you know his will. Pray very much for it, and have others pray for me. I will to make the month of Mary for this intention.

Then, too, since it is for Jesus at the Holy Altar, please beg for a few silk robes,⁴⁵ whatever color (Mme. Gal had promised me one), beg for some altar linens, etc., that is like Mary's work of dressing Jesus. I'm sure you understand that I can't put my thoughts down on paper yet. Jesus must inspire you with it himself.

I'm very happy to know that you are in such good hands.⁴⁶ This thought comforts me and leaves me feeling peaceful in your regard. Have confidence, my daughter, Jesus will have his day and his hour for you.

Now I come to Miss.... 1. I found a good boarding school for the little boy. It would be with the Marist Brothers, either at Vauban, in the diocese of Moulins, or at Saint Paul-trois-Chateaux, diocese of Valence. The cost would be three hundred francs and I would see to it that they keep him for the whole year. As for our boarding school at La Seyne, it has become too expensive. Even if I cut the cost in half, there are too many incidental expenses. I will take the responsibility to inform the Brothers about everything.

2. The little girl would be fine at La Mure. I believe that board and room there are also three hundred francs. I will recommend her. Could she stay there until the holidays? When I pass through La Mure, if I see that isn't suitable, I will look elsewhere.

3. As for their mother, she should join some community, if possible. This good idea just came to me: send her to Notre Dame du Laus. Food there is inexpensive, lodging, too. She could have a little booth of religious objects. I'll recommend her to the Superior; that would be a good arrangement.

Now, don't be afraid, neither you, nor M. G.⁴⁷ Nothing will happen to you. You have performed a good deed which is outstanding and truly pleasing to God. Prudence is good, that's true. However, God is sometimes pleased to ask for a sacrifice which is even contrary to prudence. So, my dear daughters, God will bless you, and you will have saved three souls.

Please tell M. G. that I will send him a letter through you on my first free day; - tell him not to be anxious; - to leave everything to God's fatherly care - that everything works out for the good of those who trust in God.

Oh! Heaven is desirable, beautiful and sublime. However, my dear daughters, it's the achievement of suffering love. So then, treasure that suffering love! How beautiful it is that since God could not suffer through love in heaven, he came to be loved for his crucified love.

Yes, you may write to me ... [*three lines erased*]. In real need you can ... however ... I would advise you ... and I will ... made for that. So then save the fifty francs (if it's not too late) for my great eucharistic project.

I wholeheartedly approve the pilgrimage to La Salette. Do spend a few days at La Mure, there are beds for everyone.⁴⁸ Otherwise, I would be upset and would no longer call Mme. Gal my nurse mother.

Poor Third Order! It is pushing its roots deeply into the ground; it will grow very tall, continue to love it. Oh! How can La Puylata despise it?⁴⁹ They don't understand it; besides, those good fathers are afraid. Oh! If I had been timid, nothing would have been done. I used to tell our Lady: I will be blamed, but as long as this succeeds, it doesn't matter.

Come now! dear daughter of the cross. Attach yourself to our Lord, your thorn-crowned Spouse. That is the wedding band of divine union. I bless you and yours with all my heart.

⁴⁵ perhaps vestments?

⁴⁶ Spiritual director and confessor.

⁴⁷ Perhaps Mr. Gaudioz, her brother-in-law.

⁴⁸ at his family home.

⁴⁹ The Marist community.

To MISS ANTONIA BOST
(IV 8/28)

J.M.J.⁵⁰

May 8, 1853

Mademoiselle,

I am finally writing a few words to answer your dear letter and to tell you that while I was reading it I was praising God for you, for his gifts and graces, and especially asking this good Father to increase them and to make you very faithful to his love.

How fortunate you are, to have understood so young that Jesus alone is the only true and eternal God of the heart! So, conceal your heart in his divine heart, so that they may be united by the same life.

Yes, Mademoiselle, you are truly where God wants you to be and wants you in his love. Don't look for any other situation, but learn how to find in your situation the peace and retreat of Nazareth, the charity and zeal of Jesus our Savior in Judea. So then you also need to have your Tabor, your Cenacle; then, accept the Calvary which Jesus sets up around you, for there certainly is one. Then, too, the heart is always a living cross.

To love our situation and its duties, to sanctify its sorrows and sacrifices, this is what Jesus loves most. So be happy with his will.

I will pray with you for your dear mother: one more thought, one more step, and she will be a saint. But as for you whom Jesus loves, complain to your divine Spouse for leaving you sad and ask him for this miracle of grace. You have full power over his heart.

As for meditation, I would like you to be a disciple of prayer, because without prayer there is no habitual union with God. You need a type of prayer which is suited to your temperament, your situation, your inner inclination, consequently, your heart. Speak simply and candidly to our Lord as with another self, as with your sister. Be a child who is full of love and surrendered to her good Master. Let it be an interior conversation with God more than a work of the mind. Then, a scattered, distracted meditation will come together, because it will express all the thoughts and needs of your heart.

You must make your little meditation with our Lord every day.

Do ask the Blessed Virgin for this gift of prayer; also request it for me. It's the gift which encloses all gifts and this is the most beautiful of months.

Devout and heartfelt chats with your good sister are worth a meditation; but they can't replace it because after speaking joyfully about the Lord Jesus, we must still say to him: My God, I love you!

I'm sending you a [spiritual] exercise for the month for the sisters of the Third Order, a bit late, it's true.

My respectful regards to Madame, your sister. I can't get her off my mind. She is ill, something makes me think of her often. Do tell her that our Lord really loves her and that she in turn must love her situation and her cross in God's love.

I am in our Lord,
All yours,
Eymard

Mme. Tholin-Bost
at Tarare (Rhone)
Mlle. Bost

⁵⁰ Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

TO MISS MARGUERITE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)
(II 102/395 VI 2)

*L.J.E.*⁵¹

La Seyne, May 10, 1853

I am hurrying to write to you, my dear daughter. I wasn't able to [do so] until now. We had First Communion, Confirmation, and Ordination during these last few days, and I haven't had a moment.

1. About the little child. Yesterday I sent the notes to the brother director at Saint Paul-trois-Chateaux (Drome), it is farther south than Valence. At the present time this brother (Br. Leonide), is supposed to be at the Hermitage, near Saint-Chamond, at the motherhouse, for a general meeting which is beginning Friday and due to last about ten days. If someone could go there from Lyons, no, rather, let me write to him, so that he may answer from there. He will send his answer to Mr. Gaudioz. I am asking him to keep the child during the holidays.

If Chambery were a possibility, that would be fine, or Notre Dame du Laus. What can we do? My dear daughter, don't regret the trouble [it has given you] and its consequences. It is a good work which you all took on [yourselves] and the good Lord will repay you for it. During the time of persecutions, the confessors of the faith were kept in hiding, in spite of the persecutor's threats and rage. I would advise St. Paul-trois-Chateaux as a preferred option; that would be safer than elsewhere.

My secret? I'm not going to tell you yet. I'm praying and asking others to pray. Does the good Lord only want me to have a desire for it? I would truly like to see it happen, if he wills it. Seeing that I am weak and ill, I would hardly dare think of it, except that I know that the good Lord likes to use what is unfit, unworthy and inept to show forth his grace and goodness.

You guessed part of it, but not everything: it is to establish the ORDER OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT. That is my great dream.

I am leaving you to go for the May devotions.

Goodbye, good daughter, let yourself be truly crucified by holy obedience and for love of our Lord Jesus. Then, don't let your sorrows and temptations trouble your soul: God wants it.

All yours,
Eymard

⁵¹ Abbreviation for Lou soit Jesus Eucharistique, Praised be Jesus Eucharistic.

TO COUNTESS ADELE DE REVEL DE NESC
(VIII 4/26 VII 17)

L.J.E.

La Seyne Boarding School, May 12, 1853

Very dear sister in Mary,

How could I have waited so long to answer your letter, always welcome, long-awaited, and read with such pleasure! And yet, it's true, you may say I had forgotten you, or something else? Oh, no! That's impossible. On the contrary, when we have an outstanding debt, we are conscious of it all the time. If my prayers and wishes for you had been more perfect, you would have been aware of them every day. But, why this delay? For all sorts of reasons: I haven't written to anyone for two and a half months - I hardly had time to sleep - sick teachers to replace, Adoration at Toulon to direct in the absence of the Priest-in-charge, my 115 children, little spring illnesses.. 1st Communion, Confirmation, Examinations, Administration, etc., and on top of all that, migraines and neuralgia. You will agree that I deserve a little indulgence, but don't let this stop you from writing to me. It's over now, and things are better at the moment.

Dear sister, you should have written me a short, urgent letter, or reproached me, or come to reproach me in person.

Now to your letter: the bad news about your health made me very sad; now that you could have a more peaceful life, the good Lord is putting you on the cross, and you are ill with the prospect of continuing to suffer. Nature trembles and becomes frightened at the thought; but may the love of Jesus strengthen and lift you above the cross. The suffering of love is its very life and perfection. It seems that God wants nothing but this for our eternal crown. That crown is beautiful, because of its thorns and wounds.

Come now, dear daughter, let us change the color and perspective in this picture: do not let the sun of Calvary be its light, but the sun of Heaven. Let's change the names of the sacrifices and give them the beautiful and gentle name of the love of Jesus Crucified.

But do not think too much about death. No, no, that does not lead to much greatness. Think rather about the value of life, about grace, about the love of God sanctifying you, purifying you, and separating you from everything so that he may unite himself perfectly with you.

You must not die yet. I would like to be there - no one has more right than I. I would like to close your eyes and commend your dear soul, in all its beauty, to Jesus and Mary.

No, no, you have not been making sacriligious Communion. Do not torment yourself about it. Lukewarm Communion, alas! are the fruit of human weakness. "All you who are sad and heavy-burdened, come to Me," says our Lord and our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament - since that is the only place he is on earth - so Holy Communion is the table of the poor, the infirm, the weak, just as it is also for eagles and saints.

And so, my dear daughter, go to Holy Communion with your limitations and your poverty - that is the very best thing you could do, for it is life, eternal life! If you want to accuse yourself of anything, just do so in a general way, regarding your lack of devotion in Holy Communion - no more.

As for your direction: live from past experience, and if you need me, I shall be there at your service. I suggest a stratagem, tell me: "I await your reply by such-and-such a date;" and I will be there.

The promised retreat is as good as finished. I must bring it to you and direct you in it.

Keep the good works going, but without tiring yourself. Never leave a good undone for fear of doing it badly or causing harm by it.

Mme. Spazzier has sent me the 20 fr you mentioned. Many thanks for all the news you give me from Lyons - about your friends and mine; everything is interesting about a place one loves, and

I love Lyons more than anywhere else. No doubt about it: Lyons, and my daughters in our Lord will always have pride of place. I hear very few Confessions here and prefer to hear very few.

You did well to sacrifice your natural feelings to grace which goes beyond nature in your relationship with Mme. de Revel⁵² - good, I am pleased with you: once more, and you will be victorious.

Poor Mr. Gabit! Is it possible that his brother has caused him such a heavy cross! Alas! Wealth is like a house exposed to storms and tempests; fortunately, he is rich in the love of our Lord.

My fond regards [to you], as well as to your good friends, Madame Louis and Madame Hippolite⁵³ whom I would have been pleased to see.

I asked Fr. Hermann to go to see you and to give you my greetings. I am sure he will have found the time.

Goodbye, my good daughter and dear sister; pray for me, obtain for me a special grace towards Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Write to me as if you were talking to me, and believe me, ever in our Lord,

All yours,
Eymard

410

CO 407

TO MISS MARGUERITE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)

(II 103/395 VI 2)

La Seyne, Wednesday, May 18, 1853

My dear daughter, I wrote to Brother Leonide at the Hermitage, at Saint-Chamond, asking him to answer Mr. Gaudioz. If he hasn't done so yet, you would do well to send someone there and bring this matter to a close. I believe they would also take him at Vauban, near Moulins, but since it's too close to the department of Sane-et-Loire, it might be better to place him at Saint-Paul-trois-Chateaux.

I was very pleased to read and reread your last letter. The poor Third Order needs something, it's true. The Blessed Virgin will give it Jesus.

Pray very much about what I told you, and especially for me. I am doing well, my cold seems better, and my migraine headache is fair. Manure is needed at the base of the tree. If at least I were good manure!

Goodbye.

All yours,
Eymard

My fond regards to your dear mother and to all your dear sisters.

Miss Marguerite Guillot
Rue du Juge de paix
Fourviere, Lyons (Rhône)

⁵² Perhaps her sister-in-law.

⁵³ Spelling not clear in original, perhaps Hippolyte.

411

CO 408

TO MISS MARGUERITE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)
(II 104/395 VI 2)

La Seyne, May 21, 1853

I've just received, my dear daughter, the letter of admission for the young boy. I am enclosing it here. So you can send him whenever you wish. If they can wait for Brother Leonide, he would take him with him; it would be that much less cost and worry. Or if you need to send him away sooner, you could send him with the letter from Brother Jean-Baptiste, the Provincial of the brothers.

I have time only to ask you to give my love to Fr. Champion. I know that he is wholly dedicated to you and that he will help you all that he can. Be like a child toward him, childlike obedience is God's way. It is truly a great gift of Providence for you. What you see happening is what I told you: God never forsakes those who belong to him. He always sends an Ananias to lead them on their way. The last one is always the best, because he is the one who has the grace of the moment; he is the pilot for the journey.

We must also pray very much for the Third Order, so that it may be what Mary, its Queen, wishes it to be. Pray for the idea I mentioned to you. Ask dear Fr. Champion to pray and to have others pray.

My respects to your whole family.

All yours in our Lord,
Eymard

Miss Marguerite Guillot
Rue du Juge de paix, 33
Fourviere, Lyons (Rhône)

412

CO 409

TO MISS MARGUERITE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)
(II 105/395 VI 2)

La Seyne, May 25, 1853

I am writing to tell you, my dear daughter, that I received your last letter containing the note for the Masses. Thank you.

Oh! What a cross and what troubles you have had about that poor family! Yet, that charitable deed must have been pleasing to the good Lord: to withdraw the poor mother and her children from scandal and abuse. But the good Lord has his inscrutable designs, we must adore them. I sympathize with all the difficulties it caused you. I really prayed for all of you in that sad situation.

We will do as you say, but I repeat, you can write me your difficulties ... if you should need to, and you know how dear your soul is to me in God's sight. So I present you to him often, even daily, that you may be worthy of his love and his graces. Fr. Champion's direction will greatly benefit your soul, it is forceful and selfless. You needed that, profit from it. Suggest the thoughts to me . . . write and tell me how things stand, because I am still worried. I believe you must have received my last letter, in which I had inserted the one from Brother Jean-Baptiste.

As for me, [my health is] not bad, I still have some chest pain, it will pass, if the good Lord wills. I am still able to work as usual and rise at four.

Are you praying hard for the Order of the Most Blessed Sacrament? We need men and priests of fire. We must ask for them from our Lord, especially during the beautiful eucharistic octave.⁵⁴

Goodbye, my daughter. I bless you all in the divine love of our Lord.

