

Selected **LETTERS**  
from the Correspondence of  
**Saint Anthony Mary Claret**

Volume I: Letters of 1832-1857

Translated from the Original Languages  
with Notes and Comments

by

**Joseph C. Daries, CMF**

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## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

### Translator's Note

#### ***Background of the Present Edition***

In December 1975, the translator finished his English version of the *Autobiography* of Saint Anthony Claret, based mainly on the edition of Fr. José María Viñas: *San Antonio María Claret: Escritos autobiográficos y espirituales* (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos [BAC], 1959). Almost fifteen years and many books later, he completed a translation of the Saint's *Autobiographical Documents, Retreat Resolutions, Spiritual Notes* and *Lights and Graces*, based on Fr. Jesús Bermejo's edition of *San Antonio María Claret: Escritos autobiográficos*, (Madrid: BAC, 1981) and of Claret's *Selected Spiritual Writings*, based on Fr. Bermejo's edition of *San Antonio María Claret: Escritos espirituales* (Madrid: BAC, 1985). The *Selected Spiritual Writings* were published by *Claretian Publications* (Quezon City, Philippines, 1991), who also published the *Selected Autobiographical Documents* in 1995. Now, convinced of the need for an English translation of more Claretian *primary sources*, and inspired by Fr. J. Bermejo's projected one-volume selection, he has tried his hand at translating a selection of letters considerably longer than that of Fr. Isidro Muñoz in the 1959 edition of the Saint's writings, but much shorter than Fr. José María Gil's three-volume critical edition of the Saint's correspondence, *Epistolario Claretiano* (vols. 1-2, Madrid: Coculsa, 1970, and vol. 3., Madrid: *Publicaciones Claretianas*, 1987). It is hoped that the present selection, for all its shortcomings, may be of use to those who cannot read the Saint's letters in Castilian or Catalan, and that it may move other more capable hands to prepare a better edition of this precious part of the Claretian spiritual heritage.

#### ***Brief Historical Background***

It is impossible to grasp the full import of Claret's activities and writings without at least a rudimentary notion of the turbulent historical milieu into which he was born. For a non-Spaniard, it takes no little effort to contextualize the Saint adequately -- rather like as-

sembling a graduated series of interlocking Chinese boxes or Russian dolls. To do so one must place Claret's small-town beginnings within the larger context of a long-oppressed Catalonia; then one must place Catalonia within the larger context of a Spain fallen from the glories of the House of Habsburg into the decline of the House of Bourbon; then one must place Spain within the still-larger context of a collapsing colonial empire. The American and French Revolutions were in the immediate past, and more revolutions --military and political, industrial and technological, scientific and religious, social and economic-- were either in mid-course or yet to come.

When Anthony Claret was born, the Spanish Bourbons were in a bad way. Carlos III, perhaps the ablest of that family, had died some twenty years earlier. In 1788, the year before the outbreak of the French Revolution, he was succeeded by one of the most inept Spanish monarchs, his forty-year-old son, Carlos IV, a weak man dominated throughout his reign by others: by his late father's minister of state, Count Floridablanca (1728-1808); by his own meddling and power-hungry wife, Maria Luisa of Parma (1751-1819); and finally, by the king's false friend and the false queen's favorite, Manuel Godoy (1767-1851).

After the leaders of the French Revolution imprisoned Louis XVI, Leopold of Austria and Frederick of Prussia agreed to oppose the Revolution and restore Louis to the throne. Floridablanca wanted Spain to join them in this endeavor, but Queen Maria Luisa, who wanted total control, ousted Floridablanca, replaced him for a short time with the anti-war Aranda, only to replace him in turn with her own favorite, Godoy, who in December of 1792, at the age of 25, became prime minister and principal spokesman of the pro-war stance against the French Convention. The Convention (1792-95), led by Robespierre, Marat and Danton, replaced the National Assembly and during a reign of terror beheaded Louis XVI on 21 January 1793.

When the French Convention declared war on Spain, Spanish troops crossed into France and soon conquered most of the once-Catalan region of Roussillon, except for Perpignan. But the tide soon turned in favor of the French, who took a number of northern towns in Catalonia, and even invaded the Navarrese and Basque Provinces, although they were repulsed. At the Peace of Basel (1795), the French Republic returned to Spain the northern cities it had occupied, while Spain ceded to France the Spanish part of the Isle of Santo Domingo. This treaty was deemed quite favorable to Spain and won for Godoy the fulsome, almost blasphemous, title of 'Prince of Peace.' But matters soon began to work out poorly for Spain.

In 1796, Carlos IV, offended by the high-handed conduct of England, entered into an ill-fated alliance with France at a time when Napoleon Bonaparte had already begun his meteoric rise to power. As a result of this anti-British alliance, the navy and treasury of Spain suffered greatly. The Spanish fleet was routed by the British under Nelson at Cape St. Vincent. Cádiz was subjected to a seven-day bombardment. Nelson, who planned to take Santa Cruz in Tenerife and actually landed there, was repulsed by the militia and the peasantry, losing an arm in battle. The bad outcome of this war, the growing deficit in the Spanish treasury, as well as increasing rumors about the Queen and her favorite, raised a storm of protest against Godoy, who in 1798 had to be replaced for a time. Pope Pius VI died in 1799, and the anti-Catholic radical, Mariano Luis de Urquijo, who had replaced Godoy in government, attempted among other things to set up a schismatic Church. In Venice, on 14 March 1800, Luigi Chiaramonti was elected as Pope Pius VII. In part, his bitter complaints to Carlos IV over the disastrous state of the Church in Spain (although the machinations of an offended Napoleon played a larger role in the matter), led to the ouster of Urquijo and the return to power of Alvarez Godoy in May of that year.

As Spain continued in its disastrous alliance with France, the enemies of the latter, taking advantage of Napoleon's absence in Egypt, carried out some reprisals against the French Republic, which involved further setbacks for Spain. In February of 1801, the Peace of Lunéville between France and Austria marked the virtual destruction of the Holy Roman Empire. In March of that year Spain formally agreed to cede Louisiana to France. At this time only Portugal continued in alliance with England. To remove Portugal from the sway of the English, Bonaparte coaxed Carlos IV into war with Portugal. After a farce of a war in which the forces of the militarily inept Godoy (now back in power) were pitted against the ill-led forces of Portugal (which had appealed in vain to the English, who were busy elsewhere), Portugal agreed to close its ports to England and ceded Olivenza to Spain.

The rise of Napoleon Bonaparte (who was about to place his usurping brother Joseph on the Spanish throne) was a present reality and his fall (though not yet predictable) was on its way. The War of Spanish Independence was a bright moment of united resistance against the foreign invader. But the hopes that arose with the new Constitution of 1812, were dashed in 1814 on the return to Spain of the exiled king, the inept and high-handed Ferdinand VII, who proceeded to abolish the Constitution. Ferdinand's fourth wife, Maria Cristina, gave birth to a surviving daughter, Isabel, in 1830. When

Ferdinand died in September of 1833, this daughter was proclaimed Queen Isabel II, under the regency of Maria Cristina. This proclamation was to be fraught with terrible consequences for Spain.

According to the ancient laws of Castile and León, women could rule in their own right, but this right had been abrogated by the first of the Spanish Bourbons, Felipe V, in 1713. His wishy-washy grandson, Carlos IV, had reverted to the ancient position in 1789, but as his decree had never been published, its validity was now hotly contested, especially by Ferdinand's younger brother, Don Carlos Maria Isidro. Don Carlos was an extreme reactionary, and his clash with Maria Cristina threw the latter into arms of the liberals. The first Carlist War (1833-39) broke out almost immediately, and the Carlist movement was to be a disruptive factor in Spanish history for more than half a century.

All of these events had their impact on the Saint's life and activities, and he in turn played no small part in shaping the life of Spain and of the Church in his day. A more detailed sketch of this historical background is supplied below, both in a brief introductory chronology and in Introductory Notes to each Letter.

The *Correspondence* of Saint Anthony Mary Claret is a primary source for the study of the great Catalan Apostle and Saint of the 19th Century. His entire adult life (1832-1870) in all its inward and outward complexity is reflected in his letters. In them we find a fuller picture of the development of several of his important enterprises (which he often had to conduct across great distances) and to catch something of the breathtaking pace of his all-consuming apostolic ministry. In them we also glimpse Claret's personality in the sort of psychological detail that only surfaces when one is writing to intimate friends. They show us the vigor of his spirit of faith, prayer, love for the Church and utter obedience to his superiors, as well as his loyalty to friends, his wisdom as a counselor, and his heroism in facing stiff opposition. They reveal him to be a man of the Spain, Cuba and Europe of his day, and offer us fresh insights into the web of contemporary historical events he was caught up in, which, given the limitations both of the man and of his era, are notable for their impartiality and realism.

## 1. An Overall View of the Correspondence

In 1970, coinciding with the centenary of the Saint's death, Fr. Joseph M<sup>a</sup> Gil, then Archivist General of the Claretian Congregation,

brought out his monumental two-volume, annotated edition of Claret's correspondence, *El Epistolario de San Antonio María Claret* (Madrid: Cocusa, 1970). Volume I (1847 pp.) contains the correspondence of 1832-58; Volume II (1598 pp.), that of 1859-70. Together, these volumes hold some 1459 authenticated letters, each with an introductory description and summary, along with some very helpful critical footnotes. These two volumes will be referred to hereinafter as *EC I* and *EC II*. Most of the explanatory material in Gil's work is taken from another large work, Fr. Cristóbal Fernández' *El Beato Padre Antonio María Claret: Historia documentada de su vida y empresas* (Madrid: Cocusa, 1946), vol. I (1065 pp.) and vol. II (930 pp.), hereinafter referred to as *HD I* and *HD II*. In a sense, *EC* and *HD* "belong together," both because *HD* relied heavily on Claret's correspondence for its data, and because it represented the readiest source of citations from Claret's letters until the publication of Fr. Jose María Viñas' edition of *San Antonio María Claret: Escritos autobiográficos y espirituales* (Madrid: B.A.C., 1959), hereinafter referred to as *EAE*, which included a selection of 92 letters with introductions and notes by Fr. Isidro Muñoz (*EAE* pp. 789-925). In the years following the publication of *EC I-II*, some 300 new letters were discovered, as well as a number of originals that had heretofore been known only in copies. These were published in 1987 as the third volume of the *Epistolario de San Antonio María Claret* (Madrid: Publicaciones Claretianas, 1987). Like its predecessors, *EC III* (926 pp.) was prepared by Fr. Gil, but unlike them, it omits the heavy comments from *HD* in favor of terser introductory notes. Most of the notes given here and throughout the work are from Fr. Gil, though a few are indebted to Fr. Muñoz. Further (and much more useful) insights are to be found in Fr. Jesús Bermejo's *Epistolario Pasivo de S. Antonio María Claret: Vol. I, 1838-1857* (Publicaciones Claretianas: Madrid 1992), a collection of letters sent by others to the Saint, which shed light on many points in his own letters.

