

Letters and Shorter Works

BY

SAINT JOHN EUDES

**Translated from the French by
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**With an Introduction by
THE VERY REVEREND FRANCIS LEBESCONTE
SUPERIOR GENERAL OF THE EUDISTS FATHERS**

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GENERAL PREFACE

ST. JOHN EUDES has been called "the wonder of his age." Missionary, founder, reformer of the clergy, he crowded into a life of seventy-nine years so many and such varied accomplishments that one marvels how a single man could achieve so much. In addition to the activities of an incessant and many-sided apostolate, he wrote a number of valuable books, which rank him among the most prolific ascetic writers of the seventeenth century.

For many years the devotional works of St. John Eudes were practically unknown.(1) Occasionally a volume was discovered in the library of some seminary or religious house. Many others preserved in manuscript form were lost in the chaos of the French Revolution(2) At the beginning of the present century the sons of St. John Eudes united in a tribute of filial piety to bring out a complete edition of the works of their spiritual father, seeking them in public and private libraries throughout the world(3) About twenty volumes were found and edited in 1905 by the late Fathers Charles Lebrun, C.J.M., and Joseph Dauphin,

(1).Before the French Revolution the works of St. John Eudes were popular in France. In 1792 the houses of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary were confiscated by the Government and its members were massacred or dispersed throughout Europe. With the suppression of the Eudists, their rich literary heritage was widely scattered and partially destroyed. It was not until the re-establishment of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary in 1826 that effort was made to recover the printed and manuscript works of St. John Eudes. The research was carried on until the latter part of the nineteenth century. In the "Preface Générale to the Oeuvres Complètes (Vannes, 1905), Father Charles Lebrun points out that one of the purposes of the edition was "to unearth these works buried too long in oblivion," exhumers ces ouvrages ensevelis depuis trop longtemps dans l'oubli...

(2)The following manuscripts were not found: The Christian Man, All Jesus, The Divine office, The Admirable Sacrifice of the Mass, Meditations, (2 vol.), Sermons of St. John Eudes (3 vols.), Favors obtained by the Diocese of Coutances through the Blessed Virgin, The Divine Childhood of Jesus, The Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, The Admirable *Life of Mary des Vallées*, (incomplete copy found at Laval University Library, Quebec) and Correspondence of St. John Eudes.

(3). cf. *oeuvres Complètes*, P. xiv.

v -

GENERAL PREFACE

C.J.M. The first edition in French, *Oeuvres Complètes du Vénérable Jean Eudes*, ran into twelve octavo volumes with introductions, explanatory notes, analytic and alphabetic indexes of great value. These writings constitute a complete summa of ascetic and pastoral theology. The list is as follows:

Volume 1 The Life and Kingdom of Jesus in Christian Souls. In this work the Saint develops his spiritual teaching on the Christian life, namely, that the Christian life is simply the life of Jesus extended and continued in each one of us.

Volume 11. This volume contains six short treatises on subjects relating to the Christian life:

1. *A Treatise on the Respect Due to Holy Places*, which is an echo of the fiery denunciations he pronounced during his missions against profaners of the temple of God.

2. *Meditations on Humility*, a series of meditations on the profession of humility as used daily in his order of Priests, the Congregation of Jesus and Mary.

3. *Interior Colloquies of the Soul with God*, meditations on creation, the end of man and the grace of Baptism.

4. *Man's Contract with God in Holy Baptism*, a summary of the teachings of Sacred Scripture and Tradition on the Sacrament of Baptism.

5. *The Practice of Piety*, a brief explanation of what is necessary in order to live a Christian life.

6. *Catechism of the Mission*, an outline of the catechetical instructions given during a mission.

Volume III. Contains two important works on sacerdotal perfection:

1. *The Memorial of the Ecclesiastical Life*, an explanation of the dignity and duties of the priesthood.

2. *A Manual of Piety for Use in an Ecclesiastical Community*, in which the author explains how the means of sanctification he recommended to his priests should be practically applied in their daily lives.

Volume IV. Comprises significant works on the priestly ministry.

1. *The Apostolic Preacher* is one of the first treatises written on the ministry of the Word of God and is even yet one of the most practical.

GENERAL PREFACE

V 11 -

2. *The Good Confessor* explains the qualities, and obligations of the minister of the Sacrament of Penance.

3. *Counsels for Mission Confessors* suggests practical means of assisting penitents to make their examination of conscience and excite themselves to contrition.

4. *The Manner of Serving Mass* explains the dignity and holiness of this act and what one must do to perform it devoutly and worthily.

Volume V. The Admirable Childhood of the Most Holy Mother of God. This book treats of the holy childhood of Mary and the practical means of honoring the mysteries and virtues of her early life.

Volumes VI, VII, VIII contain the entire writings of the Saint on the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. The work is entitled: *The Admirable Heart of the Most Holy Mother of God.* It comprises twelve books covering the complete theology of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts. Eleven books discuss the theory, history, and practice of the devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The last book deals with the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It is this work, together with the Offices of the Sacred Hearts, that merit for him the title of Father, Doctor and Apostle of the Devotion to the Sacred Hearts.

Volume IX. The Rules and Constitutions of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary.

Volume X. Contains *The Rules and Constitutions of the Order of Our Lady of Charity*, the *Directory* of the Order, and a collection of two hundred and forty letters.

Volumes XI and XII embrace the Saint's *Liturgical Works*, comprising twenty-five Offices and Masses for feasts to which he urged special devotion, the *Memorial of God's Blessings* and several other minor works.

The second French edition appeared in 1935, *Oeuvres Choisies de Saint Jean Eudes*, prepared under the direction of Father Lebrun, the leading authority on Eudistic research. It comprises nine volumes: *The Life and Kingdom of Jesus in Christian Souls*, *Meditations of Various Subjects*, *Regulae Vitae Christianae et Sacerdotalis*, *Man's Contract with God in Holy Baptism*, *Letters and Minor Works*, *Writings on the Priesthood*, *The Sacred Heart of Jesus*, *The Admirable Heart of Mary*, and *The Admirable Childhood of the Mother of God*. The format of

these volumes is compact and more convenient than the 1905 edition, which is now out of print.

The publication of the works of St. John Eudes revealed the extent and depth of their spiritual doctrine. Cardinal Pitra, who was associated with the cause of Beatification, discovered in the writings of St. John Eudes a remarkable depth of thought and purity of doctrine. Cardinal Vives has more recently expressed his admiration:

I was acquainted with the Doctors of the Order of Saint Francis; I was acquainted with Saint Teresa and Saint John of the Cross, the mystical writers of my own country, Spain; but I was completely ignorant of the writings of Father Eudes. As a member of the Sacred Congregation of Rites it was my duty to study his life and his works, and I am in admiration. Blessed John Eudes must be ranked with the great lights of the Church. His spiritual doctrine is profound and of wonderful exactitude. He is one of the writers who has best propounded the doctrine of the Gospel.(4).

The late Father Ange Le Doré, for fifty years Superior General of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary, wrote:

The works of Blessed John Eudes, although they do not bear the scientific touch of the professional theologian, are nevertheless proof of his remarkable theological, ascetic and scriptural knowledge.... He is not a Doctor after the fashion of the scholastics of the thirteenth century or of the great theologians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. As they, he might have built up theses and composed books didactic in form; but he was before all a savior of souls. For him the science of theology found its chief field of usefulness in the practice of virtue and in the acquisition of sanctity of which it is the principle.... He was a Doctor after the manner of the Apostles, the Fathers of the Church, St. Francis de Sales and St. Alphonsus de Liguori. The science which shines in his works not only emits light; it engenders piety and sanctity.(5)

The spiritual doctrine expounded by St John Eudes follows the teaching of Cardinal *Pierre de Bérulle* and Father Charles de Condren, two prominent members of the seventeenth-century French School of Spirituality. St. John Eudes applies this doctrine to the devotion to the

(4). Quoted by P. A. Bray, C.J.M., *Saint John Eudes* (Halifax, 1925), P. 116.
 (5). Quoted by Buy, op. cit., p. 117.

GENERAL PREFACE 1 X -

Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, developing and rendering it more precise and practical. He has the rare gift of expressing the most sublime truths in simple, familiar language. He also excels in condensing into a few pages a complete scheme of Christian life and perfection.

The wish was repeatedly expressed that these inspirational writings could be made available to English-speaking readers. Excellent abridged editions of certain books were published in England and in Canada, but they did not do justice to the literary value of the Saint. Consequently, the Eudist Fathers commemorating their tercentenary in 1943 resolved to publish a complete translation of the principal works of their founder. Competent translators were secured and much time and effort were expended to produce readable volumes in modern English, faithful to the spirit and style of the original.

The first English edition, *Selected Works of Saint John Eudes*, is the result. In presenting it to the public the Eudist Fathers and the Religious of Our Lady of Charity of the Refuge, and of the Good

Shepherd, wish to thank all those who contributed to the success of this comprehensive undertaking. They are especially grateful to the distinguished churchmen who have so graciously accepted to introduce these volumes to Catholic readers, because they consider that the works of St. John Eudes should be more widely known. The Saint in his apostolic work and in his writings ranks with the eminent figures who belong not to one country and to one religious order but to the universal Church. Three centuries have passed since he wrote the works now being printed in the new world, a striking illustration that he wrote for all time. He still speaks in accents that penetrate the mind and heart of the reader to enlighten, purify and sanctify so that Jesus Christ may live and reign in the Christian soul.

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Editors

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CONTENTS

General Preface	
Introduction	xxvii

Letters

1. To Madame Laurence de Budos, Abbess of Holy Trinity Monastery at Caen [On the Death of Her Brother, Anthony, Killed at the Siege of Privas]	1
2. To Sister Mary de Taillepied, Lay Sister of the Holy Trinity Monastery at Caen [On the Solemnity of Jesus]	13
3- To Sister Mary de Taillepied [On the Feast of Easter]	15
4- To Sister Mary de Taillepied [On the Use of a Worldly Expression and on the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lady]	16
5- To Sister Mary de Taillepied [On Her Illness]	17
6. To Sister Mary de Taillepied [On Her Infirmities]	18
7- To Sister Mary de Taillepied [On Her Crosses and Afflictions]	19
8. To Madame Laurence de Budos [On the Calumnies Directed against Him during the Pleurtuit Mission]	19
9. To Madame Laurence de Budos [On Resignation in Time of Illness]	20
10. To the Ladies of Mercy of Rouen [On the Refuge of Caen]	24
11. To Madame Blouet de Camilly [On the Refuge of Caen]	29
12. To Father William Gibieuf, Oratorian [On His Mother's Cure through the Intercession of Cardinal de Bérulle]	30
13. To the Priests of the Caen Seminary [On Humility, Charity and Pure Love]	31
14. To Father Richard Le Mesle . [Concerning Successful Negotiations]	32

X1-

X11

CONTENTS

15. To Mr. and Madame Blouet de Camilly [On the Affairs of Our Lady of Charity, and on the Proper Disposition for Holy Communion]	33
16. To Mademoiselle Eustace de Taillefer [To Strengthen Her in Her Vocation]	36
17. To Madame Blouet de Camilly [To Induce Her to Give Her Daughter to God]	38
18. To Madame Blouet de Camilly [On the Purchase of a House for the Religious of Our Lady of Charity]	40
19. To Madame Blouet de Camilly [On the Qualifications Required of Postulants of Our Lady of Charity]	42

20. To Fathers Richard Le Mesle and Thomas Vigeon [To Invite Them to Fulfill Their Promises to Join the Congregation of Jesus and Mary]	45
21. To Father Simon Mannoury in Paris [On the Mission at Le Bec-Thomas]	46
22. To Father Simon Mannoury in Rome [On the Mission at Autun]	- - 46
23. To Father Simon Mannoury in Rome [On the Difficulties Encountered in Obtaining Approbation of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary]	47
24. To Mother Elizabeth, Prioress of the Carmelite Monastery of Beaune [On the Death of Venerable Margaret of the Blessed Sacrament] -	48
25. To Anne of Austria, the Queen Mother [The Saint Begs Her to Choose Good Bishops for the Church]	50
26. Memorandum Presented to the Queen Mother on Several Outstanding Disorders in France and the Means of Correcting Them	52
27- To Very Reverend Father Francis Bourgoing, Superior General of the Oratory [In Justification of the Saint's Withdrawal from the Oratory]	57
28. To Mother Elizabeth, Prioress of the Carmelite Monastery of Beaune	58
29. To Father John Baptist Saint Jure, S.J. [Concerning Baron de Renty]	59

CONTENTS

xiii-

30. To Father Simon Mannoury [On the Dependence of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary with Regard to Bishops] . . .	60
31. To Father Richard Le Mesle [The Saint Thanks Him for Consolation Received from Him]	60
32. To One of His Sons Conducting a Mission at Gatteville [On Submission to the Will of God]	61
33. To the Priests of His Congregation during a Mission at Gatteville [On the Care to be Devoted to Spiritual Exercises] . . .	61
34. To the Religious of Our Lady of Charity at Caen [On the Feast of the joys of Our Blessed Lady]	63

35- To the Missionaries at Gatteville [On the Divine Will to Be Considered as Their Mother]	65
36. To the Priests of the Caen Seminary [On the Persecutions Directed against Them by the Bishop of Bayeux]	66
37. To Father Thomas Manchon at the Caen Seminary [On the Course to be Followed if the Seminary Chapel is Interdicted]	67
38. To One of His Confreres [Concerning the Admission of a Postulant on Probation]	68
39. To Mother Mechtilde of the Blessed Sacrament, Foundress of the Benedictine Nuns of the Blessed Sacrament [On a Favor Obtained through the Holy Heart of Mary]	68
40. To the First Sisters of Our Lady of Charity [On the Letters of Establishment of the Order]	69
41. To Sister Mary of the Assumption, Eustace de Taillefer [On Her Profession]	71
42. To Father Simon Mannoury [On a Postulant Admitted to Probation]	72
43. To Father Simon Mannoury at Coutances [On the Mission at Corbeil)	74
44. To Father Simon Mannoury [On the Mission at Bernay] -	74
45. To Father Simon Mannoury [To Ask Him to Send Helpers for the Mission at Bernay]	75
46. To Father Simon Mannoury in Paris [On the Opportuneness of a Mission in Coutances and the Concessions to Be Made to the Bishop of Bayeux]	76
X1V-	CONTENTS
47. To His Niece, Mary Herson [On the Dispositions with Which She Should Take the Veil]	77
48. To Mother Margaret Frances Patin [On Various Matters] . .	80
49. To Mother Margaret Frances Patin, Superior of Our Lady of Charity [On Sister Mary des Vallées and on Matters concerning Her Spiritual Perfections]	81
50. To Anne of Austria, the Queen Regent [On the Appointment of a Bishop to the See of Bayeux] ...	84
51. To the Priests of the Coutances Seminary [On the Reopening of the Chapel of the Caen Seminary]	86

52. To Father Richard Le Mesle [On His Persecutions)	89
53. To the Community of Our Lady of Charity at Caen [On the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary and on Zeal for the Salvation of Souls]	90
54. To His Lordship Francis Harlay de Champvallon, Archbishop of Rouen [On the Self-Interest of Bishops in Protecting Seminaries]	96
55. To Father Thomas Manchon, Superior of the Lisieux Seminary [On the Death of Sister Mary des Valléesj	97
56. To the Community of Eudists at Lisieux [On the Death of Father James Le Duc]	100
57. To Madame Blouet de Camilly [On the Unexpected Cure of Father Thomas Manchon, and on Various Other Matters] . .	101
58. To Father Simon Mannoury at Lisieux [On Various Matters concerning the College at Lisieux and the Religious of Our Lady of Charity at Caen]	103
59. To Sister Mary of the Assumption Eustace de Taillefer [On the Saint's Unchangeable Love toward the Caen Community] . .	105
60. To Mother Margaret Frances Patin, Superior of the Religious of Our Lady of Charity at Caen [On the Course to Be Followed in the Event of Opposition from the Sheriffs and on Various Other Matters]	107
61. To Mr. Augustine Le Haguais [On Submission to the Will of God in Time of Illness] . .	109
62. To die Professors of the College at Lisieux [Advice concerning Their Conduct]	111

CONTENTS

XV-

63. To the Priests of His Congregation Conducting a Mission at Honfleur [On the Sanction of the Caen Seminary by His Lordship Bishop Servien of Bayeux]	115
64. To the Superior of One of His Houses [On the Value of Humiliations]	119
65. To Madame de Bois-David, a Postulant at the Monastery of Our Lady of Charity at Caen	119
66. To Father John Dupont, Superior of the Coutances Seminary [On Occupations Outside the Community and on Trust in God]	120
67. To Father John Dupont, Superior of the Coutances Seminary [On Obedience]	121
68. To Father John Dupont [Concerning the Purchase of a Site in the Place des Petits Prés for the Erection of the Caen Seminary]	121

69. To the Priests of the Seminary at Lisieux [On Their Refusal to Accept Father Anthony Bernard as Their Superior]	122
70. To Father Thomas Manchon, Superior at Rouen [On the Conduct to Follow with Respect to the Jansenists]	124
71. To Father John Dupont, Superior of the Coutances Seminary [On the Opening of the Seminary at Rouen)	125
72. To Father Thomas Manchon, Superior at Rouen [On His Difficulties]	126
73. To Father Thomas Manchon [On the Poverty of His Seminary]	127
74. To Father Thomas Manchon [On Another Occasion] . . .	128
75. To Mr. D'Omonville, Counsellor of the Rouen Parliament [To Persuade Him to Maintain the Liberalities Pledged to the Rouen Seminary]	129
76. To His Lordship Claude Auvry, a Former Bishop of Coutances [To Urge Him to Accept the Bishopric of Bayeux] . .	131
77. To the Bursar of the Rouen Seminary	133
78. To Father John James Blouet de Camilly [On the Mission at Vasteville]	134
79. To Father John James Blouet de Camilly in Paris [On the Success of the Vasteville Mission]	134
80. To a Confrere [On the Benefits of Missions]	136
81. To Father John James Blouet de Camilly in Paris [On the Villedieu Mission]	136
XV1	
82. To Father John James Blouet de Camilly [On Mr. de Langrie's Cure]	137
83. To Father John James Camilly [Regarding the Plan of the Chapel at Caen, Drawn Up through the Efforts of Father Mannoury]	137
84. To Father John James Blouet de Camilly in Paris [On the Edifying Conduct of the Candidates for Ordination at the Rouen Seminary]	138
85. To Father John James Blouet de Camilly [On the Calumnies of Which the Saint Was a Victim in 1659]	138
86. To Mother Margaret Frances Patin, Superior of Our Lady of Charity of Caen [On Her Spiritual State]	139

CONTENTS

102. To Father John Dupont [On Complaints Received from Him] . 158
103. To the Priests of the Caen Seminary [On the Sermon Preached before the Queen Mother, February 8, 1661] 158
104. To Father John Dupont, Superior of the Coutances Seminary [An Answer to Father Dupont's Letter Claiming That God Did Not Wish Him to Remain There] 161
105. To Father Thomas Hubert [On His Illness) 162
106. To Mother Margaret Frances Patin, Superior of the Monastery of Our Lady of Charity at Caen [On the Measures to Be Taken in Rome and on the Guidance of the Penitents] 162
107. To Mother Margaret Francis Patin [To Ask That a Copy of the Rules of the Penitents Be Sent to Rome and to Prescribe the Articles for Them] 165
108. To Madame Blouet de Camilly [On Her Husband's Illness] . . 167
109. To Madame Blouet de Camilly [How to Act during a Time of Illness] 169
110. To the Priests of His Congregation [On the Death of Mr. James Blouet, Seigneur de Camilly, Which Occurred Suddenly on October 18, 1661) 174
111. To Father Thomas Manchon [On the Death of Father Richard Le Mesle, Which Occurred on October 21] 175
112. To Madame Blouet de Camilly [To Comfort Her on the Death of Her Husband] 175

xviii

CONTENTS

113. To Madame Blouet de Camilly [On the Same Subject] . . . 178
114. To the Community of Our Lady of Charity of Caen [On the Observance of the Rules and the Practice of Certain Virtues] . . 180
115. To a Priest of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary [On the Death of Father Peter Jourdan, Which Occurred on December 27, 1661]. 181
116. Permission Granted to Father Peter de Sesseval, Known as Damville, for the Foreign Missions 182
117. To Madame Blouet de Camilly [On Various Subjects. Contemplated Establishment of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary at Paris] . 184

118. To Mother Margaret Frances Patin [On Her Negotiations in Rome]	185
119. To Mother Margaret Frances Patin [To Urge Her to Send Money to Father Boniface in Rome]	187
120. To Mother Margaret Frances Patin [On the Same Subject] . .	191
121. To Father John Longeval, a Priest of the Seminary of Rouen [On the Archbishop's Manifestations of Satisfaction with the Seminary]	193
122. To Mother Mary of the Nativity Herson [To Assure Her That He Willingly Forgets Past Grievances]	194
123. To Father Louis Faucon, known as <i>de Sainte Marie</i> , the Successor of Father Thomas Manchon as Superior of the Rouen Seminary [On the Poverty of His House]	195
124. Father John Avenel's Appointment to Lisieux	196
125. To Cardinal Jerome Grimaldi, Archbishop of Aix [On the Organization of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary)	196
126. To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond [On the Cretteville Mission, in the Diocese of Coutances]	199
127. To One of His Spiritual Children, after an Illness [On Obedience to the Divine Will]	200
128. To the Priests of the Rouen Seminary [To Announce to Them the Nomination of Their New Superior, Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond]	200
129. To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond, Superior of the Rouen Seminary [On the Mission at Châlons-sur-Marne] . .	201

CONTENTS

X1X

130. To Mother Margaret Frances Patin [She Had Informed Him of the Apostolic Approbation of the Order of Our Lady of Charity] 201	201
131. To Mother Margaret Frances Patin [On Pious Practices with Respect to the Dying]	203
132. To Mr. Augustine Le Haguais [On the Mission at St. Peter's Church, Caen, and on the Course to Follow in His Adversities] 204	204
133. To Mother Margaret Frances Patin [On Drawing Up the Constitutions of the Order of Our Lady of Charity]	205

134. To Mother Margaret Frances Patin [On Various Subjects] . .	206
135. To a Nun (On the Death of Father John Doucet]	207
136. To His Lordship Henry du Tour de Maupas, Bishop of Evreux [To Request Him to Dismiss the Canons of Evreux from the Seminary] .	207
137. To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond, Superior of the Rouen Seminary [On the Precautions to Be Taken against the Plague]	208
138. To Mother Mary of the Blessed Sacrament Pierre, Who Was Elected Superior of Our Lady of Charity after the Death of Mother Margaret Frances Patin [On the Fulfillment of Her Duties]	209
139. To Bishop de la Vieuville of Rennes [To Advise That the Cele bration of the Jubilee Is Not Favorable to Giving a Mission] . .	211
140. To the Superior at Rouen [To Request Him to Send Father Thomas Vaguel to Him]	212
141. To Mother Mary of the Blessed Sacrament Pierre [On the Estab lishment at Rennes, and on the Zeal That Ought to Be Mani fested on Such Occasions]	212
142. To Sister Mary of St. Agnes des Champs, in Caen [On the Love of Jesus and Mary, and on Union with the Dispositions with Which They Died]	214
143. To Mother St. Gabriel, a Religious of Montmartre [Concerning the Saint's Zeal for Missions]	215
144. To Mother Mary of the Blessed Sacrament Pierre, Superior of Our Lady of Charity [On Spending the New Year Well] . .	215
145. To Sister Mary of the Assumption Le Grand [On Various Sub jects]	216
XX-	CONTENTS
146. To Sister Mary of the Nativity Herson, His Niece [On the Death of Her Sister-in-Law]	217
147. To a Religious of Montmartre [On Submission to the Will of God]	218
148. To Mother St. Gabriel [On the Mission Preached by the Saint to the Religious of Our Lady of Vernon]	219
149. To Mother St. Gabriel [On the Occasion of an Illness of Ma dame de Lorraine, Abbess of Montmartre]	219

150. To Sister Mary of the Nativity Herson [On the Guidance of the Penitents, and on the Proper Preparation for the Feast of the Holy Heart of Mary]	220
151. To Sister Mary of the Child Jesus de Bois-David, the Second of the Name [On the Subject of Her Profession]	221
152. To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond, Superior of the Caen Seminary [On the Registration of Letters Patent Obtained in View of an Establishment at Paris]	222
153. To Sister Mary of St. Agnes des Champs [on Her Trials] . .	223
154. To Sister Mary of the Nativity Herson [On Her Position as Mistress of Penitents, and on the Feast of the Holy Heart of Mary] .	223
155. To Sister Mary of Jesus Allain [On the Feast of the Holy Heart of Mary, and Some Virtues to Be Practised]	224
156. To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond [On the Contemplated Establishment of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary in Paris]	225
157. To the Priests of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary [On the Establishment of the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus] . . .	226
158. To Archbishop Médavy of Rouen [In justification of the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus]	229
159. To an Unidentified Person [On the Plan for the Saint's Appointment as Coadjutor Bishop of Evreux with Future Succession]	230
160. To the Same Person [On the Same Subject]	230
161. To Father Simon Mannoury [On the Subject of His Appointment as Coadjutor Bishop of Evreux]	231
CONTENTS	XX1
162. To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond [On the Same Subject]	231
163. To Father James de la. Haye de Bonnefond [On the Same Subject.	232
164. To Sister Mary of St. Agnes des Champs [On Her Convalescence]	233
165. To Sister Mary of St. Agnes des Champs [On Trust in Mary] .	234
166. To Mother St. Gabriel, a Religious of Montmartre [On the Death of Father Blouet de Than, Founder of the Caen Seminary] .	234

167. To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond, in Caen [On the Mission at Saint Germain-en-Laye, Given at the Command of Louis XIV].	235
168. To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond [On the Mission at Saint Germain-en-Laye]	236
169. To Mother St. Henry, a Religious of Montmartre [On a Marvelous Occurrence during the Mission of Elbeuf]	236
170. To Mother St. Gabriel, a Religious of Montmartre [Concerning His Ardent Desire to See Jesus and Mary Live and Reign in the Hearts of the Abbess and Her Daughters]	237
171. To Sister Mary of the Nativity Herson [On the Government of the Charity Sisters of Bayeux)	237
172. To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond [On the Difficulties to Obtain Approbation of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary]	238
173. To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond in Rome [On the Necessity of Having the Superior General of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary Appointed by the Sovereign Pontiff]	239
174. To Sister Mary of the Nativity Herson [On the Consolations of Crosses and on the House of the Charity Sisters at Bayeux]	240
175. To Colbert [On His Departure for Caen]	241
176. To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond [Concerning Father Boniface's Petition]	242
177. To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond [On Love for Jesus and Mary]	242
178. To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond [To Ask to Resign as Superior General in Order to Calm the Tempest]	243
XX11	CONTENTS
179. To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond [On the Indulgences Obtained for the Missions)	243
180. To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond in Rome [On the Ingratitude of One of His Children]	244
181. To Mother St. Gabriel [On an Illness]	244
182. To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond in Rome [On the Indulgences Obtained for the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart]	245

183 To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond in Rome [On a Defamatory Libel Published against Him]	246
184. To the Priests of His Congregation [On Trust in God in the Midst of Persecutions]	247
185. To Sisters Mary of the Nativity Herson and Mary of the Child Jesus Bois-David then with the Charity Sisters of Bayeux [To Request Them to Return to Caen]	248
186. To the Superior of the Rouen Seminary [In Answer to a Letter Urging Him to Reply to the Libel of the Abbe d'Aulnay] . .	249
187. To Mother St. Gabriel [On Afflictions]	249
188. To Mother St. Gabriel [On His Grief during His Disfavor with Louis XIV]	250
189. To an Unknown Person [On His Numerous Duties during a Mission]	251
190. To a Religious of Montmartre [To Assure Her That He Forgives His Enemies]	251
191. To a Religious of Montmartre [Consolation in the Midst of His Trials]	252
192. To a Religious of Montmartre [The Saint's Feelings toward His Enemies]	252
193. To Sister Mary of the Nativity Herson, His Niece [On Trust in God]	252
194. To the Religious of Our Lady of Charity [On Humility I . . .	253
195- To the Community of Our Lady of Charity in Caen [On the Preparation for the Feast of Pentecost]	253
196. To a Religious of Our Lady of Charity [To Console Her] . .	254
197- To Father Trochu, the Almoner of His Lordship the Bishop of Meaux [With Reference to the Rumors Circulated about the Saint in Connection with Mary des Vallées]	254

CONTENTS

XX111

198. To His Lordship Francis de Nesmond, Bishop of Bayeux [On His Connections with Mary des Vallées]	256
199. To Sister Mary St. Henry, a Religious of Montmartre [On a Libel Publicly Circulated by the Saint's Enemies]	257

200. To an Unidentified Person [On the Ordeals to Which the Saint Had to Submit]	258
201. To Mother St. Gabriel, a Religious of Montmartre [On the Value of Crosses]	258
202. To King Louis XIV [Memoir Dealing with the Boniface Petition]	259
203. To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond [To Urge Him to Accept the Position of Visitor of the Houses of the Congregation]	260
204. To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond [To Entrust Him with the Duties of Visitor]	261
205. To His Lordship Francis Harlay de Champvallon, Archbishop of Paris [To Request an Audience with King Louis XIV] . .	261
206. To King Louis XIV [To Disclaim Father Boniface's Petition and to Request an Audience of Him]	262
207..To Mother St. Gabriel [On the Illness of Which God Has Cured Him]	263
208. To Madame d'Argouges [On the Projected Establishment of the Daughters of Our Lady of Charity in Paris]	264
209. To Father Louis Francis d'Argentan, a Capuchin [On His Book, <i>Les Grandeurs de la Sainte Vierge</i>]	265
210. To Father Ralph de Bon [To Inform Him of His Appointment as Superior of the Evreux Seminary]	266
211. To Father Richard Dufour, His Secretary [To Give an Account of His Audience with Louis XIV]	266
212. To Father Ralph de Bon, Superior of the Evreux Seminary [On a Loss He Has Suffered]	268
273. To a Superior of Missionaries [On the Course to Follow in Giving Missions]	268
214. To a Benedictine Abbess [To Beg Her Not to Suppress the Feast of the Holy Heart of Mary]	270
215. To a Nun of the Order of St. Benedict [To Become Humble, but Not Discouraged because of Her Shortcomings] . .	271
XXIV	CONTENTS
216. To Two Religious of Montmartre [On Crosses and Afflictions)	272

217. To a Religious of Montmartre [On the Crosses and Afflictions of One of Her Sisters in Religion] 273
218. To a Nun of the Order of St. Benedict [On the Good Use to Be Made of Her Headaches] 274
219. To a Religious of Montmartre [On the Love of God] . . . 274
220. To Mother St. Gabriel, a Religious of Montmartre [On Trust in Mary] 275
221. To a Nun of Montmartre [On Obedience during a Time of Illness] 275
222. To One of His Nephews [On the Occasion of Some Services He Had Received from Him] 276
223. To the Superior of the Coutances Seminary [On the Feast of the Holy Heart of Mary] 276
224. To a Superior [On How to Say Holy Mass] 276
225. To the Superior of One of His Houses [On Mistrust of Self and Frequent Recourse to Our Lord] 277
226. To the Superior of One of His Seminaries [On Trust in God] . 277
227. To the Same Superior [On Another Occasion] 277
228. To the Superior of the Rouen Seminary [On the Necessity of Offering Daily an Hour of Prayer] 278
229. To the Superior of One of His Houses [To Request Prayers of Him for the Poor Who Are Involved in Lawsuits] 278
230. To a Superior [To Reprimand Him for Neglecting to Celebrate a Day Recommended as One of Thanksgiving in the Congregation for a Favor Received] 278
231. To a Superior [On How to Direct Subordinates] 279
232. To a Superior [In Answer to a Refusal to Allow the Departure of a Subject Requested by the Saint] 279
233. To a Superior [To Ask Him Not to Be Too Exacting with Regard to the Sick] 280
234. To a Confere [The Saines Charity toward a Sick Person] 280
235. To One of His Sons [At the Beginning of the New Year] 281

236. To a Priest of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary [To Inform Him that He Has Forgotten His Past Wrongs] 281

CONTENTS

XXV

237 To One of His Priests Who Is on a Mission [On the Persecutions of Which the Saint Is a Victim] 281

238. To the Priests of His Congregation [On the Accomplishment of the Divine Will] . . . 282

239. To One of His Sons [On Obedience] 282

240. To Some of His Priests during a Mission [On Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary] 283

241. To a Priest of His Congregation [On Crosses] 283

242. To a Priest of His Congregation [A Reply to Be Given to a Carmelite Nun of Caen, Who Believed She Had Been Inspired to Change Communities] 283

243. To the Superior of the Coutances Seminary [On Trust in God during a Time of Trial] . . .284

Shorter Works

Memorialc Beneficiorum Dei 287

Vow to Offer Himself as a Sacrifice and Victim to Jesus . . . 315

Contract of Holy Matrimony with the Most Blessed Virgin Mary . 318

Letter to the Most Holy Virgin 323

Last Will and Testament of Saint John Eudes 325

Prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary to Give Thanks to Her, to Recommend to Her Care the Congregation of Jesus and Mary, and to Ask of Her a Good and Holy Death 332

INTRODUCTION

The English translation of the letters of St. John Eudes, which is now being presented to the public, deserves to be widely read. "The style is the man himself," and it is always interesting to know the man; this applies even more to a saint.

John Eudes is not a stylist. He does not attempt to charm with the sparkling wit of Madame de Sévigné or the naive simplicity of St. Francis de Sales. Only the first letter, written when he was still a member of the Oratory,⁽¹⁾ gives the impression of conscious effort and striving for effect. In the 242 (2) other letters, St. John Eudes reveals himself as he really was, and we can form an unerring picture of him with his Norman shrewdness, his profound wisdom, his exquisite tenderness and his consummate sanctity.

First we remark in these letters the sly shrewdness characteristic of the Norman peasant. Born at Ri near Argentan, in the section of Normandy later known as the "pocket of Falaise," John Eudes was the son of an educated farmer and a local country girl. In him we find

(1). On March 25, 1623, John Eudes entered the Oratory of Jesus, a religious order of priests, founded in 1611 by Cardinal Peter de Bérulle. The Saint was an Oratorian until 1643 when he left the Oratory to found the Congregation of Jesus and Mary.

(2). In the course of his long and active career St. John Eudes wrote hundreds of letters. Several volumes of the original correspondence preserved by the Eudist Fathers at their Caen Seminary were lost during the French Revolution when the Seminary was confiscated by the Government. More fortunate than their spiritual brothers, the Religious of Our Lady of Charity of Caen were able to keep safe about 72 autographed letters that their holy founder had written to members or friends of the Community. Incomplete copies of this collection were to be found in many Refuge monasteries about the middle of the Nineteenth Century. When Reverend Charles Lebrun and Reverend Joseph Dauphin undertook the editing of the *Oeuvres Complètes* at the beginning of the present century, they collected in one volume all these letters together with many others that were found wholly or in part in the early biographies of the Saint. To these were also added a few letters sent to other communities or preserved in the National Archives of Paris. Up to the present the number of extant letters is 243.

XXV11-

XXV111-

INTRODUCTION

the typical Lower Norman who upholds his "woolen stocking"⁽³⁾ against Mother Margaret Frances Patin⁽⁴⁾ and consents to advance money only upon receipt of a signature.⁽⁵⁾ He is the crafty ruralist who, in view of the opposition registered by the aldermen of Caen to the transfer of the House of Our Lady of Charity, advises that the thing be done "with such secrecy that you will be housed before it becomes known."⁽⁶⁾ On another occasion he purchased, under an assumed name, the "Petit Prés" land before the Reverend Jesuit Fathers, who coveted it equally, got wind of his intentions.⁽⁷⁾

Being a saint, he knows how to renounce the goods of this world, but being likewise a Norman, he tries to retrieve what he has just sacrificed.

As for the twelve hundred livres, we must, first of all, sacrifice them to God. After that, however, I am of the opinion that you should have a novena of Masses for the Dead said for the souls in Purgatory, in order to enlist their aid in recovering the money.⁽⁸⁾

When Sister Margaret of the Blessed Sacrament (9) died, the Prioress of the Carmelites of Beaune sent him some medals of the Holy Infant Jesus to commemorate the occasion. The Saint thanked the Prioress profusely; then he added naively and charmingly: "We are deeply grateful to you for the eight medals, but there are (twelve) brothers in our little community . . ." (10) St. John Eudes is thus a typical Norman who never relinquishes what he has and claims what is his exact due.

If Norman shrewdness can be read between the lines of the correspondence of John Eudes,
(3). People in the rural districts of France often keep their valuables in woolen stockings, since they do not possess strongboxes.

(4). A Visitation nun who assisted St. John Eudes in founding the Order of Our Lady of Charity. For upwards of twenty years she directed the first monastery at Caen.

(5). See Letter 120. All references are to the present American edition.

(6). See Letter 60.

(7). See Letter 68.

(8). See Letter 212.

(9). Sister Margaret of the Blessed Sacrament, a saintly Carmelite nun Of Beaune, had a special devotion to the Child Jesus and to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Cf. *The Sacred Heart of Jesus* (New York, 1946), p. 62.

(10). Letter 24.

INTRODUCTION XX1X-

all his letters reveal patently the profound wisdom of the spiritual director of souls. Madame de Budos, Abbess of the Benedictine Monastery at Caen, and Sister Mary de Taillepied, a humble lay sister of the same abbey, both lived under his guidance. Mother Elizabeth, Superior of the Carmelites of Beaune, Mother Melchilde, Foundress of the Benedictines of the Blessed Sacrament, Mother Frances de Lorraine, Abbess of Montmartre, together with several of her daughters, Mother Margaret Frances Patin, the eminent Visitation Nun loaned to the Saint for the founding of Our Lady of Charity -all entrusted to him the guidance of their souls. There was also "his eldest daughter," Madame Blouet de Camilly(11) whom the Saint directed all her life and regarded as the true foundress of his institutions.

From all these letters we can glean a real treatise on the spiritual guidance of souls.

Rejoice, dearest sister, and have no fear of receiving Communion as usual, for every soul clothed with divine grace is prepared for Holy Communion, even though the senses are not garbed in the beautiful raiment of devout feelings and divine consolations, but remain in great dryness and poverty of devotion.(12)

This salutary advice was given at a time when even reputable theologians, influenced by the rigor of Jansenism, stipulated a perfectly pure love, accompanied by spiritual elation, as requisite for frequent approach to the Holy Table. St. John Eudes strove to counteract this insidious doctrine, using the very recommendations that *were* solemnly pronounced by His Holiness Pope Pius X almost three hundred years later.

The Saint teaches his disciples to profit richly by their shortcomings,(13) to sanctify even their headaches "so that~ by this means, you may pay some small measure of honor to His divine head crowned

(11). Madame Blouet de Camilly was a noble lady of Caen, Normandy. She assisted the Saint on several occasions when he was organizing the first house of the order of Our Lady of Charity and of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. She was very devout received spiritual guidance from Saint John

Eudes until her death in 1680.

(12). See Letter 15.

(13). See Letter 215.

XXX-

INTRODUCTION

with thorns.(14) He constantly preaches a hatred for the world. One of the best illustrations of his ardor is found in his reproach to Madame Blouet de Camilly for considering marriage instead of the religious life for her beautiful daughter.

Marry Fanfan!(15) is Marry that lovely lily-bud! (16) Oh, if you but know how those words, though you spoke them laughingly, have left me heartbroken.(17)

... she will have to cooperate and prepare for it (the religious life) through an intense hatred for the world with its vanities, a great scorn of self and an ardent desire to endeavor to seek all possible means of pleasing Him who desires to wed her.

It is your duty, my dear daughter, to help her, through your instructions, to adorn and beautify herself in order to be pleasing in the eyes of the Son of God and of the Blessed Virgin Mary.(18)

These conversational letters reveal even the small but effective penances which a spiritual director may impose upon his charges, thus affording them so much pleasure. Sister Mary de Taillepied could tell us about the prayer she had to offer for seven minutes "on these words: 'They are not of the world, as I also am not of the world'"(19) in reparation for having used a worldly expression in one of her letters(20).

St. John Eudes clearly assigns the virtues to their proper position.

If you are ordered to eat meat, be extremely careful not to make the slightest resistance to obedience, for you will render more honor to God by eating flesh meat through obedience than by fasting on bread and water of your own volition.(21)

(14). See Letter 213.

(15). An affectionate nickname given to Mademoiselle de Camilly in her family circle.

(16). A nickname given to her by St. John Eudes.

(17). See Letter 17.

(18). See Letter 19.

(19). See John 17.

(20). See Letter 4.

(21). see Letter 221.

INTRODUCTION xxx1

We learn from the Saint's counsels to remain at peace by finding all our joy in God;(22) we learn how to sanctify our illnesses and to prepare for death without worrying about a general confession.(23)

These letters are a treatise on asceticism from which mysticism is not excluded. The practice of passive prayer(24) is censured in them, and the disciples of Mr. John de Bernières(25) are severely criticized.

That is what a holy person(26) had told Mr. de Bernières a number of times-that as many souls as he started on the path of passive prayer (that is God's province), he was starting on the road to hell.(27)

When God introduces a soul to mysticism, it must correspond with grace. St. John Eudes as the spiritual director of the celebrated mystic of Coutances(28) knows these secluded paths, and he gently teaches Madame Blouet de Camilly that spiritual rapture is not good for her, and that it is better for her to remain in the barren state of spiritual dryness to which she has been committed by the divine will, "our most bountiful Mother." (29)

If extraordinary happenings take place, such as visions or revelations, the Saint is not troubled; he understands the penetration of minds, and his doctrine closely resembles that of St. Francis de Sales in the

(22). Letter 3.

(23). Letter 109.

(24). The Saint refers to the prayer of quiet or quietism, an erroneous doctrine developed by Michael de Molinos in his work *Dux Spiritualis* (Rome, 1675). Molinos taught that in prayer one must not use images or discursive thought, but must remain in "obscure faith" and in quiet, forgetting every distinct thought of the Divine attributes, abiding in God's presence to adore, love and serve Him, but without producing any acts because with these God is not pleased. Quietism was condemned by Innocent XI in 1687.

(25). Mr. John de Bernières, a devoted friend of St. John Eudes. He was a fervent layman and built a house at Caen called The Hermitage where he and some gentlemen spent their leisure in prayer and devotional exercises. See Letter 15, note 12, and Letter 99, note 1.

(26). Mary des Vallées, called "The Saint of Coutances," as the victim of a curse and for many years suffered excruciating pains with admirable patience. Through her instrumentality God revealed many important matters to St. John Eudes, especially the founding of his two religious orders. See Letter 17, note 3.

(27). Letter 99.

(28). Mary des Vallées.

(29). *Treatise on the Love of God*, Book 8, Chap. 13.

XXX11-

INTRODUCTION

Treatise on the Love of God. He stresses the fact that "the third mark of divine inspiration is holy obedience to the Church and to superiors." (29) To a Carmelite nun who asks his approval of her desire to change communities, he sends this reply full of wisdom:

... I exhort her to follow the example of her blessed Mother, St. Teresa, who, one day received a command from the mouth of Our Lord Himself to go and establish a new Order-a matter of far greater importance for her than merely changing from one convent to another. When the Saint informed her superior about her plans, she was prevented from carrying them out and was ordered to go elsewhere. Whereupon she obeyed at once ... without opening her mouth to make reply or plea. Afterwards Our Lord told her that she had been more pleasing to Him in obeying her superior than if she had made the new foundation. Let Sister St. Anne remain in peace where she is, according to that example, until I come to Caen to look into the matter more closely . . . Obedience does no harm. Sister may be mistaken in her revelations, but she will never make a mistake by being obedient.(30)

Another trait of character that the letters of St. John Eudes reveal to the reader is his inexpressible tenderness, the tenderness of a profoundly human soul. We are told that the Saint used to have bread crumbs scattered to the birds during the winter; that he would stroke the head of the

little page who served his meals; that he graciously shared the recreation of his spiritual daughters of Our Lady of Charity as St. Francis de Sales had formerly done at the Visitation Convent of Annecy. The formal writings of St. John Eudes do not reveal these lovable traits. His fatherly heart must be sought in his correspondence. We continually find him worrying about the health of his religious. To a Superior of Missionaries he writes:

Please be careful of your health, and to that end I urge you never to preach longer than an hour at a time. I also recommend to you the health of our dear brothers.(31)

(30). Letter 242.

(31). Letter 213.

INTRODUCTION XXX111-

He exhorts Mother Margaret Frances Patin, the Superior of Our Lady of Charity, to exercise the utmost care in the direction of the house because

... the fervor of our good Sisters and their desire to mortify themselves may impel them to endure excessive cold which may cause illness among them.(32)

St. John Eudes brings all his daughters to the holy altar, (933) and never forgets them there. Seven or eight times a day he recites for their intention the *Nos cum Prole*, (34) and if he is separated from them by order of the Bishop, (35) he quotes St. Paul: "What shall separate my heart from the holy love I should feel for the most cherished abode of such a good Mother? (36)

This paternal affection is especially noticeable in the Saint's letters to Madame Blouet de Camilly, his celebrated charge, "whom we hold most dear on earth." In one of his letters to her he writes:

I am worried because you mentioned in your last letter that you were not well(37)

When Mr. de Camilly, her husband, falls sick, St. John Eudes consoles her thus:

God grant, my dearest daughter, that on the occasion of our beloved brother's illness I may give you the same reply as that of Our Lord to St. Martha and St. Magdalen, who had told Him just what you write to me: "He whom Thou lovest is sick." God grant, I repeat, that I may reply to you: "This sickness is not unto death."(38)

(32). Letter 88.

(33). Letter 114

(34). A blessing used in the Congregation of Jesus and Mary: *Nos cum Prole Pia benedicat Virgo Maria. Amen.* "May Mary with her Divine Child bless us. Amen."

(35). Bishop Francis Servien of Bayeux deprived the Saint of his office of Ecclesiastical Superior of the Order of Our Lady of Charity at Caen. Cf. Emile Georges, St. Jean Eudes (Paris, 1936), P. 218.

(36). Letter 59.

(37). Letter 19.

(38). Letter 10B.

XXX1V-

INTRODUCTION

Unfortunately Mr. de Camilly's sickness was fatal and simultaneously the Saint learned about the serious illness of Madame de Camilly:

I cannot tell you too often, my dearest daughter, how distressed and grieved I am, for that is inexpressible. Certainly I know well through experience that your griefs and sufferings are also mine.(39)

Her saintly director counsels her to profit well by her sickness and trouble; he reminds her how she should prepare for death, if it be God's holy will. St. John Eudes's paternal tenderness sets aside a magnificent present for her:

Yesterday and today I said Holy Mass to supplicate Our Lord to grant you three things:

First, to bestow upon you, in whatever way He deems best and finds most pleasing, all the graces and gifts He has deigned and will deign to grant me during my lifetime, all the Masses I have said and shall yet say, all my missions of the past and the future . . .

Secondly, to bestow on you all the Holy Masses, missions and goodworks which, through His grace, have been performed and will yet be performed in our Congregation.

Thirdly, to bestow on you all the souls He has granted and will grant me yet, in His great mercy, on all the missions I have given and will yet give, and in other circumstances; and grant you these things in order to contribute to the accomplishment of His designs for you from all eternity.(40)

Here is the principal thing I ask of you, my dearest daughter. It is that, when God has shown you mercy . . . you take our Congregation and the House of Our Lady of Charity under your special protection in heaven. To this end I constitute you to be henceforth in the name of Our Lord and His most holy Mother, the solicitor and provider of all spiritual and temporal affairs, that you may intercede and beg for us at the throne of God and

(39) Letter 109.

(40). Letter 109.

INTRODUCTION

xxxv-

with the Blessed Mother.... Will you accept this position, my dearest daughter ... ? (41)

The Saint thus appoints Madame de Camilly the heavenly advocate of the Order of Our Lady of Charity and of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. It would be difficult to say in what proportion God ratified these gifts. But what concerns us is the deep and delicate affection of this manly soul, the very lifelike tenderness of its paternal devotedness, the charming ingenuity of this heart wholly identified with the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

What we discover above all else in these letters of St. John Eudes is his consummate sanctity.

In his "Introduction" to *The Kingdom of Jesus* Monsignor Sheen aptly comments that "the poet would hold the 'mirror up to nature,' but this Saint holds the 'mirror up to Jesus.'"

In his letters we constantly see that the Saint's reaction, instantaneous and without reflection, is the same sincere, spontaneous ejaculation, the simple all-powerful word: *Jesus*.

When his crosses, trials and persecutions are mentioned, St. John Eudes retorts that men are

but "rods used by this good Father to punish us." (42)

Even when the soul dearest to him reaches the point of death, it is not an occasion for weeping but a time to remind his friend what to do in order to die in the spirit of Our Lord:

The best disposition for a Christian death is to give yourself entirely to Our Lord, that you may unite yourself with all the holy dispositions with which He, His Holy Mother and all the saints died.(43)

Honors are offered to him. He is to be appointed co-adjutor Bishop of Evreux, but he answers thus:

I want no benefice other than the one my Saviour chose for Himself, that is, the Cross. That is the benefice I desire, that I embrace and love with

(41). Letter 109.

(42). Letter 61.

(43). Letter 109.

XXV1-

INTRODUCTION

all my heart for the love of my most amiable Crucified Saviour, Who loved and preferred it to all that the world loves and esteems more highly. I want no other, unless God absolutely wills it.(44)

The mirror is admirably focused. The Saint loves the Cross of Christ and feels insecure whenever God refrains from overwhelming him with tribulations.(45)

Moreover, no misfortune troubles him for he places his hope not in earthly things, not even in his own dispositions or good works, but purely in the mercy of His all-bountiful God .(46)

Apostle and missionary, John Eudes was fired with zeal for immortal souls redeemed by Our Blessed Lord on Calvary. In his letters as well as in his writings on the priesthood, St. John Eudes ranks the work of the apostolate far above almsgiving, fasts, vigils and other mortifications; in fact, he places it above miracles(47) and even martyrdom itself, for

The most divine of all divine functions, says St. Dionysius the Areopagite, is to work with God for the salvation of souls. It is the continual occupation of the God-Man Himself; to it He devotes all His thoughts, all His efforts and all the powers of His divinity and humanity. It is the employment He gives to His angels and His greatest saints, the Apostles. It is the fruit of so many labors, so much sweat, so many tears, so much pain, so many fasts, so much preaching and shedding of blood, so many holy actions and cruel sufferings in the life of God on earth-a life of thirty-four years, terminated for the same end by His awesome death.(48)

His burning ardor for souls is also expressed forcibly elsewhere in the same letter written to the Ladies of Mercy in Rouen to exhort them to assist in the work of the Refuge of Caen:

(44). Letter 160.

(45). Letter 72.

(46). Letter 109.

(47) Letter 10.

(48). Letter 10.

Since it is so pleasing to God to build hospitals and sanitariums, think of the good accomplished by helping to establish a home and hospital for souls. . . (49)

To Father Blouet de Camilly, his successor as head of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary, he writes:

What are all those doctors and bachelors of arts doing in Paris, while souls are perishing by the thousand for want of someone to offer them a hand to withdraw them from perdition and preserve them from everlasting fire? Certainly, if I dared, I would go straight to Paris and cry out in the Sorbonne and the other colleges: Fire! Fire! The flames of hell are consuming the whole universe! Come you doctors, bachelors, and parish priests, come all you ecclesiastics, and help to extinguish them! (50)

In the presence of such flaming zeal, we may conclude with another letter of the Saint which reveals the source of his passionate ardor for souls, namely his all-absorbing love for the Sacred Heart of Jesus:

Hear, hear, O great furnace of Love! It is a tiny wisp of straw that begs Thee most earnestly to be cast, engulfed, lost, devoured, consumed for ever in Thy sacred flames.(51)

The letters of St. John Eudes should not be read superficially or in haste. They are spiritual reading, rather heavy, perhaps, but rich in spiritual thought like the Norman soil from which they are sprung. When the peasant of Ri" turns over the sod, he knows that there "a treasure is hidden inside." Let us confidently plow the soil of these letters so filled with promise, and realize once more the prophecy of the Kingdom of Heaven; for it "is like a treasure hidden in a field. The man (49). Letter 10.
(50). Letter 79.
(51). Letter 219.
(52). Ri, a village near Argentan, Normandy, the birthplace of St. John Eudes.

who finds it buries it again; then in his joy he goes forth to sell all his possessions and buys the field."(53)

Francis Lebesconte Superior General of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary.
Sacred Heart Seminary Charlesbourg, P. Q. June 25, 1946

(53). See Matt 13, 44.

LETTER I(1)

To Madame Laurence de Budos,(2) Abbess of Holy Trinity Monastery(3)
at Caen. *On the death of her brother, Anthony Hercules de Budos, (4)*
killed at the siege of Privas.(5)'

[1629]

LIVE JESUS AND MARY

Madame,

May the grace, peace and consolation of Our Lord Jesus Christ and His most Holy Mother be with you for ever.

I must and I wish to adore with you the most holy and amiable will of God in the affliction it has pleased Him to send you. I must and I wish to cherish and love His eminently just and amiable hand which has dealt your soul such a harsh blow and pierced your heart with so bloody a wound, since that divine hand does nothing save through love of self and its creatures whom it seems to love even as itself.

Nevertheless, I must confess that my soul is filled with sadness and my heart with anguish at the thought of your agony. I cannot think of

(1). The purpose of these footnotes is to identify persons to whom the *letters* are addressed or to whom reference is made. Historical and theological terms are also elucidated and brief annotations are added on geographical names unfamiliar to the average English-speaking reader. The chief source books of Eudistic data used in the preparation of this edition are: Ch. de Montzey, *Father Eudes* (London, 1874); D. Boulay, *Vie du Vénérable Jean Eudes* (Paris, 1908), a very elaborate biography in four large volumes; Matthew Russell, S.J., *The Life of Blessed John Eudes* (London, 1909); *Oeuvres Complètes du Bienheureux Jean Eudes* (Vannes, 1910); P. Costil, *Annales de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie* and *Les Fleurs de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie*, two unpublished mimeographed volumes; J. M. Ory, *The Origin of the Order of Our Lady of Charity* (Buffalo, 1918); H. Joly, *Life of Saint John Eudes* (London, 1932); E. Georges, *Saint Jean Eudes* (Paris, 1936).

2 - LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

you, nor of your piteous state, without pain and tears; that, I believe, is permitted me. I see Jesus, the joy of heaven and earth, giving way to profound grief at the sight of the tears of Martha and Magdalen, who were weeping for the death of their brother!(6) Why, then, may I not weep on a similar occasion? I wish to weep with Jesus, that I may honor His tears. I wish to weep with all who mourn, according to the words of the Apostle St. Paul: "Weep with them that weep."(7) I wish to weep from the same emotions and sentiments as Jesus wept. I wish to offer Him a sacrifice of tears in homage to His divine and adorable tears. Let us, Madame, offer Him our tears in honor of His. Let us implore Him to sanctify and bless them through His. Let us beseech Him to unite our grief with His own in such a way that the tears flowing from our eyes may be mingled with those celestial waters of which the Prophet David says: "Let all the waters that are above the heavens, praise the name of the Lord." (8)

Madame, would you have your tears united with those sacred waters which unceasingly bless God in heaven? Then weep holily and religiously, that is to say, shed tears worthy of a religious and of one who is in a state obligating her to holiness. Let your eyes weep, but let your will be submissive to the will of God. Let your eyes weep, but let

(2). Madame Laurence de Budos, daughter of Viscount de Portes, belonged to one of the most illustrious families of France. When she became abbess of Holy Trinity Monastery at Caen, she found the house without enclosure, common life, regular religious dress, and scarcely any observance of the rule. All these irregularities she eventually remedied by her patience, meekness, and good example. St. John Eudes met the Abbess of Holy Trinity when he was a young Oratorian at Caen. Madame de Budos recognizing the profound wisdom and great *prudence* of the Saint, placed herself and her religious under his guidance. She died at Caen in the odor of sanctity on June 23, 1650. Cf. D. Boulay, *Vie du Vénérable Jean Eudes*, Vol. 1, p. 275; H. Joly, *Life of Saint John Eudes*, PP. 34 and 42; E. Georges, *Saint Jean Eudes*, p. 29.

(3). A Benedictine monastery founded by Matilda of Flanders, wife of William the Conqueror. Only a lady of noble blood could hold the office of abbess. Cf. Boulay, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, 274.

(4) Vice-Admiral of France. Cf. Boulay, *ibid.*, P. 275.

(5). Huguenot stronghold in Languedoc, southwestern France. The siege and capture of Privas in 1629 was the final episode of the religious wars during the reign of Louis XIII.

(6). John 11, 35. V

(7). ROM. 12, 15.

(8). Ps. 148, 4-5

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS 3 -

your heart and lips frequently repeat these divine words uttered by Jesus at the height of His anguish, and in a distress infinitely more poignant than your own: O my Father and my God, "not my will, but Thine be done." (9) In short, weep patiently and moderately, not excessively and without restraint.

Blessed are your tears if they are shed in this manner, for they will deserve to be dried by the hand of God Himself, according to this passage from Sacred Scripture: "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." (10) They will be carefully gathered by the hands of the angels. They will be cherished like a precious liquid that perfumes heaven and renders eternal praise to God. If, on the contrary, they were not accompanied by these dispositions, they would be very displeasing to God and His angels and would serve only to make the flames of purgatory more painful for you. I implore Our Lord Jesus not to permit such a thing. I should gladly entreat Him, if it were possible, to transfer all the anguish in your soul to me, so that not only might I share your pain and sorrow, but even bear alone the weight of this affliction. Yet it is so heavy that only Our Lord can support it.

I beseech Him, then, to dwell in your soul, to enter into your heart, that He Himself may bear within you this painful cross which He has ordained to be yours. The Prophet Isaias tells us that Christ came into the world to share the burden of our sorrows and infirmities (11). Indeed, Our Blessed Lord once experienced the same sorrow you are suffering now, a sorrow which for Him was infinitely more bitter and painful than yours is for you. The anguish you feel at this moment was one of the causes of the anguish He suffered in the Garden of Gethsemani, making Him sweat blood and utter these sorrowful words: "My soul is sorrowful even unto death." (12) It was not only the sight of the pains He was to suffer in His own body which wrung these words from His lips, but also the clear knowledge He possessed at the time of all the afflictions, those of the body as well as the spirit, which His beloved children were to undergo. He saw even then the grief

(9). Luke 22, 42.

(10). APOC. 7, 17.

(11). Isa. 53, 4.

(12). Matt. 26, 38.

which oppresses you at this moment. He beheld your tears, He heard your laments and sighs; and all these sighs and complaints were as so many sharp and piercing arrows which transfixed His Heart with grief because of the infinite love He bears you, just as the complaints and sorrows of a child dear to his father are like painful shafts in the heart of that poor parent when he beholds the suffering of his beloved offspring.

Jesus, therefore, Who is your Father and Spouse, felt in His paternal Heart the same affliction which fills yours at the present time. For that reason it should seem sweet and soothing to you, since it has passed through a Heart so full of love and meekness. I repeat that He once bore the same affliction that you bear. He bore it without your help and for your sake; yet He still wishes to bear it now in you and with you. Admit Him, then, into your soul. Do not let yourself become so taken up with grief that you leave no place in your heart for Him Who is your joy, your consolation and your all.

I see Him knocking at the door of your heart and waiting there with His own Heart and hands full of ineffable graces, blessings and comforts which He yearns to bestow upon you.

I hear Him saying to you in a kind and gentle voice: "Open to me, my dearly beloved sister, open to me the door of your heart." It is open to Thee; enter, O good Jesus, enter this poor heart. It is open to Thee; of that I am certain. Could it be possible that this soul would be so unfaithful as to refuse Thee admittance into her heart, allowing herself to be fully possessed by a futile and pernicious sadness? No, no, I do not think so. Enter, therefore, O God of love and comfort, into this heart crucified by grief, that it may be filled with love and consolation. Rid it of sadness and weariness and fill it with that strong and vigorous love through which Thou didst bear with strength and constancy the sorrows and agonies of the Cross and death.

Madame, behold then Jesus within your heart. He is there with the desire to bear with you the harshness of your trial, but He neither can nor wishes to bear it without you. Therefore unite yourself with Him, that you may bear your sorrow with Him. Unite your spirit with His spirit, your heart with His Heart and your will with His will.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS 5 -

Bear it holily, as He bore it holily and divinely; bear it strongly and courageously, as He bore it strongly and courageously.

To this end, I beg of you in His name to divert your mind from all considerations which sadden you, that you may devote it to better and holier thoughts. Consider the most holy will of God. Remember that this divine will is very worthy, excellent, powerful and absolutely sovereign in all things, is very just and equitable, very happy and joyous in all it does, and is very wise and prudent in all it ordains. All these points regarding that divine will are most worthy of consideration, and it seems to me that the purest, holiest and most perfect consolation I can give you should be drawn from these holy and divine considerations, and not at all from shallow and earthly thoughts, since I am addressing a person who has renounced everything shallow and earthly in the world in order to be professed in a holy and heavenly life.

Therefore consider, Madame, that the will of God is immense, that is, it reaches everywhere, arranging and ordaining everything that takes place in this world. That is why nothing happens by chance, nor by luck or accident; all things occur through the guidance and will of God.

Consider that the divine will alone is worthy of existence, continuance and accomplishment because of its infinite excellence and dignity; then let every other will be annihilated in the face of this one. Consider that it alone is worthy of reigning by reason of its sovereignty; then let every other will become submissive to its reign, not through compulsion, as in the case of the demons, but voluntarily, as with the angels. Consider that it is most just and equitable in itself and all its effects; then let all other wills acquiesce and conform to its decrees, as being eminently just and equitable. Consider that it is most sweet and amiable, doing all things through love of self and us; then let it be loved and cherished at least by those who have renounced love of the world to consecrate themselves to God. Consider that the divine will does all things with happiness and rejoicing; then let it be praised and blessed with happiness and rejoicing in all its manifestations, banishing all excessive sadness. Finally, consider that it does all things for the best, in the best possible way, at the most propitious time and place; then let

6 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

it be adored and glorified in all the conditions and circumstances in which it accomplishes its work.

Thus, Madame, do the angels and saints look upon and adore the most adorable will of God in heaven. Think how many saints there are in heaven who see their fathers, mothers, brothers and other relatives in the damnation of hell, which is the misfortune of misfortunes and the height of all woes; and notwithstanding, they adore, they love, they bless with joy and happiness that most just will because they see that such is the decree of divine justice concerning these relatives.

There is nothing like that in your case, thank God. The misfortune in which you have to adore the will of God is infinitely less grievous and bitter. Indeed, it is but honey and sweetness in comparison with the other sorrow. In that case it is a question of an eternal death, a terrible and fearful death; here it is a matter only of a temporal death which must not even be called death, but rather the passing from a mortal and unhappy life to an immortal and happy one. Then adore, on this occasion so sweet and benign to one who understands it well, adore, I repeat, and love and bless the most sweet and amiable will of God on earth, as the saints adore and bless it in heaven.

I do not doubt in the least that you are doing this. If you did not, how could you dare hope one day to be united with the saints in heaven, since one must do on earth what they do in heaven? If you did not imitate them, how could you dare say these words which you address to God so many times each day: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven?" (13) Would you not fear that the Son of God might make the same terrible reproach to you that He once made to the hypocritical Pharisees: "Hypocrites, well hath Isaias prophesied of you, saying: *This people honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me?*" (14) They pray with their mouths that my will may be done on earth as it is in heaven, but their hearts belie their tongues; their works are contrary to their words.

God forbid, Madame, that that should ever be said of you! Strive rather to be numbered among those who are referred to in the magnificent words which the Church so often puts on your lips: "To the

(13). Matt 6, 10.

(14). Matt 15, 7.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS 7 -

saints, who are in his land, he hath made wonderful all my desires in them." (15) It is Jesus Who speaks, through David His Prophet, of His Eternal Father and His saints. "My Father," He says, "hath

transmitted all my wonderfully admirable intents to the saints who are on earth." You are in the world of the saints, you are in a place of holiness; there should be no one in that place who is not a saint or inclined to saintliness. Therefore you should regard all the decrees of Jesus, whatever they may be, the most severe as well as the most delightful, as being equally wonderful, admirable and pleasant; let them all be wonderfully pleasant, dear and precious to you, and more precious than anything else in heaven and on earth. You can then say with your heart what you utter each day with your lips: "The law of thy mouth is good to me, above thousands of gold and silver;" (16) that is, My God, Thy will is dearer and more precious to me than not only millions in gold and silver, but even millions of brothers, relatives and friends if I had them. I should rather be deprived of a hundred brothers than that Thou shouldst be deprived of the accomplishment of the least of Thy desires.

By taking this attitude, Madame, you will deserve to be numbered among those who are meant in these words: "To the saints who are in his land . . ." (17) Therein is the epitome of true holiness, which is wholehearted submission to the will of God in all things.

As far as I can see, there could be no better opportunity for you to advance in grace and holiness. How dear and precious should be this hour of affliction! It is a time of grace and holiness. God at this moment has an infinite number of graces and blessings to bestow on you if you will but prepare yourself to receive them through the humble submission of your will to His. You can advance farther in grace in one hour during this time of affliction than in many days during a time of consolation. It is what Jesus intends for you now. He has an infinite desire to produce various effects of grace and sanctity in your soul through the medium of this trial which He has sent you. Do not suffer Him to be deprived of the effect of His desire; do not allow Him to be thwarted in His intention; and, what is still more important, do not

(15). Ps 15, 3

(16). Ps. 118, 72.

(17). Ps. 15, 3

8 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

deprive Him of the love and glory you can bring Him at this time. You have protested so often to Him that you want only to love and honor Him. Now, you will never be able to love Him more perfectly or honor Him more holily than at this moment. You can, in this hour of affliction, offer Him more glory and love in a single moment than in several days during a time of consolation. Do not deprive Him, then, of something so tremendous which you can and ought to give Him effortlessly by submitting your will to His. It is true that this is not easy for human nature, but it is easy with the help of the grace which is given you to do so. It will be easy for you if you remember that the severest and most terrible command that God ever had or ever will have was that by which He willed that His Son, His only Son, a Son such as Jesus is—He willed, I repeat, that this Son suffer inconceivably cruel and horrible torments; not only that He suffer them but that He die the most shameful and atrocious death of all possible deaths!

Oh, how severe is this will of a Father regarding His Son! How strange and terrible it is! Yet this same Son, Who is Jesus, in some way abandons and annihilates His own will, all-pure, all-holy and all-divine that it is, so that He may conform to His Father's will, so full of harshness and terror for Him that the very thought of it makes Him sweat blood. Therefore if Jesus somehow abandoned and annihilated a will as worthy and precious as was His human will, is it not highly reasonable, Madame, that we should forsake and destroy a will as impure, imperfect and corrupted by sin as ours is, so that we may accept the most holy, divine and amiable will of God?

But let me pause now, for I hear a voice more capable than mine of consoling you. It is the

voice of him whom you mourn as dead, who nevertheless is not really dead. It is the voice of your beloved brother who says to you: "Why do you weep so, my dearly beloved sister? Is it because they told you I am dead? But no, that is not true; I am not dead but living, and more alive than ever before. I am not dead but living in God, in Whom all things live. Those are the first words of the Office which was sung for me: "Come, let us adore the King to whom all things live." I am not dead, but rather I have ceased dying that I may begin to live. Do you not know that life on earth is a life of death? It is a living death and a dying life; a life which should rather be

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

9 -

called death and not life; an earthly life, an imperfect life, a sinful life. Will you say then that I am dead because I have left that miserable existence to participate in a heavenly life, a perfect life, an eternal and happy life? Do you not know that only the thoughtless and insane consider the faithful departed to be dead? No indeed, they are not dead. Those who die in Jesus Christ, that is, in His grace and love, do not die at all but pass from a most troublesome to a supremely happy life; and much less do they die who give their lives for the interests and glory of Jesus Christ.

"If I had died as a pagan, a heretic or an apostate, you would have reason indeed to weep. If I had died in a duel in defense of my honor and my private interests, I would say to you: Weep, weep, burst into tears, tears of blood; for those are the persons who are really dead, those who die in that way. It is for such a death that one must shed tears, and tears of blood. But look! I died in an army which fights the battle of God and His interests. (18) I died for the glory of Jesus Christ, for the defense of His Church and the establishment of His faith and Gospel! Is this not a happy death? Is it not a glorious one? Is it not worthy of gladness and rejoicing rather than tears and weeping? Does it not detract from the glory and dignity of such a death to deplore and lament, as if it were the most wretched death in the world?

"Why, then, my dear sister, do you grieve so? Is it because you will no longer see me on earth? But take comfort, for we shall meet in heaven, and very shortly. And I, while awaiting this happiness during your sojourn on earth, will always have you before my eyes, to help you in all your needs and wants at the throne of the King of heaven, with Whom I enjoy no less favor than I did with the King of earth. Cease, then, my beloved sister, cease, I beg of you, your grieving. Banish your sorrow, moderate your sighs, arrest the flow of your tears which henceforth would be injurious and unpleasant to me, insofar as it would offend Him Whom I love more than myself."

Those are the words and the voice of your beloved brother, Madame, which should console you greatly if you are at all capable of being comforted.

But I hear still another voice which comes to comfort you; the voice (18). Anthony de Budos fought in Richelieu's army against the Protestant Duke of Rohan.

10 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

of your dear Spouse, Madame. It is the voice of Jesus, the God of all consolation, which alone can give you perfect comfort. Please listen to it, therefore, and in order better to hear it, close your ears to all the voices of human nature, passion and self-interest which are wholly contrary to the voice of Jesus. Here, then, is Jesus addressing you:

"What is the matter, my dear daughter? What grieves you so? Yes, your brother is dead, it is true, but it was I who ordained his death, and who ordained it through love of you and of him, for your greatest good and for his. Should not that alone suffice to comfort you? Should not the sole

consideration of my most amiable will console and satisfy you? Have I not enough enemies who persecute and make war on in(!, opposing all my desires and intents? Do you wish to forsake me to take your place in their ranks? Do you wish to be numbered among those who desire to destroy and annihilate my most holy will, that they may supplant it with their own? Do you wish to deprive my sovereign will of the empire and domain it must exercise over all things, that you may superimpose your own will?

"I have deprived you for a little while of the presence of your brother, but am I not always with you? I am your best friend, your father, your brother, your spouse and your all; I am worth more than ten, yes, than ten million brothers; I love you with an infinite love; I am all heart and love for you; I have infinite power to help you in all your wants and needs and to defend you against your adversaries, or rather against mine? Those who oppose you oppose me; those who are your enemies are my enemies, provided you remain always united with me.

"Furthermore, I have taken your brother from you, not, however, to deprive you of him, but in order to return him to you in a better way. Do you not know that I repay a hundredfold all that is willingly given me? I have taken him in order to oblige you to give him to me, and if you relinquish him voluntarily and gladly, I will make it up to you a hundred times over, even in this life. I will give you a hundredfold all the help, comfort and favors you would have received from him, and thus you will lose nothing but gain much.

"Then give him to me, my daughter; give him willingly to me. Will you refuse me such a little thing-me, the one who has given and who gives you so much each day? Will you refuse me the life of a

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

11 -

mortal man, when I have given my own life for you-a life so precious and worthy that a single moment of it is worth more than all the lives of the angels and of men? Give him to me, then, voluntarily, and not through compulsion and necessity, and I will return it all to you a hundredfold.

"And do not proceed to fill your mind with useless thoughts and cares, saying within yourself: But what will become of this one and that one? What about these persons and those persons? Who will provide for the concerns of this house and that house? After all, where is the confidence you ought to have in my providence and goodness? Do I not love more than you those persons for whom you are so troubled? I am well aware of their needs. Is not mine the power to attend in the best possible way to all the things that concern them?

"With regard to your house, which causes you so much anxiety, and rightly so, know that it is more mine than yours, and that I do not lack the will and the might to direct wisely and advantageously all matters which pertain to it.

"Therefore, my beloved daughter, rid your mind of these trifling cares, relinquishing all things to my bounty and providence. Banish, too, every other thought and consideration which serves only to fill your soul with trouble and your heart with anguish. Put an end to your tears; enough of weeping and lamenting, enough of sobbing, enough of yielding to sorrow and sadness. It is time to dry your tears so that you may devote yourself to things more holy and more worthy of your state in life. It is time for your soul to return to its former tranquility and peace. It is time to give your sisters and all who know you the comfort and edification you owe them. It is time to render me the duties and obligations of the state in life in which I have placed you. Otherwise there would be reason to believe that you loved your brother more than me, and yet you know that I have said: 'He that loveth father or mother (brother or sister) more than me, is not worthy of me.'"(19) Would you not fear that these

words might be true of you? Would you not be afraid of making yourself unworthy of me if you persevered in your excess of sadness and tears? Would you not be fearful of giving scandal to so many persons in every walk of life whose eyes are upon
(19). Matt 10, 37

12 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

you and who expect from you a courage and constancy worthy of your position?