All yours,
Eymard

413

CO 410

TO MISS ELIZABETH MAYET
(VII 7/17)

*L.J.C.*⁵⁵

La Seyne, May 25, 1853

Mademoiselle and dear sister in Mary,

I received your kind letter this morning and I am hurrying to answer you, to curb your sadness.

Fr. Colin, [our] Superior General, has just written a delightful letter full of sensitivity and gratitude toward good Mr. Tonny, and of affection toward dear Mr. Mayet.⁵⁶ He tells him that he can come when he wishes, that he always considered him as a son, etc....

So now the matter is settled. However, since it is to Mr. Tonny that he gave the permission, he advised him to write to him himself,⁵⁷ so that Mr. Tonny need only leave Father free to return, that is all. For my part, I will write to Father Superior to ask for Fr. Mayet here at La Seyne.

Urge Mr. Tonny to let him come back. This isolation is not healing him. He is always the same; our dear Father's physical condition is fine, but not his poor larynx.

My respectful sentiments to all your beloved family, and especially to your good sister.

Pray very much for me, so that I may correspond fully to everything God wants from me.

Goodbye, my dear daughter in our Lord.

All yours,
Eymard, S.

414

CO 411

TO MISS MARGUERITE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)
(II 106/395 VI 2)

J.M.J.

Maubel, June 17, 1853

I am writing you a few words from Maubel, my daughter, a house of ours [which is] four leagues from La Seyne. I arrived here yesterday, I'll be spending a few days here to gain a bit of strength. For the last ten days my head, my chest, my whole body have been overtaxed. I am better now. Since the whole rhythm of the house of La Seyne was too tiring for me, I came here. In

⁵⁴ Octave of the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ.

⁵⁵ Abbreviation for Praised be Jesus Christ!

⁵⁶ her brothers.

⁵⁷ Fr. Mayet.

Lyons, they don't know that I am not well.

1. If you are questioned about the Third Order, say what you know and answer whatever you are asked.... If they want to give you a responsibility, ask them not to consider you; if they insist, give in.

2. No doubt, your form of direction can only be a great means for you to overcome the devil, and submit [your] rebellious nature to grace, but do so gently and calmly. Have no doubt about it, you can tell me your fears and conscience problems without Fr. Champion's permission. You cannot be prevented from doing so ... [*two lines erased*], not even in the case of vows.

3. Suffer for love of our Lord Jesus Christ, that is your Calvary.

4. I often think of you, especially about your material problems.

Goodbye. Don't write to me before a week.

Eymard

Miss Marguerite Guillot
Rue du Juge de Paix, 31
Fourviere, Lyons (Rhône)

415

CO 412

TO MME. CLOTILDE THOLIN-BOST
(IV 12/52)

May Jesus Eucharistic be praised and loved

Maubel, June 23, 1853

My dear daughter in Jesus,

I am writing to you from Maubel, a new house of the Society where a novitiate is beginning. I had been worn out for some time, since Holy Week. For the last two weeks the fatigue has increased. Then the doctor decided to send me to the country. (I hope to be in La Seyne in four days.)

I don't know what will happen to this chest ailment. If this is the first message to prepare me for my departure,⁵⁸ may God be blessed a thousand times over. Some say that it's a chest inflammation, others an excess of fatigue, others a sinus infection. As for me, I leave the secret to our good Master and his divine Providence. But to finish my apostolic career without having done anything great for our Lord, to have led only a very tepid life, that, my dear sister, sometimes makes my poor heart sad. And this illness happened at the exact time when I was going to make you happy by sharing great news with you and then I had to give up everything.

Here is the substance of it (but please don't say anything). On April 18, during thanksgiving after holy Mass, I was seized suddenly by a strong feeling of gratitude and love for Jesus, and so said to him: "What great thing could I do for you?" And a sweet, peaceful, but strong and stirring thought made me happy to think of devoting myself to the service of the Most Blessed Sacrament, to ask permission to do so, to seek the means to support and form the great work of perpetual Adoration, to press for the establishment of a religious order of the Most Blessed Sacrament. Isn't that a beautiful thought, my daughter! Isn't it surprising, that since the foundation of holy Church, the holy Eucharist hasn't had its own religious body, its honor guard, its court, its family, like the other mysteries of our Lord, which have all had a religious body to honor them and preach about them? It seemed to me that I was willing to make any sacrifice for Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament.

⁵⁸ Death.

I shared these feelings with Fr. Hermann who was here with us, with whom I had been friends for a long time; and lo, our thoughts and desires were alike. We praise God. The conclusion was: let us work for this divine undertaking, find the men and the means. Let us pray, suffer and wait for God's time. - That is the point where we are now, and we are both sick. Yesterday, I saw dear Fr. Hermann at Hyeres: he is not well, but we are happy to suffer. He would like to go to Heaven; and I would like to stay here for the glory of our Lord. We had a long discussion. At the end we entrusted ourselves to the divine holy Will. And so, my sister, pray and ask our good Master to give me the grace to work for his glory. How and when? I am expecting a sign from his hand. In the meantime, we are laying the foundations: several priests would already dedicate themselves to it, but there are still problems to be solved.

Now about the training of your dear children.

1. Always proceed the same way. The first four classes are, properly speaking, only classes for grammar and principles. This is what makes for good studies. And so, French, Latin and Greek parsing. Examine each word individually, study its nature: simple word, composite word. Study its form, the form of the declensions, of the verbs. Study their characteristics: compare the words to each other in order to see and appreciate their similarities. Notice the prepositions, evaluate them. - This is what grammatical and logical parsing consists in.

When studying grammar, also proceed with the study of the first part, and the syntax which relates to it; prepare essays containing the rules of syntax already studied. Do a little and do it well, as you are doing. It would be well to do similar essays. Here is how to do it: when the child has done a translation, give him this same translation to repeat as an essay, while changing a few words - the subjects, the adjectives, a few verbs. There is a great advantage to this: it makes the essays pleasant and easy, and then, it saves time since there is no need to look for words. Finally, they have a model before their eyes and become accustomed to writing correct Latin.

As for the history of France, the best one I know is the one by Amedeus Gabourd, in three volumes. Use it; I advise you to use it in preference to all the little summaries that are done even by good authors. Here, we use Fr. Drioux.

You will do well if you have them translate *Viris Illustribus*⁵⁹ by Vervost. Begin the Greek grammar by Burnouf, emphasizing the declensions and the verbs; - then later, have them translate the Greek *Enchiridion* by Cognet. You will find it translated word for word. It would be a great pleasure for me in our Lord if he would allow me to go see you during the holidays. I leave that to his holy Will.

I will get the books you mentioned to me. Thank you very much.

Come now, my daughter, love our Lord well, make him known and loved with all your strength. That is the only thing that makes life worthwhile. Write to me, pray for me, in order that I may do everything the good Master wills.

All yours in his love,
Eymard

Mme. Clotilde Tholin-Bost
Tarare (Rhône)

⁵⁹ "About Famous Men."

TO MR. CLAUDE GAUDIOZ
(III 2/3)

All for God alone.

La Seyne, June 30, 1853

Very dear friend and brother in Mary,

I've been wanting to write you a little friendly note for a long time, because the thought of you and of Madame and your family is ever present to me. I love to pray to God for you and for your business, so that the good Lord may bless it all and that everything may serve your salvation. Yes, everything must serve our salvation; otherwise we would suffer great losses for heaven. You can gain much merit every day because at every moment you can practice charity, meekness, patience, humility, and all the virtues. Only let us ever keep God and his holy will in mind. Let us never be discouraged by our faults nor our temptations. The humility of trust is the most beautiful of victories.

Always keep your heart at peace, trusting in divine Providence, and be sure that God will always be your Father and your support.

I learned with the greatest satisfaction what you did for your sisters by giving them ten percent on all the money they have [invested] with you. You are their good Providence and the good Lord will repay you a hundredfold for the double interest you are so generously giving them. Alas! These poor women truly needed it.

Our holidays will begin at the end of July, and if I should go to Lyons, you, good papa Gaudioz, will have my first visit, as you had my last one. While waiting, pray for me, and remember me to the prayers of dear Mme. Gaudioz.

I am, in our Lord,

Dear friend and brother,
All yours,
Eymard

P.S. I am responsible for the Adoration of Toulon. It is an admirable Work: 100 gentlemen spend the night before the Blessed Sacrament and at least 300 women during the day, from Thursday to Friday night. So, God has his chosen ones everywhere.

Please give the enclosed letter to Mr. Perret; I don't know his address.

TO COUNTESS ADELE DE REVEL DE NESC
(VIII 5/26 VII 17)

(L & S)⁶⁰

La Seyne Boarding School, July 1, 1853

Dear sister in Mary,

Thank you very much for your kind letter. I feel better; I have been back at work for a week, and I am stronger every day. It was a sign from God. A few illnesses from time to time are good for us. They force the soul to recollect itself and look back and forward.

⁶⁰ Meaning unknown.

But I am sorry to hear that you are not well. I pray to the good Lord not to draw you to Heaven just yet, but to give you his Holy love.

The Work of the Most Blessed Sacrament is still [hidden] in the ground and germinating. Pray for it. Fr. Hermann is still sick. He has just left for the Pyrenees, to the springs at Bagneres. He is a saintly priest. But I hope he will get better.

Goodbye, my good daughter and dear sister, believe me ever in our Lord,

All yours,
Eymard

418

CO 414

TO MISS MARGUERITE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)

(II 107/395 VI 2)

La Seyne, July 6, 1853

I am writing to give you news about myself. I am doing fairly well; I have been working for a few days. I don't say that I'm without some discomfort, but that doesn't prevent me from working. It fills me with courage to think that I will be going to rest a little at the feet of our good Mother of Laus, during the holidays.

If you have a copy of my old minutes of the Third Order, please lend them to me. You could bring it to Mme. Chassaignon, rue St. Jean, Rectory; this lady will be sending us a package toward the tenth of the month.

Could you inquire in Lyons, whether it is possible to find [a statue of] the Immaculate Virgin sixty or seventy centimeters high, which would be beautiful, solid and rain-resistant? We would like to buy one.

Goodbye, my dear daughter. I have time only to bless you, you and your whole family. I saw Fr. Favre. He is leaving for Lyons tonight. He loves the Third Order, but he is in a situation which is a bit delicate: Fr. Colin doesn't give him enough freedom. Pray, and the time of adolescence and adulthood will come for Mary's family.

All yours in our Lord,
Eymard

P.S. Write to me without stamps, it is much easier.⁶¹

Miss Marguerite Guillot
Rue du Juge de Paix, 31
Fourviere, Lyons (Rhône)

⁶¹ Current usage had the addressee pay for the letter when it wasn't previously stamped.

TO MME. FRANCHET
(VII 22/33)

J.M.J.

La-Seyne, July 6, 1853

Madame and dear sister in Mary,

It has been a long time since I received any news from you. Are you already in heaven? Or are you afraid to make me sad or to take some of my precious time?

Explain this silence to me, because you cannot doubt all the good I desire for your soul, and how dear it will always be to me. I heard indirectly that you are fine and that you are following our Lord and I praised God, because the greatest happiness of my heart is to learn that my former daughter continues to be generous and faithful.

Then, your sufferings are not fruitless. Suffering is dew from heaven. When your husband told me that he wanted me to write to you, my heart blamed you a little. Have I perhaps made you sad unknowingly?

So, I am writing to ask for this service from you. You copied the minutes for the Ladies of the Third Order in the past. I would really like to see them. Could you have someone send them to me?

Mme. Chassagnon, rue St. Jean, Rectory, should send you a package toward the tenth of the month. If you have it handy, please send it to me and I shall be grateful.

You may have heard that I have been ill. For the last two days I have been better and I am working as before.

Our poor body does not like the cross, but since God wills it, we must kiss it. Now, I have a bad neuralgia which makes me ill.

So, I will stop now and ask you to present my fond regards to Mr. Franchet and to your good little Charles.

All yours in our Lord,
Eymard

TO MILES. MARIANNE EYMARD AND NANETTE BERNARD
(III 95/145 VI 10)

July, 1853⁶²

My dear sisters,

I am always so negligent about writing to you. I don't know how time flies, the weeks and months pass and I hardly notice it. At this moment we are very happy: we have received the entire body of a saint from Rome, Saint Victorius. It is a natural size and very beautiful, in a magnificent gold reliquary. Next Sunday, we will have the solemn transfer. All the dignitaries and the people will attend. We will have music and cannons; everything will honor the glory of this holy Martyr. We are now having a preparatory novena, and I am praying to him for you.

In two weeks we will send our children home and we will be on holiday; but there is still much work to be done until then. However, I am well at present. Three weeks ago, I was slightly ill,

⁶² Around the 15th. Allusion to the transfer of the body of St. Victorius, probably La Seyne. (Troussier)

however, without being bedridden. I had indigestion and a slight indisposition. I went to spend about ten days in the country for a complete rest, and then I felt better. I am even better than before. In Lyons, they said I was very sick; but these good people prayed a lot for me, and that is always such a help.

I hope to see you during the holidays. I am still not sure when [it will be]. Try to stay well so that I might find you in good health.

I am happy to think that I will be able to greet our good Mother at Laus and La Salette once more in passing. I still don't know how I will organize my trip. I will write to you before I leave. As for Notre Dame du Laus, I don't dare promise to wait for you there. On the one hand, if I can have a few days to make my retreat there, I would need to be alone; on the other hand, if I would only pass through, it wouldn't be worth it.

Goodbye, dear sisters,

All yours in Jesus Christ,
Eymard

P.S. My best wishes to the Reymond family and to the Fayolle ladies.

421

CO 417

TO MME. NATALIE JORDAN (NEE BRENIER DE MONTMORAND)
(IV 12/75)

July 26, 1853

Madame and dear sister in Mary,

I am answering your good letter right away. I accompanied you with my prayers during your travels. I was hoping you would have the joy to visit Notre Dame du Laus. I hope that I will be able to go there and repay your devout and prayerful thought of me to our dear Mother, praying now for you and your loved ones.

Don't let yourself be troubled by your interior state. Beware of omitting holy Communion; that's a terrible temptation, a stroke of death which the devil wants to give you. Receive Communion as a poor person, receive Communion as a beggar, an invalid, a sick person, but always with trust and a desire to love God.

You need a little more calm and recollection. It will come. Now I refer to your question:⁶³

The Giroud family is the most respected family of La Mure. I knew the grandmother and her children. They are all fine. I don't believe that Mr. Giroud, the father, is a practicing Catholic but he respects religion. He is charitable and a good father.

The mother is Miss Perier from Vizille, I believe. I knew her a little. I think she is a good person. As for the young lady, I saw her when she was small; I don't have any more to say.

So then this family has a good reputation, no repulsive illnesses or infirmities. They have wealth and good parents. I offer my wishes for the happiness of all.

Our distribution [of prizes] will take place on Monday, August 1st. If you were here, I would be happy to invite you. Write to me from St. Romans if you are going there soon.

Goodbye, my dear daughter and sister in our Lord,

All yours,
Eymard

P.S. My state of health is fine, with a little prodding. The holidays are coming.

⁶³ Mme. Jordan seems to be seeking information about the family background of her future son-in-law.