It is impossible to establish the exact number of letters that Saint Anthony Mary Claret wrote. In the first place, the circle of his acquaintance was so large that many of his letters were bound to be lost in the normal course of events. In the second place, it is quite likely that many of those still extant are for all practical purposes "lost" in the unexplored depths of public and private archives. In the third place, we know that a great many of them were destroyed during various political upheavals in Spain. During the violence of the *setmana tràgica* ("tragic week") of Barcelona in 1909, more than two hundred originals --along with the manuscripts of the Saint's *Sermón*

*de la Luz* preached at Manresa in 1844, and the original Castilian version of his *Selfishness Overcome* written in Rome in 1869-- were consigned to the flames. It is even more difficult, perhaps, to assess the number of letters and other priceless original manuscripts that were lost during the Spanish Civil War of 1936-39. Fr. John Postius drew up a detailed list of the known losses, including most of the holdings of the *Arxiu Pairal* (Paternal Archives) of Vic, of the Archives and Libraries of the Claretian Province of Catalonia, of Fr. Jacint Blanch (the Vicepostulator of the Cause of Claret's Beatification), and above all, of the "Claretian Treasury" in the General House on Buen Suceso Street in Madrid, which still had a large collection even after the removal of the Claretian General Government to Rome in 1934.

The testimony of Señor Lafuente, a friend of the Saint, gives us some notion of the volume of Claret's correspondence during the heyday of his ministry:

He once told me that, estimating the number of letters he received from one day to the next, they came to about a hundred per day. Finally he had to be satisfied with opening only certain special ones, since it would have taken him all day just to read them, and it would have been physically impossible to answer all of them (*HD II*, p. 726).

In contrast, during the last two years of his life, when he was in exile in Paris and Rome, the Saint hardly received any letters. As his longtime friend Fr. Peter Naudó wrote him:

It doesn't surprise me that Your Excellency receives no letters from friends, because of the hatred that this sad lot [the revolutionary government] feels toward you. For I have no doubt that the postal service either opens their letters or does not allow them to pass. Hence I am availing myself of the services of my nephew, Xifré, to get this letter through to you (*HD II*, p. 781).

People had to use the same caution in writing *about* the Saint. Fr. Dionisio González de Mendoza refers to him as "the other" in letters to his own brother, Ildefonso (*ibid.*).

The first thing one notes about these letters is their *variety*, not only as to the different kinds of persons to whom they are addressed, but also as to the gamut of subjects they deal with.

As to the variety of his addressees, their number as well as their social diversity is striking. On the one hand, there are letters to the Pope, the Queen, Papal Nuncios, several Spanish Bishops, Cuban civil authorities, as well as leading figures in the Spanish government, the nobility and intellectuals of his day. On the other hand, there are many letters to modest families and lesser clergy who had become his

friends during his early days as an itinerant missionary in Catalonia. With this latter group, he expresses his affections in an admirably forthright manner.

His closest collaborators hold an outstanding place in his correspondence: Don Dionisio González de Mendoza, Fr. Paladio Currius, Canon (later Bishop) Joseph Caixal and, above all, Fr. Joseph Xifré, the Director General of his Missionaries. In this connection, although the Saint had to leave his beloved Congregation of Missionaries an orphan almost from its birth, he never ceased to follow its development closely, constantly advising its Director General on all matters of governance, however small, on which the latter consulted him.

Besides variety, another characteristic that distinguishes Claret's correspondence is its *brevity*. He himself makes frequent excuses, either for not writing at all or for not writing at greater length, because of the little time his uninterrupted work left him. But what his letters lack in length, they more than make up for in vividness -- another of the outstanding traits of his epistolary style, as we shall see.

Although the letters are often so spontaneous and multifaceted as to defy classification, we may group them for convenience sake into four main categories:

1) *Business Letters*. Saint Anthony Mary Claret was a remarkably matter-of-fact man. His correspondence is not characterized by long chains of argument, but by short and sure solutions to the thorniest problems. When he answers a letter, he is less interested in general ideas than in a point-by-point response to each inquiry made by his correspondent. For example, in a letter addressed to Canon Caixal he remarks:

As to the response on Lárrega, I must tell you that whenever I answer a letter, I am fully aware of the ultimate implications of the issues it contains. Hence, if I don't answer immediately, it's either because I don't know what to answer, or because I don't think it is prudent to answer at the moment (9/1/1849: *EC I*, p. 311)

Nevertheless, his business letters are the very opposite of dry and formal office memos. He always adds some intimate aside, some interesting detail or exhortation. The way he handles even the most prosaic matters always reveals something of his supernatural spirit, his flexibility, his delicate prudence or decisive energy.

This forms the most numerous group of his letters. In them we glimpse something of the complexity of his undertakings and activities. Notable among them are the letters addressed to Canon Caixal touching on the affairs of the Religious Library or on the publication

of some of his shorter works, and those to Don Dionisio González on matters relating to the management of the educational complex at El Escorial, but above all those he wrote to Fr. Joseph Xifré concerning the Congregation of Missionaries, Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

2) *Personal and Friendly Letters*. This group of letters, though less numerous than the preceding one, is the most interesting psychologically and spiritually, because of the variety of situations it deals with. His letters of condolence contain a veritable anthology of the most varied thoughts on the Christian meaning of death. Other letters console and encourage friends who are facing lesser misfortunes. Still others are simply personal answers to letters from close friends. In these it is interesting to note how he reveals more or less of his inner self to others, depending on the degree of confidence he has in them.

3) *Official Letters*. These include letters to the Pope, the Queen and various civil authorities, both in Cuba and in Spain. Even within the formal and impersonal protocol imposed by such letters, Saint Anthony Mary Claret always manages to express himself personally. Thus, in his letters to the Pope, he enthusiastically conveys his complete personal adherence and submission to the Holy Father's person and intentions. Writing (at great length) to civil authorities in Cuba, he uses some of his strongest and most vivid expressions to impress on them the urgency of the religious situation of the territory and to win their cooperation.

4) *Letters of Spiritual Direction*. As a general rule Claret was unwilling to undertake the spiritual direction of others, especially by way of correspondence, since this would have interfered too much with his missionary availability. Nevertheless, he did not refuse outright to give spiritual direction even by mail, if he was convinced that it was God's will. We should be thankful that a number of these letters have survived --although they are the least numerous of the four groups we have mentioned-- since they afford us some precious insights into Claret's undoubted gifts as a spiritual director. Among those who received written spiritual direction from the Saint, we might single out the following:

a) MEN

*Bishops*, such as Don Bienvenido Monzón, Archbishop of Granada; Don Fernando Blanco, Bishop of Avila; Don Bernardino Conde, Bishop of Plasencia, etc.

*Priests*, such as the Dean of the Spanish Rota, Don José Fernández Montaña; Don Juan Guitard, Director General of the Court



of Mary in Perpignan and Knight of the Holy Sepulchre; Don José Mazzarasa, Rector of the Seminary of León; Don Francisco Medranda, etc.

*Laymen*, such as the Marquis del Arco, Don Joaquín de Isla Fernández; Don Crispulo Ruiz, Administrator of the Marquis de Perales; Dr. González Mellado (cf. *Informative Process of Madrid*, sess. 8); Licenciado Julio Bernal, etc.

## b) WOMEN

*Foundresses*, such as Saint Joaquina de Vedruna, foundress of the Carmelite Sisters of Charity; Mother Antonia Paris de San Pedro, foundress with Claret of the Teaching Sisters of Mary Immaculate (Claretian Sisters); Saint Micaela of the Blessed Sacrament (the former Viscountess of Jorbalán), foundress of the Sisters Adorers; Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart, foundress of the Sisters Servants of Jesus, etc.

*Sisters*, such as Sor María Dolores, of the Teaching Sisters of Our Lady; Mother Paula del Puig, Superior General of the Carmelite Sisters of Charity, etc.

*Laywomen*, of whom we will mention only Queen Isabella II of Spain, who chose Claret as her confessor and spiritual director precisely because he was not a politician or a court lackey. "I chose him," she declared at the Process of his Beatification, "because I knew of his virtues and was aware of what a Saint he was."

## 2. Historical Value of the Correspondence

Because of the prominent place that business letters occupy in the correspondence, they constitute an historical source of great usefulness. Thus, as we remarked above, Fr. Cristóbal Fernández was able to use them in constructing his *Documented History* of Claret's life. They are still a rich and largely unmined quarry of themes and information for monographs on specific aspects of the Saint's life and undertakings, new facets of which are constantly surfacing.

But it is for the insights they provide into Claret's personality that most readers will cherish his letters. There is perhaps no other source that shows Saint Anthony Mary Claret so alive and in action. His other writings are either too self-effacing or one-sidedly spiritual, even when they are expressly autobiographical. The correspondence, because of its spontaneity and the concrete affairs it has to handle, affords us a more direct access to Claret's life, his reactions, his opinions on the most varied subjects, his inner workings and the way in which he seems to supernaturalize everything.

If our knowledge of the Saint were limited to what other sources tell us of his external life, his thoroughgoing asceticism and his rigorous schedule of activities, we might form a rather warped or at least very incomplete image of his personality. The correspondence shows us a man who was most sensitive to friendship, extraordinarily flexible, fluent and ready in his responses and capable of attracting and influencing others. This is the sort of knowledge one needs in order to form a well-rounded and balanced picture of Saint Anthony Mary Claret.

Some of his letters to Caixal, and especially to Fr. John N. Lobo, S.J., are models of communication between friends. One feature that emerges from a reading of these letters is the ascendancy he exercised over these gifted men, even though his humility recoiled from the least display of domination. He shows an exceptional grace and tact in the way he goes about correcting or admonishing his friends, especially the fiery yet sometimes ineffectual Caixal. In June of 1849, Claret was very busy training various groups for preaching in home and foreign missions; at the same time, he was on the very eve of founding his own Missionary Congregation. While he was away doing all this, a considerable row arose over the policies of the newly-founded publishing venture of the Religious Library, which Caixal should have been attending to. Instead of bluntly telling Caixal to stand on his own two feet and face the problems, since he himself was much too busy to become embroiled in these petty squabbles, he tactfully wrote him: "You are the one and only center in this circle of books, just as I am the center of the candidates for preaching, with whom I find myself so intensely occupied."

In other letters, especially those dealing with new problems relating to the Religious Library and his great undertakings at El Escorial, he displays an indomitable energy and drive. After speaking out quite strongly against certain abuses at El Escorial, he ends one letter to Don Dionisio González on a rather Pauline note: "Let it never be said that we have been weaklings." In writing to the Cuban civil authorities he shows extraordinary integrity in denouncing abuses and naming names, however painful it may have been for him to do so. His responses are generally brief and often quite forceful. The vivacity of his temperament is visible throughout.

In the narrative passages in his letters, the Saint shows a notable ability to sum up whole scenes in a few graphic details. This is particularly true of those letters in which he deals with the success of his missions and other preaching engagements in the Canary Islands.

On the whole, the letters reveal the richness of his personality and the warmth of his temperament. We mentioned earlier that his ability to console others seems almost inexhaustible. Whenever he describes an action, he never gives a cold or dry account of it. Writing to Mother Antonia Paris on July 21, 1869, he does not merely state, for example, that he had an interview with Pius IX, but adds a number of small, telling details, such as the Pope's calling him *caro mio* and encouraging him with heartfelt expressions..

Admiration for Claret and for the astonishing amount of work he did, might tend to make us view him as a rather awesome and detached figure, living high above the ordinary course of human events. Dipping into the correspondence is one of the best ways to change this distant admiration into sympathetic concern for a man who, after more than a hundred years, still seems close to us.