"What would worldlings and laymen say if they saw that a person who has taught others about virtue and holiness for so many years had not yet learned to submit herself to my will, which is the foundation of all virtue and holiness? Would you not be giving them cause to despise the vocation and Order(20) in which you live, which would have done so little for your improvement during such a long time? No, my daughter, do not lower the dignity of your position; do not vitiate the holiness of your Order; do not wrong the virtue and power of my grace. Conduct yourself in such a way, in all your actions and feelings, in your speech and exterior deportment, that people may see nothing in you and hear no word from you that would be unworthy of the dignity of your rank, the sublimity of your vocation, the glory of your Order, or the holiness and excellence of my grace and love which dwell within you."

Madame, after these divine words of Jesus, your divine Spouse, there is nothing more for me to say. Only I implore the Mother of Jesus to implant the words of her Son deep in your heart. I beseech this Mother of grace and love, this Mother of all consolation, to fill your heart with her divine consolations and let you participate in the grace and love by virtue of which she bore unceasingly and courageously the most terrible wound inflicted by that sword of sorrow which pierced her soul, at the time of the Passion and death of her only and well-beloved Son.

I am writing you these words in anticipation of speaking personally to you, as soon as your time is less taken up with the many visits of condolence that you will receive.

I remain in Jesus and Mary, Madame,

Your most humble, obedient and devoted servant,

JOHN EUDES, priest of the Oratory of Jesus.

(20). Madame de Budos belonged to the Order of St. Benedict.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

13 -

LETTER 2

To Sister Mary de Taillepie, (1) Lay Sister of the Abbey of the Holy Trinity at Caen. On the Solemnity of Jesus (2)

[January 1634]
JESUS, MARY

In the name and on behalf of Jesus Who is your All and mine, dear Sister, in His person, spirit and love I give you, for the current month and for eternity, the great Solemnity of Jesus which we are celebrating on the twentieth(3) of this month.

It is one of the three great festivities which take place continually in heaven. If Our Lord summons you to join Him soon, (4) you will celebrate it there with great happiness and rejoicing while we are observing it here below in sorrow and anguish. We shall be solemnizing, you and I, the same feast, but alas! in a very different way.

I cannot think of this without sadness. Alas! who would not sigh and weep bitterly? I weep not for you, but for myself. Ah!! my dear and beloved Sister, if you have the least urge of charity toward your poor Father, beseech Our Lord, when you are in His presence, to take me soon from this abode of sin and imperfection to that place where I may love Him purely, perfectly and endlessly.

While awaiting the time when you shall celebrate the Solemnity of Jesus in heaven, I want to celebrate it for you on earth, or rather I implore Jesus to honor and glorify Himself in you, in whatever way He wishes. I entreat Him to accomplish this in such a manner that all

(1). Sister Mary de Taillepied was a member of a noble French Norman family. Out of humility she became a lay sister at Holy Trinity Monastery. Cf. Georges, op. cit., P. 33.

(2). A special feast celebrated by the Oratorians on January 28. The Mass and Office were composed by Cardinal de Bérulle. When St. John Eudes founded the Congregation of Jesus and Mary, he continued to celebrate the Solemnity of Jesus. With the establishment of the Feast of the Sacred Heart in 1672 the Saint suppressed the Oratorian feast in his Order. Cf. *Oeuvres Complètes du Bienheureux Jean Eudes*, Vol. 11, p. 591.

(3). This is an oversight As indicated in the preceding note the Solemnity of Jesus was celebrated on January 28.

(4). Sister Mary de Taillepied was very ill at the time.

14 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

that has ever been, is now or ever shall be in you, in your body and soul, in your thoughts, words and actions, in your temporal and eternal life, may render homage and glory to all that is in Him, in His body and His holy soul, in His divinity and humanity, in His temporal and eternal life. Finally, I implore Him to annihilate you entirely and to establish Himself perfectly in you; to draw and consume you completely within Himself; to be all in you, that one may no longer see anything but Jesus in your exterior and interior life, in time and eternity; to dwell in you, live and function in you, suffer and die in you, adore and glorify Himself in you in whatever way He desires. That, my dear Sister, is what Jesus wishes to effect in you through this feast, or rather through this great mystery which encompasses all the other mysteries and feasts, and which I give you on His behalf. Surrender yourself to Him with this sole intention, and I will do the rest for you.

Also on His behalf and in His name, I assign you as a virtue, this month and always, the holy love of Jesus, that you may live and die in His love. I implore Him to love Himself in you; offer a little prayer frequently to Him for this intention. I also beseech the Father of Jesus, the Holy Spirit of Jesus, the Mother of Jesus, and all the angels and saints of Jesus to love Him for you and to bestow upon Him a hundredfold all the love you should have given Him during your whole life. Say a little prayer also to these saints and divine persons for this intention.

This morning at Holy Mass I renewed the union that Our Lord has given your soul with mine. Now do the same, I beg of you, in Our Lord's presence, by an act of the will, so that you may love and honor Him for me in heaven, if you attain it first, while I am striving to love and honor Him in your place on earth.

Farewell, my dear and beloved daughter. I am ever yours in Jesus and for Jesus, to Whom I pray unceasingly for you, even though I dare not ask Him to give you health. May this most amiable

Saviour do whatever is pleasing to Him, provided He grants us the grace to love Him perfectly before long. Please make some reply to whoever reads this to you, telling her what you wish to have written to me.

Live Jesus and Mary.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

15 -

LETTER 3

To Sister Mary de Taillepied. *On the feast of Easter.*

JESUS, MARY

What shall I say to you, my dear Sister, in this moment of joy and consolation, save what St. Paul says to us: "Rejoice in the Lord always; Again I say, rejoice!" (1)

Truly what an occasion we have for joy, beholding Jesus so full of glory, of grandeur, of felicity and content. Surely we have very great reason to rejoice; there could be no one in the whole world with so great a cause for happiness.

What have worldlings to motivate their joy? Mud, dust, wind and smoke; whereas the reason for our joy is the same which gives jubilation to the Eternal Father, the Holy Spirit, the angels and the saints.

Therefore rejoice, repeating with the Blessed Virgin Mary: "My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." (2) I no longer wish to find happiness in myself or in created and perishable things, but in Jesus my Saviour. He is my All and I desire to belong wholly to Him. It is the most extreme folly and delusion to look elsewhere for any true happiness. Let us, then, vehemently and courageously renounce all other things and seek only Him.

Live Jesus and Mary.

(1). PH. 4, 4

(2). Luke 1, 47

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

16 -

LETTER 4

To Sister Mary de Taillepied. *The Saint reprimands her for having used a worldly expression in writing to him, and directs her how to celebrate the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin.*

I am sending you all that you asked of me, and something more. I like very much the ingenuousness and simplicity with which you write me; nevertheless, there was a worldly phrase that escaped in your letter. It was the expression, *kissing of hands*, which I had forbidden you to use. I advise you, -for that, to make seven or eight minutes of prayerful meditation on these words which Jesus spoke in referring to His own: "They are not of the world, as I also am not of the world." (1) Adore Jesus in His perfect separation from the world, as much in His manner of speaking as in all

other things. Adore Him pronouncing those words. Give yourself, as well as us, to Him, beseeching Him to *separate us* completely from the world, both in its manner of speaking and in all *else*; and kiss the ground as many times as there are words in this sentence: "They are not of the world."

Do not think, however, that you have committed a grave error by having spoken in this fashion, perhaps unthinkingly. It is just that it makes me very happy to have you honor these words of the Son of God. Alas! my sins are more grievous than such as this. Live Jesus and Mary, who alone are free from error and sin.

I am ever and increasingly at your service, my dear Sister, in this same Jesus.

Exercise for the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Render full honor today to the first moment of the life of the Blessed Virgin Mary on earth. O moment, worth more than all the centuries which preceded it since the beginning of the world! O life dearer and more precious to God, in that single moment, than all the lives of the
(1) John 17, 16.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

17 -

angels and the greatest saints! Who could ever comprehend the relationship of God with this little girl who has just been born, and hers with God! What an abundance of graces and blessings does He diffuse in the soul of this child! What zeal and love for God, what union with Him! She gives Him more love and honor at that moment than has been tendered to Him during five thousand preceding years! O holy Virgin, let all the moments of my life, all my eternity, pay homage to that first instant of thy life!

At this very moment, my dear Sister, let us begin a holy and celestial life with the Blessed Virgin in honor of her holy and divine life.

Live Jesus and Mary.

LETTER 5

To Sister Mary de Taillepied. On her illness.

JESUS, MARY

What shall I say to you, my dear Sister, to comfort you? Shall I say what the world usually says to those who are sick—that this illness is nothing, and you will soon be well again? But that is not what you seek. Shall I tell you then that there is reason to hope that you will soon be free from the troubles of this earth and the exile you are suffering? But that is still not what you are seeking, since you wish to avoid any consideration of your own self-interest. What shall I tell you, therefore, to console you? I shall not speak to you at all about yourself, for we have to forget ourselves completely. I shall speak only of Jesus, Who alone should be the subject of our speech, our thoughts and our consolation. And what shall I say to you about this estimable and infinitely amiable Jesus? I shall tell you that He is all yours and you are all His, my dear Sister. What a consolation! What more could you wish? Live henceforth in peace, then, and fear nothing, for Jesus is wholly yours and you belong wholly to Jesus Who loves you infinitely, and Who has no thoughts or plans for you except those of love and goodness.

Do not be in the least troubled if you cannot recite your Office; say the prayers and perform your other exercises as well as you can because there are several persons who are doing these things for you. And what infinitely surpasses them is that Jesus Himself, your All, is unendingly absorbed in contemplation, praise and love of His eternal Father in your name. Finally, all things are yours in heaven and on earth. Dwell in peace, therefore, and in complete and total surrender of yourself, your health, life, soul and salvation into the hands of your most amiable Father Who is Jesus.

Live Jesus and Mary.

LETTER 6

To Sister Mary de Taillepied. *On her infirmities.*

JESUS, MARY

Blessed be Jesus, my dearest Sister, for finding you a worthy subject in which to glorify Himself through the most excellent of all means, that of suffering. You have the opportunity to be a martyr if you wish. But you must love our dearest Jesus exceedingly and offer Him all that takes place within you, so that He may use it to your advantage. If your suffering continues, tell Madame(1) about it so that she may decide on the proper remedy. Always abandon and sacrifice yourself, nevertheless, to the most holy will of Him Who loves you more than yourself, and Who has more concern for you than anybody else could ever have.

Live Jesus and Mary.

(1).Madame de Budos, the abbess of Holy Trinity at Caen. See Letter 1, note 2.

LETTER 7

To Sister Mary de Taillepied. *On crosses, and afflictions.*

Blessed be Jesus, and may He bless your poor heart, my dearest Sister. May He live and reign in it, and implant in it the dispositions necessary for you to profit from your present condition.

Take comfort, dear Sister, and rejoice in our most amiable Jesus, for He is yours and you are His; He is in you and you are in Him. Therefore live always in Him, for there will you find your paradise. Withdraw your mind and heart from everything else so that you may captivate and enclose them sweetly in this divine paradise. It is the paradise of the eternal Father, in which He finds all His delights. Let all your happiness be also in Jesus, for He alone is capable of satisfying your heart. Embrace willingly all the sufferings and afflictions that it may please Our Lord to send you, since this is the most efficacious means of destroying ourselves and establishing Jesus in our stead.

LETTER 8

To Madame de Budos. On the calumnies directed against him during the Pleurtuit mission.

[Plouer,(1) 1636] Here I am in a borough to begin a mission. I do not know what will happen to me, but during the last mission(2) I received some very fine epithets.

(1).A small town in Brittany about seven miles from Dinan in the Côtes-du-Nord District.

(2). Pleurtuit, a larger town than Plouer, about six miles from Saint-Malo. Most Reverend Achilles de Harlay- Sancy, Bishop of Saint-Malo, had requested the Saint to preach these two missions in his diocese. At that time Brittany was not so devoutly religious as it is today. At Pleurtuit Some lax and ignorant persons attacked the reputation of the missionaries, especially that of their superior, Father Eudes. Despite the efforts of these adversaries the mission was a definite success as this letter points out. The confessionals were literally besieged by people wishing to go to confession. Cf. Annales de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie, Vol. 1, P. 30; BOULAY, Vie du Vénérable Jean Eudes, Vol. 1, p. 195.

20 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

Some people called me the precursor of the antichrist; others said I was the antichrist himself. Some characterized me as a seducer, a devil who must not be believed; and others condemned me as a sorcerer enticing everyone in his wake. Some of them contemplated driving me away and might have carried out their plan, had not our Fathers arrived the same day. All that is but roses; the thorns that pierce my heart consist in seeing poor people sometimes follow me around for a week without being able to go to confession, although there are ten confessors here.

LETTER 9

To Madame de Budos. *On resignation in time of illness.*

[1637] JESUS, MARY

Madame:

May the grace and peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ be with you for ever.

I am filled with compassion for you at the sight of your incessant pains and weakness, and I should be filled with sorrow, too, if I did not perceive Jesus in your debility and suffering. In them I see only Jesus, only His goodness and love.

He is there, Madame; He abides within you. He is present in your anguish and sufferings. He is there, all love and completely transformed into love for your sake. He is there, preparing and ordaining these sufferings through love of you.

He is there, guiding and leading you along the paths of His love, drawing you toward the perfection of love by means of these trials and severities.

He is there, bearing with you through His love all the anguish of mind and body that is yours to bear. Even though you may often be unaware of it, He is nevertheless infallibly present, for if He were absent, you would find it impossible to support even the least of the infirmities you are suffering.

He is still there, purifying and sanctifying you and preparing great things for you, provided you, on your part, give the cooperation He asks.

He is there for the purpose of filling you completely with love for Him, and much more so than you are filled with suffering. I will say even more: not only does He wish to imbue you with His love, but also to transform you entirely into love for Him through crosses and sufferings, as His Cross and sufferings transformed Him into love for us.

He is there, finally, with a most ardent desire to draw you to Himself, to perfect and consummate you in Himself, along the path of these same sufferings. St. Paul says that it was fitting that Jesus Christ should be consummated by suffering "For it became him . . . to perfect the author of their salvation, by his passion." (1)

O dignity, O holiness, O admirable excellence of suffering used for the perfection and consummation of a God, for the perfection of Jesus, God and Man, for the consummation of Him Who is the consummation and perfection of all things! Great humiliation of Jesus, Who humbled Himself to a state in which He was capable of being perfected and consummated! And the immense dignity of suffering, chosen and used by Him and His Eternal Father to achieve this perfection and consummation!

Is it not a great honor for you, Madame, is it not a great favor, and should it not be a great comfort to you to be consumed and perfected through suffering, as Jesus was consumed by suffering? Does not Jesus show a rare and singular love for you by using the same means for your fulfillment and consummation as He employed for His own? May Christ Crucified be for ever blessed for so giving you a share in the blessings of His Cross! I implore Him to crucify you completely with Him, and to do so through the same love which nailed Him to the Cross for your sake.

I see an infinite number of crucified persons in the world, but few who are crucified by the love of Jesus. Some are crucified by their self-love and inordinate love of the world, but happy are they who are crucified for the love of Jesus; happy are they who live and die
(1). Heb. 2, io.

on the Cross with Jesus. You will be numbered among these, Madame, if you bear your cross lovingly, like Jesus, accepting, embracing and cherishing it with all your heart in honor of and in union with the same love with which He accepted and bore it for you.

To achieve that end, cast your eyes frequently upon Jesus Who is always with you, Who penetrates and pervades you much more do the pains and sufferings which seem to take complete possession you. See only Jesus in your pains and sufferings; see only His goodness and love, which are responsible for all that happens to you. here only to Him; be attentive only to Him. Forsake your wead and displeasure; disregard them utterly; ignore them entirely. Turn your mind gently and firmly from all thoughts and objects which may cause you to Worry. Turn to Jesus, Who is turned toward you, and always has His eyes fixed lovingly upon you. Cling closely to Him and His divine love, as to One Who is your All and outside o Whom you wish nothing. Let there no longer be anyone but yourself and Him in the world, and let yourself be entirely unaffected and unclaimed by anything at all that is not He. Lose every thought and consideration of your own interests, of yourself and everything else.

Yes, lose yourself wholly and happily in the abyss of this goodness and love of Jesus which encompasses, penetrates and possesses you, and is always considering you, always watching over you and all that concerns you; which is more zealous, more attentive, more preoccupied to an infinite degree in procuring your welfare and advantage in all things than you yourself are.

O love! O bounty! O Jesus, God of love and bounty! Adore, love, bless Jesus so full of love and kindness toward you. Adore, cherish, glorify all His attentions, all His plans and all His desires in your regard. Surrender yourself frequently to Him and offer Him your whole state of spiritual and bodily sufferings in homage to the sufferings of His body and divine soul. Adore, too, the peace and tranquility of that holy soul in the midst of its pains and torments, and pray Jesus to let you participate in that same peace and tranquility as well as in all the other dispositions with which He suffered.

These, Madame, are the practices and duties which Jesus asks of you now. They are the allegiance and honor you must render Him in

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

23 -

your present condition. I pray that He Himself may impress these thoughts and sentiments on your heart. I entreat Him to honor and glorify Himself in you. I implore Him, finally, to carry out all His plans and desires for you, allowing not even the slightest hindrance on your part.

And as for you, Madame, I beg only one thing of you, which is that you remember and put into practice something you said to me the last time I had the pleasure of seeing you. You told me that you no longer wanted anything except what God willed, and that you were submitting yourself unreservedly to all that it pleased Him to ordain for you. You spoke these words with a certain strength and energy which consoled me a great deal. I beseech you, therefore, not to contradict this statement, but to prove, whenever God may afford you occasion to do so, that you spoke those words not with your tongue alone but also with your heart and will.

You see, Madame, how freely I speak to you? But it is prompted by my zeal for your soul and my trust in your goodness. Let me say just one more thing, and that is to beg you to continue-for I believe that you are doing so now-to have something devotional read to you from time to time. I think that the acts of love⁽²⁾ for Jesus which were recently sent you will serve the purpose. Have them read to you now and then, and dwell tenderly on them, without strain or exertion.

(2). The Saint probably refers to the thirty-four acts of love that are found in *The Kingdom of Jesus* (New York, 1946), Part V, P. 223 ff. This first devotional work of the Saint was published that year and was dedicated to Madame de Budos. See "Epistle Dedicatory" to *The Kingdom of Jesus*, p. xxix. Cf. *Oeuvres Complètes*, Vol. 1, P. 34

24 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 10

To the Ladies of Mercy of Rouen.⁽¹⁾ *On the Refuge*⁽²⁾ at Caen.

Saint Malo,⁽³⁾ July 19, 1642.

JESUS, MARY

Mesdames, my dearest sisters in Our Lord Jesus Christ:

May the grace, mercy and peace of this same Jesus Christ dwell in you for ever.

The zeal and piety that I discerned in you while I was in Rouen so edified and consoled me that I cannot sufficiently thank Our Lord. I implore Him daily, during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, to shower the holiest blessings of His divine mercy upon you and yours, as well as to preserve and enkindle in your hearts ever more and more the fire of His most ardent charity. I was at Rouen only three months in body, but I assure you that I am and shall always be there in mind and heart accompanying you to the prisons, hospitals and the homes of the unfortunate sick, while rejoicing with Our Lord, His most holy Mother and your guardian angels to behold you thus persevere in your performance of the works of God.

Yes, my dear sisters, you must know that by these holy actions you are rejoicing all paradise as well as augmenting the glory and accidental

(1) A pious association of Catholic ladies who devoted their time and money to corporal works of mercy. They visited hospitals, prisons and the private homes of poor families in the city. The Saint wrote this letter to ask them to extend their charity in an institution for women who desired to reform their lives. These ladies responded generously to the Saint's appeal. Cf. Boulay, *Vie du Vénérable Jean Eudes*, Vol. I, P. 406; *The origin of the Order of Our Lady of Charity*, p. 12; Henri Joly, *Life of St. John Eudes*, p. 142.

(2). As early as 1635 Saint John Eudes assisted in organizing a house for penitent women in the city of Caen. In 1641 the ladies in charge began to live a religious life under the direction of Margaret Morin, a Huguenot convert. Three years later Margaret Morin left the community and the Saint requested the assistance of the Visitation nuns of Caen to organize the religious community which eventually became the Order of Our Lady of Charity of the Refuge.

(3). The Saint was then preaching a mission at the Cathedral of Saint Malo in Brittany. Cf. Boulay, op. cit., Vol. 1, P. 416.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

25 -

joy of God. If you but knew what happiness you afford your guardian angels by doing just what so many great saints of both sexes have done before you! Furthermore, you confound the evil one and enrage all hell. You bring down countless blessings from heaven upon your city, your families, husbands, children and yourselves. You spread the odor of piety and give to all France a virtuous example which will encourage many of your fellow creatures to imitate your charity. In short, you will revive in God's Church that primitive spirit of holiness which formerly flourished among the first Christians.

But the devil, who is enraged by all that is done for the glory of God, will not fail to do everything in his power to discourage you and force you to abandon this holy work. He will create many obstacles and oppose all your good intentions, particularly those regarding the house of Our Lady of Refuge, for he is driven to despair at the sight of these wretched souls, whom he employs to bring about the loss of many others, being snatched from his claws. But you must show, my dearest sisters, that your devotion and loyalty to the service of our good Master is greater than the rage of the demon against Our Lord and the souls He redeemed at the price of His blood. That malignant spirit sometimes labors thirty or forty years before he succeeds in bringing about the damnation of a soul by causing it to fall into mortal sin. Then do not grudge a little time, a little effort, a little material wealth, that you may thwart these evil works for the destruction of which the Son of God shed His blood. If you prevented but a single mortal sin from being committed in your city, you would be doing an incomparably greater good than if you delivered it from all the plagues and other temporal afflictions imaginable, since one sin alone is a greater evil than the combined ills of the world.

You should, therefore, consider yourselves fortunate that Our Lord is giving you the grace to use a portion of the temporal goods He has bestowed on you for the same purpose for which He gave His life's blood. What happiness for you to be chosen by God to be associated with Him in the greatest of His works, which is the work of the redemption of souls! To free a man who is bodily a captive in the hands of barbarians is a noble deed, but to free a soul from the slavery of Satan is greater than to deliver all who are in corporal slavery.

26 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

Since it is so pleasing to God to build hospitals and sanitariums for the relief and assistance of those who are physically sick, think of the good accomplished by helping to establish a home and hospital for souls who are suffering from an infernal plague which will bring death to them and to countless others if not remedied. There are so many hospitals everywhere for the body; is it not right that there should also be some for souls who are more horribly and dangerously ill than bodies, and that persons who love God and know how dear to Him are souls should have as much concern for them as for physical needs, and even more? A single soul is worth more than a thousand worlds; therefore whoever wins a soul to God does better than if he were to conquer a thousand empires.

To give alms to the poor is very commendable and highly recommended by God in Sacred Scripture, but to cooperate in the conversion of a soul is greater, says St. John Chrysostom, than to give to the poor all the gold in the world, if it were yours. Now by assisting in the work of the Refuge, my dear sisters, you are doing both; you are giving spiritual as well as corporal alms. Judge for yourselves how pleasing this is to God, Who is all charity and mercy, and Who so loves mercy and charity that He is merciless in His judgment upon him who fails to exercise mercy; whereas, on the other hand, He withholds judgment while showing mercy to him who performs works of mercy.(4)

Many are envious, and rightly so, says St. John Chrysostom, of the fasts, vigils, hair cloths, chastisements and other penances and mortifications of religious who lead austere and solitary lives, but to deliver a soul from the clutches of the devil and return it once more to Jesus Christ surpasses all the austerities in the world.(5)

People admire miracles which affect the body, such as the restoration of sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb and life to the dead, but St. Gregory the Great assures us that he who cooperates with the grace of God in the conversion of a sinner performs a miracle greater than if he were to raise a dead person to life again.(6)

In short, the most divine of all divine functions, says St. Dionysius

(4). James, 2, 13

(5). Oratio 5 contra Judeos.

(6). Dialog., lib. 3, Ucap. 17.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

27 -

the Areopagite, is to work with God for the salvation of souls(7). It is the continual occupation of God-Man; to it He devotes all His thoughts, all His efforts and all the powers of His divinity and humanity. It is the employment He gives to His angels and His greatest saints, the Apostles. It is the fruit of so many labors, so much sweat, so many tears, so much pain and fasting, preaching and shedding of blood, so many holy actions and cruel sufferings in the life of God on earth—a life of thirty-four years, terminated for the same end by such an awesome death.

Is it not a great honor for you, dearest sisters, to participate in something so worthy, so

exalted, so precious and divine? Should you complain or stint a little of this life in a cause for which God sacrificed Himself? How shameful for a Christian soul if Jesus Christ should reproach him at the hour of death for having spent on feasts, balls, pastimes, unnecessary clothing and a thousand other frivolities all the wealth that He had bestowed on him, while refusing to contribute anything to the salvation of souls for whom He sacrificed Himself!

Let each of you examine your conscience on this point, and there will be few who do not find yourselves guilty and have not great reason to fear the judgment of God. The goods and money you possess are not yours, but God's. Nevertheless, you have hitherto spent much of it on the world, on vanities, and consequently on the devil.

How can you expiate this sin? Henceforth do at least as much for Him to Whom you owe all as you have done in the past for His enemy, who is also yours. What you have used to gratify the world and Satan is lost, but whatever you give for Jesus Christ shall be returned to you a hundredfold in this world, and shall acquire eternal life for you in the next, according to the infallible promise of the Son of God. There is not one among you who does not have a very special devotion to the Blessed Virgin, the Mother of all purity. Remember, then, that you can do nothing more pleasing to her than to help maintain this poor little house dedicated to her under the title of Our Lady of Refuge, because it is a place of refuge for the chastity she dearly loves—a virtue which is so horribly persecuted in our century.

When I began this letter, I had no intention of making it so lengthy,

(7). De Coelesti hierarchia, cap. 3

28 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

but I believe that God wanted it so. Please accept all these counsels, therefore, not in the least as coming from me, who am nothing and wholly unworthy to be heard by you, but as coming from God. Read and re-read them, consider them attentively, and you will find them useful.

All goes quite well, thanks be to God, in the house of Our Lady of Refuge at Caen, and I assure you that it was a great comfort to me to find it so when, on my return to Caen, I called there to see how everything was progressing. For I found that God was being greatly glorified, both by the good order which is maintained there, and by the care being taken to establish these poor penitents firmly in the fear of God and the ways of piety, as well as to have them use their time profitably by keeping busy. Nevertheless, there are but three persons in Caen who are supporting this house, and they are not the wealthiest in the city. I implore you, my dear sisters, since you have more power in temporal things than those in Caen, to have also more charity. I very humbly entreat Reverend Father Angelique de Gaillon(8) to spare none of his zeal and piety for the advancement of the glory of our Master in this cause. Should some objection or obstacle arise, consult among yourselves and then appeal to his Lordship the Archbishop through his vicar general, Reverend Father Toussaint(9). I am quite sure that the love and most ardent zeal of this worthy prelate for the Church of God and the salvation of souls will move him to give you his powerful aid in every way possible.

In conclusion, do not forget me in your holy prayers. I remain with all my heart, in Jesus and Mary,

Your most obedient and humble servant,
JOHN EUDES, priest of the Oratory of Jesus.

(9). Father Joseph Mary Ory is of the opinion that Father de Gaillon was an Oratorian. Cf. *The Origin of the Order of Our Lady of Charity*, p. 16.

(10). «Father Toussaint, whose family name was Thébault, was certainly an Oratorian. A penitentiary canon as well as vicar-general, he was interred in the cathedral of Rouen in 1660.»
ibid., p. 16.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

29 -

LETTER 11(1)

To Madame Blouet de Camilly.(2) *The Saint urges her to continue her support of the Refuge of Caen.* (3)

[1643]

Continue, my dear daughter, to put your confidence in God, and rest assured that our admirable Mother will take care of her children and send them all that is necessary. It is well, however, to feel the weight of the Cross; it is our glory and our crown.

(1). Many of the letters in this collection are fragmentary. The short extracts are taken from the early biographies of the Saint, from the Annals of the Order of our Lady of Charity or from the Annals of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. This passage is from a letter written at Saint-Sauveur-le-Vicomte, where St. John Eudes was preaching a mission. Cf. *Oeuvres Complètes du Bienheureux Jean Eudes*, VOL 11, P. 41

(2). Anne Le Haguais married James Blouet, Lord of Camilly, whose family had received the title of nobility for services rendered to France in 1610. She had three sons and one daughter. One of the sons entered the Congregation of Jesus and Mary and succeeded St. John Eudes as superior general. For many years Madame de Camilly, a devout and pious lady, was under the spiritual guidance of the Saint. She assisted him on many occasions with her influence and her wealth, especially when he undertook to found his two religious orders.

(3). See Letter 10, note 2, and *The Origin of the Order of Our Lady of Charity*, p. 19.

30 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 12(1)

To Reverend Father William Gibieuf.(2) *On his mother's cure, obtained through the intercession of Cardinal de Bérulle*(3) *in April, 1634.*

November 25, 1643 (4)

I witnessed a very obvious miracle which was wrought in the case of my mother. At a time when she was so ill in the crisis of a high fever that I no longer expected anything but death, she had brought to her a picture of Cardinal de Bérulle and some of his relics which I had given her, and upon kissing them and recommending herself to him, she found herself instantly cured. When I arrived to prepare her for death after having received word of her illness, I discovered her in church in good health.

(1). This letter is taken from Germain Habert's *Vie du Cardinal de Bérulle*, p. 898.

(2). Father Gibieuf, born at Bourges, entered the Congregation of the Oratory. He received his doctorate in theology at the Sorbonne and became one of the most prominent Oratorians of the day. During the absence of Cardinal de Bérulle, he was vicar general of the Order and religious superior of the Carmelite monasteries of France. He died at the Saint-Magloire Oratory in Paris in 1650.

(3). Cardinal Peter de Bérulle (1575-1629) founded the Oratory of Jesus in 1611.

(4). This letter was written eight months after St. John Eudes left the Oratory to found the Congregation of Jesus and Mary.

LETTER 13

To the Priests of the Seminary at Caen.(1)
On humility, charity and pure love.

Paris, December 9, 1643

JESUS, MARY

My dearest brethren:

I am leaving Father Manchon(2) the task of writing you the news.(3) These few lines are only to assure you that you are all present in my heart, which is filled with unsurpassed affection and tenderness for you. But that is nothing; your real cause for rejoicing is that you are present in the Heart of Our Lord and His most holy Mother. Let us also bear them in our hearts and strive to keep them living and reigning there by means of true and profound humility, perfect and sincere charity, complete scorn for the world and self, and pure love for God. Those are the things in which you will find peace of soul and paradise on earth. I beseech Our Lord and His most holy Mother to

(1). The first Eudists at Caen resided in a small house called *The Mission*, which was used as the seminary; they were then known as the Priests of the Seminary of Jesus and Mary of Caen.

(2). Father Thomas Manchon (1617-1663) was one of the first five members of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. A gifted speaker he labored with the Saint on many of his missions. He also directed the Seminary of Lisieux and of Rouen, where he died on February 6, 1663. It might be well to mention here the names of the other four Eudists who accompanied the saintly Founder to the Shrine of our Lady of Deliverance, ten miles from Caen, on March 25, 1643, and dedicated their lives to the sanctification of the clergy and the preaching of missions. Besides Father Manchon, the first companions of St. John Eudes were Simon Mannoury of Lisieux, Peter Jourdan of Coutances, Andrew Godefroy of Caen, and John Fossey of Thorigny. The two last did not persevere, but were very soon replaced by James Finel and Richard Lemesle, both Priests of the diocese of Coutances, Normandy. Cf. *Les Fleurs de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie*, Vol. 1, P. 20.

(3). What the news was we cannot say with certainty. Apparently the Saint went to Paris to request Anne of Austria, the Queen Mother, to use her influence to have his new Congregation approved by Rome. Practically nothing resulted from these negotiations. Cf. BOULAY, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 68.

32 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

dispose of us all according to their Heart,(4) in whose love I embrace all of you together and individually and remain with all sincerity,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES,

Priest of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary.

(4). The Saint uses an expression which is now a common prayer in the Church: *Fac cor nostrum secundum cor tuum*. Boulay, *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 67.

LETTER 14

To Father Richard Le Mesle.(1) Concerning successful negotiations.(2)

Rejoice that so far the Blessed Virgin has strengthened, helped and guided you in this whole matter, and continue to thank her, for her assistance is very evident. The less help you receive from earth, the more shall you receive from heaven. Let us put our trust in Our Lord and His holy Mother and abandon ourselves to their holy will, overlooking nothing that can be done in their interests, and welcoming, for the sake of their love, all the difficulties which arise, and which they permit only to beautify and enrich your soul, and to render it more pleasing to His Divine Majesty.

(1). Father Le Mesle (1608-1661) joined the Congregation of Jesus and Mary a short time after the foundation in 1643. He was a man of great prudence and zeal and worked successfully in the first Eudist Seminaries at Coutances and Caen. He died on October 21, 1661. Cf. *Les Fleurs de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie*, Vol. 1, p. 10.

(2). The parents of Mr. Nicholas Blouet de Than, a wealthy gentleman of Caen, were trying to prevent their son from giving a substantial donation to the Eudists for the founding of the Caen Seminary. Father Le Mesle persuaded them to allow their son to turn over to the Congregation of Jesus and Mary an income of 1500 livres and 3000 livres of arrears. Mr. Nicholas Blouet de Than became a Eudist on August 15, 1644. Cf. BOULAY, Op. Cit., Vol. 2, P. 85

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

33 -

LETTER 15 (1)

To Mr. and Madame Blouet de Camilly(2) On the affairs of Our Lady of Charity,(3) and the proper dispositions for receiving Communion.

March 5, 1644

JESUS, MARY

My dearest spiritual brother and sister:

I received your letter. Blessed be God for the fervor of Messrs de Lion and de Répichon! (4) As soon as Mr. Dubuisson(5) arrives in Bayeux,(6) please let us know how the matter stands. Mr. de Lion writes me that it would be well, if the thing is urgent, to send the pastor of Notre Dame.(7) Please consult with Mr. Dubuisson about that, and then I will do whatever you decide upon together.

Rejoice, dearest sister, and have no fear of receiving Communion as

(1). This letter was written from Coutances, Normandy, where St. John Eudes was preaching the Lenten sermons. Cf. *Oeuvres Complètes*, Vol. 11, 41.

(2) See Letter 11, note 2. Mr. James de Camilly was also a staunch friend of the Saint, who often called them his "spiritual brother" as he did in this letter.

(3). Monastery of Our Lady of Charity of the Refuge founded at Caen in 1642. See Letter 10, note 2.

(4). Mr. Robert de Répichon, sieur d'Avenay and de Lion, belonged to one of the oldest and most illustrious families of Normandy. He promised the Saint 14,000 livres for the foundation of the Caen Seminary on condition that the letters patent would be registered in Parliament and that the Seminary would be recognized by the Mayor and Councillors of Caen within two years. As difficulties prevented the Saint from carrying out these conditions, Mr. de Répichon contributed only 3000 livres. Cf. Boulay, op. cit., Vol. 2, pp. 87-88. In 1646 Mr. de Répichon defrayed the expenses of the mission which St. John Eudes preached at Lion-sur-Mer, ten miles from Caen. Cf. Boulay, Ibid. Vol. 2, P. 192.

Mr. de Lion was the son of Mr. Robert de Répichon. He was a pious young man, who, acting on the advice of the Saint, entered the Congregation of the Oratory.

(5). An excellent Catholic gentleman, who defrayed the expenses of the Vimoutiers mission which St. John Eudes preached in 1645. Vimoutiers is a small town of 3000 inhabitants situated between Lisieux and Argentan in Normandy. Mr. Dubuisson received the missionaries in his own home and waited upon them himself. Cf. Boulay, *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, P. 178.

(6). A small town about 17 miles north west of Caen.

(7). The Rector of Notre Dame Church at Caen. Cf. Boulay, *ibid.*, Vol. 2, P. 466.

34 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

usual, for every soul clothed with divine grace is prepared for Holy Communion, even though the senses are not garbed in the beautiful raiment of devout feelings and divine consolations, but remain in great dryness and poverty of devotion.

We are praying daily for you and all your affairs. I wrote you by the last mail what reply was received in that connection. Our admirable Mother has promised to give a farthing(8) to her daughters, our Sisters; she calls it a farthing because she has not a very high opinion of temporal things. Of this farthing she sent me two hundred livres today which I have in my possession. I do not know how much of the farthing still remains,(9) nor by what means to forward it to you. If Mr. de la Mare,(10) or some other person, could send someone to call for it here and deliver it to you in Caen, that would be excellent.

At any rate, I am asking you to give this sum to them little by little, according to their needs and your own discretion. If I do not find any other way to get it to you, I shall bring it at Easter.

I am with all my heart, in Jesus and Mary,
Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, priest.

P. S. Please tell Mr. de Lion that it is absolutely imperative for him to go to Bayeux himself, and ask Mr. Dubuisson to tell him that he alone can do more there than anyone else in the world.

I greet and embrace all our brethren, especially our dearest Brother Dubuisson. Greetings also to our Sisters, particularly Madame de Montfort.(11)

Please put the address and postage on the letter I am writing to our

(8). Mary des VALLÉES, a saintly woman of Coutances, gave the Saint 800 livres for the Monastery of Our Lady of Charity at Caen. This may be the farthing to which the Saint refers in this letter. See Letter 17, note 3.

(9). This money received was on account and the Saint says that he does not know how much of the 800 livres remains to be drawn. *Oeuvres Complètes*, Vol. 11, P. 42. Boulay, *Op. cit.* VOL. 2, P. 94

(10). The editors of the English translation were unable to identify this gentleman.

(11). A sister of Mr. John de Bernières. See note 12. She assisted the Saint on many occasions. In 1641 she paid the expenses of the mission preached by St. John Eudes at Ramilly. Cf. Boulay, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, P. 288, P. 334.

Brother de Bernières,(12) and also mail that of Father Chrysostom,(13) after having scaled them both, as well as the few lines to Mr. Poisson.(14)

Never forget to date your letters.

(12). John de Bernières, a devoted friend of St. John Eudes, was born at Caen in 1602 and died there in 1659. He was very pious and charitable. Despite the fact that he was treasurer of France in the city of Caen, he spent a great deal of time in prayer and good works. Acting on the advice of his spiritual director, he built a house called The Hermitage, in the vicinity of the Ursuline Monastery and formed a community of devout laymen who lived with him. Mr. de Bernières was most generous to St. John Eudes when the latter was organizing the first house of Our Lady of Charity. Cf. Boulay, *ibid.*, Vol. 1, pp. 287-288.

(13). Father John Chrysostom was a member of the Order of St. Francis. He was a very holy and learned man from whom the Saint received wise advice in 1641 and 1642 when he was contemplating the founding of his two orders. It was through this devoted religious that St. John Eudes consulted St. Vincent de Paul concerning the foundation of the Caen Seminary. Father Chrysostom died in 1645. Cf. Boulay, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 196.

(14). Peter Poisson was a publisher of Caen. He brought out the first edition of *The Kingdom of Jesus* in 1637.

36-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 16

To Mademoiselle Eustace de Taillefer, (1) afterwards Sister Mary of the Assumption. *The Saint encourages her in her vocation, and speaks to her of Margaret Morin (2) with whom she was living at that time.*

[1644]

JESUS, MARY

My dearest daughter:

I implore Our Lord and His most holy Mother to be your strength in this present affliction and temptation of yours which grieves me deeply. And have I not reason indeed to be distressed? I see that souls whom God has entrusted to me,(3) and who are dearer to me than life itself, are in anguish at this moment and in great danger of losing their vocation, and then of falling into the clutches of the infernal wolf;

(1). Renée Eustace de Taillefer entered the Refuge of Caen following the mission preached by the Saint at Valognes in 1643. She took the habit of the Order on February 12, 1645, was professed on June 2, 1652, and died on May 30, 1668. In 1644 the Community of the Refuge passed through a formidable crisis. Margaret Morin, who was acting as directress, sought to introduce a spirit entirely at variance with that which Saint John Eudes was striving to implant. This divergence of viewpoint between the founder and the directress led to the withdrawal of several postulants for whom the Saint had been harboring great hopes. Mademoiselle de Taillefer saw her sister, who had entered the Community with her, leave under these circumstances. She herself was on the point of abandoning her vocation, and it was to dissuade her from doing so that the Saint wrote her this letter. Cf. Boulay, *Op. Cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 99-101.

(2). Margaret Morin, a native of Coutances who had made her home in Caen, was born a Protestant. After her conversion she devoted herself to the performance of good works. Saint John Eudes decided upon her as the one to give him the assistance he needed in the founding of Our Lady of Charity. But Margaret Morin was unable to share his views and gave up the work in 1644. After her departure she remained several years in Caen in charge of the Hospital of the Petits-Renfermés. In 1652, in company with Mary du Bosc, she founded the Order of the Sisters of Charity of Bayeux, was professed on June 1, 1657 and died there in the odor of sanctity on October 1st of the same year.

(3). Reference is made here either to three postulants whom the Saint had sent to the Refuge of Caen, following the missions of Saint Sauveur-le-Vicomte and Valognes (1643), all of whom gave up their vocations with the exception of Mademoiselle de Taillefer, or to the directresses who were placed in charge of the work along with Margaret Morin, and who abandoned it when she did. Cf. Ory, op. cit., P. 24

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

37 -

yet I am not allowed to see them and speak to them in order to prevent it. She who stands in the way of this ought indeed to fear the vengeance of God. With all my heart do I pray Him, however, to have mercy on her. As for you, my dearest daughter, I beseech you, in God's name, to do nothing until I have spoken with you. Be patient a little longer and avoid temptation. Rest assured that in a few days you will be as happy and consoled as you are now disheartened.

Consider, my dear daughter, that divine Providence has directed you to me, and that it has pleased Him to make me instrumental in winning you over to His service. That is why I am entreating you, in the name of Our Lord and His most holy Mother, to grant me what I am asking of you, which is not to leave your house until I have first talked with you. She to whom you listen would have you believe that I am turning her out of the house, which is in nowise true, for I have always said, and I still say, that if she wishes to remain obedient and not rebel against all the things I have said to her, but rather comply as she should, I shall be very pleased if she remains. If she leaves, therefore, it is certainly not by my command but through her own disobedience. Finally, my dear daughter, I implore you once again to have a little patience, and you will see how this storm blows over.

What I am saying to you is intended for all our dear Sisters as well, whom I love, in truth, with my whole heart. Be so good as to tell them what I have told you, and you will be doing something very pleasing to God.

Your most affectionate father,
JOHN EUDES, priest of the Congregation
of Jesus and Mary.

P. S. Kneel for a moment at the feet of the most Blessed Virgin Mary and give yourself to her, asking for strength. She is your true Mother and will never forsake you.

38 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 17

To Madame Blouet de Camilly. *To induce her to give her daughter to God.*

[March 1644]

JESUS, MARY

We pray daily here to God for you and all that concerns you. Continue to receive Holy Communion according to the rule I gave you in parting.

Marry *Fanfan!*(1)Marry that lovely "Lily Bud"! (2) Oh, if you but knew how those words, though you spoke them laughingly, have left me heart-broken! Nevertheless, I too am of the opinion that she should be married, but to a heavenly and divine Spouse Who is King of heaven and earth. Try, my dear daughter, to incline her gradually to this divine marriage, for that adorable Spouse is considering her, but He wants her to consider Him in return. The Eagle(3) was speaking to me about it two days ago, and of her own accord, without my bringing up the subject, she confessed that she is worried about her. She urged me to tell you to prepare her little by little to be the bride of the divine Spouse, that is, to become a nun. She told me she fears very much that the girl does not give enough consideration to this most amiable Spouse, who complained about it, and that she regards her enemy, the world, a little too much. She said that you should guard against this, frequently counseling her to hate the world with its vanities and fashions which the most holy Virgin abominates and which always arouse her wrath. She also said that you should be careful with whom and in what way she seeks diversion, and that you should insist on

(1). An affectionate nickname given to Mademoiselle de Camilly by the members of the family circle.

(2). A nickname given to her by St. John Eudes.

(3), A figurative name for Mary des Vallées, a holy woman of Coutances, Normandy, who was born at Saint Sauveur Lendelin, diocese of Coutances, on February 18, 1590. St. John Eudes met her during a mission in August, 1641. He received many special graces from God through Mary des Vallées. See *Memoriale Beneficiorum Dei*, note 27.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

39 -

joining her sometimes in her recreation. (4) All that is the language of the Eagle, spoken of her own volition, and I noticed that she was preoccupied with all these things. She revealed to me that she often thinks about them-not that she has any knowledge of something more, as she assured me. Just the same, it is a warning that deserves your careful consideration, my dear daughter, and ought to be put to good use. I forgot to mention that the Eagle also told me that you should advise her to meditate a little and should often speak to her of Our Lord, striving to imbue her with a great hatred for the world and sin, and a great love for Him Who desires complete possession of her heart.

All the Josephs, the Eagles, the Vines and the Earthworms(5) greet you in Jesus and Mary, who live and reign for ever in all hearts in heaven and on earth! Amen, amen! So be it! I embrace our spiritual brother.

I am writing a letter to someone (6) and am sending it to Madame de Caen,(7) with instructions to deliver it to you or have it delivered to you. When you receive it I beg of you to give it, or be sure to have it given, to the person to whom it is addressed. But be careful not to let anyone know that it has passed through the hands of Madame de Caen; please

(4). A girl (Mademoiselle de Camilly) in whom Mary des Vallées took great interest would sometimes indulge in the singing of profane and worldly songs. This she did, however, with such secrecy that even her own mother had no knowledge of it. But Our Lord informed Sister Mary about it, though she was eighteen leagues distant, and commanded her to warn the mother. She did so through a note written in these terms: « *Warning to our lovely Lily Bud whom the divine Spouse is considering. He wishes her to behold Him in turn and He reproaches her for taking pleasure in the singing of profane songs. Profane songs are a plague which destroys chastity; be careful of them.* »

«As soon as the mother received this warning she spoke about it to her daughter, who confessed that it was true that she sometimes sang these songs; but from then on she abstained completely from them." *Vie Admirable de Marie des Vallées*, Bk. 8, Ch. 9, Quebec MS.

Madame de Camilly's daughter joined the Benedictines of Holy Trinity, where she died a holy death on August 23, 1654.

(5). Figurative names for devout and humble friends of the Saint. In this letter he refers to Mary des Vallées as *The Eagle*.

(6). We are unable to say who this person was and why the letter was first sent to dame de Budos, the Abbess of Holy Trinity, and then to Madame de Camilly.

(7). The Abbess of Holy Trinity Monastery held the title of Madame de Caen. She took that name because it had been the title of the second abbess, who was a daughter of William the Conqueror. Cf. Trébutien, *Caen, son histoire, ses monuments*, 3rd edition, p. 156.

40 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

deliver it as if you had received it directly from me and inform this person that if she wishes to make a reply, she should give it to Father Mannoury(8) if he is still there. If he is not, let her give it to you, and you can mail it to me. If Madame de Caen sends for you, be sure to conceal (9) from her that you know anything about this matter.

(8). Father Simon Mannoury (1614-1687) was one of the first five members of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. He made two journeys to Rome in 1645 and 1646 to obtain the approbation of the Holy See for the Caen Seminary and for the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. The second journey was a successful one. Later Father Mannoury became rector of the Lisieux, Caen and Evreux Seminary. He died March 23, 1687, Cf. *Les Fleurs de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie*, Vol. 1, p. 103

(9). The reason of this secrecy is unknown.

LETTER 18

To Madame Blouet de Camilly. *On the purchase of a house for the religious of Our Lady of Charity.*

[March 1644]

JESUS, MARY

I was hoping to receive a letter from you in today's mail, my dearest daughter, to learn how you feel about Mr. de Montfort's house,(1) but I heard only from our brother Mannoury,(2) who wrote that he is coming to see me. I assume that you are sending me word through him.

Father Mannoury informs me that he and Father Jourdan(3) inspected Mr. de Montfort's house and found it wonderfully suitable and habitable. According to all that he writes me, we must not allow this opportunity to pass. The house is rather close to the Oratory, (4)but that matters little.

(1). Mr. de Montfort was Mr. John de Bernières's brother-in-law (See Letter 13, notes 11 and 12). The Saint was at that time trying to purchase a house at Caen for his new foundation, The Order of Our Lady of Charity of the Refuge. Cf. Ory, op. cit., P. 23.

(2). See Letter 17, note 8.

(3). Father Peter Jourdan (1608-1661) was one of St. John Eudes's first companions. He was a saintly priest and an excellent spiritual director. He died on December 27, 1661. See *Les Fleurs de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie*, Vol. 1, P. 13; Boulay, OP. cit., Vol. 2, P. 8.

(4). St. John Eudes was a former Oratorian. After he left the Congregation of the Oratory, his former confrères strove their utmost to hinder the development of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. Cf. Boulay, op. cit., Vol. 2, pp. 259-264.

However, I am leaving it all to your judgment and to that of our spiritual brother.(5) I am sending you the letter written me by Father Mannoury. Read it, please, and give it some thought. I implore our good Mother to inspire you with her will in this matter. If you judge the house to be suitable, kindly write Mr. de Bernières(6) to take it from Mr. Patri(7) and to close the deal.

We are making a novena here for the Bayeux affair(8) and for the Bulls of approbation(9) for our sisters. The novena consists in reciting once daily the *Veni Creator*, the *Memorare* and the *Ave Maria filia Dei Patris*;(10) *Monstra te esse Matrem admirabilem* twelve times; and twelve times these words which were recommended to the Eagle:(11) *Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, Virgo cui data est omnes potestas in caelo et in terra, fiat nobis secundum verbum tuum*, that is, be it done unto us according to thy promises. I beg of you and our fair "Lily Bud" (12) to join us in this novena, and our dear sisters too, but without telling them about the Bayeux affair which must always be kept secret. I am making the same request of our dear Father Jourdan. Recommend it also to the Mother of St. Joseph, to the poor, and to the Visitation Sisters.

The Eagle also told me yesterday that you should try little by little to instil in *Fanfan*(13) an affection for the things of God and have her choose her recreation along the same lines. She added that the evil spirit, perceiving your desire to give her to God, is striving now to attract her to the world, and that you, for your part, must exercise extraordinary care if she is to respond to Him Who calls her. She told me all that of her own accord, without my speaking to her about it, for she has great affection and concern for *Fanfan* and all her interests. That

(5). Mr. James Blouet de Cantilly, her husband.

(6). See Letter 15, note 12.

(7). Probably the real estate agent.

(8). Something relating to the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. Cf. Ory, Op. cit., P. 23.

(9). Papal approbation of the Order of Our Lady of Charity.

(10). A prayer to Our Blessed Lady recited daily in the two orders founded by St. John Eudes. See The Priest: *His Dignity and Obligations* (New York, 1947), P. 171.

(11). See Letter 17, note 3

(12). See Letter 17, note 2.

(13). See Letter 17, note 1.

makes me wonderfully happy, since it is a very great favor to you.

Adieu, my dear daughter. I remain devotedly yours,

JOHN EUDES,

Priest of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary.

LETTER 19

To Madame Blouet de Camilly. *On the qualifications required of girls who are received into the Institute of Our Lady of Charity, and on other subjects.*

March 23, 1644

Dearest daughter:

I received your last very informative letter, but not in the last mail, which brought me

nothing at all. I am worried because you mentioned in your preceding letter that you were not well.

I have no leisure just now to write to anyone but you. That is why I am asking you to write once more to Mr. de Bernières(1) that he should make sure of the house, and that if they demand a down-payment, he should tell them that the pastor of Notre-Dame(2) and Father Finel (3) will take care of it.

Contact our dear Sister Margaret,(4) too, and tell her for me that I have ascertained that this N&Nébou girl is quite sickly, and along with her having as little as she has,(5) there is no likelihood of admitting her into the house.

As for the candidate from Caen, what you have told me about her is impressive. Nevertheless, I think it would be better to postpone receiving

(1). See Letter 15, note 12. See Letter 15, note 7.

(2). Father James Finel (1618-1652) joined the Congregation Of Jesus and Mary shortly after the foundation. He contributed generously to the establishing of the Caen Seminary. After a fruitful career as a missionary and a seminary director he died at Coutances, Normandy, on March 16, 1652. Cf. *Les Fleurs de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie*, Vol. 1, p. 6.

(3). Margaret Morin. See Letter 16, note 2.

(4). Because of the poverty of the monastery St. John Eudes insisted on the dowry that the postulants were supposed to bring when they entered the Order.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

43 -

her until my return. However, I am leaving that to your own judgment, my dear daughter, and to your will in the matter. I ask only that you consider the girl well to determine whether she has the necessary qualifications, namely, a spirit of piety, humility, meekness, obedience and simplicity, a firm resolution to renounce her own will completely, zeal for the salvation of souls, a naturally good disposition, and a sound body. For I cannot overemphasize the importance of being careful about the girls whom we accept, and of painstakingly examining and questioning them. Over and above all else must we be on our guard against taking in those who are worldly, proud and vain.

May God forgive you for your over-anxiety on the subject of the greatest happiness that can befall the fair "Lily Bud" (6) and her mother. You have a very great reason for rejoicing, inasmuch as the noblest, richest and most powerful Lord in the world loves you so much that He wants you to give Him your daughter as His spouse. The Eagle(7) speaks in that fashion, advising you that Our Lord and His most holy Mother most assuredly are beholding her and calling her to be clothed in red and white, which are the colors of the heavenly Spouse, that is virginal purity and love, charity and other virtues which beautify Him -provided, however, she so desires. For, even though she is called to such a happy and exalted state, she must nevertheless enter it voluntarily. She will receive extraordinary help, but she will have to cooperate and prepare for it through an intense hatred for the world with its vanities, a great scorn of self and an ardent desire to endeavor to seek all possible means of pleasing Him Who desires to wed her. And it is your duty, my dear daughter, to help her, through your instructions, to adorn and beautify herself in order to be pleasing in the eyes of the Son of God and of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

As for yourself, Madame, you are advised . . . that the way of the Cross is the most pleasing to God, since Our Lord Jesus Christ chose it for Himself and for you; and that you should be happy that the Blessed Virgin, in speaking of you, calls you her daughter and says that you and your spiritual brother are doing a work which is very pleasing to her,

(6). See Letter 17, note 2.

(7). See Letter 17, note 3.

4 4 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

that of caring for her daughters,(8) and that she looks upon you and loves You as if you were the superior, as if you were an inmate of her house and had made a vow to live there. Why should you have any further doubt? You are wrong if you give any consideration to these anxieties, for it is impossible, in view of all that we know, and an I have seen and heard for a month, to be able to entertain the slightest suspicion. Be at peace then, dearest daughter, always humbling yourself, however, and trying to do whatever you can on your own part. Do not be discouraged, though, when that fails you. Pray Our Lord and His most holy Mother to supply the deficiency, and they will surely do so.

We will write to Mr. de la Bonneville.

All here send their regards to you, as well as to your spiritual brother, whom I embrace most affectionately.

I beseech our lovely "Lily Bud" to hate the world more than the plague and hell itself, and to love Him Who beholds and loves her with such great strength, purity and generosity.

It is in Him that I am

Very humbly yours,
John Eudes,
Priest of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary.
Live Jesus and Mary.

(8). Religious of Our Lady of Charity of Caen.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

4 5 -

LETTER 20

To Fathers Richard Le Mesle and Thomas Vigeon.(1) *To invite them to fulfill their promises to join the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. (2)*

Lion-sur-Mer,(3) September 23, 1646

I beseech you to hasten here, that you may consummate your sacrifice and dwell with your brethren who love you tenderly, and ardently desire you *adconvivendum et adcommoriendum*, in life and in death. For you know that no one who looks behind him after he has put his hand to the plow is fit for the kingdom of God. Come then, my beloved brethren, in the name of Our Lord and His most Holy Mother, and be faithful to Him Who calls you. Come without delay so that you may spend the rest of your lives together in the service of our good Master and conquer for Him souls which were redeemed at the cost of His blood. Take care lest the tempter ensnare you or the world seduce you. Close your ears to the voice of the serpent, that you may open them only to that of heaven.

(1). See Letter 14, note 1. Father Thomas Vigeon entered the Congregation of Jesus and Mary in

1646. A model of charity, meekness and zeal, Father Vigeon had a special talent for directing and converting souls through the Sacrament of Penance. He died at the Caen Seminary on March 16, 1651. Cf. Boulay, Op. Cit., Vol. 2, P. 194, 461 and Fleurs, Vol. 1, p. 10.

(2). Members of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary do not take vows, but make solemn promises to obey their superiors and constitutions until death. By these promises the Eudist is incorporated into the society.

(3). A village about nine miles from Caen in Normandy, where St. John Eudes preached a mission in 1646. Mr. de Répichon, the seigneur of the district, defrayed the expenses and provided board and lodging for the missionaries.

46 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 21

To Father Simon Mannoury, in Paris.(1) *On the mission at
Le Bec-
Thomas. (2)*

Le Bec-Thomas, July 24, 1647

Here we are in Le Bec-Thomas, where there are great crowds of people and where there exists an extraordinary need for a mission. Grief ran high when we left Nogent-le-Rotrou(3) to come here. I had never before seen anything like it. So let us take courage, dear brother. The more crosses we encounter in God's work, the more abundant are His blessings.

(1). See Letter 17. Father Mannoury on his way home from Rome had remained in Paris to interview friends that might help to obtain the approbation of the Congregation. Cf. BOULAY, Op. cit. Vol. 2, P. 293.

(2). A village in the diocese of Evreux, Normandy. The expenses of this mission were defrayed by Madame de Bec-Thomas, a wealthy lady who later married Mr. de la Porte, councillor of the Rouen Parliament. Cf. Boulay, Ibid., Vol. 2, P. 292.

(3). A town of 6,000 inhabitants, north of Chartres. Baron de Renty was instrumental in obtaining this mission for St. John Eudes. See Letter 24, note 4.

LETTER 22

To Father Simon Mannoury, in Rome.(1) *On the mission at Autun (2)*

Autun, December 12, 1647

We arrived on the feast of St. Andrew, in good health, thanks be to God, after having very palpably experienced the special help of Our Lord and His most Holy Mother on each day of our trip. We were received

(1). Father Simon Mannoury had left for Rome in November, 1647 to obtain the papal approbation of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. He arrived there at the beginning of December. Cf. Georges, op. cit., p. 99.

(2). A town in Saône-et-Loire Department. The mission began on December 1 and lasted eleven weeks. St. John Eudes preached almost every day. Cf. Boulay, op. cit., Vol. 2, PP. 304-305.

here with great demonstrations of affection by his Lordship the Bishop,(3) the priests, magistrates and all the people. There are thirteen of us missionaries,(4) and soon we shall number twenty; but if there were a hundred of us, it would still not be enough, for the good God is showering extraordinary blessings on this mission. I think we shall be here about two months, that is to say, until the Purification. Then we shall leave to spend twelve days or a fortnight at Arnay-le-Duc, (5) and thence to Beaune (6) for Lent.

(3). The Bishop of Anton was Claude de la Madeleine de Ragny. Cf. Boulay, *ibid.*, Vol. 2, P 313.

(4). Missions in the seventeenth century lasted much longer than they do today. It was not unusual for ten or more missionaries to preach and hear confessions in a parish for several months. The expenses of the mission were often defrayed by some wealthy person in the parish. Cf. Matthew Russell, Blessed John Eudes, P. 37.

(5). A town midway between Autun and Beaune. St. John Eudes was there until Quinquagesima Sunday, February 23, 1647.

(6). A town about 25 miles from Dijon in the Côte d'Or Department. The mission began on Ash Wednesday, February 26, and closed on April 20. Cf. Boulay, *ibid.*, Vol. 2, P. 336.

LETTER 23

To Father Simon Mannoury, in Rome.

On the difficulties being encountered in the proceedings to obtain approbation of the Congregation. (1)

April 7, 1648

Courage, my dear brother; we want only the will of God. Let us, on our part, do all we can in the interests of our good Master and our dear Mistress, and then abandon ourselves in all things to their most holy will. If our hour has come, the whole world united will not be capable of resisting what is decreed; if it has not yet come, "expect the Lord, do manfully and let thy heart take courage."(2) One thing should encourage us greatly: namely, that it is impossible to doubt that this is the work of God, in view of the tremendous and extraordinary blessings it has

(1). The Congregation of the Holy Sacrament and Mary was founded by St. John Eudes on March 25, 1643.

(2). Ps. 26, 14

pleased Him to bestow upon our puny efforts. It clearly shows that they must be His efforts, and that consequently He will not abandon His work ... He will accomplish it at the proper time and in the most fitting way, and much better than we could ever desire. We have only to be faithful and always travel our way with humility, strength and trust.

LETTER 24 (1)

To Mother Elizabeth, the prioress of the Carmelites of Beaune. *On the death of Venerable Sister Margaret of the Blessed Sacrament.* (2)

Citry, (3) August 16, 1648

Reverend and dearest Mother:

May Jesus, the Most Holy Heart of Mary, be the heart of our hearts for ever.

I am writing you this from Citry, at the house of our dear Brother de Renty,(4) where he gave us the medals you sent him, which we all received with inexpressible respect, joy and consolation. I thank you for them with all my heart, in the name of all my confreres. I can assure you, my dearest Mother, that we shall cherish them the rest of our lives. For I cannot tell you what respect and devotion the holy Infant

(1). See the photographic copy of the original opposite the title-page. The original is preserved in the Archives of the Carmelite Monastery of Beaune.

(2). Sister Margaret died on May 26, 1648. See *The Sacred Heart of Jesus* (New York, 1946), p. 62.

(3). A Small village about 75 miles from Meaux in the Seine-et-Marne Department.

(4). Gaston John Baptist, Baron de Renty (1611-1648), was born in 1611 at the castle of Beny-Bocage, in the diocese of Bayeux, Normandy. After completing his education he took up a military career. An accomplished and energetic soldier, he distinguished himself in the army by his courage and military talents as well as by his virtue and piety. In 1638 he relinquished his rank in the army in order to devote himself entirely to the poor and the sick. Baron de Renty was a faithful friend of St. John Eudes and followed him on many of his missions. From the village of Citry where he was lord of the manor Baron de Renty wrote to Father Olier, the founder of the Sulpicians, on June 10, 1648: "Father Eudes' labours hem are blessed beyond belief." De Renty died on April 24, 1649. Cf. Joly, *Life of Saint John Eudes* (London, 1932), P. 123, 125.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

49 -

Jesus has impressed on our hearts for His saintly spouse, our dearest Sister Margaret. For my part, I honor and invoke her daily. We have already experienced various effects of her charity, both spiritual and temporal, about which our dear Brother de Renty can tell you more.

The moment we learned of her decease we made a vow to say forty Masses in honor of all that the Divine Infant Jesus is in her soul, in thanksgiving for all the graces He has granted her, for the accomplishment of all His intentions in her regard, in supplication for some special bond between her and ourselves and for participation in her grace and spirit, as well as to pray Him to obtain from God peace for us with several persons.

I implore you, my dear Mother, to grant us a union of prayers(5) with your holy Community. This can be done without displeasing anyone, for it shall remain strictly a secret. Do not refuse this favor, then, which I beg of you in the name of the Holy Infant Jesus and His most sacred Mother.

We are deeply indebted to you for the eight medals, but there are (twelve) brothers(6) in our little Community and I should like very much for the others to participate in this favor. I beseech you, therefore, to be mindful of this and to place in the hands of our dear Brother de Renty the fruits of your charity.

On our part we will pray daily to God for your blessed community, and you shall have a very special share of all the blessings it may please His divine bounty to bestow on our missions. And I in particular, Reverend and dearest Mother, will remain eternally, in the love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, priest of the seminary of Caen.

(1). The union of prayers between the Eudists and the Carmelite nuns of Beaune was renewed on September 12, 1933 by the late Very Reverend Mathurin Jehanno, superior general of the

Congregation of Jesus and Mary. Cf. *Les Saints Coeurs de Jésus et Marie* (revue mensuelle), December, 1933, P. 325.

(2) The number is omitted in the original copy. The Congregation of Jesus and Mary consisted of twelve members at that time. Cf. Boulay, op. cit., Vol. 2, P. 379; *Oeuvres Choisies de Saint Jean Eudes*, Vol. 5, p. 68.

50 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 25

To the Queen Mother.(1) *The Saint begs her to remedy the religious evils prevalent in France by choosing good bishops.*

Paris, September 2, 1648

Madame:

I cannot disregard the inspiration that God has pleased to send me while I was offering the holy sacrifice of the Mass for Your Majesty, at the time Of the riots in Paris.(2) This thought was to beseech you in all humility, in the name of Jesus Christ and His most Holy Mother, to use the power conferred on you to check the impetuous torrent of iniquity which today is creating a strange havoc in France, dragging an infinite number of souls down into hell, and constituting the sole cause of all the miseries in this Kingdom.

It is a deplorable thing, Madame, provocative of tears of blood, to witness the loss of so many souls which cost the precious blood of Jesus Christ, to notice that this evil is spreading, and to see that so few persons bother about it. When it is a question of some temporal interest of the kings and princes of this world, they stop at nothing. But the interests of the Sovereign Monarch are ignored. We exhaust ourselves on our missions by dint of crying out against the numerous disorders existing in France, which dishonor God in the extreme, and are the cause of the damnation of countless souls; and He gives us the grace to remedy some evils. But I am certain, Madame, that if Your Majesty were willing to use the power He has entrusted to you, you alone could do more toward abolishing the tyranny of the devil and establishing the reign of Jesus Christ than all the missionaries and preachers combined.

If Your Majesty wishes to know how this can be done, it will be easy to suggest the means, and still easier for you, with the help of Our Lord's grace, to put them into effect.

For the time being I shall mention only the most powerful of all

(1). Anne of Austria, mother of Louis XIV and regent of France (1601-1666).

(2). These incidents occurred on April 27, 1648. Cf. Boulay, OP. cit., Vol. 2, PP. 381-382.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

51 -

means: that of giving the Church good bishops, because good bishops and priests would make for good Christians, and in that way the Church of France would soon change its aspect and resume its former splendor. This, Madame, is Your Majesty's weightiest obligation. It is the greatest service you can render to God and His Church, and it is of such importance as to be highly deserving of Your Majesty's personal attentions(3) since you will be the first to have to render an account of it to the Sovereign judge; an account all the more terrible in that it involves the salvation of an infinite number of souls whom He has committed to your care. For I hear the Holy Spirit crying out through the lips of St.

Paul: "If any man have not care of his own, and especially of those of his house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." (4) So that at the hour of his death he shall be condemned by God as an apostate and punished more severely than pagans and infidels.

If Your Majesty renders this service to Jesus Christ and His Church, He will shower you with spiritual and temporal blessings. But should you neglect to do so, I solemnly declare to you, in the name and in behalf of the great living God, that all the sins committed in France, because of your having failed to provide the Church with good bishops, will be attributed to you as if you yourself had committed them; that you will have to suffer condemnation and punishment for them; and that all the souls who may consequently be lost and every drop of blood shed by Jesus Christ for their salvation will cry out for vengeance against you at the hour of death.

In conclusion, Madame, I can assure Your Majesty in all truthfulness that in this whole matter I have no interest or end in view other than the glory of my Master and the salvation of souls. He Who knows the depths of the heart knows that I speak the truth. (5) In Him and His most Holy Mother, Madame, I remain always with all possible respect Your Majesty's

Most humble, obedient and faithful subject and servant,

JOHN EUDES, priest.

(3). Without referring the matter in Mazarin, the Prime Minister.

(4). 1 Tim. 5, 8.

(5). In the words of Boulay this letter is a masterpiece of tenderness as well as respectful boldness and dignity. Boulay, *ibid.*, Vol. 2. P. 384.

52 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 26

Memorandum presented to the Queen Mother on several outstanding disorders in France and the means of correcting them. (1)

[About 1648] LIVE JESUS

The Queen is most humbly petitioned, in the name and for the love of Jesus Christ, the King of kings, and of the most Blessed Virgin Mary, His Mother, the Queen of the universe, to be so kind as to read this memorandum, carefully and in its entirety.

1. The principal feasts of the Church are singularly profaned by the fairs which are held on those days, as much because most people attending these fairs miss Mass, as because of the unbridled profanity, perjury, cheating, thievery, drunkenness and other sinful excesses which are usually a part of such occasions. This state of affairs is so prevalent that God is more dishonored on those days which should be used to praise and glorify Him than on all the other days of the year—a thing which is capable of bringing down a great curse on France.

Remedy.— It would be very easy to correct this evil by having these fairs transferred to two or three days after the feast days.

11. God is no less offended and dishonored on the feasts of the patron saints of each parish, almost everywhere in France, by the dances, games, drunkenness and other dissipations which occur.

It appears that there are no longer any days consecrated to God, but only those dedicated to the devil. There are no longer any Christian feasts, but only pagan ones, and ordinarily more sins are committed on those days than during all the rest of the year.

(1). According to Martine, *Vie de R. P. Jean Eudes*, 1. 4, n. 29, this *Memorandum* was accompanied by a letter which began as follows: "I have been deliberating for a long me, Madame, whether I might use the liberty of writing your Majesty in describe to you the things that are going on, and which are of very great consequence to the glory of God and the good of your subjects. I was afraid to write you these somewhat unpleasant facts which will perhaps not be easy to remedy. But over and above that, I was afraid of betraying my ministry if I faded to speak out, and of rendering myself responsible for all the evil if I did not call your attention to these abuses so that I might beseech you to use your power to correct them."

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

53 -

Remedy.-Issue an edict, to be published throughout France, by which all these disorders would be forbidden under pain of heavy fines that could be donated to the Church or to the poor. Let it be accompanied by strict injunctions to the judges and officers of each place to be responsible for its enforcement.

III. During the missions we conducted in several places, we found that the churches were deserted on Sundays and feast days, and even on the principal solemnities, because the inhabitants of those places did not dare come there for fear of being apprehended by policemen and tax collectors who seize them even at the foot of the altar to drag them off to prison-an iniquitous thing not practised even among the Turks, but which is nevertheless so true that I myself can testify to it with positive proof. On the feast of Corpus Christi a certain parish priest had taken the Blessed Sacrament from the altar and was about to leave his church to begin the procession. His parishioners were preparing to follow him but they resolved, all of them, not to leave when they learned that tax collectors were waiting to arrest several of them upon their exit from the church. One man alone protested that he would not forsake the Blessed Sacrament; but the moment he set foot outside the church, the police seized him and led him off to prison. Is not such barbarity and impiety enough to bring the thunderbolts of divine justice crashing down on our heads?

Remedy.-Since God has established Sundays and feast days to be days of rest and holiness devoted to His service, see to it that His people may serve Him at least on those days in peace and security. To this end, forbid collectors, tax-gatherers, bailiffs and sergeants to disturb them at those times.

IV. The spirit of the world wages open warfare upon chastity, a virtue eminently pleasing to Our Lord and His most Holy Mother, and without which no one shall see the face of God. This evil spirit employs all his efforts, in this century of corruption, to banish chastity from France and bring about the triumph of its enemy instead. To accomplish this he uses several kinds of armies. Here are six of them furnished by France herself:

The first army is composed of the balls and dances which give rise to a thousand sins. That is why St. John Chrysostom says that dancing is

54 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

"the abyss of hell," which swallows up a great number of wretched souls; and St. Ephrem and the other holy Fathers tell us that it is the work, invention and assembly of the devil. One of the holy councils of the Church assures us that there are not so many sins committed by tilling the soil on Sundays as by dancing.

The second army is made up of the love comedies which are even more dangerous than dancing, and cause the damnation of many souls.

The third is composed of the love stories which are veritable books of the devil, employed by him to cause countless numbers of sins to be committed. That is why the very learned and pious Gerson, chancellor of the celebrated University of Paris, was quite right in saying, with reference to a romantic novel written in his day, that if he knew that the author of that book had done no penance for it before dying, he would no more pray to God for him than for Judas. And notwithstanding, the whole of France is poisoned by such books, which are actually authorized by permission of our most Christian King.

The fourth army consists of the lascivious songs which are printed, sold and publicly sung in the streets—a thing that singularly corrupts the morals of our youth. If they printed or publicly sang something offensive to the King, who would tolerate that?

The fifth army is the luxury, vanity and worldliness of women in their dress, against which all the holy Doctors of the Church say such terrible things, calling it the ornament and pomp of the devil, and which these women, in baptism, solemnly promised God to renounce. If they do not fulfill these promises, they can never hope to be associated in any way with Him.

The sixth is made up of the indecent sculptures, paintings and pictures which are also the source of more sins than people imagine. Nevertheless, one sees almost nothing else in the offices, halls and inner rooms of many Christians, instead of the likenesses of Our Lord, His most holy Mother, the holy Apostles and the other saints.

Remedy.— If the King were even slightly concerned about or offended by all or one of these things, the means of curtailing them would easily be found. Now, it is certain that the great King of heaven is mightily offended by them. That is why the Queen, who has so much love for His Divine Majesty, will not lack the courage and ingenuity

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

55 -

to annihilate all these pomps of Satan, and to snatch from his hands these infernal weapons with which he aspires to banish chastity from France.