422

CO 418

TO MISS MARGUERITE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)
(II 108/395 VI 2)

Notre Dame du Laus, August 16, 1853

My dear daughter in our Lord,

I've been in Laus for seven days. I'm leaving today for La Salette and La Mure. I have six Fathers with me. You can easily imagine how I prayed for you and all your dear family. It made me happy to remember your pilgrimage here. I would have liked to see it happen again. I wasn't able to write to you with all the concerns that come with the end of the school year, and I've been a bit tired. The good Mother of Laus has renewed my courage and trust.

These seven days of prayer helped me. I will arrive in Lyons in eight to ten days. Be sure, all of you, that you will always be Nazareth for me.

Goodbye then. I am leaving today.

All yours in Jesus and Mary,
Eymard

Miss Marguerite Guillot
rue du Juge de Paix, 31
Fourviere, Lyons (Rhone)

423

CO 419

TO MME. JOSEPHINE GOURD (SR. JOSEPH DU SS)
(V 12/76)

Notre Dame du Laus, August 16, 1853

Madame and dear sister in Mary,

I am writing to you from Laus, this place which is so venerated and so loved. That is to say that you as well as Miss Stephanie and your whole family have been very present to me. I really prayed for you and for your loved ones. Surrender everything to divine Providence; it keeps account of everything, and everything was for...

Don't worry about anything, don't worry about the consequences. That is God's affair.

You are poor, praise God: God enriches the poor. You are always... Truly open your soul to trust in God. He will give you abundantly the heavenly dew which makes the desert fruitful.. I would be happy to see you in Lyons. I will be there toward the end of August, until September 7, the day our retreat begins. My faithful regards to Miss Stephanie.

I've been here on retreat for the last week. I'm leaving today for La Mure.

All yours in our Lord,
Eymard

Madame Gourd

424

CO 420

TO COUNTESS ADELE DE REVEL DE NESC
(VIII 6/26 VII 17)

(A picture of Our Lady)

Notre-Dame du Laus, August 16, 1853

Mademoiselle and dear sister,

A few words from Notre Dame du Laus, this place so dear to my heart, where I feel I am resting upon the heart of the Most Blessed Virgin. In other words, I have been praying very hard for you during the week I have spent here on retreat. My soul had great need of this, and I shall go away a little stronger. I hope to be in Lyons in 8 to 10 days, and you may be sure I will visit you in the country.

I have not mentioned my health: it is reasonable, even quite good. And yet how happy I would have been to die here, at Mary's feet! But I must go on with the struggle, and I am leaving today for La Salette and La Mure.

Until we meet,

All yours in Jesus and Mary,
Eymard

Mademoiselle de Revel
Rue Ste Helene, Lyons

Aug. 16-18 - To La Salette. Aug. 18 - To La Mure.

425

CO 421

TO MISS MARGUERITE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)
(II 109/395 VI 2)

L.J.C.E.

La Mure d'Isere, August 20, 1853

I am very upset, my dear daughter, with the sad news your letter brought me. What causes me more grief is that I can't leave immediately for Lyons. I've been here for two days and I'm not too well after the trip to La Salette. However, I hope to be in Lyons Thursday night. I am praying that the good Lord will give me the grace to see your dear mother once again. Tell her about my visit.

I would have been very happy to see Miss I had written to her from Laus that I would be in Lyons only toward the end of the month.

My sister and Nanette are well. However, we really share in your sorrow. Oh! So many crosses at once!

Goodbye.

All yours in our Lord,
Eymard

P.S. If you see please express my regrets. Tell her that I will write to her if I go to Chalon.

Miss Marguerite Guillot
rue du Juge de Paix, 31
Fourviere, Lyons (Rhône)

426

CO 422

TO MISS MARGUERITE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)
(II 110/395 VI 2)

La Mure d'Isere, August 24, 1853

My dear daughter, I've just received your letter with the news of your dear mother's death. I am so sad that I wasn't able to see your dear mother again! I wanted to leave as soon as possible, hoping to see her again, when your letter arrived telling me the sad news. No need for me to tell you that I said Holy Mass for her, and that my sisters are deeply moved over your sorrow. In a few hours, I will be leaving for Grenoble. I will be in Lyons, Friday night or Saturday.

Goodbye my dear daughters. I will see you soon.

Eymard

Miss Marguerite Guillot
rue du Juge de Paix, 31
Fourviere, Lyons (Rhône)

Sept. 6 - To La Seyne to preach the Community Retreat followed, by the Student's retreat.

427

CO 423

TO MILES. MARIANNE EYMARD AND NANETTE BERNARD
(III 96/145 VI 10)

Chazey, September 13, 1853

My dear sisters,

I am still in Lyons. I was a bit ill from a threatening pneumonia. Now I am well, even better than before that problem. I came to spend several days out in the country with one of our friends. It served as a good rest for me. I will be leaving for Toulon on Thursday, and I will write to you from there. I saw the Miles. Guillot. Miss Marguerite was ill with neuralgia after their poor mother's death. She is doing better. I worked hard to find a place for Mr. Chaix's son. I am expecting an answer shortly. The owner of the place on which I am counting the most, is away: that is what delayed the matter. If you see him, please tell him that I will write to him soon.

Take care of yourselves and pray for me.

All yours in Jesus Christ,
Your brother,
Eymard

Miss Marianne Eymard
rue du Breuil
La Mure d'Isere

TO MILES. MARIANNE EYMARD AND NANETTE BERNARD
(III 97/145 VI 10)

La Seyne, October 18, 1853

Very dear sisters,

Finally I am beginning to have some free time; I'm starting with you. The seriousness of my illness in Lyons was exaggerated in the telling. I recovered quickly, and the sickness was in God's plans, as I needed to stay longer in Lyons to handle important business about the house, and everything worked out very well; so much so that I really thanked the good Lord for that illness.

When I arrived here I gave the retreat. Then [we had] the opening of the school year and our student's retreat, the days were too short for the work I had to do. I have a large family: a hundred and thirty students, eighteen teachers, ten sisters and six servants. You can see from this how I must see to everything.

My health is good. We have had beautiful weather, but a bad season: everything is very expensive. At least, if men would be converted by seeing this scourge from God! But, alas! There is a lot of blindness on earth. Nowadays they hardly even know God.

I was very pleased to see Mr. Giraud. He is so kind! We spoke a lot about you and about the village.

Take heart, my dear sisters, pray a lot for me, so that I may become a saint. I always pray for you, so that we may one day be reunited in heaven.

All yours,
Your brother,
Eymard, p.s.m.⁶⁴

TO COUNTESS ADELE DE REVEL DE NESC
(VIII 7/26 VII 17)

(L & S)

La Seyne Boarding School, La Seyne, October 22, 1853

Dear Mademoiselle,

I have an opportunity to send a word to Lyons and I have only 5 minutes to write you this short note with the indulgenced cross for the Way of the Cross, with five Our Father's and Hail Mary's, and Happy Death. I will explain all these indulgences in a long letter.

I will be happy to receive Miss Aurrin whom you mention in your letter; with a recommendation from you and Mother St. Euxodie, that is enough.

Thank you for your kind letter; I was beginning to complain about the mail service in Lyons. I am well. I wish your health were as good as mine. Take care of yourself. Yes, I too am still praying hard for you, as your soul is as dear to me as my own.

Goodbye, until next time - the 5 minutes are up - they are leaving [with the mail].

All yours in our Lord,
Eymard

⁶⁴ Abbreviation: Priest of the Society of Mary.

P.S. I have seen Mme. Spazzier - she is fairly well.

430

CO 426

TO MISS MARGUERITE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)

(II 111/395 VI 2)

All for Jesus through Mary

La Seyne-sur-Mer, October 28, 1853

My dear daughter, I am coming at last to give you a sign of life. When I arrived I had a bad case of neuralgia which lasted a few days. Then I was able to get back to work. Fortunately, I had made a brief retreat at Notre Dame du Laus. I made it in bed here as I had in Lyons. May God be praised and thanked in all things!

This year we have many more boarders than last year: a hundred and four, with twenty-four day students. God must do everything for us! I really need prayers, because my time is taken and swallowed up by everything. If the good Lord wants me to serve him through self denial, well, then! I want it with all my heart.

I really thanked God for your improvement [of health]. My dear daughter, we must serve God as he wills: by our suffering if we are ill; by our suffering and working to the extent our strength allows if we are half-sick.

I wish your health were better in order to be able to glorify God by zeal for his glory, and by charity for the salvation of others.

Don't worry about having shared your conscience problem... I know only too well how ... it's a matter of ... [two lines erased]. Once again, don't think about it anymore, nor will I. I know ... that God may always be with ... now, my dear daughter, entrust yourself once more into the hands of your heavenly Father and to his constant fatherly care. Remain grateful for the good [done] by God's servants, but don't let yourself be troubled when you are deprived. Jesus will not forget you. He is your divine Spouse. He sent a bird to feed his disciple in the desert. He would send you an angel rather than forsake you. Really, entrust yourself to your good Master in everything. You know what I have been to you. I always have the same devotedness toward you, and I always pray for you.

Accept everything that is imposed upon you for the Third Order. Do so for the love of Jesus and Mary.
My love to the whole house of Nazareth.

All yours in Jesus and Mary,
Eymard

P.S. ... [three lines erased]. Be among the first to go to Fr. Huguet.

Embrace our good Master's cross. Suffer for our dear Third Order. I have great confidence that Mary will bless it more abundantly.

TO MME. CLOTILDE THOLIN-BOST
(IV 13/52)

All for Jesus and Mary

October 28, 1853

My dear daughter,

I didn't want to write to you through an intermediary. The result is that my reply was delayed. I am upset with myself. Do as follows: set the date by which you want my answer, and you will see that I will be exact.

It is perhaps too late for me to answer you.

Here is my advice about your dear children. Don't send them to the public catechism at the parish. Keep them with you, teach them catechism yourself. This is my reason: it is better to preserve the simplicity of piety, than to expose it to scandal at such an early age.

Then, the unruliness and casualness of catechism classes in some parishes are a great danger to piety. I would also advise you to have them prepare for their first Communion in a religious house: there is more discipline and better preparation.

Also pray to find the boarding school that has the best morals. I heard many good things about the one at Montgr, near Villefranche. We will have a chance to talk about it before then. If I weren't so far away, I would take them here willingly and care for them like a mother.

I'm looking forward to your little composition on the suffering and eucharistic Jesus. Continue to pray for the great Work which I mentioned to you. The navy captain⁶⁵ whom God used for this beautiful project⁶⁶ will enter sacred Orders this year.

I know many great souls who are crying out daily for the Order of the Most Blessed Sacrament, especially Mr. Dupont of Tours, who is so well known because of his devotion to the Holy Face and his zeal to spread perpetual Adoration everywhere.

My health is good enough: I would like to live to serve Jesus and to make him loved. I would prefer to die rather than offend him.

Goodbye, dear daughter. May our Lord fill you with his graces - you, your dear husband, your children, your parents.

All yours in Jesus and Mary,
Eymard

P.S. Fr. Chambrost thanks you for remembering him.

TO MME. JOSEPHINE GOURD (SR. JOSEPH DU SS)
(V 13/76)

All for Jesus through Mary

October 28, 1853

It has been such a long time, my dear daughter, since I received news from you. Are you ill? Has someone been ill? A letter I received from Fr. Champion tells me that you are in Lyons and I am hurrying to find you there.

⁶⁵ Fr. Raymond de Cuers.

⁶⁶ French: pense.

I'm not answering your last letter which is old now, it's too late. I was thinking and expecting to answer it in person in Lyons, then God didn't will it. What made me feel a little better was to know that Fr. Champion was in Lyons. I know his charity and his prudence, and he could help you very much. I am sad to think that he won't be in Lyons any more. If you need me, you know how much I want to help you.

You see, my dear daughter, what it is like to serve God in this life of exile. God lasts forever, but his creatures only pass by, doing us good or harm, but they pass like a cloud, like a drop of water in a stream or a torrent.

Let us stay close to God who doesn't pass, who is always there with his holiness and his goodness.

Continue to be the disciple of Providence and grace. Pray for me and believe me ever,

All yours in Jesus and Mary,
Eymard

433

CO 429

TO MISS STEPHANIE GOURD

(V 10/52)

[October?] 28, 1853

Miss Stephanie,

You must be complaining a little about me, my dear daughter. You would certainly have reason to do so. However, I have some right to your indulgence, a sick person is excused.

I would have liked to see you in Lyons to know where things are with God and with yourself; to tell you to really love the good Lord and to continue to serve him with your simplicity and poverty of heart, as well as with great trust and surrender to his divine goodness.

Be happy and joyful to belong to Jesus, the best of fathers and the King of hearts and the Spouse of souls.

Pray for me.

All yours in Jesus and Mary,
Eymard

434

CO 430

TO MME. FRANCHET

(VII 21/33)

All for Jesus

October 28, 1853

Excuse me, my dear daughter, if I haven't returned your notebook. The lady who had it was on a trip when Father Reculon left. I was sorry about it. I will send it to you as soon as I can, by a more dependable way.

Thank you, my dear daughter, for remembering me. My health is adequate. I am getting up at four o'clock, therefore I am fine. Then, the good Lord has given me such a large family that I hardly have time to think about the little troubles of life. Yes, yes. I want to help your dear soul. I desire all God's gifts for it, since it is entirely God's.

Always trust. It is by rowing that we reach the port. Our Lord has said very truly: “You will cry and be sad and the world will rejoice; but have confidence, one day your sadness will turn into joy.”

I was told that they would give the Third Order an assistant-director. Try to go to him. They say he is very spiritual. He is the one who wrote the “Month of Mary for Interior Souls.” -

I said a word about you to Father Favre, but the time for missions is beginning now.⁶⁷

Receive Communion, my daughter, receive Communion. The religion of love is Communion. The life of love is Communion. [You are] poor and weak, you need the strong God. [You are] alone and solitary, you need Jesus in his Palace of love.

Come, have courage, you are now a bit old (and it makes me laugh) you have already passed the halfway mark in the rocky desert of Arabia.⁶⁸ With a little more courage the Jordan will open its path to the promised land.

Goodbye my daughter!

All yours in Jesus and Mary,
Eyd

435

CO 431

TO MISS MARGUERITE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)

(II 112/395 VI 2)

*T.P.D.S.*⁶⁹

*La Seyne-sur-Mer, November 19, 1853*⁷⁰

I received all your welcome letters, dear daughter, and read them with pleasure. You can be convinced that your letters are not too long, and they are the first ones to be read and blessed. You are everything for me in Lyons, and your dear family as well. I keep waiting to have a good stretch of time to write to you, but it never comes. I am battered back and forth so much that I never have [time] to myself. However your letters bring me a little change and relaxation. They take me back to Lyons, to converse a little about God and your soul. Here, we only hear and speak about things of this world, and often very sad things. Oh! What a sad life! since the good Lord wills it so, may he be praised!

As for my health, it's hard to say how I am. One day I am well, the next day not so. What does it matter if the engine is wearing out, provided we reach port! I am beginning to see death in a better light; I am afraid of losing everything here; so I often say to the good Lord: I'd rather die than not love you.

Pray for me so that I won't be lost in the midst of all this vanity and worldliness.

Is it possible that you were poisoned! Oh! That's all I need to add to my cross now! Only, how childish you all are, not to have known that! Please! Be a little more careful.