If, as Newman observed, reading a Saint's life is far more instructive than reading a treatise on sanctity, this impression is all the more intense when the contact with a Saint's life is direct, rather than mediated through a secondhand abstract of his or her life. The closest one can get to the Saints (other than living and dealing with them personally) is perhaps in their correspondence and, one might add, best of all when they are not expressly giving spiritual direction, but are dealing with the simpler affairs of human life.

At such times we can see the "living Saint" in Claret, gently gracing, divinizing and lifting up everything about him and generously giving of himself to others. In his letters we glimpse his love of suffering for the sake of Jesus, his reaction to contradiction, his tact and prudence and, in general, his ability to find God in everything and to bring everything to God. Claret's correspondence delights and profits us not so much by preaching, as by showing us how a Saint practices what he preaches, and how he helps others to do the same.

In the first place, as regards *prayer*, we observe the Saint passing any project he is engaged in, however trivial, in prayerful review. His letters to Fr. Xifré, dealing with the many difficulties his Missionary Congregation had to face during its first period of expansion, sound the constant refrain of bringing each new problem before God in prayer, so as to have the serenity needed in order to detect the slightest movement of the Spirit on the direction to be followed in solving it. Again and again when he is confronted by problems, the Saint manifests a sort of spiritual instinct that tells him to calm his soul and absorb the power he needs from above. The solution he arrives at, almost spontaneously, is the one that seems most conformable to the will of God.

Claret's *tact* in handling problems is really admirable. His solutions are never arrived at rashly. He lets a situation ripen, waiting for the moment when God expresses His will most clearly. In a letter to Fr. Currius (4/21/1855) dealing with the rather mundane matter of the dimensions a chapel to be built at the "model ranch" for poor boys and girls near Puerto Príncipe (Camagüey), Cuba, we catch sight of the spiritual-intuitive attitude that informed all of Claret's planning:

The dimensions of the church seem fine to me. As for the adjoining building, I have given it much thought and have commended the matter to God. I know that it should not be tall, but rather on the style of that house I pointed out to you... The façade needn't be any wider than we planned, and in time the building can be enlarged on the inside. This is God's work and, as St. Vincent de Paul says, 'God's works are ordinarily done little by little and, as it were, by themselves.'

Of course, this does not mean that Claret always took forever to make up his mind. But one suspects that this constant process of passing things in review before God was silently at work before he made some of his apparently spontaneous decisions, to the surprise and occasional consternation of even his closest collaborators.

Another trait that Claret's letters reveal is his *genuine love of Christian suffering*. At times he speaks with a conviction and candor that are truly moving, as when he writes to the exiled Bishop of Plasencia:

Jesus has given me such a great desire to suffer for Him that I can't live without pains and persecutions. I am not afraid of them; I seek them out everywhere. I have found many, thank God, but not so many that I have had my fill of them. I regard them as so necessary in order to enter the glory of heaven, that whenever I see someone to whom the Lord grants them, it seems as if He is offering them a free ticket of entry. My dear father, take heart and rejoice! You have reasons aplenty to be overflowing with joy. You can't imagine how much I love you when I see you so adorned with persecutions. If only I could see you and throw my arms around your neck, the way a little boy does with his loving father! I trust that in time I will be able to do so" (7/22/1844).

The entire correspondence is steeped in the *supernatural*. The letters in which the Saint seems most jovial and friendly are the very ones that reveal the highest ideals of holiness, especially in the practice of the evangelical counsels. Thus he writes to his close friend as associate, Fr. John N. Lobo, who has just made his vows in the Society of Jesus;

Well, my friend, now you can see how it is. One must follow Jesus. One must deny oneself... One must think of himself as an old walking stick; like an old mannequin that is dressed or undressed, or shoved into some corner to gather dust and cobwebs; or like an old scrap of paper... I would even go so far as to ask a little more of you than this -- that you would never talk about where you are or where you have been or where you have studied... Well, my sermon is getting a bit long. Here's hoping that what I've just said isn't so much straw and rubbish (5/4/1859).

At times, what strikes us most in the letters is Claret's complete *trust in divine Providence* to supply his Missionaries with the means of subsistence, or his faith in Jesus and Mary to cure his illnesses, or his total and unreserved commitment to God.

But the main theme in his letters is his concern for the *apostolate*. He is always telling his friends about his ministerial works and their results. During the years when he was largely confined to the Court of Madrid, his constant theme is his ardent longing to be off preaching and the endless martyrdom he feels at being tied down to the Court. In August 1861 he writes to Fr. Xifré in glowing terms, telling him how much he trusts in his Missionaries' work for the salvation of souls, and how much they deserve to be loved because of this work:

Yes, yes indeed, this is my most savory meal, my only meal. If only I were able to be off and running, preaching throughout Spain and the whole world! The greatest temptation I have is to escape from Her Majesty's side. But I put up with it all because they tell me that it's God will that I stand by her and, for the moment, I believe that it is so. This and this alone enables me to put up with it, hoping that the Lord will see fit to release me. Meanwhile, tell my dearest brothers the Missionaries to take heart and work as hard as they can. God and the Blessed Virgin will reward them for it. I have such great affection for priests who dedicate themselves to missions that I would give my life's blood for them. I would wash and kiss their feet a thousand times. I would take the food out of my mouth to feed them. I love them so much that I would do crazy things for them. In fact, I can't say what I wouldn't do for them... Even while I'm writing this, I have to put down my pen in order to dry my eyes... O Sons of the Immaculate Heart of my dearest Mother Mary! I want to write to you but I can't, because my eyes are filled with tears. Preach, and pray for me.

The correspondence deals with many other spiritual themes. The letters of spiritual direction alone deserve a separate study of their own. We hope, however, that even the little that has been said here will suffice as an enticement to further reading.

### 3. Language and Style of the Correspondence

As anyone who merely glances through the correspondence can tell, Saint Anthony Mary Claret was at least bilingual: he wrote in Catalan and Castilian. Catalan was his native tongue, and certain Catalanisms and Catalan words and spellings creep into his Castilian letters and to a lesser extent in his other writings. We will not enter into details here, because the general reader would probably find them either meaningless or boring. Those who are interested in such matters may consult the notes I have prepared below on the Saint's letter of May 15, 1838, where he makes no less than 23 such mistakes. Claret was fully aware of his deficiencies in Castilian, and so sent many of his works in that language out for correction before having them printed. Hence many of these works are not so marked by Catalanisms as his letters, where they slip spontaneously from his pen. In all fairness, one should remark that many of the Saint's misspellings are the same ones anyone might make while writing in haste, and that their number tends to diminish over the years. Moreover, one should note that many of his 'corrected' works sound stiff and artificial in comparison with his own lively habits of speech.

As for the Catalan of Claret's letters, sermons and other works, it is obviously not the literary language of today, which is the fruit of more than a century of purification and refinement. It employs some of the inaccuracies of the pseudo-literary language of his day, such as subjunctives ending in "-ia" in *portia*, *cantia*, etc., instead of the genuine *porti*, *canti*, etc. It also tends, during a period when Catalan spelling had not been normalized, to interchange unaccented *e* and *a*, which sound almost identical in spoken Catalan. In contrast, his lexicon retains words, forms and turns of expression that have been lost in the intervening century. It still uses, for example, the auxiliary verb "ser" (to be) in the active voice. It is, simply, the *spoken* Catalan of his day, influenced by certain linguistic importations that had crept into Catalan during the centuries of disuse into which it had fallen because of the changing political and economic fortunes of Spain. For the English reader some of these changes may be summarized (drastically) in a few paragraphs.

In the 13th and 14th centuries, when Catalonia monopolized the trade of the Western Mediterranean (as Venice did in the Eastern part), and even well into the 15th century, Catalan language and literature reached great heights in the works of writers of the stature of Ramon Llull, of the authors of the four great epic chronicles, of the compilers of laws, of the dream-allegorist and Catalan purist Bernat

Metge, of the chivalrous and didactic romancer Joan Martorell, and of the profound probings of Ausias March (the 'Spanish Petrarch'), to mention but a few. One reason for this climate of creativity and prosperity was the marriage between Count Ramon Berenguer IV of Barcelona and Queen Petronilla of Aragon in 1137, in virtue of which Catalonia and Aragon were united under the same ruler. This Catalan-Aragonese union lasted (mainly to the benefit of Catalan interests) until the extinction of the male line of the Counts of Barcelona in 1410. Catalan dissatisfaction with the new Trastámara dynasty grew until it developed into a strong but unsuccessful rebellion in the 1460s and 70s during the reign of King John II, the father of Isabella the Catholic.

During the 16th century, after the marriage of Ferdinand of Aragon with Isabella of Castile, Catalonia began to be relegated to a position of secondary importance in Spanish affairs, not only because of Castile's exploitation of the riches of the Americas, which greatly heightened its international prestige, but also because of Turkish interference in Mediterranean trade, which seriously diminished Catalonia's prosperity. In Castile's heyday in the 16th and 17th centuries, Catalan literature entered a period of dormancy, surviving largely in folk-songs and popular sermons. When the Spanish monarchy lost its ascendancy in the 17th century, the disastrous centralizing economic policies of the Conde de Olivares, under Philip IV, led to the first of the separatist movements which characterized the history of Catalonia thereafter. The most crushing moment came, however, in the 18th century, when Catalonia was completely subjugated by forces of Philip V and its constitution and privileges were abrogated.

The Catalan resurgence really began with the literary *renaixença* of the 19th century, touched off by the *Ode to the Fatherland* by Carles Bonaventura Aribau (1833). Passing through a troubadour revival, Catalan began recovering its linguistic purity through a study of the lexicon of folk-songs and tales. In Mossèn Jacint Verdaguer (who as a child had heard Claret preach) it found a poet of mystical sensitivity who gave the language warmth and life, while later, in Joan Maragall, who exemplified his doctrine of the 'living word' in his poems and essays, it opened the way for more modern expression. If we bear in mind that Pompeu Fabra (1868-1948), whose work forms the cornerstone of modern Catalan, was born in the year of Claret's exile from Spain and two years before his death, we will be better equipped to assess the importance of the Saint's contribution to the spoken and written preservation and development of the Catalan tongue. The translator is by no means equipped, either linguistically

or historically, to expand on this theme, but he earnestly hopes that some of his Catalan brethren will undertake such an assessment.

Claret was ordained in 1835, two years after the publication of Aribau's *Ode*, and in the same year in which many of the great preaching centers of Catalonia were for all practical purposes closed down by the anticlerical civil government. It seems providential, then, that in this critical hour God should have raised up this little man of the great voice to make the missionary word resound throughout his native land. He spoke to all levels of people in his native tongue, and always to packed houses. His clergy retreats seemed more like synods, while his popular missions often had to be preached out of doors. In Catalonia, he always preached in Catalan. He is reported to have remarked, not without humor, that it made little sense to preach in Castilian, while people were losing their souls in Catalan. The great poet, Verdaguer, whom we mentioned above, wrote: "Des dels braços de la mare m'enamori d'aquella predicació tan catalana i senzilla, com ardenta i feridora" --"From my mother's arms I fell in love with that preaching, which was as Catalan and simple as it was burning and piercing" (from the *Dedication* of Verdaguer's collection of religious songs, *Veus del Bon Pastor*, Vic, 1894).