Would it not be very easy for her Majesty to lead the way in renouncing balls, comedies and all these other Satanic pomps, according to the promise she made to God in baptism, so that, through her example, she might inspire horror for them in the hearts of all her subjects?

Would it not be easy for her to order the chancellor to refuse permission henceforth for the printing of love stories, and even to forbid printers and booksellers to print and sell such books?

Would it not be easy for her to prohibit indecent songs from being printed and sold, and from being sung in the streets?

We often see poor people in prison for having sold a little salt in order to gain a livelihood. They are sentenced to pay heavy fines, and being unable to do so, they rot there in jail and are forced to ask as a favor that, instead of paying the fine, they be flogged by the executioner. I can testify to this myself, having interceded a number of times to obtain this concession for some of them. All these penalties are imposed because it is a question of the King's interests! But how much more is the glory of the Sovereign Monarch concerned in the above mentioned disorders, and with what zeal,

consequently, should those truly devoted to Him strive to remedy them!

V. I do not even speak here about the blasphemies, curses and imprecations which defile the present-day speech of the French people. I make no mention of the passion for dueling which sacrifices so many souls to hell and causes the greater number of our French noblemen to become martyrs of the devil. Sufficient edicts have been issued against these disorders, but the important thing is to enforce them, for God will not exonerate anyone for having made fine decrees if no attempt is made to have them carried out.

VI. The greatest evil existing in France today is heresy,(2) an infernal rage which precipitates countless souls into eternal damnation.

(2). The heresy in question is not only Calvinism but also Jansenism which was beginning to spread throughout France. Cf. *Annales de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie*, Vol. 3. P. 187.

56 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

Remedy.-Make peace, so that the royal authority may then be devoted to ridding France of this plague.

Conclusion

If the Queen is wholeheartedly devoted to God's interests(3) and uses her power to remedy the above-mentioned disorders, He will crown her with incomprehensible glory and inexpressible happiness. But if she ignores them and fails to do all in her power to abolish them, all the sins proceeding from them will be laid to her and she will be fearfully punished for them. Divine Bounty forbid that such should be the case. Rather, let her be an instrument of God to promote the reign of Jesus Christ in the hearts of all the French people.

(3). Anne of Austria was undoubtedly a pious and well-meaning woman; because, far from being hurt by such remonstrances, we have the best authority for saying that she gave much good example in attending, and listening to the Saint's sermons whenever he preached in Paris, or in the vicinity of the royal palaces. H. Joly, *Life of Saint John Eudes* (London, 1932), P. 193.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

57 -

LETTER 27

To Very Reverend Father Francis Bourgoing, Superior General of the Oratory.(1)

St. John Eudes sends him a memorandum in justification of his withdrawal from the Oratory(2)

Paris, September 10, 1648

JESUS, MARY, JOSEPH

Most Reverend and Honored Father:

I kneel at your feet in spirit and in heart to receive, may it please you, your holy blessing, and to implore you very humbly, in the name of Our Lord Jesus and His most holy Mother, to be so good as to read and consider, with your usual kindness and charity, the things I have set forth in writing on the sheet I am attaching to this letter. I have composed this paper to clarify many things of which I believe you are not informed. Perhaps when you understand them, God will give you different

sentiments. And I assure you, most Reverend

(1). Father Francis Bourgoing (1611-1662) was elected superior general of the Oratory of Jesus on May 7, 1641. In this letter and in the memorandum that accompanied it St. John Eudes justified himself for withdrawing from the Oratory. He undoubtedly expected that the Superior General would take steps to stop the unjust hostility of some Oratorians who sought to bring about the dissolution of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary founded in 1643.

(2). The memorandum which St. John Eudes sent to Father Bourgoing has not come down to us. We are therefore unable to say with certainty why he withdrew from the Oratory Of Jesus. Some writers have stated that the Saint left the Congregation because it had come under the evil influence of Jansenism, which destroyed to a great extent the work of de Bérulle and de Condren. It is true that St. John Eudes was always a vigorous opponent of Jansenism. Nevertheless the opinion that he left the Oratory to escape dangerous associations is groundless. Cf. Boulay, op. cit., Vol. 1, P. 487. Most biographers attribute the Saint's determination to leave the Oratory to his desire to realize the paramount objective of the Congregation at its foundation, namely the sanctification of the clergy through proper training in seminaries. This purpose had been almost entirely neglected by the Oratorians after the death of de Bérulle. Cf. Boulay, *ibid.*, Vol. 1, P. 530. A recent biographer, Father Emile Georges, C.J.M., in his biography written for the canonization of the Saint, rejects both opinions and holds that St. John Eudes left the Oratory to obey the will of God manifested to him by a number of providential events. Cf. Saint Jean *Eudes*, p. 62, p. 67 ft

158 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

Father, that I am stating them to you with the same sincerity and truth with which I should want to speak to my confessor if I were about to die and appear before the tribunal of the great God. if you deem it opportune to turn this paper over to your Council, and especially to Reverend Father Gibieuf, (3) I shall be very grateful to you, for I am most anxious for him to see it. And if, after that, you honor me with a reply, kindly address it to me at Caen, where I intend to return and where, as everywhere else, I wish to demonstrate, whenever the providence of God permits, that I am and shall remain all my life, with all possible affection and respect, very reverend and honored Father,

Your most obedient, grateful and devoted servant,

JOHN EUDES, priest.

(3). See Letter 12, note 2.

LETTER 28(1)

To the Prioress(2) of the Carmelites at Beaune.

Caen, December 20, 1648

JESUS, MARY, JOSEPH

Very Reverend and dear Mother:

May Jesus, the most Holy Heart of Mary, be the heart of your heart for ever.

I cannot tell you what joy my confrères and I have derived from our possession of the precious medals you were kind enough to send us by our dear Brother de Renty, (2) and for which we very humbly thank you. But I implore you now to look with favor, my dearest Mother, upon this repetition of the supplication I made to you through him, that of giving us some special alliance and union with

your holy Community(4).

(1). The original of this letter is reproduced on opposite page. The English editors are grateful to the Carmélites; of Beaune for the photographic copy.

(2). Mother Elizabeth of the Trinity. See Letter 24.

(3). See Letter 24, note 4

(4). See Letter 24, note 6.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

59 -

in honor of the most intimate union of Our Infant Lord Jesus with His most Holy Mother. All our confreres ardently desire it, too, and add their supplications to mine. Please do not, therefore, refuse us this favor. As for ourselves, we gladly affirm in the sacred love of the most Holy Infant Jesus for His Amiable Mother: *Omnia nostra vestra sunt*. Now we shall wait and hope for the same from you. In conclusion, if anything singular has happened since the decease of our dearest Sister,(5) you will oblige us exceedingly by letting us know about it.

I am with all my heart, very reverend and dear Mother,

Devotedly yours,

JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

(5). Sister Margaret of the Blessed Sacrament See Letter 24.

LETTER 29

To Father John Baptist Saint Jure,(1) a Jesuit. Concerning Baron de Renty(2)

[1649]

We have seen him carried away by his zeal and fervor in the church at Citry, sweeping it, removing the sweepings with his hands and ringing the bells to summon the people to the exercises. We have noticed him with tears in his eyes on such occasions, and when I asked him the reason, he confessed that they were caused by the excessive joy he felt upon witnessing the emotion of so many persons who were showing definite signs of conversion, restoring the goods of others, becoming reconciled with their enemies, getting rid of bad books, forsaking the occasions of sin and beginning a new life.

(1). Father Saint Jure (1588- 1663) entered the Society of Jesus at the age of 16. He was an excellent spiritual advisor and the author of a number of devotional works, *The Religious Man*, *Treatise on the Love and Knowledge of Jesus Christ*, and *The Life of Mr. de Renty*. This letter is taken from *The Life of Mr. de Renty*.

(2). See Letter 24, note 4.

60 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 30

To Father Simon Mannoury. On the dependence of the Congregation with regard to bishops.

[1649]

Our benefactors(1) are moving heaven and earth. They have told astounding things about us to

his Lordship of Bayeux;(2) among others, that we wish to establish ourselves by prerogative from Rome, without bishops. He is angry about this and determined not to tolerate it. I have written him to refute this calumny.

(1). The Oratorians who accused St. John Eudes of seeking independence from the Ordinaries. The Saint always called his adversaries his "benefactors."

(2). His Lordship Edward Molé was consecrated Bishop of Bayeux on February 14, 1649. Because of the false reports concerning the Saint, Bishop Molé was hostile to the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. Cf. Georges, op. cit., PP. 97-98.

LETTER 31

To Father Richard Le Mesle.(1). *The Saint thanks him for consolation received from him.*

[1649]

I thank you with all my heart for your charitable letters. Reading them brought tears to my eyes, for they reveal the very sincere and cordial charity that Our Lord has given you toward me, and the very deep concern you have about my troubles. Let me assure you, too, my dearest brother, that there is no one in this world who loves you as much as I do. You are the only one of all our good confrères to console me in this trial, which is the hardest I have ever borne in my whole life.'

(1). See Letter 14, note 1.

(2). Reference is made here to the numerous grievances which Saint John Eudes had to endure from the hostility of Bishop Molé of Bayeux, who was seeking to suppress the Congregation Of Jesus and Mary.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS 61 -

Letter 32.

To One of His Sons Conducting a Mission in Gatteville.(1) *On submission to the Will of God.*

[Paris, June 1650]

I had hoped to join you soon in the Gatteville mission, but Our Lord does not find me worthy of it and is keeping me here in my Paris purgatory for my sins longer than I had anticipated. Not that I wish it to be otherwise, for, thanks to His mercy, He gives me the grace to desire nothing in this world save to do His most holy will. And to tell you the truth, everywhere that I find His will, there I am in my element and paradise. Therefore Paris, which used to be my purgatory, is now my paradise, because I see clearly that the divine will has brought me here and is detaining me yet for a few days ... It makes no difference to me where I am nor what I do, provided I am serving my God and accomplishing His holy will. That is all we have to do in this world, and therein should we find all our happiness.

(1). A small town in the vicinity of Cherbourg.

LETTER 33

To the Priests of the Congregation during a Mission in Gatteville. On *the care that must be devoted to spiritual exercises.*

[Paris, June 1650]

I implore you never to conduct in haste any of the exercises which directly concern God, such as the Sacrifice of the Mass, the Divine Office, morning and evening prayers, and those of the *Benedicite* and the thanksgiving, under any pretext whatsoever, but to conduct them slowly, distinctly and with devotion.

In addition, "Let us not love in word, nor in tongue," like the children of this generation, "but in deed, and in truth," (1) like true children

(1). 1 John 3, 18.

62 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

of God. In short, let these words of the Holy Spirit be impressed on our hearts and stamped on our words and actions: "Humble thyself in all things, and thou shalt find grace before God: for great is the power of God alone: and he is honoured by the humble." (2)

Our affairs are going well, thank God. Get ready now for three important missions at Bernay (3) Pontoise (4) and Saint Sulpice. (5) I implore Our Lord and His most holy Mother to prepare us for the accomplishment of their most holy wills. Once again, in the sacred love of their most loving Heart, do I embrace all of you, including our dear brethren Fathers Ameline, (6) Delaunay, (7) Paillot (8) and the others with you. I remain, my dearest brethren,

Devotedly your servant,

JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

(2). Ecclus. 3, 20-21.

(3). A small town in the Eure Department, Normandy.

(4). A town in the archdiocese of Rouen.

(5). A parish in the city of Paris where Father John James Olier opened the Seminary of Saint Sulpice. The mission preached by St. John Eudes began on February 2nd and continued until the end of Lent.

(6). Father Ameline was a priest of Caen who later wrote a pamphlet against Mary des Vallées. Cf. Boulay, op. cit., Vol. 3, P. 140.

(7). Father De Launay-Hué, vicar general of Bayeux. Cf. Boulay, ibid. Vol. 4. P. 330.

(8). Father Nicholas Paillot, a priest of St. Michael of Vaucelles, a village in the Nord Department, six miles from Cambrai. He assisted St. John Eudes in many of his missions. Father Paillot was not a member of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. He died at Vaucelles On May 21, 1687. Cf. Boulay, ibid. Vol. 2, P. 46; Vol. 3, P. 370. See Letter 92.

LETTER 34

To the Religious of Our Lady of Charity at Caen. *On the feast of the joys of Our Blessed Lady. (1)*

Paris, July 5, 1650(2)

J. M. J.

My dearest Sisters:

May Jesus, the most Holy Heart of Mary, be the life and joy of our hearts for ever.(3)

I was exceedingly happy to receive your beautiful and charitable letter, for which I thank you a thousand times. I trust that the Communion you offered to God for my intention, on the feast of St. John,(4) will be profitable to you as well as me, since all my intentions have no end save the sanctification of your souls and the establishment of the reign of God in your hearts. It is that for which we must unceasingly strive; all our happiness lies therein, and it alone should constitute our joy.

Speaking of joys, I am writing you this on the fifth of July, which is the feast of the Joys of Our Blessed Lady, our good Mother. If you have overlooked it, I am asking our dear Mother Superior to appoint another day on which you may observe this feast, and to permit all of you to receive Holy Communion, which you must offer to God for these five intentions:

1. In thanksgiving to the most holy Trinity for all the joys bestowed by It upon the Blessed Virgin, on earth as well as in heaven.

(1). This feast is still celebrated on July 5th by the Eudists and the Religious of Our Lady of Charity.

(2). This letter was written from Paris where St. John Eudes had gone with Father Mannoury to obtain from Bishop Molé of Bayeux the approbation for Our Lady of Charity. This was granted on February 8, 1651.

(3). St. John Eudes places this salutation at the head of most of his letters to his communities until 1660 when he begins to use "May the Divine Will Be Our Guide in All Things." See Letter 87

(4). We know that the Saint had received the name of John in baptism. The above letter shows that the sisters at Caen had sent him their feast day greetings on the feast of St. John the Baptist, June 24. Boulay thinks that John Eudes's patron saint was the Apostle St. John. Cf. Boulay, *ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 15.

64 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

2. In satisfaction and reparation for the sorrows and griefs she suffered during her life on earth, because of our sins.

3. For the increase and extension of her joys in heaven.

4. To ask God for the grace to scorn and detest all the false joys of this world.

5. To ask also for the grace to find all our joy in doing His most amiable will everywhere and in all things, and in carrying the Cross with our most adorable Saviour. For truly, my dearest Sisters, there is no real cause for joy on earth other than this: to perform the will of God and to be despised and crucified with Jesus Christ. Oh, would that we shared the sentiments of St. John of the

Cross! When Our Lord asked him what he desired for the services he had rendered Him, he made this reply: "Lord, I ask nothing of Thee save to suffer and be despised for Thy sake." It was indeed the Holy Spirit Who inspired him to ask for the greatest blessing of this life.

After you have received Communion for these intentions, I pray you, my dear Sisters, to think seriously, each one to yourself, about what you can do to increase the joys of the most precious Virgin Mary.

In conclusion, we are overlooking nothing, Father Mannoury and I, that can be done for your house, or rather for the house of Our Lord and His most holy Mother. But the affairs of God are transacted only with much patience and resignation. I trust, however, that they will soon be settled, and that the outcome will be satisfactory to all of us. This letter is intended both for the Mother and her daughters, whom I greet one and all.

I pray you also to contact our dearest brethren,⁽⁵⁾ so that, if they have forgotten to observe the feast of the joys of Our Blessed Lady, they may atone for their omission, for I have not the leisure just now to write them.

I am with all my heart, my dearest Sisters,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

(5). The Eudists of the seminary at Caen.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

65 -

LETTER 35

To the Missionaries at Gatteville. *On the sorrow he feels on being separated from them, and on the Divine Will which he invites them to consider as their mother.*

Paris, July 9, 1650 J. M. J.

My dearest brethren, whom I embrace with deepest affection, *in visceribus Christi*:

Here it is already the ninth of July and there is no prospect of my being able to leave Paris for two weeks yet. For that reason I am giving up the hope I had of seeing you at the mission in Gatteville. I can assure you that this mortification is one of the hardest I have had to bear for a long time, for it seems to me that I am separated not only from my own heart and body, but from something still dearer to me, since in truth I love you more, collectively and individually, than my inmost parts. I believe that I speak without exaggeration and in all sincerity.

The most adorable Will of God, which is our most bountiful mother, has ordained this separation; may it be for ever blessed for having done so! I call it our godmother, since from it we have received our being and life, that of nature as well as of grace. It must govern us, and we must obey it and abandon ourselves with the utmost confidence to its guidance, for it has a truly maternal love for us. That is why I urge, my beloved brethren, that we regard, honor and love God's Will as our most amiable mother, and that our principal devotion be to conceive a strong affection of mind and heart for it, conform faithfully to it in all things, and obey all its orders "with a great heart and a willing mind." Let us find all our glory and happiness therein and regard all else as pure folly.

"We can do nothing," says St. Paul, "against the truth: but for the truth." May God grant us so many graces that we may truthfully say:

- (1). 2 Mach. 1, 3.
- (2). Cor 13, 8.

66 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

"We can do nothing against the will of God, but for the will of God." We can do nothing, that is, we cannot think, say nor do anything contrary to the divine will, but we are strong and powerful to obey Him in all things.

Furthermore, when I call the divine will our mother, that does not imply that the most Blessed Virgin is not our Mother too, for the divine will so fills, possesses and animates her that it is like her soul, her mind, her heart and life, in such a way that she is but the same thing, if one may so express it, as the divine will itself. Thus the most precious Virgin is our Mother, and the divine will is also our mother. And nevertheless, they are not two mothers but one, to whom I offer and abandon myself with all my heart, along with my dearest brethren, that she may live and reign within us, carrying out all her designs, now and for ever, in her own way rather than in ours. Say *amen*, my beloved brethren, but say it with deep sincerity, not merely with your lips but much more with your works. To this end, I entreat you to practise faithfully what I wrote you in my last letter, which I pray you to re-read together if you still have it.

LETTER 36

To the Priests of the Seminary at Caen. *The Saint encourages them during the persecution directed against them by the bishop of Bayeux, His Lordship Edward Molé, who was seeking to interdict their chapel(1)*

Coutances, November 6, 1650

I hope that this storm will pass and that Our Lord will salvage great good from it. His Lordship of Coutances(2) is showing me extraordinary charity and cordiality. I shall not tell you the rest; you will see it in its effects(3) Let us continue to humble ourselves before God and beg Him

- (1). By decision of the Bishop's Court at Caen the Seminary chapel was placed under an interdict on November 29, 1650.
- (2). Claude Auvry, a friend and protector of St. John Eudes. Cf. Boulay, *ibid.*, Vol. 2, P. 417.
- (3). The Saint is referring to the imminent establishment of the Congregation at Coutances.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

67 -

to carry out His designs for us. Furthermore, it is a special act of Providence that I should be here at this time. I shall remain for a few days yet, no longer on account of the business which has kept me here until now, but for another matter of which I will tell you when I see you, and which I ask you to recommend to Our Lord and His holy Mother.

LETTER 37

To Father Thomas Manchon(1) at the Seminary in Caen. *The course to follow if the seminary chapel is interdicted.*

[Coutances, autumn of 1650]

Do not be astonished, my dear brother; it is a storm that will pass. If they intimate anything to you, make no reply but tell them that in my absence you have nothing to say until my return. However, if they order you to close the chapel, do so, and say your Masses wherever you can. Give encouragement to our brethren and exhort them to humble themselves in the sight of God, putting all their hope in Him and His most holy Mother, and spending as much time as possible before the Blessed Sacrament. Send some of them to Our Lady of Deliverande.(2)

(1). See Letter 13, note 2. Father Manchon was then acting superior of the Caen Seminary. Cf. Boulay, *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, P. 505.

(2). A shrine about nine miles from Caen. It was there that St. John Eudes and his first five companions dedicated their lives to the work of seminaries and missions on March 25, 1643.

68 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 38

To one of his confreres. *Concerning the admission of a postulant to probation.*(1)

With regard to the young man about whom you wrote me, send him to Coutances,(2) my dearest brother, provided he is highly resolved to renounce his own will completely, to be admonished about his shortcomings, and to live and die in the Congregation.

(1). The name given to the formative years in the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. According to the original rules as laid down by the Saint the probation was to last three years and three months in memory of three years and three months that the Apostles and Disciples lived with Our Lord before being incorporated into His apostolic family on Pentecost Sunday. The first year in the Congregation of Jesus and Mary is devoted to prayer and spiritual training and corresponds to the novitiate in other religious orders. The remaining years are spent in the study of philosophy and theology. In recent years the probation has been changed to four years. After completing his probation the candidate is incorporated into the Congregation by virtue of the perpetual promises that he takes to obey his superiors and the rules of the Order.

(2). The Probation House was then at Coutances in Normandy.

LETTER 39

To Reverend Mother Mechtilde of the Blessed Sacrament,(1) Foundress of the Benedictine Nuns of the Blessed Sacrament. *On a favor obtained through the Holy Heart of Mary.*

[About 1650]

In 1648 we were conducting a big mission at Autun, in the course of which we celebrated, in the cathedral,(2) the feast of the Holy Heart of the Queen of Heaven which enkindled the fire of that devotion in many hearts. It happened that a Benedictine nun of the Abbey of St. Mary(3)

(1). Mother Mechtilde was then at the Benedictine Monastery of the Holy Trinity at Caen. She founded the Benedictines of Perpetual Adoration in 1651.

(2). The first solemn feast of the Holy Heart of Mary was celebrated at the Autun Cathedral on February 8, 1648

(3). Benedictine Monastery founded in 589 by Queen Brunehaut. Cf. Boulay *ibid.*, Vol. 2, P. 319

of St. John the Great at Autun, named Frances du Rey and called "of the Cross," eighteen years of age, was sick with measles which had deprived her of sight and caused a severe inflammation of the eyes, with constant and very acute pain. She called her nurse and requested her to kneel near the bed, reciting by heart the salutation to the most holy Heart of the Mother of God, *Ave Cor sanctissimum*, (4) printed in a little book. (5) When this was done she asked for the booklet which she applied to her eyes for about the length of a *Miserere*, supplicating the Blessed Virgin to restore her sight and health through the merits of her most holy Heart. After this she removed the book from her eyes, and not feeling any more pain, she opened them without difficulty and began to see as clearly and perfectly as ever . . . I have an authentic attestation of this, in addition to having been an eye-witness of it.

(4). Prayer to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary recited daily in the two orders founded by St. John Eudes. Cf. *The Sacred Heart of Jesus* (New York, 1946), p. 173.

(5). *La Dévotion au Saint Coeur et au Saint Nom de la très Sainte Vierge* by St. John Eudes. It was published at Autun in 1648, Cf. *Oeuvres Complètes du Vénérable Jean Eudes*, Vol. V1, p. V111; Boulay, Op. Cit., Vol. 2, P. 320.

LETTER 40

To the First Religious of Our Lady of Charity. *The Saint announces the signing of the letters of establishment for the Order. He exhorts them to have true devotion to the most Holy Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary.*

Paris, February 11, 1651 J. M. J.

My dearest daughters;

May Jesus, the most Holy Heart of Mary, be our life and our joy for ever.

I have wonderful news for you. But first, kneel down to receive it, not as coming from me, but from our adorable Jesus and His most worthy Mother.

At last, after several years of patient waiting, the letters for your establishment were signed by his Lordship of Bayeux(1) last Wednesday,

(1). Edward Molé. See Letter 30, note 2.

+

70 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

February 8th, the feast of the Most Holy Heart of the Blessed Virgin and the contract of foundation was also signed by him and by Mr. and Madame de Langrie.(2) So you are now true daughters of the Heart of the Queen of heaven, and obliged, in a special manner, to honor and love her most amiable Heart, to celebrate its feast with special devotion, to have but one heart with her and with one another, and to engrave on your own hearts a perfect likeness of the love, charity, obedience, humility, meekness, zeal for the salvation of souls and other virtues which reign in her Heart, so that you may thus conform to the Heart of her Son.

No longer need you be afraid. Your Community and Order are founded upon the Holy Heart of the sovereign Empress of the universe, and this was accomplished not through the efforts of men but by a special mandate from heaven. For last Tuesday his Lordship of Bayeux, after several previous

delays and difficulties, had again postponed the affair to Friday; then on the very same day he announced that it would take place on Wednesday, which it did. Eternal thanks be rendered to the most Holy Trinity, Our Lord Jesus Christ, His most precious Mother and all the angels and saints who interceded in this great work, and may all who cooperated in it in any way whatsoever be for ever blessed with the choicest blessings of heaven.

In thanksgiving, my dearest daughters, it is my opinion that you should do the following things: Recite every day for a week, in a body, the *Te Deum*, the *Ave Cor sanctissimum*, and each day one of the eight litanies of the most Holy Heart of the Blessed Virgin, contained at the end of the book of devotion⁽³⁾ to this same Heart. Then after this prayer, recite the litanies of St. Joseph, St. Gabriel, the Holy Guardian Angels, and the prayer to all the saints which is used on All Saints Day.

In addition, you should receive thirty-four Communions, at your

(2). It was mainly through the influence of John Leroux, Seigneur de Langrie, Royal Counsellor, President of the Rouen Parliament, that St. John Eudes obtained the contract of foundation from Bishop Molé on February 8, 1651. Mr. de Langrie donated 10,000 livres to the monastery, and Madame de Langrie in recognition of the great service she had rendered the Order was given the privileges and rights of foundress. Cf. Father John Mary Ory, *The Origin of the Order of Our Lady of Charity*, PP. 55, 57

(3). See Letter 39, note 5.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

71 -

convenience, in thanksgiving to the most Holy Trinity, to Jesus, to the most holy Heart of His glorious Mother, to the angels and saints, and for his Lordship of Bayeux, your founders and benefactors, and all who have contributed to the success of this affair.

Furthermore, it seems to me that you ought to write four letters of thanks: 1. To his Lordship of Bayeux; 2. To President de Langrie; 3. To Madame de Langrie; 4. To Madame de la Porte,⁽⁴⁾ to whom you are greatly indebted. I am asking our dear Sister Mary of St. Francis Xavier⁽⁵⁾ to write these four letters. Above all, I implore you to begin now in good earnest to live as true daughters of the most Holy Heart of the Mother of God.

It is in the sacred love of this Heart that I am and will ever be, my dearest daughters,

Devotedly yours,

JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

P. S. Wait until Father Mannoury and Mr. de Langrie arrive in Caen before you sing a solemn *Te Deum*, but while you are waiting do not neglect to recite it, as I mentioned in this letter.

(4). Madame de la Porte, whose husband was a Councillor of the Rouen Parliament, accompanied Mr. and Madame de Langrie when they visited Bishop Molé in Paris to request the approval of the Monastery of Our Lady of Charity of Caen. See Letter 21, note

(5). She was probably the secretary of the community.

LETTER 41

To Sister Mary of the Assumption, Eustace de Taillefer.⁽¹⁾ *The Saint urges her to prepare to be professed.*

Paris, March 11, 1651 J. M. J.

My dearest daughter:

May Jesus, the most Holy Heart of Mary, be ours for ever.

I should like to have you make your profession as soon as possible,

(1). See Letter 16, note 1.

72 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

and if it were left to me, you would already have done so. But first you must have some Sisters with you, and you shall have them soon. Therefore be patient until then, my dearest daughter, and prepare yourself meanwhile for this holy act.

I beg Our Lord and His most Holy Mother to help you with your preparation, and to fashion you entirely after their own Heart. It is in the love of this most holy Heart that I remain, both to you, my beloved daughter, and to all my dearest daughters,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

P. S. I gave Madame de la Porte the book of *The Heart*, (2) along with the signature and your letter. She seemed very pleased with them and told me that she would write to thank you.

(2). See *Letter 39, note 5*.

LETTER 42

To Father Simon Mannoury, in Coutances. *Regarding a postulant admitted to probation.*

(Corbeil,(1) April or May 1651)

You will take care to form him according to the spirit of Our Lord, which is a spirit of detachment and renunciation of oneself and all things; a spirit of obedience and abandonment to the divine will, manifested to us by the rules of the Gospel and the regulations of our Congregation, which are simply an expression of the evangelical maxims, and by the behavior of those who act in God's stead; a spirit of pure love for God which inclines us to do nothing save only to please Him; a spirit of singular devotion to Jesus and Mary, to the mysteries of their lives, and to all the saints most closely associated with them; a spirit of scorn and aversion for the world, which is the body of Satan, and of all that the world loves; a spirit of love for the Cross of Jesus,

(1). A small town situated on the Seine River about 20 miles south of Paris.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

73 -

that is, for scorn, poverty and sorrow; a spirit of hatred and horror for every kind of sin, which should incite us to wage war on it unceasingly and destroy it in ourselves and others; a spirit of humility, contempt, hatred and annihilation of self, as indicated in these words from the *Imitation of Christ*: "Love to be unknown and to be esteemed as nothing; (2) spirit of cordial and fraternal charity toward our neighbor, especially toward those of our Congregation and the poor, and of zeal for the

salvation of souls; a spirit of virtue, in order to love all the virtues and practise them steadfastly in the spirit of Jesus, as is stated in the book *The Kingdom of Jesus*,⁽³⁾ the reading and practice of which you should strongly recommend to those under your direction; a spirit of love, esteem and respect for the Church and all that pertains to it, as well as for all the religious Orders in the Church, for we should have a Catholic, that is to say, a universal, spirit-one that embraces, honors and loves all that is of God, for the sake of God; and we should hate and despise only sin and ourselves; finally, a spirit of prayer and piety, that we may perform all our actions in the spirit, that is, in the dispositions which are those of Our Lord.

Study these dispositions as carefully as possible, with the grace of Our Lord, and impart them to others by your example, prayers, discourses and meditations, readings and other exercises. Above all, implore God to grant you the spirit of meekness and watch yourself particularly on this point, that you may make yourself loved, and win hearts in which you may afterwards instil what God may grant you for that purpose.

Keep this letter and read it over from time to time.

(2). *Imitation of Christ*. Book 1, verse 3.

(3). Treatise on Christian perfection by St. John Eudes published by Peter Poisson at Caen in 1637.

74 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 43

To Father Simon Mannoury, in Coutances. *On the mission at Corbeil.*

Corbeil, May 18, 1651.

All our brethren here in Corbeil send affectionate greetings to their brethren in Coutances. Our dear brother Father Jourdan⁽¹⁾ is ill with a fever. We are here among a "stiffnecked" people but the mission is bound to convert some of them.

(1). Father Peter Jourdan (1607-1661) was One Of the first five Eudists. He was a zealous missionary and took part in the great mission given in Paris at St. Germain-des-Prés in 1661. He died on December 27, 1661. Cf. Boulay, op. cit., Vol. 3, PP. 307-309. *Les Fleurs de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie*, Vol. 1, p. 13.

LETTER 44

To Father Simon Mannoury. *On the mission at Bernay.* (1)

June 2, 1651

We are leaving tomorrow for Bernay, to begin the mission there on Sunday. It seems to me that it will be a good thing for Father Saché⁽²⁾ to come on this mission, but first have him make a three-day retreat.

(1). See Letter 33, nov 3.

(2). Father Stephen Saché (1615-1678) was born at Aseville, in the diocese of Coutances, Normandy, in 1615. He entered the Congregation of Jesus and Mary in 1650. An intelligent and cultured priest, Father Saché won the hearts of all by his simple and pleasing personality. For twenty years he was assistant superior of the Seminary and College of Lisieux. He died on January 9, 1678. Cf. *Les Fleurs de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie*, Vol. 1, P. 48

LETTER 45

To Father Simon Mannoury. *The Saint asks him for helpers for the mission at Bernay.*

(Bernay, June 1651)

wrote you to send us Father Sache, but you have made no reply to me about it. This is a mission which begins where the others end, and we have a great dearth of workers for it. I was afraid that we should not have any crosses on this occasion, but God has provided, for our dear brother Father de Montaigu (1) has been ill since Sunday morning with a continuous fever, and Father Jourdan is kept busy taking care of him. Hurry and send us Father Sache. Could you do without Father Le Mesle(2) so that he could come to help us? I am leaving it in your hands. Write to the pastor of St. Gervais(3) and importune him to send us some of his good workers for this mission. Ask him, however, not to send any except those whom we have already seen.

(1). Father John Baptist de Montaigu (1610-1681) met St. John Eudes at Autun in 1647 and asked the Saint to be admitted into the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. In addition to his missionary activities Father de Montaigu was for eight years superior of the Seminary of Coutances. He died at the Rouen Seminary in 1681. *Les Fleurs de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie*, Vol, 1, p. 61.

(2). See Letter 14, note 1.

(3). The parish priest of St. Gervais Church in Coutances. Cf. Boulay, Op. Cit., Vol. 2, P. 466.

76 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 46

(1)To Father Simon Mannoury, in Paris. *On the opportuneness for a mission in Coutances, and the concessions to be made to His Lordship Edward Molé, the Bishop of Bayeux.*

(Summer of 1651)

I have written to his Lordship the Bishop of Coutances(2) to ask for his approval of our giving a mission in Coutances at this time. Press him for a reply so that we may begin as soon as possible, for there are a good many persons who desire this work, and it would be fitting for us to render this service to God and to the public at the outset of our establishment there . . .

I beg of you not to leave Paris until you have used to advantage, as much as possible, all the means that the providence of God has placed and will place at your disposal to win over his Lordship the Bishop of Bayeux and his father.(3) Concede to his Lordship everything he wishes except the authority to appoint the superior of the seminary; he must be persuaded to consent to his election by the Community.

(1). Father Mannoury had gone to Paris on business, probably to request the Bishop of Bayeux to lift the interdict on the chapel of the Caen Seminary.

(2). Bishop Claude Auvry, who was in Paris at that time.

(3). Matthew Molé, a magistrate of repute and a personal friend of Cardinal Mazarin, the Prime Minister. Cf. Boulay *ibid.*, VOL 2, P. 297

LETTER 47

To His Niece, Mary Herson,(1)afterwards Sister Mary of the Nativity.

On the dispositions with which she should take the veil.

September 3, 1651

My dearest niece and daughter in Our Lord Jesus Christ:

With all my heart do I bless our most amiable Saviour for the good sentiments He gave you during your retreat, and I beseech Him to grant you the grace to be faithful to Him by using them well, as He wishes you to do.

It is a mortification for both of us that I shall not be present at the ceremony of your clothing, but it will be better that way and greater blessings will result, since it is quite certain that the more crosses there are in the affairs of God, the more advantageous it is for us. But that will not prevent my being present in mind and heart in order to supplicate Our Lord and His most Holy Mother to use their own holy hands to divest you of yourself and all earthly things, that you may be clothed instead with their spirit and virtue.

On your part, there are eight things you must do:

The first is to enter into an ardent desire of wholly renouncing yourself and everything that is not God, and of giving yourself perfectly to Our Lord, that He may command of you all that is pleasing to Him, without reservation.

The second is to offer yourself to the holy Virgin with a fervent desire to serve, honor and imitate her as your dearest Mother, and to cultivate a special devotion to her most amiable Heart.

The third is to consecrate yourself to the Son and the Mother, that

(1)She was the eldest daughter of the Saint's sister and was born on March 5, 1629. At the age of twelve she entered the Monastery of Our Lady of Charity of Caen. Nine years later, on September 8, 1651 she took the habit and received the name of Mary of the Nativity. She became superior of the Community and did much to spread the Order and in establish regular observance. She worked with the ecclesiastical superior, Father Legrand, parish priest of St. Julian of Caen, at the revision of the Constitutions and at the composition of the Custom-Book. She died on June 4, 1709 at the age of eighty-five. Cf. Ory, *The origin of the Order of Our Lady of Charity*, pp. 65, 194, 269.

78 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

you may occupy yourself according to their most holy will with the salvation of lost souls who are so precious to them.

The fourth is to protest to Our Lord that you wish to do all these things, particularly on the feast of the Nativity of the most Blessed Virgin Mary, not for the sake of rewards from heaven, nor earthly merits and consolations, but purely for His love and glory, and to accomplish His most adorable will.

The fifth is to remember that you are to perform an act which has previously been performed

in such a holy manner by many saintly religious of both sexes, and to unite yourself to their holy dispositions, asking them to grant you a share in them.

The sixth is to pray to St. Joseph, St. Gabriel, your guardian angel, the holy guardian angels of your house, and all the saints who had a particular zeal for the salvation of lost souls, to help you perform this act.

The seventh and principal one is to humble yourself profoundly at the sight of your own unworthiness, wretchedness and lowliness, and earnestly to beseech the Blessed Virgin to obtain for you from her Son the grace to regard and treat yourself always as the lowliest of anyone in the house, and to be willing to be regarded and treated as such by others. That, my dear daughter, is what I particularly recommend to you; implant it so deeply in your heart that it may never escape, and in that way you will truly be one of the daughters of the Mother of love and humility.

The eighth is that, after you have done everything possible on your part to prepare yourself for so great an act, you place no reliance upon it and depend in nowise for support upon your own efforts and preparations, but that you offer and give yourself to Jesus and Mary, imploring them to do for you all that you yourself should do, and to prepare you themselves in their own way and according to their most holy will.

Lastly, all the sentiments of our good Mother are so precious to me that I can wish only what she wishes. Hence I am very pleased that you will bear the name of the Nativity of the most Blessed Virgin, so that you may regard that feast as the day of your rebirth into a whole new life--a day on which you may begin to live, with the Mother of sweet love, a life in imitation of hers.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

79 -

Ask our good Mother to look to the needs of each of the Sisters, as well as to whatever else may be expedient, and to have these purchases made, and I will gladly settle for them.

I am writing to my nephew, your brother,(2) that I am glad he is coming, but I shall not be able to see him, for I cannot come out of seclusion and it would be inopportune for him to come here. Do not forget to ask him how he is behaving whether he goes frequently to confession and to a good and regular confessor, whether he kneels to say his morning and evening prayers, and whether he goes to catechism instructions and sermons. Give him this good advice: 1. To fear offending God above all else; 2. To live in peace and charity with everyone; 3. Never to lie or swear when buying and selling; 4. To place all his trust in God; 5. To have devotion to the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph.

I greet our dearest Mother and thank her with my whole heart for all her care and trouble in your behalf, and I beseech Our Lord and His most holy Mother to thank her for both of us. I also send greetings to all our dearest Sisters and recommend myself to their prayers. I remain, in the sacred love of the most holy Heart of Jesus and Mary, my dearest niece and daughter in Our Lord,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

P. S. Do not forget to ask your brother for news of your little sister(3) -how she is getting along, and how much he could give her if she wished to become a religious.

(2). John Herson.

(3). France Herson entered the Order of Our Lady of Charity and made her profession as a lay sister on July 25, 1662. She took the name of Sister Mary of St. Francis.

LETTER 48

To Mother Margaret Frances Patin.(1) *On various matters.*

(1651) My very dear and good Mother:

May Jesus, the most holy Heart of Mary, be ours for ever.

It is always a great pleasure for me to receive letters from you, but even if you did not write me at all, I could never doubt your most cordial charity toward me, any more than your participation, in company with our dear Sisters, in my small afflictions. I thank you with all sincerity, my dear . est Mother, and beseech you to obtain for me from Our Lord the grace to bear them in His spirit.

I entrusted your letter for his Lordship of Bayeux to Mr. Le Tardif, who is well acquainted with the matter, and who can say whatever is necessary and fitting. He offered of his own accord to deliver it. Pray God to bless this affair, and to let His most adorable will be done in all things.

I am delighted that our dear Sisters are travelling so happily and courageously along the paths of heaven through the practice of sound virtues. I beseech them always to continue their advancement, especially in humility, obedience and mutual charity, and in the love of our most amiable Jesus and His most worthy Mother. It is in this same love that I send greetings to one and all, and that I am with all my heart, my dearest Mother,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

(1). In 1644 St. John Eudes asked the Visitation Nuns of Caen to assist him in the training of the first sisters of Our Lady of Charity until his spiritual daughters would be able to choose from among themselves a sister qualified to govern them. On August 10, 1644, Mother Margaret Frances Patin, a Visitation Nun, became superior of the Refuge of Caen. For twenty years she guided the nascent community and trained the young sisters that were destined to govern the order. Mother Patin died the death of a saint on October 31, 1668. Cf. Ory, *ibid.*, P. 32 ff; George, *op. cit.*, p. 204 ff.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 49

To Mother Margaret Frances Patin, Superior of Our Lady of Charity. *The Saint speaks to her of Sister Mary des Vallées and gives her some spiritual advice.*

(January 1652)

My dearest Mother, whom I love most cordially in the sacred love of the most holy Heart of Jesus and Mary:

May they be the heart of our hearts for ever.

Our dear Timothy(1) is now undergoing extraordinary sufferings, and it is therefore

impossible to speak with her about anything. As soon as she has returned to her normal state, I will read her your letter, and if she gives me any message for you, I will not fail to convey it to you. However, I can assure you, my dearest Mother, that she loves you deeply and sincerely, and that you and all your dear Community have a very special place in her heart.

As for your own condition, after I had recommended you to Our Lord and given myself to Him, that He might direct me what to tell you, this is what came to my mind.

It is true, my dear Mother, that the miseries of the children of Adam are infinitely great beyond the power of speech or thought, for we bear within ourselves two unfathomable abysses of wretchedness: the first is the abyss of our nothingness, and the second is that of sin. God permits you, or rather He gives you the special grace, to see in yourself some portion of these two inexhaustible sources of miseries, and for two reasons:

First of all, He desires you to use this means to close all the approaches of your heart to that accursed vanity which so singularly ravages many souls who profess to be virtuous and pious, and who even aspire to perfection; and which, alas! precipitates many into the fires of hell. Then too, it is to preserve, strengthen and increase within you the most essential of all virtues, that of humility, which shapes the souls

(1). Mary des Vallées. See Letter 17, note 3.

82 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

it possesses according to the Heart of Our Lord and His most Holy Mother.

Secondly, it is to render you conformable to our most adorable Master, Who is Jesus. According to the testimony of the Prophet Jeremias, He says this of Himself: I am the man that see my poverty."(2) For His humanity perceived perfectly and clearly that of itself it was nothing, and that, having sprung from nothingness and from Adam, it would have been born in original sin and consequently would have been capable of falling into all the miseries of the children of Adam if it had not been preserved by the great miracle of the hypostatic union. It penetrated even to the depths of these two abysses of nothingness and sin, a sight which caused Our Lord the most profound and inconceivable humiliation, as well as inexpressible pain.

Adore that divine humanity in this state, my dearest Mother. Thank Our Lord for having deigned to assume it for love of you. Give your~ self to it so that you may accompany it on whatever road it may please to take you. Offer it your little troubles in thanksgiving for His immense trials. Pray it to make good use of them in your name. Finally, abandon yourself with your whole heart to Divine Providence, that He may lead you wherever He will and in His own way. On your part, remain always humble and submissive to the guidance of God, but take care never to become discouraged; rejoice, rather, and give thanks to Our Lord for the graces He grants you. For I repeat, my dearest Mother, what I perceive quite clearly to be true, that your present state, as you describe it to me, is a great gift from God."Blessed is he," says St. Paul, "that condemneth not himself in that which he alloweth.»(3) For it frequently happens that, when one feels and believes himself to be very good, he is not good; and when he thinks himself quite wicked, it is then that he is most worthy in the eyes of God. But let us abandon ourselves entirely to the judgment, will and guidance of Him Who knows and loves us infinitely more than we ourselves do. Let us dwell in the house of our nothingness and await with patience, humility, simplicity and submission Him Who desires only nothingness as the material and substance with which to do whatever is pleasing to Him.

(2). Lam. 3, 1.

(3). Rom. 24, 22.

With my whole heart do I deliver you, my dearest Mother, to His omnipotent bounty, beseeching Him to annihilate you so completely that He may be all things in you. Please offer the same prayer for me.

Lastly, I send affectionate greetings to all our dear Sisters, imploring them not to fail to visit faithfully the most lovable infant Jesus every day during these forty days that commemorate His sojourn in the stable of Bethlehem, that they may adore, praise and love Him, give themselves to Him, and supplicate Him to grant them the spirit of His divine childhood, which is a spirit of innocence, humility, poverty, simplicity, obedience and charity. They should also call upon His most worthy Mother to thank her, give themselves to her and ask her to obtain for them this same spirit of her dearest Son. Then let them offer proportionate supplications to St. Joseph for the same intentions.

Father de Montaignu(4) told me that Mr. de Taillefer's bond(5) must be ratified by his sons-in-law, and that so far he has taken all the steps to have this done and will give it his whole attention, but that we must wait until Mr. de Taillefer comes here. However, if you desire him to return it to you, he will do so.

I will convey to Timothy, as well as I can, everything indicated in your letter.

I remain with all my heart, in Jesus and Mary, my dearest Mother,

Devotedly yours,

JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

(4). See Letter 45, note 1.

(5). The Saint refers to the dowry that Mr. de Taillefer was to offer the Community before the profession of his daughter, Mademoiselle Renée Eustace de Taillefer. See Letter 16, note 1. Also *Oeuvres Complètes du Bienheureux Jean Eudes*, Vol. 10, P. 503

LETTER 50

To the Queen Regent.(1) On the appointment of the bishop of Bayeux.

(1653) Madame:

Having learned that the abbe de Sainte Croix(2) has declined the Bishopric of Bayeux, I should deem myself extremely culpable if I did not follow the advice given me by several great servants of God and point out to Your Majesty that, from time immemorial, no episcopal visitation has been made by the bishop in this diocese; that this negligence has produced disorders and profanations of greater duration than would have been caused had armies inimical to the Christian name passed through it a number of times. This voluntary resignation of such a wealthy benefice seems to be a warning to Your Majesty that God, Who has numbered even the hairs of our heads, does not permit such an extraordinary thing in these miserable times of corruption (when men do not scruple to renounce the benefice of eternity to acquire or keep one far less valuable than the bishopric of Bayeux), save with the intention of giving Your Majesty an opportunity to render justice to the blood of His Son Who, by shedding it to the last drop, acquired the domain and ownership of all the souls in this diocese, with a much better and indisputably more just claim than those who buy slaves at the cost of money, over whom they nevertheless have absolute power.

These considerations, Madame, incomparably more important than those which determine the government of the greatest monarchies on earth, demand of Your Majesty a saint as bishop of this diocese. You are obliged by the Holy Council of Trent, under pain of mortal sin, to nominate to all the benefices which have charge of souls, not merely those whom Your Majesty considers worthy, that is to say, saints, but rather the worthiest, that is, the greatest saints. All the more, Madame,
(1). Anne of Austria, Mother of Louis XIV. She was Regent of France from 1643 to 1661.
(2). Appointed bishop of Bayeux in 1653, the abbé de Sainte Croix, who was Bishop Molé's brother, resigned almost immediately, even before having been consecrated.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

85 -

are you obliged to do so in the case of a diocese as neglected as the one to which I refer, whose needs are infinitely greater than I can describe to Your Majesty. I am acquainted with these conditions through the numerous missions I have had the privilege of conducting in many of the localities there, and through the sighs and complaints which are wrung from many souls moved by zeal for the glory of God, during a long succession of years, over such deplorable conditions. This knowledge, coupled with my ardent desire to see showered upon this State⁽³⁾ and the sacred person of Your Majesty as many blessings as the misfortunes that a justly provoked heaven seems to be preparing for us, has given me the courage to cast myself at Your Majesty's feet, in the name of all the people of this diocese, even the least and unworthiest of them, to try to obtain from you, in your kindness, the consent to a request so important to the glory of God, so necessary to the salvation of the souls for whom He delivered His own Son to death, and to a death on the Cross, and so capable of loading Your Majesty and the sacred person of our incomparable Monarch, that admirable God-given one, with all sorts of prosperity. It would atone in one respect for the abuse to His glory in this diocese, while in other respects His enemies and yours, who are those of the State, are committing outrages against Him which can be expiated only in the fires of hell.

I implore God in His goodness, of which you will one day partake, Madame, to shower upon Your Majesty the plenitude of His graces necessary to lead you to the heavenly land.
(3). The kingdom of France.

86-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 51

To the Priests of the Seminary at Coutances. *On the reopening of the chapel⁽¹⁾ of the Caen seminary.*

Caen, May 15, 1653 J. M. J.

My dearest and beloved brethren:

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation." Alleluia! alleluia!

Our chapel is open and we are celebrating Mass in it.

Alleluia! alleluia! alleluia!

It was not opened until last Tuesday, but the affair was concluded and signed on Saturday, the feast of the Apparition of Our Risen Savior to His Most Holy Mother.

Alleluia! alleluia! alleluia!

It is a stroke of the incomparable power and ineffable goodness of our most bountiful Mother, who consented to defer the conclusion of this matter to the day of her greatest joy on earth, and who did so when we were no longer giving it much thought, after we and our friends had exerted all our efforts in vain.

Alleluia! alleluia! alleluia!

This Mother of mercy condescended to avail herself of the good Mother Superior of the Religious of Mercy in Paris⁽³⁾ to grant us this favor in order to show us that it was a result of her boundless mercy, and that we are the Missionaries of Divine Mercy sent by the compassionate Father to distribute the treasures of His mercy to the wretched, that is, to sinners, and to deal with them in a spirit of mercy, compassion and meekness.

(1). The chapel of the Caen Seminary had been interdicted for two years and five months. See Letter 36, note 1.

(2). Cor. 1, 3-4.

(3). Mother Mary of the Holy Trinity, foundress of the Order of the sisters of Mercy, which Order was intended for girls of rank whom dowry was not sufficient for them to enter another Order.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

87 -

Alleluia! alleluia! alleluia! alleluia! alleluia!

How shall we repay this amiable Mother? And how shall we repay her beloved Son, through Whom the heavenly Father gives us all things? How shall we repay this divine Father Who is the primary source of all good?

Let all the angels and saints bless Jesus and Mary for evermore! May Jesus and Mary, together with the angels and saints, praise and glorify the eternal Father! May all the powers and perfections of the Divinity infinitely magnify the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit: "Let the mercies of the Lord give glory to him: and his wonderful works to the children of men."⁽⁴⁾ But that is not all; I implore you, my dear brethren:

1. In memory of and in thanksgiving for the infinite favor Our Lord has granted us, through the intercession of the Mother of mercy, in coming to visit and comfort us by His divine presence in the Blessed Sacrament, that we resolve to celebrate annually the feast of His apparition to His divine Mother and His first visit to her after the Resurrection.

2. All of you say a votive Mass in honor of this mystery, to be followed by seven additional Masses for a devotion of your own, to thank God and ask three things of Him: the first, for all those who have opposed us, that non illis imputetur;⁽⁵⁾ the second, for all our friends, that Our Lord may repay them a hundredfold for their charity toward us; the third, for ourselves, that He may grant us the grace to make holy use of His favors and begin seriously to love and serve Him with the perfection He asks of us, that is to say, through the practice of true humility, strict obedience, sincere charity, intense fervor for the salvation of souls, a pure love for God, and above all, perfect submission and abandonment to His divine will.

3. In the salutation to the most Holy Heart of our Mother of mercy, that we add Ave Cor misericordissimum after Ave Cor beatissimum; and that, in the salutation Ave Maria, filia Dei Patris, we also add the verse Mater misericordiae after Ave Maria, Mater admirabilis. Likewise in

the litanies of Our Lady: after Mater admirabilis, let us say Mater
(4). Ps. 106,8.
(2) Tim. 4, 16.

88 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

miseri cordiae in memory of and in thanksgiving for the mercy that God has shown to us on this occasion through this Mother of grace and mercy, in order to offer Him and His Son, through her, all those who are in some spiritual or corporal distress, but especially those in the fearful calamity of sin; and to submit ourselves to the mercy of God, that He may animate us with His spirit toward all the wretched, enabling us to pity them and do all in our power to help and relieve them.

4. Since Our Lord has given us the grace to reenter His house, and because we have the happiness of possessing Him once more in the Blessed Eucharist, we must renew our desire to pay and have others pay Him all possible honor and respect in this sacrament. Let us conduct ourselves in church with the utmost modesty, reverence and piety, never speaking a word there except in case of necessity, and then very little, in low tones; never allowing children to play nor make noise in our churches or chapels; never permitting the poor to beg for alms in church, nor dogs to be seen there, nor people to talk, assume an unbecoming attitude nor behave irreverently there.

Give yourselves joyfully, all of you, to Our Lord Jesus Christ, that you may enter into these sentiments and put them into practice for the love of our most amiable Jesus and His most worthy Mother.

I embrace each of you individually in the sacred love of their most holy Heart, with a renewed desire to serve you in every way I can. Embrace one another in this same love, "with a great heart and a joyful spirit." I give myself wholly to them for your sake, and to you for their sake, as your most unworthy servant and devoted confrere,

JOHN EUDES, missionary priest
of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

89 -

LETTER 52

To Father Richard Le Mesle.(1) *On his persecutions.*(2)

June 15, 1654

With all my heart I thank our most adorable Jesus and His most amiable Mother for the cross it has pleased them to send us. It is the single earthly treasure, the sovereign good of true children of Jesus and Mary, the source of all blessings, the glory and crown, the love and delight of true Christians. I speak with reference to the spirit, not the senses.

Therefore, dear brother, let us adore, bless, praise, glorify and love with all sincerity the most amiable will of our good Lord Who arranges all things for the best, and Who can gain glory from sin itself, the greatest of all evils. Let us say with all our souls: I will bless the *Lord* at all times?(3) *The Lord is my helper; I will not fear what man can do unto me.*(4) It is true that if the Lord Himself does not build the house, those who wish to construct it work in vain; but it is just as

true that if the Lord Himself does not destroy the house, then those who wish to destroy it also work in vain. After all, God's will be done. He is the Lord; let what is pleasing to Him be accomplished ...

Furthermore, let us strengthen ourselves in the Lord and in the strength of His virtue, convinced that our work in Him is never useless. Let us place all our anxieties in His bosom, for He will take care of us. Those who thwart us are not dealing with us, but with the King and Queen of heaven and earth, who assuredly can frustrate all their designs when the proper time arrives. Nevertheless, we must do all in our power for the interests of our Master, and dwell in peace. Above all, let us not forget to pray for those whom God is pleased to use as instruments to chastise us, as for benefactors.

(1). Set Letter 14, note I.

(2). This letter was occasioned by the hostile attitude which the Saint's enemies had succeeded in instilling in the mind of Bishop Francis Servien, then recently transferred from the see of Carcassonne to that of Bayeux.

(3). Ps. 33, 2.

(4). Ps. 117, 6.

90 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 53

To the Community of Our Lady of Charity at Caen. *On the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, and zeal for the salvation of souls.*

(Before 1656) J. M. J.

My dearest Sisters and beloved daughters in the sacred love of the most holy Heart of Jesus and Mary:

May the grace, peace and love of this same Jesus be for ever yours.

Not having the happiness of being able to address you personally at this time, I am availing myself of this letter to invite and exhort you to make a good preparation for the solemn feast of the glorious Assumption of our admirable Mother. It is her greatest feast, the day of her triumph and grandeurs. It is the day which ends all her works and sufferings, and inaugurates her repose and eternal happiness. It is the day which establishes her upon the throne of glory and majesty that is due the dignity of the Mother of God. It is the day on which she can say, after the manner of her Son and by virtue of her dependence upon Him: *All power is given to me in heaven and in earth.*⁽¹⁾ It is the day on which she is empowered to use the sovereignty that the most Holy Trinity has given her over heaven and earth, over hell and all things. For this reason all creatures are obliged to render her respect and homage, as to their Queen and Sovereign to whom they belong and upon whom they depend and will depend for all eternity.

But you are bound, in a very special manner, my dearest Sisters, to honor in every possible way this great Princess to whom you belong not only in the capacity of servants or slaves, as do most of the other creatures in her universal empire, but in your capacity as very dear and beloved daughters. Make ready, therefore, to fulfill your obligations to her on this great feast.

To that end, you must render her four tributes before she leaves this earth to ascend to heaven.

(1). Man. 28, 18.

If a great queen had come to visit you, what should you do when she was ready to depart for home? You would do four things:

1. You would thank her for the favor she had conferred on you.
2. You would make excuses and ask her pardon for not having received and entertained her in keeping with her station.
3. You would profess your service, respect and obedience to her.
4. If you knew that she desired something of you, such as a book of devotions, an image, a rosary or something similar, you would make her a present of it with all possible affection.

That is just what you should do with respect to the Queen of Heaven before she leaves this world. You owe her these four duties:

1. Thank her for all she has done and suffered here below, in cooperation with her Son, for our salvation and sanctification. Thank the most Holy Trinity, too, for having given her to us, and for all the graces we have received either directly from her or through her intercession.
2. Ask pardon of her and make honorable atonement for all the wrongs, offenses and outrages perpetrated against her on earth, for they occurred on our account and for our sake. As reparation and satisfaction, offer her the most amiable Heart of her Son so full of love for her, together with all the honor, glory and praises which have ever been, are now and shall yet be rendered to It in heaven and on earth.
3. Protest to her that you desire to serve, honor, love and obey her, and to imitate her virtues, and urge everyone as much as possible to do the same.
4. Consider what she asks of you, and what you can present to her that will please her; then make the offering with all your hearts.

After that, you should pray to her, as to your good Mother, to grant you her holy blessing, which she will surely do if you are firmly resolved to live as good daughters, to the best of your ability, through a conscientious imitation of her holiness.

Those are your duties on the eve of this feast.

On the day itself, there are five things you ought to do:

1. Give thanks to the most Holy Trinity and invite all the angels, saints and all creatures to give thanks with you for all the favors It has granted your most bountiful Mother during her life, at her death,

and in her resurrection and glorious Assumption into heaven, as well as for all the favors she will enjoy there throughout eternity.

2. Rejoice with her because of all the glory and happiness that is hers in heaven, and which will be hers for evermore.
3. Pay honor and respect to the moment of her establishment at the right hand of her Son, and of her appointment as sovereign Lady and Empress of the whole universe. Render her, in the name and on behalf of all creatures, the homage, respect and obedience, the offers and protestations of service, dependence and submission, which are her due; and unite yourselves to the praises given her by all the inhabitants of heaven, even to those of the King Himself.

4. Offer her your whole mind, your whole will and your whole person. Beseech her to separate and detach you from the things of earth and bear you with her to heaven; to impress upon you a lively realization of her new life there, one all-holy and celestial; and to unite and associate you with the love, glory, adoration and praise which she renders and will for ever render in heaven to the most Holy Trinity.

5. Strive to find means of increasing her joy and glory.

Here are four excellent methods:

The first is to implant deep within your hearts a firm resolution and fixed intention of seeking nothing in all your actions, mortifications and exercises save the glory of her Son and the accomplishment of His most adorable will.

The second is to be strict and faithful in the obedience you owe your good Mother Superioress, whom you should regard and honor as a representative of the most holy Virgin, your true Mother and first Superioress. Be obedient also to your Rules and Constitutions.

The third is to love and cherish one another with a sincere, simple, tender and cordial love which will banish from your thoughts, words and actions everything in the least contrary to it~ and will impel you to make prompt and efficacious reparation for the slightest sins you may commit against natural charity.

The fourth is to excite a fervent desire to attain the end for which your holy Order was founded, that of laboring by your prayers, examples, instructions and every manner prescribed for you by holy obedi

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

93 -

ence for the salvation of the lost souls whom divine Providence may send you.

This, my dearest Sisters, is the most fitting and powerful means of augmenting the glory, joys and even the domain of our great Queen. For the conversion of a soul affords her more happiness than any other good work that can be performed in this world, and from it she alone derives greater joy than all the rest of the inhabitants of heaven combined. To help snatch a soul from the tyranny of Satan in order to bring it within her empire is to render her a greater service than if one were to present her with an earthly kingdom. Hence it is the work closest to her Heart, the labor most pleasing to her. It is by this means, Therefore, that you can truly be daughters of her Heart, and that you will be associated with her in the same vocation.

Yes, my dearest daughters, you have in a manner but one and the same vocation with the Mother of God. For, just as God chose to form His Son within her, and through her agency, in the hearts of the faithful, so also has He called you to your holy Community to have His Son dwell within you, and through your labors, to restore Him to life again in sinful souls wherein He has died. God sent her upon earth and made her the Mother of His divine Son, giving her all the graces and qualities she possesses in behalf of sinners, without which she would be not at all what she is; in like manner and for the same end has He placed you in His holy house, with many graces in readiness for you. Ah, my dearest Sisters, how holy is your vocation! How advantageous is your state in life! How immense is the goodness of God toward you in having called you to a truly apostolic Order! Ah, how blameworthy would be your ingratitude if you did not recognize your inexpressible obligation to divine mercy on this account!

But remember that the evil spirit will not fail to tempt you in regard to your vocation, since this employment is singularly displeasing to him and he hates no one so much as those who labor for the salvation of souls.

He will remind you of the troubles and difficulties you must suffer, but remember, my dearest daughters, that there is no state in life exempt from work and suffering; that, if you do not suffer with Jesus, you

94 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

shall not reign with Him. Hence there is nothing you should fear so much as to be without a cross. Cast your eyes upon the crucifix and see what He suffered to save souls. Is it reasonable that you should be associated with Him in the greatest work for which He came into the world, which is to save sinners, which cost Him so dearly, and yet expect to be spared every trial? Alas! Where would you be, if His fear of suffering, which was so violent as to cause Him to sweat blood, had prevented Him from laboring for your salvation?

Consider, too, the sorrows, tears and anguish which the Blessed Virgin had to accept as her portion in order to cooperate with her Son in the redemption of lost souls.

Read the life of St. Catherine,(2) and you will see what frightful torments she suffered for the relief of the souls in purgatory. Remember, too, that to help one single soul to rid itself of a mortal sin, even though it were not to persevere in the state of grace, is nevertheless greater than to release all the souls in purgatory from their torments.

Place before your eyes those holy women who leave their country and cross the seas to Canada, where they live daily in the midst of a thousand dangers in order to win souls to God.

I know a person of your sex, a weak, timid, fragile girl(3) like you, who entreated God with incredible fervor, for many years, to let her suffer for a time the frightful pains of hell, that she might preserve some wicked souls from it for all eternity. God, on that account, caused her to suffer torments so incredible that no tongue or pen could ever begin to express them, and she has been enduring these tortures for more than forty years.

After that, my dearest Sisters, should we not die of shame at the sight of our own weaknesses and cowardice? The slightest difficulties dishearten us, the feeblest temptations overcome us, the most trifling troubles discourage us, molehills become mountains in our estimation. We are saddened by the things that should cause us to rejoice; we tremble when there is no reason for fear! We wish indeed to enjoy the advantages of our holy religion, but we want no share of its crosses;

(2). St. Catherine of Genes in her Treatise on Purgatory 6, 17 writes: "This P~ of purification to which I see the souls of Purgatory subjected, I feel within myself."

(3). Mary des Vallées. See Letter 17, note 3.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

95 -

we imagine that devotion consists of living an idle life of ease. Oh, how badly do we deceive ourselves! Any devotion which is not based on renunciation of self, of one's own will and gratification, and on bearing one's cross and following the path trodden by Jesus when He was seeking lost souls, is nothing more than pure illusion and fraud,

Do you not know, my dearest Sisters, that the broad road leading to heaven is the way of the cross, that it is the only one, and that the true and stable virtues necessary for us to be pleasing to God are acquired only through many trials, labors, mortifications and penances that must be self-imposed? Do you not understand when Our Lord tells us that because the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, only they, who do themselves violence can take it by force,(4) and that He Himself had to

undergo an infinite number of tribulations in order to enter into the glory(5) which is rightfully His by virtue of so many claims? How can you be numbered among His members and spouses if you do not desire to conform to Him? Do you wish to have another Gospel written for you, or do you want God to send you another Messiah-a Messiah of honey and roses? Should you prefer to go to paradise by a path other than that which the Mother of God and all the saints traveled to attain it, or else is it your wish to go there all alone and leave your poor sisters on the road to hell because you are so fastidious that you are afraid to take the trouble to lend them a helping hand?

Perhaps you may say that they are traveling along a very muddy road, and that you are afraid of soiling yourselves by snatching them back; the devil is cunning enough to offer you that temptation--one all the more dangerous because it is seemingly beautiful and convincing. But I tell you, my dearest daughters, that it is impossible for Our Lord to allow anyone to fall who, out of love for Him, helps others to rise. Purity, when it is allied with true charity, can never be sullied, any more than rays of sunlight can be contaminated by mud. Cast aside, then, these vain fears, and trust in Him Who has called you to this divine employment. If you mistrust yourselves and rely wholly on Him, He will not withdraw and allow you to fall.

Finally, my dearest daughters, if you desire to increase the joy and

(4). Matt. 11, 12.

(5). Luke 24, 26.

96 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

glory of our worthy Princess, be faithful to her Son in your vocation; close your ears to the whisperings of the serpent; do not be daughters of Eve who listened to him and allowed herself to be seduced, but daughters of Mary who vanquished him and trampled him underfoot. I beseech her with all my heart to crush him completely beneath your own feet, and to render you worthy of being true daughters of her Holy Heart all aflame with love and zeal for the salvation of sinful souls who cost her the precious blood of her Son Jesus.

It is in the sacred love of the most amiable Heart of the Son and the Mother that I am and ever will be, my dearest Sisters and beloved daughters,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest
of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary.

LETTER 54

**To His Lordship Francis de Champvallon,(1) Archbishop of Rouen. On
the self-interest of bishops in protecting seminaries.**

(About 1655)

Indeed, my Lord, I make so bold as to state that this is the business of their Lordships the bishops, and that it is largely to their own interests to protect those engaged in the work of seminaries, since they are wholly subject to them. This is especially true of us, who profess in all sincerity to be absolutely at their service.

(1). Appointed to the See of Rouen in 1651 the Archbishop was a personal friend of St. John Eudes. At the end of 1655 Archbishop Harlay de Champvallon decided to open a Seminary in his archdiocese under the direction of the Eudist Fathers. Because of opposition on the part of the Chapter he was

unable to carry out the project until February 16, 1659. Boulay, op. cit., VOL 3, P. 240 ff.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

97 -

LETTER 55

To Father Thomas Manchon,(1) Superior of the Seminary at Lisieux.(2)

On the death of Sister Mary des Vallées.(3)

Caen, March 2, 1656 J. M. J.

My dearest brother:

May Jesus, the most Holy Heart of Mary, be our consolation for ever.

It has pleased God to deprive us of the creature we held most dear on earth, our beloved Sister Mary. She passed away(4) last Friday, February 25, at a quarter past twelve.

Our deepest sorrow is that her body was taken from us for interment at St. Nicholas. Almost all the canons wanted her placed in the cathedral. Others wanted her to be buried at the Jacobins, in the Holy Rosary Chapel. But Mr. de la Foulèrie, who established a St. Joseph Chapel in the Church of St. Nicholas, arranged to have her interred there. He did this with the help of Mr. d'Urville, not wishing to act solely on his own responsibility. So we find ourselves deprived of this treasure, and all our brethren in Coutances and all our friends, those in that city as well as here, are sorely grieved about it. Madame de Saint Simon and Madame de Malherbe (formerly Mademoiselle de Pleimaret) did everything they could do under these circumstances, but in vain. Even the provost-marshal offered to use his influence to have the holy body taken by these persons and brought to our church, but we declined with thanks, fearing to create too much dissension. The same motive kept us from taking possession of her heart. It would have been quite easy for us to do this, and we are very sorry now for not having done so. But it is God Who has so arranged it, for reasons unknown to us.

(1). See Letter 13, note 2.

(2). The Lisieux Seminary was opened on January 11, 1654.

(3). She was, it would seem, a Dominican tertiary, hence the name «Sister». Cf. Joly, op. cit., P. 95.

(4). Mary des Vallées was sixty-six years of age.

98 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

For three months her death was foreshadowed and foretold in several ways. She died in great interior and exterior peace, without any inward disturbance or any outward effort or struggle.

The illness which caused her death lasted only twenty hours. During that time she enjoyed, almost to the end, the use of her mind, seldom speaking, and then saying nothing more than *yes, no* or *so be it*, to the things which were said to her, and uttering the holy name of Jesus almost continually. She received all the sacraments, and our brothers in Coutances and I never left her during those last twenty-four hours. We were all present around her bed at the time of her death, the room being filled with people.

I did not forget, my dear brother, to recommend you to her before her death, as well as all the rest of our brethren, and she assured me well that she will take care of you and never forsake you. I heard her confession three times in the course of her last week, painstakingly examining and searching into her whole life, but I can truthfully say that I did not discover the slightest venial sin

in all the sixty-seven years of her life. Nevertheless, we must not fail to have the usual prayers offered up for her, in accordance with the mandate of the Church. At our place(5) we have recited the entire Office for the Dead and have sung three Masses, namely: of the Holy Spirit, the *Beata* and the *Requiem*. We shall do the same here;(6) I pray you to do likewise. Besides that, we must say sixty-seven Masses in each of our houses for the following intentions: 1. in honor of all God's plans for Sister Mary and of everything He is in her; 2. in thanksgiving for all the favors He granted her and has granted us through her mediation; 3. in reparation for all our omissions in that respect; 4. for the accomplishment of all God's intents in this work; 5. to ask His Divine Majesty to let us partake of her spirit, that of extreme hatred for sin; purest love for God; complete detachment from self and all things; total submission to the most adorable will of God; burning love for the Cross; the utmost scorn of self; irreconcilable hatred for distinction; marked affection for contempt, confusion and ignominy; but most of all, incomparable charity, goodness, meekness, and forbearance toward one's neighbor,

(5). The Eudist Seminary in Coutances.

(6). The Caen Seminary.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

99 -

which impelled her to be extremely careful never to vex or anger anyone, but rather to please and gladden people as much as possible. It is particularly in this virtue, and in her humility, simplicity and sincerity, that we should try to imitate her. I implore all our dear brethren to be most diligent in asking God for these virtues and schooling themselves assiduously in their practice. Furthermore, the above intentions of these sixty-seven Masses will not preclude their being said also for the principal intentions which are given out from the sacristy.

I did not forget Mademoiselle Obègne(7) either.

Affectionate greetings to all our dear brethren whom I embrace with all my heart.

Please write to those in Coutances. I left them very much grieved, especially Father de Montaigu, but I was forced to come here on urgent and important business of which I shall write you, perhaps soon.

My most respectful and affectionate greetings to the Promoter.(8) I remain *corde magno*, dearest brother,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

P. S. I forgot to tell you that nearly all the residents of Caen are openly proclaiming that Sister Mary is a saint, even those who held her in contempt during her lifetime.

(7). This should be Mademoiselle Obègne, a benefactress of the Lisieux Seminary. Cf. *Oeuvres Complètes*, Vol. 10, P. 405.

(8). Father Baslay, the pastor of Fontaines, promoter of Lisieux and benefactor of the Seminary.

100 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 56

To the Community in Lisieux. *On the death of Father James Le Duc.* (1)

Lingèvres, April A, 1656

I am very deeply grieved by the death of our good and beloved brother, Father Le Duc, for a good priest is an inestimable treasure in the Church whose loss cannot be sufficiently lamented. He was an excellent laborer whom God had endowed with many fine qualities, and there are very few like him. But Our Lord and His most Holy Mother, who are the real superiors of our Congregation and are more concerned with it than we, are aware of all that. Yet it has pleased them to take him, and they can do nothing save for the best. What consoles me is that he died during the Jubilee, in Holy Week, while working for the salvation of souls.

(1). Father James Le Duc (1603-1656), originally from the parish of Fourneaux, in the diocese of Séez, and later the pastor of that parish, joined the Congregation in 1652 at the age of 49. He died at Lisieux on April 12, 1656. Cf. *Les Fleurs de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie*, Vol. a, p. 9.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

101 -

LETTER 57

To Madame Blouet de Camilly. *On the unexpected cure of Father Thomas Manchon, and various other matters (1)*

1656 J. M. J.

My dearest daughter:

May Jesus, the most Holy Heart of Mary, be for ever ours!

Enclosed is a letter for Madame de la Croizette. (2) It is rather long but it comforted me in my troubles. I am trying to give her, insofar as I am able, some sound consolation in hers. I am sending you this letter unsealed. When you have read it, be kind enough to seal it and give it to that lady. Tell her, however, that I beg her to read it leisurely in her study, in the presence of God, so as to derive the most good from it.

Furthermore, my dear daughter, know that you are the mother of two good children; (3) they are surely angels. May God grant them constancy and perseverance.

Father Manchon continues to improve; he is now at the home of Mr.

(1). Several days before coming to Coutances, where he was to preach the octave of Corpus Christi, Father Manchon was obliged to make a business trip for the Congregation, during which he spent several days and nights without sleep. When the business was finished he departed hurriedly in order to reach Coutances on time; but on the way he was taken with a serious illness from which it was believed he would die. The sickness was violent and obstinate, and all were fearful of the outcome. The prayers offered up for him were more efficacious than all the remedies employed. St. John Eudes, who had come to preach in his place, prayed earnestly to God to restore his preacher to him. Never was a father more grief-stricken by the illness of his son. God Who in former times had prolonged the life of King Ezechias by fifteen years for the sake of his virtues, prayers and tears was also moved, in His goodness, by the lamentations offered Him for the sick priest who had been reduced to that condition only through his excessive zeal to gain glory for Him. His health was restored and he used it, as before, to labor for the conversion of sinners." Peter Hérambourg, *Vie du P. Eudes*, Vol. 1, Ch. 21. This incident occurred in 1656.