I bless the good Lord for having given you Fr. Favre. This Father is truly spiritual, very simple and enlightened. That is the greatest grace the Blessed Virgin could grant her Third Order. I am happy about it. When the good Lord provides you with the opportunity to see him, do so, and speak to him as you would to me about the Third Order.... Now, I am happy [because] I see that Fr. Superior General is taking care of the Third Order.

All Fr. Huguet's faults are nothing. The Blessed Virgin uses everything to attain her purpose. Don't worry about that little humiliation, it's manure for the tree. Then, too, you need to pay your debts on your vow a little, and in that way the good Lord is offering you some precious gains.

⁶⁷ Implication: he is very busy. Ed.

⁶⁸ Is she over fifty? Ed.

⁶⁹ Abbreviation for the French: Tout pour Dieu Seul. All for God alone.

⁷⁰ Published in French as Nov. 19th; listed by Fr. Garreau as illegible; possibly the 12th or 17th.

So you are continuing to suffer from your trials! Unfortunately, we make it so difficult for the good Lord to remove our obstacles to his grace, whatever prevents the reign of his love in us! Let him act freely! Even though the sacrificial knife cuts deep, it is to bring those poor little selfish ways to a quicker death.

Have courage! Goodbye. I will write to Miss Claudine⁷¹ later.

I bless you in our Lord.

All yours,
Eymard

Illness of faculty and students. Death of one student.

436

CO 432

TO MISS MARGUERITE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)

(II 113/395 VI 2)

*V.J. and M.*⁷²

La Seyne, December 1, 1853

Your letter, my dear daughter, made me so happy that I carried it continuously on me and I praise God for it. If I didn't write to you immediately, it's because we have had many problems. Many have been sick and a poor child died. So then, my first letter and my first moment are yours. It's only right, you are my eldest daughter.

So there you are on the cross which I wished for you and for which I worked a little!⁷³ I don't know whether I should pity and console you. On one hand, I see in it so many opportunities for humility, the servant commanding her teachers; for patience, bearing so many little trials from this newly-formed family; for self-denial, for sacrifices, and also for zeal for souls, that I bless you and love to see you in that responsibility. On the other hand, I see your human nature revolting, your heart suffering, love for solitude and retreat making its claims, and your family being afraid. Oh well! Respond to it all by saying: I did nothing, desired nothing, wanted nothing if not the opposite. God has chosen me and we must follow him.

You can be sure that I will help you all I can⁷⁴ in your difficulties or doubts. Now your soul is doubly dear to me. Go to Fr. Huguet. I believe that it is still the best way to go. There will be double merit. Most of all, count very much on God, entirely on God, and on the protection of our good and gracious Mother. Be her daughter, be somewhat like Sr. Benoite,⁷⁵ the very simple and good daughter of the Good Mother.

I am still waiting for the letter from ... and I will do as you wish.

My fond best wishes (if you so judge) to the whole family of Nazareth, and believe me always in our Lord.

All yours,
Eymard

P.S. My health is satisfactory. Only, my poor soul is like poor people who don't have enough to eat.

⁷¹ her sister.

⁷² Abbreviation: Praised be Jesus and Mary.

⁷³ Her position in the Third Order of Mary.

⁷⁴ Literally: with my whole soul.

⁷⁵ Benoite of Laus, the visionary.

TO COUNTESS ADELE DE REVEL DE NESC
(VIII 8/26 VII 17)

(L & S)

La Seyne Boarding School, December 1, 1853

Well, my dear, good daughter! What must you be thinking of me! But, I was so happy to read your kind letter! and I am still re-reading it, because it makes me feel as if I am in Lyons - write to me about it with plenty of details and a flowing pen. It is as if I could see you, listen to you, and answer you. It is a happy moment for me. - But you will reproach me and say I have forgotten you! Oh, no! never, impossible! Only I have had so many troubles, so many sick people to stay up with at night, and one death. Well, may God be praised for everything; but nature protests sometimes. I have scarcely any time to pay attention to it.

You must have received the indulgenced cross for the Way of the Cross and a Happy Death.

To gain the indulgences for the Way of the Cross, you must: (1) be physically or morally unable to do them in a church; your distance from any church is sufficient; (2) do the ordinary Way of the Cross or else recite 5 Our Father's and 5 Hail Mary's once in honor of the 5 Wounds of our Lord before the cross, or holding it in your hand; (3) in the case of serious illness... only 3 acts of love to God. The same indulgences can be gained by any person who does this with the person who has a cross and is in the right dispositions.

One may bequeath one's cross after death, with the indulgences.

The plenary indulgence for a Happy Death is personal to you. It will be enough to kiss the cross, devoutly uttering - with the lips or the heart - the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary.

There are also apostolic indulgences attached to the cross.

Well, now you are Sister Directress and mistress of novices⁷⁶. May God be thus glorified in you, my dear, blessed daughter! I am pleased with you. This cross will weigh heavily on the scales of divine Mercy, and Fr. Eymard is the one who was instrumental in getting it for you: see how good the good Lord is! and how he has already crucified you a little with him. A few years ago you did not want to drink that cup - it is rather hard humanly speaking - but take heart. It is Mary's motherly hand who brings it and offers it to you, and it will be your beautiful pledge of trust in death.

I have seen Mme. Spazzier, who is fairly well. She had a toothache.

The country here is beautiful, but there is great poverty. Alas, God cannot be pleased with us - He is so ill served!

Give me news about your health, your companions, everything. I keep reasonably well; I am very busy. The good Lord does it all.

Goodbye, my dear daughter, believe me ever in our Lord,

All yours,
Eymard

⁷⁶ A position in the Third Order of Mary.

TO MILES. MARIANNE EYMARD AND NANETTE BERNARD
(III 98/145 VI 10)

La Seyne-sur-Mer, January 17, 1854

My very dear sisters,

I am still very lazy. In your charity please forgive me. The months of December and January are very busy months because of examinations, income and bills.

I am beginning to have a few free moments and I'm taking advantage of them to write to you. I have hardly written to anyone.

I am well. My health seems stronger. I am already getting old: forty three years old.

I continue to be very happy. We have 135 children. Our students are very well-behaved. We are trying to make them good Christians.

I wished you a good and happy New Year in our Lord. If you hadn't been so far away, I would have sent you your gifts for New Year's day. You know that my second Mass at Midnight is always for the two of you, and that it makes me very happy to place you near the divine Child's crib asking him to bless you. It is the same for New Year's day, and my first prayer is the one you taught me when I was still a child.

So then, may our Lord give you a good year, my dear sisters, an increase of graces, greater growth in his holy Love, and the spirit and virtues of our kind Mother!

Let us never forget that our life is flowing away, bringing us closer to heaven. Let us consider ourselves as foreigners and exiles on earth.

Don't be frightened by all the false rumors.⁷⁷ The children of Jesus and Mary have nothing to fear. I was very pleased with the letter you wrote me. I am able to read you well.

I am pleased about the charitable work you are participating in. It is such a sad year for the poor!

Please! have courage, my dear sisters. One day we will be reunited eternally in heaven. Pray very much for me.

Your brother,
Eymard, p.m.

TO COUNTESS ADELE DE REVEL DE NESC
(VIII 9/26 VII 17)

(L & S)

La Seyne Boarding School, January 17, 1854

My dear sister in our Lord,

I hardly knew what to think of your long and strict silence - I was afraid you had a prolonged illness - fortunately it was only a multitude of little religious obligations.

So I am very grateful, as well as for your heartfelt good wishes both past and present. You know that I did the same for you, if not at the exact hour of midnight, at least early in the morning.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Political events?

⁷⁸ Traditional New Year's Wishes.

You know, too, that your soul is dear to me on many accounts, and so I desire for it all the good I desire for my own.

Yes, dear daughter, happy New Year. May it be filled with divine grace, may confidence be your virtue, and may divine love be your life. In a little while we shall have the joy of seeing God and loving him perfectly. Part of you is already in eternity through the hope-filled memories of your dear family. - Yes, I remember the soul of your dear brother, my dear son in our Lord. I am doing the novena you asked of me in your letter. So as not to inconvenience yourself kindly give the sum, - which is too large - to Miss Guillot, who already has some to send me. I shall leave the total in Lyons. (If this is not practical, do not worry about it.)

Now for details:

1) I am so happy to know that you are working more actively for the Third Order so I pray for you twice over. Keep up this work, you will find in it the opportunity for many great virtues, and our Good Mother will receive you with greater kindness; to save oneself through others is an apostolic maxim.

Dislikes are not important when the will acts in a spirit of charity. It is a small weakness which we pay for by greater sacrifice.

2) I was amused about your experience with Fr. Teraillon.

Jan. 29th. I continue my letter, dear daughter, and continue with yours, I was amused at your comical experience with Father. You will soon have more directors than you want. Here is what I think about it: you don't need a director as much as a problem-solver - you could then go to the one who is most available. Fr. Teraillon will go into more detail and give you more time. Fr. Colin is perhaps more spiritual, but if he is too busy, people are frustrated at not being able to express themselves completely.

Thank you for your image of the Five Wounds. I know Mr. Dupont well. He is a godly man and I have great confidence in his prayers.

I shall pray hard also for the Mother of the Five Wounds,⁷⁹ poor Sister! She has many troubles, but what can she do alone? She is not mentally strong enough.

Your conjuring session would have been all very well if you had not given it any further thought; balancing skills are not dangerous, they are not a competition, so be reassured on that point and others like it.

3) Be very vigilant and clear about anxieties and worries which come to you after something is over. That is a ruse of the devil, and sometimes of pride. Humility in general, trust in particular, contempt for the devil, patience for yourself, and all will be well.

Now my paper and pen have run out, to my regret, but you know how much I wish you blessings and graces.

All yours in Jesus,
Eymard

I saw Mme. Spazzier a few days ago. She is fairly well, is working, and looks forward to hearing from you. - Pray for me. I am always the same - blessed if I truly loved our Lord!

⁷⁹ Perhaps a religious?

TO MISS MARGUERITE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)
(II 114/395 VI 2)

La Seyne, January 29, 1854

I received your welcome letter, my dear daughter. God bless you for it. I love your spontaneity and holy freedom, like a child with her Father. As a proof of my good will, I wrote to Fr. Huguet immediately. I wasn't at ease doing it because I was afraid that in Lyons they would think that I'm still trying to be the director. As I was forbidden to do so, I wanted to be like a dead person. If I haven't spoken about the Third Order to Fr. Favre, it was purposely. Since he didn't speak about it to me himself, I didn't want to initiate the subject. I had what I wanted: your Council and a good director. My soul was at peace.

I tried to encourage this fine priest. For, in fact, is there a more beautiful mission than to form spiritual persons! It was such a lovely time in my life when I was responsible for Mary's beautiful family! I often think of it with joy. Every day I ask for God's blessings upon it, and especially upon you, my dear daughter. Mary will be with you. Be totally hers. To serve her family is the most noble and most perfect thing you can do. So then, have courage and trust. When you encounter difficulties, or obstacles, double your confidence. Mary wants to do something important. When you are humiliated, be content, for the tree will blossom. Poor Third Order! I still love it, and I regret that I did so little for it, or did it so poorly. Don't worry! The Third Order will have its day. I wrote to Miss de Revel to give you the twenty francs for the Masses she requested from me. I told her that you had some for me. I haven't written to Miss G. yet. I will do so soon.

It seems that Fr. Champion is doing well. He wrote to me.

I have no other news, except that the good Lord gives us a lot of work to do. Yet, God does everything, so it isn't difficult for us to hold the helm of the little vessel. My health is satisfactory. I really don't know how [it is so]. My soul has a real need for God, because so much external activity leaves me weary, but I surrender it all to his divine goodness and care.

Now to answer your letter of December 27th. Thank you for your good wishes from each one. I answered them at the feet of Jesus and Mary. You know what I asked for: for you, to be pleased with the martyrdom of divine love; for Miss Mariette, trust; for Miss Claudine, love for the hidden life of Jesus; for Miss Jenny, childlike surrender into God's hands; for Mr. Gaudioz, St. Joseph's blessing and spirit to carry out his business affairs; for Mme. Gaudioz, love for sacrifice and peace of soul; for the two little ones, piety. These are my wishes, may God fulfill them! Thank you for the notes. They are very precious to me. My gift to you will be Holy Mass offered for your dear parents. So, let me have the merit for it.

Now for your direction.

1. Make the Third Order function at all costs. For that to happen use the men who can be helpful to it, in keeping with the measure of their own graces. Following this principle, do somewhat like St. Paul, preach in season and out of season.

2. Good management requires that you have a hand a bit everywhere, do a bit of everything, without seeming to do so. At the same time motivate the others to do everything, and let them have the honor for it.

3. Continue to move forward, in spite of criticism, dislikes, and feelings. When someone says that everything is going wrong, that everything will crumble, that is when you need greater trust in God. "Do what is right and let others say what they will."

4. Keep the Priest Director informed. Always do so prudently and charitably, so that he may never jeopardize you by any indiscretion.

5. Don't attach any importance to whatever might be said against the Third Order. Let the Blessed Virgin take care of it.

6. As for me, I am not yet in favor of the House for the Third Order Members. It isn't possible yet. It would require the help of the Superior General.

7. I am in favor of the retreat for the Third Order. It will do some good.

8. Hold back Fr. Huguet when he goes too quickly. The important thing at the moment is to support it. The time hasn't come yet to do more. Oh! If Fr. Superior General wanted it, fine. However, he hasn't said anything about it.

9. While you are working for the Blessed Virgin, I understand that your house will be somewhat neglected because of it, but our good Mother will repay you some other way.

10. When the needs of charity are pressing, and you must take action, then it's necessary to put aside the contemplative life for the active life. However, in the depths of our being we must always be tending toward inner life with God.

So much for the Third Order. Now about you:

1. Don't be worried because you are not interiorly [?] when everything around you is agitated. God is having pity on you. Then, withdraw as much as you can to the center of your soul: that is your haven in the storm.

2. Always go to God through the heart, by recollection of soul; that is shorter and more pleasing to God. God's grace makes up for your weakness. This path has many more distractions and temptations. But don't dwell on them, by-pass them quickly. Simply be recollected within yourself, that is, see your weakness, and look at God, as if to say: "Look at my weakness."

3. Consider your vows as the dowry you are bringing to your heavenly Bridegroom. Love them as the gentle bonds of his grace. Observe them, as you say, more through love than through little details. Keep them with holy freedom. Follow them with peace of heart. Consider your deficiencies as little flowers to be offered to God.

4. About your temptations, my poor daughter. Continue to hide them in one of the wounds of our Lord and good Savior. At the height of the storm, hide yourself in the cleft of the mysterious rock, that is, in our Lord crucified. Don't examine the effects or the reasons for your temptations. Always go forward. You need to be kept close to your humiliating poverty and on the steep incline of your weakness. God remains with you: that is your consolation and strength.

5. For your penances, let yourself be led by your present confessor. Through obedience we gain what we seem to be losing.

6. As you say, follow your little rules at home, without mentioning it, but with the holy freedom of love.

Please my daughter! have courage. Yes, write to me when you wish. Your letters make me very happy. You know how dear your soul is to me in our Lord.