Claret's bilingualism also appears in his writings. His very first known short work, *Reglas de Espiritu* (later known as *Advice to Nuns*), as well as all of his earliest letters, were written in Castilian. But from 1845 to 1848, most of his letters and almost all of his short works were written in Catalan, remitting the Castilian versions of the short works to other, more capable hands. One feels constrained to remark in passing that Claret did not write such utterly deplorable Castilian that it will not bear comparison with that of other popular writers of his time. There is nothing surprising about his having written his earliest works in Castilian: it was simply the custom of the times, when Castilian had become the *literary* language not only of Catalonia, but also of other linguistic groups in Spain. Yet while most of Claret's Catalan friends and associates--e.g., Balmes, Caixal, Palau-- nearly always wrote in the language of Cervantes, Claret had the missionary courage to write and preach in his warm and native Catalan. Indeed, it can be said that through his writings, especially his Catechisms and his extremely popular manual of piety, the *Camí dret* ("The Straight and Sure Path that Leads to Heaven"), Fr. Claret made all of Catalonia read Catalan in his day. In this connection, it is hard to resist another citation from Verdaguer: "L'infatigable Apòstol de Catalunya, Mossèn Claret, ha sigut el primer, el més actiu i més popular propagandista que ha tingut la Llengua Catalana en aquesta



centúria" -- "The tireless Apostle of Catalonia, Father Claret, is still the first, most active and most popular propagandist that the Catalan language has had in this century."

Visually, Claret's handwriting is flowing, uniform and very pleasing in appearance -- almost the exact opposite of the exasperating (though lively) scrawl of St. Teresa. The reader who is further interested in such matters might enjoy reading the article by Ricardo Baracaldo, C.M.F., "*Estudio grafopsicológico de la vida sentimental de San Antonio María Claret,*" published in the *Revista de Psicología della Scrittura* (Sept-Dec. 1956, 122-39), and also in *Virtud y Letras* 15 (1956) 295-311. More important than the material fact of using a language is its form, its spirit, its style; and Claret's style, not only in his letters but in his other works, was spontaneous, simple, natural -- in a word, *clear*. In this connection, Fr. Alfredo Bestué, C.M.F., has left us an interesting anecdote:

A few weeks before leaving Montevideo for Mendoza, I went to bid farewell to the celebrated Redemptorist, Fr. Victorio Loyódice, who has since died in the odor of sanctity. He was deeply devoted to our Venerable Father Founder, whom he had met in Rome while attending the Vatican Council. Among the many edifying things he told me, the following story stands out. "One day," he said, "I went to visit the Venerable and, our conversation turning to his Catechism, he asked me whether I was acquainted with his little work and what I thought of it. I considered all its unsurpassed qualities as a didactic work, but finally said that what I admired most was the clarity that shone in all its pages. Then the Venerable playfully remarked: 'How could it be anything else but clear, seeing that my very name is Claret i Clará?'" (cf. *Iris de Paz* 35 (1918) 312 f.).

Although neither the Catalanisms of Claret's Castilian nor the 'earliness' of his Catalan show through in the translation of his letters, one can only be grateful to Fr. Gil for preserving them in his careful edition of the *Epistolario*. Fray Luis de León, himself an acknowledged master of Castilian, once deprecated the efforts of would-be purists to "retouch" the works of Saint Teresa of Jesus. His words apply with even greater aptness to Saint Anthony Mary Claret, who for nine years bore the Eucharistic presence within him: "It would be an act of the greatest audacity to make the slightest change in things written by a *breast in which God lived* and, presumably, moved the hand that wrote them."

Finally, the translator would like to express his gratitude to the many Claretians who have helped him in all his efforts. Firstly, to the Claretians in Rome, to present and preceding General Governments,

and most especially to the present Claretian Superior General, Father Aquilino Bocos, for his strong and constant spiritual encouragement. The present Econome General of the Claretians, Father Enrique Arenas, and his predecessor, Father Federico Fernández, have always been most generous in material aid and technical equipment for his projects. Father Santiago González Gómez, a onetime schoolmate, former Secretary General and present Procurator General of the Claretians, has been a great help. Secondly, to the present and preceding Provincial Superiors of the Claretian Province of USA-West, who have provided him with the precious time he needed. Thirdly, to the Claretian Provinces of USA-East and of the Philippines, for publishing so many of his translations. Finally, to a number of individual Claretians who have, taught, encouraged, helped and prodded him over the years, among whom Father John Manuel Lozano holds a unique place.

## ABBREVIATIONS FREQUENTLY USED

- Aut *Autobiography of Saint Anthony Mary Claret*, written between 1861 and 1865, but first published in Madrid, in December of 1915, under the title of *Biografía del Arzobispo Antonio María Claret* [BAMC]. It was later edited, with numbered paragraphs greatly assisting consultation, by Fr. Joseph M. Viñas, CMF, in *SAMC, Escritos autobiográficos y espirituales* (Madrid: BAC, 1959) [hereinafter cited as EAE], and again by Fr. Jesús Bermejo, CMF, in *SAMC, Escritos autobiográficos* (Madrid: BAC, 1981) [hereinafter cited as EA]. Fr. Louis Moore, CMF translated BAMC in the 1940s [recently reprinted by TAN publications], and Fr. Joseph C. Daries, CMF translated Aut., based on EAE (Chicago: Claretian Publications, 1976).
- AutDoc Writings by SAMC other than his Autobiography and Correspondence. They include 16 autobiographical documents of various lengths (AutobDoc), the Saint's Retreat Resolutions (RR), Spiritual Notes (SN) and Lights and Graces (L&G). These are included in both EAE and EA, and were Englished by Fr. Joseph C. Daries, CMF, and published as *Works of Saint Anthony Mary Claret, Volume II: Autobiographical Writings* (Claretian Publications, Quezon City, P.I., 1995).
- CGA Claretian General Archives, Rome, Italy. CCTT *Constituciones y Textos sobre la Congregación de Misioneros*, ed. and annotated by Fr. John M. Lozano, CMF (Barcelona: Editorial Claret, 1972). A collection of texts leading up to the foundation of the Claretian Missionaries, their first and second Constitutions, Notes of Retreats preached to them by SAMC and selected Documents by the Cofounders, Frs. Xifré and Clotet.
- ClarPubl *Claretian Publications*, either Chicago or Quezon City.
- CMF *Cordis Mariae Filius* The initials of the Congregation of Missionaries, Sons of the Immaculate Heart of the B.V.M., Claretian Missionaries.

- EA            *SAMC, Escritos autobiográficos*. Cf. Aut.
- EAE          *SAMC, Escritos autobiográficos y espirituales*. Cf. Aut.
- EAE also had a short selection of 92 Letters of SAMC, ed. with introduction and notes by Fr. Isidro Muñoz, CMF.
- EC I, II, III    *El Epistolario de SAMC*, The Collected Correspondence of SAMC, prepared and annotated by Fr. José M<sup>a</sup> Gil, CMF, vols. I (1847 pp) and II (1598 pp.) (Madrid: Cocusa, 1970), vol. 3 (926 pp.) (Madrid: PublClar, 1978). This is the critical edition, on which the present translation is largely based.
- EE            *SAMC, Escritos espirituales*, ed. Fr. Jesús Bermejo, CMF (Madrid, BAC, 1985), an ample selection from the spiritual writings of the Saint. Cf. SSW, below.
- HD I, II      Fr. Cristóbal Fernández, CMF, *El Beato Padre Antonio María Claret: Historia documentada de su vida y empresas* (Madrid: Cocusa, 1946), vol. I (1065 pp.) and vol II (930 pp.).
- LSG          Fr. John M. Lozano, CMF, *Anthony Claret, A Life at the Service of the Gospel*, Engl. tr. Joseph C. Daries, CMF, (Chicago/Los Angeles/Manila: ClarPubl, 1985), 486 pp.
- PublClar     Publicaciones Claretianas, Madrid.
- SAMC        Saint Anthony Mary Claret.
- SAW         *SAMC, Selected Autobiographical Writings* (other than the Autobiography), Engl. transl. Joseph C. Daries, CMF, based on EA (Quezon City: ClarPubl, 1995).
- StCl         Studium Claretianum, Rome.
- SSW         *SAMC, Selected Spiritual Writings*, Engl. tr. of EE, by Joseph C. Daries, CMF (Quezon City: ClarPubl, 1991).

## BIOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND (1807-1831)

Since the Saint's first extant letter dates from 1832, it may be helpful to supply a short chronology of the main events of his life before that time, along with some of the main religious and political developments that marked his childhood, adolescence and young manhood up to the end of his philosophical studies in the Seminary of Vic.

### 1. Infancy and Childhood

**1807** *December 23.* Born in Sallent (pop. 2,000), near Manresa, in the Diocese of Vic, Province of Barcelona, the fifth of eleven children born to John Claret and Josepha Clará. Since Anthony was born so late in the year, his age may be computed as if he had been born at the beginning of 1808. Since the Church's New Year begins with Advent, his Baptism was recorded in the Parish Registry for the year 1808. As he himself notes in his *Autobiography*: "Myself (1807 or 1808)."

*December 25.* Baptized in the parish church of St. Mary, Sallent. The Latin record reads as follows: "On the 25th day of December, 1807, the Reverend Raymond Mas, priest and vicar of the parish of St. Mary of Sallent, Diocese of Vic, solemnly baptized at the font of this church, according to the rite of the Holy Roman Church, *Anthony John Adjutor*, born the day before yesterday (*antepridie*), the legitimate and natural son of John Claret, cotton weaver, and Josepha Clará, his wife, of the same town. The godparents were Anthony Clará, muleteer, and Mary Claret, wife of Adjutor Canudas, basket maker, of the city of Manresa, all of the same Diocese of Vic." Thus the future Saint was christened *Anthony* (after his maternal uncle), *Adjutor* (after the husband of his paternal aunt) and *John* (after his father). In 1850, at the time of his episcopal consecration, he added the name *Mary*, out of devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

**[Secular History: 1807.** *Napoleon Bonaparte dominates political scene, Beethoven the musical scene. Romanticism in the arts. Hegel publishes his Phenomenology of the Spirit. Fulton's steamboat is built. William Wilberforce gains passage of his first bill for the abolition of*

*slavery in British domains. Spain signs disastrous treaty of Fontainebleau with France.]*

**1808** (-1 year old). His mother's health being poor (she had already lost two children in infancy), Anthony was sent to live with a wetnurse in Santa Maria de Oló, a nearby town with a more healthful climate, where his mother came to visit him frequently. One night, acting on impulse, she took the baby home to Sallent for a short visit. That same night the wetnurse's house, which was undergoing repairs, collapsed, burying the wetnurse and her four children alive. Anthony later attributed this escape from death to the providential care of God and the Blessed Virgin.

*[Secular History. 1808. February 16th, Napoleon's forces invade Spain. February 29th, the French take Barcelona. March 3rd, Joachim Murat occupies Madrid. May 2nd, Spanish rising against the French begins in Madrid. May 6th, Charles IV of Spain and Crown Prince Ferdinand (arguably the two most inept kings in Spanish history) renounce the Spanish throne to Napoleon's control. June 15th, By Napoleon's decision, Joseph Bonaparte is proclaimed King of Spain. August 1st, King Joseph flees from Madrid. December 13th, Madrid capitulates to Napoleon. Other events: Napoleon abolishes the Inquisition. Goya paints "Execution of the Citizens of Madrid." 1809. January, Spanish Supreme Junta and Britain agree not to make separate peace with Napoleon. May 12th, Wellesley defeats French at Oporto and forces them out of Portugal. May 17th, Napoleon issues decree annexing Papal States. July 6th, Pope Pius VII, having won the admiration of the world by his heroic resistance to Napoleon, is taken prisoner by the French. July 28th, Wellesley is victorious at Talavera and is subsequently created Duke of Wellington. November 19th, Spanish defeated at Ocana; French overrun all of Andalusia, except Cádiz. Other significant events: Charles Darwin and Abraham Lincoln born on February 12. In music and writing, great works by Beethoven, Goethe, Schlegel, Chateaubriand, Byron. In the U.S., Mother Seton founds her Congregation of Sisters]*

**1810-11** (2-3 years old). Anthony grew up in a strict Catholic household that featured regular daily prayers, devotional reading and a twelve-hour workday. He now had an older sister and brother, and a new baby brother, living at home with him. As his younger sister Mary testified years later, the Claret family were often the butt of jokes because of their pronounced piety.