(2). Wife of the Governor of Caen.

(3). John James Blouet de Camilly entered the Congregation of Jesus and Mary and his sister,

Mademoiselle de Camilly, "the lovely lily-bud,- became a Benedictine of Holy Trinity Monastery at Caen.

102-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

de Mémont(4). It is certain that but for a miracle he would have died. So true is this that the doctors had assured us he could not live through the third day of his illness, for it was violent and dangerous. That is what I told you and my brethren in Caen when I first heard about it, but I added repeatedly that without a miracle he would never recover, and I was not saying that at random or unthinkingly. I am telling you all this now, my dear daughter, not so that you will consider me a prophet, for you would be wrong, but in order that no one may mistake me for a false prophet. I want to testify to this truth in view of what you said in your last letter which, although written in jest, qualifies me as such. That is how most calumnies are invented; one retains part of a statement and forgets the rest, or else one gives it a different appearance, another meaning. It teaches us to be cautious indeed in believing disparaging things about our neighbor.

They write me from Burgundy, from Arnay-le-Duc and Dijon, that our dear Sister(5) is being discussed from very conflicting viewpoints. There are Jesuit Fathers who are publicizing and upholding her as a great saint; while other religious, the brethren of those who persecuted her here, are saying all around that she was a sorceress, and they are circulating astonishing things about Father Eudes, too, whom they believe to have been her spiritual adviser. I am deeply grateful to them for the honor they do me in joining my name with hers in their slanders.

They are saying many other things, but Our Lord can answer them when He deigns to do so. Do not mention anything about all this.

I embrace our spiritual brother.(6) We are praying for our eldest brother who is at Rouen. All your children in Coutances greet you most humbly and affectionately.

It is very necessary for me to see the Rector before he leaves, but I can do nothing without the advice of our dear Brother de Bernières.

I am with all sincerity, my dearest daughter,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

(1). One of the benefactors of the Caen Seminary. Cf. Boulay, OP. cit., Vol. 2, P. 527.

(2). Mary des Vallées who died at Coutances on February 25, 1656.

(3). Madame de Camilly's husband.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

103-

LETTER 58

To Father Simon Mannoury, at Lisieux. *On various matters concerning the college in Lisieux and the nuns of Our Lady of Charity.*

Coutances, July 29, 1656 My dearest brother:

May Jesus, the most holy Heart of Mary, be for ever ours!

I forwarded your letter to Father Manchon, asking him to send you a reply concerning the Promoter's last will and testament.(1) If he has not done so, it is my opinion that lawsuits should be shunned like the plague. It would be better to have less--indeed, to lose everything--rather than go to law, unless one enters a lawsuit incidentally and not as the principal party, and unless, in that case, one is perfectly sure of Success.

With regard to the college, here is my opinion: Father Marion(2) for the fifth class, Father de Longeval (3) for the fourth, Father Saché (4) for the third, Father Franco(5) for the first, Father Doucet,(6) prefect of boarders, Father Dudy,(7) prefect of the college; or else Father Yon(8) for the fifth class, Father Marion for the fourth and the rest as above, so that in this way we could take Father de la Haye(9) and Father de Longeval from the college to employ them otherwise. But do not say anything yet

(1). See Letter 55, note 8.

(2). Father Marion entered the Congregation of Jesus and Mary about 1655. After teaching at Lisieux, he became one of the first directors of the Rouen Seminary. Cf. Boulay, *ibid.*, VOL 3, P. 275.

(3). Father John de Longeval later became superior at Lisieux. See Letter 121, note 1.

(4). See Letter 11 p note 2.

(5). Father Franco was probably a secular priest who helped the Eudists at Lisieux. Cf. Boulay, VOL 3, P. 102, who gives Francs, not Franco.

(6). Father John Doucet (1620-1654) entered the Congregation Of Jesus and Mary in 1654. He spent most of his life at the Lisieux College.

(7). Father Dudy became superior of Coutances Seminary, but later left the Congregation to take up parish work in the secular Clergy.

(8). Born at Montcuit in the diocese of Coutances, Father Yon joined the Congregation in 1654. He died on October 3, 1672.

(9). Francis de la Haye was later superior of the Caen and of the Evreux Seminary. He died in 1679.

104 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

about this latter plan. Just send me your opinion and I will confer with Father Manchon about it.

I am very sorry about Mr. de Langrie's dissatisfaction,(10) but what is there to be done about all that? If I allowed myself to follow my own inclination, I too should be strongly tempted to abandon that house; but we must forget ourselves and consider only Our Lord and His Holy Mother, doing everything for love of them. God permits all things out of goodness toward us in order to shield us from complacency and vanity, which perhaps would cause us to lose all the fruits of our labors.

I was never informed about the pastor of Saint Julian(11). That was done before I had heard anything about it. I am not sure whether he alone was responsible for it, or he and Mother together; but I do not think her daughters had anything to do with it. It is quite certain that the good Mother has not wanted anything of us for a long time. We must be patient, rely on divine Providence and travel our broad path, always serving our house to the best of our ability for the love of Our Lord and His most holy Mother. I told Mother, and also wrote her since my arrival here, that we must send a man purposely to Rome, but she has not answered me on that. There is no doubt that the course advocated by the pastor of Saint Julian is not a good one, and that it will not be successful. I am writing all these things to Mr. de Langrie, begging him to retain his goodwill. I hope to make a trip some time to Caen, where I shall see the parish priest of Saint Julian to state my reasons to him, and I shall ask him to call a meeting in order that we may decide what is best.

I am writing Mr. de Langrie that he should choose from our Sister Mary des Vallées, either some linen soaked in her blood or a medal that she wore for many years around her neck, or that be

should say what he wants and I will gladly give it to him if it be in my power.

(10). Mr. de Langrie was Royal Councillor and president of the Normandy parliament. He was also one of the benefactors of the Cam Seminary. When Bishop Francis Servien was appointed Bishop of Bayeux in 1654, he took the superiorship of the Order of Our Lady of Charity from St. John Eudes, the founder, and gave it to Father Le Grand, the parish priest of St. Julian's Church in Caen. This change did not please Mr. de Langrie and he threatened to withdraw his support. Cf. Matthew Russel, *Life of Blessed John Eudes*, p. 114.

(11). Father Le Grand. See preceding note.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

105-

You have been too strict with the poor child. There are many reasons why she can do that. I am writing to her so that she may do so without fear.

I embrace all our dear brethren and greet all our friends, particularly our good Mademoiselle Ozenne. With all my heart, my dearest brother, I am

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LETTER 59

To Sister Mary of the Assumption Eustace.(1) *The Saint assures her of his unchangeable charity toward the Community.*

Coutances, August 12, 1656 My dearest daughter:

May Jesus, the most Holy Heart of Mary, be for ever ours!

In the sacred love of this divine Heart, the furnace of immortal love, do I love unchangeably and equally, without preference, all my dearest Sisters, the beloved daughters of my most honored Mother.

What shall separate my heart from the holy love I should feel for the most cherished house of such a good Mother? Will it be tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or the sword, or any other thing? No, I am certain, with the help of the grace of God, Who has chosen me to take charge of it for Him, that neither the angels, nor the Principalities nor Virtues, nor the heights nor depths, nor life nor death, nor any creature, will ever be able to separate me from the charity I should have toward Our Lady of Charity, for I will always do with my whole heart whatever I can to serve that blessed house of my divine Mother. And no matter what happens, neither heaven nor earth, nor hell itself, shall ever hinder me from doing in its regard, as in all else, the most adorable will of my God, which alone is what I desire, aspire to and seek.

(1). See Letter 16, note 1.

106-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

I should like with all my heart to do what our good Mother and you and our dear Sisters wish, but just now I am suffering from a slight indisposition of such a nature that I cannot travel without the risk of becoming ill along the way, as happened to Father Manchon while coming here. I need urgently to take medicine but must wait until the dog days are over. So I do not think I shall be able to go to Caen until September, but at all events, I assure you that it will be as soon as possible, with the help of Our Lord.

Nevertheless, I will recommend both you and your interests to Him with all possible affection, as I do each day. Offer to Him and His holy Mother, on your part, him who is ever, in truth, in the love of their most amiable Heart, my dearest daughter,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

P. S. My very humble and cordial regards to our dearest Mother(2) and her good daughters, my beloved Sisters, one and all. I ask her to give you a penance for having written in a worldly fashion—a fashion which daughters of the most Holy Heart of Mary ought to abhor and shun more than the plague itself, as much in this instance as in everything else, since all worldly fashions are highly displeasing to her and her Son.

(2). Mother Margaret Frances Patin, superior of Our Lady of Charity of Caen.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

107-

LETTER 60

To Mother Margaret Frances Patin. *The Saint thanks her for her devotion to the work of Our Lady of Charity; he informs her that he has letters from the King (1) regarding their business at Rome; (2) and he instructs her how to act toward the sheriffs of Caen in a difficult situation where their opposition is feared (3).*

Paris, March 7, 1657

My dearest Mother, and, in truth, beloved in Him Who is eternal love: I thank Him with all my heart for having imbued your own with such great zeal and charity toward the house of His most Holy Mother, and with such great kindness toward one who is so unworthy of it as I am. And I thank you a thousand times, my dearest Mother, for your many testimonies of it in the cordial letters you write us. I can assure you, too, that Our Lord has given me sentiments in your regard which words alone cannot express.

I am very happy about what you wrote me concerning our dear Sisters, and I bless Our Lord and His most Holy Mother with my whole heart for all the graces they are bestowing on them. I beseech all my dear daughters to be most faithful to them, and to labor in competition with one another to imprint upon themselves a perfect likeness of their most adorable Father and most amiable Mother through a conscientious and continual imitation of their holy virtues, particularly their humility, obedience, charity, forbearance and overwhelming love for the Cross.

(1). Louis XIV of France.

(2). This pertained in the approbation of the Order of Our Lady of Charity.

(3). Toward the end of 1656 Mother Patin purchased some property along the wharves where she planned to establish the Community, then temporarily installed in a house belonging to Mr. de Langrie. When everything was ready for the installation of the Community, it was feared that the sheriffs of Caen might be opposed to the establishment. In perplexity, Mother Patin referred the matter to St. John Eudes, who replied to her from Paris on March 7, 1657 by the above letter. The affair was righted and the sisters were able to move into the property they had purchased. Later they built 2 spacious convent on the same site, where the Community of Caen was housed until the destruction, of their house in June, 1944. Cf. Ory, OP. cit., P. 98

Quite some time ago I procured letters from the King for our business at Rome. I hope, God willing, to bring them to you soon, for I am feeling much better, thank God, and am waiting only until I have regained sufficient strength for the journey.

Fear nothing, my dear Mother, for God is with you and on your side; and if He favors you, who can oppose you? Time and time again you have felt the effects of His protection of the little house of Our Lady of Charity. Why, then, are you afraid? Rest assured that He will finish what He has begun. It is true that we must always do, on our own part, what we can. Now of three things, it is possible to do one of them. The first is to proceed with such secrecy that you will be housed before it becomes known. The second is to have Mr. de Bernières write to Madame de Longueville(4) and ask her in turn to write to the sheriffs that they should not interfere with you on this occasion; or, if he thinks it timely, I can make this request of her on my way through Rouen, but I should have to have his opinion. The third is to speak to the sheriffs and those persons close to the King, beseeching them to consent to your taking possession of this house. Since this last method is one of submission and humility, God would bless it, and the outcome could not fail to be successful; if they refused, we could then have recourse to Madame de Longueville.

Nevertheless, do not be satisfied to accept my thoughts alone on the subject, but ask the friends of the house-- Mr. de Bernières, and Mr. and Madame de Camilly--to meet together and discuss the best way to proceed, for Our Lord will inspire them with His holy will.

In the sacred love of the most Holy Heart of Jesus and Mary I greet our dearest Sisters, one and all. I remain, in truth, ever and unreservedly, my dearest Mother,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.
(4). Wife of the governor of Normandy.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

109-

LETTER 61

To Mr. Augustine Le Haguais.(1) *On submission to the will of God during a time of suffering.*

Caen, April 26, 1657 J. M. J.

Sir, our very honored and dear brother:

When I look upon you through human eyes in your present condition, I am indeed deeply moved to the point of great compassion. But when I consider you through the eyes of faith, I am prompted to bless and praise our divine Saviour for the singular effects of His infinite goodness toward you, for I see quite clearly that everything which is taking place is a command and inclination of His mercy in your regard. He wishes you to do penance for your sins in this world in order to pardon you in the next.

We are indebted to His divine justice for a hundred thousand bushels of wheat, and He lets us off for a portion of it. O great favor! We have merited eternal torments, and He is satisfied to let us suffer a few small temporal afflictions. I call them small, very small, in comparison with those our

offenses deserve. All, what goodness! What an obligation we have toward such goodness! What care should we take to make good use of our afflictions! That is what I exhort you with all my heart to do, my dearest brother, that you may not thwart His plans for you at this time. He intends for us to be cleansed and purified of the filth of our sins by that lye-bath of suffering which may seem very strong to us; but the stronger it is, the more will it whiten us and make us pure and pleasing in the sight of His Divine Majesty, provided we, on our part, cultivate the necessary dispositions which are chiefly these four:

The first is to accept our sufferings from the most adorable Trinity and the most amiable Heart of our heavenly Father Who chastises us, not as a harsh judge, according to our merits, but as a very kind Father, and infinitely less than we deserve. If we accept them as coming from
(1). Brother of Madame Blouet de Camilly and Counsellor of State.

110 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

the latter, we shall not attribute them in any way to our fellow creatures who are but the rods used by this good Father to punish us.

The second is to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, considering ourselves not as just and innocent, but as guilty criminals who time and time again have deserved the wrath of God and all His creatures. But let us be convinced that the humbler we become in our nothingness and lowliness, the more will God be exalted therein, and the more, too, will He take care to protect us and convert all things to our welfare.

The third disposition is to regard sin as the sole author of all our ills, and consequently to turn all our hatred, indignation and vengeance against this monster which is our only enemy; to employ all our forces to persecute and destroy sin by true penitence; and to banish it henceforth beyond the doors and avenues of our souls. Let us remove the cause, and the effect will cease.

The fourth is to guard well against allowing ourselves to subscribe to pagan sentiments, which are to hate those who hate us. Rather should we follow those of our gentle Leader Who gives us this commandment: "Love one another as I have loved you, and by that shall they know that ye are My disciples."

I implore you, my dearest brother, to consider all these things seriously in the presence of God, that you may savour them, impress them on your heart and put them into practice, with the help of His grace which He will not refuse you if you recognize your infinite need of it and sincerely ask it of Him.

It is what I do for you each day, with as much affection as I am, in truth, unreservedly and always, Sir, my very honored and dear brother,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

111 -

LETTER 62

To the Professors of the College at Lisieux.(1) *Advice concerning their employment and conduct.*

Caen, October 15, 1657.

May Jesus, the most Holy Heart of Mary, be your heart, your mind and your strength in the employment you are undertaking in the diocese of Lisieux for love of Him-employment of the greatest importance. It is the work of God and of Jesus Christ, because it concerns the salvation of souls! It is the work of the Mother of God, the Apostles and the greatest saints! It is a mission of very great consequence to which the Son of God, the sovereign Missionary, sends you with these words: "As the Father hath sent me, I also send you."(2)

You are going to perform this mission for children, in whom you must lay the foundations of God's reign and in whom there are generally far fewer obstacles to divine grace than in adults.

They are children who belong to God through baptism, who were redeemed by the blood of the Son of God and created to see the face of God, to possess and bless Him for all eternity; children who are so dear to the heavenly Father that He has given each of them a prince of His court to serve as guardian angel and, in a certain sense, as a servant. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent to minister for them, who shall receive the inheritance of salvation?"(3) Children, finally, for whom our good Jesus felt so much love and tenderness, and of whom He said: "Suffer the little children and forbid them not to come to me: for the kingdom of heaven is for such."(4)

(1). In 1652 the Bishop of Lisieux offered to entrust both a seminary and a college to the Eudist Fathers. St. John Eudes ardently desired the first of these foundations, but the second had no place in his plans. Because of the Bishop's insistence he accepted the college, and at once applied himself to make the best use of the gift, while assuring himself that in the future he would not accept any similar proposal. He no doubt was afraid lest he might follow the example of the Oratory, and allow the efforts of his Congregation to be diverted towards an object which was not that of the new Congregation.

(2). John 20, 21.

(3). Hebr. 1, 14.

(4). Matt 19, 14

112-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

Weigh all these truths seriously, my dear brethren; they will lead you to thank God for the wonderful grace He has granted you in employing you in such a holy mission, and to search eagerly for and embrace all the means of which you can avail yourselves to do your task well.

To this end, you should:

1. Establish in your hearts a very pure intention to aspire to nothing, in all that you have to do, save the glory of God.

2. Make a firm resolution to be as diligent as possible in imparting to these children, first of all, a knowledge of salvation, and in the second place, education.

3. Take great care to preserve and increase in yourselves a spirit of piety and virtue, that you may avoid this reproach: "Thou therefore, that teachest another, teachest not thyself," (5) and imitate our Saviour while fulfilling in yourselves these words: "Jesus began to do and to teach." (6) I urge you, therefore, for the love of His most Holy Mother, to observe faithfully the following precepts:

Never fail to offer an hour of prayer together each morning before the Blessed Sacrament. The teachers and prefects, however, need make only a half-hour on class days and an hour on the other days.

The priests should celebrate Holy Mass daily, with preparation beforehand, strict attention and recollection while saying it, and an unhurried thanksgiving afterwards. Those who are not priests should hear or serve Mass every day with the proper interior and exterior dispositions.

Care should be taken to have Holy Communion distributed on the usual days.

Each one should always make his confession to the confessor assigned him.

The teachers should have the utmost respect and deference for the director assigned them, and he should exercise great charity, meekness and vigilance toward them.

Let everyone make a daily quarter-hour of spiritual reading from Holy Scripture, and then report on a passage during the evening con

(5). Rom. 2, 21.

(6). Acts, 1, 1.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

113-

versation. Let the teachers do the same from the Gospel, that they may learn its chief maxims and implant them in the hearts of their pupils.

The spiritual conference and the humiliation⁽⁷⁾ should be carried out weekly in the usual manner.

Every Saturday, in honor of the humility of Our Lord and His most Holy Mother, two of you should go to the kitchen to wash some of the dishes.

Have some poor person dine each week with the Community.

Silence should be observed strictly in the places and at the times appointed.

Outside of recreation periods, you should not waste time in conversing with one another.

Do not go into another's room except with permission or through necessity; and no one should allow the students, either boarders or day pupils, to enter his.

You should never cat outside the refectory, except in case of illness, nor outside of mealtime, save through necessity and with permission; very rarely in town, and then only with leave.

Uniformity should be very closely observed in food, drink, dress and everything else.

All peculiarities and individual characteristics should be banished from the Community as highly dangerous nuisances.

You should receive nothing from your students nor anyone else that you appropriate to yourselves, whether it be money for Masses, or linen, clothing, butter, fruit, etc. These things should be turned over at once to the superior or the bursar.

No one should either give away or lend anything that belongs to the Community except with the superior's permission, under pain of being punished for theft, as in the preceding instance.

Charity and fraternal cordiality should be carefully fostered, and each one should avoid violating it through speech or in any other way. If anything to the contrary should occur, the offender ought not to allow the day to pass without atoning for his error and becoming reconciled with his brother.

(7). In the Congregation of Jesus and Mary this is a community exercise at which the members accuse themselves of the faults committed against the constitutions and rules.

114-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

You should inform the superior, in a spirit of charity, of the shortcomings of individuals when there is no other way to remedy them; and you must be prepared to be told about your own and to accept the admonition in a spirit of humility and obedience, neither excusing nor justifying yourselves. Disputes ought to be shunned like the plague, and to that end you should all strive to renounce your own opinions.

As for the students, the teachers should make every effort to impress the following things upon them: 1. a deep respect for holy places, the sacraments and other things pertaining to religion; 2. an ardent love for Our Lord Jesus Christ; 3. a singular devotion for the Blessed Virgin Mary; 4. perfect obedience to one's parents; 5. sincere charity toward one another; 6. a lively fear of vanity and pride, and an ardent love for humility; 7. extreme hatred for every kind of sin; 8. complete resignation to the most holy will of God in all things. I need not speak of the horror that must be instilled in them for everything offensive to purity, nor of the painstaking care that should be exercised in teaching them to serve Mass.

You should all honor your superiors as representatives of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and strive to make a more complete renunciation of your own wills than of all the demons in hell, that you may accept in all things and places the most adorable will of God which is made known to you through the voice of your superiors and the mandates of the Community.

But above all, strive to know yourselves, that you may learn to despise yourselves and be humble in all things, for there is nothing more important or necessary to please God, serve Him and arrive at perfection.

De caetero, fratres, quaecumque vera, quaecumque pudica, quaecumque justa, quaecumque sancta, quaecumque amabilia, quaecumque bonae famae, si qua virtus, si qua laus disciplinae, haec cogitate . . . haec agite, et Deus pacis erit vobiscum.(8)

(8). Phil. 4, 8-9

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

115-

LETTER 63

To the Priests of his Congregation who were giving a mission at Honfleur. *Thansgiving for the sanction of the seminary at Caen, granted on December 2, 1657 by His Lordship Francis Servien, Bishop of Bayeux.*

December 1657

His Lordship(1) drew up authentic letters patent confirming the letters of the King(2) and of Bishop d'Angennes(3) and he had them all recorded in his secretary's office in Bayeux, and in the registry of the ecclesiastical court of Caen and of the ecclesiastical insinuations. Then he ordered the

pastor of St. Julian's Church(4) in Caen to proclaim it publicly and to send notices last Sunday to all parish priests and preachers, so that they might announce to everyone that the establishment of the Bayeux seminary in our house had been confirmed, and that the ceremony would take place in our chapel on the same day with all possible solemnity. All of this was done. We sang a high Mass in the morning and vespers in the afternoon, both with great ceremony. The pastor of St. Peter's Church,(5) the canon of Bayeux, came expressly to say the Office after the Vicar-General and I had invited him to do so.

Father Larderat(6) had written me, on behalf of his Lordship, that I should invite the Abbé de Brissac to preach. The Abbé was unable to accept, but the rector of the Jesuits,(7) substituting for him, gave an excellent sermon, and so many people kept coming all day long that our chapel would have been filled even if it were as large as the church of the Abbey of St. Stephen. Blessed be Our Lord and His most holy Mother, who are the true and sole authors of this work. For we, on our

(1). Bishop Francis Services of Bayeux.

(2). Louis xiv.

(3). James d'Angennes was Bishop of Bayeux from 1606 to 1647.

(4). Reverend Father LeGrand for twenty years superior of the Monastery of Our Lady of Charity of the Refuge.

(5). Father Gabriel Jacques, rector of St. Peter's Church in Caen from 1624-1661.

(6). Bishop Services's secretary and a devoted friend of St. John Eudes.

(7). The rector of the Jesuits was Father Francis Pinchereau, who held that position in Caen from 1655 to 1658.

116 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

part, did nothing, either by ourselves or through others, to petition his Lordship of Bayeux. On the contrary, he had been strongly importuned by a congregation(8) to which he was bound for many years by the ties of a very special friendship. This congregation made every effort to prevent, as did other persons who offered him signal advantages for his seminary, and who overlooked nothing that could possibly be done by themselves as well as their friends, to persuade him to reject us and ally himself with them. Nevertheless, he elected to ignore all these solicitations, and after having broken with all the others, he chose poor nobodies like us to take charge of his seminary. "He hath put down the mighty from their seat and hath exalted the humble." (9)

It is true that Father Larderat and the pastor at Saint Julian worked hard in this affair, but that was through an inspiration instilled in them by God, and not through anyone's request.

Let us all, therefore, feel a profound humility at the sight of so many favors. Let us give sincere thanks to God, and proportionately to the Blessed Virgin, St. Joseph and the other patrons of our Congregation, as well as to all the holy bishops of Bayeux.

For this purpose we have decided to choose the octave of Christmas for our thanksgiving, to expose the Blessed Sacrament in our chapel on the first three days, in accordance with permission granted us by the Vicar General, and to invite all our friends to adore and thank Our Lord with us.

During those eight days we shall say our Masses according to the order of the Church. In addition, we shall offer them on the first four days in honor of the Holy Trinity, Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Blessed Virgin; on the fifth, in honor of the holy angels; on the sixth, in honor of St. Joseph, St. John the Evangelist, St. Joachim and St. Anne; on the seventh, in honor of the holy Apostles, martyrs, priests and Levites, virgins, innocents, bishops of Bayeux and all the saints; on the eighth, in honor of Our Lord and His most holy Mother.

To these we shall add three intentions: the first, for his Lordship of Bayeux and those others whom God used as instruments to accom

(1). The Congregation of the Oratory.

(2). Luke 1, 52.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

117 -

plish His holy will in this matter; the second, for all those who opposed it; and the third, to obtain all we need to do well what He asks of us.

We shall also say a daily rosary which will be divided among us, and every evening the *Te Deum* and a *Sub tuum praesidium*.

I leave it to you to choose your own devotions, but I should like very much to know what they are . . .

My third recommendation to you is that you convince yourselves that, in order to know what God demands of you on this occasion, you must be mindful that the Congregation has been established by God in His Church and that He has granted you the grace of calling you to join it for these three ends:

First, to give you the means of arriving at the perfection and sanctity compatible with the ecclesiastical state.

Secondly, to labor for the salvation of souls through missions and other sacerdotal functions, which is the work of the Apostles and Our Lord Himself; a work so great and divine that there would seem to be none greater nor more divine, *divinorum divinissimum*.

Nevertheless, there is one function which does surpass it, and this is to labor for the salvation and sanctification of ecclesiastics, which is to save the saviours, direct the directors, teach the doctors, feed the shepherds, enlighten those who are the light of the world, sanctify those who are the sanctification of the Church, and perform in the hierarchy of the Church what the seraphim and cherubim perform in the heavenly realm. That is the third end for which God has deigned to establish our little Congregation in the Church and for which He has summoned us to join it, through an incomprehensible mercy of which we are infinitely unworthy. He wishes to place in our keeping the most precious, the most illustrious portion of His Church, dearer to Him than the apple of His eye, which is the heart of His mystical body, that is to say, the ecclesiastics. It is the holy family whose care and guidance He wishes to entrust to us.

Judge from that, my dearest brethren, the extent of our obligations, and what perfection He asks of us. He wishes priests to serve as models and examples for the faithful, but He desires us to serve as models and patterns for the priests.

118 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

Let us humble ourselves at the sight of all these considerations which are so weighty, acknowledging our unworthiness and infinite incapacity for such a task. Let us, finally, cultivate a great mistrust of ourselves, while preserving the utmost confidence in Him Who calls us, for He has extraordinary graces to bestow upon us which are in proportion to our vocation. With His grace there is nothing impossible for us. Let us, however, conceive an earnest desire to place no obstacle in its way, but rather to prepare ourselves to receive it. Then let us resolve anew, as we offer ourselves to

Him, to perform in a holy manner all our ecclesiastical functions, to carry out faithfully all our duties in the Community, to put all its orders into prompt execution, to obey our superiors to the letter, to love one another sincerely, and above all, to humble ourselves constantly in all things.

As for the ecclesiastics that God sends us, let us resolve to do three things: 1. to set them an outstanding example of piety, modesty and all the other virtues; 2. to receive and treat them with the utmost charity, sincerity, civility, courtesy, meekness and forbearance, omitting nothing we can do to help train and cultivate them in all that pertains to ecclesiastical life, customs and duties; 3. to pray a great deal for them, in our Masses and other prayers, that God may give them the true spirit of the priesthood.

That, my beloved brethren, is what God asks of us—great things which completely surpass our ability, but: "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, do manfully." (10) "Be strengthened in the Lord and in the might of his power." (11)

I implore our most bountiful Jesus and His most worthy Mother to accomplish their all-holy wills perfectly in us.

In the sacred love of their most Holy Heart I remain sincerely, unreservedly and always, to each and every one of you, whom I embrace with all respect and affection, my very dear and honored brethren,

Your most unworthy servant,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest of the
Congregation of the Seminaries of Jesus and Mary.
(10). Cor. 16, 13
(11). Eph. 6, 10.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

119-

LETTER 64

To the Superior of one of his houses. *On the value of humiliations, with respect to an ordination which had edified the entire city of Caen.*

1658

Among all these successes I clearly perceive that periods of humiliation, trouble, suffering and crosses are much more desirable, pleasing, advantageous, useful and precious than those of eulogy, exaltation and comfort. However, we must accept the one with the other from the hand of God, endeavoring thereby to accomplish His most holy will.

LETTER 65

To Madame de Bois-David de Soulbieu, (1) then a Postulant at the Monastery of Our Lady of Charity at Caen.

1658 My dearest daughter:

May Jesus, the most Holy Heart of Mary, be ours for ever.

I thank you for your testimonies of sincere and cordial charity. I assure you, my dearest

daughter, that my heart is filled with charity for your soul, and that I desire most earnestly to serve you to the best of whatever ability it may please God to grant me. All that is happening with regard to your affairs is for the best; do not doubt that. For you have a Spouse and a Mother who are all-powerful in heaven and on earth, who love you more than you yourself do, and who are most wise and thoroughly capable of managing all things in the best possible manner. Take care then, my dearest daughter, not to allow yourself to become anxious, but trust fully in Our Lord and His Mother. Annihilate at their feet all your thoughts, plans, desires, inclinations and in

(1). Born at Montmartin, in the diocese of Coutances, of a most distinguished family, Madame married Simon de Bois-David, a Captain of the Guards. After the death of her husband, she entered the Monastery of our Lady of Charity and took the habit on April 29, 1658. She received the name of Sister Mary of the Infant Jesus. Ory, op. cit., p. 83.

120 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

tents, and resign yourself completely, sincerely and unreservedly to their most holy will, supplicating them to arrange all things in the way most pleasing to them. Remember that they will do everything that is useful and advantageous to you, beyond your fondest desires.

My most affectionate regards to our dearest Mother, together with all her daughters, my dearest~ Sisters. I remain, in the sacred love of the most holy Heart of Jesus and Mary, my dearest daughter,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LETTER 66

To Father John Dupont,(1) Superior of the Seminary at Coutances. *The Saint reminds him that the occupations of the Community must be given preference over outside works, and admonishes him to place all his trust in Jesus and His most Holy Mother.*

1658

I will do what I can to send someone to help you with duties of the Community. However, with things in the condition that you describe to me, Father Yon' will have to remain at the house if he is needed there to help with confessions and in singing Vespers. For this is a maxim that must be observed: the interests of the Community have preference over anything that can be done outside of it. If you think, then, that he is needed in the house, have him give up his preaching elsewhere.

Your letter would grieve me if I did not know that we have a very good Father and Mother who have absolute power over all things in heaven and on earth. They have provided very charitably so far for all our needs and they will always do so if we try to serve them and place

(1). Father Dupont was born at Dieppe in 1619. He entered the Congregation of Jesus and Mary in 1658 and became superior of the Coutances Seminary in the spring of 1658. He died in 1685. Cf. *Les Fleurs de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie*, Vol. 1, pp. 98-103.

(1). See Letter 58, now 8

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

121 -

all our trust in them: "Casting all your care upon (them) for (they) have care of you." (3)
(3)1 Peter 5, 7

LETTER 67

To Father John Dupont, Superior of the Coutances Seminary.
On obedience.

November 2, 1658

I am well aware of the prudence that God has given you, and of the sincerity and integrity of your intentions. But you and the other superiors of our houses must allow me to speak my thoughts to you on those occasions when I deem it necessary. If I suggest things to them which they find difficult, they may write me about it with simplicity and deference, but then they must give their attention to my next request in the matter without consulting this one or that one. Each one should feel free to write me whatever he thinks necessary for the good of the house.

LETTER 68

To Father John Dupont, Superior at Coutances. *Concerning the acquisition of a site in the Place des Petits Prés(1) for the erection of the Caen seminary.*

December 16, 1658

The business regarding the *Place des Petits Prés* is all settled, thanks be to God. The contract is drawn up and signed by everyone concerned. And it is the almighty hand of Our Lord which has performed this wonder: "This is the Lord's doing: and it is wonderful in our eyes." (2) I entreat all our dear brethren to thank Him for it, as also His most

(1). Place des Petits Prés later became the Place Royale, and today is the Place de la *République* in Caen.

(2). Ps. 117, 23.

122 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

Holy Mother, and to implore Him to raise up someone now who will build a church on this spot in honor of the most Holy Heart of the Blessed Mother of God.

LETTER 69

To the Priests of the Seminary at Lisieux. *On their refusal to accept Father Anthony Bernard (1) as their superior. (2)*

January or February, 1659 My very dear and beloved brethren:

You are aware that all priests, especially missionaries, are obliged to practise all the virtues with a view to perfecting themselves as models of holiness for the faithful. You know, consequently, that their obedience for all the orders of their superiors must be unquestioning.

If you had practised it in that way, you would have done something very pleasing to Our Lord and His most Holy Mother, very advantageous to your souls and very comforting to me. But if you did not have enough virtue for that, you should at least have been satisfied to acquaint me with your feelings in a spirit of humility and deference.

If I had sent you the lowliest of our lay brothers to govern you, you should have submitted to it

because for your sakes Our Lord was obedient to Herod, Pilate, the executioners who crucified Him, and the forces of darkness. I have sent you a man who is one of the first to have entered our Congregation, extremely wise, virtuous and charitable. Yet you scorn him, you reject him, thereby condemning the superior of your Congregation in the choice he has made and preferring your own judgment to his. But what is worse, one of you writes me for the

(1). Father Bernard, a former parish priest entered the Congregation of Jesus and Mary in 1652. He was Superior of the Lisieux Seminary for one year.

(2). At the time of the foundation of the Rouen seminary, Father Manchon, who was in charge of the Seminary at Lisieux, was summoned in take over its direction. St. John Eudes replaced him at Lisieux with Father Bernard, whose appointment dissatisfied the priests of the Lisieux seminary. It was then that the Saint wrote the letter we reproduce here. It was written near the end of 1658 or the beginning of 1659.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

123-

others that this is a provocation not to be endured, that he is giving up his function as bursar and the others are threatening to withdraw from the Congregation. What sort of language is that? Is that the way for priests, missionary priests, to talk? Where is the humility, the obedience, the sacrifice of self, of one's own reasoning and will? Where are the fruits of so many meditations, spiritual readings and Masses?

Open your eyes, my dear brethren, and see the errors you have committed.

1. You have opposed the most holy will of God which was made known to you through him who acts in His place.

2. You have saddened and grieved your poor Father who loves you more than his own inmost parts.

3. You have scorned your brother and injured him immeasurably, for how will he be regarded henceforth in the Congregation? If I carried out your desires, he would be a man completely discredited and ruined, and that would be sufficient to force him to withdraw from the Congregation.

4. You have done incalculable injury to the Congregation through your very pernicious example, the aftermath of which is highly dangerous. For whenever the Superior of the Congregation sends a house a superior who is not acceptable to the bursar or someone else, they will have only to announce that they are resigning from their office and threaten to withdraw. In short, my dear brethren, it is like placing a dagger at my throat to force me to carry out your wishes. It is even like stabbing me in the heart, for it fills me with a most lively sorrow to see so little virtue among you, specially since I wrote you that it was to be only for a short time.

I hope that all these considerations may help you to recognize your errors, to humble yourselves and implore pardon of God for them, to resolve never to do such a thing again, and to submit yourselves willingly to the most adorable will of God which is made known to you by him who acts in His stead.

I am with all sincerity, my beloved brethren,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LETTER 70

To Father Thomas Manchon, Superior at Rouen. *On the conduct to follow with respect to the Jansenists.*

February to, 1659 My dearest brother:

I received two letters from Paris on the same day, from two eminent persons who are friends of ours.

One writes me that he was present at a very select gathering where two men of rank said that it was on our account that His Lordship of Rouen(1) issued his order for peace, meaning that we were inveighing too violently and indiscreetly against the Jansenists.

The other writes me as follows: "I shall tell you simply that the complaint was made to me in a well-known Paris residence that for some time now it has been noticed in Rouen that there is a great deal of communication between some of your Congregation and those who are only too justly associated with the group. This is particularly true of the one who is in charge of the house, whose virtue I myself do not question but who, apparently lacking sufficient firmness and vigor to oppose these people openly, might be capable, though quite unintentionally, of arousing marked prejudice against your seminary and preventing all the good that it could accomplish. He might prejudice even the subjects seeking to enter there, who would attribute such conduct to him who is in universal charge of the Congregation."

That is what they wrote me; it should teach us to keep careful watch over our conduct. I know no better secret than to follow our own broad path without becoming involved in anything save to keep the commandments of God and of the Church, follow the rules of our calling and urge everyone, in our private conversations as well as our sermons and exhortations, to do the same. Let us avoid as far as possible any mention of controversial questions of the day, whether they concern faith or morals, and especially in our sermons.

(1). Archbishop Harlay de Champvallon.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

125-

I also entreat you, my dearest brother: 1. to shun, whenever possible, the society of those who profess false doctrines: "Their speech spreadeth like a canker."(2) Our friendliness with them would cause us to be suspected and do us considerable harm; 2. always to evince the greatest possible charity and friendship for the Reverend Jesuit Fathers and all other religious.

(2). 2 Tim. 2, 17

LETTER 71

To Father John Dupont, Superior of the Coutances Seminary. *On the opening of the seminary at Rouen. (1)*

February 1659

After many trials and obstacles, not only from outsiders but even from our friends, the Rouen seminary was opened last Sunday on the octave of the feast of the Most Holy Heart of Our Bountiful

Mother. There was great solemnity and joy on the part of all our brethren and friends who, after having disagreed in this affair, became reconciled very admirably, according to what Father Manchon wrote me, so that everything is peaceful now. Help us to give thanks to Our Lord and His most Holy Mother, as well as to all the angels and saints, and pray God to pardon those who opposed it and bless those who contributed to it, particularly Mr. de la Boissière.(2) It is to him, after God and our heavenly friends, that we are most highly obligated in this matter, since he worked on it for nine months with zeal, patience and wonderful perseverance.

(1). The Rouen Seminary was opened on February 8, 1659

(2). Mr. de la Motte-Lambert who, after having been of Parliament, became a priest and later, vicar apostolic in China with the title of the bishop of Berytus.

126 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 72

To Father Thomas Manchon, Superior at Rouen. *On his difficulties.*

1659

Since God has chosen you to establish a seminary as important as the one in Rouen, you should consider these crosses and obstacles as a very precious gift from His divine bounty and thank Him as for a very special favor, for it is a sign that the seminary will yield great fruits.

If I beheld you surrounded by prosperity and contentment, I should fear greatly for you and the work entrusted to you; but seeing you afflicted with crosses and persecutions, I rejoice and give thanks to God that He is making you travel the road He traveled, and that He is building His house on the same foundations as those on which He established His Church.

Listen, my dearest brother, to these words of the Holy Spirit: "Looking on Jesus, the author and finisher of faith, who having joy set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame ... think diligently upon him that endured such opposition from sinners against himself; that you be not wearied, fainting in your minds. For you have not yet resisted unto blood . . ." (1)

In conclusion, my dear brother, "Believe firmly in God, and place yourself entirely in His hands." Those are the words of St. Augustine, to which I shall add these of the Church: "Cast thy care upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee." (2) Let us abandon ourselves to His divine will with full and complete resignation, having boundless confidence in His infinite goodness and in the unrivalled charity of our most bountiful Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary.

(1). Heb. 12, 2-4.

(2) PS. 54, 23.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

127 -

LETTER 73

To Father Thomas Manchon, Superior at Rouen. *On the poverty of his seminary.*

1659

"Do manfully and let thy heart take courage, and wait thou for the Lord."(1) For he hath said: I will not leave thee: neither will I forsake thee"; (2) and He is faithful to His words and promises: "Heaven and earth shall pass, but my words shall not pass."(3) "Casting all your care upon him, for he hath care of you."(4)

Our Lord and His most holy Mother, Who had foretold the establishment at Rouen a long time before, and Who did so in such a wonderful way, will not abandon their work. They have not given their sons a house to lodge them without intending to furnish them with food; but they wish to afford us an opportunity to exercise patience, obedience to their most adorable will, love of poverty and trust in their great goodness.

We must guard well, my dearest brother, against losing that confidence which the Holy Spirit recommends so highly to us in Sacred Scripture, for it is very pleasing to His Divine Majesty. Distrust binds His hands and prevents Him from bestowing the fruits of His holy generosity.

In short, God never forsakes the needy, but He wants us to pray to Him with trust and perseverance. Make a novena, then, for that intention.

- (1). Ps. 26, 14.
- (2). Heb. 13, 5
- (3). Matt 24, 35
- (4). 1 Pet. 5, 7

128 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 74

To Father Thomas Manchon. *On another occasion.*

1659

I am constantly mindful of the needs of your house, but I cannot believe that our most bountiful Father and our admirable Mother will withhold their generosity in this urgent necessity. No, no, no, my dearest brother, they will not abandon their poor children, however unworthy and unfaithful; heaven and earth would sooner come to an end. What would become of those divine words: "Who giveth food to all flesh: for his mercy endureth for ever"?(1)

He Who lavishes His gifts on so many Turks, blasphemers, godless persons and atheists, will He forsake His own true children? It is impossible! It is utterly impossible! We have but one thing to fear, and that is to be too fearful and not have enough confidence.

The need is urgent, but I trust that help is not far distant. For my part, I am sparing no effort or endeavor to do all that I reasonably can in this matter, but, thank God, without haste or uneasiness, and without any reliance on what I am doing. Do as much on your own part.

But above all, I beseech you to see to it that God is well served and honored through faithful and literal obedience to all the orders and rules of the Congregation and all the things that God has been pleased to inspire me to establish in it. Know, my dearest brother, that by observing and having them observed as much as possible, you will be doing something very pleasing to Our Lord and His most Holy Mother, and you will bring down their holy blessing upon us and our Community. "Cast thy care upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee." (2)

- (1). Ps. 135, 25.
(2). Psalm 54, 23

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

129-

LETTER 75

To Mr. d'Omonville, Counsellor of the Parliament of Rouen. *To persuade him to maintain the liberalities(1)pledged to the Rouen Seminary, which he mistakenly feared was being won over to Jansenism.*

1659

My dear Sir:

I must confess that it causes me a very bitter pang to see you withdraw your support from us. It is true that it would be better not to have any seminary at all than to see it managed and directed by Jansenists. But, thank God, the seminary at Rouen is certainly not in that state, for there is a great difference between a seminary which is under the authority of persons suspected of Jansenism and a seminary which is managed and directed by Jansenists. It is a fact that the seminary is under the authority of certain persons suspected of this pernicious doctrine; but it is under the immediate guidance and direction of persons who are as far removed from it as heaven is from hell.

If in breaking with us, my dear Sir, you were not doing something which will give the Jansenists what they want and which will be most prejudicial to Catholics, *gemens tacerem.*(2) But consider, I beg of you, that as a result of this breach the seminary will no longer be ours, since all the conditions of the order of Parliament are by no means fulfilled. It will then fall into the hands of the Jansenists, which is precisely what they wish, and is the greatest misfortune that could happen to the city of Rouen and the entire province.

(1). As soon as the Rouen seminary was established, it was stipulated that the house was not to be supported by the diocese. Thanks to a donation of ten thousand livres pledged by Mr. d'Omonville, St. John Eudes had been able to assume this obligation. Abandoned now by Mr. d'Omonville, he found himself unable to meet it and forced, consequently, to give up the seminary, which would have allowed the Jansenists to take it over by supplying the necessary sum themselves. Cf. Costil, *Annales, de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie*, Vol. 5, P. 337. Despite Mr. d'Omonville's donation, which the Saint succeeded in having maintained, the Rouen seminary passed through great financial smuts in its early days.

(2). Esther 6, 4.

130-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

If we are dependent on several suspected persons, that will induce us to keep guard over ourselves with increased effort and vigilance; but if the seminary falls into the hands of the Jansenists, who is going to answer to God for the great evils which will inevitably result, if not those who did not prevent the misfortune when they could have done so? One must always choose the lesser of two evils; now an evil that is neither present nor certain is incomparably smaller than one which is certain and inevitable. You fear that we are turning to Jansenism, although we are more opposed to it than fire is to water; but it is only too certain that if we do not keep the seminary, it will be entrusted to the Jansenists. That is why everyone who has heard this matter discussed cannot understand how it is possible to be in doubt about it, except a single individual from this district(3) who prefers his own opinion to that of all the directors, religious, and everyone else. Certainly such conduct is highly dangerous.

What likelihood is there, Sir, that one person who has some authority over us can pervert an entire Community which openly professes to wage war upon Jansenism? But were there such a danger, that same reason ought to induce our friends not to abandon us, especially at a time when there is no danger for them, since they are well aware that there is no malice in our ranks, thanks be to God.

Finally, my dear Sir, Jansenism is a very pernicious thing because it is a heresy *which destroys* faith. Schism and division among the servants of God, however, are no less dangerous, insofar as they destroy charity which is a virtue more excellent even than faith. "And now there remain faith, hope and charity, these three: but the greatest of these is charity," (4) says the Holy Spirit.

Therefore I urge you, my dear brother, by the tenderest charity of Our Lord and His most Holy Mother, not to withdraw your support from our brethren who love and honor you much more than can be expressed, and not to destroy such an important work in *which you* have helped serve as an instrument of God. I implore Him with all my strength to speak to your heart Himself and make you see the peril confronting you, not only because you are destroying the Rouen senti
(3). «That is to say, from Caen,» says Costil. Loc. cit.
(4). I Cor. 13, 13

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

131 -

nary, but also ruining our little Congregation which assuredly is a work from the hand of God, destined by Him to bring about the salvation of many souls. But men often upset His plans and works. I trust He will not allow that evil to befall us.

LETTER 76(1)

To His Lordship Claude Auvry, a former bishop of Coutances(2) *The Saint urges him to accept the bishopric of Bayeux, left vacant by the death of Bishop Servien.*

Caen, June 1, 1659

Most illustrious and honored Lord:

Behold me at your feet to receive, may it please you, your holy blessing.

Mr. de Saint Hilaire was in the city yesterday evening. He brought me kindest regards from you, for which I thank you very much, my Lord, as also for your kindness toward our confrere, Father Blouet,(3) during the visit you graciously paid him, of which he wrote me in terms full of happiness and delight. For it is true that he entertains for you, my Lord, all the reverence and affection that the most dutiful son in the world could have for a very godfather. And all our other confrères, thank God, share the same sentiments, which affords me no little satisfaction.

Mr. de Saint Hilaire told me something that would overwhelm me with joy if it came true. He assured me that Bishop Auvry was being mentioned for the bishopric of Bayeux, something which Mr. de Courmont had already told me six days ago. They have been talking about it in this city for a long time. O my Lord, if that came to pass, what

(1). Letter reproduced from the National Archives of Paris.

(2). In 1658 Bishop Auvry resigned from the bishopric of Coutances in favor of Bishop de Lesseville. He then withdrew to Paris, where Mazarin employed him in affairs of state.

(3). Father John James, Blouet de Camilly (1632-1711), eldest son of James Blouet and Anne Le Haguais. See Letter 11, note 2. Father Blouet entered the Congregation of Jesus and Mary on February 8, 1655, at the age of 23. In 1680 he was elected superior general. Father Blouet died on August 11, 1711. Cf. *Les Fleurs de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie*, Vol. 1, P. 252.

132 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

rejoicing it would bring, not only to your most humble servants and unworthy children, but to this whole diocese, where I can assure you that you are greatly honored, loved and wanted. Indeed, I do not believe there could be another place so partial to you. But there is something else: these two gentlemen told me that only your consent is necessary to bring this about. Oh! how I do cast myself at your feet at this moment to implore you not to let this opportunity pass.

I shall perhaps be told that I am moved by self-interest to make this appeal to you. I confess that I am far from disinterested, but my sole interests are those of my God and His Church, and of your eternity, my Lord. Now, I see that if you were bishop of Bayeux and if God gave you the grace to reside there, as I believe you would plan to do, you would render Him invaluable services at little cost in this diocese. You would do great things for the welfare of that Church, and you would enrich your eternity with an infinite number of heavenly graces and blessings.

That is why, my Lord, I pray you, I implore you, I urge you, by all that you love and all that is lovable in heaven and on earth, to think earnestly and effectually about this matter, particularly for the love of the most holy Mother of God, patroness of this diocese as well as of that of Coutances. Since it has pleased God in His goodness to make you a bishop of His Church, please do not neglect the opportunity He gives you to be useful in episcopal duties which are so beautiful, so noble, so holy and divine. The episcopacy was instituted by Our Lord Jesus Christ for the same end as the apostolate, namely, to carry on the work of the salvation of souls which the great Bishop of our souls, in the wording of Scripture, began on earth; the work of the Apostles, the work of the kings and princes of heaven, the work of all works, *omnium divinatorum divinissimum*. Your life, your time, your mind and all that you possess, my Lord could they be used more worthily and advantageously than in such a work? You can do a certain amount of good at the Court, but you would accomplish infinitely more by governing a great diocese like this one. Forgive me for speaking to you at such great length about this, but I am still saying too little on a subject of such importance.

Think about it, then, my Lord, I beg of you once more. I implore

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

133 -

Our Lord and His most Holy Mother to lead you to think about it, to direct this matter in accordance with their most holy will, and to grant me the grace to live and die in all the reverence and deference due you,

My most illustrious and honored Bishop, from your most obedient, grateful and faithful servant,

JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

P. S. I forgot to tell you, my Lord, that his Lordship of ... arrived in this city Monday evening. I did myself the honor to go at once to greet him, and he received me with great friendliness, for which I am grateful to you and thank you very humbly. I shall go this week, God willing, to Coutances, but shall remain there only six or seven days in order to leave to begin a mission on Corpus Christi Sunday at Vasteville, (4) in La Hague. If you do me the honor to write me, please address your letters

to me at our house in Caen, as if I were there, and they will be forwarded to me. What great happiness if I should learn that Bishop Auvry was appointed to the bishopric of Bayeux!

(4). A village about six miles west of Cherbourg.

LETTER 77

To the bursar of the Rouen Seminary.

1659

If I considered from a human point of view all that you write me of the needs of your house in Rouen, it would trouble me a great deal, but I look upon them as being in the province of God who manages all things in the best possible manner. It is usually His way to found His works on lowliness, humiliation, poverty and nothingness. "The base things of the world, and the things that are contemptible, hath God chosen, and things that are not, that he might bring to nought things that are."

(1)

(1). I Cor. 1, 28.

134-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

That should not keep us from doing, on our part, all that we can, because that is His will; but let us take care not to lose confidence or allow ourselves to become distrustful, for thus do we bind the hands of divine Bounty. "Be strengthened in the Lord and in the might of his power." (2) If He is concerned *even about* the hairs of our heads, how much more about other things of greater importance! Let us be anxious only to please Him and accomplish faithfully what He asks of us, and He will take care of all that is necessary and expedient for us.

(2). Eph. 6, 10.

LETTER 78

To Father John James Blouet de Camilly. *On the mission at Vasteville.*

Vasteville, July 9, 1659

... Thirty missionaries would not be enough, (1) so great are the crowds who come from all sides to hear the sermons. Sometimes these people, having been deeply moved, wait for a week around the confessionals before they can make their confessions. In short, God's blessings on this mission are very abundant.

(1). St. John Eudes had with him twelve missionaries, seven from his own Congregation and five helpers. Boulay, Op. Cit., Vol. 2, P. 288.

LETTER 79

To Father John James Blouet de Camilly, in Paris. *On the success of the Vasteville mission, in the diocese of Coutances.*

Vasteville, July 23, 1659.

My dearest brother:

I cannot tell you what blessings God is bestowing on this mission. It is certainly wonderful.

I have not preached in the church for quite some time now, for al-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

135-

though it is very large, it is nevertheless too small on this occasion. I can truthfully say that we have more than fifteen thousand people present on Sundays.

There are twelve confessors, but without exaggeration there is enough work for fifty. People come from a distance of eight or ten leagues, and their hearts are so touched that there is nothing to be seen but tears and nothing to be heard but laments from the poor penitent men and women. The results observed by the confessors in the tribunal are wonderful. But what grieves us is that we shall be able to confess only a fraction of these people. We are exhausted. The missionaries see some who have been waiting for a week without having been able to get to confession, and who cast themselves on their knees whenever they meet a priest, imploring him with suppliant hands and tears in their eyes to hear them. And yet this is already our sixth week (1) here.

What a great blessing the missions are! And how necessary! What a great evil it is to hinder them in any way! Oh, if those who have prevented us from giving several in this diocese only knew the harm they have done! "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." (2)

Let us pray the Lord of the harvest, my dear brother, to send laborers for it, saying frequently to Him with all our hearts: "Lord of the harvest, send labourers into thy harvest." What are all those doctors and bachelors of arts doing in Paris, while souls are perishing by the thousand for want of someone to offer them a hand to withdraw them from perdition and preserve them from everlasting fire? Certainly, if I dared, I should go straight to Paris and cry out in the Sorbonne and the other colleges: Fire! Fire! The flames of hell are consuming the whole universe! Come, you doctors, bachelors and parish priests, come, all you ecclesiastics, and help to extinguish them! (3) ' (1). St. John Eudes and his assistants began the mission on June 15, the Sunday in the Octave of Corpus Christi and closed it in the first week of August.

(2). Luke 23, 34.

(3). This is perhaps a reminiscence of the beautiful words written by St. Francis Xavier a century earlier in one of his letters: "It often occurs to me," he said, "to go through the academics of Europe, principally the one in Paris, crying out with all my might to those who have more learning than charity: *Ah! how many ways late heaven and are cam into hell through yaw fault!*»

136-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 80

To a Confrere. *On the benefits of missions.*

1659

I have never enjoyed more palpable consolations than here, where I see enormous crowds of people coming to the sermons and besieging our confessionals. If the priests who waste their time and talents had ever experienced one iota of these comforts and consolations, I can assure you that they would hasten to labor in the field of missions and offer us their services.

LETTER 81

To Father John James Blotter de Cantilly, in Paris. *On the Villedieu mission* (1)

Autumn of 1659

Here there are even greater crowds than at Vasteville.

We have fourteen confessors, but undoubtedly fifty would not suffice. It would cause your heart to break with pity to see so many poor people who come three and four leagues, notwithstanding the hard roads, asking us with tears in their eyes to hear their confessions. They wait for six or eight days without being able to be confessed, so great is the rush, and they sleep at night in doorways and marketplaces, despite the weather. «Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth labourers into his harvest.»(2)

(1). Villedieu is a town in the district of Avranches in Normandy. The mission began on September 1 and closed on November 1.

(2). Luke 10, 2.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

137-

LETTER 82

To Father John James Blotter de Camilly. *On Mr. de Langrie's cure.*(1)

1659

May Jesus be eternally blessed for the improved health of our dear Mr. de Langrie.

Your letters of today have given me renewed vigor. It is not that we have placed our trust and reliance in any creature. No, God forbid. But how is it possible not to feel the loss of such a good and sincere friend, whom God in His goodness has been pleased to give us? Nevertheless, whenever He deigns to deprive us of him and all the others, we shall try to say as best we can: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. As it hath pleased the Lord so it is done. Blessed be the name of the Lord." (2)

Please assure him that we are praying to God for him, but that we ask for nothing more than the accomplishment of His most adorable will in him.

(1). Mr. de Langrie was Royal Councillor and President of the Normandy Parliament. He was one of the benefactors of the Caen Chapel. Cf. Boulay, op. cit., Vol. 2, P. 329. Mr. de Langrie recovered and lived until 1663.

(2). Job 7, 2 1.

LETTER 83

To Father John James Blotter de Camilly. *Regarding the plan of the chapel at Caen, drawn up through the efforts of Father Mannoury.*

1659

If Father Mannoury has included anything superfluous and contrary to simplicity in his plan,

I shall certainly cross it out, for I am the sworn enemy of everything that violates this virtue and I will tolerate only what is necessary and without embellishment.

138 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 84

To Father John James Blouet de Camilly, in Paris. *On the edifying conduct of the candidates for ordination at the Rouen seminary.*

Rouen, December 15, 1659

It is true that our good God bestows great blessings upon us through His infinite mercy, and that He manifests Himself as the author and founder, the superior and protector of our little Congregation, for which may He be for ever blessed!

There are now almost a hundred of us in this house. Among this number are many candidates for ordination and several boarders or seminarians who afford us great satisfaction, through the grace of Our Lord, because for the most part they are very tractable and unassuming. The candidates will leave tomorrow. I have given them a daily exhortation and I hope that God will thereby be glorified.

LETTER 85

To Father John James Blouet de Camilly. *On the calumnies (1) of which the Saint was a victim in 1659.*

Rouen, December 17, 1659

The big dogs(2) in this part of the country have neither bitten nor barked at the little white dog' with black cars, to the best of my know!

(1). After the death of Mr. John de Bernières on May 3, 1659, the members of the Hermitage in Caen proceeded to fight Jansenism, and anything that resembled it, with an imprudent zeal. They made demonstrations in the streets of Caen, that were not of a nature to attract the sympathy of intelligent men and women. The enemies of St. John Eudes now endeavored to attribute to him some of the responsibility of these silly proceedings. The Saint hastened to dissociate himself from them. Cf. Joly, Life of St. John Eudes, p. 134.

(2). These probably were the Jansenists.

(3). The Saint himself.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

139 -

edge. But in Caen they are biting and tearing him into bits, for the reason you well know. He belongs to a Master Who is certainly able to protect him if He so desires. If He finds pleasure in seeing him mauled and devoured, *fiat! fiat!* I hope, nevertheless, that He will defend His poor little dog and give him the strength to bite, strangle and kill his Master's enemies, which are the sins of man.

LETTER 86

To Mother Margaret Frances Patin.(1) *On her spiritual state.*

Rouen, December 24, 1659

My very dear and good Mother:

May the divine Infant Jesus be the heart of our hearts and the spirit of our spirits.

All that you have written me of the condition and dispositions of your soul is indisputable proof that our most amiable Saviour has a very special love for you. There is nothing to fear, my dearest Mother; you are in a good state. Remain undisturbed and confident, abandoning all that you are, in time and in eternity, to the most adorable will of God, Who has established His reign in your heart and will reign there for ever in the blessed eternity. But I beseech you, my dearest Mother, not to allow yourself to believe that you can or ought to do now what you have done in the past. On the contrary, you should greatly moderate your mortifications, and give your body all the rest and care necessary to conserve your health. If you do that, I assure you that you will be doing something highly pleasing to God, and a great deal more pleasing than if you were to do otherwise.

My most cordial greetings to all our dear Sisters in general, and to each one individually. I implore them to carry out faithfully their daily obligations to the divine Infant, His Holy Mother and St. Joseph, and to strive in competition with one another to imitate the humility of this Infant Jesus, as also His simplicity, innocence, obedience, meek

(1). See Letter 48, note 1.

140 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

ness, tenderness, cordial charity and, above all, His great love for His most Blessed Mother; and not to forget to recommend to the Son and the Mother him who is, in the sacred love of their most Holy Hearts, my very dear and good Mother,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LETTER 87

To Sister Mary of the Nativity Herson, His Niece. *The Saint testifies to his conformity to the will of God, and gives her spiritual counsel.*

Rouen, January 7, 1660 My dearest Sister:

May the divine will be our guide in all things.(1)

It is true that my months of absence are sometimes quite long, and longer than I am aware of, but not longer than I wish. For, through the mercy of my Lord, it seems to me that I desire nothing, either in this world or in the next, except to abandon myself entirely to the sweet possession of the most adorable will of my God, so that it may lead me wherever it pleases, and do with me, everywhere and at all times, whatever is most pleasing to it. Hence I cannot tell you yet when I shall return to Caen. I am well aware that, with the grace of Our Lord, it will be when I wish, but I do not know yet when I shall wish to do so; that is to say, I do not know when God desires it.

You describe your spiritual state very well to me, my dear Sister. I have nothing more to tell you on that subject, save that you should try not to worry about your poverty and wretchedness, but to dwell in peace, humility, patience, submission and abandonment to the divine will, remaining

obedient to your superioress, and faithful to the observance of your Rules.

Above all, my dear daughter, I recommend three things to you. The first is always to preserve in your heart a firm and generous resolution
(1). This is the first instance of the use of the salutation. See Letter 34, note 3.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

141 -

to overcome the shortcomings that you recognize in yourself. The second is to keep your intention pure and upright, protesting frequently to Our Lord that you wish to do nothing save for His glory and love, and to accomplish His most adorable will in all things. The third is to have a great love, meekness and cordiality in your heart toward all your Sisters, demonstrating it by your words and actions.

I implore the most amiable Infant Jesus to live and reign in your heart, and in the hearts of all our dear Sisters. I send my regards to them, one and all, with every possible token of affection, wishing them a thousand and more blessings and a great abundance of graces, that they may use this new year in a holy manner and in conformity with the most holy will of God.

I am delighted that your brother,(2) my nephew, is so close to the time when he is to consecrate himself to His Divine Majesty through the solemn vows of holy religion. I implore God in His infinite goodness to grant him whatever graces are necessary and desirable to perform this act well. When you write to him, please give him my kindest regards.

I remain with all my heart, my dearest niece, Sister, and daughter,

Devotedly yours,

JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

(1). Mary Herson had two brothers: John, born October 2, 1632, and Isaac, born May 3, 1638. Cf. Boulay, *Vie du P. Eudes*, Vol. 1, p. 17.

142 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 88

To Mother Margaret Frances Patin. *On the decease of Sister Mary of the Child Jesus de Bois-David(1)*

Rouen, February 1660

J.M.J. My dear good Mother:

May the divine will be our guide in all things.

The decease of our dear Sister Mary of the Child Jesus surprised me a little at first; but having cast my eyes upon that most adorable will which arranges all things in the best possible way, my heart remained at peace and my lips could only utter: My God, "not my will but Thine be done!"(2) Ah it is well that way, my dear Mother, since such is the pleasure of the divine Child Jesus, Who willed to take this dear sister, consecrated to the Divine Childhood, at the very time which is dedicated to this great mystery. She has gone to take possession of heaven in the name of all the sisters and to begin an eternal establishment of the Community of Our Lady of Charity. She has

gone to paradise, there to adore, praise and love the most holy Trinity unceasingly and for all eternity, together with Jesus and Mary and all the blessed, in the name and on behalf of all her dear sisters. These are the first fruits of your house which you have offered to His Divine Majesty. It is your first sacrifice which must have been very pleasing before the throne of Almighty God.

But when I say that she has gone to heaven, I do not mean that she has arrived there yet, for sometimes one is a long time on the way. That is why we must pray a great deal for this dear sister. For my part, I will not fail to do so, with God's help.

I am afraid that the fervor of our good sisters and their desire to mortify themselves may impel them to endure excessive cold, which may cause illness among them. I pray you, my dear Mother, to take precautions against this.

With respect to Holy Communion for the sick, you may arrange for

- (1). Sister Mary of the Child Jesus died on January 3, 1660. See Letter 6, note 1.
- (2). Luke 22, 42.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

143-

it according to your own judgment. I thank Our Lord and His most Holy Mother for having given you the Old Bank House.

Sincere greetings to all our dear sisters. I remain with all my heart, my dear good Mother,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LETTER 89

To Mother Margaret Frances Patin. *The Saint congratulates her on having celebrated the feast of the Heart of Mary. Then he expresses fear of her being elected superior of the Visitation Convent at Saint-Lo, (1) and he outlines the course she should follow during Lent.*

Rouen, February 15, 1660 J.M.J.

My dear good Mother:

May the divine will be our guide in all things.

I was very happy about what you wrote me concerning our dearest Sister Mary of the Child Jesus, and I thank Our Lord and His most Holy Mother infinitely for it! I will do whatever is necessary, after we have discussed it together.

You make me very happy, too, my dearest Mother, by telling me that you celebrated the feast of the most Holy Heart of our admirable Mother so well. I give infinite thanks to her and her beloved Son for all the graces they bestowed on you that day-both you and all our dear Sisters. I bless and praise them with all my heart, too, for guiding you, my dear Mother, along the road which they themselves traveled, the way of the Cross and desolation. It is a very great favor that they are conferring on you; have no doubt about it, my dearest Mother. Embrace your cross wholeheartedly for the love of our most amiable Crucified and His divine Mother, and abandon yourself entirely to the divine will.

Thursday I delivered a lengthy exhortation at the greater Visitation Monastery, and another yesterday at the smaller one, where I saw the
(1). A town in the department of la Manche in Normandy.

144 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

Mother Superiors of both places. I was highly gratified with them, especially with the superior of the first-mentioned monastery;(2) she is truly a holy nun. We spoke a great deal of Mother Margaret Frances Patin, for whom she shows a great affection. But she told me something that troubles me exceedingly: that it is to be feared that you may be elected to the foundation at Saint U, where Mother Chary was to go. I beseech you, my dearest Mother, to let me know as soon as possible if there is any likelihood of this, any reason to fear it, so that we may anticipate and try to avert this blow which would spell the ruin of the house of Our Lady of Charity. Please write me what you know about this, and your sincere opinion of it.

This good Mother also told me that she hopes soon to have copies of the *Lives* of your first Mothers, and that she will send them to you.

I greet our dear Sisters, one and all, in the sacred love of the most Holy Heart of Jesus and Mary, beseeching them not to fail to visit our most amiable Saviour in the desert each day during Lent, in the name of the whole human race, that they may prostrate themselves at His feet to adore Him in all that transpires within Him, both outwardly and inwardly. Let them also thank Him for all He is doing and suffering for them and for all mankind, ask pardon of Him for the many sins for which He is mortifying Himself so rigorously, give themselves to Him in order to be united with His holy dispositions in fasting, praying, and remaining in silence and solitude, and try to imitate Him in all these things. After that, they should also visit His most holy Mother, who is in a state conformable to that of her Son, that they may greet and honor her in this condition, thank her, unite themselves with her and pray to her.

I am with all my heart, speaking to the dearest Mother and her dear daughters, my beloved Sisters,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

P. S. Please have a few little prayers said in private, my dear Mother, for nine days, and have the Sisters receive Holy Communion in a body, for my intentions.

(2). The superior of the first monastery at Rouen was Mother Joan Mary de Raguemare. The superior and foundress of the second one was Mother Mary Frances Elias. Ory, op. cit., P. 103, note.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

145 -

LETTER 90

To Father John Dupont.(1) *On the numerous crosses borne by the Saint.*

March 4, 1660

My dear brother, crosses come to me from all sides. If the good God did not sustain me, I should be overpowered by them. Lately my crosses are the heaviest and most painful that I have ever had to bear.

(1). See Letter 66, note i.

LETTER 91

To Father John James Blouet de Camilly. *On the behavior of the candidates for ordination at the Rouen seminary, during the Lenten ordination of 1660.*

March 31, 1660

We were highly gratified with our candidates for ordination, who numbered one hundred twenty. God has singularly blessed us in them. His Lordship the Archbishop(1) ordered us to bring them in procession on Saturday, the ordination day, into Notre Dame Church, where he conferred Holy Orders on them. Then they returned as they had come, but with such great modesty, piety and recollection, both in entering and leaving, and during the ordination ceremonies, that everyone agreed it would be impossible to find humbler religious anywhere. All who saw them were greatly edified, and his Lordship the Archbishop evinced such great satisfaction over them that he insisted on telling everyone about it over and over again, and proclaiming his joy in his seminary. Give thanks to God and His most Holy Mother for all this, and communicate it to our dear brethren, whom I embrace with all my heart.

(1). Francis Harlay de Champvallon. See Letter 54.

146 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 92

To a Priest of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. *On Father Nicholas Paillot(1)*

1660

This venerable priest is our goodfriend, or rather our beloved brother whom we love and consider as one of our own, and as belonging to our Congregation, because he really loves it as much as any one of us. For many years now he has been laboring with us on our missions with wonderful blessings and results, since God has endowed him with the true missionary spirit and all the qualities necessary for the perfect exercise of such functions.

(1). Father Paillot was not a Eudist, but spent several years on the missions with St. John Eudes and the first Eudist missionaries. He was an excellent catechism teacher and drew large crowds to his instructions. Cf. Boulay, OP. Cit., VOL 3, PP. 370-371.

LETTER 93

To the Community of Our Lady of Charity. *On submission to the will of God.*

Paris, July 20, 1660

J.M. J. My dearest and beloved Sisters:

May the divine will be our guide in all things.

I thank you with all my heart for your beautiful and cordial letter, which made me very happy indeed.

When I left Caen I expected to be away two months at the most, but my will was not in agreement with my thoughts, for it was my wish to be gone longer than eight months, but I was not aware that such was my will. I desired it, since God did, for His will is mine. I did not know then that I should have this intent, because I was ignorant of God's will in the matter, just as I do not know what He intends for the future. It is quite evident that His holy providence has brought

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

147-

us here so that we may accomplish, worthless instruments that we are, what we can scarcely believe, but we do not know yet how He wishes to dispose of us later on. Pray, my dearest Sisters, that He will do whatever is most pleasing to Him solely for the glory of His Holy Name, without regard for our unworthiness and wretchedness.

It is true that I am not in the least worried in your regard, my beloved Sisters, for, aside from the great concern and ardent love that I know our admirable Mother has for the daughters of her Heart, I also know full well in whose protection I have left you. That does not prevent, however, my offering you daily to Our Lord Jesus Christ during the holy sacrifice of the Mass, nor from visiting you each day in spirit. I beseech you in turn, my dearest Sisters, to join us daily in our labors during this mission,⁽¹⁾ by your prayers and other pious exercises. You can do nothing more pleasing to His Divine Majesty.

I am very happy over the blessings which God in His infinite goodness is bestowing on your little Community. I implore Him most humbly to increase them more and more, and not to tolerate any hindrance on your part. That such a thing may not happen, my beloved Sisters, I entreat you to examine yourselves particularly on these three points, namely: humility, obedience, and mutual charity and cordiality. I remain, a great deal more than you can imagine or I can say, in the sacred love of the most Holy Heart of Jesus and Mary, my dearest and beloved Sisters,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.
(1). At the Church of Saint Germain-des-Prés in Paris.

148-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 94

To Mother Margaret Frances Patin. *On the Launay property⁽¹⁾ and other matters.*

(Paris, 1660) J. M. J.

My very dear and good Mother:

May the divine will be our guide in all things.

I praised God with my whole heart for all the graces He is giving you and for the holy dispositions He is implanting in your soul. I thank Him, too, for increasing the ranks of our dearest Sisters, your good daughters. But particularly do I give thanks to Him for the goodwill He inspires in you toward my niece;⁽²⁾ I am most grateful to you on that score, my dearest Mother, and thank you with all sincerity.

I was delighted at first to read in your letter that your business in Rome is progressing satisfactorily, but this example at Avignon(3) of which you speak worries me considerably, for I am afraid they wish to unite you with the religious of Avignon-a thing that must never

(1). The Launay estate, situated in the parish of Saint Aubin-de-la-Pierre, near Periers, had been sold to the Coutances seminary in 1655 by Anne Le Conte, who entered the novitiate of Our Lady of Charity that same year. She brought the Community, a dowry of eight thousand livres. Upon receiving the habit she took the name of Sister Mary of the Presentation. In 1678 the Launay home became the novitiate of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary.

(2). The reference here is to Frances Herson, sister of Mother Mary of the Nativity Herson. She took the habit on July 25, 1662 at the age of twenty-one, was professed a lay sister on March 25, 1665 and died on March 26, 1733. She was known in religious life as Sister Mary of St. Francis. Entering the monastery in her youth, she suffered an injury to her arm at the hands of an unskillful surgeon, and for 2 long time it was feared that she might lose the use of her arm. Mother Patin allowed her to remain, nevertheless, out of respect to her uncle. The Saint alludes to these facts in this letter. Ory, op. cit., p. 110, note.

(3). In the Refuge of Avignon, the penitents were governed by former penitents who had become religious. St. John Eudes, on the contrary, wanted the administration of the religious of Our Lady of Charity always to be kept free from any hint of suspicion and thus he frowned upon allowing the penitents desirous of consecrating themselves to God to be professed in the Order; he preferred their being sent to other Communities. III& fact explains why he opposed, at all costs, the union of the Refuge of Caen with the one at Avignon. Cf. Ory, *ibid.*, p. 110.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

149-

be allowed to happen. Indeed, I should prefer instead to see the house utterly destroyed, but I trust that Our Lord and His most Holy Mother will provide. When Mr. de la Boissière arrives here, where he is expected, I shall know from his own lips just what he meant.

I saw our dearest Mother de Maupeou(4) and shall see her again, God willing, after the close of our mission here.

If I can locate the goldsmith, I will take care of your request.

That business about the Launay estate is giving me a great deal of trouble, for our brethren at Coutances write me that it will ruin our house if something is not done about it.