All yours in his divine love,
Eymard

TO FR. HUGUET, S.M.
(VI 1/1)

La Seyne, January 29, 1854

I am really late to thank you for your two pious works⁸⁰ which pleased me greatly. I don't know why I delayed so long; please kindly forgive me. I wanted to write to you through Rev. Father Favre, but time was lacking. For the last month I have been so busy I only have time to say my breviary.⁸¹

So, very dear Father, you are now in charge of the Third-Order of Mary. I praise God and our good Mother, because you can really help it. Our Lord has granted you the grace of ascetical studies. Congratulations on such a beautiful mission! It is better to perfect than to build, than to convert. How much glory rendered to God by a soul of prayer and deep interior devotion!

Surely the one who formed St. Teresa or St. Chantal did more than a missionary who would have converted a whole country.

That is the great character of the Third-Order of Mary - to form interior souls, souls of prayer, on the model of the simple and hidden life of Mary in Nazareth. It is also the spirit of our dear Society on which we have tried to build. It is the outpouring of the grace of our Marist Vocation, and God knows what peace, what generosity this spirit has produced in true Third Order members.

It was a pleasure for me to admire this grace and these good souls, and happier still to support them in this holy vocation. I am convinced that their prayers were a great help to the Mother-Society. It is the branch [emerging] from the trunk, slipping into the world and bearing the spirit of Mary everywhere.

But as you know, the interior life has its phases, its struggles, its difficulties. We continue to walk in the darkness of the mysterious grace of prayer. The soul needs to be guided, directed, or risk falling into discouragement, or into sterile virtues. The more a soul is detached from itself,⁸² crucifies itself to the world with Jesus Christ, our good Savior, the more it needs the help of a voice saying: Courage, go forward, have confidence. That is the director's beautiful and sensitive mission. It is yours, dear brother. Love it above all others, since Holy Obedience has entrusted you with it. You would be so happy at [the time of] your death to present to the Queen of Heaven your care for her holy family.

We must proclaim very loudly the beautiful title of the Third Order, of a religious in the world, under Mary's banner. The Third-Order is not a confraternity. It is more than that. It is the legitimate child of Holy Church and of the Society, and that word finds a powerful echo in hearts. It is the password for sacrifice.

Father Favre told me about the excellent Council the Ladies have. I praise God for it. This Council deserves your confidence. You can have full confidence in Miss Guillot, the Directress. Her discretion is beyond question, her prudence and charity admirable. You will find in Miss de Revel a person who is entirely dedicated and especially a good Third Order member.

I don't ask you to recommend me to the prayers of the Third-Order. No, let them forget me and to live only for the Third-Order. But, what I hold to is that you would give me a small share in your prayers and believe me ever in our Lord, dear brother,

Devotedly yours,
Eymard

⁸⁰ Probably books

⁸¹ Liturgy of the Hours.

⁸² Inner freedom.

442

CO 436

TO MR. CAMILLE JORDAN
(VII 1/4)

La-Seyne, January 30, 1854

Father Eymard has the honor of presenting his respectful tribute to the two Jordan families and to inform them that tomorrow the Captain of the “*Pluton*” will expect them at the port at 1:00 p.m. with his canoe and twelve sailors to accompany them to St. Mandrier, and bring them back to Toulon.

Father Eymard regrets he cannot accompany them, because of the Sunday.

Toulon, three o'clock,
Eymard

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CO 440

TO MR. CAMILLE JORDAN
(VII 2/4)

La-Seyne, February 11, 1854

Very dear Mr. Jordan,

I am writing to give you news about myself. A bad cold kept me to my room this week, as well as a skittish fever. I am feeling better. I am very grateful to you for so much interest toward such a lowly person as I.⁸³ You are so kind toward your friends! - I am pleased about the celebration you had the other day. I would like to provide you another; a fishing trip if possible, when you show me your friendship by coming for dinner as a family.

A thousand and one expressions of respect, affection and devotion to everyone in your dear family.

All yours,
Eymard

444

CO 439

TO MME. FRANCHET
(VII 23/33)

JMJ February 11, 1854

Finally, my dear daughter, I can turn my attention to you. It is high time. Your last letter, which is still here in front of me, was constantly saying: - “and what about me, are you forgetting me?” Oh, no, I replied, I will save the best time for you. I will give my busy moments to others. - My good daughter, I cannot tell you how happy your letters make me. You have some right to

⁸³ Literally: my poor weak person.

doubt it, if you judge by my negligence. But if you saw what my life is like, and how my free time is dissected, and how my strength is sometimes depleted - your charity would forgive me, as it does, I am sure, because I know it well.

So now about you.

1. Thank you very much for your notebook with the minutes.⁸⁴ I am very surprised that Father Favre has not returned it to you yet. I gave it to him. Please ask him for it again; he has forgotten.

2. So you are still isolated on the path to Calvary, surrounded by darkness and trials. Poor daughter! I understand your sorrow, you who so desire to love God! What can you do? Place yourself in the holy and gentle company of Jesus and Mary; prepare a beautiful Nazareth in your soul, work and live there with the Holy Family. Better yet, submit your sorrows and doubts to our Lord and follow the reply he will give you to be calm, trusting, and surrendered. See, my dear daughter, you have been seeking from people what our Lord keeps for himself. Your self-denial is precious to him, and that is why no one can find any other path for you. Ask for holy absolution at regular times and outside of the usual times, when you need it. Have great confidence in the grace of absolution. It is everything, it is the divine word which purifies and brings us closer to God.

As for the counsels that are given,⁸⁵ do like a poor person who receives gratefully what is given to him. It often happens that the less people give us, the more generous God is in his divine goodness. We must know how to wait at God's door, behave like the poor man of the gospel, or the Canaanite woman.

Courage my good daughter, don't be depressed any longer because people can't help you. Let this trial make you more magnanimous, more spiritual, more dependent on God.

For that matter, you are so grateful when someone helps you a little that God wants to have your gratitude for himself. Furthermore, my dear daughter, your conscience is clear, your difficulties are not sins, they come rather from a fear of offending God; and then the devil is very evil. You know something about it. The temptations you mention really must have made you suffer. However, they are ordinarily the prelude of great graces. No my daughter, you are not damned, but truly on the path to Heaven. Always continue to follow crucified love, without turning back on yourself. Love your good Master for himself and by the sacrifice of the ego.

Receive Communion, receive Communion. During the time of war, rations are doubled.⁸⁶

What you tell me about the freedom your husband is giving you should reassure you. But do not make a vow. It has been in effect for a long time. At the moment, I do not feel inspired to tell you otherwise. We will see later.

Daily Communion requires freedom from voluntary attachment to venial sin, a real desire to love our Lord.

Receive Communion as much as you can, but under one condition, to reject every source of turmoil. Be on your guard against your imagination, your over-active mind. God has given you a good heart. He wants you to give him all its affection, and that's all.

Before I run out of paper, I want to recommend to you the daughter of a German family who needs a salaried position. Please begin by finding out her skills. The porter of the minor seminary at St. John's, Mr. Algager, will give you her address.

Goodbye, my daughter, walk peacefully and generously in the love of our Lord in whom I am,

Your ever devoted,
Eymard

⁸⁴ She copied the minutes of the Third Order meetings.

⁸⁵ in confession.

⁸⁶ We must double our strength.

445

CO 441

TO MISS MARGUERITE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)
(II 115/395 VI 2)

La Seyne, March 5, 1854

My dear daughter, this will be just a brief greeting, to thank you for your welcome letter. I hope to go see you at the time you indicated. Pray for us and especially for me.

My health is like the weather. I wasn't well for about two weeks, but I am well enough to work. May God be blessed and glorified through my disabilities and weaknesses.

The month of St. Joseph is here. We can't find any small statues of this dear saint. Nonetheless we are honoring his month with great devotion. I would truly be grateful if you would buy some plaster statues, approximately fifty or sixty centimeters high. I would like to have six of them. They could be sent to me by stagecoach or by express transport, if the stagecoach should cost more than ten francs.

Forgive me for the trouble. We will pray for you.

A thousand and one best wishes to your whole family.

Devotedly yours in Christ,
Eymard

446

CO 442

TO CANON PIERRE ROUSSELOT, VICAR-GENERAL⁸⁷
(VIII 1/2 VII 6)

La Seyne, March 8, 1854

My dear Fr. Rousselot,

I am pleased to be able to tell you that the matter of the pictures from Rome has been resolved. Today Mr. de Gasquet sent me word that he would arrange the transport from Civita⁸⁸ to Toulon on the Government ships, of which he is Chief Captain.

That fine gentleman will also attend to the necessary formalities with Mr. Journal, Director of Customs, concerning the cost of entry. He hopes to get us a refund on duty.

The Government ship is leaving Toulon between the 12th and 15th of this month. I have written to Mr. Ferrucci to inform him about all this.

Thank you, dear good Father, for thinking of me in this matter, and you will always give me the greatest pleasure by further proofs of confidence.

Believe me, ever in our Lord, dear Father,

Your most obedient and affectionate son,
Eymard, Sup.

(continued)
Dear Father,

I have reopened this letter to thank you for yours, received today. Everything is in order, concerning the entry duty. Mr. de Gasquet hopes to have it refunded. I shall know for certain in a couple of days, and will write to you immediately.

⁸⁷ Vicar-General of Grenoble

⁸⁸ Civitavecchia, port city outside of Rome.

TO CANON PIERRE ROUSSELOT, VICAR-GENERAL
(VIII 2/2 VII 6)

La Seyne, March 10, 1854

My dear Father,

I am very happy to be sending you the Director's reply to Captain de Gasquet. The matter is settled now. Mr. de Gasquet decided to send you the pictures overland, to avoid any delay.

Dear Father, do you happen to have a well-educated Priest who might be in need of a rest, to teach Classics? I know one of the most respectable families in Provence who is looking for an ecclesiastical tutor for two young men. He would be lodged in a convent, with every comfort.

It is the de Bouchard family, in St. Remi, near Arles.

Goodbye, dear and beloved Father.

Love me always as your son.⁸⁹ We are going to try to organize something to honor Notre Dame de la Salette in Toulon. It's a city without resources. I don't know if we will succeed.

Devotedly yours,
Eymard, P. Mar.⁹⁰

TO MME. JOSEPHINE GOURD (SR. JOSEPH DU SS)
(V 14/76)

March 10, 1854

I began writing you a letter such a long time ago, my very dear daughter! I left your letter unfinished to write another. Your silence which lasted so long didn't surprise me. I know how busy you are. Mine must surprise you, I am astonished myself. I won't use my work or my little difficulties as an excuse. The good Lord willed it. It didn't interrupt my prayers and devotedness for you, my daughter. On the contrary, I think of you more often. Miss G.⁹¹ gave me news about you from time to time.

Now, I refer to your letter from last January. 1) Watch over your servants, especially at first. In order to form them well, you must show them confidence, but never give them the freedom of authority. They must always remain dependent even for general permissions. From time to time have them render an account of their work. What is wrong in large houses is that servants become little masters; that is more your husband's responsibility than yours. What to do? What you can, and depend a little and much upon God.

On the question of alms, continue to give them as you do. You can do it and include them in the expenses. To explain them, if anyone should ask you to account for it, an alms is a debt.

Poor daughter, I pity you for having so many external things to worry about. The soul suffers when life is too busy. Devotion dries up, recollection diminishes, a certain sadness takes hold of the heart: a fear of no longer being acceptable to God. That is somewhat your situation. Here is a great remedy for it:

⁸⁹ Expression of submission.

⁹⁰ Abbreviation: Marist Priest.

⁹¹ Miss Guillot

Surrender yourself entirely to God's good pleasure. He wants you in a life given to your neighbor, in order to honor him by interior self-denial and the sacrifice of self. So then, let charity be queen, let gentleness and strength, vigilance and patience, activity and prayer be the circle of your life.

My poor daughter, often ask the good Lord how to love him by means of charity for others, how to stay with him in the midst of the world, recollected and calm in the busiest activities. Our soul ought to be an impenetrable sanctuary where God alone acts and from where life's strength and graces spring forth.

But, please, don't leave aside your Communions. The poorer you are, the more you need them. It's the infirm person's Communion: God loves her and is healing you of everything. Thank you for the good news about the miraculous water. How good God is! and how merciful Mary is! Oh! if only we had faith and trust, we would be all-powerful!

Good news! I am responsible to purchase sixty beautiful paintings from Rome, for Notre Dame de la Salette. It is a Roman gift, and in Rome there is less controversy than in France.⁹² Many devout people would do better to thank God for this grace (La Salette) instead of engaging in so much discussion. Everything that interests you, interests me. I'm really praying for you and yours. Have confidence, God will grant your prayer for your husband.

Your last letter really made me sad. Oh! It may be the devil's last attempt! Surely, the devil accounts for a lot in the condition and moods of the beloved patient. He really deserves to be pitied. We must really continue to pray. We will double our prayers especially during this beautiful month of St. Joseph, our good patron.

The resurrection of a dead person is a great miracle.⁹³ The good Lord wants to be solicited and petitioned a long time in order to give more graces.

I really laughed over your little difficulties in the kitchen, and about your little problem; the devil as you see, can use the smallest things. Be gentle and strong in God.

Goodbye, my good and dear daughter, I don't need...[several illegible words], it would be a comfort for me to see you and tell you personally what is so poorly written. Pray for me. I am pleased that I will be able to go and work in spite of my physical problems. My poor health is just as the good Lord lets it be, and so am I. I leave it entirely in the hands of our good Master. I can say that I am a bit more detached.⁹⁴

Good-bye, dear daughter.

All yours in Jesus and Mary,
Eymard

⁹² Controversy over the authenticity of the Apparitions.

⁹³ Spiritually dead.

⁹⁴ More freedom of heart.

TO MISS STEPHANIE GOURD

(V 11/52)

March 10, 1854

Miss Stephanie,

So now it is your turn, dear daughter. What you tell me about your soul pleases me. You know my concern and devotedness toward you and how happy I would be to help you.

The good Lord really knows how to help us make sacrifices.

I was hoping to see you in Lyons during the holidays, and all I found was a miniature Calvary. It was necessary, since I had a great grace to request and to obtain it I had to be ill. How true it is that God knows how to attain his purposes by means which we deem to be contrary.

Now to reply to your first letter.

1. If you want to please me when you open your heart, just write very simply, as it comes to you, even if it were not well said or well written.

2. You reproach yourself for laziness. That touched me; I had and I still have this natural temptation. I know it quite well. It is difficult to correct, because it rises again from its ashes at every moment. It is a very harmful defect. We must work to correct it, but how? I am tempted to answer that I almost don't know. Here is what I try:

1) To love something only as much as God wills it and as he wills it; not to cling to one thing more than another, but only to the Will of God.

2) Never put off until later what we can and ought to do at a determined time.

3) In a choice between two things, do what is most contrary to your preference.

4) Impose a penance upon oneself when we have failed this rule.

My dear daughter, this is my advice to help you overcome spiritual laziness, and you will see that you will enjoy great peace and freedom.

As for the hostility which made you suffer, don't worry about it too much, my dear daughter. However, don't act on your feelings at that time. On the contrary, if you want to do something which would be very pleasing to God, it would be to react against the hostility with a joyful heart, at least exteriorly, and you will have total victory.