*[Secular History: 1810. April, under influence of Bolivar, Venezuelan Junta breaks from Spain. May, revolt against Spanish authority in New Granada; revolt in Rio de la Plata. July 19th, Ney*

takes Ciudad Rodrigo. September 16th, Fr. Miguel Hidalgo's "Grito de Dolores" sparks Mexican revolt for independence from Spain. October, Wellington holds line at Torres Vedras, forces French to withdraw. Other events: Goya engraves "The Disasters of War." Jaume Balmes born in Manresa, which the French take and burn twice that same year. **1811.** May, Wellington defeats French at Fuentes de Onoro; British check French at Albuhera. July, Venezuela becomes independent of Spain. August, Paraguay declares its independence from Spain (and later from Buenos Aires). Fr. Hidalgo, defeated near Guadalajara, is taken prisoner, defrocked and executed.]

**1812-13** (4-5 years old). The family routine began with Mass at St. Mary's. Before 8:00 a.m., they and their employees said the first five decades of the rosary, followed by work and the recitation of the next five decades at noon, followed by work and the recitation of the last five decades before closing at about 9:00 p.m. Supper at about ten was followed by spiritual reading or instruction by John Claret. On Holy Days the family attended a High Mass and a Low Mass.

On holidays, the family went on outings to the woods, the river-side or a spring, frequently ending the day with a visit to the shrine of Our Lady of Fussimanya, some 5 or 6 kilometers from Sallent. On two of these outings, Anthony narrowly escaped death. Once, while the family was off gathering firewood, Anthony remained behind to keep the campfire burning by throwing kindling on it. While doing so his clothing caught fire, but he managed to put it out and though his clothing was badly scorched, he was all smiles when the family returned. On another outing, when the family was hiking on a hillside, a boulder fell from the cliff above, barely missing the young Anthony.

Anthony's memories of the War of Independence from France date from about this time. He remembered being carried on someone's shoulders during a night attack. Later, he recalled leading his half-blind grandfather John Clará through the rubble when the younger children had run off. He tells us that he was always respectful toward the elderly, and was shocked when he saw some unruly boys poking fun at them. Anthony was always polite and never talked back to his elders.

Throughout his life he slept very little. When he was five, the thought of others' being damned kept him awake at night. He would lie in bed repeating "sempre, sempre, sempre" (Catalan for "forever"), shuddering as he did so. His younger sister Mary later testified that

he used to wake up very early in the morning, repeating “sempre” at each tick of the clock.

**[Secular History: 1812.** *January 19th, Wellington takes Ciudad Rodrigo. March 19th, Spanish Cortes passes liberal constitution under a hereditary monarch. April 6th, British capture Badajoz.. July 22nd, Wellington defeats French at Salamanca; 31st, Venezuelan Republic falls to Spanish forces. August 12th, Wellington enters Madrid. September 19th, British are forced to withdraw from Burgos. Fr. José Morelos takes up the armed struggle for Mexican independence from Spain.]*

**1813-15** (5-6 years old). Anthony started school under the direction of a devout layman, Anthony Pascual (illiteracy was practically unheard of in Sallent). He never missed classes, was always early and very well behaved, always did his homework, and was pointed out to his classmates as a model.

He had a remarkably good memory, learned the whole catechism by heart and recited it publicly in church, for which he received a prize. Though he parroted many of the words, he later came to appreciate their meaning. In later life, right up to the First Vatican Council, he was a constant catechist, a writer of catechisms, a founder of catechetical associations and a champion in the cause of a uniform Catechism. After mastering the catechism, he studied Bible History and read a number of devotional works, one of which, *El Roser* (an explanation of the rosary, its mysteries, litanies and accompanying prayers), he committed to memory. Soon Mr. Pascual had him leading the rosary in church, where the class used to march in double file each day after class. Other pupils, noticing the approval he received, began to follow his example. Later, Anthony (who had a lifelong devotion to the rosary) would lead the rosary for the workers in his father's workshop.

The boy was scrupulously honest. On the way home from school one day, he found a coin in the street, and went from door to door, trying to find its owner.

On December 12, 1814, before his seventh birthday, he received the Sacrament of Confirmation from the Archbishop of Palmyra, Felix Torres Amat.

**[Secular History: 1813.** *June 21st, Wellington routs French at Vitoria, forcing Joseph Bonaparte to flee from Spain to France. July Venezuela becomes independent of Spain a second time, with Bolivar as virtual dictator. Sept 9th, San Sebastián taken by Wellington. October 8th, Wellington crosses Bidassoa into France; 30th, Pamplona surrenders to British. December 11th, Napoleon agrees*



to restore Ferdinand VII of Spain, by Treaty of Valençay. **1814.** April 11th, Napoleon abdicates and is banished to Elba; Back in Madrid, Ferdinand VII begins a tyrannical rule of 19 years, later interrupted by a three-year liberal hiatus. Events of May: Ferdinand dissolves the Cortes and annuls the Constitution of 1812 (created by the former), and takes vengeance on the liberals, who begin increasingly to conspire against him. Pius VII returns to Rome, restores Inquisition, Index and Jesuits; Goya's May 2 and May 3 paintings. December 24th, end of war between Britain and U.S.]

**1815-18** (7-10 years old). In 1815, when Anthony was seven, a notable visitor to the school (probably Abp. Torres Amat) asked the students what they wanted to be when they grew up. When Anthony's turn came, he answered unhesitatingly, "a priest."

This was a period of intense Marian devotion for Anthony. He said fifteen decades of the rosary daily, said the Angelus morning, noon and night, and a Hail Mary on the hour. At play, he often seemed to hear an inner voice of Mary calling him to church. He would answer, "I'm coming," and run off to church. One of his favorite diversions at the time was to make trips with his sister Rose to the shrine of Fussymanya. On the way there they would recite the sorrowful mysteries; on arriving there they would recite the five joyful mysteries (portrayed in five bas-relief medallions on the front of the altar); on the way home, stopping by a fountain near a statue of Mary, they would recite the glorious mysteries. Claret returned to this shrine in later years, as a seminarian, priest and archbishop.

In 1818, when he was ten years old, he made his First Holy Communion. His earlier frequent attendance at Mass and other Eucharistic devotions, as well as his reading of a few devout books given him by his father, prepared him for this deeply joyful experience. Fifty years later he recalled the day, and despite the extraordinary Eucharistic grace he had recently received (the indwelling of the Sacred Species within him from Communion to Communion), he felt that he had been much more devout as a child.

Love for the Eucharist, Mary and the priesthood, together with a deep concern for the salvation of others and an affection for spiritual reading, were to be lifelong constants in his spirituality.

*[Secular History: 1815. March 1st, Napoleon lands in France; 20th, he enters Paris and begins the "Hundred Days." June 9th, Final act of Congress of Vienna recognizes restoration of Bourbon monarch Ferdinand VII in Spain, Papal States restored; 18th, Wellington and von Blücher defeat Napoleon at Waterloo. The Inquisition and the Society of Jesus are restored in Spain. In Mexico, Fr.*

Morelos is arrested, defrocked and executed. Goya's *Tauromaquia* engravings. **1816.** January, Brazil becomes an Empire. July, Independence of United Provinces of La Plata (Argentina) declared. Other events: King Ferdinand VII marries his second wife, Isabella of Braganza who, during their short-lived marriage, exerted a moderating influence on her mean-spirited spouse. Don Carlos Maria Isidro, the King's younger brother and heir-apparent, marries Isabella's sister, Maria Francisca of Braganza that same day. Goya's portrait of the Count of Osuna. **1817.** February, Argentine General José de San Martín crosses Andes into Chile, liberating Santiago from Spain. September 23rd, by treaty with Britain, Spain agrees to end slave trade. **1818.** February 12th, Independence of Chile proclaimed in Santiago. May 5th, Birth of Karl Marx. The Queen founds Prado Museum in Madrid. November 20th, Simon Bolivar formally declares Venezuela independent of Spain.]

## 2. Apprentice and Worker

**1819-25** (11-17 years old). At the onset of adolescence, Anthony underwent three severe trials: 1) an aversion toward his heavenly Mother Mary, 2) an aversion toward his earthly mother Josepha, and 3) a setback in his plans for the priesthood.

1) He later described the first of these trials as "the greatest suffering I have ever felt in my life." All he says of this trial is that he felt strange feelings of aversion and blasphemy toward Mary. He could neither eat nor sleep. He went to his confessor, who disregarded the whole matter as a typically adolescent phase. After weeks of suffering, the trial left him.

2) At about the same time he felt a similar aversion for his mother. She probably never suspected it, since he hid his feelings of aversion, prayed for her, and went out of his way to treat her more lovingly than ever. One outward symptom of the struggle was his increased silence and withdrawal. He went again to his confessor, explaining his problem and the way he was dealing with it. This time the confessor was convinced that the boy had received an extraordinary gift of the Spirit, and told him that as God was leading him, he should continue doing just as he had been doing. It was always hard to know what Anthony preferred. Whenever his mother asked him what he preferred, he would answer "I like best whatever you like." Other youthful traits that remained with him throughout his life were blushing, punctuality, neatness and love of method. In other typically adolescent situations, he could respond with precocious resolution. When other boys of his age indulged in shady conversations, they warned Anthony that

they were going to do so. He not only walked away, but broke off relations with them altogether.

3) Ever since he was seven, he had wanted to be a priest, and his parents did nothing to discourage him in this desire. When he was eleven, they sent him to Latin classes with Dr. John Riera, an elderly priest who devoted his time to preparing boys from Sallent for the seminary. After Anthony had taken less than a year of these courses Dr. Riera died, thus bringing to an end the only Latin courses offered in Sallent. The Claret family had a growing brood to provide for. Besides, they had just bought a new house, workshop and garden, and could not afford to send Anthony away for studies. He therefore had to start working full time in the family weaving business. He accepted without complaining outwardly, but inwardly he was heartsick. He used to visit the Blessed Sacrament in the evening, praying: "Humanly speaking, I see no hope, but You have the power."

Meanwhile, out of respect and love for his parents, he worked as hard as he could, rising under the foremanship of old Jaume Ferrer from the simplest to the most complex jobs in the shop. At first, the less demanding tasks left him free to read as he worked. But when he moved up to the full-bodied operation of the loom, he could no longer read, so he neatly tacked up holy cards on the loom and meditated as he worked. He treated his lesser fellow-workers with great kindness and tact. When he had to correct their faulty work, he always pointed out their good qualities and then pointed out how they could improve their work. He later regarded this gentle tactfulness as a special gift of God. He always turned out one-half more work than the others did, and learned not only how to do his tasks, but also the principles on which the machinery worked. He eventually became so proficient at his trade that he could learn no more about it in Sallent. It was time for him to move on --like so many others in those heady days of the industrial revolution-- to the larger world of the big city.