I beseech you, my dearest Mother, to consider that I undertook this transaction as a favor to your house, that I did so against the opinion of all our brethren, and that we purchased this estate when no one else wanted it. All that is incontestable, for the place was certainly not such a bargain that we were obliged to buy it. It is true that, after the deal had been closed, you or someone else told me that the pastor of Saint Nicolas Church was asking for the property, but at that time I had a verbal agreement with another person who was also making a bid for it. Even so, if the pastor of Saint Nicolas had come into possession of it, together with the same troubles in connection with it that we are having, he would not have failed to appeal to you for indemnity. Hence I am entreating you, my dearest Mother, to act in this case as you would have others act toward you under the same circumstances. It is a transaction in which we have been cheated, and if she who sold us this property were still in possession of her wealth, she would be obliged to indemnify us. Now it may be that it was largely a donation to you. That is why it is up to you to do what she would be obligated to do if the estate still belonged to her; such a course is only fair and equitable. But do not let me be the judge of it; I urge you, my dearest Mother, to forestall any offense against Christian charity by allowing yourself to be guided in this matter by what the Rules of the Visitation Order command you to do

whenever any legal difficulty

(4). Magdalen Elizabeth de Maupeou, daughter of the Calvinist Giles de Maupeou, entered the Visitation Order at Paris in 1628. She was superior successively at Caen (1635-41), Bayonne and Paris, where she had been recalled. She died at the first Paris monastery on July 3, 1674 at the age of seventy-eight, after forty-five years of religious life. Cf. *Année sainte* of the Sisters of the Visitation, Vol. 7

150 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

arises, that is, to choose several mutual friends, well informed in business affairs, to whose judgment you may refer matters such as this one. It is the expedient which should be adopted, and I do not doubt that you will resort to it, since it is eminently fair, reasonable and Christian.

Meanwhile, I send my most cordial regards to our dear Sisters, one and all. Please tell them that I beseech them to help us on this mission, a highly important one, by their prayers.

I remain with all my heart, my very dear and good Mother,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LETTER 95

To Mother Margaret Frances Patin. *On her spiritual disturbances, and the steps to take in obtaining the approbation of Rome for the Order.*

(1660) J. M. J.

My very dear and good Mother:

May the divine will be our guide in all things.

I bless Our Lord with my whole heart for the favor He has granted you in having controlled the wind and tempest, and having filled your soul with calm and tranquility. But I thank Him even more for the grace He has given you in allowing you the sufferings which I perceive from your letter you have undergone. My dear Mother, how precious is the state of suffering! Ah, what a priceless gift from divine Bounty it is! How much more should we render thanks to God for such desolations than for all the consolations in the world! They are the greatest gifts that God can bestow on earth upon souls who are very dear to Him, and, were we to remain on our knees for a century in thanksgiving for the most trifling affliction possible, we still could not thank Him worthily, as He Himself said on one occasion to Blessed Henry Suzo of the Order of St. Dominic. But, my dearest Mother, I beseech you to shun the thought that you have no vocation to the house

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

151 -

of our Lady of Charity. This idea does not proceed from God, since it is certainly contrary to the truth. Never have I known a vocation to be more obvious, indisputable and manifest than yours.

God grant that the news from Rome may be false, but I fear it is only too true, for Cardinal Anthony Barberini(1) to whom reference is made, and Cardinal Antonio are but one and the same person. It is true that we, on our part, have never spoken in Rome of the Daughters of the Heart of the

Most Holy Virgin, so I do not know where that could have originated.(2)

Be that as it may, we must be completely resigned to the most adorable will of God and trust that His infinite goodness will arrange everything in the manner most pleasing to Him; that, after all, is what we wish. Nevertheless, we should not become discouraged, but should do whatever we can to achieve our end.

I have always said to you, my dearest Mother, and I say again, that we must send a man to Rome expressly on our business, for the reasons I have already given you. It is my opinion that we should wait for further news; however, we must be prepared to send someone in case it becomes necessary. It is not nearly enough that the matter has been recommended to His Lordship of Le Puy;(3) it is still necessary for us to send an ecclesiastic to further the affair. I know one(4) in Paris who would be well qualified, and I do not think he would refuse me. I have written to Paris to find out when His Lordship of Le Puy plans to leave, so that I may meet him to discuss the matter with him at greater

(1). Cardinal Antonio Barberini (1607-1671), nephew of Pope Urban VIII, was created Cardinal in 1627.

(2). The Saint's enemies had probably succeeded in prejudicing Cardinal Barberini against the sisters because of their devotion of the Holy Heart of Mary, which was something new at that time, and it is in this regard that Mother Patin must have written the Saint. Cf. Ory, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

(3). The Bishop of Le Puy, of whom mention is made here, was His Lordship Henry de Maupas. He was about to leave for Rome to urge, in the name of the French clergy, the canonization of the saintly Francis de Sales.

(4). The man referred to was Fr. Francis Louis Boniface, a Flemish priest, whom St. John Eudes met in Paris during the Mission at the hospital of the Quinze-Vingt in Paris. This sincere and worthy priest knew Italian and had a number of friends and acquaintances in the Eternal City. To him the Saint entrusted the negotiations for the approbation of his religious orders. Cf. de Montzey, *Father Eudes*, p. 185; Joly, *Life of St. John Eudes*, p. 150.

152 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

length, and contact this ecclesiastic. If His Lordship consented to accompany him on the trip, that would be satisfactory. At any rate, I am asking you, my dearest Mother, to have on hand the money that he will need, in case he agrees to go, and to have good legible copies made, as soon as possible, of Bishop Mole's letters, the last judgment of verification, and your Constitutions. This last, however, is not so pressing.

Most cordial regards to all our Sisters. I remain in all sincerity, my very dear and good Mother,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LETTER 96

To Mother Margaret Frances Patin. *On her spiritual anxieties, and on sending a representative to Rome for the purpose of soliciting approbation for the Order.*

September 21, 1660 J. M. J.

My very dear and good Mother:
May the divine will be our guide in all things.

If I were to speak according to the senses, I should indeed pity you for your sufferings, but speaking according to the spirit, I find you more worthy of envy than of pity. The greatest happiness that can befall you is to be in conformity with Jesus Christ Our Lord, Who is our most adorable Master. Now, your present state of privation, death and annihilation is highly conformable to that endured by our most amiable Saviour here on earth. Therefore give yourself to Him, my dearest Mother, that you may suffer with Him in that condition and in His spirit, as He desires. Try to do these three things: 1. Strive not to become disheartened, guarding well against it. Surrender yourself to virtue and to divine strength, that they may sustain YOU. 2. Accept this state of death and annihilation, saying with the Son of God: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." (1). Abandon yourself completely
(2). Luke 23, 46.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

153 -

to the most holy will of God, repeating with Our Lord: «Not my will, but Thine be done.» (2)

I come now to your undertaking, my dearest Mother. A short time ago I saw several persons who recently had been in Rome on business of the same nature as yours, and they assured me that it will never receive attention unless you send a man expressly to advance it, for the same reasons that I have already mentioned and written to you so often.

Remember, too, that His Lordship of Le Puy (3) said this same thing to me on the subject, and that what you wrote me about Mother de Maupeou should not cause you the slightest hesitation, because I am quite sure that after I have explained things to her, she will agree with me.

I have also been informed by various persons who were recently in Rome what the approximate cost will be. They all tell me that a moderate expenditure will come to at least two hundred livres for the journey there and that much again for the return trip. While there, one cannot get along on less than four hundred livres a year; however, it will not take that long. In brief, while it is impossible to determine exactly what the entire cost will be, I think YOU Can manage on about six hundred livres. That sum, of course, is nothing in a matter of such great consequence. Have no regard for money, my dearest Mother, in this urgent necessity, lest Our Lord tell you some day what he told to St. Teresa on an occasion when she was having difficulty in deciding something regarding the establishment of one of her houses; she was hesitating because it would cost a great deal, whereupon the Son of God said to her: "Thou art therefore still mindful of money!"

The person who has made you an offer to go to Rome to transact your business for a hundred crowns is either joking or else he is planning to go there anyway and would like to make the trip at your expense. But has he all the qualifications necessary to handle this affair? If so, do as you please about it. But remember, my dearest Mother, what I have written you concerning the person (4) here who offers to go

(1). Luke 22, 42.

(2). Bishop Henry du Tour de Maupas. See Letter 95, note 2.

(3). Father Boniface. See Letter 95, note 4.

154 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

through pure and disinterested charity, and who is a very good man, learned, intelligent, courteous, with a knowledge of the Italian language and a number of friends and acquaintances in Rome.

Finally, the time to leave on this trip is drawing near. Let me know your final decision as soon

as possible, and in God's name have faith in one who loves the house of the Blessed Virgin as I do, and who speaks to you in all truth and sincerity. It is he who remains with all his heart, my dearest Mother,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LETTER 97

To Sister Mary of the Assumption Eustace de Taillefer.*(1) On conformity.
to the will of God.*

(Paris, September-October 1660)

J. M. J.

A thousand thanks to you, my dearest daughter, and to all our dearest Sisters as well, for your charitable regards and sincere cordialities. I assure you that I am not forgetting you in God's presence, and that I bring you daily, each and every one of you, to the holy altar.

If I followed my own inclinations, I can assure you that I should prefer to be at Caen where I could speak to you sometimes about the incomparable goodness of our most bountiful and adorable Saviour, rather than be here to walk about the streets of Paris. But God keep us ever from doing our own will, and grant us the grace to acknowledge that we have no interest in this world save that of accomplishing His holy will, everywhere and in all things, "with a great heart and a willing mind!"⁽²⁾ Ah, what a joy it is to know that this is our sole concern, and that all the powers of earth and hell cannot prevent us for a single moment, with the grace of God, from performing this one

(1). See Letter 16, now x.

(2). Mac. 1, 3

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

155-

duty if we wish to do so; indeed, the more they strive to hinder us, the more they help us to accomplish it.

With all the love in my heart, or rather in the sacred love of the most Holy Heart of Jesus and Mary, I send greetings to our dearest Sisters, one and all, and particularly to our dear good Mother,⁽³⁾ on whose word I rely completely.

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.
(3). Mother Margaret Frances Patin, the Superior.

LETTER 98

To Father John Dupont, Superior of the Coutances Seminary.*On the
course to follow regarding the seminary at Valognes, (1) which was sus-
pected of being tainted with Jansenism.*

(Paris, September 25, 1660)

I learned that a young man who had been sent by his father to our house in Coutances to determine his vocation, wishing to go to Valognes to study theology there, wrote his father that a close friendship exists between the latter seminary and the one at Coutances, and that you assured him there was absolutely no danger. This greatly surprised the father, in view of what is being said about the Valognes seminary.

If that was your counsel, it was given with good intent and because you do not know how that seminary is reputed to be a hotbed of Jansenism an opinion which is current here, and held by the Queen, (2) the Sorbonne and many others. What you said is capable, therefore, of doing us great harm and causing us to be considered something we are not, thank God.

I implore you, then, my dear brother, to make amends for this as best you can without telling anyone at all that I wrote you.

(1). Valognes is a town in the district of Cherbourg in Normandy. It was more important in the Saint's time than it is today.

(2). Anne of Austria. See Letter 50, note 1.

156 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 99

To Father John Dupont. *On the Hermitage (1) at Caen.*

November 27, 1660

You did exceedingly well not to receive them(2) in your house; for our benefactors(3) have secretly put a pamphlet in circulation here which maliciously states that I was the spiritual director of the Hermitage, and others are saying that those who committed these follies in the streets of Caen and elsewhere were from our ranks . . . The source of such impostures is vanity, which, once it has taken root in the mind, can seldom be banished and then only with great difficulty. That is what a holy person(4) told Mr. de Bernières(5) several times—that as many souls as he started on the path of passive prayer(6) (for that is in God's province), he was starting on the road to hell.

(1). This reference is to several members of the Hermitage at Caen who had asked to enter the Coutances seminary. We know that Mr. de Bernières had grouped around him, at the Hermitage, some laymen and ecclesiastics who lived under his guidance in the practice of piety and good works. After his death (May 3, 1659), some of them indulged in demonstrations in the streets of Caen, and later in those of Argentan and Falaise, which met with diverse judgments. Cf. Boulay, *Vie du V- P.. Eudes*, Vol. 3, Ch. 20. Four who had taken part in the Caen demonstrations were condemned by the criminal prosecutor to pay a fine and suffer banishment from the city of Caen. Two of them, Dennis Roberge, valet to Mr. de Bernières, and John Dudouyt, went to join Bishop de Laval in Canada. Another, James Dudouyt, John's brother, entered the Congregation of Eudists, where he was known under the name of Jourdan. He died in the odor of sanctity at the seminary in Rennes. The Abbé Tresvaux has included quite a detailed account of him in Volume V of his edition of the *Vies des saints de Bretagne*, by Dom Lobineau. Cf. Costil, *Les Fleurs de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie*; Souriau, *Le Mysticisme en Normandie au XV^e siècle*, Ch. V11 and V111.

(2). The persons who lived at the Hermitage.

(3). His enemies.

(4). Mary des Vallées. See Letter 17, note 3.

(5). See Letter 15, note 12.

(6) See "Introduction," p. xxvii.

LETTER 100

To the Priests of His Congregation. *On his enforced stay in Paris.*

(1660)

I can assure you that I should be extremely weary of Paris, if I followed my natural inclinations, and should have left it a long time ago. But it is the divine will that keeps me here, and I have neither hands nor feet to protect myself against it. On the contrary, I allow myself to be bound to its most sweet hands, and its chains are so delightful to me that my captivity constitutes all my happiness and paradise. O my dear brother, how happy is the soul which is disengaged from everything and adheres only to the most lovable will of its God!

LETTER 101

To Father John Dupont, Superior of the Seminary at Coutances. *On the practice of obedience.*

(1660)

Father Bernard (1) will soon make a trip to Coutances, but to my great regret it will be a short visit, so that he may return to Lisieux, because at present I have no one to replace him. It is a splendid opportunity for you to practice obedience ...

These past few days I have been seeing the Mother Superior (2) of the Visitation nuns in Caen, who came recently from Toulouse, that is to say, from a distance of two hundred fifty leagues. She told me that her chief incentive for willingly accepting this cross and all the worries and discomforts of such a long trip was the thought that such a wonderful opportunity for practising obedience might perhaps never again present

(1). See Letter 69, note 1.

(2). Mother Renée Faber, a professed nun of the Visitation Monastery at Annecy. *Annales de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie*, 1. 4, n. 25.

158-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

itself. Ah! how her example will fill many ecclesiastics with confusion on the day of judgment, since they should possess all the virtues in a higher degree than nuns]

LETTER 102

To Father John Dupont, Superior of the Coutances Seminary. *On complaints he had received from him.*

(About 1660)

You have no reason to complain (1) my dear brother, or to say that you are being nourished with gall. Those words are very bitter to the heart of one who tries in all things to keep the gall for himself and give the honey to others.

(1). Among other things, Father Dupont sometimes complained quite vigorously about the subjects St. John Eudes would send him, to such an extent that one day the Saint replied: "Henceforth I will send no one to you without first asking how you feel about him." *Annales de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie*, '1.4, n. 24.

LETTER 103-

To the Priests of the Seminary at Caen. *He reports what he said to the Queen Mother (1) in a sermon preached at the Benedictines of the Most Holy Sacrament in Paris, February 8, 1661, the day on which they were celebrating the feast of the Holy Heart of Mary.*

Paris, February 17, 1661

The Queen arrived toward the end of my sermon, and I told her many things with respect to the fire which burned a section of the Louvre(2). I began addressing her in this manner:

Madame, I have nothing to say to Your Majesty except to implore you most humbly, since His Divine Majesty has brought you here,

(1). Anne of Austria, who acted a regent under Mazarin.

(2). Royal palace at Paris.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

159-

never to forget the powerful sermon that God has preached to you and the King through the fire which destroyed part of the Louvre. You are well aware that for Christians nothing happens by chance, but that everything takes place through the providence and will of God. This fire, therefore, was the result of His mandate and it meant several things:

1. That it was strictly forbidden to work on Sundays and feast days;

2. That kings were allowed to build Louvres; but that God was ordering them to lighten the burden of their subjects, to take pity on so many widows, orphans and people overwhelmed by poverty;

3. That kings and princes were permitted to indulge in decent amusements; but to spend all their days, weeks, months, years and even a whole lifetime in doing so was not the road to paradise;

4. That Paris was full of atheists who trample God underfoot and do things to shock even the demons; and that, if their Majesties were aware of all this and refrained from using the royal authority to punish such horrible crimes, they would be held responsible for them before God and bring down His vengeance and curse upon their heads;

5. That, if temporal fire had not spared the royal house, the eternal fires would spare neither princes nor princesses, kings nor queens, unless they lived like Christians and took pity upon their subjects; and that, if this material fire had shown no respect for the portraits and likenesses of the kings which were in the palace that burned, neither would the fire of God's wrath spare the originals unless they used their authority to destroy the tyranny of the devil and sin, and to establish the kingdom of God in the souls of their subjects;

6. That my sole interest in saying these things was that of my Master and my God, as well as

that of the salvation of my King and Queen for whom I would lay down a thousand lives;

7. That it was indeed a pity that the great personages of this world were besieged by hordes of sycophants who were so poisoning and destroying them by their flatteries that they almost never heard the truth; that preachers were very culpable in the sight of God to suppress the truth unjustly, and that I should consider myself most guilty if I did not say all these things to her Majesty;

Finally, I entreated her to accept them as coming not from a man

160 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

but from God; that I was only a worthless creature and miserable sinner, but that in the place where I was standing and as a representative of God, I could say, like St. Paul and all who have the honor to preach the holy word of God: "For Christ therefore we are ambassadors." (3) I was fulfilling my duty as an ambassador of Jesus Christ in order to bring the words of the King of kings to a great queen, and that I implored her to accept them as such.

In conclusion, I entreated the nuns and the assistants, with whom the church was filled to overflowing, to address their prayers to Our Lord and His most Holy Mother to obtain from His Divine Majesty the grace for our most Christian King (4) and our Queens (5) to acknowledge so many favors and blessings which heaven had lavished on their royal persons, and to use their power to overthrow the tyranny of hell and establish the kingdom of God in the souls of their subjects.

That is what I said almost word for word. I am writing you this so that you and your friends may know the truth.

I have since learned from several persons who were with the Queen, and who left with her at that time, that she took it very well indeed, and that, when several flatterers had wanted to comment, she silenced them very conclusively.

His Lordship of Coutances, (6) who is at the Court and knows what is going on there, expressed great satisfaction to me over my sermon; and a number of other persons of quality sought me out to let me know how glad they were about it.

May God bestow His universal blessing, granting us the grace never to seek anything save to please Him, and to do and say what He asks of us.

(3). 2 Cor. 5, 20.

(4). Louis XIV (1638-1715)

(5). Anne of Austria the Queen Mother, and Mary Teresa, daughter of Philip IV of Spain, who married Louis XIV in 1660.

(6). His Lordship Claude Auvry, former bishop of Coutances.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

161 -

LETTER 104

To Father John Dupont, Superior of the Coutances Seminary. In answer to Father Dupont's letter claiming that God did not wish him to remain there.

(1661) J. M. J.

Peace to men of good will, that is to say, peace to men who have made a complete renunciation of their own wills and have no other than God's, which is manifested to them through holy obedience.

O my dear brother, what a great delusion it is to maintain that one is quite certain that God does not desire something of him which obedience desires! Let us humble ourselves, my dear brother, and not misrepresent our own inclinations and feelings as the will of God when they are contrary to obedience, without which it is impossible to please His Divine Majesty, particularly in a Congregation of ecclesiastics who must serve as examples for all types of virtue.

You would be very fortunate even to die through obedience in your present employment. Let us ask Our Lord to make us participants in His divine obedience which caused His death on the Cross, and for our own part, let us strive to put our own wills to death and follow our most kind Father, if we wish to be numbered among His children. I implore Him with all my heart to grant us this grace. Nevertheless, since you constrain me to do so, I will shortly relieve you of your post at all costs, God willing.

I am, in truth, with all my heart,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

162 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 105

To Father Thomas Hubert.(1) *During an illness.*

(1661)

I am deeply moved by your illness. You have a quartan ague(2) in your body, and I have three in my heart: yours, that of our brother Father Jourdan and that of Brother Andre,(3) along with the tertian ague(4) of our beloved Father Blouet, and the ills of our very dear Father Le Mesle and all our other brethren.

(1). *Father Thomas Hubert* (1622-1674): Born in Bricqueville, in the diocese of Coutances, Father Hubert joined the Congregation in 1652 and was stationed at Lisieux in 1658. After the Versailles mission (1671) in which he had participated, Louis XIV requested, and obtained permission, to *keep him* at the Court to take charge of the palace chapel. He died at Versailles on March 20, 1674. Cf. *Les Fleurs de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie*, Vol. 1, P. 45.

(2). An intermittent fever which returns every fourth day that is, with two days' intermission between paroxysms.

(3). No information could be obtained in the present instance pertaining to Brother André.

(4). An intermittent fever which returns every other day.

LETTER 106

To Mother Margaret Frances Patin. *On the measures to be taken in Rome, and on the guidance of the penitents*(1)

(Paris, summer of 1661) J. M. J.

My very dear and good Mother:

May the divine will be our guide in all things.

Yesterday I forwarded to Father Boniface,(2) at his request, the affi-

(1). In the Order of Our Lady of Charity of the Refuge and the Good Shepherd, name given to the group of girls and women who have led disorderly lives or who are in need of reform.

(2). See Letter 95, note 4.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

163-

davits(3) you had sent me from the Vicars-General, together with several others from the Vicars-General of Paris. These affidavits concern the nuns of the Hotel Dieu, in Paris, who are constantly in the midst of numerous sick persons, convalescents, doctors, surgeons, apothecaries, hospital attendants and even fallen women who come there to be confined, and they also concern your own Visitation Sisters who stay at the Magdalen Asylum. Their purpose is to prove that both employments exist without giving rise to any disorder.

A long time ago I spoke about this matter to his Lordship of Bayeux, (4) telling him what was being done at Rome in that regard. He even wrote, at my request, to some of his friends there, asking them to help further our cause. I spoke to him about it again this week, and he assured me that when he is in Rome he will furnish his affidavit and have it presented by the proper persons, and that he will have recourse to all his influence and friends there in order to bring our business to a successful conclusion. He is expecting to receive his Bulls tomorrow. He will be consecrated as soon as possible, and he hopes then to be in his diocese by All Saints' Day. Hence I have written Father Boniface that, if he perceives any danger of failure, he should not continue to push the matter but rather delay it for the moment until he obtains his Lordship's help. I received some letters from him yesterday, in which he wrote that they are raising formidable objections over the danger which they believe results from having religious govern penitents; that some, nevertheless, are encouraging his hopes, and that he is working day and night to promote this affair, busying himself with it to the exclusion of everything else. He also wrote that, in order to overcome their objection, he has disclosed that the penitents are separated from the Sisters by a wall; that they have their own dormitory, refectory and chapel; that there is a door in the aforementioned wall through which two of the older Sisters, chosen by the superioress, enter the penitents' quarters and leave again in the evening; that during the

(1). Father Boniface arrived in Rome on May 17, 1661, and on the 30th he sent St. John Eudes an account of the steps he had taken. At the same time he requested several affidavits which the Saint hastened to send him. The above letter, in which he speaks of that consignment, must have been written from Paris during the summer of 1661.

(2). His Lordship Francis de Nesmond, who was appointed at the beginning of 1659, but was not consecrated until March 19, 1662. See Letter 120, note 1.

164-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

night the penitents are watched through a lattice; that there is always a lighted lamp in the center of their dormitory, before a statue of the Blessed Virgin; that those of the penitents who are recognized to be well grounded in the fear of God are put in charge of the others; that those who are capable of corrupting the others are placed under lock and key during the night; that no one is forced to enter the house, but, that only those accepted who, being moved by the grace of God, enter voluntarily to become converted and do penance.

He wrote me that he revealed all these things in order to overcome their objection, in the belief that they exist as he described them, and that I should inform you about it so that, if they are not exactly as he stated, you may put them into practice as soon as possible. For if it happens-as it will if he meets with success--that they write from Rome to the Nuncio, as is customary in such circumstances, requesting confirmation of these things, they must be found true. See to it then, my dearest Mother, if you please.

I wrote him that the penitents are not observed through a lattice, and that he should try to suppress this proposition, but that all the rest will be done. The Abbe Brisacier has contributed nothing whatsoever to our cause, and the banker(5) has served only to injure it. If a man like the one there now had been sent in the first place, the thing would have been accomplished a long time ago, and with less trouble and expense, which will be considerable now.

I have already seen our good Mother de Maupeou,(6) and I hope to see her again today.

I greet all our dear Sisters most cordially, each and every one of them. Please tell them that I recommend myself earnestly to their prayers. I remain, both to the Mother and her daughters, in the sacred love of the most Holy Heart of Jesus and Mary, my dearest Mother,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

(5). After Father Mannoury's second trip to Rome, a banker was chosen by him to solicit approbation for Our Lady of Charity. Father Boniface conferred with him upon his arrival in Rome, without, however, being able, on the whole, to share his point of view.

(6). Mother Mary Elizabeth de Maupeou, who had been superior of the visitation Convent at Caen.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

165-

LETTER 107

To Mother Margaret Frances Patin. *The Saint asks that a copy of the Rules for the Penitents be made in order to send them to Rome, and he prescribes the Articles for them.*

Paris, September to, 1661 J. M. J.

My dearest Mother:

May the divine will be our guide in all things.

Enclosed is a letter from Father Boniface which I received yesterday and am forwarding to you, so that you can have the plan he requests drawn up, like the one he has made, or approximately so, and can send it to me as soon as possible.

It will not be necessary for you to send me all your Rules, but have those written out for me which concern the penitents and the manner in which they are governed, and have the following articles inserted:

1. That only those are received who, being called by God, voluntarily enter the house to do penance there.

2. That during the time they spend there, they remain perfectly cloistered.

3. That they never are received into this monastery to become nuns, but if they desire to be such, they are sent to the monasteries of converts in other cities, if they wish to go there.

4. That their dormitory, chapel and refectory are separate from those of the nuns.

5. That, if anyone proves to be incorrigible, she is made to leave.

6. That, although they live in the same monastery with the nuns, they are separated from them at least by a wall so that there may be no communication between them except by permission of the superior.

7. That there is a door in this wall, through which two nuns, by order of the superior, enter every morning to join the converts in order to be with them during the day, in a room where they are all together, that they may watch over their conduct, see that they pray, have some spiritual reading for them at appointed hours, and see that they are

166 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

working the rest of the time. In the evening, after prayers and self-examination, the converts retire to their cells and the two nuns rejoin the other religious. Then the door is locked and the key given to the Superior.

8. That those nuns who are oldest both in age and in manner are chosen to be sent during the day to remain with the penitents. The same ones are not always sent, however; sometimes one is changed, sometimes the other, for greater precaution.

9. If any one of the converts is under suspicion, she is locked in her cell at night.

10. During the night there is always a lighted lamp in the converts' dormitory, before an image of the Blessed Virgin. There is also a religious to watch them through the grills, which are arranged in such a way that the nun who is observing them cannot speak to any convert, lest she be heard by the other nuns around her.

11. No questionable outsider, whether man or woman, is permitted to speak with the converts, not even their own relatives.

All these things were set forth by Father Boniface and must be included in the Rules you are sending me, with the intent to keep them as long as possible or until they are no longer needed.

The word *converts* used in Father Boniface's letter is the name given them in that country instead of penitents or repentant women.

If Father Mannoury were with you, he would immediately put all these rules in good order and draw up the plan for you that Father Boniface requests, and he would do so properly and in conformity with your place;(1) but it would be necessary to send a man with a horse expressly to Lisieux to bring him back as soon as possible. However, I should not want him to lodge with us on account of the sickness there. I should prefer that you give him the Rules of the Penitents with this letter after he has conferred with you, my dear Mother, and seen your house, and that he go to Camilly for two days to do the task there. I am writing him to call on you for that purpose if you send

for him.

Send me at your earliest convenience the attestations of the cures and the chief personages of that city, such as you are able to procure,

(1). This phrase probably designates the division of Community quarters between the sisters and penitents.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

167-

for his Lordship of Bayeux is still without his Bulls and is not leaving as yet for his diocese. Return Father Boniface's letter to me and address your letter to me at the Mazarin Palace in Paris. That is where I am lodging, since his Lordship of Coutances, who lives there, wanted me to have a room there and take a rest cure for an indisposition I have which is of very slight consequence.

I am with all sincerity, my dearest Mother,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LETTER 108

To Madame Blouet de Camilly. *On her husband's illness.* (1)

Paris, October 18, 1661 J. M. J.

Godgrant, my dearest daughter, that on this occasion of our beloved brother's illness I may give you the same reply as that of Our Lord to St. Martha and St. Magdalen, who had told Him just what you write to me: *He whom Thou lovest is sick*(2) meaning their good brother St. Lazarus. God grant, I repeat, that I may reply to you: *This sickness is not unto death.* (3) But because these divine words would be ineffectual in my mouth, and since it is to Our Lord that you address yourself in saying to His representative, though an infinitely unworthy one: *He whom Thou lovest is sick*, I implore this most kind Saviour with all my heart, by the great goodness which prompted Him to make that reply to the sisters of Lazarus, to answer you in like manner with the words: *This sickness is not unto death.*

No matter what happens, my dear daughter, these words will always hold true of our dear patient, which is a wonderful cause for comfort, for there is no death for true children of God... *I am the*

(1). Reference is made here to James Blouet de Camilly. See Letter 15, note 1.

(2). John 11, 3.

(3). John 11, 4.

168-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

resurrection and the life, said the Son of God to St. Martha, *he that believeth in me, although he be dead, shall live: and every one that liveth, and believeth in me, shall not die for ever.* (4) Let us be comforted, my dearest daughter, by these great truths and by the recollection of what our good Saviour has said to us.

It is true, I must confess, that although these considerations do much to assuage my grief, my heart is nevertheless sorely afflicted by the knowledge that our poor dear spiritual brother, Mr. de Camilly, is in such a condition, and that you and all your loved ones, my dear daughter, are in your

present anguish and in danger of falling ill from this perilous sickness. I beseech my Jesus with all my heart to keep you safe. Not my will be done, however, but His.

I fancy that I see from your *letter* that this kind Saviour is implanting in your heart, my good daughter, the dispositions which should be there at this time, and that comforts me no little. I thank Him infinitely for it and implore Him to *preserve and* increase this spirit in you for His glory. *There is* never a time when He is so glorified in a soul as during a period of affliction, when one bears it in a Christian spirit. Let us try, *therefore*, to do so, my dearest daughter, accepting from His hand the trials He sends us and supporting them with all possible humility, resignation and love.

If you perceive that our dear brother is in any real danger, have recourse to the little book I have written entitled *Man's Contract with God* (5) You will find, about halfway through this book, several complete acts which embody the dispositions necessary for a Christian death, and at the beginning of these acts, the method of using them when assisting a sick person, that the patient may practise them without disturbing himself. I should like all who take care of the sick to have this book. It would also be well for you to consult the final pages of *Exercise in Preparation for Death*, (6)' contained in *The Kingdom of Jesus*, at the end of the book.

Finally, my dearest daughter, I implore Our Lord Himself to be

(4). John 11, 25-26.

(5). A short work in which St. John Eudes summarizes the teaching of Sacred Scripture and of Tradition on the Sacrament of Baptism.

(6). See *The Kingdom of Jesus*, Part 7, P. 312 ff.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

169-

your strength and guide, and to accomplish His holy will perfectly in you and all yours. I implore His most precious Mother to harbour and protect you in her motherly Heart, in whatever way is most pleasing to that divine will.

it is in the sacred love of this most kind Heart that I embrace our dear patient a thousandfold, and that I pronounce over him, you and all your loved ones these holy words: *Nos cum Prole pia benedicat Virgo Maria. Amen!* (7)

JOHNEUDES

(7). Blessing used in the Congregation of Jesus and Mary.

LETTER 109

To Madame Blouet de Camilly. *How to act in time of illness.*

Paris, October 25, 1661 J. M. J.

I cannot tell you too often, my dearest daughter, how distressed and grieved I am, for that is inexpressible. Certainly, I know well through experience that your griefs and sufferings are also mine.

I received your letters on Saturday, after the mail had gone Out, and that is why I could not write you until today; it added to my sorrow to have to go so long without giving you some small

comfort.(1)

O my dear daughter, how terrible is my grief and anguish that I cannot be near you now to weep with you and help you in your present affliction. But it is the most adorable will of God which arranges it thus and does everything through infinite goodness toward us and for the best. Then let it be adored, blessed and praised through all eternity in all its decrees! Never before, my dearest daughter, have we had such a magnificent opportunity to glorify God and render ourselves pleasing to Him as on this occasion, and perhaps never again shall we have

(1). Mr. de Camilly died on October 18th. On Saturday, the 21st, the Saint learned simultaneously, through letters, of his friend's death and of Madame de Camilly's illness. Cf. Boulay, Op. Cit. VOI. 3, P. 320.

170 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

such an opportunity. Let us not allow it to pass, therefore, without making the holiest possible use of it. To that end:

1. Let us acknowledge that of ourselves we are thoroughly incapable of using it without a special grace from the goodness of God, and that we are infinitely unworthy to receive this grace; but let us ask for it, nevertheless, with confidence, and it will be given to us.

2. Let us humble ourselves beneath the almighty hand of God, acknowledging that the least of our sins deserves all the afflictions in this world, and let us accept those He sends us, and will send in the future, in honor of His divine justice and in reparation for our sins.

3. Let us adore the most holy will of God, submitting and abandoning ourselves wholly and unreservedly to whatever disposal it may please Him to make of us and what is ours.

4. Because sorrows are a gift from God far more precious and greater in this world than consolations, let us thank Him for them with all our hearts, as much as is in our power.

5. Let us offer our sorrows, griefs, sighs and tears to Our Lord Jesus and His most Holy Mother, in thanksgiving for their sorrows and griefs which were infinitely greater than ours, and for all their sighs and tears.

6. Let us embrace our crosses for love of our most amiable Crucified, Who bore such heavy sorrows for love of us.

7. Let us unite ourselves with our Holy Mother at the foot of the Cross of her beloved Son. Alas! She is completely overwhelmed with sorrows, and yet so imbued with obedience to God's holy will that, because such is the desire of that adorable will, she sacrifices to His Divine Majesty a Son Who is infinitely dear to her, Who is her Son, her Father, her Brother, her Spouse, her God, her All. Let us unite ourselves, my dear daughter, to these holy dispositions, that we may sacrifice with her and with Our Saviour the lives of all our dear ones, our own lives, and a hundred thousand worlds if we possessed them.

8. Let us offer all our griefs and afflictions to Our Lord and His most Holy Mother, praying them to unite them with theirs and put them to the same use as they made of theirs, for the glory of the most holy Trinity.

9. For the same end, let us also offer them all the sorrows that have

ever been, are now and ever shall be in the universe, particularly those of persons who have not put them to good use; since all these things are ours, according to the divine Word, we should use them to glorify our heavenly Father, together with our most adorable Master, Jesus, Who employs all things for His Father's glory.

10. Let us pray to our guardian angels, all the angels and saints, and our good Sister(2) to do all the above things for us, as also the others that we ought to do, in order to give thanks to God for our debt to Him in time of trouble.

Do you not earnestly desire all these things, my dear daughter, as well as to unite yourself with those who are doing or will do them for you? Yes, beyond a doubt you do. Say, therefore, for this intention, with all your heart: *Amen, amen, fiat, fiat.*

If you are in danger of death, *here are* several things that I urge you to do, both *exteriorly and* interiorly.

Exteriorly: 1. Recall *whether you* owe anything to anyone, and have payment made for all your debts *immediately if* possible, without leaving that responsibility to others after your death. 2. If you have had any *disagreement with* anyone, become perfectly reconciled, doing whatever is necessary to that end; and even ask pardon of all your servants. 3. Give your blessing to all your children, in the name of Our Lord and His most Holy Mother, entreating them to bless them in time and in eternity, and admonishing them to live in the fear of God and to love one another in charity. 4. If you can, have a donation given to the poor.

Interiorly: 1. Do not worry about making a general confession; that is not in the least necessary. But try to have general contrition, after having asked it of God. 2. Give yourself to Our Lord, in preparation for receiving Holy Viaticum, that you may receive Him in union with all the holy dispositions with which all the saints on earth received Him in their hour of death. 3. Do the same with regard to extreme unction, and do not wait to *receive it* until you no longer have the use of your sense'. 4. Have someone read you the acts contained in *Man's Contract with God through Holy Baptism*, which embody all the dispositions *necessary for* a Christian death; not all at one time, but first one, then
(2). Mary da Vallées.

another; and likewise the last chapter of *The Kingdom of Jesus*. 5. Do not forget to try to gain the plenary indulgence for the hour of death, which is granted to those who belong to the Holy Rosary and have the medals that you have. 6. After all that, the best disposition for a Christian death is to give yourself entirely to Our Lord, that you may unite yourself with all the holy dispositions with which He, His most Holy Mother and all the saints died. Among these dispositions, there are three for which you should strive in particular: humility, trust, and abandonment to the divine will. 7. Have them entreat your good sister at the Abbey(3) and kind Mother Patin to have the exercises of the *Preparation for Death*, contained in *The Kingdom of Jesus*, said for you. 8. After you have done all that, be careful not to rely on it, but place all your reliance and trust purely in the mercy of Our Lord and in the intercession of His most Holy Mother.

In conclusion, my dear daughter, I wish to make you the finest gift within my power, and this

is it:

Yesterday and today I said holy Mass to supplicate Our Lord to grant you three things:

First, to bestow upon you, in whatever way He deems best and most pleasing to Him, all the graces and gifts He has deigned and shall deign to grant me in my lifetime, all the Masses I have said and will yet say, all my missions of the past and future, and in general, all that He has granted and shall grant me to think, say, do inwardly and outwardly, and suffer in His service.

Secondly, to bestow on you all the holy Masses, missions and all the goodworks in general which, through His grace, have been and shall ever be performed in our Congregation.

Thirdly, to grant you all the souls He has given and shall give me, in His great mercy, in all the missions I have conducted and will yet conduct, and in any other circumstances; and to grant you these three gifts in order to contribute to the accomplishment of His designs for you from all eternity, and that He may forever find as much glory in you as He desires.

And so that I may do what I can on my part to put you in possession

(3). Madame Le Haguais, sister Of Madame de Camilly and of Mr. Augustine Le Haguais, and a nun of the Abbey of the Holy Trinity in Caen.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

173 -

of these three gifts, after having adored the infinite love through which our Lord gave to His most holy Mother all that He received from His Father, and having thanked Him for it, I offered myself and am offering myself again to this divine love of Jesus for His dearest Mother, who is both His Mother and Daughter; and in union with this same love, I have given and am giving you for evermore, my dearest daughter, and irrevocably, the three aforesaid gifts, in the most perfect manner that I can confer them on you, in accordance with the most holy will of God, and that I may contribute all within my power to the perfect accomplishment of all the plans that His Divine Majesty has had for you from all eternity.

Will you not accept this gift, my dearest daughter, for this same intention? Then give thanks to Him Who is the sole source of all good, and not to him who is nothing and of himself can give rise to no good. I forgot to tell you that I prayed to the Blessed Virgin Mary, all our angels and saints, and our good Sister to implore Our Lord to ratify and confirm this gift.

I am asking three things of you, too, my dearest daughter:

1. That, if you have anything to tell me or recommend to me, you tell it to Father Dudy, and even request him to write it down in your presence, to make sure that he forgets nothing.

2. That you leave to our beloved brother, Father Blouet, your holy relics, and to me the holy rosary that you received from our Sister,(4) as also everything else that belonged to her, even her cane, and I will distribute them to whomever you wish; you can tell this also to Father Ducly.(5) Nevertheless, that you may act without any compulsion, I shall leave this entirely to your generosity. Leave me something, however, from among your devotional articles, whatever you wish.

Here is the third and principal thing I ask of you, my dearest daughter. It is that, when God has shown you mercy-and this you can expect with confidence from His infinite goodness and the intercession of Our glorious Mother and our good Sister-you take our Congregation and the House of Our Lady of Charity under your special protection in heaven. To this end, dear daughter, I constitute

you to be henceforth,
(4). Mary des Vallées.
(5). See Letter 58, note 7

174 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

in the name of Our Lord and His most Holy Mother, the solicitor and provider of all our spiritual and temporal affairs, that you may intercede and beg for us at the throne of God and with the Blessed Mother, our good Sister and all the angels and saints. Will you accept this position, my *dearest daughter*, and give yourself to the Son of God and His divine Mother in order to accomplish this carefully according to their most holy will, and to try to obtain for us now from the goodness of God these four things above all others? 1. Several good brothers and excellent workers to help us labor for the salvation of Souls. 2. The favor of building a church in Caen, in honor of the most holy Heart of our most Holy Mother. 3. A house in Paris, with a church or chapel, to celebrate therein the feast of this same Heart. 4. Success in Rome for the negotiations concerning our good sisters. In addition, as soon as you reach heaven, ask for the salvation of Mr. Le Haguais, your brother, and of your good daughter, Madame de Camilly, and all her children and yours.

I give you my daily blessing, and several times during holy Mass I entreat our good Jesus . . .

LETTER 110

To the Priests of his Congregation. *On the death of Mr. Blouet, (1) Seigneur de Camilly, which occurred suddenly on October 18, 1661.*

(1661)

May the divine will be our sole consolation in our afflictions.

It does all things with such great wisdom and goodness that we have only to look upon it in all the misfortunes that befall us in order to be comforted.

I must confess, however, that this consolation does not prevent my suffering a great sorrow, according to the senses, because of the decease of our good Mr. de Camilly. We have lost a very sincere and faithful friend.

(1). Husband of Madame de Camilly and father of John James Blouet, a member of the Eudist Congregation.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

175 -

But I speak from the human viewpoint in saying that we have lost him, for, after all, who does not lose God loses nothing. Then too, we do not lose our friends when God takes them unto Himself. On the contrary, they are all the more ours, and they are more useful to us in heaven than on earth. But we must help them to reach heaven quickly, for it often happens that one is a long time in arriving there.

I entreat all our dear brethren to take care to render God what we owe Him in this hour of sorrow, by humbling ourselves under His almighty hand, adoring His divine will and submitting ourselves to it with all our hearts, thanking Him for the crosses that it pleases Him to send us, sacrificing to Him our lives and those of all our loved ones, and above all, trying to put ourselves in the state in which we should wish to be at the hour of death. To that end, let us renew our desire to

fulfil all our obligations with the utmost exactitude.

LETTER 111

To Father Thomas Manchon. *On the death of Father Richard Le Mesle,(1)which occurred on October 21, 1661.*

1661

I am suffering deeply from the death of our beloved Mr. de Camilly, and to an even greater degree from that of Father Le Mesle, who was one of our best members, one of the most useful to our Congregation and one most devoted to it.

(1). See Letter 14, note 1.

LETTER 112

To Madame de Camilly. *To comfort her on the death of her husband.*

Paris, November 1, 1661 J. M. J.

I give infinite thanks to Our Lord Jesus and His most precious Mother for your improved health, my very dear and good daughter; it

176-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

affords me great consolation. Yes, my dearest and peerless daughter, I shall write you often, I assure you, and gladly; for your letters always console me, and I find comfort in writing you, too.

But what shall I say to you, my good daughter, to console you in your sorrow, the most grievous you have ever had and perhaps ever will have?

This is what I have to tell you, which is what I also tell myself. Is it not the most adorable will of God that regulates and ordains everything that happens here below? Yes, beyond a doubt. Is not this adorable Queen infinitely wise, powerful and good, in order to know, be able and desire to direct all that happens to us, even to the smallest things and most trifling circumstances, in the way most advantageous for the glory of God and our own good? Yes, certainly. That being the case, it is then an infallible conclusion that what has happened to you is for the greatest glory of God and to our advantage.

Well then, shall we grieve over an event by which God is glorified, which He has ordained out of infinite goodness toward you? Let us be comforted, therefore, my incomparable daughter, and let us not give way any longer to grief. Let us find consolation in our knowledge that our dearest spiritual brother, Mr. de Camilly, is now numbered among those who will see the face of the heavenly Father and will love and bless Him for all eternity.

Let us also rejoice, my dear good daughter, because this life is short and because soon, through divine mercy, we shall see this beloved brother and with him render eternal praise to God for all the favors He has granted us in His goodness. Let us obey the voice of the Holy Spirit which tells us: *Weep but a little for the dead*, (1) seeing that he is at rest. He is speaking of him who has lived in the fear of God, such as our own dear departed; for, in referring to the wicked, He says: *The mourning ... for a fool and an ungodly man is all the days of their life.* (2) Alas, yes, one must weep eternally, and tears

of blood, for those who have not lived as Christians; but with regard to him who lived and died in the way of Christ, we should do what God says: Weep but a little.

(1). Ecclus. 22, 11.

(2). Ecclus. 22, 13.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

177 -

I implore you, therefore, my dear good daughter, to moderate your tears and restrain your laments.

Let infidels and heretics, let the relatives and friends of bad Catholics, weep without consolation and unceasingly for the death of their departed ones; but we have no death to lament. Our beloved spiritual brother is not dead and will never die, but for all eternity he will live the life of the children of God, a life free from all evil and replete with every kind of blessing. In God's name, my incomparable daughter, do not give way to sadness any longer. Of what use would it be except to scandalize your neighbor and cause you some troublesome illness from which you might never recover?

It has pleased God to deprive you of your dear husband; yet you are not a widow, because Our Lord is your Spouse, for a long time ago he gave you the grace to be chosen by Him as His spouse. (3) Is He not worth more, this most amiable Jesus, than all the men in the universe? Well then, my good daughter, look upon this divine Saviour as your most lovable Spouse; thank Him for the infinite favor He bestowed upon you in granting you a place in the ranks of His spouses; give Him your whole heart and affection; strive earnestly to disengage yourself completely from this earth and all its creatures; and let your sole concern be henceforth to labor to make yourself pleasing to this divine Spouse, and so to prepare yourself for a good and holy death which wings its way toward us.

Since Jesus is your Spouse, my dear daughter, the Mother of Jesus is your mother; therefore cast yourself at her feet to greet and honor her as such, to offer yourself to her, to protest to her that you wish to serve, love and follow her as your most bountiful Mother; and entreat her to protect, bless and guide you as her daughter. Say to her, for these intentions, with all your heart: *Monstra te esse Matrem ...* three times, and *Sub tuum ...*

The best things you can do for our dear departed one are to say the holy rosary, offer to God your Holy Communions and the Masses that You hear for him, and above all, have as many Masses said as possible.

(3). After having given birth to four children, three boys and a girl, Madame de Camilly made a vow of perpetual chastity, under the guidance Of St. John Eudes and with her husband's consent, and signed the agreement with her blood. Hérambourg, 1, Ch. 13.

178 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

All mine will be for him and for our dear brother, Father Le Mesle, whenever I can do so. They will share them between them.

Cordial greetings to all the family.

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LETTER 113

To Madame de Camilly. *On the same subject.*

Paris, November 8, 1661 J. M. J.

What are you doing, my poor dear afflicted child? What are you doing? In what condition are you at this moment? Are you not making any attempt to moderate your grief? Write me a little about your feelings, my dear good daughter. It seems to me that I have not received a letter from you for a long time. I think of you constantly, my incomparable daughter, and your sorrows are always in my heart.

But if we are not masters of our senses in such bitter anguish, let us try, my beloved daughter, frequently to raise our minds to the heavenly Father, saying to Him these holy words which His Son Jesus, our most adorable Master, addressed to Him in the most poignant and overwhelming grief that ever was or will be, that we may acquire the spirit of obedience, resignation and love with which this divine Saviour uttered them: "Father, not my will, but thine be done." (1) Let us repeat those sacred words over and over again, and these, too, which also emanated from the all-loving Heart and adorable lips of this same Jesus: "Yea, Father; for so hath it seemed good in thy sight." (2) Yes, my most kind Father, Thou Who dost all things with infinite wisdom and goodness, I wish all that Thou dost wish, and because such is Thy desire. It is Thou Who didst give me this dear husband, it is Thou Who hast deprived me of him; blessed be Thy name! I sacrifice

(1). Luke, 22, 42.

(2). Matt 11, 26.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

179-

him to Thee to the fullest extent of my will, despite all the feelings and reluctance of human nature, and I wish to repeat what one of Thy handmaids once said on a like occasion: that, because it hath pleased Thee to take him unto Thyself, if it needed but a single hair of my head to restore him to life, I would not give it, with the help of Thy grace. No, my God, for nothing in the world would I wish to do the slightest thing contrary to Thy most adorable will.

O my Jesus, Who hast sacrificed for me, with an infinite love, a life of which one moment was worth more than all the lives of men and angels, I give myself to that incomprehensible love with which Thou didst make this great sacrifice, and in union with this same love, I sacrifice to Thee with all my heart, not only the life of this dear husband whom Thou didst give me, but also my own life and those of all my children, my father, brother, and all my loved ones. And if I possessed all the lives of angels and men, with the help of Thy holy grace, my Saviour, I should want to sacrifice them all to Thee in thanksgiving for the sacrifice Thou didst make of Thine, through such a frightful death, for the glory of Thy Father and the salvation of all mankind.

O Mother of Jesus, I honor thee at the foot of the Cross of thy Son, doing in union with Him what He is doing, that is to say, offering and sacrificing Him to His Father, even as He offers and sacrifices Himself. I give myself to Him and to thee, that I may unite myself with the holy dispositions with which thou didst make this sacrifice; and in union with these same dispositions, I wish to immolate for my God, with my Jesus and thee, all that is most precious to me, all that I am, all my capabilities, and a hundred worlds if I possessed them. Compensate for my shortcomings, O my gracious Mother, and do for me in thine own way, that is, most perfectly, what I can do but very imperfectly. I give thee my heart and my will for that purpose, and I consent most willingly to

whatever thou mayest do in my name.

O all ye angels and saints of Jesus, help me, I implore, to make this sacrifice.

That, my beloved daughter, is what I urge you to say and do as best you can, every day from now on; and then make a firm resolution to live henceforth like a true spouse of Jesus, giving Him without reservation your heart, all your affection, your time, and whatever is left of

180 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

your life, of which but little remains. These are the principal fruits that He wishes you to gather from your grief, and He desires you to belong wholly to Him. I beseech Him to exert His all-powerful goodness to take complete possession of you.

I am, in the sacred love of the most Holy Heart of Jesus and Mary, my beloved daughter,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LETTER 114

To the Community of Our Lady of Charity. *On the observance of the Rules, and the practice of certain virtues.*

Paris, December 3, 1661 J. M. J.

My dearest Sisters:

May the divine will be our guide in all things.

I give infinite thanks to our most bountiful Jesus and his most Holy Mother for the great blessings they are showering upon your Community. I supplicate them to increase the blessings more and more, and to grant you the grace to make the holy use of them that Jesus and Mary ask of you. To this end I beseech you, my dearest Sisters, to be very faithful and exacting in the observance of your Rules and Constitutions, and in the practice of all the holy virtues, especially humility, obedience, mutual charity, zeal for the salvation of souls, submission to the most holy will of God, pure love for Jesus and a special devotion to His Blessed Mother. That is what your good Mother teaches you daily by her words and example; it is what I have always preached to you, my *dearest Sisters*, and will preach to you all my life, for our sole occupation in this world is to strive to please God, and that is the only way to do so. Lastly, I thank you, my dearest Sisters, for your charitable regards; please continue to send them, and rest assured that I never forget you at the holy altar, for, in truth, you are dearer to me in the presence of God than I can tell you.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

181 -

If I did not consider the most adorable will of God, I should be very weary of Paris, but it is His will that is keeping me here on necessary business, yours being the most important; if I had no other concern, that alone would detain me. Pray to Our Lord and His most Holy Mother for me, my dearest Sisters, that they may grant me the grace to do, *everywhere and* in all things, and at no matter what cost, whatever is most pleasing to them, for I assure you that that is my sole desire. I implore them to dispose of all of you, both the Mother and her daughters, according to their Heart. In this most Sacred Heart I am and will ever be, my dearest Sisters,

Devotedly yours, JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LETTER 115

**To a Priest of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. *On the death of
Father Peter Jourdan, (1)which occurred on December 27, 1661.***

[December 1661]

May the divine will be our guide in all things, and our sole comfort in all our afflictions.

Here is one which is very painful to me and has caused me unwonted sorrow: it is the death of our most kind and lovable brother, Father Jourdan. But it is only just, my dear brother, that God be the master and that His most adorable will prevail over ours. If I indulged my feelings, I should cry aloud with grief and tears: "Doth bitter death separate in this manner?" (2) But when I consider the most holy, wise and bountiful will of God, I cry out from the depths of my heart: "*Yea, Father; for so hath it seemed good in thy sight.*"(3)

(1). Father Jourdan (1608-1661), priest of the diocese of Coutances in Normandy, was one of the first five companions of St. John Eudes. For eighteen years he labored in the Caen Seminary and on the missions. St. John Eudes had great confidence in his wisdom and prudence as a spiritual director and entrusted to his guidance the soul of Madame de Budos, abbess of the Monastery of the Holy Trinity at Caen. Cf. *Les Fleurs de la Congregation de Jésus et Marie*, Vol. 1, P. 13

(2). I Kings 15, 32

(3). Matt 11, 26.

182 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 116

Permission Granted to Father Peter de Sesseval (1)for the Foreign Missions.

[1661]

From John Eudes, missionary priest, the superior of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary, greetings to whom it may concern:

According to information given us by our beloved brother, Peter Sesseval, a missionary priest of our Congregation, an almost countless number of souls are being lost in the kingdom of China and neighboring countries because of a shortage of evangelical laborers to help snatch them from perdition and place them on the road to salvation. He has, in consequence thereof, conceived a very ardent desire to join several other ecclesiastics who are about to set out for these regions, but, because he wishes to do nothing without the perfection of perfect obedience to the superiors whom God has placed over him, he has entreated us to look with favor upon this project and to give it our approval and consent.

After having carefully recommended the matter to God and contacted some of the heads of our Congregation, and being desirous of cooperating in such a holy work for which, with the help of divine grace, we should willingly sacrifice a hundred thousand lives if we had as many, we did and do now consent most willingly by these presents that the aforesaid Peter Sesseval carry out his pious and praiseworthy desire, in our knowledge of his piety, prudence, ability, and other virtues and good qualities which God has given him.

Yes, my dearest brother, with all our hearts we approve of your holy undertaking for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

Go then in the name of the Blessed Trinity, to make It known and adored in places where It is neither known nor adored.

(1). Father Peter de Sesseval (1632-1663) was stationed at the Rouen Seminary when he was requested by His Lordship Francis de la Palue, Bishop of Heliopolis, to labor in the mission fields of China. Despite the shortage of priests in the Congregation of Jesus and Mary, St. John Eudes granted permission to Father de Sasseval to accompany the Bishop of Heliopolis. Father de Sasseval died on December 8, 1663 before reaching his destination. Cf. *Les Fleurs de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie*, Vol. 1, p. 18.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

183 -

Go in the name of Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, to bring to souls the fruits of His precious blood which He shed for them.

Go under the protection and in the safe-keeping of the Blessed Virgin Mary, to imbue those hearts with the respect and veneration due her, and under the guidance of blessed St. Joseph, St. Gabriel, your guardian angel, and the holy apostles of the places where you are going, to work with them for the salvation of lost and abandoned souls.

Go in the name and on behalf of our little Congregation, to accomplish in China and the other places where Providence directs you what we should like to do throughout the whole world, even to the shedding of our last drop of blood: destroy Satan's tyranny there and establish the kingdom of God.

But remember that, because this work is entirely an apostolic mission, you must have a very pure intention of seeking therein only the glory of God, and a most profound humility and mistrust of self, boundless confidence in His infinite goodness, complete submission to His most adorable will and that of the prelates placed over you in His stead, unconquerable patience in your labors, an ardent zeal for the salvation of souls, and a most sincere charity toward other ecclesiastics, particularly the religious of the holy Society of Jesus, with whom we importune you always to live in perfect union and understanding. Meditate frequently on these virtues, earnestly ask God for them, and try to practise them faithfully. May God in His goodness deign to grant you them in their perfection, together with all the other graces necessary and expedient to accomplish perfectly His most holy will, and to conduct yourself everywhere both as a true missionary of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary, and as a true child of their most amiable Heart.

May Jesus and Mary grant you their holy blessing for that purpose. May it remain always with you and precede, accompany and follow you everywhere and in all things.

With this wish do we pronounce over you, in the name of Jesus and Mary, and in the sacred love of their most charitable Heart, these precious words of Holy Mother Church: *Nos cum Prole pia benedicat Virgo Maria.*

184 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 117

To Madame Blouet de Camilly. *On various subjects. Contemplated*

establishment of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary in Paris.
Paris, January 3, 1662 J. M. J.

My very dear and good daughter:

May the divine will be our guide in all things, and our sole comfort in all our afflictions.

This is a sorrow which is most painful to me and causes me extraordinary sorrow; (1) but I adore, bless and love with all my heart the most adorable and amiable will of my God, which should be infinitely dearer and more precious to us than all the lives of men and angels, if they were ours.

The condition of our dear brother, Father Blouet, is still another grief which weighs heavily upon me. I urge him to do all he can to improve his health; but, my dear daughter, be careful, too, not to physic him too much for fear of injuring his stomach, which is somewhat delicate.

When I see Mr. La Haguais,(2) I will not fail to tell him what you want, though I do not think that is necessary, because I believe he is not giving it the least thought, unless he has changed his mind since I saw him about two or three weeks ago. I do not often see him, since it is quite a distance from here to his house, with the days being extremely short now and the roads bad. But please do not think, my dear good daughter, that I tell him everything you write me. No, I can assure you that I tell him nothing except the things you want me to tell him, or those you have already told him yourself in your letters. Know once and for all, dearest daughter, that your interests mean more to me, and always will, than those of anyone else whomsoever.

Excuse me, my good daughter; I do think about returning, and every

(1). Allusion to the death of Father Jourdan. See Letter 115.

(2). See Letter 61, note z.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

185-

day I importune God to take me away from this place which wearies me exceedingly, but I am here on very important business for the general good of our Congregation. It concerns not only an establishment in Paris,(3) but something else of even greater importance which will, however, soon be concluded. I hope that Lent will not find me still in Paris.

My most humble and affectionate greetings to the family in general and each member individually, particularly to Mr. de Camilly,(4) whom I thank with all my heart for his kind and beautiful letter. To him and all the others I wish every manner of blessings for the New Year and all the years to follow, and afterwards the blessed eternal years.

I am, in the sacred love of the most holy Heart of Jesus and Mary, my very dear and good daughter,

Devotedly yours,

JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

(3). An establishment at Mont Valérien Was being considered at that time, but this project did not materialize. Cf. Boulay, op. cit., VOL 3, P. 376.

(4). Reference is made here to Mr. Augustine de Camilly, her third son.

LETTER 118

To Mother Margaret Frances Patin. *On her negotiations in Rome.*

[Beginning of 1662) J. M. J.

My dearest Mother:

May the divine will be our guide in all things.

I received a letter this week from Father Boniface, who writes me that your cause is constantly gaining favor, thank God, and that this is the time to redouble your prayers, for the affair, he says, is now coming to a head.

He also writes that he has been informed that the rate of exchange, that is to say, what must be paid to bring money into Rome, will soon be increased by five per cent; thus, instead of ten francs per hundred, the fee will amount to fifteen. This is because of the large sums of money

186 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

it will be necessary to take out of Paris when the Ambassador and Cardinal de Retz,(1) who will soon leave here for Rome, arrive there. Hence he will soon be out of funds, since he now has but about a hundred crowns. His expenses come to about ten crowns a month, and his room costs three crowns, not counting laundry, fuel and candles. Upon his arrival in Rome he had to spend more than a hundred crowns on clothing and linen, for he left here with badly worn garments, fearing that he might be robbed along the way. He said that wearing apparel is very expensive in Rome and of poor quality, making it necessary for him to buy serge garments for the winter, but that he still needs a summer-weight cassock and cloak, which will cost twenty crowns. It is impossible for him, he writes, as active as he is, to keep himself in clothing on less than sixty or eighty crowns a year. He says, too, that it will cost him a great deal to have several papers copied, and much more besides for presents that he is obliged to give to various persons, for one gets nowhere in that country without them. Lastly, he writes that I shall be amazed when he shows me his accounts.

That is what his letter says, and he is a very sincere and truthful man, who would spend no money except on necessities. We are very fortunate to have found someone so generous with his time and efforts, which are considerable, for he is working very hard in your interests, sparing no trouble or endeavor, and he is doing nothing else except that. Therefore I am asking you, my dearest Mother, to give the order that money be provided to send him.

I wrote you that I sent him five hundred livres in September, and that it cost me fifty livres more to have them delivered. Since I had the money then, and he had written me that he needed it, I did not wish to importune you at that time. If I had more, I should send it to him as gladly as I did the other time, confident that you would repay me, but I have none. Please get some, therefore, and send it to me as soon as possible, for the rate of exchange will soon be higher; then too, I shall be here only a short time. Without it, my dearest Mother, your business would come to a standstill, and Father Boniface would have to abandon it at that point. After so much effort and expense, we must not leave it in mid-air. One should not complain about money where

(1). Paul de Gondi, Archbishop of Paris from 1654 to 1662.

the affairs of God are concerned. If you have none, you should borrow it or take it out of your revenues. Do not send less than four or five hundred livres; it will cost far more for the Bulls, and you shall receive an account of everything. Do this as soon as possible, my dearest Mother, if you please.

My most cordial greetings to all our dear Sisters. I remain most sincerely, my dearest Mother,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

P. S. Here is a Collect for the Office and Mass of your Blessed Father(2) which Mother de Monçon sent me for you to keep. It was composed by our Holy Father the Pope(3).

(2). St. Francis de Sales, beatified by Pope Alexander VII on December 28, 1661. In the decree of beatification the Pope observes that he celebrated the Mass of the new Blessed with a Collect which served also for the Office. The rest of the Mass and Office was taken from the Common of a Confessor Bishop.

(3). Alexander VII (1655-1667)

LETTER 119

To Mother Margaret Frances Patin. *The Saint urges her to supply Father Boniface with the money needed in working to obtain the probation of the Order from Rome.*

[Beginning of 1662] J. M. J.

My dearest Mother:

May the divine will be our guide in all things.

If I yielded to purely human sentiments, your illness would move me deeply, but, aside from hoping that Our Lord will restore your health, I am obliged by the sight of His most adorable will to say but one thing: "Yea, Father: for so bath it seemed good in thy sight." (1)

I beseech you, my dearest Mother, to take a little better care of your
(1). Mart. 11, 26.

health, and to accept the doctor's judgment in all things that can contribute to your recovery.

But on what account, my dear Mother, do you write me what you have done concerning your undertaking? Do you wish to abandon it, now that it is so far advanced and progressing so well? Do you think that anything can be accomplished in Rome without money, or that Father Boniface can live there and support himself without it? Is it not enough that he is giving you his time and efforts? I have assured you, and do assure you again, that he is a most virtuous ecclesiastic, a very good man, who undertook this business solely because of his zeal for the glory of God and the salvation Of Souls,

and purely through charity, since he has a means of support without it. Do you take me for a liar and a cheat? Do you believe that he is squandering your money, or rather mine? Should you like to repay all his efforts in such coin?

But you say that your close friends are astonished that a man should be so long in Rome to transact your business, and business such as that. Would to God that these friends of yours might consent to replace Father Boniface! They would see how things are done in Rome, and how the smallest transactions consume both time and patience. Remember, my dear Mother, that if Father Boniface had pushed this matter too vigorously before he was in possession of the last affidavits that were sent him, he would have failed irreparably, because without them our cause would have been rejected a second time, after which all hope would have had to be abandoned.

Remember, too, you and your good friends, that this is one of the most difficult affairs that can be dealt with in Rome. First of all, those in Rome look upon our institute as an innovation, and consequently as one of the most important and complex things that can be discussed there. Secondly, they see that it is an Order and a Community composed of virtuous women who are to devote themselves to the direction and guidance of girls and women of low morals. This situation creates a difficulty which no one has yet been able to surmount in Rome, because it is believed there that it is impossible for virtuous women to associate with these others without real danger to their own morals. And to show you that no one has thus far been able to overcome this objection, you must know that the Sisters of Refuge at Nancy, who have

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

189-

houses also at Avignon, Dijon and Rouen, have not yet succeeded in obtaining Bulls from our Holy Father the Pope, despite all their efforts; and yet, their affair is not so difficult as ours because, in the first place, their Community is composed of penitent women who are not in any danger from their contact with the penitents, as virtuous women might be; and secondly, they have been received and approved at Avignon by the papal legate. And nevertheless, they still have not been accorded approbation from Rome, although they have a man there who has been working on it for them longer than Father Boniface has been there, and he is a very influential person who is highly esteemed in Rome. Father Boniface talked things over with him, and he writes me that this man agrees with him and has decided to await the outcome of your affair to see what course it takes and what comes of it, so that afterwards he may act accordingly in advancing the cause of the Sisters of Nancy. Thereupon I wrote to Father Boniface that I was very pleased that this gentleman had taken this resolution; for, if his business had come up for consideration before ours, it would have met either with success or failure. If the latter had happened, there would no longer have been any hope for our cause; but had it been successful, and then yours had been proposed later, you would have been obliged to join the other Sisters and adopt their Rules. You can judge from all this, therefore, that a transaction like yours is not so simple as your close friends seem to think it is.

But there is still a third thing that makes it very difficult, which is that your cause has already been once rejected.

Please tell all these things to your friends, and they will change their mind, or else they are not good friends of your house.

Tell them also, and believe it yourself, my dearest Mother, for it is true-tell them that they should not, in a matter of consequence like this, form groundless judgments that are prejudicial to the charity we owe our neighbor, lest they mortally offend God. I have already told you repeatedly, and I say it again, that Father Boniface has no interests in Rome except yours. So true is this that I

even refrained from asking him to procure indulgences for us, or anything else whatsoever, in order not to distract him in the least or make it possible for you to say that he was handling other affairs besides your own.

190 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

Should he remain even a day longer in Rome after the negotiations are accomplished, rest assured that it will not be at your expense, and that he will render you a strict account of your money, together with that which I sent him for you. Do not wait for me, however, to forward more money to him. And if you fail to send him any, understand that, when he has spent the remainder of what he still has, to the exclusion of what he will need for the return trip, he will abandon your cause and leave Rome, and thus it will have come to nothing. All your efforts on behalf of the house of Our Lady of Charity will have been nullified, for without Bulls from our Holy Father the Pope it will not be possible for it to subsist, because the very first Sister who is tempted against her vocation will easily be persuaded that her vows are invalid, since her Community lacks the Pope's approval. Then she will withdraw, the whole structure will collapse, and the blame will be attributed, before God and man, to good Mother Margaret Patin, who would not furnish what was necessary to obtain the Bulls of approbation.

O my dear Mother, the saints have never spared money when it was needed for the affairs of God. You were able to procure enough to purchase the Old Bank House, for which you had a liking, although you did not actually need it. Would you stint money now for something which will be the very foundation of your Community, and without which it cannot subsist? In God's name, my dearest Mother, lay aside your mistrust and ill-founded suspicions as something unworthy of such a saint as Mother Patin, and do not listen to these good friends of whom you write me, to the extent that you do not believe a word of what is said to you by one who has more esteem and affection for you, and more zeal for the good of your house, than anyone else in the world.

It is he who remains, in the sacred love of the most Holy Heart of Jesus and Mary, my dearest Mother,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LETTERS AND SHORT WORKS

191 -

LETTER 120

To Mother Margaret Frances Patin. *Renewed entreaties to persuade her to supply Father Boniface with the money he needed.* (1)

[March 1662] J. M. J.

My dear good Mother:

May the divine will be our guide in all things.

I give infinite thanks to Our Lord and His most Holy Mother for your improved health. I implore them to preserve and strengthen it, and to make you entirely well and holy for their glory and the sanctification of the most cherished house of their divine charity.

Many thanks to you, too, my dearest Mother, for the consolation you afford me in writing that you have received my little niece; but I am amazed that I was not informed sooner, either by you or others, of something I had been wanting for such a long time.

In this I am comforted; but allow me to tell you, my dearest Mother, that it grieves me exceedingly to see you abandon your transaction in Rome, just when it is progressing so well. I also received a letter this week from Father Boniface to the effect that it looks very favorable indeed. You inform me that you cannot send any money, that you have no assurance that the cause will succeed. Is it possible that Mother Patin, who is so virtuous and reasonable, should make such a proposal? Do you wish to deal with Father Boniface, who has made such a long trip and is going to so much trouble for us, through mere charity, as if you were a money-agent? Do you want him to return to you what he will have spent for his necessities while in your service? If you were employing him as a valet, he would not have to do that. Is it not enough that he has promised to render you an exact account of his expenses ?

You say that I wrote you that divine Providence would provide. That
(1). This letter was written from Paris during the week preceding the consecration of His Lordship Francis de Nesmond, Bishop of Bayeux, which took place in Paris on March 19, 1662.

192-

LETTERS AND SHORT WORKS

is true, but are you implying that I am obliged by these words to furnish the money needed? If I had it, I should gladly advance it for that purpose; but I have already contributed to it all that I had, besides having borrowed a considerable sum. It is quite true that I have spent more than six hundred livres in this transaction, including the money I had as well as what I borrowed. Nevertheless, if you guaranteed to repay me, I would see if I could borrow more. But you would have to send me your written assurance of this in Thursday's or Friday's mail, at the latest, for, God willing, I shall soon leave here. But I shall not be immediately in Caen, for I am stopping off a few days in Rouen and Lisieux. If you allow me to leave here without sending me any mandate in this matter, what will become of it? And what about Father Boniface, to whom I shall be obliged to write, before my departure, that you wish to send him nothing except instructions to drop the whole matter and return? And how shall we answer to Our Lord and His most Holy Mother for having thus abandoned their project—a project so vital to their service and the salvation of souls? Do not cast the blame on anyone else, my dearest Mother, for I am quite certain that the whole thing depends on you.

In God's name, my good Mother, do not economize in a thing which is the very foundation of the House of Our Lady of Charity. You have worked and suffered so much for it up to this time, and without it the house is in obvious danger of ruin. If you have no money, send me a written promise to repay it to me, and I will do everything in my power to raise it.

Most cordial *greetings* to all our dear sisters. I am with all sincerity, my dear good Mother,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

P. S. I recommend that you and your dear daughters pray for his Lordship of Bayeux, who will be consecrated next Sunday.

LETTER 121

To Father John de Longeval,(1) Priest of the Seminary of Rouen. *On the Archbishop's manifestations of his satisfaction with that seminary.*

Paris, March 10, 1662

Wherever he goes, the Archbishop speaks of the work accomplished by the Rouen seminary, and his enormous satisfaction in the modesty and piety so visibly reflected in the faces of those on whom he conferred Holy Orders in Pontoise.(2)

It is a source of great joy to me to witness the blessing that God is *pleased to bestow* on the labors of my dear brethren; may He be eternally blessed for it!

Oh, how pleasing is this work to Our Lord and His most Holy Mother! What happiness it affords the angels and saints! How wonderful are the benefits accruing from it to the Church! How many souls will be saved through this means! What gratitude do we owe the goodness of God for having chosen us, unworthy as we are, for such a holy task-the most necessary, worthy and fruitful of all the tasks in God's Church! Blessed are they who persevere in such a holy work and ignore the sensibilities of a corrupt nature which seeks only its own satisfaction. Blessed are they who renounce the case that self-love craves, that they may labor in imitation and for love of our divine Master, Who never enjoyed rest in this world and Whose whole happiness consisted in doing the most holy will of His Father. *Blessed are* they who labor with Him, for soon their work shall be finished and they shall enjoy eternal rest with Him. Therefore: "In doing good, let us not fail. For in due time we shall reap, not failing." (3)

(1). Father de Longeval's name is mentioned in a letter written to Father Mannoury, Superior of the Lisieux College, in 1656. (See Letter 58) Father de Longeval succeeded Father Mannoury in 1662 as Superior at Lisieux. Cf. Boulay, *Op. cit.*, VOL 4, P. 11. No other details could be found in the reference books on the Congregation of Jesus and Mary.

(2). A town about 22 miles north of Versailles.

(3). Gal. 6, 9.

LETTER 122

To Mother Mary of the Nativity Herson. *The Saint assures her that he willingly forgoes certain past grievances.(1)*

[1662]

J. M. J.

My dearest niece and beloved daughter:

I read your letter with great joy and consolation, and with all my heart do I forgive and forget entirely all that has taken place. I ask but one thing of you, that you faithfully serve our most benign Saviour and His most beautiful Mother, and that you love them with your whole heart.

Most cordial greetings to your good Mother Superior and all my dearest daughters.
If they wish to gratify me and make me very happy, they should welcome back the poor orphan whom they sent away.

Live Jesus and Mary.

JOHN EUDES,
Priest of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary.