Then, my poor daughter, keep in mind that by these little sacrifices of the heart you are working for the salvation of that dear soul.⁹⁵

You have many little spiritual faults: so, you complain about your mental prayer, - in fact, I think a little laziness results in lack of preparation, a certain disposition to criticism, etc., and interior grief against your dear mother, - ignore it, it's a feeling of pride which would like to surface and which the devil would use to advantage. So, at such times, behave exteriorly as if you were nothing, and everything will disappear like fog before the sun.

You blame yourself for being careless. This could come from the fact that your soul is in an excessively violent state of struggle to serve God and your neighbor. This results in sadness and a need for expansion. - What can be done?

Go to the good Lord with more simplicity and surrender; to your neighbor with more love for God, and your soul will then be in the center of peace. In general, avoid mental stress, it is worthless; rather sacrifice your heart for the love of God.

Be joyful in the service of our kind Master and look at his goodness more than your wickedness, his graces more than your sins.

⁹⁵ Her father's conversion.

Goodbye, my dear daughter. Do pray for me. I hope to be in Lyons at the beginning of the month of May. If you were there, we would complete what is lacking.⁹⁶

All yours in Jesus and Mary,
Eymard

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CO 446

TO MISS ELIZABETH MAYET
(VII 8/17)

La Seyne, March 22, 1854

I am very negligent, am I not, my dear daughter?⁹⁷ It's a bit true that in spite of my good will, I sometimes fail when I see what I must do; I act like a person who has a lot to do and does nothing, because he doesn't know where to begin.

I was happy to learn about your beautiful and delightful retreat. Our good Mother is really spoiling her daughters! But then, they are so grateful! I was happy to read your letter to Father, I really thanked God for this unique grace.

You also have many sorrows, my dear daughter, Alas! I understand how Calvary appears so painful to you. Veil it with divine goodness. No, God will never forsake his own. He wants his grace to be greater than pain, and his love greater than sacrifice.

You are both often the subject of our conversations with Father, as well as dear beloved Tonny. Please offer him a thousand greetings from me, and believe me in our Lord, as well as your dear sister,

All yours,
Eyd

451

CO 447

TO MISS MARGUERITE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)
(II 116/395 VI 2)

La Seyne, March 25, 1854

It is high time, my dear daughter, for me to thank you for sending the statues of St. Joseph; we received them very promptly. Only one was broken: it doesn't have the Child Jesus. If the dealer insists that it be paid, pay for it like the others. I am pleased, very pleased with this style. May St. Joseph pay you back a hundred-fold!

I was happy to learn about the great success of your Third Order retreat; it did my heart good. Oh! I thanked our Lord wholeheartedly for such an inestimable grace for my former daughters! You yourself must be very happy about it, my good daughter, for the sake of all your sisters.⁹⁸ Since you could do very little of it, our Lord will repay you in some other way.

⁹⁶ What still needs to be said.

⁹⁷ Father Eymard wrote this letter at the end of a letter from Father Mayet to his sister Elizabeth.

⁹⁸ Sisters of the Third Order of Mary.

Now about you:

1. You do well to go to Fr. Favre as you do, the Third Order will benefit from it. He may be somewhat impressionable, be prudent.

Don't worry about your vows. Someone who doesn't know you may be put off by your vows at first, or consider them as rash and perhaps even as risky, but don't let yourself be misled. When I gave you permission for them, I studied things thoroughly, I prayed a great deal. You need such divine bonds to cling energetically to Jesus crucified. Don't be troubled by the trials they are predicting for you. Nothing will happen to you except what the good Lord wills.

If they want to deprive you of Holy Communion, submit to it humbly, while pleading for permission to receive. If you are refused, God's will must replace everything for you. However, if at a later time - whoever it might be - kept you away from Holy Communion for too long, and if I were no longer in this world, consult someone else: because we need life.

In a month, please God, we will go see you. Alas, when I think of that trip, I feel a great need to pray.

What can I tell you about myself? My poor daughter: for about two weeks I have been suffering from a migraine headache. However, God is so good that it is equivalent to a little retreat. Today however, I am feeling better.

Goodbye, my good daughter, my fond best wishes to your family. I am happy to hear that the rule is going well and that you will become a real Nazareth.

All yours,
Eymard

452

CO 448

TO MILES. MARIANNE EYMARD AND NANETTE BERNARD
(III 99/145 VI 10)

La Seyne, March 26, 1854

My dear sisters,

I am really always so negligent to write and tell you that your letters please me - that the best news I can have is to know that you are well, happy and peaceful in your little corner, letting the world struggle on, and quarrel as it will. As for you, remain peaceful with our Lord.

It seems to me that there is no greater happiness than to seek only to please God, to have only his esteem and protection, and that of our neighbor only as God wills and as much as he wills. Then, neither wind nor human storms can do anything to us, because God is our all.

Oh, my sisters, what profound meaning, sublime perfection, and perfect love can be found in the words of a Saint: "My God and My all...!" Let us sincerely ask the good Lord for this.

I believe that you must have participated in the beautiful month of St. Joseph as we did. That good saint blessed us during his month, but then we did pray fervently to him. The nineteenth is the Superior's feast day. If I told you about the honors I received, the celebrations, the fireworks: it was enough to make me blush. I then said to St. Joseph: "It is for you, because I don't want anything for myself."

My health is not bad. I had a cold a few weeks ago, and my migraine made me lazy for a week. Today I am feeling well again.

Sometimes I do like our little children, I say: soon the holidays will come, we will go to see our sisters, and this thought makes me happy.

Goodbye, my dear sisters, take courage, Easter is coming, the Resurrection, and the joy that I am wishing you wholeheartedly.

All yours,
Your brother,
Eymard

P.S. I am reopening my letter to tell you, dear sisters, that I have just received your last letter. Thank you for your kind affection. My dear sister, watch out for sadness, it is a very great evil, it kills the heart. No, no, rejoice rather at the sight of God's graces and don't look at the sorrows; and you good Nanette, don't be so afraid of the pastor, he can't do you any harm, quite the contrary. So, go forward boldly.

I am taking care of Bethoux's business. Conditions are bad in Provence at this time. There is neither wine, wheat, nor oil. - I will continue to search.

453

CO 449

TO MME. GALLE (NEE DE VILLEDIEU)
(VII 3/8)

La-Seyne, April 30, 1854

My dear Madame and sister in Mary,

I received the sad news about the death of your dear holy Mother. Sadness seized my heart, not for her, she is in Heaven, but for you and your dear family.

Oh! God had been preparing you for this sacrifice for a long time, but how painful it must have been!

My dear daughter, remember that in heaven we will all be together, and find comfort at the feet of our Lord who crowned such a beautiful life.

What a pleasant fragrance of virtue this dear Mother is leaving behind. She has not died.

Here we are praying for her soul and for you.

I was a bit relieved to know that Paul was with you. He must have told you how I hated to see him go. But in his position, it was a duty. Please tell this dear Paul that I still love him.

I will be in Lyons soon, and if I can steal away for a moment, I will come see you.

My dear sister, I leave you in the hands of Jesus and Mary.

All yours,
Eymard

454

CO 450

TO MR. CAMILLE JORDAN
(VII 3/4)

*Thursday*⁹⁹

Dear Mr. Jordan,

I have just learned that the “*Napoleon*”¹⁰⁰ was returned to the arsenal. It is the best time to visit it before it is disarmed. If I can go to Toulon tomorrow, I will come for you. It will be a great pleasure for me to accompany you.

All yours,
Eymard

455

CO 451

TO MR. CAMILLE JORDAN
(VII 4/4)

Lyons, Puylata, May 8, 1854

Dear Mr. President,

We have been on retreat since the day I had the honor and pleasure of seeing you. Our retreat will close Wednesday. Thank you, therefore, for your kind invitation. I will not leave without coming to see you briefly. Don't give yourself the trouble of coming here, your time is so precious; and then, we are in meetings nearly the whole day.

Kindly receive the very devoted and loving sentiments, dear Mr. President, from your most humble servant,

Eymard, Marist Priest

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CO 452

TO MME. NATALIE JORDAN (NEE BRENIER DE MONTMORAND)
(IV 9/75)

*Lyons, Tuesday, the 9th*¹⁰¹

Madame and dear sister in our Lord,

I received your little note. I am expecting you on Sunday. My first visit was to Mr. Jordan; you must surely have the second.

We are on retreat for great matters. Let me tell you that very Rev. Father General praised the Third Order in the presence of the Congregation and permitted that it be spread, a grace I had been

⁹⁹ between January and May 1854.

¹⁰⁰ A “*Napoleon*” can be either a navy ship or a cannon.

¹⁰¹ Probably May 9, 1854.

requesting for so long. I was only waiting for that before my death. All I want is to see Jesus and Mary known, loved and served.

My health is poor but very rich, if I know how to unite myself to Jesus crucified.
Goodbye, my dear daughter,

All yours,
Eymard

457

CO 453

TO MISS MARGUERITE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)

(II 117/395 VI 2)

La Seyne, June 10, 1854

I have a free moment and it is yours, my daughter.

1. I will begin by speaking about myself. The accident on the Rhone only amounted to a delay. We had found a small, very fragile boat, water was seeping through. It was night, and after five hours on this small board, we reached Avignon safely at 10:30 at night. My migraine headache isn't as strong as it was before I left for Lyons, I can control it better. It happens less often, so I'm better.

2. Your letter to Miss Daniel was fine, she is a good person who really wants to love God, she appreciates the spiritual life. She is fervent and generous when she wants something, you do well to answer her.

3. About Miss David. - Mass, yes; intentions for her until the feast of the Assumption, yes. God had given this good woman great graces; I was very pleased to have seen her before she died.

4. I am happy to see you totally and lovingly dedicated to the Third Order, the Blessed Virgin will repay you well, so live and suffer for it. It was a comfort to see that the last act of Rev. Fr. Colin's Superiorship was to praise and propagate the Third Order. That was my highest prayer. Now, if the good Lord wills that I should be responsible for it once again, then I also want it wholeheartedly. I am only too happy that I suffered for it, that I was willing to die so that Jesus, Mary and Joseph at Nazareth be known and served. Up to this very moment I have respected the fact that I was forbidden to have anything to do with it and you see that God did everything: he doesn't need us.

Now I come to the issue of the house. I think as you do, that it would be necessary to have two types of Third Order Members: the regular ones and the boarders. Without that, it would be impossible to have unity of mind and life.

Now, some external work would also be needed. Which one? I have no idea. At first glance, work for the missions seems good. Avoid works that are engrossing, like education or an orphanage, etc....

Should you aim to buy a house? It's a serious question. I don't believe the Superiors would place any obstacles to it, if the house had some revenues. They will never say: "Do it." Yet if they let you do it, that's enough, it is tacit consent. Among us,¹⁰² there is a fear of being obligated. It is important not to obligate, but to become adopted; you understand what I mean.

For my part, I would like the house for the Third Order Members to be like a Work for Spinsters, like the respectable retirement of the "Invalides."¹⁰³ This work is lacking in the Christian world. Yet, who is more respectable and worthy of help and care than a spouse of Jesus Christ who has been faithful to her divine Spouse, and who, for his love, paid dearly to give up the world and its comforts! St. Francis de Sales had that idea. Yet today, the Visitation has become a convent

¹⁰² Marists.

¹⁰³ Place in Paris for the care of veterans.

which is as demanding as the others. (Don't move too quickly in this matter, [just] encourage it.)

Now let's speak about the Work of the Blessed Sacrament. You know, my dear daughter, that I speak to you openly and simply. If I didn't speak to you about this beautiful thought at the time of my visit, I don't remember why. Either I didn't have time, or I didn't think of it. I continue to love this thought, I long for it, always in keeping with the Holy Will of God, I would even say that I sigh for the Cenacle. - Now, what is happening in regard to this Work? It's still in the period of prayer and discernment; it did, however, take a giant step forward during my stay in Lyons. I spoke openly to Fr. Colin; he encouraged me and said he believes that it comes from God. Nonetheless, we need to pray and proceed prudently and patiently. This dear Father is entirely in favor of this good Work, it's his favorite thought, he has begun adoration at la Negliere. Still, we would remain Marists, that is only right. Then, could we abandon our Mother? So, my daughter, you must continue to pray for me, that I not become unworthy of God's grace.

As for the Third Order Chapel, I wouldn't advise building a new one in the determined location; it would cost too much. It would be better to enlarge the former one; that would cost less. There is such a lovely space, a ready-built wall by the stairs. I mean the garden adjoining our little sacristy, that would really be fine.

I would enjoy a little family party, only, there would need to be more sisters {Third Order members}, do something like the first Christians. It is a beautiful idea, it would also be so in practice; the idea of seeing us all gathered together made me smile.

As for you, you can see that God helps you as soon as you are in need. So then, trust in God and surrender to him. You will soon be receiving a little gift¹⁰⁴ on holy abandonment in the mail. Read it carefully.

Journey along as the good Lord wills, in the sunlight when it is shining or by the light of the moon and stars, or groping by the thread of obedience: it is a sure guide.

I bless your crosses and suffering, dear daughter. God will not forsake you, what he wants from you is to honor him in the experience of alienation and the horrors of hell. These horrors constitute hell's punishment; in this life they constitute the glory of God and his divine mercy, which overcomes the devil. Take heart, my dear daughter, inner desolation is more pleasing to the heart of your divine Spouse than all the joy and brightness of Tabor. In fact, you would need to have a few external mortifications, ask for them; then be submissive.

I'm very pleased that Fr. F.¹⁰⁵ is informed about your vows. Go to him from time to time. He is very good and more spiritual than you might believe at first.

Yes, make the retreat, it will give you rest. Yes, I received Mme. G's¹⁰⁶ letter and answered it.

Yes, your lunch with Fr. H.¹⁰⁷ is good. In any embarrassing situation take his part.

Come now, my dear daughter, sacrifice yourself to the glory of God, or rather let yourself be sacrificed by his fatherly action. - How fortunate you are that God should attach you to his divine crucified Son!

Yes, yes, I will inscribe you as the first one on the Eucharistic lists. Let me know what our Lord tells you on that subject.

Goodbye.

All yours,
Eymard

P.S. - I will write to Miss Mariette soon. I want to send this letter quickly.

¹⁰⁴ a book.

¹⁰⁵ Fr. Favre.

¹⁰⁶ Mme. Gourd.

¹⁰⁷ Fr. Huguet.

TO MISS MARIETTE GUILLOT (SR. ANNE-MARIE DU SS)
(VI 1/1 II 21)

La Seyne-sur-mer, June 1854

I do not want to answer your sister's letter without adding a few words for you, Mademoiselle. I can imagine you working, praying, and struggling, and I ask the good Lord to sustain and help you to bear the burden of your duties and troubles. Offer them to God, and you will have the merits and the love of St. Martha. Say to yourself often: the good Lord wants me to be where I am, he wants only what I am doing. Well then, I shall do it with calm, with peace, out of love for him.

Yes, Mademoiselle, it is love alone which gives value to our actions, and it is the practical love of his holy Will which constitutes the highest perfection. So when our Lord wants you to receive tiresome visits, you are more pleasing to him than if you were at prayer, performing the finest acts of zeal and charity.

Always be faithful to the general offering in the morning, the presence of God throughout the day, holy Communion even in the midst of obstacles, - and I can promise you Heaven.