***[Secular History: 1819.*** *January, Death of Ferdinand VII's second wife, Isabella of Braganza. Their only child, Isabella Luisa, had died in infancy. The King marries his third wife, Maria Josepha Amalia of Saxony. February 22nd, U.S.A. obtains Florida from Spain. The steamboat Savannah makes the first transatlantic crossing. May 24, birth of Princess Alexandrina Victoria (later Queen Victoria of England). December 17th, Simon Bolivar becomes president of the new Republic of Colombia, created from Venezuela and New Granada.*

**1820.** *January 1st, Ferdinand VII's high-handed rejection of the Constitution of 1812 and his sending of troops to put down the up-*

risings in Spanish America (with which his liberal opponents sympathize) provoke an uprising led by Corporal Rafael Riego. This rebellion spreads rapidly, and in August Riego, now a general, stages a triumphal entry into Madrid, to the strains of the anticlerical "Hymn of Riego." The liberals had now divided into Moderados (moderates) and Exaltados (radicals). The Exaltados chanted the more violent and vulgar "Trágala" ("Swallow it," i.e., the revolution). Ferdinand, craven as ever in defeat, gives in, adopting a liberal posture of constitutionalism for three years, meanwhile making pathetic appeals to various powers for armed intervention in Spain. The Liberal Government of 1820-23 did not evoke the same broad support that the War of Independence had won, largely because its causes were not perceived as being in the interest of the great mass of the Spanish people, but in that of a largely Masonic clique of the intelligentsia. By this time, many secret societies and lodges were at work in Spain. November 25th, temporary truce between Spain and Colombia.

**1821.** February 24th, Vicente Guerrero draws up proposals for independence of Mexico from Spain. May 5th, Napoleon dies on St. Helena. June 24th, Bolivar ensures independence of Venezuela by defeating Spanish army at Carabobo. July 28th, Pushing northward from Chile, San Martín proclaims independence of Peru. September 15th, Guatemala declares independence from Spain and aligns itself with Mexico. November 28th, Panama declares independence from Spain and joins Republic of Colombia. December 1st, Republic of Santo Domingo is established independent of Spain, but falls to Haitians a year later. **1822.** Uprisings among various "apostolic" or royalist groups, under the direction of the "Regency of Urgell." Bloody clashes in the streets of Madrid. The Government of Martínez de la Rosa is succeeded by that of Evaristo San Miguel. Brazil declares its independence. Iturbide becomes Emperor of Mexico. Louis Pasteur is born.

**1823.** The Holy Alliance decides on armed intervention in Spain. Ferdinand VII is spirited off to Seville. The Duc d'Angoulême leads the "Hundred Thousand Sons of St. Louis" into Spain. Rout of the Constitutionals at the Battle of the Trocadero. The French enter Cádiz. Ferdinand VII becomes absolute monarch. Riego is executed. Other Events: February 27th, Ernest Renan (against whose errors Claret will later write) is born. Iturbide is dethroned in Mexico. Independence comes to Central America when Guatemala, San Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras and Costa Rica form the Confederation of United Provinces of Central America. Monroe Doctrine declared. The ailing Pope Pius VII dies on August 20th. His successor, the ailing Cardinal Annibale della Genga, was elected on September 28th and crowned as Leo XII on October 5th. He soon

*proved to be a strong-willed pope, whose lack of sympathy with any kind of liberalism would dash the hopes of reform-minded Catholics in England, France, Italy and Germany.*

**1824.** *Ferdinand continues his purges. Beginning of the detestable ministry of Calomarde. Bolivar's successful campaigns in Peru spell the end of Spanish colonial rule in continental America. All that remained of the once-great Spanish empire was Cuba and Puerto Rico in the Antilles, and the Philippines in the Pacific, but before the end of the century, these, too, would be lost to Spain. Other events: Mexico becomes a Republic. In France, Louis XVIII dies and is succeeded by the reactionary Charles X.]*

**1825-26** (17-18 years old). Just before Claret turned eighteen, his father took him to Barcelona, the textile capital of Spain, to perfect himself in his trade. He had to fend for himself and pay his own way. He boarded in a modest hostelry and began working in a textile mill. He also enrolled in classes offered at La Lonja (the board of trade of Barcelona), where he studied Castellan and French (his native tongue was Catalan), in which he achieved some fluency, and also took courses in astronomy, geography and mathematics. He was always well-versed in natural sciences.

He soon developed a passion for all aspects of the textile trade, including design, machine-setting and manufacture and won a number of prizes at La Lonja, where he acquired a reputation as a promising talent. He even showed his foreman how to correct a complicated pattern that had been set up incorrectly. As a result he was charged with copying, adapting and improving the latest designs from London and Paris catalogues. The very neat sample book of his own work contained some 400 patterns in cotton and 823 in wool -- no mean feat for one of his age in such a highly competitive environment, especially since it involved not only drawing the designs, but also their machine settings. A number of businessmen approached his father about putting Anthony in charge of a large new textile firm; but although his father was enthusiastically in favor of the plan, Anthony demurred, alleging that his youth and diminutive stature would not allow him to command the respect of the workers. This is hard to understand, since his fellow workers had always admired him for his fairness and competence.

Anthony lived frugally, was self-supporting, bought his own books, put a little money aside (at a good rate of interest) and even became something of a stylish dresser. He kept up his religious practices and devotions, such as the rosary and frequent reception of the sacraments, but things were somehow different. He was so absorbed

in his craft that he was constantly distracted by it, even at Mass. Troubled about this, he spoke to an Oratorian priest, Fr. Amigó (there always seemed to be a good Oratorian director available during the first half of Anthony's life), who judged that, all things considered, Anthony was doing well. True, he was spending a great deal of time on his studies, even on Sundays and Holy Days, but these were, after all, not 'servile works.' Anthony was somewhat reassured by Amigó's advice, but four crises were to awaken him from his slumbers and change the course of his life.

**[Secular History: 1825.** *Bolivia becomes independent of Peru and Uruguay becomes independent of Brazil.* **1826.** *Ampère publishes Electrodynamics.*]

**1827** (19 years old). At this time, he used to visit the apartment of a married friend from Sallent. He arrived one day when his friend was out and was invited by the friend's wife to come in and wait. She soon made some verbal and physical advances toward him. Shocked, he invoked the Blessed Virgin, pushed the woman away and fled the spot, never to return. In his haste, he even left his hat behind. Incensed, the woman screamed at him from the balcony, accusing him of attacking her. Although he was utterly innocent, Anthony said nothing, because he did not want to compromise the reputation of his friend's wife.

At about the same time, he was associated with another friend who played the state lottery. Anthony kept the accounts and supplied some of the money. They were lucky and won a good deal of money. One day Anthony returned to his lodgings to find his money stolen, and his books and some of his clothes pawned by his friend, a compulsive gambler, who went on to rob another friend's house and gamble all his ill-gotten goods away. His friend was arrested and sent to prison for two years. Anthony felt betrayed by a friend, but even more humiliated to think that he might be suspected of complicity in the crime.

**1827.** *Beethoven dies*

**1828** (20 years old). On January 20, while vacationing at home in Sallent, he attended a dance-party held at a friend's house after a baptism (quite against the custom of the pious). Shortly after 7 p.m., Anthony, who was no lover of parties, left. Moments later, the house collapsed, killing 28 persons. Anthony was horrified. Years later he included an account of this incident in his booklets, *Advice to Youth* and *Advice to Women*, as a reminder of the uncertainties of human existence.

He returned to Barcelona and threw himself into work and study, to the detriment of his health, so that he developed lung and stomach ailments. His only relaxation was strolling along the rather deserted beach of La Barceloneta. As he did not know how to swim, he waded along the shore. Once when he and some of his friends from work had gone to the beach, a large wave swept in from the Mediterranean and swept him out into deep waters. He called out to the Blessed Virgin, whereupon he began to float on the surface and was gently deposited on the shore, his clothes fully dry. His friends, who had gone for help, were surprised to find him safe and sound. While he was in the water, he had not been afraid, and had not even swallowed any water, but once on shore, he began to shudder at the thought of his close call with death. Later, in deep gratitude, he attributed his rescue to the Blessed Virgin.

**1829** (21 years old). Despite all these ominous incidents, he continued working feverishly, and began to suffer an emotional crisis that some have referred to as Claret's night of the senses. As would happen time and again in his life, what finally moved him to redirect his vocational path was the Bible. One day at Mass he heard the words: "What does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his soul?" These words shook him out of his indecision. He went to the Oratory, sought out Fr. Amigó, and told him that he wanted to leave the world and become a Carthusian monk at Monte Alegre, near Barcelona. Fr. Amigó listened, and while not ruling it out in principle, recommended that he continue working for the present while beginning to study Latin, which would be required of him if he went through with his plan. Anthony returned to Sallent to inform his father of his decision. The latter, though pained at the decision, did not reject it out of hand. He did suggest, however, that Anthony try the diocesan seminary first. Anthony began studying Latin while continuing his textile work in Barcelona, but two months after he began Latin classes, his teacher died. He then took up classes with Fr. Francis Mas I Artigas (who later dedicated a Latin-Spanish dictionary to the then-Archbishop Claret), and after 9 months of work and study, became rather proficient in Latin.

He would soon be 22 years old. His reason for staying in Barcelona was over and done, yet he still did not know just what to do. At this point, the intervention of an admiring relative brought matters to a head. His brother John had married Mary Casajoana, whose father Maurice was a purchasing agent for the Bishop of Vic, the saintly Paul of Jesus Corcuera. In a conversation with the bishop, Maurice

spoke so glowingly of his gifted relative that Corcuera asked to meet him. Anthony, still eager to become a Carthusian, was not enthusiastic about meeting the good bishop, but under pressure from his Latin teacher and another Oratorian priest, he gave in. He returned to Sallent and on September 19, 1829, the Feast of St. Michael, he and his parents set out on foot through a driving rain for Vic. The next day they had an interview with Bishop Corcuera. The upshot was that Anthony decided to begin studies at Vic, with the understanding that he might still join the Carthusians at a later date.

### **3. Seminarian**

**1829-30** (21-22 years old). The Seminary of Vic was a strict, even austere, institution. Scholastic requirements included 4 years of humanities, 3 of philosophy and 4-7 of theology. After his elementary education in Sallent, Claret had studied a number of academic subjects during his busy stay in Barcelona, but one would hardly consider this sufficient preparation for the humanities' requirements of Vic. Nevertheless, after he was examined by three members of the seminary faculty, he passed the test and was admitted to the 3-year course in philosophy. It was a difficult adjustment, not only because of the new surroundings, but also because most of his classmates were 5-6 years younger than he.

Seminarians were either boarders (interns) or day students (externs). A number of eminent future Claretians attended the Seminary of Vic, either as externs (Xifré, Serrat, Alsina) or as interns (Stephen Sala). Looking around the halls, Claret might have spotted the very poor Joseph Xifré (just beginning humanities), Dominic Fábregas (just finishing them) and Stephen Sala (a class ahead of Claret). Most externs boarded with local families, in exchange for tutoring or catechizing the children of the house, running errands, or performing humbler domestic chores.