(1). The grievances in question here were probably those arising from Mother Patin's refusal to furnish Father Boniface with money. In that case, this letter, which carries no date, would have been written in 1662.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

195 -

LETTER 123

**To Father Louis Faucon,(1) known as de Sainte Marie, successor to
Father Thomas Manchon as Superior of the Rouen Seminary. *On the
poverty of his house.***

[1663]

Our Lord makes us poor in order to grant us the grace to be in conformity with Him, and to give us an opportunity to humble ourselves, become submissive to His most holy will and place all our trust in Him. Therefore, let us trust in Him without reservation, my dear brother, and also in our most Holy Mother. She is the one who gave us the house in Rouen; there is no likelihood of her having placed us in a house to allow us to perish there of hunger. She is too good for that, and she certainly does not lack power, since she is very powerful in heaven and on earth. Then have recourse to her; nevertheless, do not fail to do, for your own part, whatever you can.

(1). Born at Aulnay in the diocese of Bayeux in Normandy, Father Faucon (1624-1675) entered the Congregation of Jesus and Mary in 1653. He labored in the Coutances and Evreux Seminaries up to the time he was appointed superior of the Rouen Seminary, in 1663. Father Faucon died on March 16, 1675. *Les Fleurs de la Congrégation de Jésus, et Marie*, Vol. 1, P. 47

196 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 124

Father John Avenel's Appointment to Lisieux.

J. M. J.

November 14, 1663.

Our dearest brother Father Avenel(1) will live in our house in Lisieux, where he will teach the fourth or fifth class, according to the decision of the superior.

JOHN EUDES, missionary priest
of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary.

(1). This letter was written the year Father John Avenel (1638-1684) entered the Congregation of Jesu and Mary. After teaching at Lisieux College he was appointed bursar of the Evreux Seminary in

1675. He died on July 3, 1684. Cf. *Fleurs*, Vol. X, P. 89.

LETTER 125(1)

To Cardinal Grimaldi,(2) Archbishop of Aix. *On the organization of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary.*

[January or February 1664] My Lord:

I cast myself at your Eminence's feet to beg your holy blessing and to thank you infinitely for the favor you did us in writing to Rome. I also beg you in all humility to continue to honor us with your goodwill and protection, since it is true that, through the grace of God, we seek only the glory of His Divine Majesty and the salvation of souls.

(1). This letter was written from Meaux, at the conclusion of the mission preached there by St. John Eudes in 1664. It began on the least of the Epiphany and closed at the end of the first week in Lent.

(2). The Cardinal (1597-1695), wrote in the Cardinal Prefect of the Propaganda requesting wider faculties for St. John Eudes and his missionaries. The request was not granted. Cf. Boulay, *Op. cit.*, Vol. 3, PP. 438-448,

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

197-

To broach the main subject at once, I shall state the following facts, in compliance with your Eminence's order to me:

1. Our four houses (in Caen, Coutances, Lisieux and Rouen) are united in a single Congregation under the same rule and guidance. No detriment results from the dependence of each upon its own prelate, who exercises over it the same authority that he has over all other persons and places under his episcopal jurisdiction in that diocese.

2. The superior of each house is chosen by the superior general of the Congregation and presented to the bishop of that particular diocese for his approval and confirmation, if he finds him acceptable; if not, another must then be presented to him.

3. Everyone in the house, our own members as well as the seminarians, is under the direction of the superior of that particular house.

4. We have sufficient funds only for the support of our own members, and until God inspires our prelates with the will to do what your Eminence has done for your seminary, or provides in another way, the seminarians must pay their own room and board, which in Coutances amounts to two hundred livres; in Caen and Lisieux, where living is not so cheap, two hundred fifty livres; and in Rouen, where expenses are still higher, three hundred livres.

5. Since our houses form a Congregation which is under the guidance of one superior, its members are sent from one house to another, as in other congregations—a practice which is necessary and most useful for several reasons. They are also taken from all the houses to participate in the missions, according as they are needed, for some of them grow weary of being constantly in one place; they dislike listening always to the same preachers; some form dangerous attachments; and frequently differences of disposition make these changes imperative. It is necessary for all these reasons that the seminaries be united and under a single direction, in order to insure their subsistence and their usefulness to the Church. It was for this reason that St. Charles established the Congregation of the Oblates to which he entrusted the direction of his seminaries.

I do not have at hand the rules of our seminaries. However, these are the principal ones: Rising is at 4:30, and prayer begins at 5:00, continuing until 6:00. Then the Little Hours are recited by the whole

198 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

Community, after which, three times a week, an account of the morning meditation is given. Then each one retires to his room.

From 10:00 to 11:45 a class in theology is taught.

At 11:45, the litany and examination of conscience take place, followed by dinner.

After dinner there is recreation until 1:30, and then liturgy or chant class.

At 2:00 are Vespers and Compline; from 3:00 to 4:00, theology for the ordinands.

From 4:00 to 5:00 there is a lecture on the *Manual*, given to the cures.

At 5:45 are Matins and Lauds, and the Litany of the Blessed Virgin; then supper and recreation, which continues until 8:00.

At 8:00 cases of conscience are propounded for half an hour; then night prayers are said and the subject for meditation is read.

The signal for retiring is given at 9:30, and everyone goes to bed.

High Masses are sung twice a week, and Vespers on all Sundays and feast days.

A spiritual conference is given once a week, and Saturday evenings there is a meditation on the Sunday Gospel, instead of the cases of conscience.

We are bringing to a close this mission [at Meaux] on which God has showered wonderful blessings. His Lordship of Châlons, in Champagne, is asking us to give one in that city at the beginning of next October, but I do not know yet whether we shall be able to undertake it. I am returning to Caen to give a mission, after Easter, in Le Cotentin.(3).

(3). At Ravenoville in the peninsula of Lower Normandy called Le Cotentin.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

199 -

LETTER 126

To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond.(1) *On the Cretteville (2) mission, in the diocese of Coutances.*

[Autumn of 1664]

We are giving a mission now in Le Cotentin, in the parish of Cretteville-en-Beauptois, where President de Franctot is spending the vacation, and God is lavishing extraordinary blessings on it. Although it has rained almost constantly during our six weeks here, and despite floods on all sides and extremely bad roads, there are nevertheless large crowds in attendance at the sermons and other

exercises of the mission. The rush to the confessionals is so great that many persons from four and five leagues distant are seen to remain three or four days at the feet of the confessors, from morning until night, without eating or drinking, and so moved to contrition that those who hear their confessions have no trouble at all in influencing them to renounce their bad habits, all the occasions of sin and every other obstacle to salvation. They say, consequently, that they have never seen a mission wherein graces from heaven were so abundant. It should encourage us to labor for the salvation of so many poor souls who perish daily. Help us, too, my dear brother, to bless Our Lord and His most Holy Mother for all the favors they are conferring on our little Congregation; they are surely very great.

(1). Father James de la Have de Bonnefond (1634-1711), joined the Congregation of Jesus and Mary in 1658. He was superior of Rouen in 1666 and of Caen in 1670. Three years later he left for Rome where he tried in vain to obtain the approbation of the Congregation. St. John Eudes appointed Father de Bonnefond his vicar in 1679. He died on August 22, 1711 at the age of 78 years. Cf. *Les Fleurs de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie*, Vol. 1, P. 287.

(2). A village in the district of Coutances in Normandy.

200 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 127

To One of His Spiritual Children, After an Illness. On obedience to the divine will.

Help me to thank Our Lord and His Holy Mother for having delivered me from a severe illness-it was pleurisy- which lasted only a week. Help me also to ask them to give me to the divine will so completely that I may never use a single moment of the life it has granted me except to do everywhere and in all things what is most pleasing to it. I am most edified *and comforted by your obedience to that adorable will. Remain firm in this holy disposition. I entreat Our Lord to strengthen and increase it in you more and more.

LETTER 128

To the Priests of the Rouen Seminary. To announce to them the nomination of their new superior, Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond.

[1665]

After praying intensely that I might receive the grace to know the adorable will of God with regard to the superior whom I had to send you, I decided that there was no one better fitted than our dear confrere Father de Bonnefond. He ranks high in virtue and piety, he is very wise and prudent, he has learning, and he has served as bursar, which makes him better qualified to be superior. He is extremely reluctant to accept, but his reluctance is joined with obedience, which are two indications of his capacity for this position. For it is a maxim that whoever cannot obey is not fit to give orders. Furthermore, he has no failing to prevent him from giving good example. Finally, he knows how to get along with people. Thus he has all the qualities necessary in a superior, which are very rarely found in one person.

LETTER 129

To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond, Superior of the Rouen Seminary. *On the mission at Châlons-sur-Marne.(1)*

Châlons, May 22, 1665

This mission is beginning where the others end, that is to say, with great fervor. The church, a very large one, is always filled for our sermons, as on Good Friday. We are hopeful of great fruits; they are already abundantly in evidence. I have as much strength again to preach as I ever had, thank God; so far I have preached almost every day. Our two brothers, Father Blouet and Father Yon, are beginning to relieve me on the days when I give lectures to large groups of ecclesiastics and religious; for his Lordship. of Châlons(2) is seeing that all the Orders are represented there-the Augustinians, Benedictines, [D]Dominicans, Franciscans, and Jesuits.

(1). Capital of the Marne Department, thirty miles south of Rheims.

(2). Bishop Felix Vialart de Herse.

LETTER 130

To Mother Margaret Frances Patin. *She had informed him of the apostolic approbation of the Order of Our Lady of Charity.*

Paris, October 11, 1665. J. M. J.

I thank you with all my heart, my dearest Mother, for the wonderful news you sent me; my joy is too great for words. Infinite thanks be for ever rendered to the most Blessed Trinity and our most amiable Jesus! Eternal thanks to His most Holy Mother, who is also ours! Immortal thanks to our honored Sister Mary des Vallées, who contributed so much to this splendid success! Immortal thanks to all the angels and

202 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

saints, particularly St. Francis de Sales! Blessing after blessing upon everyone who labored to achieve it!

Let us rejoice in Our Lord, my dearest Mother; let us rejoice, my dearest Sisters. May these favors from heaven animate us to love our most bountiful Jesus and our amiable Mother more fervently, as well as to serve them more faithfully, through the practice of sound virtues, especially humility, obedience, charity, and above and beyond all else, zeal for the salvation of lost and abandoned souls. It is in this that you can manifest still more the love you bear Him Who sacrificed Himself for their sake, as also your desire to please His most charitable Mother.

In conclusion, I am sure that you have sung our holy *Alleluia*. Ah, how I should like to sing it with you, my dearest Mother and daughters, and to bring you a sacred relic of the holy martyrs who were the companions of St. Dionysius, one that I obtained for you from Madame de Montmartre.(1) I have not forgotten you, my dearest Sisters, although you appear to have forgotten me entirely, inasmuch as I have had no word from you since I left Caen. I assure you that each day I bring you upon

my shoulders to the holy altar as my poor lambs, and in my heart as my dear daughters, that I may sacrifice you, one and all, with our adorable Host to the praise and glory of the most Holy Trinity, and do a number of other things for you which would take too long to write,

Please read this letter, my dearest Mother, to all our Sisters, and do not forget in your prayers one who is truly, in the most Holy Heart of Jesus and Mary, my dearest Mother,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

(1). Frances Renée de Lorraine, Abbess of the Benedictine Monastery of Montmartre. See Letter 149.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

203 -

LETTER 131

To Mother Margaret Frances Patin. *The Saint recommends some pious practices with respect to the dying.*

[1666] J. M. J.

My dearest Mother:

I am very sorry to learn about the illness of our dear Sisters, especially my dear Sister Mary of the Holy Spirit; but the most adorable will of God be done everywhere and in all things. Please assure her, my dear Mother, that I am particularly mindful of her at the holy altar, where I am not forgetting any of the other sisters either.

Whenever one of our Sisters is in danger of death, it would be well to have some of the others divide among themselves the exercises in preparation for death which are contained in Part Seven of *The Kingdom of Jesus*, in order to say them for the sick person, who should be told what is being done so that she may agree to it and unite herself with the exercises in heart and in will. I beg you, my dear Mother, to tell this to all our Sisters, that they may keep it in mind.

My most cordial regards to all of them, and many thanks for their prayers for this mission, upon which God is lavishing such abundant blessings.

I am with my whole heart, my dearest Mother,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

204 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 132

To Mr. Augustine Le Haguais.(1) *On the mission at St. Peter's Church in Caen, and the course to follow in his adversities.*

April 1, 1666

Sir, our dearest and beloved brother:

It is true that God in His goodness has liberally showered a great abundance of graces on our

mission, contrary to the expectations and opinions of our friends and ourselves, who would never have dared to hope for what we have witnessed. To God alone be the honor, glory and eternal praises for it, and to the Mother of grace who, after God, is its primary source. Let thanks be rendered also to her dearest Son Who has contributed greatly to it by His blessings. You have good cause, my dear brother, to rejoice over it and to help us thank divine mercy, since we share alike the good and the evil.

Yes, indeed, the good and the evil. For, if our benefits and blessings afford you joy, your troubles and persecutions grieve me, and more deeply than I can tell you. But it is a great comfort to me, my dear brother, to see the graces that God is granting you in the midst of your misfortunes. May He be eternally blessed for His Courage, rejoice, my beloved brother; all your afflictions are beautiful broad fields given you by our heavenly Father, the revenue from which will soon make you very rich, provided you try to turn your land to good profit.

To this end, three principal things are necessary: 1. to fertilize it well, 2. to irrigate it, 3. to sow it with seed. To fertilize it with humility, by humbling ourselves a great deal, according as God gives us the grace to do so; to irrigate it with the tears of deep contrition for our sins; to sow it with the divine seed of God's word, which we must implant in our hearts and meditate on frequently, particularly on the following words taken from various parts of Sacred Scripture: "But thy providence, O Father, governeth it."(2)

There you have the divine seed with which we must sow our land.

(1). Brother of Madame de Camilly. See Letter 6 1, note 1.

(2). Wis 14, 3.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

205-

In conclusion, my dear brother, with reference to the last item in your letter, I have nothing more to say to you except that I am entirely of your opinion, as are also those of our dear flock. Nevertheless, ask Madame Talon to hurry this matter along as much as possible and bring it to a happy conclusion. Urge her also to take pity on that poor child. It is what I shall beg of her with all my heart, as well as to do me the favor of showing you with what affection and ardor I am, in truth, Sir, my dearest brother,

Devotedly yours,

JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LETTER 133

To Mother Margaret Frances Patin. *On drawing up the Constitutions.*

Evreux, November 12, 1666 J. M. J.

My dearest Mother:

You will do well to put the *Directory* at the end of the *Constitutions*, and to add to these *Constitutions* the three following chapters: *i. On the Reception of Postulants; 2. On the Entrance of Novices; 3. On the Obligation of the Rules.* But in the second Article of the first chapter, I should like these words to be omitted: "They shall be detained a few days as outsiders," for it seems to me that this cannot be put into practice. Furthermore, be careful to insert these first two chapters in the

proper places in your *Constitutions*. With regard to the third, it should be placed at the end.

As for the *Ceremonial*, we shall see to it, God willing, at some future time.

A thousand thanks, my dearest Mother, to you and all our dear Sisters for your prayers for the mission, on which God is bestowing great blessings. May He be eternally blessed for them, as also His Holy Mother.

Most cordial greetings to all my dear Sisters. With my whole heart I remain, my dearest Mother,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

206 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 134

To Mother Margaret Frances Patin. *On various subjects.*

Evreux, January 13, 1668 J. M. J.

My dearest Mother:

Your beautiful long letter, so full of kindness, charity and friendliness, filled my heart with an altogether singular joy and comfort, and I thank you a thousand times for it, my dearest Mother. Let me assure you that my own heart is overflowing with affection and tenderness for you and all my dear daughters, and that I make it a special point to offer the Mother and her daughters daily to Our Lord, during the holy sacrifice of the Mass, and to pray for all their spiritual and corporal needs.

I return infinite thanks to our most adorable Saviour and His most amiable Mother for all the favors they have bestowed on Mr. de Bellecourt's daughter, and I beseech them to make her a worthy daughter of their most Holy Heart, Whose feast is now established in six different churches in this city.

We have come to the close of our mission, on which God lavished extraordinary blessings. I beg of you, my dearest Mother, and of all our dear sisters, to help us thank Him and His most Holy Mother for it, as well as for the new cross they have placed on my weak shoulders -the establishment of a new house, toward which we are now working.

In conclusion, my dearest Mother, his Lordship acknowledges and loves you as one of his dearest daughters, and as such he sends you his holy blessing. I shall be here another eight or ten days, after which I am obliged to go to Rouen to begin a new mission. I shall have great need of your prayers for it, my dearest Mother, and of those of all our dear sisters. I should like so much to pay you a visit first, if time allowed, but it is too short.

Adieu then, my dearest Mother. I will never forget you in my prayers; do not forget me, either. With all my heart I remain, both to you and to all my dear daughters,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LETTER 135

To a Nun. *On the death of Father John Doucet.*(1)

[1668]

It has pleased Our Lord to call unto Himself one of our clerical brothers. He was a man of great virtue, but the time in purgatory is long, especially for ecclesiastics, priests and nuns.

(1). See Letter 58, note 6.

LETTER 136

To His Lordship Henry de Maupas du Tour, Bishop of Evreux.(1) *To request him to dismiss the canons of Evreux from boarding at the seminary.*

[About 1668]

I should certainly prefer peace to all the imaginable payments for room and board. We get along very well without them in our other seminaries and still manage, thank God, to perform all our duties, for divine Providence has never abandoned us. Therefore, my Lord, I beseech your Grace with all my heart, by all the kindness you have always shown your unworthy servants, that you consent to our withdrawing room and board from the canons of Evreux. We shall all be most grateful to you for this favor.

(1). A city in the department of L'Eure, about 68 miles northwest of Paris.

208-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 137

To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond, Superior of the Rouen Seminary. *On the precautions to be taken against the plague.*

September 14, 1668

Every day I have been waiting to hear from you, my dearest Brother, for I am extremely worried about you and all our dear brethren, from the highest to the humblest. We are saying daily prayers and Masses for you, and I have written all our houses to do likewise in order to place you under the protection of the Blessed Virgin.

I beg of you to make a novena of Masses in honor of her maternal Heart, and another in honor of St. Charles to implore him to intercede for us with this most charitable Heart, not only to place you under its protection, but first and foremost for all those who are victims of the plague or in danger of it.

I likewise entreat all our dear brethren, on this occasion, to render to God all the honor we owe Him; and, in order to use this circumstance as He would have us do, let us also:

1. Adore His divine justice and humble ourselves for our sins, in the name of all the people.

2. Give thanks to Him for this scourge, beholding in it not only a manifestation of His justice, but even more of His mercy which chastises us that we may be reformed and saved, not lost.

3. Adore the divine will in its intents for us, and abandon ourselves wholly to its operations in order that it may do with us what is most pleasing to God. It is an incontrovertible fact that this plague was brought on by our sins. Let us all, therefore, make a careful self-examination to determine those sins which could have contributed to it, then humble ourselves and make amends for them, trying to place ourselves in the state in which we should like to be at the hour of death, for there is no time for such preparation when one is ill.

4. Adore Our Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross and in the infinite love with which He bore so many sufferings for our sake, offering

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

209-

ourselves to Him to suffer all the crosses it may please Him to send us, in thanksgiving for His.

5. Offer Him all the stricken people and implore Him to grant them the grace to use their affliction to good advantage.

6. Recommend them to her whom we call *Consolatrix afflictorum*.

7. Give ourselves to that immense love through which our most lovable Saviour took upon Himself all the sins of the world and offered Himself to His Father to atone for them, that we may immolate ourselves to divine justice as offerings for the sins of our brethren and sisters, as well as for our own sins, and that we may assist the plague stricken people, if it please Him, in union with the charity which brought Him upon earth to assist and succour the victims of the plague, that is to say, sinners.

Finally, let us pray our Holy Mother, our angels and saints to accomplish all these things for us.

LETTER 138

To Mother Mary of the Blessed Sacrament Pierre, (1)Elected Superior of Our Lady of Charity after the Death of Mother Margaret Frances Patin.(2) On the fulfillment of her duties.

Paris, January 9, 1669 J. M. J.

My dearest daughter:

With all my heart do I give thanks to Our Lord and His most Holy Mother for having chosen you to take charge of their house. I say charge, for you will do well, my dearest daughter, not to consider it an honor or advantage, but rather a cross and very weighty burden, since superiors must answer to God for the salvation of the souls whom God has entrusted to them.

(1). Mother Mary of the Blessed Sacrament Pierre entered the Order of Our Lady of Charity in 1655. She was elected superior on December 22, 1664 and again in 1672. Mother Mary of the Blessed Sacrament died on January 26, 1678. Cf. Ory, *The Origin Of the Order of Our Lady of Charity* p. 159, 183 and 194.

(2). Mother Patin died on October 31, 1668 at the age of 68 years.

Then too, you should not look upon yourself as a superior, for the true superior is the most Holy Mother of God. You are only her vicar, or substitute, and therefore you should frequently cast yourself at her feet, particularly whenever you have to perform some action as superior. There at her feet, make an act of self-renunciation, give yourself to her and implore her to annihilate your own spirit within you and grant you hers, which is that of her Son, so that you may guide your Sisters in the spirit of their Spouse and their Mother.

To that end, there are four things you should do, my dearest daughter:

The first is to speak to your Sisters more by deed than by word, while assuming the lead in all things and endeavoring through your behavior to be a model of all the virtues.

The second is to guide them with great charity, meekness and kindness, anticipating all their spiritual and material needs, and demonstrating in all things that you have truly a motherly heart full of concern, tenderness and cordiality in their regard.

The third is to see that your Rules and Constitutions are strictly and carefully observed, and to that end you yourself should study them diligently, especially those that concern you.

The fourth is to take special care of the penitents and to overlook nothing you can do to perfect their conversion, for the house was established for that purpose; thus all the graces that God may deign to grant it depend on that. As long as the duties belonging to this institute are properly fulfilled, God will abundantly shower His blessings on your Community, but as soon as they are neglected, He will abandon you, and the whole structure, spiritual as well as material, will collapse.

I trust, God willing, that I shall soon be able to answer the rest of your letter in person. You must not be in too great a haste, for a number of reasons, to write the biography of a person who has just died.

I send my most cordial regards to all my dear daughters. I have always felt and will continue to feel toward them a truly paternal affection. I am, in truth, my dearest daughter,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LETTER 139

To Bishop de la Vieuville of Rennes.(1) *The celebration of the jubilee is not favorable to giving a mission.*

[1669] I beg of you, my Lord, to consider that the jubilee will either precede, coincide with or follow the mission.

If the jubilee precedes it, the mission will no longer be seasonable, since each one will already have gained his Jubilee indulgence.

If it coincides with the mission, it will render our work useless for two reasons: 1. With the

fruits of the mission depending on good confessors, the people will avoid the missionary confessors who are more strict, and will go to others who are less exacting, since the Jubilee Bull grants each one the privilege of choosing his own confessor. 2. Should everyone go to the missionaries, the Jubilee will not last longer than two weeks. Now in order that a mission produce some change in morals and destroy vice and bad habits, it must last at least seven or eight weeks. Even those that we preach in the smallest country parishes continue for not less than six weeks.(2) Otherwise one simply puts a plaster on the sore but does not heal it. Weeds are cut down but not uprooted. A noise is made, but there is little result.

If the jubilee follows the mission, everyone will desert our exercises in order to attend the jubilee. All that I am telling you, my Lord, I have learned from experience gained by preaching missions during other Jubilees. I am observing these very things now in a mission that we began three weeks ago in the diocese of Bayeux. So long as there was no talk of a Jubilee, it was bringing wonderful results, but ever since news of it began to spread, we have been accomplishing nothing. It is of the greatest importance to choose a suitable time to give this mission, since it is to be preached in your cathedral and will be our first effort in your diocese.

(1). A city of Brittany in the department of Ille-et-Vilaine, about 260 miles west of Paris.

(2). It is interesting to note the length of missions in the Seventeenth Century. The Saint give, his reasons why the mission should last at least a month and a half. It is probable that missions were not given so frequently then as at the present time.

212-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 140

To the Superior at Rouen. The Saint requests him to send Father Thomas Vaguel(1) to him.

[Before 1670]

... It is not by my authority as your superior that I am asking you to send Father Vaguel. I am requesting it of you as a brother who entreats you to lend him to us for a little while, or rather, to give him to Our Lord and His most Holy Mother. I hope you will not refuse them.

(1). Father Vaguel (1624-1674), a native of Caen, joined the Congregation of Jesus and Mary in 1647. After reaching at the Lisieux College, he was appointed superior of the Rouen Seminary and law of the Evreux Seminary. He was an excellent missionary and spent the last years of his life in the work of the missions. He died on March 10, 1674. Cf. *Les Fleurs de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie*, Vol. 1, P. 43.

LETTER 141

To Mother Mary of the Blessed Sacrament Pierre. On the establishment at Rennes, and the zeal that ought to be manifested on such occasions.

Rennes, January 19, 1670 J. M. J.

I received the copies you sent me, my dear daughter, but the judgment of verification from the Parliament is missing. There is one, to be sure, but it is a judgment which orders only that Caen be informed of the conveniences or inconveniences of the city. We have no need of that one, but of a different one in your possession, issued after the other, which orders that your letters patent from the King be registered. Please have a copy of it made as soon as possible and send it to me without

delay, for his Lordship of Rennes wishes to see it.

I am surprised at your writing me that it is impossible to send any of our Sisters here so soon. What is the meaning of that, my dear daughter? Is it because there are none who wish to come? I cannot believe that the Daughters of Charity could have so little love for God

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

213-

and so little charity toward souls who have been redeemed by the precious blood of His Son.

Is it because they hold some grievance against the superior here?(1) But she is all charity, meekness and kindness.

Is it because you think that you shall be asked for a dowry, or room and board, or the expenses of the trip made by those who come? But I give you my word that none of these things shall be demanded of you. One of our presidents has offered to have them brought here in her carriage.(2) If they do not like it after they arrive, they will be privileged to leave. Then too, as long as they remain, your house will be relieved of the support of two girls. It will also be strengthened by the union which will be formed with this house, and it will furnish an example for other establishments of your Order.

Lastly, I do not know the origin of this hindrance and delay, but I do know that the devil, who is enraged at the Communities which labor for the salvation of souls, will do all in his power to prevent this plan and postpone its execution, because he knows only too well that, when we have left here, it will be easy for him to create obstacles.

But why, my dear daughter, are you so reserved toward me, who have no intent other than the glory of God, the salvation of souls and the advantage of your house? Why do you not simply tell me what the trouble is, so that I may try to remedy it? You can let me know as safely in writing as by word of mouth, for letters are never lost in the mail.

Most cordial regards to all my dear daughters. I beseech them to have a very special devotion to the divine Infant Jesus and His most Holy Mother.

In the love of the most Holy Heart of the Son and the Mother I remain, both to you and to them, my dearest daughter,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

(1). Mother Mary of the Trinity Heurtaut. She had taken the habit of Our Lady of Charity at Caen and had made a fervent novitiate there. But because her parents had refused to give her a dowry, she was not allowed to make her profession and was obliged to return to the outside world.

(2). Madame d'Argouge, who founded the house.

214-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 142

To Sister Mary of St. Agnes des Champs,(1) in Caen. *On the love of Jesus and Mary, and union with the dispositions with which they died.*

Evreux, October 12, 1670

J. M. J.

I thank you with all my heart, my dearest daughter, for your letter so full of charity and friendliness, and I give infinite thanks to our most benign Saviour and His most amiable Mother for the holy dispositions which they are implanting in your soul. It is a very special grace which proceeds from their purest goodness. I implore them to strengthen and increase it more and more. And in order to cooperate on your part, try to cultivate love for the Son and His Mother. Offer yourself frequently to them, beseeching them to immerse, engulf, lose and consume you in the sacred flames of the fiery furnace of their most amiable Heart. Always unite this love with humility, as well as with trust and complete abandonment of your whole self to the divine will. Finally, my dearest daughter, give yourself repeatedly to Jesus in order to unite yourself with the holy dispositions with which He and His most Holy Mother died. I beseech them very humbly and earnestly to grant you their holy blessing all the moments of your life, particularly in the last one, to assist you during that final passing, and to receive and harbor your soul for ever in their most benign Heart. I have the greatest confidence in the incomparable goodness of this admirable Heart of Jesus, the Son of Mary, and of Mary, the Mother of Jesus, that they will grant you this grace.

(1). Father Joseph Mary Ory, author of *The origin of the Order of Our Lady of Charity*, says very little about Sister Mary of St. Agnes. He merely mentions the fact that she had been brought up in the Caen Monastery and had been tormented with interior trials. The Saint often came to console her, and when he was unable to visit wrote encouraging letters such as the one given here. Cf. Ory, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

215-

This is what I shall earnestly beg of them. In the sacred love of that divine Heart, my dearest daughter, I am

Devotedly yours,
JOAN EUDES, missionary priest.

P. S. Most cordial greetings to all my dear daughters.

LETTER 143

To Mother St. Gabriel,(1) Religious of Montmartre. Concerning the Saint's zeal for missions.

[1670]

God has given me so much strength on this mission(2) that I have preached almost every day for twelve weeks to an enormous audience in the cathedral, with as much vigor as I had at the age of thirty. That is why I have resolved to spend the rest of my life in this work. After the summer missions, we have promised to give one at Clermont,(3) in Auvergne, on All Saints' Day.

(1). A Benedictine nun of the Montmartre Monastery in Paris.

(2). The mission at Rennes.

(3). Former capital of Auvergne in the department of Puy-de Dôme, about 250 miles south of Paris.

LETTER 144

To Mother Mary of the Blessed Sacrament, Superior of Our Lady of Charity. *On spending the new year well.*

Paris, January 14, 1671 J. M. J.

I thank you, my dearest daughter, for your charitable letter. I have too much affection for you and your Community to forget you in my prayers; that is something I am not doing, nor will I ever do so. I always

216 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

remember you and my other dear daughters at the holy altar and in all my worthless prayers. *Please assure* them of this. My greetings to them, one and all. I implore Our Lord and His most Holy Mother to lavish their most holy blessings upon you, and to grant us the grace to use this new year as if it were to be the last one of our lives in which to love our most amiable Jesus and His dearest Mother, who is also ours, and to atone in their love and service for all our shortcomings of the past.

I shall not forget the persons you have recommended to me. I pray you, too, my dear daughter, to have the Community make a novena in honor of the most Holy Heart of Our Lord and His gracious Mother, for my intentions.

In the sacred love of their most Holy Heart I remain to all, and to you in particular, my dearest daughter,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LETTER 145

To Sister Mary of the Assumption Le Grand.(1) *On various subjects.*

Vernon,(2) July 19, 1671 J. M. J.

I am very grateful to you, my dearest daughter, for your letter telling me of the joy our good Saviour has granted you by admitting you to the ranks of His spouses and of the daughters of the most Holy Heart of His dear Mother. I give infinite thanks to Him, imploring Him most humbly to grant you all the virtues proper to such a holy state in life.

I have waited a long time to answer your letter, but I have been so busy now for nearly a month with a mission that I am giving for a community of nuns, at the command of his Lordship of Evreux, that I really have had no leisure to write you sooner.

(1). Niece of Reverend Father Le Grand, pastor of St. Julian's Church in Caen and ecclesiastical superior of the Monastery of Our Lady of Charity. Cf. Ory, *ibid.*, p. 172

(2). A city in the district of Evreux on the Seine River.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

217 -

My most cordial greetings to all my dear daughters, from the first to the last.

When you see your uncle again, please give him my most respectful regards.

My two dear nieces know, too, that I have for them the affection both of an uncle and a father.

Do not forget in your prayers, my *dearest daughter*, one who never forgets you, and who is, in the charity of the most Holy Heart of Jesus and Mary, my dearest daughter,

Devotedly yours,

JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LETTER 146

To Sister Mary of the Nativity Herson, his niece. *On the death of her sister-in-law.*

Evreux, September 27, 1671 J. M. J.

I deeply regret the great affliction, my dearest niece, that has befallen your poor brother. We must pray earnestly that God may grant him the grace to make good use of his sorrow, and recommend his children to the Blessed Virgin Mary, supplicating her to be their mother. I wrote to him as consolingly as I could and said Mass for the deceased, as also for him and his children, which I will do again. Ah, how fortunate we are, and how advantageous is our state in life compared with the most favorable situations of our time! How much are we bound to bless, love and faithfully serve Our Lord and His most Holy Mother for having withdrawn us from the inferno of the outside world and placed us instead in the paradise of their holy house! Ah, how gladly should we embrace all the duties of our state in life!

I am leaving here Tuesday, Godwilling, to go to Lisieux, where I shall remain for two or three weeks. Then I am proceeding to Caen, and I will not fail to call on you there.

218 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

Most cordial greetings to all my dear daughters. I am with my whole heart,

Devotedly yours,

JOHN EUDES, missionary priest
of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary.

LETTER 147

To a Religious of Montmartre. *On submission to the will of God.*

[1671]

Tell the good Mother that she should resign herself without reservation to the most adorable will of God, neither desiring nor asking for anything save what is pleasing to Him. That is the secret of obtaining from God everything we wish, for in all things we should have no will other than His, especially since we are well aware that He desires only what is for our greatest good. Oh, how pleasing to His Divine Majesty is one soul! What wonderful peace the soul enjoys when it has wholly,

annihilated its own will and all its inclinations, and has sacrificed all its desires, interests and satisfactions to God, neither wishing nor asking for anything, at any time, except what is most pleasing to its God, professing to desire no happiness other than the happiness of its most kind Father! No matter what happens, nor in what state it is, the soul is always very happy because God is, too. One must indeed be hard to satisfy if he is not made happy by the happiness of God. This is the way, therefore, in which one obtains from God all that he requests of Him, because he asks for nothing that is not pleasing to Him. It is paradise on earth. Ask Him for this grace for me, my dearest daughter, and I will do the same for you, that you may thus be in complete conformity with the Heart of Jesus and Mary.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

219-

LETTER 148

To Mother St. Gabriel. *On the mission preached by the Saint to the religious of Our Lady of Vernon.*

September 25, 1671

I am back again at Évreux, my dearest daughter. I was away giving a mission for the nuns which lasted for quite some time, and I worked very hard. It pleased our most benign Saviour and His most kind Mother to manifest their admirable power and incomparable goodness on this occasion, and to bestow on my work the most wonderful success that could have been desired. This is all I can tell you about it in writing. I beseech you, my dear daughter, to help me give thanks to the Son and the Mother for the great favor they have conferred upon these good religious. It is one of the most palpable consolations I have ever experienced in my whole life.

LETTER 149

To Mother St. Gabriel. *On the occasion of an illness of Madame de Lorraine, (1) the abbess of Montmartre.*

[1671]

Above all, keep me informed of the health of our good Mother, whom, in truth, I respect beyond all power of expression, and for whom I frequently pray to God with a very special affection. (1). Frances Renée de Lorraine, abbess of the Benedictine Monastery of Montmartre in Paris.

220-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 150

To Sister Mary of the Nativity Herson. *On the guidance of the penitents, and the proper preparation for the feast of the Holy Heart of Mary.*

[Paris, beginning of 1672] J. M. J.

I was just on the point of going to see you and the other Sisters, my dearest niece and daughter, when our dear brother Father Hubert came expressly to Caen from Paris to take me back with him. I am there now in my desire to obey the divine will wherever it may be pleased to send me. Pray that I may be granted the grace to die rather than deviate ever so slightly from its commands.

It is that divine will which has placed you in charge of our sister penitents. It is the holiest of any employment you could undertake in this world. Apply yourself to it with all possible diligence, charity and fidelity.

My most cordial regards to them, as well as to my dear daughters. God bless them all, particularly my dearest daughter Mary of the Child Jesus, whom I desire with my whole heart to be professed.

Here are three ways in which to prepare for the feast of the Most Holy Heart of Mary: 1. Humble yourselves and ask pardon for your past sins; 2. Conceive an ardent desire to impress upon your hearts a perfect likeness of the virtues of the Holy Heart, and strive unceasingly toward that end; 3. Give yourselves to the infinite love of the divine Heart of Jesus for the Holy Heart of Mary, that He may prepare you for this feast.

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

221 -

LETTER 151

To Sister Mary of the Child Jesus de Bois-David,(1) the second of that name. *On the subject of her profession.*

Caen, February A, 1672

J. M. J.

A thousand thanks, my dear good daughter, for your most cordial and sincere letter, with its many indications of your true charity in my behalf. I thank my dearest daughters, too, whose names were mentioned in your letter, for their charitable regards. If all the others shared this same spirit, they would be daughters of Our Lady of Charity in the true sense.

I feel it very keenly that I cannot attend the ceremony(2) of your profession, my dearest daughter. I will be present in spirit, however; and I intend to sacrifice you together with my Saviour in the great sacrifice which I am going to offer for you, that I may supplicate Him, as well as His most Holy Mother, to take my place at your holy profession and to render you entirely conformable to their divine Heart.

It is in this most amiable Heart that I will remain eternally to you and all my true daughters, despite hell itself,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest
of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary.

(1). See Letter 65, note 1. The religious to whom this letter was written entered the Monastery of Our Lady of Charity as a boarder when her holy mother became a postulant. In obedience to her mother's last request she joined the Order and took the name in religion. That is why she is referred to as Sister Mary of the Child Jesus, the second of the name. Cf. Ory, *The Origin of the Order of Our Lady of Charity*, P. 173.

(2). We are unable to say why the Saint did not assist at the profession. His letter shows traces of a deep-seated sorrow. Cf. Ory, *ibid.*, p. 173.

LETTER 152

To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond, the superior of the Caen Seminary. *On the registration of letters patent obtained in view of an establishment at Paris.*(1)

[Spring of 1672]

We have not yet presented our letters patent to the Parliament. We are engaged in paving the way for success in this, which we hope to receive from above. Have prayers said for this affair and recommend it to God. I think we shall embark on it next week. I should like the matter to be taken to Our Lady of Deliverance.'(2)"For many dogs have encompassed me;" (3) but, after God, all my trust rests in our most powerful and bountiful Mother. No matter what happens, I shall always be happy, God willing, and I shall always benefit from it, for I desire no happiness or benefit other than that of my God.

(1). In 1671 a lady by the name of Madame Pétau gave to St. John Eudes, by a deed of gift between living persons, two-thirds of a home that she owned in Paris, near St. Josse Church, as a home for the students of his Congregation. In the event that the Saint was evicted from this house, Madame Nun wanted him to be given the price required for the purchase of another house to be used for the same purpose. The execution of this contract gave rise to great difficulties. The pastor and the church wardens of St. Josse opposed it, offering to give St. John Eudes the price of the house in question. The Saint, perceiving their opposition, resolved to take advantage of the benevolence of the King, whom he had just won over during a mission preached at Versailles, to solicit letters patent which would permit him to execute this contract, as soon as the opportunity presented itself. He obtained them in March, 1672, but it still remained to have them registered in Parliament. The Saint feared new opposition from this direction, and it did not fail to materialize.

(2). The Saint asks Father de la Haye de Bonnefond to pray at the shrine of our Lady for the success of the undertaking. See Letter 37, note 2.

(3). PS. 21, 17.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

223 -

LETTER 153

To Sister Mary of St. Agnes des Champs. *The Saint comforts her in her trials.*

[1672] J. M. J.

Your letter in which you describe your sufferings, my dearest daughter, touches me more deeply than I can say. Nevertheless, do not allow yourself to become discouraged, but place your trust in our most benign Saviour and in His holy and most bountiful Mother, who is also ours. They love you infinitely and can gain their greatest glory, as well as your utmost good, from all things. I beseech them, now and always, to do so, and to grant you their holy blessing at all times. To this end I repeat seven or eight times daily, for you and all my dear daughters who are known to God: *Nos cum Prole pia benedicat Virgo Maria*. I send my regards to one and all, recommending myself most earnestly to their fervent prayers, since I am obliged to leave for Paris as soon as possible.

Live Jesus and Mary.

Devotedly yours,

JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LETTER 154

To Sister of the Nativity Herson. *On her position as Mistress of Penitents,(1)and on the feast of the Holy Heart of Mary.*

Paris, May 26, 1672 J. M. J.

Thank you, my dear child, for the news of yourself; and infinite thanks to my dearest Jesus and my most Holy Mother for the incon-

(1). In the convents of Our Lady of Charity of the Refuge and of the Good Shepherd the religious in charge of the repentant women and girls.

224-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

ceivable favor they are conferring on you by employing you in the work which is the most pleasing on earth to them, that is to say, the great work of the salvation of souls. Ah, think what it cost the Saviour to rescue our souls from eternal damnation! Then do not be astonished, my dear daughter, if you encounter trials and crosses while doing God's work; that is the best part of your task. But bear in mind the charity, patience, meekness and other virtues which our most benign Saviour practised while accomplishing His Father's work on earth.

Infinite thanks to His immense bounty, and to the incomparable graciousness of His most Holy Mother, for having at last given you the feast of her most amiable Heart! May God make a great saint of his Lordship of Bayeux for having granted you permission for it. I assure you that it is a cause of great joy to me. *Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

It is up to all of you now to strive to acquire all the virtues necessary to be true daughters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary, especially humility, patience, love, charity and zeal for the salvation of souls.

In the holy love of this divine Heart I remain, my dearest daughter,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LETTER 155

To Sister Mary of Jesus Allain.(1) *On the feast of the Holy Heart of Mary, and some virtues to be practised.*

[1672] J. M. J.

God bless you, my dearest child. If you have the affection of a daughter for me, I assure you that I feel the love of a father for you, with a heart full of tenderness and cordiality, as it is indeed for all my

(1). Sister Mary of Jesus Allain de Barbières was brought up by Madame de Camilly, her relative and godmother. She took the habit of the Order of Our Lady of Charity and made her profession when she was seventeen years of age. Deeply imbued with the spirit of the Order she rendered inestimable services in her offices as assistant and councillor. Cf. Ory, *ibid.*, p. 175.

true daughters, whom I cast daily into the fiery furnace of the Heart of Jesus and Mary so worthy of love.

Thank you, my dearest daughter, for the joyous news you wrote me about the permission granted you by his Lordship of Bayeux to celebrate the feast of the Holy Heart of our divine Mother. May He make a great saint of this good prelate. *Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

I beseech you, my dear child, and all my other dear daughters as well, to strive to acquire all the virtues you need in order to be true daughters of the most Holy Heart of Jesus and Mary, especially humility, obedience, love, charity and zeal for the salvation of souls.

Most cordial greetings to our dearest Mother and all my dear daughters. *Nos cum Prole pia benedicat Virgo Maria. Amen.*

I thank our dear Mother for the little picture of the Holy Ghost that she sent me. I will take care of your indulgences; leave it all to me without troubling yourselves in the least about it.

LETTER 156

To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond, in Caen. *On the contemplated establishment in Paris.*

[July 9, 1672]

The Parliament has handed down a decision, but the magistrates are demanding so many things that I am singularly discouraged and almost persuaded to drop the whole matter, for I am wondering if it is God's will that we proceed any farther with it. Have prayers said for this affair.

226 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 157(1)

To the Priests of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. *On the establishment of the least of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.*

Paris, July 29, 1672.

J.M.J.

My dearest and beloved brethren:

It is an inexplicable grace which our most amiable Saviour has accorded us in giving our Congregation the admirable Heart of His most Holy Mother. But not being content, in His infinite goodness, to stop there, He has gone even further in giving us His Own Heart, along with the Heart of His glorious Mother, to be the founder and superior, the beginning and end, the heart and life, of this Congregation.

He conferred this great gift upon us at the birth of our Congregation, for, although we have heretofore celebrated one special and particular feast of the adorable Heart of Jesus, nevertheless we never intended to separate two hearts which God has so closely joined together, the most august Heart of the Son of God and that of His Blessed Mother. On the contrary, from the very beginning of our

Congregation it has been our intention to regard and honor these two Hearts as one, in unity of spirit, feeling and affection, as is clearly indicated in the Salutation to the Divine Heart of Jesus and Mary that we recite each day, as well as in the prayer and in several portions of the Office and Mass which we celebrate on the feast of the Holy Heart of the Blessed Virgin.

But divine Providence, which guides all things with marvelous wisdom, has willed to introduce the feast of the Heart of the Mother before that of the Heart of her Son, in order to prepare the hearts of the faithful for the veneration of His adorable Heart, and to dispose them to obtain from heaven the grace of this second feast by the great devotion they have shown in celebrating the first. Although the latter has

(1). This circular letter is an important historical document on the Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. In it the Saint enjoins his spiritual sons to celebrate a solemn feast on October 20. He sent them for the occasion a special office and Mass, which he had composed two years before. Cf. *The Sacred Heart of Jesus* (New York, 1946), p. 136.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

227 -

been attacked, first of all, by the spirit of the world, which never fails to oppose whatever proceeds from the spirit of God, nevertheless, as soon as it became known to those who profess to pay special honor to the most Holy Mother of God, they looked upon it with joy and embraced it with ardor. For several years now they have celebrated it with great fervor, and today it is solemnized everywhere in France, and in several religious orders and congregations, with such abundant blessings that there is reason to hope that some day it will be celebrated throughout the universe.

It is this ardent devotion of the true children of the Heart of the Mother of love which has obliged her to obtain from her beloved Son this signal favor which He has accorded His Church, that of granting her the feast of His royal Heart which will be a fresh source of an infinity of blessings for those who are disposed to celebrate it holily.

But who indeed would not do that? What solemnity is more worthy, more holy and more excellent than this one, the fountain-head of everything great, holy and venerable in all other feasts? What heart is there more adorable, admirable and worthy of love than the Heart of this God-Man whose name is Jesus? What honor is not due this divine Heart which has ever rendered and will eternally render God more glory and love, at every moment, than all the hearts of men and angels can render Him in a whole eternity? What zeal should not be ours to honor this august Heart which is the source of our salvation, the origin of all the joys of heaven and earth, an immense furnace of love for us, which thinks of nothing, day and night, save to confer on us an infinity of blessings, which, finally, was broken with grief on the Cross for our sake, as the Son of God and His most Holy Mother declared to St. Bridget, according to an excellent doctor, Father Bail.

Should the objection be raised that the feast is an innovation, I shall reply that innovation in matters of faith is indeed pernicious, but that it is good in matters of piety. Otherwise one would have to frown upon all the feasts in the Church, since they also were new when they were first celebrated, particularly those most recently established, such as the feasts of Corpus Christi, the Holy Name of Jesus, the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Holy Name of Mary, her Grandeur, Our Lady of Compassion, of Hope, of Victory (in the

228 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

diocese of Paris) and many others, as well as a considerable number of new saints' feasts which have been added to the Roman Breviary. If they answer that these things were done on the authority of our

Holy Father the Pope, I shall reply, as did St. Francis de Sales and a great many very illustrious and learned prelates and doctors, that each bishop in his own diocese, notably in France, has the same power in this regard as that of the Sovereign Pontiff in the entire Church.

Then let us acknowledge, my dearest brethren, the infinite grace and incomprehensible favor with which our most bountiful Saviour has honored our Congregation in giving it His own most adorable Heart, together with the most amiable Heart of His Holy Mother. They are two inestimable treasures which contain an enormity of heavenly blessings and eternal riches, and He has made our Congregation their depository, that through it they may then be implanted in the hearts of the faithful.

Let us humble ourselves infinitely at the sight of our own infinite unworthiness in the face of such tremendous considerations. Let us be deeply grateful for the ineffable bounty of our most benign Saviour and the incomparable charity of His dearest Mother, who is also ours. Let us never cease to bless, praise and glorify them, nor to invite all the saints and all creatures to bless and thank them with us. Let us joyfully and jubilantly embrace the solemnity of the divine Heart of our most amiable Jesus.

I am enclosing herewith the Office and Mass of this feast, approved by all our prelates. Use them with all possible care, diligence and fervor in order to celebrate it worthily.

To that end: 1. Invite all our friends and all devout persons to join with you in doing so.

2. If you receive this package in time, have the feast proclaimed. If there were time, there would have to be a sermon.

3. Fast on the vigil of the feast.

4. Have twelve poor persons dine in the refectory on the eve of the feast or the day before.

The octave is not yet printed and ready to be sent to you.

In a word, my dearest brethren, I beseech you to celebrate this feast with all possible devotion and solemnity, and then write me all about

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

229 -

it afterwards. You will thereby greatly rejoice him who desires for you the holiest blessings of our most bountiful Saviour and His sweet Mother, and who is, in the sacred love of His divine Heart, my dearest brethren,

Your unworthy servant,
JOHN EUDES, priest of the
Congregation of Jesus and Mary.

LETTER 158

To Archbishop de Méday of Rouen. *In justification of the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.*

[About 1672]

It is true, my Lord, that any innovation in matters of faith is extremely pernicious and utterly damnable. But I beg of you to consider, my Lord, that it is not the same thing in matters of devotion, for there are many feasts in the Church which were not established at the outset and are new ... Certainly if those innovations were bad, the Church would not allow them.

Please consider, too, that all our prelates have given us their approbation and permission in this matter. That is why I beseech you very humbly, by this most adorable Heart which is the source of everything holy and venerable in all the feasts which the Church celebrates, by the love with which It is inflamed for you, and by all the effects of that love which you have experienced and want to experience at the hour of your death, not to prevent this feast from being celebrated in your seminary as it is celebrated in others. If you refuse me this favor, which I request of you with all possible respect and submission, I must confess that I shall be deeply pained; but should you grant it to me, as I trust you will, in your kindness, you will afford me much joy and infinite gratification. Do not, then, reject this most humble and earnest prayer addressed to you by one who is, in truth, with all his heart, and with deepest respect....

230 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 159

To An Unidentified Person. *On the plan of His Lordship Henry de Maupas du Tour, Bishop of Evreux, to appoint St. John Eudes his coadjutor with right of future succession.*

[1672]

I do not even presume to write to his Lordship, for I am so filled with astonishment, confusion and fear, in view of the frightful danger confronting me, that I do not know where I stand. I feel like one who has lost his mind and power of speech, except that, if I dared, I should cry out that I desire no benefice save the one my Saviour chose for Himself, which is the Cross. My only consolation is that I have an enormous confidence in the incomparable goodness of my most amiable Jesus, and of His most bountiful Mother and mine, that they will direct all things in the manner most pleasing to them. That is my only prayer to them, save that they grant me the grace to do their most holy will everywhere and in all things. I see all that our dear Mr. de... fears for me, and it causes one's nature to shudder and tremble. But my spirit embraces all for the love of our adorable crucified Saviour and in reparation for my sins, the least of which merits infinitely worse, for I have the greatest confidence that my good Mother will not abandon me.

LETTER 160

To The Same Person. *On the same subject.*

[1672]

The fear I have had up to now of resisting the will of God in that matter of which you are aware, Sir, obliged me to endure what was being said and done to further it; but at last the crystal-clear view I have of my great, my very great, my almost infinite unworthiness, and the fear of seeing myself compelled to answer to God for the salvation of so many souls, oblige me to tell you, sir, that I declare openly and from the bottom of my heart that I want no benefice other than the

one my Saviour chose for Himself, that is, the Cross. This is the benefice I desire, that I embrace and love with all my heart for the love of my most amiable Crucified Saviour, Who loved and preferred it to all that the world loves and esteems more highly. I want no other, unless God absolutely wills it. I implore you to read this letter to his Lordship and to the vicar-generals, as well as to Monsignor de ...

LETTER 161

To Father Simon Mannoury. *On the request of His Lordship Henry de Maupas, Bishop of Evreux, to make him his coadjutor.*

[September 1672]

This news has not caused me the slightest disturbance, both because I am quite certain that, no matter what may be said, nothing will come of these proposals, and because, if it did happen, it would assuredly be God Who had so willed it. Tell his Lordship of Evreux plainly that I desire no benefice save the one chosen by my Saviour Jesus Christ for Himself, that is, His Cross. So far I have had all manner of them, and by the grace of God I have not bent beneath their burden; but as for this new cross which threatens me, I have no fears at all. I know men, and I feel quite sure that this is the cross they will most willingly spare me.

LETTER 162

To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond. *On the same subject.*

September 17, 1672

Here is still another matter that I urge you to keep very secret: his Lordship of Evreux wishes to have the nonentity of nonentities as his coadjutor. He has consulted several bishops and doctors about it, and other religious of outstanding piety, as well as his two vicar-generals,

232 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

all of whom have encouraged him in it ... He has drawn up a petition to present to the King and has written in this regard to Father Ferrier.(1) Monday he is to send Father du Vaucel, his vicar-general, to Paris, and he, accompanied by Father Cyprien, a Discalced Carmelite, will call on Father Ferrier to request him to present the petition to the King.

Since I learned this piece of news, which is known only to Father Mannoury, I have not troubled myself about it, as much because I believe that the whole project will go up in smoke, as because I am afraid of resisting the divine will, in case this affair is proceeding from God. But as soon as I learned of the disclosure of his Lordship of Evreux, I wrote to Father Mannoury that I desired no other benefice except that chosen by my Saviour for Himself, that is, His Cross; that this was the sole cross I was seeking, which I embraced and loved for the love of this most amiable Redeemer Who preferred it to all that the world most loves and esteems; and that I begged him to make that avowal to his Lordship of Evreux and his vicar-generals. I see nothing but crosses heaped upon my head if this does not succeed. As for the others, that is, those who are connected with such a high place, I do not fear them so much because I cannot convince myself that the thing will happen.

(1). A Jesuit, the King's confessor.

LETTER 163

To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond. *On the same subject.*

October 18, 1672

Father du Vaucel, Vicar General of Evreux, will arrive in Paris to-morrow for the affair we have been discussing, my dearest brother. It makes me tremble and would cause me to die of fright if it were not for my great confidence in the incomparable goodness of my most benign Saviour and my most bountiful Mother.

I beg of you, my dearest brother, to have a novena of Masses said at

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

233-

our house in honor of the most Holy Heart of Jesus and Mary, but for this novena have no other Mass said save that of the Divine Heart of Jesus. Then please write for me to Coutances, Rennes and Lisieux, telling them to do the same; and to Rouen, that they should make a novena of Masses to St. Joseph, all for my intentions. Ask our Carmelites also to make a novena of their own chosen devotion, in honor of the Blessed Virgin and St. Teresa.

LETTER 164

To Sister Mary of St. Agnes des Champs. *On her convalescence.*

Paris, October 23, 1672

J. M. J.

I give infinite thanks to our most adorable Saviour and His most amiable Mother for the solace they have granted you, my dearest daughter. There is no credit due me, for nothing can be expected from one who is merely a nonentity. It is solely an effect of their bounty; may they be eternally praised and blessed for it.

Give yourself to them with your whole heart, my dear daughter, in order to serve and honor them with joy, love and confidence. Be very careful to suppress all thoughts that can trouble you, and to appeal to the most bountiful Virgin in all our trials, as a daughter having recourse to her most sweet mother. She has never yet rejected anyone, and she will not do so the first time in your case.

Be satisfied to make your confession as usual during your retreat. Then too, do not speak to his Lordship of Bayeux about it; it is your superior who should settle these things. My most cordial greetings to her, as also to her niece, Sister Mary of the Nativity and to your brother. I remain with all my heart, in Jesus and Mary, my dearest daughter,

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LETTER 165

To Sister Mary of St. Agnes des Champs. *The Saint encourages her to put her trust in the Blessed Virgin Mary.*

J. M. J.

I am extremely sorry, my dearest daughter, that I cannot go to see you, but have recourse to our Holy Mother. She has never rejected anyone, and you need not fear that she will do so in your case. She is all mercy, charity, goodness, meekness and kindness. You are her daughter, and she is your Mother—a mother who loves you so much that, if the love of all the mothers who ever existed, are now living and will yet be, were gathered into a single heart, it would form only a tiny spark in comparison with her love for you. Then go to her with full and complete confidence. Implore her aid with all earnestness, and you will feel the effects of her incomprehensible goodness.

With my whole heart do I beseech her and her beloved Son to grant you their holy blessing.

Nos cum Prole pia benedicat Virgo Maria.

Live Jesus and Mary.

My most cordial regards to the whole Community.

LETTER 166

To Mother St. Gabriel, a Religious of Montmartre. *On the death of Father Blouet de Than, (1)the founder of the Caen seminary.*

Caen, January 19, 1673

We are about to bury a manifest angel. He was one of our dearest brethren, the founder of this house, who lived like an angel and died

(1). Father Blouet de Than (1628-1673) was a nephew of Mr. Blouet de Camilly. He donated an annual income of 4,000 livres and 3,000 livres, of arrears for the founding of the Caen Seminary. On August 15, 1644 he entered the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. For more than twenty years he was in failing health and could leave his room only to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. He died on January 14, 1673. Cf. *Les Fleurs de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie*, 1, 36; Georges, Saint Jean Eudes, p. 85.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

yesterday as an angel might die if he were subject to the law of death. We must not neglect to pray for him, however, as we should do for anyone else. I am asking you, my dear daughter, to communicate this to Madame.(2) He had an unparalleled devotion for the Blessed Virgin, from whom he received extraordinary favors. He suffered for more than twenty years, and during that time he never left his room except to say Holy Mass, spending all his time in prayer, in having Sacred Scripture and the holy Fathers read to him, and in making collections of all their beautiful sayings in praise of the incomparable Mother of God, with which he filled several huge hand-written volumes. Help us, my dearest daughter, to thank our most amiable Mother for the many graces she obtained for him from her beloved Son.

(2). Madame de Lorraine. See Letter 149, note 1.

LETTER 167

To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond, in Caen. *On the mission at Saint-Germain-en-Laye, (1) given at the command of Louis XIV.*

Saint-Germain-en-Laye, April 2, 1673

Immediately upon my arrival I greeted their Majesties, (2) his Lordship the Dauphin(3) and Monsieur, the King's brother,(4) all of whom received me very graciously.

Father Blouet and Father de Launay(5) preach in the morning at 6:00, and at 2:00 Father Paillet conducts the catechism instruction, which the Queen herself attended on one occasion. As for myself, I have been preaching every evening, with as much strength as ever, on very moving topics. Everyone gives evidence of being highly gratified with our

(1). This city is in the district of Versailles. The royal palace there was then the usual residence of the King and Court.

(2). King Louis XIV and Queen Mary Teresa.

(3). Louis, son of Louis XIV (1661-1711).

(4). Philip I of Orleans (1640-1701).

(5). Father John Baptist de Launay was a secular priest of the diocese of Bayeux, who assisted the Saint in his missions. He later became vicar general of the Bayeux diocese.

236 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

work, thanks be to God, and all assure me that their Majesties share the same sentiments. The Queen told me yesterday that I should continue to preach all the remaining days of this week. In short, everyone tells us that the King and Queen are well pleased.

LETTER 168

To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond. *On the mission at Saint-Germain-en-Laye.*

Paris, April 21, 1673

Yesterday the Queen called on the Carmelite nuns here while I was at Montmartre. She evinced such great satisfaction over the mission and the preachers that it defies expression. She said that other sermons were only speeches, but that ours penetrated the depths of the heart, that everyone was moved by them, and that she could see a change in the King's behavior. Beg God to bless our small efforts. Finally, she demonstrated such enormous benevolence, such enormous friendship (those are the words of our good Sister Teresa, who made the account as glowing as possible), toward the nonentity of nonentities that it is impossible to imagine. And she earnestly enjoined Sister Teresa not to allow the day to pass without telling me all these things. Blessed are they who are loved by the Queen of Heaven!

LETTER 169

To Mother St. Henry, a Religious of Montmartre. *On a marvelous occurrence which took place during the mission at Elbeuf.(1)*

[June or July 1673]

I am now conducting a large mission in which Our Lord Himself deigned to deliver the third

sermon by a fearful clap of thunder ... I cannot tell you what marvelous effects were wrought in the hearts of those present by this manner of preaching.

(1). A small town on the Seine in the diocese of Evreux.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

237 -

LETTER 170

To Mother St. Gabriel, a religious of Montmartre. *Concerning his ardent desire to see Jesus and Mary live and reign in the hearts of the abbess and her daughters.*

[1673]

I implore our Blessed Mother to impress a perfect image of her most amiable Heart on the heart of her beloved daughter, Frances de Lorraine, and on all the hearts of her dear daughters of Our Lady of Montmartre, at whose feet my mind and heart will always remain, crying out unceasingly: Live Jesus and Mary in the hearts of my dear daughters! May they and they alone for ever dwell therein, and may they inflame and consume their hearts completely in the sacred flames of their divine love!

Once again I send my greetings to our good, our excellent Madame, whom I pray God to preserve, bless, sanctify and make as great a saint as I should like her to be. I beseech this of Him now and for the rest of my life. Oh, how ardently do I wish her in the utmost depths of the sacred furnace of the divine Heart of Jesus and Mary, together with all her daughters!

LETTER 171

To Sister Mary of the Nativity Herson. *On the government of the House of the Charity Sisters of Bayeux.(1)*

[1673] J. M. J.

Enclosed, my dearest and beloved daughter, are two books for you which have been most useful to me. Please read them carefully and put them even more diligently into practice, particularly their teach

(1). This community was founded by Margaret Morin when she left the Monastery of Our Lady of Charity in 1644. See Letter 16, note 2. When the foundress died on October 1, 1657, the Religious of the Hotel Dieu of Caen took over the government of the Community. Sister Mary of the Nativity succeeded the Hotel Dieu Sisters.

238 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

ings concerning meekness, for a hard, harsh, dry, haughty and domineering disposition serves only to spoil everything, ruining the filial affection, confidence and tenderness which should be *present in* the hearts of those in our charge, and tends to fill them instead with fear, terror, contempt, aversion and hatred. In a word, it is good only for destroying a Community and putting the head of the superior on the block. I do not think, my dearest daughter, that you are behaving in this way, nor has anyone said so to me, but since I know from experience that being a superior ruins many persons by giving them that haughty, domineering, hard, bitter, dry and harsh spirit, I am always afraid. Strive, therefore, I entreat you, to guide your daughters with all possible gentleness, kindness, cordiality and tenderness. It is the spirit of Our Lord and His most Holy Mother; pray to them frequently to

grant it to you and me, and ask one of the Sisters to tell you of your shortcomings in this respect.

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LETTER 172

To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond, in Rome. *On the difficulties he was encountering in his efforts to obtain approbation of the Congregation.*

[1673]

I always implore God in His goodness to destroy our little Congregation completely if it does not exist for His greatest glory, and I embrace with my whole heart all the mortifications and humiliations which would consequently be mine. Thanks to my Saviour, it *seems to me* that I have no desire in the depths of my soul save that of seeking in all things what is most pleasing to Him. Let us take courage and rejoice in two things which ought to cause us to die of joy:

First, that all the enemies of our great God can never keep Him from being what He is. "Know ye that the Lord He is God," (1) says the
(1). Ps. 99, 3

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

239-

Prophet David; and in the words of the most Holy Mother of God: "My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." (2)

Secondly, that all the powers of earth and hell can never hinder us in our sole and all-important occupation, that of serving and loving our most adorable Jesus and His most Holy Mother. Let us lose all rather than lose the least particle of trust we should have in their incomparable goodness toward our Congregation, of which they have given us such abundant proof.

We have never transacted any business that was not accompanied by some cross, which is the true character of all God's affairs. The more they are thwarted, the greater are the fruits and blessings that result from them. I have high hopes for this affair, since there are so many difficulties in connection with it. I am confident that Our Lord and His most Holy Mother will, in their goodness, remove these obstacles. Finally, my dearest brother, one would never accomplish anything in God's work if he were easily rebuffed by obstacles and difficulties. Even if you gain nothing, after having done everything possible, I shall be as happy, God willing, as if all were accomplished. For what is it that I seek? My own interests and gratification? By no means, thank God; only His will!
(2). Luke 1, 47

LETTER 173

To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond, in Rome. *On the necessity of having the Superior-General of the Congregation (1) appointed by the Sovereign Pontiff.*

October 28, 1673

Above all, it will be necessary for the Bull to nominate and establish the superior of the

Congregation. I should be overjoyed if it were James de la Haye de Bonnefond. There is only one thing that worries me, and that is the possibility of your dying before me, although it seems not at all likely.

(1). The Congregation of Jesus and Mary founded by the Saint in 1643

240 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 174

To Sister Mary of the Nativity Herson. *On the consolations that accompany crosses, and on several things regarding the house of the Charity Sisters of Bayeux, where she had been sent.*

Paris, February 16, 1674 J. M. J.

I thank you with all my heart, my dearest daughter and good niece, for your kind letter so full of charity and cordiality.

It is true that our most amiable Saviour is loading me down with crosses, but at the same time He is granting me such a great abundance of graces that all my afflictions are turned into consolations. Many lies and calumnies⁽¹⁾ about me have been widely circulated, but God will use them for His greater glory, while the father of lies, who is their author, will be put to confusion.

I give infinite thanks to my dearest Jesus and His Holy Mother for all the blessings they are bestowing upon your work in the house *where* you are at this time, and I beseech them to increase these spiritual favors more and more, in you as well as your dear companion, to whom I send my most cordial regards.

I am most grateful to Reverend Father Guardian, of whom you wrote me, for his charity toward you and his kindness in my regard; I thank him over and over again.

My affairs are progressing very well, thank God. The falsehoods are being exposed, and I hope that Our Lord and our gracious Mother will soon show us the effects of their special protection.

It is not enough for you to have revealed your reasons and difficulties to the Mother Superior; you should also acquaint his Lordship of Bayeux: with them, and beseech him to keep in mind his word to you. Over and above all else, I entreat you, my dearest daughter, to implant deep in the hearts of all your daughters a tender and cordial devotion to the most Holy Mother of God, who is an inexhaustible source of

(1). These Were Circulated by the Jansenists, his enemies.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

241 -

every manner of blessing, and an infallible means of attaining eternal salvation. I implore her with all my heart to bless every one of them, and to shower her holiest and most precious blessings in *everlasting* abundance upon you, my dear child, together with your *beloved companion*, my dearest daughter. *Nos cum Prole pia benedicat Virgo Maria.*

I remain, in the holy love of the most amiable Heart of Jesus and Mary, my dear daughter,
Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, priest of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary.

LETTER 175

To Colbert (1)

Sunday morning, April 15, 1674 My Lord,

Yesterday evening I received an official letter which was delivered to me from you, ordering me to retire¹ to the seminary at Caen. I immediately made arrangements to obey. I will presently leave Paris and will await, along the way, a coach which is to be sent to me from Evreux, since I was unable to reserve a seat in the public coaches and my age does not permit me -to go on horseback or on foot. I felt, my Lord, that I was under an obligation to you to inform you of my prompt obedience, and to protest that I remain, my Lord, with profound respect,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

JOHN EUDES, priest.

(1). Colbert (1619-1683), was statesman and general controller of finance under Louis XIV.

(2). When Father Boniface, mentioned in preceding letters, saw that he could not obtain from Rome the approbation of Our Lady of Charity, he filed a petition in St. John Eudes's name with the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, requesting that his Congregation be permitted to make a vow to uphold the authority of the Sovereign Pontiff, even in matters which might give rise to doubts. The petition came to nothing, and St. John Eudes, not knowing that it had been filed, did not even suspect its existence.. His enemies succeeded in getting their hands on it and using it to discredit him with King Louis XIV, who banished him to the seminary of Caen.

242 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 176

To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond, in Rome. *Concerning Father Boniface's petition.*

(1)

[1674]

Whatever you do, my dearest brother, we must labor to clear ourselves of the accusation of having drawn up that petition, which is altogether contrary to the truth. Father Boniface has given me a statement in writing to the effect that he wrote me, when he was in Rome, to ask if I wanted him to handle our business, and that my answer was no. But they are not satisfied with that. In short, the whole success of our affairs depends on this justification.

(1). Cf. Boulay, op. cit. Appendix to vol. 4, P. 40, for copy of the original Latin text.

LETTER 177

To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond. *On love for Jesus and Mary, and the trust we must place in them.*

[About 1674]

Where can one find a faithful friend? It is the easiest thing in the world: let us love Jesus, the Son of Mary, and Mary, the Mother of Jesus, placing all our trust in them, and they will manifest their power and incomparable goodness.

LETTER 178

To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond, in Rome. *The Saint asks to resign as Superior-General in order to calm the tempest.*

[1674]

I have no attachment for anything save the most adorable will of my God, which will be revealed to me through that of our most Holy Father, the Pope.(1) As for my own self, let them cast me into the sea so that this tempest may cease. Let them annihilate me and put another in my place. What difference does it make who governs the Congregation, provided he does it well? What do I desire, what do I seek, save that my God be glorified? Yes, with all my heart do I resign, at the feet of His Holiness, from all superiority.

(1). Clement X (1670-1676).

LETTER 179

To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond, in Rome. *The Saint expresses his joy on having obtained indulgences for the missions.*

Caen, August 21, 1674

I received your two parcels containing the indulgences(1) for the missions, and they have given me inexpressible consolation, for never before had we been able to obtain such a favor. I thank you a thousand times for it, my beloved brother.

(1). Father de Bonnefond obtained many benefits for the Congregation during his stay in Rome. Among the privileges was a Bull permitting St. John Eudes to give missions in all parts of France with a plenary indulgence. Boulay, Op. cit., VOL 4, P. 293.

244-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 180

To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond, in Rome. *On the ingratitude of one of his children who had turned against him.*

[October 1674]

I can truthfully say to you, my dearest brother, that since I came into the world I have not suffered such a bloody persecution as this one. What grieves me most is that it is one of my own sons(1) who used to live here, and who never received anything from me but every possible mark of friendship, who has been my most relentless persecutor. "He ... rendereth evil for good."(2) . . . judge for yourself, my dearest brother, what sorrow and anguish is mine! It was in consequence of this that I fell sick.

(1). The name of this disloyal son is not known with certainty. Perhaps it was an ecclesiastic in minor orders, named Aude, who sometimes acted as St. John Eudes's secretary, and who handed over the Saint's notes on Mary des Vallées to Father Dufour, the Abbé d'Aulnay, who used them in circulating the odious libel which forms the subject matter of this letter to Father de Bonnefond. Cf.

Annales de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie, 1 , 7, n. 21.
(2). Prov. 17, 13

LETTER 181

To Mother St. Gabriel. *On an illness.*

October 1, 1674

I had an unremitting fever, accompanied by paroxysms, for nine or ten days, but I never believed myself to be in danger of death. Here I am now, thanks to Our Lord and His most Holy Mother, in an entirely new life which I ardently desire to use wholly in their love and service.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

245 -

LETTER 182

To Father James de IS Haye de Bonnefond, in Rome. *He had informed the Saint of the concession of indulgences for the Confraternity of the Divine Heart of Jesus (1)in the chapel of the Coutances seminary.*

November 27, 1674

O my dearest and beloved brother, what consolation your letter has given us! Eternal praise be rendered to the most adorable Heart of our good Jesus for having so well inspired yours! Immortal blessings be given the most amiable Heart of our Holy Mother for having guided you so well in this affair! Let all paradise redouble its prayers for the preservation and sanctification of our most Holy Father the Pope! (2) May Jesus and Mary fashion you perfectly according to their Heart, my dearest brother, inspiring and guiding you so well that you may do for our other houses, if possible, what you have done for the one at Coutances.

(1). Father de Bonnefond brought back six Bulls of indulgences for the establishment of the Confraternity of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary in the six seminaries of Caen, Coutances, Lisieux, Rouen, Rennes and Evreux.

(2). Clement X (1660-1676).

246 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 183

To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond, in Rome. *On a defamatory libel (1)published against the Saint.*

December 12, 1674

Now I am involved in a new persecution, bloodier than all the others. My great benefactors, the gentlemen of the new doctrine, had a libel printed against me which they have distributed throughout the whole of France and in all the communities of Paris. It deals with my writings on Sister Mary(2) and is full of falsehoods, calumnies and all sorts of marks of their prejudice. They charge me with thirteen heresies, namely: Arianism, Nestorianism, Monothelism, Jansenism, in connection with four condemned propositions, and others. The cause of their anger is that everywhere

I oppose their innovations, that I uphold the faith of the Church and the authority of the Holy See, and that I burned a hateful book written against devotion to the Blessed Virgin, at the end of which it said that we must by no means pray to her any more than to the other saints, and that she is not the Mother of God, even though she is called the Mother of Jesus. The author of this libel(3) is an abbe from M. de Sainte Marie's" locality, along with several others.

(1). *Lettre à un docteur de la Sorbonne*, which gave the example and set the tone for a multitude of others, veritable farragos of silly statements, falsehoods scattered in profusion and circulated throughout France. St. John Eudes, faced with this torrent of abuse and its resulting mistrust, remained silent. One of his friends, Father de Launay Hué, powerfully and convincingly replied to all the attacks of Father Dufour, turning against the latter the accusation of heresy which he has brought against St. John Eudes. Cf. Joly, *Life of Saint John Eudes*, P. 202.

Mary des Vallées.

(2). The author of the libel in question was Father Dufour, the Abbé d'Aulnay. 'It is not my," says Martine, a biographer of St. John Eudes, "to express the harm done in the reputation of this apostolic man by that unfortunate document."