I do not ask you to pray for me; in your charity you are doing so; but I also do pray for you, that you may always be the good Saint Martha in the house of our Lord.

TO MME. FRANCHET
(VII 24/33)

La-Seyne, June 10, 1854

Madame and dear sister in Mary,

I wanted to answer your letter right away, I could not. Today I am writing to tell you how happy I was about your delight with Holy Abandonment.¹⁰⁸

Knowing you well, I was sure that this little book would give you spiritual joy, and would be a very precious treasure for your soul, which, unfortunately, is still crucified. Read it and meditate on it slowly. You will find a hidden manna, the peace and sweetness of grace and, above all, the pure love of our Lord.

Each soul has its own path, its own characteristic virtue, its special graces. It isn't within the director's power to change them. His rule is to recognize them and to help the soul which our Lord has entrusted to him to follow its path.

You know very well that our Lord has shown you your path: the interior life. The characteristic of your virtues, a generous, calm, gentle and strong love for God; your special graces, the path of self-denial, of holy poverty, of childlike surrender. That will lead one directly to heaven.

It is fine and very fine that people are like thorns for you. They make you walk more quickly toward the Good Master.

Oh! When will you be so closely united with our Lord that you will need nothing else? I really ask that for you. You do know and you will know that your soul is always dear to me in the divine love and that anything anyone may have said has in no way dampened my desire to help you. It would have required a verbal explanation, and we are often misunderstood. If a soul requires care and struggles to be saved, it is only dearer, and if someone harmed it, it would be a cause of great suffering.

¹⁰⁸ Perhaps the book by De Caussade. Ed.

Thank you for your little books. They will carry out a spiritual mission. During the holidays I will go to thank you doubly for them.

My heartfelt regards to Mr. Franchet. Please ask him to send us the bill for the sheets we received, the price for each meter, and the total amount.

Goodbye in God,

Your ever devoted servant,
Eymard

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CO 456

TO MME. NATALIE JORDAN (NEE BRENIER DE MONTMORAND)

(IV 16/75)

Feast of the Sacred Heart, June 23¹⁰⁹

Madame and dear sister in our Lord,

I have just received your letter which was greatly longed for. I am answering immediately to prove my good will.

1. I burn all spiritual letters immediately: that is a rule of mine.

2. I can sympathize with your headaches; I also have that problem. We use our heads to live, our hearts to act. Fortunately, the good Lord is only asking for your heart; the more it suffers, the more pleasing it is to God. The less consolations you experience, the more God will become your all: that is a comforting thought. You found the book on holy Abandonment. I am happy for you because it will help you a lot. We need God so badly in this land of exile, under the weight of human limitations!

Yes, dear daughter, depend on God for the future of your dear Mathilde; she belonged to God before she belongs to you. She has her own earthly and eternal destinies in God's love. Worldly people move ahead of situations, provoke them, force them to serve their purpose. God's people wait for the moment of divine Providence, help the movement of grace, dedicate themselves fully to the will of God, both present and future, with a childlike surrender which leaves to God the Father every care and all glory. I will really pray for your two material needs. I am convinced that you will inject them with peace and justice, gentleness and the strength of truth.

Love the good Lord well, my poor daughter, love him for so many blind people who don't love him; love him with your fine daughter, with your whole family. Let us love him in fraternal union.

You know how your soul is united to mine in our Lord.

Eymard

P.S. When you go to St. Romans, please let me know.

¹⁰⁹ Probably 1854.

TO CANON PIERRE ROUSSELOT
(VI 6/7)

June 29, 1854

Respected and dear Father,

I am very happy to let you know that in a few days you will receive your pictures from Rome.

I received them on the 23rd from the Government ship, the *Regium*. They arrived safely. We brought them into Toulon duty-free. The gentlemen were most happy to do that for Notre Dame de la Salette. I was asked 14 francs for transport of 100 kilos and 14 days for Grenoble. You will find the large chest slightly damaged, but repaired. That occurred as it was being carried to the storeroom.

I heard, to my distress, that the Bishop of Gap, on returning from Rome, was speaking ill of La Salette, that the Supreme Pontiff is furious with La Salette, that the children had revealed no secret.; that is what I hear from a priest from Gap, who says he heard it from the lips of the Bishop himself.

While the devout and simple folk believe in the truth of the apparition and are doing penance, while some eminent persons are coming a great distance to venerate the miracle of the apparition and proclaim it far and wide, it is distressing to hear blame and scorn from the lips of those who should be praising and blessing God for such a grace, or at least keep a discreet and charitable silence.

The holidays will soon be here. I hope to have the joy of seeing you in Grenoble, dear Father Rousselot, and meanwhile, allow me to call myself ever

Your son,
Eymard, p.m.

In June 1854, Father Claude Mayet prepared a presentation regarding plans for an Order of the Blessed Sacrament for Fr. Jean-Claude Colin. This document reveals the closeness of vision between Fr. Eymard, Fr. Colin and Fr. Mayet at this period and can be found in Appendix I.

TO CANON PIERRE ROUSSELOT
(VI 7/7)

La Seyne, July 16, 1854

Good and very dear Father Rousselot,

I was very pleased to hear that the paintings had arrived in Grenoble. I hope they arrived safely.

The transport by sea was free, thanks to Mr. de Gasquet, Chief Commander of the State steamships at Toulon. The duty-free entry into France is thanks to Mr. Journal, the Director of Customs in Toulon. The Government had nothing to do with it. We owe it all to the graciousness of those two gentlemen. And the positive thing is that I told them the destination of the paintings - Notre Dame de la Salette.

I leave it all to your discretion, and if it were a good thing to make it known, I would be very pleased, but here it is merely an act of friendship.

But what is worth doing is to answer the Bishop of Gap, who is going about telling everyone that the Pope has appointed him to say that he¹¹⁰ has never believed, nor approved, the happening.

It appears that this poor Bishop is out of his mind when he says that the Pope is furious about La Salette! Alas, dear Father! such behavior from a Bishop is surely more reprehensible than our “stupidity” in believing, respecting and loving a grace which preaches penance, rather than such a bitter and violent criticism against good priests and truly devout faithful.

Recently I saw a priest from Gap who spoke to me about the Bishop of Gap’s triumph over La Salette as a final victory.

Oh! if only the Supreme Pontiff could judge for himself, and not on the words of a Bishop who, as everyone in Gap and in the diocese is aware, has very little credibility from his clergy, and very little sense.

I think you would do well to go to Rome. It is easy to obtain a free passage on the Government ships from the Minister for the Navy. All you need do is write to him as Vicar-General, and if the Bishop were to add a P.S. it would even be better. On the 5th, 15th and 25th of each month there is a ship going to Civita Vecchia. In that case I would have the pleasure of welcoming you at La Seyne. You would not stop in Toulon but go straight to the harbor, where there is a boat to La Seyne at any time.

Do not go via Marseilles by postal steamer; you would have to be held in strict quarantine in Italy.

Cholera is raging in Marseilles; there are many victims, though some reports deny this. They are counting 120 to 130 deaths a day.

Do not stop in Marseilles, but reserve your place in Valence, directly for Toulon, and pay in advance in case the price was doubled in Marseilles.

Please drop a line about your arrival, so that we can come to get you. In anticipation of this great pleasure, believe me ever, dear Father Rousselot,

All yours,
Eymard, p.m.

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CO 459

TO MISS MARGUERITE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)
(II 118/395 VI 2)

La Seyne, August 2, 1854

I come hastily, to tell you, my dear daughter, that I will be leaving here on the 4th. I hope to be in La Mure on the 6th or the 7th. After a few days, we will go to La Salette and to le Laus from there.

I would be tempted to tell you: come and meet us there. At least we would have time to see one another.

My health isn’t strong. My migraine headache has tired me out somewhat: as God wills!

I will expect either you, or news about you, at La Mure.

If you should arrive at Grenoble, Sunday or Saturday evening, ask for me at the Major Seminary.

¹¹⁰ Unclear: he = the Pope?

The cholera has had many victims in Toulon. It has decreased in Marseilles.
Goodbye, my dear daughter.

All yours in our Lord,
Eymard

P.S. Love and best wishes to the whole family.

464

CO 461

TO MISS MARGUERITE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)
(II 119/395 VI 2)

V.J. and M.

La Mure, August 7, 1854

My dear daughter, I reached La Mure a few hours ago. I asked for you when I passed through Grenoble.

I read and reread your letter, and prayed. My thought is to have you come here to discuss important matters:¹¹¹ first of all with my sister who is expecting you, then with a person who came from Toulon almost exclusively to speak with you about this important matter. She is the president of the adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament, Mme. Duhaut-Cilly. She really wants to see you. She couldn't go to Lyons. I had led her to hope that you would visit La Mure....

I know that your position is difficult. So, you are the one who can judge, since you are in the situation; couldn't one of your sisters replace you?..

May God guide you. We are waiting for your answer or for you before we leave for La Salette.

All yours,
Eymard

P.S. My sister and Nanette are well and are hoping to see you very much. Best wishes to your dear sisters, and to kind Mr. Gaudioz.

(urgent)

Miss Marguerite Guillot
% Mr. Gaudioz, Mme. Papetier
Place Leviste, 10 near Bellecour
Lyons, (Rhone)

¹¹¹ The foundation of the women's branch of adorers.

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CO 460

TO MME. GRISAUD (NEE CHAMBORD)¹¹²
(VII 1/2)

August 3, [1854]¹¹³

Madame,

I am really late in answering you. In your charity, kindly forgive me.

I consent willingly to your entry into the little family of Mary, that you should belong to the Third Order. Then we will call you our Sister by this new title, and I am sure that the Blessed Virgin will also fill you with her graces and blessings. Our good Mother begins [to do so] even today. I've just given the permission for our kind and excellent brother¹¹⁴ to go see you at Tarare. He is the one who will receive you.

I am happy that this circumstance has arisen to recommend myself to your prayers and to say that I am in our Lord,

Madame, your very humble and devoted Superior,

Eymard

P.S. You could communicate this to Mme. Tholin-Bost. Please present my respects to her in our Lord.

466

CO 462

TO FR. JEAN RAYMOND DE CUERS
(VI 2/4 I 181)

La Mure, August 25, 1854¹¹⁵

Dear friend,

Here I am at La Mure, weak as ever, but with the good will to belong entirely to God and his glory.

This good Mr. Thomas is ours.¹¹⁶ Thank you for sending him to me at Laus.

The cholera is devastating us here and everywhere.

I will leave for Lyons on the 28th.

Farewell in our Lord,

All yours,

Eymard

P.S. And what about the retreat? *Quid?*¹¹⁷ (When I am in the mountains, I get no news.)

¹¹² At Tarare

¹¹³ Probably 1854 from La-Seyne. Troussier.

¹¹⁴ Her brother was a Marist priest.

¹¹⁵ These lines were written at the end of a letter from Mr. Thomas, dated August 18, 1854. The address of Fr. de Cuers on the reverse side is in Fr. Eymard's handwriting, and is stamped with the La Mure postmark, August 25, 1854. It is printed in the French Volume VI as 1859.

¹¹⁶ Possibly: has decided his vocation in our favor.

¹¹⁷ What.

TO MME. GALLE (NEE DE VILLEDIEU)
(VII 4/8)

La Mure, August 25, 1854

Madame,

What must you think of me? I don't want to justify myself, but tell you that it was very hard for me to leave Lyons without going to see you. The day I had set aside to visit you, Mme. Mulsant fell gravely ill and I had to stay by her bedside. Miss David, who was in her last agony, wanted to see me and so I was tied down.

I was receiving letter upon letter from La-Seyne, so many troubles - I had to leave immediately. When I reached La-Seyne, my migraine headache took over every day. Two teachers fell ill who must be replaced - so I said goodbye to all external things, counting upon charity.¹¹⁸

This time I hope to be more fortunate and come see you and dear Paul whom I continue to love as a child of mine.

I consider his departure from La-Seyne as a Providential thing. - How sad it would have been if he had not received his dear Mother's last breath, and if he hadn't been with you at that painful time. Then, I would have sent him away quickly when the cholera approached.

Courage, dear Lady, don't hold it against me. I was sick, my head but not my heart.

I will be in Lyons toward the end of August. - I am here surrounded by sick people. - It is devastating! - The cholera invaded our mountains and is causing much destruction.

All yours in our Lord,
Eymard

My regards to Paul.

TO MME. CLOTILDE THOLIN-BOST
(IV 14/52)

*All in J. E.*¹¹⁹

Saturday, September 23, 1854

Madame and dear sister in our Lord,

It's a sacrifice for me that I can't go to see you. I had set aside two days for you. When it was time to leave I felt ill and I still am.

Then, I must leave tomorrow or Monday for La Seyne. I was due to leave today. Life in this world is like that. I strongly recommended your dear child to Fr. Superior at St. Chamond. I envy him, because you understand how much I love him.

Please offer my regards to dear Mr. Tholin. It would have been so good for me to see him, as well as your sister. As a soldier of obedience, we must say goodbye and run wherever God wants us to be.

¹¹⁸ for understanding.

¹¹⁹ Abbreviation for Jesus Eucharistic.

You know that I am, in our Lord,

Your ever devoted,
Eymard

Mme. Tholin-Bost, Negt¹²⁰
Tarare (Rhone)

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CO 465

TO ST. JEAN-MARIE VIANNEY, CURE D'ARS
(VI 1/2)

Lyons, September 25, 1854

Dear Father and brother in Mary,

I am pleased to send you this certificate giving you all the faculties necessary to enroll persons into the Third Order of Mary of the Interior Life. It was a real pleasure for our dear Father Superior General to sign it.

Require from the people to be received at least 15 minutes of meditation, as much as possible. I'm leaving today for La Seyne near Toulon. Bless me and pray for me. I trust that good St. Philomena will heal my poor weak head; however, since the end of the novena, I have been fine.

Goodbye dear esteemed brother, believe me in our Lord,

Your ever devoted,
Eymard
Marist Priest

470

CO 466

TO MME. NATALIE JORDAN (NEE BRENIER DE MONTMORAND)
(IV 13/75)

L.J.C.

La Seyne, October 18, 1854

Madame and dear sister in our Lord,

After all that searching, we are left with the good Lord. I would have really liked to go visit you briefly in Lyons or at Romans. Such is life; we look for one another and say goodbye.

But how good it is to live in God, to love God and in God! to see every event only in God, for his glory and for Heaven!

In the midst of my numerous occupations and my little sufferings, God gives me many graces. I can hardly resign myself to asking that these crosses may be removed. It's so good to suffer a little! What about you, my dear daughter, what are you doing? I feel that you must be frustrated by so much business and so many people. What to do? That is where God wants you. Try to never lose sight of him and to never let your heart become attached to this poor wretched world.

I pray a great deal for Miss Mathilde and for all of you.

¹²⁰ Abbreviation for merchant.

If you wish, please offer my regards and regrets to Mr. Jordan. The only thing I did in Lyons was suffer migraine headaches. Just when I thought I would be free to go out, I had to go lie down. Believe me, dear sister,

All yours in our Lord,
Eymard

471

CO 467

TO THE GUILLOT FAMILY
(II 120/395 VI 2)

L.J.C.