Anthony could not afford to board at the seminary, but here again, Maurice Casajoana came to the rescue. He was a good friend of the bishop's majordomo. Fr. Fortian Bres who, on learning of Anthony's talents and qualities, offered him room and board at his own rented lodgings in the home of a well-to-do local family (the Casa Toradés). In exchange, Anthony was to run errands for him after school. But as things turned out, Bres was so impressed by Anthony's application and piety, that the only 'task' required of him was to serve Bres' daily Mass and walk and pray with him in the garden during the lunch-break from school. The two became lifelong friends.



Claret's room was modest but spacious (8 x 4 meters). It contained a bed behind a curtained alcove, some chairs, a table (on which lay books, a crucifix and, romantically, a skull), a picture of St. Bruno (a Carthusian reminder) and, on the back of the door, a print of some piously trite verses on the Last Things.

His class-day routine was as follows: Up at 4:00, morning prayer, meditation, Mass with Fr. Bres in the house chapel, thanksgiving, study until 8:00, breakfast of hot chocolate, quick review of studies. Class from 9:00 to 10:30, quick revision of his notes of the main points covered, visit to Church of St. Philip until 11:00. From 11:00 to noon, study for afternoon classes. At noon, lunch, with spiritual reading from the life of the Saint of the day. Then, back to the house for a walk with Bres in the garden and prayer at the garden shrine of Our Lady of the Angels, followed by a 15-minute siesta (a lifelong habit) to recoup his forces. Then, spiritual reading and review for afternoon classes. Classes from 2:30 to 4:00, followed by a visit to the Church of the Forty Hours' Devotion and to the Rosary Shrine in the Church of St. Dominic (both visits never omitted, whether it rained or snowed). Then, usually, research in the Bishop's Library, where he often saw Jaume Balmes. It was still a long time before dinner and retiring.

One of his first concerns was to find a good confessor and spiritual guide. He found both in 34-year-old Fr. Peter Bach, and Oratorian, to whom he made a general confession and saw at least once a week throughout his stay in Vic. Fr. Bach allowed him to receive Communion once a week (rare in those days) and later, as much as four times a week. He had a daily half-hour of spiritual reading, mainly on the Passion. He also began fasting once a week and performing various forms of bodily penance six days a week. On Sundays he visited the sick in the hospital of Vic, not only consoling and instructing them, but also attending to their physical needs (washing them, tidying their rooms, etc.).

Throughout this first year he continued in his resolve to become a Carthusian. After his final examinations, armed with a letter of recommendation from Fr. Bach, he set out sometime in July, 1830 for the Charter house of Monte Alegre, by way of Barcelona and Badalona. He was in rather poor health, probably because of his former grueling work-schedule in Barcelona and his more recent ascetical excesses in Vic (at this time and for some years after, he often spat up blood). Before he reached Badalona, he was caught in a summer dust-storm which made him violently ill with chest-pains, nausea and near-suffocation. Taking this as a sign from heaven, he

abandoned his journey and with some embarrassment returned to Vic for good. In later life he spoke of his Carthusian leanings as a temporary vocation which God had used to wean him from the world until he could discover his permanent vocation as an apostolic missionary. (It is curious to note that three hundred years earlier, another great apostolic soul, the recently-converted Íñigo de Loyola, had considered entering the Carthusian house in Seville, but later his “desire to enter the Carthusians cooled” (cf. Chapter I of Ignatius’ *Autobiography*, dictated to Fr. Gonçalves da Câmara).

*[On the larger Spanish scene, in May of 1829 Queen Maria Josepha Amalia died, and later that year Ferdinand VII married his fourth wife, the young Neapolitan Princess, Maria Cristina de Borbón, his niece. On May 19, 1830, when the new Queen was four months pregnant, Ferdinand published his Father’s heretofore secret Act of 1789, abrogating the Spanish Salic Law (limiting royal succession to the male line) declared by Philip V in 1713, and reviving the ancient law of the Siete Partidas, which allowed a woman to succeed to the throne. This came as a thunderbolt to the King’s younger brother, Don Carlos María Isidro, who had every hope of succeeding to the throne and who, to make matters worse, had favored the marriage with Maria Cristina. On October 30, 1830 Maria Cristina gave birth to a girl, who received the name Isabella (after Spain’s greatest queen) and was at once proclaimed Princess of Asturias, which was the same as saying ‘heirress to the throne,’ unless the royal couple should produce a male heir. The scene was thus set for the outbreak of the Carlist War(s). Other events: Revolution in Paris leads to abdication of Charles X and election of Louis Philippe. First cholera epidemic in Europe. In the new world, Venezuela secedes from Colombia; Bolivar dies on December 17th.]*

**1831** (23 years old). He continued his philosophical studies in both public and private courses. Though he only received average grades in philosophy, he was always the brightest in science and mathematics. And while he had not formally studied humanities, he began giving some of his schoolmates regular Thursday-afternoon ‘classes’ in French, Latin and Science in his room at Fr. Bres’ lodgings.

Toward the beginning of 1831, during his second year of philosophy, he had constant colds, and frequently coughed up blood. One attack was so severe that he was ordered to bed for several days. On one of these days, at 10:30 in the morning, he began to feel a violent temptation against chastity, which persisted despite his turning and tossing, making Signs of the Cross, and invoking Mary, his Guardian Angel and all the Saints of his special devo-

tion. Suddenly he had a vision of Mary, St. Stephen and a group of Saints on one side of the room, and of the forces of Evil on the other. Mary offered him a crown of roses if he overcame the temptation. She then crowned a little child in the vision (whom Claret recognized to be himself), and then disappeared. After the temptation, Claret felt deep joy and peace, and was freed from carnal temptations for the rest of his life. This experience was so deeply engraved in his mind that he wrote of it in the first person in his Autobiography (nn. 95-98), and a number of times in the third person in other works. He called it a victory of Mary (to whom he attributed his missionary priesthood). It certainly freed him greatly for the exercise of his apostolic ministry. Here again, we find another similarity with Iñigo Loyola, who also had a vision of the Virgin and Child which protected him from carnal temptations for the rest of his life (cf. Ignatius, *Aut.*, ch. 1).

Another practice that was to affect Claret's missionary vocation both now and ever after, was his daily reading of three or four chapters of the Bible, as well as his study of the lives of the Saints. He also joined several fraternities or sodalities honoring Jesus and Mary.

This brings us up to the year 1832, from which his first extant letter dates.

Further biographical and historical background will be supplied in the Introductory Notes to each letter and, in a very few cases, in footnotes to the body of the letter.

Most of the letters are written in Castilian. If not, the language used in the original will be noted immediately after the title of the letter in question.

The number in **bold type** indicates the number in this selection of letters; the number in [brackets] indicates the number in the *Epistolario Claretiano*.

- **Joseph Clifton Daries, C.M.F.**

## I. LETTERS OF A SEMINARIAN AND PARISH PRIEST (1832 - 1840)

### 1. [1] To the Bishop of Vic

(EC I, 57-59)

#### Introductory Note

This first extant document in Claret's hand bears no date. However, from the accompanying certificates of Baptism and Confirmation, dated 1/21 and 1/31/1832, respectively, and sent (rather late) to the Bishop of Vic by Fr. Marian Cots, Pastor of St. Mary's in Sallent, it is reasonable to assume that the petition was written sometime in January of 1832. Claret received Tonsure from Bp. Paul of Jesus Corcuera (1776-1835) on February 2, 1832. Some thirty years later, Claret mistakenly stated (*Aut.* 90) that this happened in 1831, but a contemporary note by a chancery official states the correct date.

Bp. Corcuera was born in Cádiz in 1776. After obtaining his doctorate at the University of Osuna, the Bp. of Sigüenza took him under his patronage and ordained him in 1800. For distinguished service, he was made a Cathedral Canon in 1807. After the war of 1808, during the Bishop's forced absence, Corcuera ran the diocese until the Bishop returned in 1814, when he became Archdeacon of Almazán and Rector of the Seminary, from which position he was removed by Royal Order in 1822, because of his anti-liberal ideas. In 1825 he was made Bishop of Vic, where he remained until his death on 5 July 1835.

In 1831, Claret (like Iñigo Loyola some 300 years earlier) had been freed from carnal temptations by the Victorious Virgin, who appeared to him in a vision (*Aut.* 95-98). At his ordination to the Diaconate in 1834, Claret realized that this extraordinary Marian experience had been granted him in order to free him for his future priestly and missionary apostolate, toward which he was in a sense taking the first step by entering the clerical state through the reception of Tonsure, whereupon he received the "monk's benefice" [Monjía], one of the oldest Benefices of Royal Patronage of the church community of Sallent.

It should be noted that this and the next seventeen extant letters in the *Epistolario* (except the one in Latin to the Jesuit General) were written in Castilian. As noted in the Introduction, the Saint's grasp of Castilian left somewhat to be desired, except in those letters he first submitted to others for correction. For specifics, see the Introduction, as well as the notes to the letter of May 15, 1838. The reader can hardly miss the obsequious formalities observed in this and the following few letters.

### **Text**

[January (?), 1832]

Most Illustrious and Reverend Sir:

Anthony Claret, born in the Town of Sallent in Your Lordship's Diocese, a student of Philosophy in Your Lordship's conciliar seminary, attentively sets forth the following to Your Lordship:

That, whereas His Majesty [Ferdinand VII, d. 1833] has graciously offered him the Benefice known as "Mongia" of the Parish Church of the aforesaid Town of Sallent, it is necessary for its conferral and possession, that he first receive clerical tonsure.

He therefore begs that Your Lordship deign to enable him for this by conferring tonsure on him, should it please Your Lordship.

Looking forward to this favor from Your Lordship's bounty, and kissing Your Lordship's hand,

Anthony Claret  
Most Illustr. and Rev. Sir  
Petition to His Lordship.  
Anthony Claret, Student

## **2. [2] To the Bishop of Vic**

(EC I, 60-63)

### **Introductory Note**

All four Minor Orders were conferred on Claret on December 21, 1833 (cf. *Aut.* 100) in the Oratorian Church of St. Philip Neri in Vic. At the same ceremony, Claret's younger friend and admirer, the future Jesuit Philosopher Jaume Balmes (1810-1848), received the Subdiaconate. Claret had received glowing letters of recommendation

from his Pastor (Fr. Marian Cots), his confessor (Fr. Peter Bach of the Oratory), the directors of the Marian Sodality of Vic, and several townspeople of Sallent and Vic. His Pastor certifies that Claret, “during vacations from studies, lives at his parent’s house in this town, and has always given an example of virtue, modesty, retirement, frequent prayer and attendance at divine services, receiving the holy Sacraments every fifteen days or even more often.” In a further note dated 9 December 1833, he adds: “For as long as I have known him, every time the said cleric, D. Anton Claret, has stayed in this town, I have always observed his behavior to be so Christian and edifying that it could serve as a model for the imitation of many and for the confusion of not a few. Would that I could see him adorned as soon as possible with the sacred character of *Priesthood*, for the greater glory of God and the salvation of souls.”

Although the Saint suggests (*Aut.* 100) that he was advanced somewhat early to these Orders because of his age, Bishop Corcuera confided to his Majordomo, Fr. Fortian Bres (with whom Claret resided at the time), that he wanted to hasten the Saint’s ordination to the Priesthood, “because there is something extraordinary about him” (cf. *HD I*, 92-93).