(3). Father Faucon, called "de Sainte Marie," was a native of the borough of Aulnay in the diocese of Bayeux, Normandy. See Letter 123, note 1.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

247 -

LETTER 184

To the Priests of His Congregation. *On trust in God in the midst of persecutions.*

[1674-1675]

Let us be strictly on guard against losing our trust even in the slightest degree. We should offend the power and infinite goodness of our most adorable Father and our most amiable Mother if, after having experienced so many effects of their incomparable charity, we lacked confidence in them. They are raising up several powerful persons to uphold and defend us. I hope that this persecution is the final attempt of the rage of hell against us. You cannot imagine how many different calumnies the demon is circulating against me on all sides.' But in the midst of all this I sing with my whole heart:

Live Jesus, my sole desire!
Live Jesus, my whole delight!
Live Jesus, my sweet Saviour!
Live Jesus, God of my heart!

Live the Queen of my heart!
Live Mary, Mother of love!
Day and night I wish to sing
The wonders of her all-good Heart!

(1). An illusion in the tempest aroused against the Saint by the Boniface petition and the libel of the Abbé d'Aulnay.

LETTER 185

To Sisters Mary of the Nativity Herson and Mary of the Child Jesus de Bois-David. They were then with the Charity Sisters of Bayeux. The Saint importunes them to return to Caen.(1)

[1674] J. M. J.

I can add no more, my dearest daughters, to what I have already told you a number of times, which is that you should do everything in your power to return to the house of your Order and your vocation. Not so long ago I was speaking about this to his Lordship of Bayeux, and he told me that the last time he had talked with you, you seemed quite satisfied to remain where you were. If that is the case, I do not understand a word of what you write me; otherwise, keep reminding him of his promise, of your weariness at being so long outside of your own center, and of the fact that there are many nuns in his own diocese with whom he can replace you. Do not be content to speak once, nor four times, nor a dozen, but keep on entreating, supplicating and importuning him both verbally and in writing.

I remain with all my heart, in Jesus and Mary,
Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest
of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary.

(1). See Letter 171, note 1. Sister Mary of the Nativity returned to Caen on February 8, 1675. Sister Mary of the Infant Jesus had been sent home the preceding September. Cf. Ory, op. cit., p. 189.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

249 -

LETTER 186

To the Superior of the Rouen Seminary. *In answer to a letter urging him to reply to the libel of the Abbé d'Aulnay.*

[1675]

A thousand thanks, my dearest and beloved brother, for the charitable and cordial letter you wrote me; I am most grateful to you and to those gentlemen who are noted therein. I beg of you to assure them of my gratitude and thank them profusely for me. Their zeal and goodness are most praiseworthy, but, because I can find no evidence in the holy Gospel that our divine and adorable Master ever used the ways and means indicated in your letter to defend Himself against the injustice and cruelty that He suffered at the hands of the Jews, I cannot bring myself to do otherwise than to try to imitate Him in His patience and silence: *Jesus autem tacebat.*(1) Perhaps God will raise up someone who can answer the libel.(2) Be that as it may, I gladly embrace all the crosses it may please God to send me, and I earnestly entreat Him to grant pardon to me and those who are persecuting me. My numerous sins are deserving of a thousand times worse ...

(1). Matt. 26, 63, "But Jesus held his peace."

(2). At a meeting held at the Abbey of Val-Richer, the friends of St. John Eudes decided that one of themselves would reply to the Abbé d'Aulnay's pamphlet. It was Father de Launay Hué, a doctor of the Sorbonne, who took his task upon himself and avenged the Saint of the unjust accusations levelled against him. Cf. Georges, Saint Jean Eudes, P. 349.

LETTER 187

To Mother St. Gabriel. *On afflictions.*

Oh, what a rich and enormous treasure is a great affliction when one uses it well! There is a vast difference between the sufferings of this world and those of purgatory: 1. Because one does not suffer even a

250 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

thousandth part of what one ought to suffer here; 2. Because there is nothing which so greatly increases grace and divine love in the soul as the sufferings of this life—something which those of purgatory cannot do, since they serve only to satisfy divine justice for the punishment due to sin. In short, there is nothing which gives greater glory to God and is more pleasing to Him than the sufferings of this world. That is why Our Lord said one day to Blessed Henry Suso that, if a man only knew the reward obtained in heaven for the most trifling affliction of mind or body that can be suffered in this world for the love of God, he would prefer to spend a century in a fiery furnace than to be deprived of this reward. I should not want a soul who desires to love God purely, however, to suffer from the motive of that reward, but rather because suffering is infinitely pleasing to His Divine Majesty.

LETTER 188

To Mother St. Gabriel. *On his grief during his disfavor (1) with Louis XIV.*

My little crosses would be as nothing on shoulders stronger than my own, which frequently bow in weakness under their burden. Pray to God that my humiliations may help me to cultivate some slight measure of true humility, and continue to pray, too, for my dearest benefactors to whom I am highly indebted. May it please God in His goodness to make great saints of them, in the blessed eternity, for the enormous benefits they are conferring on me.

(1). Because of Father Boniface's petition. See Letter 175, note 2.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

251 -

LETTER 189

To An Unknown Person. *On his numerous duties during a mission.* (1)

[1675]

Though already advanced in age, I am preaching almost daily. I hear confessions and take care of an infinite number of things. All these hardships amount to nothing when one is sustained by the soothing grace of God and enjoys the consolation of seeing people correspond with what is being done for their salvation.

(1). This letter was evidently written during one of the Saint's last missions, perhaps the one at Saint-Lô (1674-1675) which was his final one, and the success of which was complete.

LETTER 190

To a Religious of Montmartre. *The Saint assures her that he forgives his enemies.*

[1674 or 1675]

I beseech Our Lord to forgive them for all the wrongs they have done me, which are not very considerable. Would to God they did themselves no more harm than me. One of them died suddenly a few days ago, which grieved me exceedingly because he was one of those who had helped circulate the libel against me. God grant that he may not fare badly for that! But if, unhappily, such were the case, there is nothing I would not do to redeem him, were it possible.

252-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 191

To a Religious of Montmartre. *The Saint's consolation in the midst of his trials.*

Pray for me, my dearest daughter, for I have great need of it, being more laden with crosses than ever before. But the least of my sins is deserving of a thousand times worse. My consolation is that God is ever God, that He always derives the greatest glory from all things, and that all the powers of earth and hell cannot prevent me from performing my sole duty, which is to love and serve my most benevolent Saviour and my most amiable Mother.

LETTER 192

To a Religious of Montmartre. *The Saint's feelings toward his enemies.*

I should be crushed beneath the weight of my sufferings if Our Lord and His Holy Mother were not sustaining me, but they are giving me an altogether singular strength, for which I entreat you to help me thank them. Help me, too, I beg of you, to pray a great deal for my benefactors, to whom I am most indebted for giving me such precious opportunities to practise the most beautiful virtues, particularly humility, obedience to the divine will, a love of Jesus crucified, and love for His most Holy Mother, also crucified with Him.

LETTER 193

To Sister Mary of the Nativity Herson, His Niece. *On trust in God.*

Let us take care not to allow our spirits to become narrow and depressed through sadness and discouragement. Let us try, rather, to gladden, sustain and heighten them through trust, and through our love for Him Who is all love and goodness toward us.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

253-

LETTER 194

To the Religious of Our Lady of Charity. *On humility.*

Be very humble, my dear daughters, be very humble. Oh, how greatly do I desire you to be humble, for when you achieve humility Our Lord will abundantly infuse His graces into your hearts! A soul which is truly humble is indeed wealthy, for it possesses all; but a soul lacking in humility has nothing. It is like a sieve through which everything passes, and thus God takes no care to bestow and shed His graces on that soul, for they would be lost.

LETTER 195

To the Community of Our Lady of Charity, in Caen. *On preparation for the feast of Pentecost.*

J. M. J. My dearest Sisters:

The Holy Spirit of our Jesus Himself wishes to prepare us to receive Him. The best preparation we can make is to humble ourselves unceasingly, purify our hearts and renounce our own spirit, which we ought to fear more than all the evil spirits in hell.

Ask Our Lord for this preparation for yourselves and us, my dearest Sisters. For my part, I never cease offering you to Him and His most Holy Mother, imploring them to accomplish in you the designs of their infinite goodness, and not to permit either you or us to thwart them in any way.

I am greatly comforted by what our dear Mother informs me of your fidelity and perseverance. Ah! what a crown of glory is prepared for those who persevere! May it please Our Lord Jesus, through the prayers of His most Holy Mother, to strengthen you more and more and to make you true daughters of Our Lady of Charity.

254-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

In them and for their sakes, *corde magno et animo volenti*, my dearest Sisters, I am

Devotedly yours,
JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LETTER 196

To a Religious of Our Lady of Charity. *The Saint consoles her.*

Your letter, my dearest daughter, pierces my heart with compassion. My consolation, however, is that your trouble is not a mortal one, but for the glory of God. No, my dear child, your soul is by no means in the state of death, and it will certainly not die the death of those to whom the Author of Life addresses these words: "Every man shall die for his own sin." (1) It will live eternally, to love and glorify its most amiable Redeemer for all eternity. Rid your mind, therefore, of all these thoughts which disturb you, and put all your trust in our benign Saviour and His most Holy Mother, both of whom love you far more than you love yourself, for they are all affection and love toward you. I implore them to grant you their holy blessing: *Nos cum Prole pia benedicat Virgo Maria~.*

(1). 2 Par. 25, 4

LETTER 197

**To Father Trochu, the almoner of His Lordship Dominic de Ligny,
Bishop of Meaux.** *Father Trochu had written to Father de la Haye, Superior of the Caen Seminary, with reference to the rumors being circulated about St. John Eudes in connection with Mary des Vallées.*

Caen, January 2, 1675

Since Father de la Haye is absent, I opened the letter you had written him, that I might answer it. A thousand thanks for all your benevo

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

255-

lence toward our little Congregation, which I ask you to continue for the love of Our Lord and His most Holy Mother.

I am not surprised, Sir, by these calumnies which are going the rounds, for it seems as if all hell has been loosed against us. But the least of my sins merits a thousand times worse, and I have not the slightest doubt that Our Lord will derive the greatest possible glory from all this. I sincerely beseech Him to show mercy toward all these slanderers and calumniators.

It is a strange thing to say and believe that priests, who profess to live in the fear of God, should be so blind, so senseless and so hatefully impious as to say prayers and salutations, recite a special Office and celebrate Masses and feasts in honor of the heart of a poor girl dead these ten years,(1) who is neither canonized, nor beatified nor anything else. Do they not see that all the words of the salutation, all the anthems, responses, hymns and lessons of the Office and Mass are addressed to the Heart of the Blessed Virgin?

It is the blackest and most false calumny to claim that this good girl was a sorceress, and that she had been condemned as such by a judgment of Parliament.

All the other statements in your letter, too, are utterly false, as are similar ones contained in a defamatory libel which has been spread against me. It is crammed with material taken from my writings on the life of this good girl. But the authors have done just as the Huguenots do with books written by Catholics on controversial issues, taking only the objections and omitting the answers. So, too, has the author of this libel selected only what is hard to understand and liable to offend the reader in these writings on Sister Mary, without adding the explanations I have given. In addition, he has also inserted several ridiculous things taken from other accounts that I never wrote ...
(1). This is a mistake. Mary des Vallées had been dead, as a matter of fact, for nineteen years. Father Costil who compiled the *Annales de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie* adds that the letter sent him was not from the hand of St. John Eudes. Undoubtedly it was only a copy, which explains the error committed.

256-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 198

To His Lordship Francis de Nesmond, Bishop of Bayeux. *On his relation with Mary des Vallées.*

[1675]

I, the undersigned, a priest of the seminary of Caen, do hereby declare to his Lordship the Most Illustrious and Reverend Bishop of Bayeux, my prelate, that several years ago, having assumed the obligation, by the order of His Lordship de Matignon, at that time bishop of Coutances, to become the spiritual director of Mary des Vallées, a native of his diocese, I felt that it was my duty, in order to give an exact account of the mind and soul of this girl, to assemble and write down all that I was able to learn about her, as much from various persons of outstanding doctrine and piety who had known or guided her several years previously, as from what I had learned since taking over her spiritual guidance. In doing so, however, I had not the slightest intention of compiling a book for publication, nor of submitting these writings as unquestionable truths. They were intended simply as memoirs, and as an account on which my superiors might pass whatever judgment they pleased. If I added my own reflections here and there, it was only to suggest to them a way of explaining and understanding these things. I never intended that anyone except my superiors should see these writings. If at present, then, they have fallen into other hands for I understand that certain persons claim to be in possession of them - it has happened through the negligence or disloyalty of some of my friends to whom I had entrusted them, in good faith, to be examined only in private. These persons either took copies or allowed them to be taken without my knowledge and against my will. Then certain individuals of evil intent not only confused and identified them with other accounts which had already been written by others on the same subject, but they also garbled and altered them in several places in order to make it possible to give them sinister and criminal interpretations.

After all, I do acknowledge that I am neither impeccable nor infallible, but that of myself I should be capable of falling into all sorts of

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

257-

errors if God in His goodness did not keep me from doing so. And I confess, with the great St. Augustine, that I am indebted to the grace of God not only for the little good I have tried to do but also for all the evil I have not done.

Furthermore, if in the writings which are really mine there is found any expression too positive, or any proposition not strictly in conformity with the common doctrine of the Church, I am ready and willing to make a sincere retraction, both verbally and in writing, and to submit all that I have written and shall ever write to the judgment and correction of the most Holy, Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church, and particularly of his Lordship the bishop, into whose hands I have delivered all my writings in order that he may pass judgment on them and make such disposition of them as it may please God to inspire him. I will yield entirely to his decision.

Dated at Caen this 25th day of June, 1675,
JOHN EUDES, priest.

LETTER 199

To Mother St. Henry, a Religious of Montmartre. *On a libel publicly circulated by the Saint's enemies.*

[December 1675]

... And yet withal, I am not lacking trials and crosses of various kinds. Yesterday I learned that there is still another libel being spread, as well as some new slanders, for which God be blessed. I beseech Him with my whole heart to make great saints of all my calumniators-or to state it better, of all my great benefactors.

258 - LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 200

To An Unidentified Person. *On the ordeals to which the Saint had to submit.*

April 20, 1676

... As for my condition at present, I shall tell you, my dearest daughter, that since my last mission I have been laboring under several indispositions, but all that is nothing. I am *better now*, thanks to Our Lord. My goodfriends(1) never cease to benefit me, and I, thank God, never stop asking divine goodness to make great saints of them.

(1). The persons who circulated libels against him.

LETTER 201

To Mother St. Gabriel, a religious of Montmartre. *On the value of crosses.*

I thank you, my dear gooddaughter, for your participation in my crosses; blessed be Our Lord and His most Holy Mother for them. I hope that, in their incomparable goodness, they will grant you a share in all the fruits and blessings derived from my trials through their great mercy. Oh, what an enormous treasure is the Cross which Our Lord so loved, and which His Holy Mother and all the saints embraced and bore so lovingly! Surely, if there were a more excellent way in this world to glorify God and please Him, Our Lord would have chosen it for Himself and given it to His dearest Mother and all His saints.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

259 -

LETTER 202

To King Louis XIV. *Memoir dealing with the petition which Father Boniface had addressed to the Pope, in 1662, in St. John Eudes' name but without his consent, and which had displeased that monarch.*

[1675 or 1676]

I protest at your Majesty's feet, Sire, and before God, that the petition in question was never presented by my order nor with my consent, that I never knew what it contained, and that Father Boniface has never belonged to our Congregation.

He is a good Flemish priest who was formerly an Oratorian Father. He claims to have left them because he felt that they leaned toward those who were too mild in their condemnation of the book of Jansenius.

It is true that this good priest offered to handle the business of our Congregation when he was in Rome thirteen or fourteen years ago; but he promised me in writing to affirm on oath that I requested him not to involve himself in our affairs. It is evident, through two petitions which I turned over to the archbishop(1) and which were formerly presented for us, that never have we either desired or sought anything having reference to that petition. That alone seems sufficiently to

justify our intentions. I cannot imagine what use our adversaries were able to make of that petition which they brought to light after it had been hidden for fourteen years, and against which they raised no outcry at that time, save to provide themselves with a means of constituting me an impostor. It could not be detrimental to them at present, since the last petitions presented from me were in no way similar to it. Therefore it appears likely that, having discovered this old scrap of paper by some means unknown to me and realizing, furthermore, that I was strongly opposed to what it contained, they had me questioned at length, surmising indeed that I would answer simply, according to my custom and my own mind, without suspecting the trap they were

(1). His Lordship Francis Harley de Champvallon, the archbishop of Paris.

260 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

laying for me to cast doubt on my innocence through Father Boniface's petition.

Do not, Sire, allow the good faith of a priest in his seventies, who has been laboring half a century for the Church, to remain in doubt, nor a Congregation established by letters patent from the King, your father of glorious memory, to be suppressed. In the letters of establishment granted to us by this great King, he declares that he would willingly give his life for the accomplishment of such a holy work which could do so much for the glory of God. The Queen, your mother, has always favored us with her powerful protection, and because of your Majesty's kindness I have had reason to hope that God was reserving for you the completion of a work begun by this great Prince and this holy Princess.

Prostrate, Sire, at your Majesty's feet, I ask this favor of you, and I hope that God, Who has given you such a just and upright heart, may render you the protector of innocence.

LETTER 203

To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond. *The Saint urges him to accept the position of visitor of the houses of the Congregation.*

January 4, 1678

I do not know why you are so reluctant to be made visitor so that you may take care of changes and other matters of the greatest importance. I entreat you, in the name of Our Lord and His most Holy Mother, to renounce your own opinion and give yourself to them, that you may accomplish their most amiable will.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

261 -

LETTER 204

To Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond. *The Saint entrusts him with the duties of visitor.*

January 28, 1678

I have requested Father de Bonnefond, our beloved brother, to make up my deficiency, and have committed all my authority to him so that he may remedy any shortcomings he may find, make whatever changes in superiors as well as subordinates that he may deem suitable, and renew in your hearts the desire to pay strict observance to the Constitutions in order that our most lovable Saviour and His most amiable Mother may be served, honored and loved in the Congregation in conformity

with the purposes for which divine Providence established it in Holy Mother Church. I am asking all my dear brethren, therefore, to receive our aforesaid beloved brother, Father de Bonnefond, in the capacity of visitor, and to render him all the honor, respect and obedience due those who act in God's place.

LETTER 205

To His Lordship Francis Harlay de Champvallon, Archbishop of Paris. *The Saint requests the Archbishop to obtain for him an audience with King Louis XIV.*

[November 1678] My Lord:

Prostrate at your Lordship's feet, I very humbly entreat you to grant me your holy blessing and to have the kindness to give your attention to the reading of this letter, the sole purpose of which is to implore you to allow some spark of that gracious benevolence which enables you to win all hearts to reflect on the least of all men, who takes the liberty of hoping to be, and of always having been, foremost in paying the honor and veneration due your Lordship.

But how does it happen, my Lord, if I may venture to ask, that I have the misfortune to have lost the honor of your good graces? Who

262 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

has robbed me of this precious treasure? Is there not some unpleasant tongue which has spread its venom against me?

For six years I have groaned beneath the weight of the King's disfavor for a fault of which I am, in truth, completely innocent, and from which you and you alone, my Lord, have sufficient power and kindness to deliver me. For, although I have spent my whole life-nearly fifty years--in the service of the Church and of their Lordships the prelates, not one of them is willing to take a step or say a word in my defence except his Lordship of Coutances.(1) They all send me to his Lordship of Paris, saying that he is all-powerful and so kind that even his own enemies feel the effects of that kindness ...(2)

(1). His Lordship Claude Auvry, a former bishop of Coutances.

(2). In the remainder of the letter, St. John Eudes begged Archbishop Harlay to arrange an interview for him with Louis XIV.

LETTER 206

To King Louis XIV. *The Saint disclaims Father Boniface's petition, and requests an audience. (1)*

November 7, 1678

Sire:

It is the most insignificant of your subjects who returns from death's door, where he still lingers, having been brought to that pass by a grievous illness. But God has not permitted me to leave this world with the hideous brand which was placed on my forehead by the accusation of having presented to our Holy Father, the Pope,(2) a petition offensive to your Majesty's interests. I can

assure you, indeed, that this accusation has in its way been more bitter, in this extremity, than death itself which hovered before my eyes, since I should prefer to be (lead

(1) This letter is of November 7, 1678. It was addressed to Bishop Auvry of Coutances with the plea to have it delivered to Louis XIV; but scarcely had it been sent when St. John Eudes wrote Bishop Auvry that he should examine it to see if the moment was opportune to have it given to the King. Therefore, we do not know whether or not it was ever delivered to the King.

(2). Innocent XI (1676-1689).

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

263 -

than to do anything displeasing to him who represents on earth the King of heaven. Before Him I protest that the petition in question never entered my mind.

I implore your Majesty to be mindful that it is a priest who has the honor of addressing you; one who, for more than fifty years, has daily offered to God the sacrifice of the adorable body and precious blood of Him Who is eternal Truth. It is Christian charity to give some credence to his words rather than to judge and condemn him as a liar and an imposter, seeing that I am ready to affirm what I say by every means by which a Christian can confirm a truth, and that I openly proclaim that I disown and detest that petition with my whole heart. I should prefer to forfeit a thousand lives than do anything contrary to the least of your Majesty's interests. I most humbly entreat your Majesty to banish the memory of that miserable petition, even as you desire the Saviour of souls to destroy utterly whatever might stand in the way of your eternal happiness. Permit me to come to prostrate myself at your feet in order to protest to you by word of mouth that I am, with the most profound respect, Sire, your Majesty's . . .

LETTER 207

To Mother St. Gabriel. *On an illness of which God has cured him.*

November 7, 1678

My sins brought down upon me an illness which carried me to the brink of death. But He Who holds the keys of life and death has postponed my death and preserved my life, that I may have time to reform and begin a new life. It is what I most ardently desire, and I beg Our Lord and His most Holy Mother to grant me that grace and to let me begin to love them as I should, for I do not know if I have yet begun. Help me, my dearest Sister, to love them in that way.

264 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 208

To Madame d'Argouges.(1) *On the projected establishment of the Daughters of Our Lady of Charity in Paris.* (2)

[1678] J. M. J.

Madame:

Here are your good nuns of Our Lady of Charity who have the honor to join you, that they may carry out whatever orders it may please you to issue. They are the Daughters of Most Amiable Heart of the Mother of God, and they are also the daughters of your most kind heart, since that glorious

Virgin has given you a mother's heart and love toward them. They are going to Paris to search for lost souls, in imitation of Our Saviour Who says of Himself that He came to seek and to save those who were lost. Of all divine things, the most divine, says St. Dionysius, is to cooperate with God in the salvation of souls. For that reason, Madame, you can do nothing more pleasing to His Divine Majesty than to provide the employment you intend to give these good girls. All the souls who may be saved through their mediation will honor you, after God, in heaven as the cause of their salvation, and you will have a very singular share of their glory. To win a soul for God is greater than to conquer a hundred thousand worlds, for a single soul is of higher value than that many worlds. That is why you will be wealthy in heaven beyond all power of speech or imagination.

(1). Wife of the first president of the Parliament of Brittany.

(2). "This letter bears no date, but it can have been written only in 1678. As a matter of fact, in that year a plan for an establishment in Paris, prepared by President d'Argouges, failed, for reasons unknown to us. The sisters were to leave Caen, and Mother Mary of the Trinity Heurtaut left her monastery at Guingamp in order to join them. This letter of St. John Eudes was undoubtedly intended to announce their departure from Caen and their arrival in Paris . . . Madame d'Argouges was in no way discouraged by this failure. She continued her proceedings, and in 1682 she was able to staff the St. Pélagie house with Mother Mary of the Trinity and several sisters who had come either from Guingamp or from Caen." Ory, *The Origin of the Order of Our Lady of Charity*, p. 628.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

265-

But what shall I say to you, Madame, to show my gratitude for your kindnesses toward my beloved sisters? I have no words capable of doing this; but I do have an overwhelming confidence that our most benign Saviour and His most kind Mother will make up my deficiency by repaying you a hundred thousand times for all the effects of the charity and tenderness with which you honor these sisters. All my life I shall beg them to do so, as well as to shower their most holy blessings increasingly upon you, Mr. d'Argouges and all that is yours. I assure you, Madame, that I will never say Holy Mass without addressing to them this earnest prayer. In them and for their sakes, Madame, I remain Your most humble, obedient and grateful servant,

JOHN EUDES, priest of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary.

LETTER 209

To Reverend Father Louis Francis d'Argentan, a Capuchin. *On his book, Les Grandeurs de la Saint Vierge.*

[1678] Most Reverend Father:

I am doing myself the honor of writing you to render you infinite thanks for the admirable book you have written on the glories of the Blessed Virgin. I am preaching it to everyone. Would to God it were in the hands of all Christians, and that they took as much delight in reading it as I do! . . . Blessed be the hand which has written so worthily of the greatness of the Mother of our Saviour! Blessed be the head and heart whence have sprung such beautiful truths! Oh, how wretched and hateful is the tongue which dares to pronounce anathemas against those who have devotion for our lovable Mother! It is against her enemies that all the anathemas should be fulminated, particularly against those who hide themselves in their house whenever one knocks at their door, crying out that they are not there, only to surprise the passers-by and slaughter them. O my dearest Father, if I were now at your feet, you could not prevent me from kissing them, no matter how much you protested.

LETTER 210

To Father Ralph de Bon.(1) *To inform him of his appointment as Superior of the Evreux Seminary.*

[Spring of 1679]

What comforts me is the sight of the most adorable will of God which does everything for the best, and my belief that you will gladly submit yourself to the decrees of that divine will which has chosen you to replace our dear departed superior. It is what I beg of you, my dearest brother, while venturing to assure you that Our Lord and His most Holy Mother will be with you, managing their house through you and giving you all the enlightenment and graces necessary for that purpose. Accept this post, therefore, from their hand, or rather from their most charitable Heart; and accept it corde magno et animo volenti, with a fervent desire to govern their family according to their spirit, which is one of humility, kindness, charity and meekness.

(1). Father de Bon (1640-1680) entered the Congregation Of Jesus and Mary in 1670. He was appointed to the Rouen Seminary and then to that of Evreux. On Much 3, 1679 he succeeded Father de la Haye as Superior of Evreux. He died on April 17, 1680. Cf. *Les Fleurs de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie*, Vol. 1, p. 58.

LETTER 211

To Father Richard Dufour,(1) *His Secretary. The Saint gives an account of his audience with Louis XIV.*

Paris, June 17, 1679

Yesterday I had the honor of seeing the King at Saint Germain. It happened in this way: I was ushered into the King's room, where I found myself surrounded by a large group of bishops, priests, dukes,

(1). Born at Clinchamps in the diocese of Coutances, Normandy, Father Dufour (1627-1696) entered the Congregation of Jesus and Mary in 1657. For many years he was the Saint's secretary and copied his letters and the Constitutions of the Congregation. He died on December 8, 1696 at the age of 69 years. Cf. *Fleurs*, Vol. 1, P. 132

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

267-

counts, marquises, marshals of France and King's guards. His Lordship of Paris took me to one corner of the room. When the King made his entrance, he walked by all these great lords and came directly Up to me, his expression full of kindness. Then I began to speak to him of our affair and he listened most attentively, with an air of being very glad to hear what I was telling him.

"Sire, I have come to your Majesty's feet to render you my most humble thanks for your kindness in granting me the honor and consolation of seeing you once more before I die, and to protest to you that there is no man in this world who has more zeal and fervor than I where your Majesty's service and interests are concerned. This is the sentiment in which I desire to spend and use the little time left me in this life. I also beg of you most humbly, Sire, to honor us with your royal protection, and to continue to reward us with your graces and favors. This is what I hope from that wonderful benevolence which rejoices and delights the hearts of all who have the honor of speaking to your Majesty, and which never fails to send them away full of joy and comfort."

When the King had heard these things, he said to me:

"I am very pleased to see you. I have heard about you. I *feel quite* sure that you are doing a great deal of good in my States. Continue to work as you have been doing. I shall be very pleased to see you again, and will protect you on whatever occasions may arise."

Those were the words of the King, which filled me with an unspeakable gratification, and were overheard by his Lordship of Paris and all the lords who were present. They were amazed to see such a great King speak so gently and kindly to the most insignificant of all men.

Thereupon I went to say Mass at the Franciscans. Then I was invited to dine with the almoners, who received me with marked kindness and charity.

Write to all the superiors of our houses, in my name, that I beg of them to do three things: first, to make an octave of thanksgiving to Our Lord and His most Holy Mother for the splendid success of this affair; secondly, to pray a great deal for the King and all the royal house, for their Lordships of Paris and Coutances; thirdly, to make

268 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

a firm resolution henceforth to love and serve our benign Saviour and His most Holy Mother with more fervor than ever before, through the practice of the holy virtues ...

LETTER 212

To Father Ralph de Bon, Superior of the Seminary at Evreux. *On a loss he had suffered.*

February 16, 1680.

As for the twelve hundred livres,(1) we must first of all sacrifice them to God. After that; however, I am of the opinion that you should have a novena of Masses for the Dead said for the souls in Purgatory, in order to enlist their aid in recovering the money.

(1). The money has been stolen or lost. Cf. *Fleurs de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie*, Vol. 1, p. 60.

LETTER 213(1)

To a Superior of Missionaries. *On the course to follow in giving Missions.*

What should console and encourage you is that Our Lord is in your midst (on your missions) in a very special way, according to His promise: "Behold I am with you all days."(2) Not only is He with you, but He is in you, too, in order to continue that same work of the redemption of souls which He Himself began. Dwell also in Him, dearest brother, and to that end strive to put aside your own self and renounce it vigorously, that you may withdraw into Our Lord and give yourself completely to Him, since outside of Him you can do nothing but in Him

(1). All letters from 213 to the end of this collection are taken from the biographies of the Saint or from *Les Annales de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie*. There are no references in them that would help to discover the date when they were written by the Saint.

(2). Matt. 28, 20.

you can do all things. Remember that to preach is to make God speak, and consequently he who preaches should be destroyed so that God may be everything in him. Take great care, therefore, to annihilate yourself at the feet of Our Lord before ascending the pulpit, and to give yourself to Him, imploring Him to annihilate you Himself and establish Himself within you, so that it may be He Who speaks, for to Him and Him alone belongs the privilege of preaching His Father's word.

Try also, dearest brother, always to pray a little, and to read your Breviary and say Mass with recollection.

Please be careful of your health, and to that end I urge you never to preach longer than one hour at a time. I also recommend to you the health of our dear brothers. See to it that they all return from the church at the same time, that they may have their meals together. Have the indisposed say early Mass, and above all, see that they retire at nine o'clock in the evening to get the rest they need.

Recommend interior piety and exterior modesty to them frequently, and that they give themselves often to Our Lord in order to accomplish His work in His spirit, that is, in the interior and exterior dispositions with which He performed all His actions when He was on earth. I beseech them all to give themselves earnestly to Him in order to perform the divine actions—and by that I mean sacerdotal functions *digne Deo*, that they may deal with sinful souls in a spirit of charity and meekness, and live and converse with one another with respect and brotherly love, "not considering the things that are his own, but those that are other men's," (3) Particularly do I urge them to hold in extreme horror and to shun more than death and hell itself the slightest shadow of that abominable vice which shall be nameless, and therefore to exercise the utmost reserve toward persons of the opposite sex.

I bless God infinitely for all the graces He bestows upon you during your missions. If the attendance is not so large at the current One, do not let that discourage you. If there are not many people there at first, there will be more later on. And remember, too, that a single soul is a whole world in the sight of God, and that Our Lord Himself stopped to preach to one lone woman. Furthermore, self-love and vanity, which interfere even in the works of God, must be mortified. Be careful, how
(3). Phil. 2, 4

270-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

ever, to devote just as much attention and preparation to your preaching, for in those circumstances it is necessary to be even more diligent and fervent.

LETTER 214

To a Benedictine Abbess. *The Saint asks her not to suppress the feast of the Holy Heart of Mary in her monastery.*

Madame, although I do not have the honor of being known to you, I am nevertheless venturing to take the liberty of writing to you, to acquaint you with my sorrow upon learning that you not only have abolished the feast of the Holy Name of Mary in your monastery, but have also determined to suppress the feast of her Holy Heart.

O Madame! What are you doing? The abbesses preceding you, who were so full of wisdom and

virtue, established those feasts as a consequence of their singular devotion for the glorious Virgin, and you are destroying the work of their piety! What will they say to you on the day of judgment?

What are you doing, Madame? God in His goodness established these two feasts in your house, like twin fountains of graces and blessings, and you are draining them dry! The Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Holy Heart of Mary were two impregnable towers to shelter the souls of the abbess and her daughters from their enemies, and you are destroying them! You are striking and wounding the Heart of the Mother of pure love! You are excommunicating her most venerable name and pleasing Heart! You are driving them out of your house! After all that, how will you dare to appear before her presence? Have you no fear at all that her Son, Who is acutely sensitive to the slightest offenses committed against His dear Mother, may fulminate some terrible excommunication against you, and that they may close the door of their house against you? They gave you their Hearts, which are but a single Heart through unity of spirit, to be your heart, your treasure and your consolation, and you are rejecting it! How will you continue to live without a heart? Will you not henceforth deserve to be called, in

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

271 -

the words of the Prophet Osee, "a dove that is decoyed,"⁽¹⁾ no longer possessing a heart? The Mother of God gave you her Heart as an asylum in all your troubles, an immense treasure filled with an infinity of benefits, according to these words of a holy prelate of your Order: "a fountain of infinite good." And yet you want none of them, preferring to lose them! You are abolishing a holy feast founded on the approbation of a great number of illustrious prelates, by authority of a legate *a latere* and on the immovable rock of the apostolic Holy See, and authorized by a great number of Holy Fathers, celebrated theologians, and even several great saints and a number of very learned men of the Order of St. Benedict, all of whom have left us obvious proofs of their devotion to this most benevolent Heart during their lives here on earth, and who are now celebrating its praises in heaven. Do you think, Madame, that you will do better to subscribe to the sentiments of men who are still in the darkness, rather than to those of the saints who are enlightened by the wisdom of heaven and educated by the doctrines of Jesus Christ? For He Himself desired to be the first to preach this devotion, having taught it to St. Mechtilde, a nun of your holy Order. If you condemn this feast, now that it has existed for several years in your monastery, it is greedy to be feared that you may not celebrate it with the saints who will solemnize it in heaven for all eternity.

In God's name, Madame, consider these things seriously and accept them from the hand which offers them to you, that of purest charity, and as coming from one who has all conceivable respect for you.

(1). Osee, 7, 11

LETTER 215

To a nun of the Order of St. Benedict. *To become humble, but not discouraged, because of her shortcomings.*

No, my dear Sister, as long as we remain on earth we shall never be entirely free from the shortcomings and imperfections of the world. O earth, how unbearable thou art! O abode of sin and misfortune, wilt

thou hold us here yet a long time? O Jesus, wilt Thou not call us Soon to join Thee? Tell us, most amiable Jesus, when will there no longer remain anything in us that is contrary to Thy love? When shall we love Thee perfectly? Let us hasten, my dear Sister, to labor for the accomplishment of God's work in ourselves, so that we may soon leave this place of darkness and horror to enter into the kingdom of eternal love.

Furthermore, let us always humble ourselves a great deal in view of our shortcomings; but at the same time, let us cast off ourselves, flee from ourselves as from a place filled with all sorts of evils and miseries, that we may enter into Jesus Who is our house of refuge, our treasure in which we possess every kind of wealth and shall find all types of virtues and perfections to offer His eternal Father in satisfaction for our sins and imperfections. If we dwell within ourselves, we shall find nothing therein save every cause for grief and sadness; but if we emerge from ourselves in order to ascend to Jesus, we shall behold in Him so many delights, grandeurs, perfections and wonders that, if we truly love Him, we shall rejoice exceedingly in the sight of these things, exclaiming with the Blessed Virgin: *Exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo*, "My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." (1)

That is one of the uses we should make of our defects. O blessed shortcomings, if I may so express it, when they give us cause to cast ourselves aside in order to ascend to Jesus and unite ourselves with Him Who alone is free from shortcomings and imperfections! Belong to Him alone; remain wholly and for ever in Him.

In this same Jesus I am devotedly yours, and ever more and more.

Live Jesus and Mary.

(1). Luke 1, 47.

LETTER 216

To Two Religious of Montmartre. *On crosses and afflictions.*

I am writing you this, my dearest daughters, to assure you that I feel your crosses very keenly, that is, humanly speaking. For, speaking as a

Christian, I shall tell you that the greatest cause for joy that we can ever have on earth is to be crucified with our amiable Saviour.

Human nature does not begin to understand such language, but it is an article of faith that therein is the sovereign good of Christian souls. So true is this that the saints in heaven who suffered the greatest torments here on earth would very gladly exchange the glory and joys they possess in heaven for the sufferings they endured in the world, if God allowed them to do so. That is why I give infinite thanks to divine Bounty for the holy dispositions which fill your hearts in this circumstance. Courage, my dearest daughters, rejoice; rejoice because our dearest Jesus is granting you a share in the one thing in this world that He most dearly loved, and of which His Holy Mother had the greatest share. You must not doubt that I am doing my very best for you in the presence of God.

LETTER 217

To a Religious of Montmartre. *On the crosses and afflictions of one of her sisters in religion.*

I beseech my dearest daughter to help me to love God She has much, indeed, for which to show Him great love. For just as the greatest love He manifested for us was in His sufferings, so also the greatest love we can show for Him is to suffer for His love. Oh, if the seraphim were capable of jealousy, they would surely be jealous at the sight of the sorrows of our dear sister, and I venture to say that they would gladly exchange the delights of the glory that is theirs for the greatest torments that can be endured on earth. I give infinite thanks to our most adorable Crucified Saviour for allowing this dear sister to participate in His most sacred crown of thorns, and for the grace He is giving her to make such good use of her sufferings. I urge her always to continue to bear them with all possible humility, resignation and love.

274 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 218

To a Nun of the Order of St. Benedict. *On the good use to be made of her headaches.*

It is a special favor that our most adorable Crucified is granting you in still allowing you your headaches so that, by this means~ you may pay some small measure of honor to His divine head crowned with thorns. Exercise the utmost care, my dearest daughter, to use this illness to the best possible advantage by supporting it with humility, submission to the divine will and love for Jesus wearing a crown of thorns.

LETTER 219

To a Religious of Montmartre. *On the love of God.*

I thank you, my dearest daughter, for your charitable letter. I am indeed delighted to see that you are persevering in your desire to love our most amiable Saviour and His dearest Mother more and more. I very humbly supplicate them to cast all of you, that is to say, Madame(1) and all her daughters, who are my dearest sisters, into the innermost depths of the furnace of divine love. I do this daily for you, insofar as I am able, with a most ardent desire for all of you to be inflamed, devoured and consumed by the sacred flames of that divine furnace. From the depths of my soul do I cry out, *de prof undis clamavi*, for each and every one of you: Hear, hear, O great furnace of love! It is a tiny wisp of straw that begs thee most earnestly to be cast, engulfed, lost, devoured, consumed for ever in Thy sacred flames.

The divine Heart of Jesus and Mary is this furnace whose fires and flames are fed only on hearts. Oh, how happy are the hearts which lose themselves in these divine flames! But they require hearts that are humble, pure, detached, charitable, faithful, obedient, inflamed with an at (1). Madame de Lorraine, Abbess of Montmartre.

dent desire to please God, and utterly filled with trust in the infinite goodness of the Son of Mary and the incomparable benignity of the Mother of Jesus.

LETTER 220

To Reverend Mother St. Gabriel, a Religious of Montmartre. *On trust in Mary.*

I thank you with all my heart, my dearest daughter, for the immense love you bear our most amiable Mother whose name is Mary, the Mother of Jesus. Continue to grow in this holy love, my dear daughter, and strive to make her loved by everyone of your acquaintance. Have no fears; the good and powerful Mother of God has never failed, and will never fail, the needs of those who love and serve her, and who, after God, have put all their trust in her incomparable goodness. But she has her own seasons and moments, and we must await them with patience and submission to the will of her Son, which is also her own will.

LETTER 221

To a Nun of Montmartre. *On obedience during a time of illness.*

If you are ordered to eat meat, be extremely careful not to make the slightest resistance to obedience, for you will tender more honor to God by eating flesh-meat through obedience than by fasting on bread and water of your own volition.

LETTER 222

To One of His Nephews. *On the occasion of some services he had received from him.*

I pray Our Lord Himself to be my gratitude; and to shower you so abundantly with His choicest graces for the life you wish me, even at the expense of your own, that you may join the ranks of the holiest priests in paradise.'

'One of the brothers of Mother Mary of the Nativity Herson entered the religious life. This letter Was ~evidently addressed to him. The wish expressed at the end pre~ dudes any doubt on this Point.

LETTER 223

To the Superior of the Seminary of Coutances. *On the feast of the Holy Heart of Mary.*

I thank you for the great consolation afforded me by your letter. I was overjoyed to learn that the feast of the Most Holy Heart of Our Admirable Mother was so well celebrated, and that his Lordship of Coutances officiated and has promised to do so again next year. I give infinite thanks to Our Lord and His most Holy Mother.

LETTER 224

To a Superior. *On how to say Holy Mass.*

I beseech each one of our dear confreres to say Mass with the utmost concentration of mind and heart on this great and divine mystery, never to hurry, and to pronounce distinctly every word said at the altar.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

277 -

LETTER 225

To the Superior of One of His Houses. *On mistrust of self and frequent recourse to Our Lord.*

Let us frequently have recourse to our oracle, who is Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, in order to pray Him to lead and direct us along all our paths. Let us acknowledge that we are but darkness, and that we have an extreme need to mistrust ourselves and an infinite necessity of the enlightenment of grace.

LETTER 226

To the Superior of One of His Seminaries. *On trust in God.*

There has occurred to me a way to find help, and I have communicated it to our friends who approve of it. Nevertheless, I am not counting on it in the least, but if Our Lord finds it pleasing He will avail Himself of it. Otherwise, His holy will be done. In Him alone should we place our dependence and trust. He does want us, however, to do what we can on our own part ...

LETTER 227

To the Same Superior. *On another occasion.*

May God deign to keep us from depending on anything but His infinite goodness. Let us expect nothing, hope for nothing and wish for nothing save Him, placing our dependence and trust in Him alone.

278 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

LETTER 228

To the Superior of the Seminary at Rouen. *On the necessity of offering daily an hour of prayer.*

Without prayer, it is impossible, my dear brother, for a Congregation to subsist in the spirit of piety and virtue necessary to render it pleasing to God and useful to the Church. To make a half-hour of prayer and not make any at all are practically one and the same thing. And yet, there is nothing more necessary to ecclesiastics. Besides, I know of no seminary where an hour of prayer is not made. If you are absolutely set on establishing a half-hour for the seminarians, I beg of you to arrange it so that our confreres may always make a full hour of prayer. Otherwise it would be better for us to give up the seminary.

LETTER 229

To the Superior of One of His Houses. *To request prayers of him for the poor who were involved in lawsuits.*

I am asking you to have a novena of Masses and rosaries said for all those who are implicated in just lawsuits, and who are poor and defenceless, in order to ask Our Lord Himself to be their judge, the Blessed Virgin their counsel, St. Joseph their attorney, and St. Gabriel their petitioner.

LETTER 230

To a Superior. *The Saint reproves him for neglecting to celebrate a day recommended as one of thanksgiving in the Congregation for a favor received from God.*

Is it possible, my dear brother, that you have so little esteem and affection for a grace like that one, of which you are so well aware? I must

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

279-

confess to you that I felt, and do feel now, an inexpressible sorrow. I beg of you, and of all our brethren, too, to atone for this omission as best you can. To that end give the order that, on the first day open after the receipt of this letter, all the Masses be votive Masses: some of the Holy Spirit, some *de Cruce*, some *de Beata*, and have one *de Beata* High Mass—all of them in thanksgiving for the favors God has granted us and in reparation for our misuse of them. For the future, it will be necessary to repeat this each year.

LETTER 231

To a Superior. *On how to direct subordinates.*

Always show meekness and cordiality, no matter with whom you are dealing. That is the spirit and behavior which should reign among us. It is the spirit of our Father and Mother, of whom it is written: "My spirit is sweet above honey.(1)

(1). Ecclus. 24, 27

LETTER 232

To a Superior. *The Saint complains because he refused to allow the withdrawal of a subject.*

If you persist in your impetuosity and disobedience, I shall complain about it to Our Lord and His Holy Mother. I am wholly confident that they will take the matter in hand, and will not allow you to ruin and destroy their Congregation in this manner.

It is charity alone which constrains me to write you these things. I urge you, my dearest brother, by the Sacred Heart of our most benign Father and our most bountiful Mother, to make good use of my recommendations and accept them in a spirit of humility, obedience and charity.

LETTER 233

To a Superior. *The Saint asks him not to be too exacting with regard to the sick.*

It is never detrimental to the spiritual progress of a Community when one does not do what God does not want him to do. Now God does not desire anyone to observe rules when he cannot do so because of illness or some other infirmity. We should not wish to do more than what God desires. Let us do only what we can, my dearest brother, without becoming troubled or worried, submitting ourselves with peace and tranquility to the commands of His most adorable will.

LETTER 234

To a Confrere. *The Saint's charity toward a sick person.*

I embrace our dear patient most cordially, in the sacred love of the most Holy Heart of Jesus and Mary. I beseech him to rejoice and to bless God for the graces He is bestowing upon him, to abandon himself wholly to the divine will, and to entrust himself unreservedly to His infinite goodness. With all my heart do I implore our most kind Jesus and His most bountiful Mother to grant him their holy blessing, not for his death, but that he may live and recover in order to win still more souls who may bless them for all eternity. It is for that intention, in the name and on behalf of the Son and the Mother, and by virtue of their divine Heart, that I pronounce over our beloved brother: *Nos cum Prole pia benedicat Virgo Maria.*

LETTER 235

To One of his Sons. *At the beginning of the New Year.*

God grant us the grace to make perfect use of this New Year in His service and that of His most Holy Mother, and with as much solicitude and fidelity as if this were to be our last year. With all my heart do I desire to do so. For that reason I have withdrawn into seclusion to make a good retreat, God willing, just as long as possible. Help me to do this, my dearest brother, by your holy Masses.

LETTER 236

To a Priest of His Congregation. *The Saint informs him that his past wrongs are forgotten.*

I am here in Evreux, where I received your letter. It would have made me very happy if I had found therein, instead of such a long discourse, this one word of humility: *Peccavi*. For everyone knows that you have brought M ... But let us say no more about it. It is enough, my dearest brother, for me to protest to you that my heart is yours in all truth and sincerity. .

LETTER 237

To One of His Priests Who Was on a Mission. *On the persecutions (1) of which he was a victim.*

While you are contending with the seven-headed, ten-horned monster where you are, it is striving to wage war on us here. But, thanks be to God, it does not deprive us of peace. For those to whom God grants

(1). See Letters 176 and 183.

282 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

the grace to be, to have and to do what they wish, because they desire only what He wills—those, I repeat, always possess perfect peace. And then, too, I agree with our benefactors, for I have resolved to take their part against myself and my sins because I find that they are right in wanting to annihilate a sinner who deserves the wrath of God and of all His creatures, provided they do what they are doing with the zeal of divine justice and in the spirit of Christian charity. That is what I should and wish to believe.

LETTER 238

To the Priests of His Congregation. *On the accomplishment of the divine will.*

The accomplishment of the divine will is the sole object of our being in this world; it is our sole business and *unum necessarium*. It is what we ask of God each day through these words: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." (1) It is our proper sphere and our element, in which we shall find real repose and true life. But in order that the divine will may reign over us and govern us, it is absolutely necessary that we renounce our own wills, which are just as contrary to Him as the devil is to God. We should strive, with the help of God, to trample our wills underfoot, to crush them like a serpent and like the and Christ, in the conviction that nothing within us forms so great an obstacle to the accomplishment of the divine will as our own wills.

(1). Matt. 6, 14.

LETTER 239

To One of His Sons. *On obedience.*

Perfect obedience is prompt, having no need of reasons or speeches to become convinced. What would happen if each one obeyed his own temperament and inclinations whenever it was necessary to send a subject to a different house or give him some employment?

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

283 -

LETTER 240

To Some of his Priests during a Mission. *On devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary.*

Above all things, my beloved brethren, I urge you to honor and have honored, in as many ways as possible, our most kind and amiable Mother, the most Holy Mother of Jesus, the beloved of God and the consoler of the afflicted.

LETTER 241

To a Priest of his Congregation. *On crosses.*

Dearest brother:

May Jesus be eternally blessed for the share He deigns to grant us in His Cross. Oh I when shall we be able to say with truth: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world."(1). How very true it is that there is nothing to be desired in this world, save to be nailed to the Cross with Jesus Christ! Therefore let us joyfully embrace our crosses, dearest brother, and try to bear them in the spirit of our most adorable Crucified Lord.

(1). Gal. 6,14.

LETTER 242

To a Priest of his Congregation. *To outline to him a reply to be given to a Carmelite Sister of Caen, who believed that she had been inspired to change Communities.*

In reply, tell her that I exhort her to follow the example of her blessed Mother, St. Teresa, who one day received a command from the mouth

284 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

of Our Lord Himself to go and establish a new Order—a matter of far greater importance for her than merely changing from one convent to another. When the Saint informed her superior about her plans, she was prevented from carrying them out and was ordered to go elsewhere. Whereupon she obeyed at once, not only without accusing her superior of resisting the will of God, but even without opening her mouth to make any reply or plea. Afterwards Our Lord told her that she had been more pleasing to Him in obeying her superior than if she had made the new foundation. Let Sister St. Anne remain in peace where she is, according to that example, until I come to Caen to look into this matter more closely. In it I perceive a good many things which to me seem contrary to the spirit of God. Perhaps I am mistaken, but I should be very glad to investigate the whole thing right on the premises. Obedience does no harm. Sister may be mistaken in her revelations, but she will never make a mistake by being obedient.

LETTER 243

To the Superior of the Seminary of Coutances. *Trust in God during a time of trial.*

I left all our brethren ill in Lisieux, ecclesiastics as well as laymen, with the exception of two. Nevertheless, that does not discourage me, thank God, because I do not lose sight of the divine will which does all things and does them well, and because I have the greatest confidence that Our Lord and His Holy Mother will not abandon us but Will attend to everything in the way most pleasing to them. That, thanks be to God, is all I desire.

285 -

SHORTER WORKS

287 -

MEMORIALE BENEFICIORUM DEI

Memoir of the principal favors which I have received from God through His Son Jesus Christ Our Lord and His most Holy Mother, for which I must incessantly praise and thank Him.(1)

Confiteantur Domino misericordiae ejus, et mirabilia ejus filiis hominum.

1. God granted me the grace to be born, baptized, to make my first Holy Communion and to give a mission filled with blessings, all in a parish dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, its patroness; that is to say, the parish of Ri,(2) in the diocese of Seez.

Uni trinoque Numini honor, virtus, imperium; Proli Matrique Virgini sit laus per omne saeculum.

2. God granted me the grace to be born of parents who were in a modest condition of life,(3) who lived in His fear, and who, I have every reason to believe, died in His grace and love.

Benedicite servi Domini Domino. Qui timetis Dominum, laudate eum; universum semen Jacob glorificate eum.

3. My father and mother were married (4) three years without being able to have children, because of a curse that had been put upon them which prevented it. Then they made a vow, in honor of the Blessed

(1). Other biographical details on the Saint are found in the Prayer, placed at the beginning of *The Kingdom of Jesus*, pp. xxvi-xxvii and in the one which forms the conclusion of *The Admirable Heart* reproduced on pages 332-339. We also refer the reader to the notes in the *Letters* in this volume.

(2). A village in Lower Normandy, about nine miles from Argentan, on the road to Tours.

(3). "Not belonging to rich and proud aristocracy, nor yet in abject poverty, which has in special dangers and excludes from the boon of a liberal education." Cf. Matthew Russell, *Blessed John Eudes*, P. 4

(4). About the year 1598, Isaac Eudes of Ri married Martha Corbin, who probably lived in the neighboring village of Houay. Cf. Boulay, op. cit., Vol. x, p. 10.

288 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

Virgin, to go to Our Lady of Recovery,(5) which is a place of devotion to this same Virgin in a chapel in the parish of Tourailles, in the diocese of Seez. Afterwards, my mother then being pregnant, she and my father made a pilgrimage to the same chapel, where they offered and consecrated me to Our Lord and Our Lady.

Tuus sum ego, O Domine Jesu; tuus sum ego, O Domina Maria. Accipite et possidete me totum ut totus impendar cum Jesu et Maria, et omnibus Sanctis, in laudem et gloriam aeternam sanctissimae Trinitatis. Amen, amen, fiat, fiat. Sit nomen Domini benedictum, qui habitare facit sterilem in domo, matrem filiorum lactantem.

4. If doctors are correct in their opinion which holds that the soul is infused into the bodies of

male children the fortieth day after conception, my soul was created by God and united with my body on the 25th of March, the day on which the Son of God was made incarnate and the Blessed Virgin Mary became the Mother of God. For I was born on the 14th of November, and consequently, having been conceived nine months previously, the 14th of February was the day of my conception. Now from that day to the 25th of March there are exactly forty days.

Benedictum sit Cor amantissimum, et dulcissimum Nomen Domini Nostri Jesu Christi, et gloriosissimae Virginis Mariae Matris ejus, in aeternum et ultra.

5. I was born on November 14th, in the year 1601, on a Wednesday, and baptized the following Friday evening, which was the beginning of Saturday. At that time the name of John(6) was given me by my godfather of the same name, and my godmother whose name was Mary.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto. Sicut erat in principio, etc. Gratias aeterno Patri, qui dedit Filio suo nomen quod est super omne

(5). A Shrine at Tourailles, about fifteen miles from the home of the Eudes.

(6). Boulay says in *Vie du Vénérable Jean Eudes, Vol. 1, p. 15*, that the patron Saint of John Eudes was the Apostle St. John, not St. John the Baptist. The people in the country places of France always make a distinction between John and John the Baptist. Furthermore, the Saint does not seem to have had a special devotion to St. John the Baptist, whereas he chose St. John the Evangelist as one of the patrons of the Congregation Of Jesus and Mary. Strangely enough, we find the Religious of Our Lady of Charity sending him their feast day wishes for June 24, Feast of St. John the Baptist. See Letter 34.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

289 -

nomen, ut in nomine Jesu omne genu flectatur coelestium, terrestrium, et infernorum.

6. Living in a parish where there was very little instruction for salvation, and *where few* persons ever received Communion except during the Easter season, I began to know God when I was about twelve years old, through a special grace of His divine goodness, and to receive monthly Communion(7) after having made a general confession. It was on the feast of Pentecost(8) that He granted me the grace of making my first Holy Communion. *Gratias Deo super inenarrabili dono ejus.*

Thereupon He also gave me the grace, shortly afterwards, to consecrate my body to Him by a vow of chastity, for which may He be blessed for evermore.

7. For sometime I studied under a rural teacher, a priest named Father James Blanette, from whose example and spiritual instruction I profited a great deal. Then my father sent me to Caen to continue my studies at the College of the Reverend Jesuit Fathers(9). There, on the feast of St. Dionysius,(10) in 1615, I was taken into the fourth class conducted by Father Robin,(11) with whom I studied as far as the second class inclusively. This was through a special grace of Our Lord, because he was a virtuous and pious teacher who frequently spoke to us of God with extraordinary fervor, which helped *me in matters of salvation much more than I can express.

Benedic anima mea Domino, et noli oblivisci omnes retributiones ejus.

8. I was received into the Sodality of Our Lady,(12) at the college of the very Reverend Jesuit Fathers of Caen, about the year 1618, wherein Our Lord granted me extraordinary graces through the intercession of His most Holy Mother.

(7). At that time there were very few in the parish who received the Blessed Eucharist more than once 2 year." Cf. Russel, OP. cit., P. 7.

- (8). According to the Saint's biographers the date was May 26, 1613.
- (9). The Royal College of the Mount founded at Caen in 1668.
- (10). October 9.
- (11). Francis Robin was just ten years older than his illustrious pupil; he was not a priest, and had finished his noviceship only the year before. Cf. Russel, *ibid.*, p. 8.
- (12). One is surprised that his entrance into the Sodality was delayed until his third year at College. St. John Eudes is always mentioned among the glories of the Sodality. Cf. Russel, *ibid.*, p. 9.

290 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

Confitebor tibi, Domine, in iota corde meo, in concilio justorum et congregatione.

9. I received tonsure and the four minor orders in the year 1620, if I remember correctly, in Seez, in the month of September.(13)

Omnes sancti Sacerdotes et Levitae, benedicite Dominum in aeternum.

10. I was admitted into the Congregation of the Oratory(14) at their house on Saint Honoré Street in Paris, where I was received by the founder, Reverend Father de Bérulle, on March 25, 1623. (15)

Benedicamus Jesum Filium Marine, et Mariam Matrem Jesu. Laudemus et superexaltemus eos in saecula.

11. I was clothed with the ecclesiastical garb that same year, on the feast of The Seven Dolors of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which falls on Friday of Passion Week.

Confitebor Domino, et exaltabo nomen ejus in aeternum, quia incluit me vestimentis salutis, et indumento justitiae circumdedit me. Tibi laus, tibi honor, tibi gloria, O piissima Virgo Maria, in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

12. I began to preach during the same year, 1623, at the command of my superiors, although I was not as yet in holy orders.

Confiteantur tibi, Domine, opera tua, et Sancti tui benedicant tibi. Gloria Patri, etc.

13. I received tonsure and minor orders in Seez, on September 19, 1620, and the order of subdiaconate, also in Seez, in 1624. I began the reading of the Breviary on the feast of St. Thomas the Apostle.(16)

Repleatur as meum laude, et cantem gloriam tuam, tota die magnitudinem tuam.

14. I received the order of diaconate in Bayeux, during Lent of 1625.

(13). In entry 13 the Saint says that the date was September 19.

(14). The Oratory of Jesus was founded in 1611 by Father Peter de Bérulle, who was afterwards created Cardinal.

(15). The Feast of the Annunciation was an important day in the Congregation of the Oratory. Cardinal de Bérulle, the founder, had a special devotion to the Incarnate Word and taught his young disciples to concentrate all their spiritual efforts on the adorable Person of the Saviour. Faithful to the spirit of the Founder, St. John Eudes inculcated the devotion upon his spiritual sow. It is noteworthy that he founded the Congregation of Jesus and Mary on March 25, 1643.

(16). December 21.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

291 -

Omnes sancti Levitae, magnificate Dominum; et exaltemus nomen ejus in idipsum.

15. In the same year, 1625, the order of the priesthood was conferred upon me in Paris on the 20th of December.(17)

Sacerdotes Domini, benedicite Dominum: laudate et superexaltate eum in saecula.

16. Thereupon I said my first Mass on Christmas Day of 1625, at midnight, in the Saint Honoré house of the Oratory in Paris, in a chapel and at an altar dedicated to the most Holy Mother of God.

Gloria tibi, Domine, qui natus es de Virgine, etc.

17. In the years 1625 and 1626 God sent me a physical infirmity which prevented me from working abroad. He allowed me to spend these two years(18) in retreat, devotion to prayer, the reading of pious books, and other spiritual exercises. This was a very special grace for which I must eternally bless and thank His divine bounty.

Misericordias Domini in aeternum cantabo.

18. In 1627 pestilence(19) invaded the diocese of Seez, in the parishes of St. Christopher, of St. Peter and St. Martin of Vrigny, of Avoinnes and several other neighboring parishes, and the stricken inhabitants were left devoid of any spiritual help. I requested permission of Reverend Father de Bérulle, in Paris, where I was at the time, to go to their assistance, and this he granted me. Then I went to take up residence with a good priest of St. Christopher's parish, named Father Laurens~ who received me charitably into his house. Every day we would say Mass, he and I, in a chapel at St. Evroult's, not far from his house. After that I would put some consecrated Hosts into a small white steel box, which I now keep at the bottom of my trunk, but which I wore then around my neck. Thereupon we would go, this good priest and I, to call on the sick, sometimes in one parish and sometimes in another, where we would hear confessions. Then I would administer the Blessed Sacrament to them. We did this from the end of August until after All Saints' Day, when the plague had completely disappeared, and God *preserved us* so well that we never felt any ill effects from it.

(17). Saturday of Ember Days.

(18). These years were spent at the country house of the Oratory at Aubervilliers, 2 small town, in the northeast of Paris, and afterwards in the Paris community.

(19). For ten years, from 1627, Asiatic cholera ravaged every province of France.

292 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

Confitebor tibi, Domine Rex, et collaudabo te Deum Salvatorem meum. Confitebor nomini tuo, quoniam adjutor et protector factus est mihi.

19. In 1631 Father Gaspard de Repichon, the superior of the house of the Oratory in Caen, was stricken with the plague. God also granted me the grace to assist him in his illness, which proved fatal to him, and to administer all the sacraments and be present during his last agony and at his death; likewise I assisted two others after him and rendered them all the corporal services usually given to sick persons, after having administered the holy sacraments to them. Later one of them

recovered, but the other died. And God again preserved me from all harm.

Propterea confitebor et laudem dicam tibi, et benedicam nomini Domini in aeternum; quoniam de interitu redemisti vitam meam. Laudent coelum et terra, mare, et omnia quae in eis sunt.

20. In the year 1632 I labored on missions(20) in the diocese of Coutances, at Lessay, Périers, Saint Sauveur-le- Vicomte, La Haye-du-Puits, Cherbourg and Montebourg.

Cantate Domino canticum novum, cantate Domino omnis terra.

21. In 1635 I gave several missions in various places in the diocese of Bayeux, namely: at Beneauville, Avenay, Evrecy and Villers-Bocage.

Omnis spiritus laudet Dominum.

22. During the summer of 1636 I took part in several missions in the diocese of Saint Malo in Brittany, at Pleurtuit, Plouer and Cancale.

Benedic anima mea Domino, et omnia quae intra me sunt nomini sancto ejus.

23. In September of the same year I gave a mission in the parish of Le Fresne, the cost of which was borne by Mr. de Camilly(21) On this occasion God was pleased to convert a goodly number of Huguenots. It was also on this mission that I began to have morning and evening prayers offered, as we do now on our missions.

(20). His missionary labors continued with extraordinary fruitfulness for 44 years. In the course of this long career St. John Eudes preached over 100 missions, each lasting at least six weeks.

(21). Mr. James Blouet de Camilly and his wife, Madame de Camilly, were two steadfast friends of St. John Eudes. See *Letter 15*, note 2.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

293-

*Confiteantur Domino misericordiae ejus, et laudent cum omnes virtutes ejus**

24. In the year 1637 I gave a mission in the parish of Ri, my birthplace, in the diocese of Séez, upon which God showered many blessings.

Benedicite omnia opera Domini,.Domino, Laudate et superexaltate cum in saecula.

25. In 1638 I gave three missions: the first at Bremoy, in the diocese of Bayeux, during the summer; the second in September at Estreham, the expenses of which were defrayed by Madame Laurence de Budos,(22) the abbess of Holy Trinity at Caen; the third during Advent at Le Pont-l'Eveque, in the diocese of Lisieux.

It is impossible to express the fruits garnered by God from all these missions; may He be eternally blessed and glorified for them.

26. In the year 1639 I preached during Lent at Le Pont-l'Eveque, which served as a continuation of the mission I had given there during Advent.

27. In that same year, between Advent and Lent, I gave a mission at the Abbey of St. Stephen in Caen, the fruits of which were far more abundant than can be recorded.

Quid retribuam Domino, pro omnibus quae retribuit mihi? Tibi sacrificabo hostiam laudis, et benedicam nomen tuum in saeculum, et in saeculum saeculi.

28. During the summer of that year His Lordship Philip Cospéan, Bishop of Lisieux, had me conduct a mission in the city of Lisieux, through which God was greatly glorified.

Tibi laus, tibi honor, tibi gloria, O beata Trinitas, unus Deus, a quo omne bonum in coelo et in terra procedit.

29. Still in 1639 I preached during Advent in St. Peter's Church in Caen, as also the following Lent, in 1640, when Our Lord deigned to produce some wonderful effects of grace in many souls by virtue of His divine word.

Confiteantur tibi, Domine, omnia opera tua. Laudent et superexaltent misericordias tuas in saecula.

(22). *Madame Laurence de Budos*: The abbess of Holy Trinity Monastery was a lifelong benefactor of the Saint. See Letter 1, note 2.

294 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

30. In 1640 I also preached the Advent season in Lisieux, as well as the following Lent, in 1641, when God in His goodness continued, as always, to grant me His usual blessings.

Benedicam Dominum in omni tempore: semper laus ejus in ore meo.

31. In the aforesaid year 1640 I conducted a mission in the parish of Le Mesnil-Mauger, in the diocese of Lisieux. God lavished so many graces upon it that they are beyond the power of expression.

Ex quo omnia, per quem omnia, in quo omnia, ipsi gloria in saecula.

32. In 1641 I gave five missions, all filled with immeasurable blessings: The first was at Urville, near Falaise, in the diocese of Bayeux.

The second was given at Remilly, in the diocese of Coutances. It was requested and paid for by Mr. de Montfort(23) and his wife, a sister of Mr. de Bernières.(24) It was during the Remilly mission that I began to hold private conferences for ecclesiastics.

The third was at Landelle, in the same diocese. Mr. de Renty(25) induced us to give this one.

The fourth was conducted at Coutances. Father Le Pilleur, the vicargeneral of His Lordship Léonor de Matignon, Bishop of Coutances, requested and paid for it.

The fifth was held during Advent in the city of Pont-Audemer, in the diocese of Lisieux. Its cost was defrayed by His Lordship Philip Cospéan, Bishop of Lisieux.

Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis. Laudamus te, benedicimus te, adoramus te, glorificamus te, gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.

33. Also in 1641, during the octave of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, God gave me the grace to formulate the plan of establishing our Congregation.

34. In that same year 1641, during the month of August, God granted me one of the greatest favors I have ever received from His infinite

(23). A brother-in-law of Mr. John de Bernières. See next note and also Letter 18, note 1. " Mr.

John de Bernières was treasurer of the City of Caen. A pious layman, he founded The Hermitage, a community of devout laymen who spent their leisure in prayer and devotional exercises. See Letter 15, note 12.

(25). Gaston John Baptist, Baron de Renty, another devout layman. See Letter 24, note 4.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

295 -

bounty, for it was then that I had the happiness of first knowing Sister Mary des Vallées," through whom His gracious Majesty bestowed on me a great number of signal graces(27). After God, I am indebted for this favor to the most Blessed Virgin Mary, my most honored Lady and dearest Mother, whom I can never sufficiently thank.

Confiteor tibi Pater, Domine coeli et terrae, quia abscondisti haec a sapientibus et prudentibus, et revelasti ea parvulis. Ita Pater, quoniam sic fuit placitum ante te. Ave Maria gratia plena, Dominus tecum, benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ventris tui Jesus. Amen.

35. It was also in 1641 that God granted me the grace of beginning the establishment of the house of Our Lady of Charity,(28) on the day of the Immaculate Conception of the most Holy Virgin.

Deo gratias.

36. In the year 1642 I gave three missions which were even richer in graces and blessings than all the preceding ones.

The first was held at Rouen and lasted from the beginning of the year until well on into Lent. Its cost was defrayed by the Duchess d'Aiguillon.

The second was conducted during the summer in the city of Saint Malo, in Brittany, and was paid for by His Lordship Harlay-Sancy, Bishop of Saint Malo.

The third was given in Saint U, in the diocese of Coutances.

(26). Often called "The Saint of Coutances," Mary des Vallées was the humble instrument used by God to guide St. John Eudes in many of his important undertakings. See Letter 17, note 3.

(27). In this Article 34 the Saint makes two statements: first, that it was in the month of August, 1641 that he began to know Mary des Vallées; secondly, that God bestowed upon him, during the course of his life, signal graces through the intercession of this holy woman. He does not say that these graces were given him at his first meeting with "The Saint of Coutances" as she was called by the people. It is hard then to understand how this text could have been used to substantiate the assertion that at that very moment, through the mediation of Mary des Vallées, the Saint received from heaven the triple mission of founding the Congregation of Jesus and Mary, instituting the Order of Our Lady of Charity and establishing the public cult of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. The Saint's early biographers never wrote anything of the sort. This opinion, which dates from Reverend Father Le Doré, seems to us to be thoroughly groundless. Cf. the pamphlet by Reverend Charles Lebrun on Marie des Vallées et le culte public du Coeur de Jésus. Reply to Mr. Emile Dermenghem.

(28). The religious order founded by St. John Eudes for the conversion and rehabilitation of penitent women.

296 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

Renedictus es, Domine, in firmamento coeli, et laudabilis, et gloriosus, et superexaltatus in saecula.

37. In the year 1643 Our Lord and His most Holy Mother, in their excessive goodness,

granted, us the grace to begin the establishment of our little Congregation(29) on March 25th, the day on which the Son of God was made man and the Blessed Virgin became the Mother of God.

Sacrosanctae Trinitati, Christi Jesu humanitati, Virginis Matris foecunditati, et omnium Sanctorum universitati, sit sempiterna laus, honor, virtus et gloria, ab omni creatura, per infinita saecula saeculorum. Amen.

38. In this same year we gave two missions which yielded extraordinary fruits, surpassing those of all the preceding missions, as if Our Lord had clearly wished to show everyone that He was with us and was the author of the above-mentioned establishment.

The first was given at Saint Sauveur-le-Vicomte, in the diocese of Coutances.

The second took place at Valognes, where the crowds were so large that I was obliged to preach daily outside the city, behind the chateau, and it is estimated that there were forty thousand persons present on Sundays and feast days.

It was during this mission that God granted us the grace to establish the devotion of Our Lady of Victory in a chapel which had been completely deserted and abandoned, in the parish of Alleaume, near Valognes.

Gloria aeterno Patri, gloria Filio ejus Unigenito, gloria Spiritui sancto, gloria Virgini Matri, et nunc, et semper, et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

39. In the year 1644 I preached during Lent at Coutances, with altogether singular blessings. I had the pleasure of lodging with Father Potier, a holy priest, at whose house Sister Mary des Vallées was living. I made it a point to see and converse with her daily, thereby gaining spiritual benefits and advantages that words can never reveal.

(29). Congregation of Jesus and Mary, religious order of priests founded by St. John Eudes on March 25, 1643. The chief objects of the Congregation are the sanctification of the clergy and the evangelizing of the people through the preaching of missions.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

297-

Gratias Deo et beatissimae Virgini Mariae pro inenarrabilibus donis eorum.

40. During the summer of that year we gave a very celebrated and fruitful mission at Honfleur, in the diocese of Lisieux, for which may God and His most Holy Mother be for ever blessed.

We conducted several others like it during the following years in various places, namely:

At Entrees, near Corbon, diocese of Lisieux, in the year 1645;

At Vimoutiers, in the same diocese, also during 1645;

At Arnay-le-Duc, in Burgundy, in the diocese of Autun. It was procured and partially paid for by Mr. de Renty, in that same year of 1645;

And at Couches, in the same diocese and year, and also through Mr. de Renty.

41. At Thorigny, in the diocese of Bayeux. This mission was procured by Madame de Matignon, in the year 1646, during Lent.

At Le Bény, in the same diocese, in 1646. Its cost was borne by Mr. de Renty. Sister Mary des Vallées was present, at Mr. de Renty's request, and God worked several wonders through her on that occasion.

At Lion, in the diocese of Bayeux, near Our Lady of Deliverance, in the aforesaid year 1646.

42. At Nogent-le-Rotrou, in the diocese of Chartres, in 1647.

At Fouqueville, in the diocese of Evreux. It was arranged and paid for by Madame de Bec-Thomas, who is now Madame de la Porte, the wife of Mr. de la Porte, a councillor of the Parliament of Rouen, in that same year 1647.

At La Ferté-Vidame, in the diocese of Chartres. This mission was paid for by the Duke de Saint Simon, in the aforesaid year 1647

43. At Autun, in Burgundy. It began in Advent of the year 1647 and ended shortly before Lent in the year 1648.

At Beaune, in the diocese of Autun, during Lent of that same year 1648. These last two missions were also arranged by Mr. de Renty, who defrayed their expense.

At Fère-en-Tardenois, in the diocese of Soissons. It was obtained and paid for by the Princess de Conde, the mother of the Princess de Conde and de Conti, in the aforesaid year 1648.

298 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

During these last four missions, the results of God's goodness and mercy were most extraordinary and abundant, for which may Jesus Christ be praised and glorified for all eternity.

Confitemini Domino quoniam bonus, quoniam in saeculum misericordia ejus.

44. His bounty and mercy were also very manifest and considerable on the following missions conducted by us:

At Saint Sauveur-Lendelin, in the diocese of Coutances, the birthplace of Sister Mary des Vallées, who attended this mission. We gave it in the year 1649 at the expense of Mr. de Liancourt.

At Briquebec, in the same diocese, also in 1649

At Alleaume, near Valognes, in the aforesaid year 1649.

At Saint Sever, in the diocese of Coutances. It had been requested in the last will and testament of Mr. de Renty, at that time deceased, and paid for by Madame de Renty in the same year 1649.