La Seyne, October 22, 1854

My very dear daughters in our Lord,

Thank you for your kind wishes. I am afraid that my health is worrying you too much I am well enough, if I'm careful. My migraine headache is very light and less frequent. I can say Mass regularly. I eat very little at night and I feel better. This migraine is a good director for my food, and too demanding on my sleep; it is merciless. It recollects me when I am too scattered and stops me when it isn't necessary to go out. Therefore, it's a good companion.

My dear daughters, you do have a lot to bear, you have many crosses, many sacrifices. Well! Praise God for it, since he is kindly giving you what is most precious and gracious as proof of his love.

When we are on the cross, we shouldn't look down, but up to heaven.

So then, poor Miss Marguerite is stretched out on a hard cross! Oh! The thought of it is hard to bear. I had a presentiment about it when I left her. Let her see it only as a pledge of heaven.

Take courage! My good daughters, let us love the good Lord even more during this time of suffering. It is the best time.

I will stop now. My sister and Nanette are doing well. At the first opportunity, I will have someone pass you my retreat [notes].

Give me news about your dear patient.

All yours,
Eymard

472

CO 468

TO MISS ELIZABETH MAYET
(VII 9/17)

La Seyne, Nov. 14, 1854

Mademoiselle and dear sister in our Lord,

I learned the sad news about Miss Melanie with great regret. She left you alone¹²¹; she was so virtuous, so kind! Alas! This life is a sad life of farewells!

¹²¹She died.

However, my poor daughter, those for whom you are grieving are all blessed. Their death was precious in God's sight and their glory is great in heaven.

You loved them in God and for God. You will meet them again, happy and glorious in the homeland of God's children. -- Do not cry too much over so much virtue, since you are its beneficiary, and life is very short. Oh! my poor daughter, how good it is to love God in such wrenching and agonizing moments!

We will find those whom we love in God again. I prayed and do pray for your dear sister in order that the peace of the Lord may be her eternal rest. But I am praying even more for you, because I feel that you are alone and suffering. I am mistaken, you are not alone. Your brother Thony is there, with the kindness of a father and a mother. Your fine Sister Perroud is there with her tender love and your brother-priest with prayer.

Courage! my dear daughter, let us walk in confidence and surrender toward that beautiful homeland where there are no more tears, nor suffering, nor sin, nor death, but God, who is eternally good, our Relatives, our Friends, the Saints.

Goodbye, believe me ever in our Lord,

Your ever devoted
Eymard

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CO 469

TO MME. FRANCHET
(VII 25/33)

*LJC*¹²²

La-Seyne, November 14, 1854

Madame and dear sister in our Lord,

It is too soon to give you a decision. I didn't want to say yes, and leave you prey to the grace of the moment. What you are asking from me is good at certain times, but harmful at others.

If you have done it, that is fine; otherwise wait a little.

Dear Father General told me that he had given you Father Marcel.¹²³ I praise God for giving you this grace and I am convinced that it will be the source of peace, of a spiritual life and of the love of God which you have been seeking for such a long time.

Your dear Charles is with his uncle, so much the better! There were so many reasons, that we can only approve your decision.

Goodbye, Madame and dear daughter in our Lord. Always be simple, calm and dedicated to the service of your divine Master.

Your ever devoted servant,
Eymard, SM

¹²² Praised be Jesus Christ.

¹²³ As a spiritual director.

TO COUNTESS ADELE DE REVEL DE NESC
(VIII 10/26 VII 17)

(L & S)

La Seyne Boarding School, La Seyne, L.J.C.E., November 15, 1854

Mademoiselle and dear sister in our Lord,

I have spent a few days reflecting deeply and praying after receiving your letter. My heart would have answered you at once, but the matter is too serious.

I am not surprised, dear sister, by the impression my last words made on you. I was quite affected myself as I said them, and I saw them as a touch of grace for you. - You were obliged to go through that demanding Christian duty, that honorable fidelity; and now our Lord wants a daughter's, a spouse's heart. All is dead around you, and if anything is left, it will soon pass away. - The world is but an image, as St. Paul says: that is, a fleeting shadow.

So now you are free! but [free] to belong wholly to God; in a few years' time, perhaps, only eternity will know your name and your life. So you must set about using the remaining time well. But what are you to do? Here is the problem, and it pulls me up short.

Here, then, is what I think you should do:

1. Continue your external way of life - with your house in town and your fine servants.
2. Do not take an active part in Nazareth House; I mean do not live there - or lodge there full time - so as not to bring attention to the little mystery of Nazareth, but let it begin in the shadows, and in silence; let it then take its first steps, and let it grow. That, dear Sister, is my idea for the present. But what is my wish for you in the future? This is what I am asking our good Master for you: that you become a Religious before you die; that you leave the world entirely, and that you die in the bosom of evangelical religious life. Meanwhile, dear daughter, before that happy day comes, put Nazareth House at the head of your good works. Remember that it is for Mary of Nazareth that you are working.

Save money for this Work!

I would very much like to ask you to be its foundress. I know that there are family demands to be respected; so be it. But, the more I see of society, the better I understand the misfortune of families that are too wealthy and have little religion.

What can I tell you about my health? I feel better, I can work; my head, which is still heavy, is feeling better. Oh! what poverty is mine, that I have done hardly anything for God, and when I see the world so wicked and so cold towards God, alas! I would like to do something great to glorify God and save my fellow-men.

Take care of your health, dear daughter, - for you must do something great for God before you die.

Goodbye, you know that I am, in our Lord,

All yours,
Eymard, P.M.

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CO 472

TO MISS MARGUERITE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)
(II 121/395 VI 2)

La Seyne, November 16, 1854

I wrote the enclosed letter for everyone. This one is for you alone

1. I share your feelings about Miss de R., she will show you my letter as you may show her yours.

2. Don't buy at first, only rent to try it out. If Miss de Revel didn't give at least five hundred francs for the house, that would be an obstacle, because a thousand francs for rent would be too high.

3. The Good Lord is very good toward you, my dear daughter. He stretches you out on the cross and he comes to visit, comfort and strengthen you. Love him dearly in this high God-given state.

4. Don't be afraid! In his divine goodness he will not forsake you. Spurn the devil. Accept the external embarrassment to which Fr. Huguet is subjecting you. When he asks, say that you think he is right and don't dwell on it, nor on what I told you. However, I beg you in our Lord, don't give in to scrutinizing your past life which you are told was so guilty; consider that opinion only as a way to humility and nothing more. See nothing in your past life except the goodness and mercy of God, and his love for you.

Goodbye, my dear daughter. I am feeling better. I haven't missed Holy Mass for a month now.

I will offer the two Masses that you requested from me, immediately.

My love to all your sisters, my warm respects to the fine and dear Mr. Galtier. I am pleased about his kindness toward you.

All yours in Christ,
Eymard

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CO 471

TO MISS MARGUERITE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)
(II 122/395 VI 2)

L.J.C.E.

La Seyne, November 16, 1854

Mademoiselle and dear sister in our Lord,¹²⁴

I was happy to receive the letter you wrote to me, a few days ago, to consult me about the house of Nazareth and about the Carmelite location.

Concerning the house of Nazareth, I like to think about such a foundation as a haven for the spouses of Jesus Christ who are old, sick and alone in the world. What I like especially is that the Third Order will be known there, both as a Cenacle and a Nazareth. It will be a center for the sisters who want to lead a religious life suited to their situation. The world needs this kind of house. Religious communities want to receive only persons who are young and in good health.

What strikes me as most beautiful is the need to establish houses of Nazareth a bit everywhere, as St. Francis did for his Third Order houses. A motherhouse is necessary for that. But how can

¹²⁴ This letter was sent as a companion piece to the preceding personal letter; it was intended for all those involved in the Nazareth project.

such a house be founded? On God and on trust in our Good Mother, on the house of Nazareth, with its life of recollection, work, and charity, its centering on Jesus. So, we need to choose persons who are poor, weak, simple and ill. These are the foundation stones. If we want the house of Nazareth to succeed, it must not depend on the protection of human beings, nor on everyone's approval, but on God's care. It is enough to be approved by one's Superior. Under those conditions, you would be sure to succeed because God will do everything; he still loves Nazareth.

Should you rent the Carmelite's house? Given the advantages which this location offers, it seems to me that you shouldn't let it pass to someone else. My opinion is to rent it. However, I would advise you to submit this thought to Very Reverend Fr. General beforehand, not for approval, but for his gracious consent. It must all be done without me, and wholly in God.

Rev. Fr. General seemed to indicate that I will be staying here until the holidays. I am in God's hands: whether he leaves me here or sends me elsewhere, you understand only too well that I must desire only holy obedience.

Only, don't spread the news about the house of Nazareth. The world didn't know the Holy Family when they were together in their shabby house.

My dear sister, these are my thoughts about this undertaking. However, it's necessary to pray so that God may manifest his holy will.

Believe me in our Lord,

Your devoted servant,
Eymard
P.M.

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CO 473

TO FR. BRAMEREL
(V 5/5)

La Seyne, November 17, 1854

Very dear friend,

I am responding to your kind and cordial letter from La Seyne. Without a treasurer, with new men, surrounded with sick people... I could hardly find time to say my office. Your heart will not hold it against me.

I read your letter with the same heart which inspired it. How pleased I was to learn your news! I didn't know where you had pitched your tent.

It was with deep feeling that I read the description of your difficulties. Alas! It seems that every part of your heart was touched: loss of relatives, friends, etc. - See, dear friend, what the reality of life is like which seems so beautiful in the springtime of our lives, so rich seen from a distance... So, we long for a better life! So then, it's a great grace to understand the vanity of this world, and I rejoice to see that you do understand it. Oh! It's really true, outside of God everything is only vanity and deception. So, my good friend, turn toward God that fine heart he has given you which he endowed with so many and such generous qualities.

Love Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament, the priest's Holy of holies, his tabernacle, his heritage, his camp, his glory. We have everything with the Eucharist: Heaven and the heart of our brothers.

The Order of the Most Blessed Sacrament is being formed and developing in deepest solitude. That is where we must keep a place for you: there is light and a burning fire there.

But I understand that with your obligations as a brother, you cannot yet do so. Dear friend, pray and God will come to your help! - Chaplain for the Navy! That's fine, but it's very dry. You

have the Bishop of Gap to help you succeed. That's a good connection, but you yourself need to write to Fr. Coquerand, Head Chaplain in Paris. Reflect on it. I would prefer to see you as a Father of the Blessed Sacrament. How many resources would your parents require to do without you?

Please, dear friend, you know my address. If I can ever help you, I would be pleased. Find me a few men of fire among your old friends, for this new Order which I love very much and which I would like to see prosper.

Goodbye, dear friend.

Always yours,
Eymard, Superior

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CO 474

TO MISS MARGUERITE GUILLOT (MOTHER MARGUERITE DU SS)

(II 123/395 VI 2)

La Seyne, December 3, 1854

My daughter, I know you are waiting for my reply. I'm sorry for my delays; I had answered you, then I withheld my letter. It's so difficult for me to decide. My thought hasn't changed about the idea of the house itself;¹²⁵ but should it begin right away? that is where my difficulty lies.

The undertaking must be submitted to V. R. Fr. Favre. If he approves it and wants to direct it in a general way, do it ... If he leaves you free and under Fr. H's¹²⁶ direction, that is where my difficulty lies. I would almost say no.

You may as well consider me as dead where Lyons is concerned, this year, and perhaps for the beginning of next year as well. Fr. Superior General said that he could not withdraw me since he has no one to replace me. Then, the person they have in mind is still a novice.

That, my daughter, is where things are. What is certain is that I cannot direct that house from here. To conclude: if my presence is a factor in discerning about this undertaking, then it is impossible at this time.

That's all I can tell you, dear daughter. You will understand this very easily. As for you, don't worry over Fr. H's storms. Keep going. Go beyond your doubts, and don't describe your temptations in too great detail. You know what you have to do about it: peace and wisdom lie in letting it be God's secret. In confusion and doubt, proceed as if nothing happened.

Goodbye my daughter. May our Lord keep you and make you belong fully to his love.

Eyd.

P.S. Our regards to everyone.

¹²⁵ Foundation of the House of Nazareth.

¹²⁶ Fr. Huguet.

TO MISS MARIETTE GUILLOT (SR. ANNE-MARIE DU SS)

(III 4/21)

To Miss Mariette

La Seyne-sur-Mer, December 3, 1854

I am very happy, my dear daughter, about the permission given you by good Fr. Galtier. - Yes, receive Communion as often as he permits. You need it. You tell me that you are not worthy of it. That's true, the angels are not worthy of it. All the holiness we could have doesn't make us deserving of a single Communion in our whole life.

But you need it, you are weak, it is the food of strength. You want to love God, it is the sacrament of love. In this regard, you would need to receive Communion at every hour of the day, if that were possible. So you are really poor, my good daughter, and you always have the same faults!

You say that you can't meditate, that you aren't gentle and patient enough. You are always the same, more concerned about others than about yourself.

Here is my answer. Be the sister Martha of the house, the sister of charity ... and our Lord will love you as much as Magdalen.

One thing is essential. It is to be content with everything that happens to you, as being the best for you. It means doing everything for God.

Concerning your meditations, I will have to pay my debts, I didn't have time for them.¹²⁷

As for the new house,¹²⁸ I cannot become involved with it, since I am here. And since I'm not due to return to Lyons, I believe it will be postponed. So it is useless to think about it, - unless the good Lord manifests his holy will in an evident manner.

So, remain as you are until you receive new orders.

Goodbye, my daughter, be wholly God's.

Devotedly yours,
Eymard

TO COUNTESS ADELE DE REVEL DE NESCE

(VIII 11/26 VII 17)

(L & S)

La Seyne Boarding School, December 3, 1854

Mademoiselle and dear sister in our Lord,

Here I am at last. If I have been slow to reply, it is because I needed time to reflect.

After I had prayed, I still felt uneasy about this new house.¹²⁹ I don't have the courage to say "Begin it," and even if what I say were to have some weight, I would say no. If it is to be done by Fr. Huguet I shall let him go ahead, but I don't wish to take part in it.

It would require the approval of the Very Rev. Fr. Favre, with his promise to support and help it, for me to comply with the idea and give it my blessing.

But if the Sup. General is content to see it begin, and let it develop on its own, then I say it is too soon - what is needed is firm and benevolent spiritual support. As for what affects you

¹²⁷ Meaning unclear. Perhaps review her written meditations or to send her his. Tr.

¹²⁸ House of Nazareth.

¹²⁹ House of Nazareth.

personally, I may, dear daughter, tell you exactly what I think. - If I seemed strict when I advised you not to take up an active life straightaway, it was because I could foresee too many difficulties falling upon you from all sides; the project is not yet ripe. God preserve me from depriving you of a great good, or diminishing your crown. No, on the contrary, I would like to increase it a hundredfold. Continue, dear daughter, in the good works which God wants of you in your situation. When I wished you to die as a perfect religious - well, I still hope for that, but death! don't think about it. Love the good Lord as if you were to live forever, and serve him accordingly.

As for me, I am quite well, with a thousand and one things to do, but God is present.

You know how much I enjoy getting your letters, and that I am

All yours,
Eymard

On December 8, 1854, the dogma of the Immaculate Conception was proclaimed by Pope Pius IX.