45. At Vesly, in the diocese of Coutances, in the year 1650. It was during this mission that God granted us the grace of establishing the devotion of Our Lady of Consolation in a chapel situated in the parish of Vesly, which previous to that time had been totally abandoned.

At Denneville, also in that diocese, in the same year 1650.

At Ravenoville, in the same diocese. Its cost was borne by Mr. de Cybrantot, in the aforesaid year 1650.

46. In this same year we began the establishment of our house in Coutances, on the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the most Blessed Virgin, for which may her Son Jesus and she be eternally blessed by all the creatures in heaven and on earth. Amen, amen, fiat, fiat. And this establishment was made possible through the great kindness shown us by His Lordship Claude Auvry, Bishop of Coutances, who of his own accord indicated that he desired it.

47. After this we gave a second mission in Coutances which began during Advent in 1651 and ended shortly before Lent of the year 1652. Its fruits were most abundant; for them and for those of all the preceding and following missions, eternal praise and glory be rendered to the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, and to the most Holy Mother of God, for ever and ever. Amen.

48. God also granted us the grace to give the following missions, namely:

At Paris, in the parish of Saint Sulpice, during Lent of the year 1651. This mission had been requested a long time before by Father Olier,(30) pastor of Saint Sulpice, who defrayed its cost.

In the city of Corbeil, diocese of Paris. It was paid for by Madame Tronson, of the parish of Saint Sulpice in Paris, during the same year 1651.

At Bernay, in the diocese of Lisieux. It was procured and paid for in part by Mr. de Croisy, lawyer for the Council, in the aforesaid year 1651.

At Marolles, in the diocese of Lisieux, in autumn of that same year 1651.

49. At Pontoise, in 1653. This mission was obtained and paid for through the efforts of Reverend Mother Joan of Jesus, a Carmelite nun and sister of his Lordship, Chancellor Segulier.

At Lisieux, our second time there, during autumn of the same year 1653

50. It was during this mission that our house in Lisieux was established, for which immortal thanks be rendered to Our Lord Jesus and His most Holy Mother.

51. At Cisai, in the diocese of Lisieux. It was requested and paid for by President d'Amfreville, in the year 1654

52. At Lingevres, diocese of Bayeux, in 1656. This mission was procured by His Lordship Francis Servien, Bishop of Bayeux, and employed by divine Providence to destroy the bad impressions that his Lordship had received of us, and to reconcile him with us.

53. At L'Etanville, near Grandcamp, in the diocese of Bayeux. It was given at the request and expense of President de Langrie in the year 1657.

54. The establishment of our house at Rouen was concluded and signed by his Lordship the Archbishop on the feast of the Ascension in 1658, and our church there was opened in the year 1659, all through the efforts and charity of Mr. de La Motte-Lambert,(31) Father Mallet, who was the vicar-general, Mr. d'Omonville, (32)Father de Fermanel, a priest and the son of Mr. de Fermanel the collector, and Mr. Cornier.

(30). Father John James Olier, the founder of the Society of St. Sulpice.

(31). Peter de la Motte-Lambert was for many years councillor of the Court of Rouen.

He later became a priest. Pope Alexander V¹¹ appointed him Vicar Apostolic in China with the title of Bishop of Berytus.

(32). Counsellor of the Rouen Parliament. See Letter 75

55. At Vasteville, in La Hague, in the diocese of Coutances, we gave a mission filled with extraordinary blessings, in the year 1659.

And we held another that year at Villedieu-les-Poëles, in the same diocese, which was no less fruitful than the preceding one. It had been the wish of the late Mr. de Remy, and its expense was defrayed by his widow.

For all these missions and establishments, for all these graces that God has granted us, I say with my whole heart and supplicate all the angels, saints and creatures to say with me: *Regi saeculorum immortalis et invisibilis, soli Deo honor et gloria in saecula saeculorum. Amen.*

quoque, O sanctissima Dei Mater, laus, et gratiarum actio ab omni creatura, in aeternum et ultra. Amen, amen, fiat, fiat.

I must not forget seven other favors bestowed upon us by Our Lord and His Holy Mother, for which I owe them particular thanks.

56. The first was in connection with His Lordship Edward Molé, Bishop of Bayeux, who had been prejudiced by unfavorable impressions he had been given of us, and ordered our chapel in Caen to be closed, with the intention of completely suppressing our establishment. God frustrated these plans, undoing all that his Lordship had done against us, through l'Abbé de Sainte Croix, his brother, for shortly afterwards Bishop Molé died, and l'Abbé de Sainte Croix was appointed to the bishopric of Bayeux. He restored us to our former status, so that our chapel was reopened in the year 1653, after Easter, on the feast of the Apparition of Our Lord to His most Holy Mother after the Resurrection, a day of great consolation and extraordinary joy for us and all our friends.

Regina coeli laetare, alleluia, quia quem meruisti portare, alleluia, resurrexit sicut dixit, alleluia. Ora pro nobis Deum, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

57. The second favor was that Our Lord Jesus Christ and His most worthy Mother granted us the grace to erect a church in Coutances, over a period of three years. This is the first church ever to be built and dedicated in honor of the most Holy Heart of the Blessed Virgin, who has but one Heart with her beloved Son.

O Mater admirabilis, magnificent te omnes gentes; et benedicant fidelissimum Cor tuum omnes populi.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

301 -

58. The third favor concerned our most honored Sister Mary des Vallées, who had desired that her body be interred in our church. Although we were deprived for a time of this treasure, God in His goodness was pleased to restore it to us through the mediation of President de Langrie,(33) and to preserve it for us through the protection of His Lordship Claude Auvry, Bishop of Coutances, notwithstanding all the evil intents of worldly persons to rob us of it, nor all their efforts in that direction.

Exaltabo te Domine, quoniam adjutor et protector factus est nobis, nec delectasti inimicos nostros super nos.

59. The fourth was that, through a wonderful demonstration of His divine might and infinite mercy, God deigned to give us, contrary to all likelihood, the large square(34) in front of our house in Caen for the construction of a church in honor of the most Holy Heart of our admirable Mother, and for the erection of the other buildings and accommodations we needed, availing Himself of His Lordship Francis Servien, the bishop of Bayeux, Mr. de Longueville, the governor of the province, and Mr. de la Croisette, governor of the château of Caen, as well as of Madame de la Croisette, his wife.

Magnus Dominus Deus noster, et magna virtus ejus, et sapientiae ejus non est numerus. Sit benedictum nomen ejus in aeternum.

60. The fifth is that God preserved me many times, through the intercession of my most kind Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary, when I found myself on the verge of losing His grace and falling into

the hell of sin.

Confiteor tibi, Domine Deus, in toto corde meo, et glorificabo nomen tuum in aeternum, quia misericordia tua magna est super me, et eruisti animam meam ex inferno inferiori. Sit laus tibi, Mater gratiae, sit laus tibi, Mater misericordiae, quoniam ab hoste me protexisti. Sit laus tibi, Mater mea charissima, ab omni creatura in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

61. The sixth is that divine Mercy has had me undergo a great number of tribulations, which is one of the greatest favors accorded me, because they have been most useful to me and God has always delivered me from them.

(33). Royal Councillor and President of the Normandy Parliament.

(34). *Place des Petits-Prés, later Place Royale and today Place de la République.*

302-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

Benedictus Deus et Pater Domini nostri Jesu Christi, Pater misericordiarum et Deus totius consolationis, *qui quos amat castigat.* Dedit mihi per multas tribulationes transire, et consolatus est me in omni tribulatione mea, et eripuit me de omni angustia.

62. The seventh is an infinite number of other graces that Our Lord has granted me, through the mediation of His most worthy Mother, for which may they both be blessed and glorified for all eternity.

Magnificate Dominum Jesum mecum: et exaltemus nomen Matris ejus in aeternum. Confiteantur Domino misericordiae ejus: et mirabilia ejus filiis hominum.

63. In the year 1659, for ten days during Advent, I delivered conferences in Rouen to the candidates for ordination, as also during the following Lent of the year 1661, with great blessings.

Benedictus es, Domine, in firmamento coeli, et laudabilis et gloriosus in saecula.

64. In the closing days of 1659 and at the beginning of the year 1660, God permitted me to be despised, reviled and calumniated to an extraordinary degree. Nevertheless, this grieved me very little and almost not at all, through a special grace of divine Bounty, for which may He be forever praised and glorified.

65. During the same year 1660, shortly before the Ascension, divine Providence sent me to Paris and engaged me, when I least expected it, to give a mission at the Quinze-Vingts, (35) on which God abundantly lavished wonderful blessings. It was His Lordship Claude Auvry, Bishop of Coutances, who had us give it and who defrayed the expenses.

Confiteantur Domino misericordiae ejus: et mirabilia ejus filiis hominum.

66. Following the preceding mission, we gave a short one that lasted only ten days, in the parish of Mauregard, five or six leagues from Paris, in the diocese of Meaux.

In omni loco dominationis ejus, benedic anima mea Domino.

67. In the same year 1660 we gave another mission at Paris, in the Church of Saint Germain-des-Prés. It began on July 4th and continued

(35). A hospital for the blind in Paris. The Church connected with the institution had a very select congregation. Even King Louis XIV and his Court attended services there.

until the feast of the Nativity of Our Lady. God bestowed *even greater* blessings upon this mission than the one we had given at the Quinze-Vingts. It was Father de Pousse, the pastor of Saint Sulpice, who had us conduct it.

Te Deum laudamus, te Dominum confitemur.

68. In the years 1661 and 1662 God granted me the grace of enduring several great afflictions, partly from the slanders and calumnies of the world and partly from persons very dear to me who caused me, for many months, the most poignant sorrows and griefs I have ever suffered in my whole life.

Benedicam Dominum Jesum omni tempore: semper laus ejus in ore meo.

69. In the year 1662, on a Saturday, the eve of the Visitation of Our Lady, Our Lord provided us with the means of redeeming an annuity of three hundred sixty-nine livres which we had been paying to the city of Caen for the square in front of our house which had been granted us in fief. This was accomplished through the mediation of a man from Paris who wishes to remain anonymous, both during his lifetime and after his death. Simply out of pure charity he, or rather Our Lord and His most Holy Mother, gave us the sum of ten thousand francs, from which we took about eight thousand to effect this amortization and pay up two years of arrears owed on the aforesaid annuity. Thereupon I dedicated and consecrated the square, on that same day, in honor of the Holy Heart of the Blessed Virgin. I also made a vow to God, in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, to choose her as foundress of the church that we desired and hoped to erect there in honor of this same Heart, as well as foundress of the houses necessary and expedient for our Community, and never to concede the title of founder or foundress to anyone else at all.

Benedictum sit in aeternum Cor tuum amantissimum, O Maria, vita, spes et laetitia cordis nostri.

70. It was also in 1662, on the 16th of September, that Our Lord was pleased to send me a grave illness which lasted for six weeks, during which He bestowed choice graces upon me.

Benedic anima mea Domino: et omnia quae intra me sunt, nomini sancto ejus.

71. In 1663 Our Lord and His most Holy Mother granted us a very precious gift in the form of a heavy cross, with the grace to receive it from their hands and bear it with complete submission to the most adorable will of God. It was the death of our beloved brother, Father Manchon, (36) who died at Rouen on February 6th with the holiest dispositions that could be desired, after having labored more than twenty years for the salvation of souls and won a great number of them for God through numerous missions. The news of his death was brought to us here in Caen on February 8, the feast day of the Most Holy Heart of the Blessed Virgin, on which His Lordship of Bayeux celebrated Holy Mass, solemnly officiated at Vespers, was present at a very beautiful sermon delivered by Father de Than, a doctor and religious of the Abbey of St. Stephen in Caen, and then gave Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, all of which afforded us comfort in our great affliction.

Benedicam Dominum in omni tempore: semper laus ejus in ore meo.

72. In the same year 1663 we gave a very fruitful mission in the parish of Saint Germain de la Campagne, in the diocese of Lisieux. It was requested and paid for by Father Le Marchand, one of the four priests of that parish.

Deo gratias.

73. During that year we also conducted a second mission at L'Etanville, where we had previously given one in 1657, and it proved to be even more fruitful and celebrated than the first one had been. It too was requested and paid for by President de Langrie, who died on the 13th of December in that same year. His Lordship Francis de Nesmond, Bishop of Bayeux, arrived toward the end, administered confirmation, preached at the cemetery, and gave benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, after a powerful and very fervent exhortation.

Soli Deo honor et gloria in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

74. In the same year we gave a mission at Saint Lô which lasted from the 7th of October until Advent. God bestowed wonderful blessings upon it. There were twenty-five confessors, but even fifty would scarcely have been enough. A great number of restitutions and recon

(36). One of the first five members of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. See Letter 13, note 2.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

305-

ciliations were effected, and we burned a considerable number of bad books. Gratias Deo super inenarrabilibus donis ejus.

The Abbé of Saint Lô procured it and defrayed most of the expense incurred; the rest was contributed by Mr. de Mesny, a clothier named Mr. Eliot, and several others whose names are written in the book of life.

75. In the year 1664 we gave a mission in the city of Meaux which lasted from the Epiphany to the first week of Lent inclusively. God showered no fewer blessings on this one than upon the preceding mission. His Lordship the bishop of Meaux instructed us to give it and bore the entire cost.

Sit nomen Domini benedictum, ex hoc nunc, et usque in saeculum.

76. During that year 1664, on the 20th of May, the day before the Eve of the Ascension, the first stone of our church in Caen was laid with great solemnity by Madame de la Croisette, the wife of Mr. de la Croisette, governor of the city of Caen. This she did, not in her own name, but in the name and on behalf of our divine foundress, the most Holy Mother of God. His Lordship Francis de Nesmond, Bishop of Bayeux, assisted by fifteen ecclesiastical dignitaries, performed the ceremony and celebrated the pontifical Mass of the Most Holy Heart of the Blessed Virgin, with the Introit *Gaudeamus*, the *Gloria in excelsis*, the *Credo* and the *Sequence Laetabunda*. It was sung by the clergy of Caen, all of whom were on hand, for his Lordship had ordered all the pastors to bring their processions there. The Mass was celebrated on a stage which had been erected on the spot where the church was to be built. Mr. de la Croisette was present, together with the chief personages of the city and a very great multitude of people. The sermon was preached by Father Lamy, lecturer in theology at Bayeux. On the afternoon of the following day, May 21, the eve of the Ascension, the laying of the first foundations of the church was begun.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Benedictum sit in aeternum sanctissimum Cor Mariae, pars nostra, spes et gaudium, coetusque nostri gloria. Amen.

77. In the same year 1664 we gave our second mission at Ravenoville, in the diocese of Coutances. Its cost was defrayed by Mr. de Cybrantot, and it was richly blessed by God.

306 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

Sit nomen Domini benedictum, ex *hoc* nunc, et usque in saeculum. 78. Also in that year we gave a mission at Cretteville-en-Beauptois, in the diocese of Coutances. It was paid for in part by Madame de Malherbe, who just before her death had requested that mission and had left some money toward its expense; the remainder was furnished by other pious persons. The blessings of God were extraordinarily in evidence there.

Benedicite omnia opera Domini Domino.

79. In 1665 we gave a mission at Granville, in the diocese of Coutances. Its cost was generously defrayed by the inhabitants of the city, and it yielded innumerable fruits. During this mission I was taken ill with pleurisy, from in which divine Bounty deigned to deliver me.

Benedic anima mea Domino: et omnia quae intra me sunt nomini sancto ejus, qui sanat omnes infirmitates tuas, qui redimit de interitu vitam tuam, qui coronat te in misericordia et miserationibus.

80. In the same year, 1665, we gave a mission in the city of Châlons, in Champagne. It was requested and paid for by His Lordship the Bishop of Châlons, and divine Mercy showered very abundant blessings upon it.

Gratias Deo super inenarrabilibus donis ejus.

81. In that same year, and also at the beginning of 1666, we gave a mission at St. Peter's Church in Caen. It continued from the beginning of Advent until Lent, at the partial expense of His Lordship of Bayeux, who contributed five hundred livres. Mr. and Madame de Secqueville donated about eight hundred livres, and other persons also contributed. This mission produced wonderful and abundant results, for which may God be eternally glorified.

Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.

82. In 1666 we also gave four other missions:

The first in the diocese of Lisieux, in the parish of Mesnil-Durand.

The second in the diocese of Coutances, in the parish of Cerisy-Montpinchon. Its cost was borne by some private individuals.

The third in the château at Caen, for the soldiers.

The fourth in the parish of Saint Eny, in the diocese of Coutances, at the expense of Father de Meautis, a priest, and the inhabitants of the place.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

307 -

Sit nomen Domini benedictum, ex *hoc* nunc, et usque in saeculum.

83. In 1667 we continued the mission at Evreux which we had begun during the preceding year 1666, and which we finished on the Epiphany. It was given through the zeal and at the expense of

His Lordship Henry de Maupas du Tour, Bishop of Evreux. In the course of this mission we established the feast of the Most Holy Heart of the Blessed Virgin in several of the churches of Evreux, and His Lordship granted permission for this to be done throughout his diocese.

84. At the conclusion of this mission, His Lordship established our seminary at Evreux, purchasing, paying for and furnishing the house, and endowing it with an income of two thousand livres. Father Le Doux, the dean of Évreux, donated to us his house and garden, and the Priory of the Wilderness, known as St. Susan's Priory.

Te Deum laudamus, te Dominum confitemur.

85. During that same year we gave four other missions:

The first at Besneville, in the diocese of Coutances, near Saint Sauveur-le-Vicomte, at the expense of Father de Gourmont, the archdeacon of Coutances.

The second at Percy, in the diocese of Coutances, through the efforts of Madame de Matignon.

The third at Brucheville, near Le Grant-Vey, in the diocese of Coutances. It was requested by the pastor of that parish.

86. Previous to these last two missions, we had given one in the cathedral of Rouen which was paid for by Mr. Le Cornier, head of the exchequer, and several other persons of piety who had contributed to it. It began on Septuagesima Sunday and ended during the octave of Easter, suffering many trials and setbacks at first but yielding abundant fruits.

Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.

87. God in His goodness was pleased to grant me, that same year, several extraordinary crosses, for which may He be eternally praised and blessed.

88. From the closing days of 1667 until Lent of the following year, we also gave a mission at Marigny, in the diocese of Coutances, through the efforts of Fathers Eleine and Chardin, priests of that locality.

Deo gratias.

308 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

89. In 1668 we gave one during Lent at Carentan, in the same diocese, chiefly through the Cure de Brevands; during the summer, another at Montfarville, in the parish of Le Plessis; one in 1669, during Lent, in the borough of Montsurvent, in the same diocese; and in the month of July, one in the borough of Cenilly and at Quettehou.

90. At the end of the same year and the beginning of the following one, we conducted a long mission in the city of Rennes, in Brittany, which lasted from the first part of Advent until the Octave of Easter. It was singularly blessed, thanks to the zeal and generosity of His Lordship de la Vieuville, Bishop of Rennes who, at the conclusion of this mission, established us at Rennes, donating to us a house, a garden and an income of two thousand livres.

Quis loquetur potentias Domini, auditas faciet omnes laudes et . us?

91. In that same year 1670 we gave three other missions in the diocese of Rennes:

The first at . . .(37)

The second at ...

The third in the city of Fougères.

Soli Deo honor et gloria, in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

92. In that year, too, Our Lord was pleased to favor me with several good crosses, for which may He be eternally blessed. May He grant me the grace to be able to say for evermore:

Mihi autem absit gloriari, nisi in Cruce Domini.

93. In the same year 1671 His Lordship the archbishop of Paris sent us to give a mission at Versailles, during the jubilee. It was the wish of the King, who took care of its cost. There, with the Blessed Sacrament exposed, God granted me the grace to deliver two powerful exhortations before the Queen, while I was holding the monstrance, and a third one of even greater force in the King's presence.

Domine, salvum fac Regent, et exaudi nos in die qua invocaverimus te. That year I was accompanied everywhere by crosses. Eternal thanks be rendered to the most lovable Crucified Saviour and to His most Holy Mother and mine.

94. Throughout the year 1672 I was almost always laden with crosses, (37). The names of the parishes where St. John Eudes preached these two missions are left blank in the copy of the Memorial which has come down to us.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

309-

in the midst of which divine Bounty granted me so many graces that I was able to say:

Repletus sum consolatione, superabundo gaudio in omni tribulatione mea. Circumdederunt me canes multi. Pater, dimitte illis.

95- In 1673 the King and Queen had us give a mission during the Easter fortnight at Saint Germain-en-Laye. It was most fruitful, and their Majesties appeared highly pleased with it.

Domine, salvum fac Regem.

96. Also in the year 1673 we gave a mission at Elbeuf, diocese of Evreux, by the command of His Lordship of Evreux. Its expense was shared by His Lordship, by the pastor of Elbeuf and by Father Le Sueur, his curate. Two extraordinary things happened during the course of this mission:

First of all, on June 11, the fourth day of the mission, as I was preparing to take my place in the pulpit to preach, there was a fearful clap(38) of thunder which filled every heart with a great fear, and penetrated into the church, scattering violence everywhere in its wake, even at the high altar; but it left the altar of the Blessed Virgin completely unscathed. This was attributed by a number of persons to the fact that the mission had been dedicated on its opening day in honor of her most Holy Heart. Two small stone columns on either side of an embossed image of the Blessed Virgin,

which is on a small door leading into the nave of the church, were shattered, but the image remained intact. The lightning did strike a priest, who was carried out half dead, his shirt having caught fire underneath. After regaining consciousness, he made his confession and received all the sacraments, dying a Christian death. Only the one priest was killed, but other persons were injured; among them, a scrivener or notary who had been praying with one knee resting on a small low box and the other off the floor. The thunder prostrated him, to teach him the respect with which one should address His Divine Majesty, and it injured both his knees, to punish him through the things in which he was deficient.

The second event which occurred during that mission was what I am about to relate. On the second day of July I preached on the subject (38). The Saint relates this fact in a letter to Mother St. Henry, a religious of Montmartre. See Letter 169.

310 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

of the most Blessed Virgin Mary. As I began to speak, toward the end of my sermon, against that vice which is incompatible with devotion to the Queen of Virgins, everyone became aware of something that sounded like frightful thunder coming from the vault of the church, although the weather was quite calm and cloudless. It seemed at first, nevertheless, to be thunder; but as people realized that it was lasting a long time, that is to say, for about the length of a *Miserere*, and that it was coming from the vault of the church, they believed that the roof was splitting open and was about to collapse, and that everyone there would be crushed to death. And then you would have witnessed the most fearful desolation in the world; the whole church resounded with the most pitiful cries, tears, groans and lamentations. Some were crying for mercy, others were calling upon the Blessed Virgin and the saints to help them, while still others prostrated themselves on the floor, and some cast themselves at the feet of nearby priests, beseeching them to absolve them from their sins. At last the noise ceased and everyone withdrew from the place more dead than alive. As for myself, I knelt down in the pulpit to adore divine Justice and do what I should for my listeners and myself.

The cause of this incident was never ascertained. For, as soon as the noise ceased, people hastened up to the vault, but they could discover nothing at all there. However, everyone deemed it to have been a manifestation of the fury of the devil against the mission, but the confusion was tied against him, for God employed these two kinds of thunder as a means of softening hardened hearts and preparing them to receive the grace of the mission, the fruits of which were many.

Benedicite fulgura Domino: ignis et spiritus procellarum, quae faciunt verbum ejus.

97. In the same year 1673 Her Royal Highness Madame de Guise donated twelve thousand francs to us to be used in building the Church of the Most Amiable Heart of Jesus and Mary in our house at Caen, in the manner and according to the conditions imposed by the contract drawn up in Paris, in the presence of Notaries Du Chatelet, Després and Gallois, on June 3, 1673.

Tibi laus, tibi honor, tibi gloria in aeternum, O Cor amantissimum Jesu et Mariae.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

311 -

98. Toward the end of that year and at the beginning of the following 1674, divine Providence favored me with several great trials, (39) greater in some respects than all the preceding ones. For, first of all, in an attempt to destroy our Congregation, my enemies turned the King against me by persuading him that I had committed serious acts against his Majesty's interests, although I had

never even thought of such things; but this had been foretold to me a year or so previously. Secondly, in order to Prevent us from obtaining confirmation of our Congregation from the Holy See, they sent a document from Paris to Rome which was crammed with calumnies and lies about us.

99. In the years 1675 and 1676 our most lovable Crucified Saviour honored me with several weighty crosses by permitting defamatory libels,(40) filled with atrocious insults and slanders, to be published against me practically throughout the whole of France. These accused me of a great number of heresies, from which, thanks be to God, I am far removed. However, all that vanished into thin air.

Deo gratias et Mariae, super inenarrabilibus donis ipsorum. Pater, dimitte illis.

100. In 1674 our dear Father James de la Haye de Bonnefond,(41) who had gone to Rome, returned with several Bulls(42) for us from our Holy Father Pope Clement X: a Bull which authorizes us to give missions

(39). Father Boniface, a Flemish priest, had been sent to Rome by St. John Eudes to obtain the formal approbation of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. This was not granted. Wishing to secure some return for the very great expense which his mission put upon the Eudist Fathers, Father Boniface, in the year 1662, presented a petition to the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars in which he suggested that, as a barrier against heretical opinions that were creeping into many countries, the members of this Congregation were ready to add in their obligations a vow binding them to uphold all opinions and doctrines tending to favor the authority of the Holy See, even if they were doubtful. Twelve years later this petition was found by the Saint's enemies, who brought it in the notice of Louis XIV as an attack on the pretensions of the French King. Although St. John Eudes made a formal declaration that he had no part in Father Boniface's petition, he fell under Louis's displeasure. Father Boniface also declared on two different occasions that the Saint had nothing to do with the petition. The King refused to be appeased. Through the intervention of His Excellency Harlay de Champvallon, Arch. bishop of Paris, King Louis XIV finally consented to receive the Saint. See Letter 202.

(40). The most defamatory of these libels was *Lettre à un docteur de la Sorbonne*, by Father Dufour. See Letter 183.

(41). See Letter 126, note 1.

(42). See Letter 179, note 1.

312 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

anywhere in France, with a plenary indulgence; a Bull confirming the statutes of our Congregation; and six other Bulls for our houses at Caen, Rouen, Coutances, Lisieux, Evreux and Rennes, giving us the power to establish Confraternities of the Most Holy Heart of Jesus and Mary in our churches and chapels, with many indulgences. From the lips of our Holy Father, and consequently from the adorable lips of Our Lord Himself, these churches and chapels received the name, in the aforesaid Bulls, of *The Churches and Chapels of the Divine Heart of Jesus and Mary*, which afforded me extraordinary consolation in the midst of all the above-mentioned troubles.

Gratias infinitas, immensas, aeternas, amantissimo Cordi Jesu et Mariae.

101. In the years 1674, 1675 and 1676 we gave several missions in the dioceses of Bayeux, Coutances, Lisieux, Evreux and Rennes. God lavished His choicest blessings upon them, particularly on the one that we gave at Saint Lô in 1676, our third time there, during which divine Bounty converted a considerable number of Huguenots.

Deo gratias et Mariae.

102. In the year 1676 Our Saviour bestowed upon me many painful crosses, for which may He be blessed for all eternity.

A very painful affliction turned into consolation. From the 25th of November, in the year 1673 to the 17th of June, 1679 I suffered a terrible affliction as the result of a thoroughly false calumny against me which had been implanted in the King's mind. It accused me of having presented a petition(43) to our Holy Father the Pope, requesting permission to render obedience to him *etiam in iis quae dubium movere possunt*;(44)which is something that has never entered my mind. Nevertheless, the King was persuaded to regard it as a crime, and this threatened to bring about the destruction of our Congregation. But God in His goodness prevented it, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, in the following manner. Having made a vow to God to dedicate one of the principal chapels of our church in Caen in honor of her Immaculate Conception, I received a letter three days later from His Lordship Claude Auvry, a former bishop of Coutances, addressed to(43). The Boniface Petition.- See note 39
(44). Even in matters that might raise doubts.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

313-

me at Caen on behalf of His Lordship the archbishop of Paris, and stating that the King had lost the unfavorable impression that he had been given of me, and that I should come to Paris to thank his Majesty. I went, and upon being presented to the King by His Lordship of Paris, I spoke to him as follows:

"Sire, I have come to your Majesty's feet to render you my most humble thanks for your kindness in granting me the honor and consolation of seeing you once more before I die, and to protest to you that there is no man in this world who has more zeal and fervor than I where your Majesty's Service and interests are concerned. This is the sentiment in which I desire to spend and use the little time left me in this life. I also beg of you most humbly, Sire, to honor us with your royal protection, and to continue to honor us with your graces and favors. This is what I hope from that wonderful benevolence which rejoices and delights the hearts of all who have the honor of speaking to your Royal Majesty, and which never fails to send them away filled with joy and comfort."

The King's reply. The King, having listened very attentively and with a kind expression, spoke to me in the following manner:

"I am very pleased to see you; I feel quite sure that you are doing a great deal of good in my Kingdom. Continue to work as you are doing. I shall be very pleased to see you again, and will help and protect you on whatever occasions may arise."

Those words of the King filled me with an inexpressible happiness. So it was, then, that after a desolation of six years' duration, the Father of Mercy and God of consolation deigned to dry my tears and change my most bitter anguish into unbelievable joy, for which may He be blessed and praised for all eternity, Immortal thanks and praises, too, be given the Mother of graces and blessings, through whose hands pass all the blessings that divine Bounty grants to us.

Another affliction.

103. On my return from Paris I developed a hernia as the result of the jolting of the coach in which I was riding, as it traveled along a very rocky road. This caused me a great deal of physical pain, but far

greater suffering of mind, inasmuch as it deprived me of the power to labor on missions for the salvation of souls.

Gloria tibi, Domine, qui natus es de Virgine.

104. In the year 1680, during the octave of the feast of Corpus Christi, God granted us the grace to convene the first general assembly of our little Congregation, with the purpose of electing someone to replace me, particularly after my death. Father Blouet de Camilly (45) was unanimously elected to be Superior General of the Congregation for life. This was a very great consolation to me, and all the greater because it has been preceded by very acute sorrow and anguish, for reasons I cannot record here.

Te Dominum Jesum laudamus, te Dominam Mariam, Matrem Jesu dignissimam, et Matrem nostram amantissimam, benedicimus. Nos cum Prole pia benedicat Virgo Maria.

105. Today, July 25th of the same year 1680, (46) God granted me the grace to finish my book, *The Admirable Heart of the Most Holy Mother of God*.

*O sacrosancta Trinitas, aeterna vita cordium, Cordis Mariae sanctitas: In corde regnes omnium.
Amen.*

(45). Father John James Blouet de Camilly, eldest son of James Blouet and Anne Le Haguais. Father Blouet entered the Congregation of Jesus and Mary on February 8, 1655, at the age of 23. He died on August 11, 1711. See Letter 11, note 2; also Letter 76, note 1.

(46). St. John Eudes died on August 19, 1680.

VOW(1)

or Prayer to Jesus, to offer himself as a sacrifice and victim to be immolated to His glory and pure love.

(1637) *Jesus, Mary*

O my most amiable Jesus, I adore Thee and glorify Thee endlessly in the most bloody martyrdom Thou didst suffer through Thy Passion and Cross.

I adore Thee and bless Thee with all my might in the state of offering and victim in which Thou art present in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar, where Thou art continually sacrificed for the glory of Thy Father and love of us.

I honor Thee and venerate Thee in the most sorrowful martyrdom suffered at the foot of Thy Cross by Thy Holy Mother.

I praise Thee and magnify Thee in the various martyrdoms of Thy saints who endured so many atrocious torments for love of Thee.

I adore and I bless all the thoughts, intents and infinite love Thou hast had from all eternity with regard to all the blessed martyrs who have been in Thy holy Church since the beginning and will continue to be there until the end of the world.

I adore and I venerate in every way I can Thy extreme desire and most ardent thirst to suffer and die in Thy members until the end of the world, in order to fulfill the mystery of Thy Holy Passion and glorify Thy Father through the way of suffering and death until the end of time.

In honor of and in homage to all these things, and in union with the boundless love in which Thou didst offer Thyself to the Father, from the first moment of Thy Incarnation, as a sacrifice and victim' in order to be immolated for His glory and for love of us through the most sorrowful martyrdom of the Cross; and also in union with the love of Thy Holy Mother and all Thy holy martyrs: I offer and aban

(1). It is interesting to note that John Eudes's saintly director, Father Charles de Condren, also took a vow of martyrdom. Cf. Emile Georges, *Saint Jean Eudes*, p. 39.

316-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

don myself, I vow and consecrate myself to Thee, O Jesus my Lord in the capacity of sacrifice and victim, that I may suffer in body and soul, according to Thy pleasure and with the help of Thy holy grace, all manner of pains and torments, and even shed my blood and sacrifice my life for Thee through any death pleasing to Thee; and this for Thy sole glory and for pure love of Thee.

I vow to Thee, O my Lord Jesus, never to revoke, that is, never to make a formal act of disavowal, of this my oblation, consecration and sacrifice of myself to the glory of Thy Divine Majesty. And should there arise an occasion on which I should have either to die or to renounce Thy holy faith, or else do something of consequence against Thy divine will, I make a vow and promise to Thee, as firm and constant as possible, while trusting in Thine infinite goodness and the help of Thy grace, to confess, acknowledge, adore and glorify Thee in the presence of everyone, at the price of my

blood, my life and all the martyrdoms and torments imaginable, and to suffer a thousand deaths, with all the tortures of earth and hell, rather than deny Thee or do anything serious that is contrary to Thy holy will.

O good Jesus, receive and accept this vow of mine and this sacrifice which I make to Thee of my life and my being in homage to and by the merits of the most divine sacrifice Thou didst make of Thyself to Thy Father on the Cross. Look upon me henceforth as an offering and victim dedicated to be wholly immolated to the glory of Thy holy name. Grant, through Thy great mercy, that my whole life may be a perpetual sacrifice of love and praise for Thee. Let me live a life that may perpetually imitate and honor Thine own holy life and that of Thy Blessed Mother and holy martyrs, that I may never pass a day without suffering something for love of Thee; and that I may die a death conformable to Thy holy death.

That is what I beg of Thee very humbly and earnestly, O most kind Jesus, by that ardent love which brought Thee to a death on the Cross for us, by that precious blood Thou didst shed, by that most sorrowful death Thou didst suffer, by the overwhelming love Thou didst bear for Thy most Holy Mother, the Queen of martyrs, by Thy love for all the holy martyrs and their love for Thee; in short, by all Thou dost love and all who love Thee, in heaven and on earth.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

317-

O Mother of Jesus, Queen of all martyrs, O ye holy martyrs of Jesus, implore this same Jesus, I beseech you, to effect these things in me, through His infinite goodness, solely for His glory and most pure love. Offer Him this vow of mine, and pray Him to confirm and fulfill it by virtue of His precious blood, just as I am about to sign it with my own blood in testimony of my desire to shed it even to the last drop for love of Him.

Done at Caen, in the Oratory of Jesus, this 25th day of March, 1637.(2)

JOHNEUDES.

Live Jesus and Mary, Whom I love more than my life.

Jesus, Mary

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried.

Amo te, amantissime Jesu, amo te, bonitas infinita: amo te ex toto corde meo, ex tota anima mea, et ex totis viribus meis, et magis atque magis antare Polo.

Beati qui ad coenam nuptiarum Agni vocati sunt! Beati qui laverunt stolas suas in sanguine Agni! Majorem charitatem nemo habet, quam ut animam suam ponat quis pro amicis suis. Amen.

Veni Domine Jesu. Jesus Maria. Jesu fortitudo Martyrum, miserere nobis. Regina Martyrum, Pea pro nobis. Omnes sancti Martyres, clarificate et orate Jesum pro nobis. Jesus Maria.

(2). The date is significant. St. John Eudes had been trained in the school of de Bérulle and de Condren, who held up the Incarnate Word as the perfect model of the Christian and the priest. In his spiritual classic, *The Kingdom of Jesus*, Part 1, P. 75, St. John Eudes explains that at the moment of His Incarnation Jesus Christ took a vow of obedience and martyrdom, thus offering Himself as a victim entirely immolated to the glory of His Eternal Father. It Was in memory of this vow that the

Saint choose the Feast of the Annunciation to consecrate his whole life to God as a victim to His glory and pure love. Cf. Georges, Op. Cit., P. 41

318 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

CONTRACT(1)

of Holy Matrimony with the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God.

(1668) *Jesus, Mary, Joseph*

O admirable and most amiable Mary, Mother of God, only Daughter of the eternal Father, Mother of the Son of God, Spouse of the Holy Ghost, Queen of heaven and earth, it is no wonder thou art willing to be the spouse of the least of all men and greatest of all sinners, Who had the boldness to choose thee from his tenderest years to be his most unparalleled spouse, and to consecrate his body, heart and soul wholly to thee. The truth is that thou dost wish to imitate the infinite goodness of thy Son Jesus Who is willing to be the spouse of a sinful and wretched soul. May all the angels, saints, creatures and the Creator Himself praise and bless thee eternally for it, and atone for all my countless acts of ingratitude and infidelity against thee.

Since thou hast already shown such great kindness, O most charitable of all creatures, deign to accept the conditions of our holy union which I am about to write down on this paper. It will serve as the contract, or rather, as a copy of the contract, of which I implore the Holy Spirit to be the notary, that He may record it in thy Heart and in mine in the golden and indelible letters of His pure love.

Whereas the husband is the head and superior of the wife, and whereas she is subject to his authority, I wish to respect and honor thee as my Queen and sovereign Lady, and I desire my whole being, with all its dependencies and appurtenances, to be fully subject to thy power, that thou mayest dispose of them all according to thy pleasure.

Whereas a portion of the wife's dowry remains in the hands of her husband-an arrangement popularly known as a changeable gift-who

(1). A somewhat similar fact is found in the life of St. Robert, Abbot of Citeaux. St. Edmund, Archbishop of Canterbury, once told his aunt that when he was very young he chose the Blessed Virgin Mary as his spouse and placed a gold ring on the finger of her statue in token of his promise.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

319 -

uses it as he deems best, I desire to appropriate and retain nothing of the dowry thou hast brought me, that is to say, the numberless graces and favors which the heavenly Father has granted me through thy intercession. I willingly surrender all claims to any advantage for my private interests, placing these graces in thy hands, together with all the fruits they have yielded, so that thou mayest return them to Him Who is their primary source, and to Whom alone may all glory for them be eternally rendered.

Whereas the wife, after her husband's death, retains only a portion of her wealth as her marriage settlement, it is my intention, O my most honored Lady, that all that I am, all of which I am capable, all that I possess in body and soul, nature and grace, all that I hope for in glory, and in general, all that belongs to me in either the spiritual or temporal order, or that depends on me in any

way whatsoever, be thine entirely and without reservation, that thou mayest do with them what thou wilt. But all that is nothing. O, had I a hundred million worlds, how gladly would I give them to thee, O my Holy Spouse! Truly, if through the impossible I were a divine being, like thy Son Jesus, I would give myself to thee with the utmost happiness, in union with the same love with which He gave Himself to thee.

Whereas the wife must conform to her husband and become like him, according to these divine words: *Faciamus homini adjutorium simile sibi*, (1) I desire with all my heart to strive to become like thee, O my Queen, through a careful imitation of thy holy life and eminent virtues. I beseech thee to use thy God-given power to destroy in me whatever may prevent my doing so, and to impress upon me a lively image and perfect likeness of thyself.

Just as husband and wife must live together in the same house, so also do I desire to dwell with thee in the most amiable Heart of Jesus, which is also thy Heart. Grant that I may never leave it, I beg of thee, but that I may have no other dwelling in time and in eternity.

Just as the wife is inseparable from her husband and is obliged to follow and accompany him everywhere, so also do I beseech thee, my all-good, to be ever with me, in all places, at all times and in all my
(1). Gen. 2, 18.

320 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

actions, that thou mayest guide and govern me in all things, according to the most adorable will of thy Son.

Just as the honor of the wife, which is her husband's glory, must be very dear and precious to him, so do I protest my desire to be especially fervent in honoring and having honor paid thee in every way I can, with the help of the grace of thy Son.

Just as husband and wife must love each other with a love that is sincere, constant and cordial, so have I every imaginable proof, O my all-lovable one, of thine incomparable affection for me; thou dost likewise behold the fires and flames, the sincerity and tenderness of my heart in thy regard. O my all-desirable Queen, what do I wish, what do I love, in heaven and on earth, after thy Jesus and mine, other than thee! O thou sole object of my heart, second only to my God, what would I not do and suffer for thy love! I know there is nothing more pleasing to thy Son and thee than to labor for the salvation of souls. Surely thou art aware of my feelings in that respect! O, that I had all the hearts of men and angels, with all the capacity to love which ever was and ever shall be, that I might avail myself of them to love Jesus, the Son of Mary, and Mary, the Mother of Jesus! But even then I should not be content. One must have the heart of a God in order to love worthily a God-Man and a Mother of God. Thanks be to Him, I have such a one, for, since Jesus has given Himself wholly to me, His Heart is consequently mine. Yes, the Heart of Jesus is my own heart. It is in the love of this Heart that I wish to love my most kind Saviour and His most amiable Mother, and that I desire to love them deeply, ardently, tenderly, solely and eternally. I wish to love only what they love, I hate only what they hate, rejoice over nothing save what affords them happiness, grieve over nothing except what displeases them. And I wish to find all my consolation and delight in thinking of them, conversing with them, speaking of them and hearing them spoken of, being active in their service, suffering for love of them, and dying ten thousand times, were it possible, for Jesus and Mary.

Just as husband and wife have a mutual obligation to aid and console each other in their infirmities, illnesses and afflictions, it is my desire to serve, help and console thee, according to the

power God has granted me, in the persons of the poor, sick and afflicted, in whom I shall see

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

321 -

thee as the mother in her children. I beseech thee, too, my all-gracious one, to help, protect and sustain me in my spiritual and corporal needs.

just as husband and wife should have but a single heart and soul, grant, O Queen of my heart, that I may have but one soul, one mind, one will and one heart with Thee. To that end, deprive me of my own heart and give me thine, according to thy word, that I may sing for all eternity:

*O qualis haec benignitas!
Ardens Mariae charitas
Meum sibi cor abstulit,
Suum mihi Cor praebuit.*

May this sacred Heart of my dearest Mary be the soul of my soul and the spirit of my spirit; may this amiable Heart be the principal of my life and all my thoughts, words, actions, feelings and affections; may I perform all my actions and bear all my trials and afflictions in the love, charity, humility, submission, patience and the other holy dispositions and intentions of this most holy Heart.

Just as the wife should redouble her care of her husband and her affection toward him during his last days and at the hour of his death, so also do I ask thee, O beloved of my soul, to be present and near me personally On my last day and during my final hour, according to thy promise, in order to defend me against the enemies of my salvation; to strengthen and comfort me; to prepare me for a holy death; to give me a share in the holy dispositions with which thou didst die; to receive my soul when it leaves my body; to lodge it within thy bosom and thy maternal Heart, for thou art the Mother and Spouse of my Jesus; to elevate it unto thyself in heaven, that there I may love, praise and glorify for ever the most Holy Trinity, together with thee and with all the angels and saints.

Just as the wife should care for the children that her husband has left her after his death, so do I beseech thee with all my heart, O my all-charitable one, to take very special care of all the spiritual children God has given me; they are thy children, too, since He has given them to me through thy intercession. I place them all, from this moment forward, in thy loving care, beseeching thee to preserve them so well

322 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

that not a single one may perish. I also place in thy blessed hands the Communities over which divine Providence has given me charge, or with which He has granted me a special bond of unity; and all those persons who have any friendship and charity toward me, or who have recommended themselves to my prayers, or to whom I have any obligation whatsoever, without forgetting those who have felt any hatred or aversion toward me, for whom I pray thee to ask pardon of divine Mercy.

But above all else, I recommend to thee most earnestly, O my loving Mother, the little Congregation of Jesus and Mary, which thy Son and thou have given me, entreating thee, O my Queen, by all the kindness of thy most benign Heart, to make up all my omissions in its regard; to annihilate anything that may obstruct the designs of God for it; to protect, bless and govern it in all things. Remember, O most kind and powerful Virgin, that thy Son Jesus is its Founder, Superior and Father; that thou art its foundress, superioress and mother; and that it is wholly dedicated and consecrated to thy most Holy Heart. Grant then, I beseech thee, that all the children of this Congregation may be true

children of thy Heart, and that to that end they may make a complete renunciation of their own wills in order to comply *everywhere* and in all things with the most adorable will of God. Expel all those who wish to live according to the desires of their own hearts, and do not allow anyone of that character to enter. Bless and favor in every way those who faithfully observe the rules which are established in this Congregation. Bless, too, with thy holiest blessings all who love and protect it. But most of all do I ask of thee, O my amiable Princess, that thou grant it a superior pleasing to thy Heart, who may make amends for the countless mistakes I have made in its regard, and who may rule it in thy spirit, which is the spirit of thy Son.

Those are the conditions of the contract of holy matrimony into which thou has desired me to enter with thee, O Queen of heaven, as with the most holy spouse of my spirit and heart. Once again I entreat thee to look with favor upon it and to sign it with the blood of thy virginal Heart, just as I am going to sign it with my own blood, in the ardent desire of affixing my signature with the last drop of my heart's blood. Grant that it may be accepted and signed by thy adorable

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

323-

Father, Who is also my Father; by thy Son Jesus, my Redeemer; by thy Spouse, the Holy Spirit; by thine own father, St. Joachim; by thy mother, St. Anne; by thy spouse, St. Joseph; and that thy good guardian angel St. Gabriel, my own guardian angel, St. John the Baptist, St. John the Evangelist, all the saints who had particular devotion for thee while they were on earth, and all the other angels and saints, may sign it as witnesses; and that the Holy Spirit may imprint thereon the eternal seal of His divine love. Amen, amen! So be it!

Dated at Caen, in the house of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary, on Saturday, this 28th day of April, 1668.

JOHN EUDES, missionary priest
of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary.

LETTER TO THE MOST HOLY VIRGIN

Most august Mother of God, most glorious Empress of heaven and earth, prostrate in mind and heart at the feet of thy Supreme Majesty, in all the humility, respect and devotion of all the hearts that love thee, and desiring that my mind, understanding, memory, will, heart, tongue, hand and pen may render thee all possible homage, I venture, though infinitely unworthy, to take the liberty of writing thee this letter, in imitation of others among thy children.

First of all, it is to protest to *thee*, in the face of heaven and earth, that I acknowledge and honor *thee* as the most worthy sanctuary of the Holy Trinity, the most worthy daughter of the eternal Father, the dearest Mother of His Son, the beloved Spouse of the Holy Spirit, the most powerful Queen of the universe, my sovereign Lady, my most honored Mother, and the holiest, wisest, sweetest, happiest and most beautiful, powerful, generous, compliant, glorious, admirable and amiable of all creatures.

Secondly, it is to offer *thee* all the respect, service, veneration, praise, honor and glory which are due to thy grandeurs, and have been and ever shall be rendered in all times past, present and yet to come.

Thirdly, it is to render thee all possible gratitude and thanksgiving

for the countless results of thine incomparable goodness toward me and all created things.

Fourthly, it is to ask pardon of thee most humbly and to make honorable amends for all my ingratitude, negligence and unfaithfulness toward thee, and for all the wrongs and offenses thou hast received from men and demons; and to offer thee, in supplement and reparation, the most amiable Heart of thy Son Jesus, all aflame with love for thee, together with all the love and honor which has been and ever shall be rendered thee in time and in eternity.

Fifthly, it is to beseech thee most humbly, by the most ardent love which thy Son Jesus bears thee, by that which thou bearest Him, and by all the kindness of thy maternal Heart, to obtain from Him pardon for me for all my sins, to atone for all my offenses against His Divine Majesty, to destroy within me all that is displeasing to Him, to establish perfectly in me the reign of His divine love and adorable will, to let me share with thee in all things, in whatever way is most pleasing to Him, to fashion me wholly after His Heart and thine, to give me knowledge, if such be His pleasure, of the time when He shall be pleased to call me unto Himself, to assist me at my death, to obtain the favor for me from my Saviour that my last breath may be an act of pure love for Him and thee, to receive my soul when it leaves my body, to present it to my Jesus, to lodge it in His Heart and thine, and to plunge, engulf and consume it in that fiery furnace of divine love for evermore.

These are the most humble and earnest prayers which I venture to offer thine incomparable benignity, O Mother of grace, not only for myself but for all thy children, with whom I desire to have but one heart and soul in order to live the same life and die the same death in the holy love of the most amiable Heart of Jesus and Mary, to whom and through whom I am,

Most august Mother of my God, most gentle Queen of my heart,
and most pious and good Mother of my soul, Thy Sovereign Majesty's Most humble, obedient,
grateful and sincerely devoted servant in all things,

JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF SAINT JOHN EUDES

(1671) Jesus, Mary

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and in honor of and union with the last will and testament made by my Jesus on the final day of His mortal life on earth, I am drawing up this will solely for the glory of my God, and in the following form:

1. I bequeath myself with all my heart to my Saviour, that I may unite myself with the perfect faith of His most Holy Mother, His Apostles, His saints and the entire Church; and in union with this faith, I protest before heaven and earth that I wish to die as a child of the Holy, Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church, and in the belief of all the Christian truths she teaches; and I offer myself to my God so that I may suffer, with the help of His grace, all imaginable torments and all possible deaths to that end.

2. With all my heart do I bequeath myself to the infinite love through which my Saviour died

on the Cross for me and for all men; and in union with this love, I accept and embrace my death, whenever and however it may please Him to send it, in honor of and thanksgiving for His holy death and that of His glorious Mother. I most humbly beseech Him, by the Holy Heart of this Blessed Mother, and by His own adorable Heart broken and shattered for love of us and by the sorrows of the Cross, to grant me the grace to die in His love, through His love and for love of Him.

3- Prostrate in spirit at the feet of all my brethren and all those persons to whom I have given any dissatisfaction or bad example, I ask pardon of them with my whole heart, entreating them to forgive me for the love of Our Lord, and to beg Him to show mercy to me.

4- With all my heart I bequeath myself to that boundless charity which prompted my Saviour, while He was hanging on the Cross, to offer this prayer to His eternal Father for those who were sacrificing Him: *Pater, dimitte illis, non enim sciunt quid faciunt.*(1) And in union (1). Luke 23, 34.

326 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

with this same charity, I say to my heavenly Father from the very bottom of my heart for all those who have offended me in any way whatsoever, provided, of course, it were at all possible to offend a wretched sinner like me: *Pater, dimitte illis, non enim sciebant quid faciebant.*

5. I declare that it is my intention to receive Holy Viaticum and the Sacrament of Extreme Unction. I beseech my dearest brethren to administer them to me while I still have the use of reason, and I give myself to my God in order to unite myself with all the holy dispositions with which any of the saints have ever received them. And should it come to pass that I am deprived of the last sacraments, I implore my most benign Redeemer to accomplish in me the purposes for which He instituted them, and to do so for His sole glory.

6. Should it happen that I lose my use of reason and exterior senses, I concur with my whole heart in all the acts of faith, hope, charity, humility, resignation, contrition and others which may be said for me, whether on earth or in heaven; and I beseech my dear brethren, my guardian angel, St. Michael, St. Gabriel, all the other angels, St. Joseph, St. Joachim, St. Anne, St. John the Baptist, St. John the Evangelist, St. Lazarus, St. Mary Magdalen, St. Martha, all the holy Apostles, martyrs, priests and virgins, all the holy innocents, all the saints in paradise, and in particular, my Blessed Mother, the most Holy Virgin, to supply my deficiencies, discharge all my duties toward God and perform for me all that will be most pleasing to His Divine Majesty. I also implore them to protest that I wish every throb of my heart and veins, and every breath, to be as so many acts of contrition, resignation, praise and love for my Creator and Saviour.

7- With all my heart do I will myself to the infinite love through which my Jesus gave His holy soul to His Father with these words: *Pater, in manus tuas commendo spiritum meum;*(2) and in union with this same love, I bequeath my own soul to the Father of mercy, the God of all consolation, with the same words: *Pater, in manus tuas commendo spiritum meum.* I place it also in the most amiable Heart of Jesus and Mary, that fiery furnace of eternal love, entreating them most (2). Luke 23, 46.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

327 -

humbly to embrace, consume and transform it into a very pure flame of that divine love.

8. If I had any desire, I should wish my body to be interred in our church at Caen, which is

consecrated to this same Heart of Jesus and Mary. But I abandon both my body and soul completely to the divine will, submitting myself most willingly to all it may be pleased to ordain in time and in eternity, joyfully consenting that my body be reduced to a powder, and that each grain of dust from it be a perfect act of adoration and praise for the mystery of the burial of my Saviour and His most Holy Mother.

9. I implore my dearest brethren to bury me in the little white habit of my loving Mother, including the white silk girdle and the heart bearing a red silk cross, as well as the alb I have marked for that purpose, together with the holy scapular, the holy rosary given me by Sister Mary des Vallées, the original of my last will and testament, of which this copy will survive, the *Contract of Marriage* that I made with the Blessed Virgin, and above all, the holy image which is fashioned in part from holy relics and is kept in a small niche of gilded copper.

to. To the fullest extent of my will do I give myself to that incomprehensible love through which my Jesus and my all-good Mother gave me their most amiable Heart in a special manner. In union with this same love, I bequeath this Heart (3) as something which belongs to me, and of which I can dispose for the glory of my God-I bequeath it, I repeat, to the little Congregation of Jesus and Mary to be the portion, the treasure, the chief patron, the heart, life and rule of the true children of this Congregation. In like manner do I offer and dedicate our Congregation to this divine Heart, to be consecrated to its honor and praise for time and eternity. I beseech and urge all my beloved brethren to strive to render It and have It rendered all the honor within their power; to celebrate with the most fervent devotion possible its feasts and

(3). This is noteworthy in view of the fact that St. John Eudes was the first to preach the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to the Holy Heart of Mary. He considers the Heart of Jesus and the Heart of Mary as belonging to him "in a special manner" and therefore leaves them to his spiritual sons and daughters as a priceless heritage. Cf. *The Sacred Heart of Jesus* (New York, 1946), p. XX.

328 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

Offices on the days indicated in our *Proper*, and to give exhortations on this subject in all their missions; to strive to impress on their hearts a perfect likeness of the virtues of this most Holy Heart, and to look upon It and to follow It as the pristine rule of their lives and conduct. I entreat them to give themselves to Jesus and Mary in all their actions and exercises in order to perform them in the love, humility and all the other dispositions of their Sacred Heart, so that, by this means, they may love and glorify God with a Heart truly worthy of God, *Corde magno et animo volenti*, and that they may be like unto the Heart of God and true children of the Heart of Jesus and Mary.

ii. I likewise bequeath this most precious Heart to all my dearest daughters, the religious of Our Lady of Charity, to the Carmelites of Caen, and to all my other spiritual children, particularly those who have a special love for their most unworthy Father, and whose names are written in the book of life. I give all of them, and each one individually, to this most kind Heart for the aforesaid intentions indicated in the preceding Article, and I promise them that, if my Saviour grants me forgiveness, as I hope from His infinite mercy and the incomparable charity of His Blessed Mother, I will take very special care of them in heaven. I hope that God may grant me the grace to assist them in their hour of death, in company with this most kind Virgin.

12. Prostrate at the sacred feet of my Jesus, Whom I adore as the Institutor, Founder, Superior and Father of our Congregation, as also at the feet of the Queen of heaven, whom I honor as the institutress, foundress, superioress and mother of that same Congregation, I implore them most humbly and earnestly, by their most benign Heart, and I ask all paradise to join in my prayer, to replace me with a man to govern it who will be pleasing to their Heart, make reparation for the

incomparable mistakes I have made in its regard, and guide it in their spirit. And because I know better than anyone else the qualities and dispositions of the members of the Congregation, I beg my dear brethren to approve of my telling them that there is no one indeed so well suited in every respect for this position as our dearest Brother . . .(4)

(4). There is a blank in the original manuscript. Father Costil in *Annales de la Congrégation de Jésus et Marie* says that the Saint undoubtedly had Father Blouet de Camilly in mind. Cf. Boulay, *Op. cit* , Vol. 4, P. 460.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

329-

13. I also ask them to regard the Rules and Constitutions which I leave them, as well as all the Offices and prayers which are found in the *Proper* and *Manual* of our Congregation, not at all as something proceeding from me, but as being given to them by the hand of Our Lord and His most holy Mother. I beg them to observe and practise the rule conscientiously for the love of Jesus and Mary, for I declare to them that the Son and the Mother will love, protect and bless in every way those who do so, and that they will deal with them in this world and in the next as true children of their Sacred Heart; but that they will refuse to consider as children of their Congregation, either in life or in death, those who despise or neglect these Constitutions or Offices.(5)

14. I bequeath my sacred, heart-shaped reliquary of silver, the one that I wear, to the sacristy of our house at Caen, to be inseparably attached to the image of the most Holy Virgin which is exposed on the altar whenever her Litanies are sung.

15. I bequeath my crucifix, which is filled with holy relics, to my successor, with the request that every morning and evening he perform the acts of devotion to the crucifix which are given in *The Kingdom Of Jesus*.(6)

16. I also leave to him the disposal of the other holy relics which I wear, and of those contained in the little chest in my room, near the window which overlooks the garden of the Reverend Jesuit Fathers, together with some medals which are kept there and in the drawer of my desk. Through his hands I bequeath them to whomever he distributes them.

17. I urge him, as well as all his successors, not to fail to pay an annual visit to all the houses of the Congregation, either in person, or through others when he cannot do so himself, and to observe in them everything that is indicated in the Constitutions.

18. I also request him to see that my *Sermons* are not scattered, but to have them bound in order to preserve them for the Congregation; and if there should remain some of the books I have written for the

(5). In Boulay's *Vie du Vénérable Jean Eudes*, Vol. 4, P 460, Article 13 has been replaced by Article 13, and vice versa.

(6). Part V, P. 238.

330-

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

good of souls, to have them printed, and even to arrange to have all my writings printed in one volume.

19. I beseech all the superiors of the Congregation to study and practise conscientiously the rules of their office, to speak unceasingly to their subordinates through their works and examples, and to guide them with all possible charity, meekness and kindness. And I conjure all true children of

the Congregation always to pay their superiors all the respect, affection and obedience due those who represent Our Lord Jesus Christ. For from these two duties of superiors and subordinates depends the preservation and entire happiness of the Congregation.

20. Having received outstanding aid in all my exterior needs for many years from our dear Brother Richard Le Moine,(7) I beg all my dear brethren, particularly him who will succeed me, to have toward him the same charity that they would have for me, if I were still of this world.

21. In conclusion, I bequeath myself with my whole heart to my dearest Jesus, that I may unite myself with all the holy dispositions with which He, His most Holy Mother and all the saints died, embracing for love of Him all the pains of mind and body which may be mine during my last days, protesting to Him that I wish my final breath to be an act of purest love for Him, and imploring Him to accept and reserve for my hour of death all the sentiments and acts of religion indicated in this paper.

This is my last will and testament. I very humbly implore my most amiable Saviour and His good Mother, by their most benign Heart, to be its executors, and to see that all the Articles contained herein are carried out in whatever way is most pleasing to the most adorable will of my God.

Amen, amen. Fiat, fiat. Veni, veni, veni, Domine Jesu.

Dated at Paris, this 24th day of April, 1671.

JOHN EUDES, missionary priest
of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary.
(7). Richard Le Moine: a lay brother who died in 1722.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

331 -

SUPPLEMENT

I should not wish to be guilty of extreme ingratitude toward my dearest daughter in Our Lord, and my eldest daughter, Anne Le Haguais, Madame de Camilly. It was she with whom our dearest brother, Father de Than, associated himself in the foundation of our house at Caen, and very justly so, for God gave her a maternal affection for the whole Congregation, and particularly for that house which she benefited in every way possible. Therefore I implore all my dear brethren to regard and honor her in that capacity, and to render her, during her lifetime and after her death, all that is due the foundress and mother of a Congregation. I am giving her something which is very precious to me - a small image of the Blessed Virgin that I wear around my neck in a little silver case, which also contains a fragment of the true Cross. This image was given me from the same Virgin as a token of the special union which she granted me the privilege of forming with her.

Dated at Paris, this 1st day of May, 1672.

JOHN EUDES, missionary priest.

DONATION OF HIS HEART AND REVOCATION

St. John Eudes had requested that his heart be given, after his death, to the house of Our Lady of Charity; and in addition to having indicated this desire in his last will and testament, he had entrusted to the nuns a document on this subject signed by his hand, the text of which follows:

In the year 1678, on the 13th day of January, I gave my heart to my beloved daughters in Our Lord, the religious of Our Lady of Charity who are established at Caen, to be interred in their monastery there. Such is my will which I desire to be carried out, and I request the priests

332 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

of our seminaries to do so. In testimony whereof I have affixed my signature,

JOHN EUDES, missionary priest of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary.

He revoked the aforesaid donation by crossing out that Article in his will and leaving to the seminary the following statement:

I hereby revoke the gift which I made of my heart to the religious of Our Lady of Charity, desiring that my body and heart be interred together in our church of the most amiable Heart of Jesus and Mary. Dated at Caen, this 18th day of September, 1678.

JOHN EUDES, missionary priest of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary.

PRAYER TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

To give thanks to her, to "commend to her care the Congregation at Jesus and Mary, and to ask of her a good and holy death.(1)

O great and most amiable Mary, most august Empress of the universe, most holy and worthy Mother of my God, behold me prostrate at thy feet to ask pardon very humbly of thee for having dared to undertake, through an excessive audacity, to record in this little book the ineffable perfections and incomprehensible excellences of thine admirable Heart. What is this compassionate Heart, save an impenetrable abyss of grace and holiness, an immense world of unrivalled wonders and an infinitely exalted heaven of incomparable glories and grandeurs? And what am I, save an infinitesimal atom, an abyss of wretchedness and darkness, the nonentity of nonentities? Is it not prodigious temerity for a puny earthworm like me to dare lift my eyes toward heaven to gaze upon the foremost, the worthiest and the most brilliant object of

(1). This Prayer forms the conclusion of the *Admirable Heart of Mary*. It contains interesting biographical details and resembles a last will and testament. For that reason we print it here.

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS 333

the infinite love of the three adorable Persons of the most Holy Trinity?

But how can I close my ears to so many millions of voices which incessantly cry out to me that I am a monster of ingratitude if I do not render the thanks I owe my sovereign Princess for the many favors that I have received and am constantly receiving from the inconceivable kindness with which her most generous Heart is filled toward the least of all men?

For, first of all, is it not true, O Holy Virgin, that after God I should respect and honor thee as my true Mother to whom I owe my birth, my being and my life, and without whom I should still remain in the nothingness from which I should never have emerged? For this reason I have as many obligations toward thee as there are advantages attached to existence and to the life of a reasonable and Christian creature.

Secondly, how great is my debt to thee, O Mother of goodness, for having given me a father and

a mother who exercised great care to rear me, by the good example of their lives and their holy instructions, in the fear of God and the spirit of Christianity?

How greatly am I indebted to thee for having inspired them to place me under the discipline and guidance of the holy Society of Jesus, in the city of Caen, and for having admitted me into thy Sodality which is truly a school of virtue and piety, under the direction of the same Society? And this, indeed, O Mother of grace, was one of the greatest graces I have ever received from my God through thy intercession. .

Here is another very special grace. It is that, in order to snatch me from a manifest danger which would have caused my downfall, thou didst enlist me in the Congregation of Jesus and Mary, established by thee and thy beloved Son in the holy Church for two ends of the greatest importance and usefulness to that same Church, namely: to attend to the functions of ecclesiastical seminaries and to the exercises of missions. And God has granted me the grace, through thy mediation, O Mother of mercy, to devote myself unceasingly for nearly forty years to the functions of these same seminaries, and for nearly sixty years to the exercises of missions, with the very abundant blessings which divine Bounty has showered upon my meager efforts through

334 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

thy sacred hands, for the saints assure us that no grace descends from heaven to earth without passing through those blessed hands.

I have no words at all to express the infinite excellence of the incomprehensible favor thou didst grant us, my brethren and me, in bestowing upon us the adorable Heart of thy beloved Son, along with thine own all-loving Heart, to be the heart, life and living rule of our Congregation.

I must not omit mention of the great favor with which the Sovereign Priest, thine only Son and my Saviour, deigned to honor me through thy intercession, when He granted me a share in His divine priesthood, which is a grace in a certain sense infinite, and which comprises an infinity of others, such as the power to consecrate on the holy altar His adorable Body and precious Blood; the power to offer Him to God as a sacrifice, as He offered Himself to the Father on Calvary; the power to give Him to the faithful in the Holy Eucharist; the power to annihilate all the sins of earth and hell if they were in one soul; the power to bind and loose, to absolve and condemn, to reconcile sinners with God, to open heaven and close hell; the power to spread the Holy Gospel, preach the divine word and propagate the admirable light of faith throughout the world; the power, finally, to confer upon Christians the divine Sacraments of the Church, which are the inexhaustible sources of the graces acquired for us by our Redeemer through His precious blood.

I do not even mention the light thou wert pleased to give me so that I might bring into existence this small undertaking, together with other similar ones preceding it, in which there is no favor which does not proceed from the Father of wisdom and from that admirable Star who for our sakes brought forth the Sun of justice.

What shall I say of an infinity of other benefits which I have received from the generosity of my God through thy intercession, O admirable Mother? How many sins have I committed for which thou hast obtained pardon for me? How many others should I have committed if thou hadst not preserved me from them?

How often have I seen myself on the brink of hell, in obvious danger of falling therein but for thy most benign hand which saved me?

How often would the roaring lion from hell, who prowls about un

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

335 -

ceasingly in all directions seeking to devour the souls redeemed by the precious blood of thy Son, have swallowed up and devoured my own soul, had not the admirable charity of thy Heart opposed it?

Alas! Without thee, my dearest and all-good Mother, where should I be today? I should be in the fiery furnace of hell from which I should never emerge.

Oh, what a profusion of kindnesses! What an excess of mercy! What incomprehensible obligations I have toward the incredible charity of thy most benign Heart O, what immense graces, infinite graces, eternal graces Let all the spirits, all the tongues and hearts of heaven and earth praise, glorify and love thee eternally in my name!

But the grace of graces, the favor of favors, is the great multitude of crosses which my most adorable Crucified has bestowed upon me on thy behalf, for which may He be praised and glorified for evermore.

Now are not all these graces, not to mention a million others, as so many voices continually preaching the respect, veneration and gratitude I should have for that most august Heart, of which I have infinite reason to say what St. John Chrysostom said of the heart of St. Paul-that it is for me a fountain of countless blessings: *Fons innumerorum bonorum*? Yes, indeed, the most kind and benign Heart of the Mother of my Jesus is for me an immense source of all sorts of inconceivable blessings, graces and favors. That is what I should and wish to proclaim openly, wherever I may be. It is what compels me to bring forth this little work, that those who take the trouble to read it may be aroused and animated to praise, bless and glorify with me this most worthy Heart as the holiest, noblest and most generous, royal, magnificent and amiable of all hearts, second only to the adorable Heart of Jesus.

Finally, my most kind Mother, I have received so many favors from thy maternal Heart that I can truthfully say that they surpass in number the hairs of my head.

But I have still two favors to ask of thee which will crown all the others. For I possess overwhelming confidence in the unrivalled charity of thine admirable Heart that my infinite unworthiness will not prevent thee from granting me these two things.

336 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

The first is that thou look with favor, my dearest Mother, upon my giving to thee, or rather, my returning to thy hands, the little Congregation of Jesus and Mary which thou wert pleased to give me through an excess of thine inexplicable goodness. Thou knowest that I have offered, given and consecrated it to thee hundreds and hundreds of times during my life; but now I wish to give it to thee incessantly and for all eternity, in union with the incomprehensible love with which the only Son of God gave Himself to thee for evermore. Avail thyself of thy sovereign God-given power in order to take full, absolute and eternal possession of it. Give it wholly to thy Son Jesus; pray Him to annihilate therein all that is displeasing to Him; to establish perfectly in it the reign of His holy love and His adorable will; to fill it with His divine spirit, His spirit of humility, submission, charity, purity, zeal for the glory of God, hatred for sin, love for the Cross, the abnegation of the aged, and a great detachment from and scorn for the world and all the things of this earth; to protect, sustain and defend it against those who would thwart it; to give it a great number of evangelical laborers who may

devote themselves to the training and instruction of holy priests and good pastors through the exercises of seminaries, and who may work efficaciously for the salvation of souls through missions. Finally, may He dispose of it entirely according to His Heart, together with all His children in general and each one individually; and may He accomplish in it all the designs of His goodness, at all costs, annihilating us rather than permitting us to place any obstacle in its way because of our sins.

I also offer thee, O most sacred Mother of God, all the founders, benefactors and friends of this little Congregation, beseeching thee very humbly to preserve, bless and sanctify them, to place them in the ranks of the children of thy Heart and to let them feel the effects of this holy prayer which we offer for them several times a day: *Retribuere dignare, Domine, omnibus nobis bona facientibus, propter nomen tuum, vitam aeternam. Amen.* O Lord, be pleased to grant eternal life, for the love of Thy Holy Name, to all our friends and benefactors.

The second favor I ask of thee, O Mother of goodness, is to look upon me always as a true child of the ineffable goodness of thy most

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

337 -

Holy Heart, even though I am infinitely unworthy of my heritage. For it is not a pretended or imaginary thing, but a real and established truth, that thou gavest me birth and life through a certain and unquestionable miracle, following the vow made to God by my father and mother, who were without children and unable to have any, that they might obtain this favor through thy intercession. When this vow was followed by the fulfillment of their desire, they took me, while I was yet in my mother's womb, into a holy chapel dedicated to thy name under the title of *Our Lady of Recovery*, in order to give thanks to thee for the favor thou hadst granted them, and to offer and consecrate me to my Creator, as well as to her through whose intercession He had called me into being. Look upon me, therefore, and treat me, O most amiable Mother, as the fruit and the child of the wonderful charity of thy Holy Heart, and do not allow me to degenerate from such a noble birth. Impress upon my heart and my life the likeness and resemblance of the holy virtues which reign in the Heart and life of my heavenly Mother, from which, alas! I am infinitely removed. But above all, I implore thee, by all the mercies of thy benign Heart, to obtain for me from divine Clemency complete pardon and general remission of my numberless sins, offenses and negligences, and to help and protect me with extraordinary bounty in my last days and in my final hour.

Alas! thou knowest, O Mother of grace, that human weakness and wretchedness is so great that there is not a man in the world who, after having struggled with the infernal powers for eighty or a hundred years, would not be capable of succumbing to them and losing his salvation in the last hour of his life. Have pity on me, then, O Mother of goodness: *Tu mea maxima fiducia, tu ratio spei meae.* I have the greatest confidence in thee, who art, after God, the principal foundation of my hope. Do not permit the enemies of my salvation to have any advantage over thy poor son: *Nequando dicat inimicus meus: praevalui adversus eum.* But grant, through thy powerful intercession, that all the moments of life still remaining to me may be entirely and solely consecrated to the glory of my Saviour and the honor of my Holy Mother; that all my thoughts, words and actions, every breath,

338 -

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

every throb of my heart and veins, all the functions of the faculties of my soul, and every use of my interior and exterior senses may be a perpetual exercise of praise and love for my most adorable Jesus and my most amiable Mother.

O most kind Mother, obtain for me from my God that *moriatur anima mea morte Justorum et*

fiant novissima meorum similia; that I may die the death of the just, that is, the holy death of the King and Queen of the just, who are Jesus and Mary, and of those of whom the Holy Ghost says: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord"; and that I may die in the holy interior and exterior dispositions in which they died.

Let me die pronouncing these words which my Redeemer spoke on the Cross, and while giving myself to Him in order to say them in the holy dispositions with which He uttered them: Pater, in manus tuas commendo spiritum meum.

Let me die in the faith of all the holy martyrs, with complete confidence in the immense mercy of my Redeemer and the unparalleled kindness of His Most Holy Mother and mine; and with perfect charity toward my neighbor.

Let me die in the spirit and in the sentiments of humiliation, contrition and penance with which my loving Savior bore my sins during His Sacred Passion and Death.

Let me die with these divine words in my heart and on my lips: "Jesus, Mary"; and let me pronounce them in union with all the love which ever has been, is now and ever shall be in all hearts which love Jesus and Mary.

Let me die in the love, through the love and for the love of my Jesus, and let my last breath be an act of purest love through which I may offer and sacrifice myself of my own accord to my God, in union with that same love with which my Redeemer offered and immolated Himself on the Cross to His Father for love of me.

In conclusion, with all my heart do I give my soul, O Mother of love, in union with the same love by which my Saviour gave thee His at the moment of His Incarnation. Do thou preserve it as something which is wholly thine; receive it into thy most sacred hands when it

LETTERS AND SHORTER WORKS

339-

leaves my body; harbor it in thy maternal Heart; present and give it to thy beloved Son, that He may place it in the ranks of those who will love and bless Him for all eternity with thee and with all the angels and saints in that blessed eternity, O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria, vita, dulcedo et spes mea charissima.

LIVE JESUS AND MARY