### Text

Most Illustrious Sir:

Anthony Claret, Cleric, a native of St. Mary’s of Sallent and beneficiary of the same Church in the Diocese of Vic, 25 years of age, having completed the first year of the course in Scholastic Theology in the College of Vic, with due respect represents to Your Lordship:

That desiring to receive the four minor orders, and having been found to have the necessary requirements to that effect,

He humbly begs Your Lordship to be so good as to admit him for the examinations of the St. Thomas Ember Days, which he will regard as a special favor.

*Note:*

After his sixteenth year of age, the petitioner spent nearly four years [1825-29] outside the Town of his birth, in Barcelona.

Sallent, 20 September 1833

I kiss Your Lordship’s Ring.

Claret, Cleric

**3. [3] To the Bishop of Vic**

(EC I, 64-65)

**Introductory Note**

On behalf of his sister-in-law, Mary (wife of his older brother John), Claret asks Bishop Corcuera to bless and attach indulgences to a picture of Our Lady of Solitude. Bishop Corcuera complied, writing as follows in the left margin of the petition: "We grant forty days' indulgence to all who devoutly recite three Hail Marys and a Glory be to the Father before this holy image of Our Lady presented to us, in honor of the three days of her most bitter Solitude, and commending to her the needs of Holy Church, the Kingdom and this Diocese." This same picture, though framed in wood, survived a fire that burnt a number of objects immediately surrounding it. Thus it came to be regarded as an object of even greater veneration.

**Text**

Most Illustrious and Reverend Sir:

Mary Claret i Casajoana attentively represents to Your Lordship:

That, moved by her great devotion to the Blessed Virgin, she has purchased a picture of Our Lady of Solitude, which she hereby presents to Your Lordship in hopes that, should you see fit, you would deign to attach indulgences to it, in order to move her to still greater devotion.

She looks forward to receiving this grace and favor in view of your Lordship's well-known kindness.

Vic, 10 February 1834

For Mary Claret i Casajoana

Claret, Acolyte

**4. [4] To the Bishop of Vic**

(EC I, 66-68)

**Introductory Note**

On May 17, 1834, during the Whitsuntide Ember Days, Claret received the Subdiaconate in the Cathedral Church of St. Justus in Vic, at the hands of Bishop Corcuera. It was a long and crowded service, since candidates for Minor Orders, Subdiaconate, Diaconate

and Priesthood all received their respective Orders during it. Afterwards there was a highly emotional procession of the newly ordained through the main streets of the city. The most outstanding of the new priests wore a cope, assisted on either side by the leading deacon, Balmes, and the leading subdeacon, Claret.

1. The original of this letter is in the Episcopal Archives of Vic. To it are attached letters of recommendation from Fr. Bach, the Directors of the Marian Sodality, and various parishioners of Sallent and Vic (most of them in the cotton manufacturing trade). One of Claret's acquaintances from Sallent writes: "I have known the candidate since his birth, and believe that he has resided in Vic since he was ordained an Acolyte. I have often seen him receive the Sacraments and attend the various Offices, and know that he has a particular inclination to divine worship... I lived in Barcelona when the aforesaid Mr. Anthony Claret was studying Grammar there, and I observed that he received the Sacraments frequently and had a special devotion to the Holy Rosary." To these letters from Sallent, the Pastor, Dr. Marian Cots, adds: "Besides being in agreement with the truth of these testimonies, I would add that I am well persuaded that the aforesaid Acolyte, Mr. Anthony Claret, has persevered constantly in the practice of virtue, corresponding faithfully with the grace of God; that he still frequently receives, as he did while he was here, the holy Sacraments of Confession and Communion, not only every fortnight, but even more frequently; and finally, that I hope to see him become a worthy minister of the Most High. Sallent, 10 May 1834. -- Dr. Marian Cots, Priest, Rector."

### **Text**

Most Illustr. and Rev. Sir:

Anthony Claret, Acolyte, born in St. Mary of Sallent and a beneficiary of the Church of the same Town in the Diocese of Vic, being 26 years of age and a student in the second-year course of Scholastic Theology, with due respect represents to Your Illustrious Lordship:

That, desirous of receiving the Subdiaconate and having been found to possess the requirements necessary to that effect,

He humbly begs that Your Lordship would be so good as to admit him to the examinations during the Ember Days of Pentecost, which he would regard as a special favor.

Vic, 20 February 1834.

I kiss Your Lordship's Ring,  
Anthony Claret, Acolyte



## 5. [5] To the Bishop of Vic

(EC I, 69-70)

### Introductory Note

On December 30, 1834, the Ember Saturday of Advent, following a thirty-day retreat, Claret was ordained Deacon by Bishop Corcuera in the Church or Chapel of the Presentation (destroyed by the Spanish Marxists in 1937). At the same ceremony, Jaume Balmes was ordained to the Priesthood.

The day and the ceremony were memorable for Claret because of the special enlightenment he received from the Lord during the reading of the text of Ephesians 6:12, as the Saint himself tells us: "During that moment the Lord made me understand clearly the meaning of the demons I saw during the vision I described" (*Aut.* 101). Fr. Paul Vallier later stated that Claret had once confided to him that at that time he had seen a vision of the Deacon-Saints Stephen and Vincent, and had understood something of the great ministry and trials that lay before him (cf. *Claretian Annals* II (1890) 212, and *HDI*, 94).

Attached to this petition are letters of recommendation from the Pastor and parishioners of Sallent, and from the directors of the Marian Sodality.

### Text

Most Illustrious and Reverend Sir:

Anthony Claret, Subdeacon, most humbly and respectfully represents to Your Lordship:

That, after completing the second course of Scholastic Theology in Your Lordship's conciliar seminary, having spent his vacations in the study of Moral Theology, and having been found to possess the necessary requirements [for promotion to the Diaconate], now applies to Your Excellency, asking you to deign to admit him to the examinations of the Christmastide Ember Days.

Hoping to obtain this grace from Your Excellency's bountiful hand, I, your most attentive servant, kiss your ring,

Anthony Claret, Subdeacon  
Vic, 23 Sept. 1834

## 6. [6] To the Bishop of Vic

(EC I, 71-73)

### Introductory Note

“On the thirteenth of June, 1835, I was ordained to the priesthood, not by the Bishop of Vic, who had an illness of which he was to die on July 5, but by the Bishop of Solsona” (*Aut.* 102). The records of the Cathedral Chapter of Vic show that Bishop Corcuera in fact died on July 3, 1835. Of the forty-day retreat that preceded his ordination, the Saint tells us that “I have never made a retreat so full of sufferings and trials but neither, perhaps, so replete with great graces” (*ibid.*).

In the Register of Passports in the Municipal Archives of Vic, we find this entry for a passport granted to Claret on June 8, 1835: Don Anthony Claret, Deacon, duly subscribed, authorization to leave Vic and travel to Solsona for a month... Age, 27; stature, regular [He was in fact quite short]; hair, chestnut; eyes, brown; beard, thick; color, good” (Passport # 982).

On June 13, 1835, the feast of his Patron, Saint Anthony of Padua, in the Chapel of the Episcopal Residence at Solsona, Claret was ordained to the priesthood by the Bishop of that city, Fray John Joseph de Tejada, former Superior General of the Mercedarians. Eight days later, on June 21st, the feast of St. Aloysius Gonzaga (of whose Sodality he was a member), he sang his First Mass at Saint Mary’s Parish Church in his home town of Sallent. For an engaging account of these events, see John M. Lozano, *Anthony Claret: a Life at the Service of the Gospel* [Engl. transl. Joseph C. Daries, CMF] (Chicago-Los Angeles-Manila, 1985), pp. 37-38.

Attached to this petition are letters of recommendation from four clergymen of Vic, from the Directors of the Marian Sodality of St. Aloysius, and from his confessor, Fr. Peter Bach of the Oratory.

On the 100th anniversary of Claret’s Ordination, a plaque was placed in the Chapel of the Episcopal Residence to commemorate the event. For the 150th anniversary, a “Priestly Week” was celebrated in Vic under the presidency of the Claretian Superior General, Fr. Gustavo Alonso. The Acta of this Priestly Week were published as *Sacerdotes Misioneros al estilo de Claret* (Madrid, 1985), ed. by Rev. Aquilino Bocos, CMF, then Provincial Superior of the Claretian Province of Castile.

### Text

Most Illustrious Sir:

Anthony Claret, Deacon, born in Saint Mary of Sallent and a beneficiary of the same Town in the Diocese of Vic, most respectfully represents to Your Illustrious Lordship:

That, desirous of being promoted to the Sacred Order of the Presbyterate, he most humbly begs Your Lordship to be so good as to admit him to the examinations of the Ember Days of the Most Holy Trinity, which he will regard as a special grace.

Vic, 24 March 1835.

I kiss Your Lordship's Ring,  
Anthony Claret, Deacon

### 7. [7] To Doctor Melchior Solá

(EC I, 74-75; EC III, 10-11)

### Introductory Note

The addressee was Don Melchior de Solá, M.D. (the Saint's spelling is non-standard), a member of a well known local family. To clarify the situation alluded to in this letter, it should be noted that the Clerical Community of Sallent was supported by the income from 15 benefices, that is, Church properties to which an income was attached in view of some specified clerical service. 12 of these benefices were for "sons of the Town," i.e., native clergy of Sallent. The remaining 3, all of them named "of St. John," were for the support of whatever clergy applied and were accepted for them. The first was of Royal and Episcopal Patronage. The second was of Royal and Parochial Patronage, and was described as "de la Mongía" (cf. Letter 1, above), because it had once involved the services of something like a Sexton Major (bell-ringer, church maintenance, attendance at morning Mass on Feast days), although by 1832, when the 24-year-old Claret, at the suggestion of the Vicar General of Vic, applied for and obtained it, a layman was acting as bell-ringer and sacristan, while the cleric assigned had to say the Office for it and had to reside there on a limited basis (cf. *HD I*, p. 90). The third benefice, founded by Peter Carbonés, was of Particular Patronage and was administered by the holder of the Carbonés Farmhouse in the nearby Parish of Avinyó. The House of Vidal in Cabrianes was in charge of the properties of the Presbyteral Community of Sallent. In fact, most of the properties of the aforesaid

Community were located in Cabrianes, a famous neighboring parish which, with Sallent, formed part of the same municipality.

It seems, then, that the addressee of this letter had a clerical “friend,” who wanted to obtain for himself the Benefice of Carbonés, and in an earlier letter had asked a number of questions concerning this Benefice, which the Saint benefited from in his home parish. Claret is at pains to explain some of the less favorable “strings” attached to the income of this Benefice, which had been considerably reduced by the greed of the current liberal Government of Spain.

### Text

#### To Don Melchior Solá

My Dearest Sir and Friend:

I received your letter with great satisfaction and in answer to your question, I would inform you that the Benefice of Carbonés involves an income in an amount tallying with that of the attached list, all of which is taken from the benefits received by the Miter, clear of one-ninth of the Tithe. There is another tiny amount that I have not been able to verify, because the House of Vidal in Cabrianes takes care of the whole thing, and I have not been able to see them yet. Nevertheless, I am assured that this small amount I speak of would come to about a quarter of the combined yearly assets. That is all there is to it.

I should point out to you that as these benefits derive from the Tithe, of which the Nation now takes away half, only half of them will remain. This is so that your friend may understand.

Please bear in mind that I have had to deal with this matter through another person and have done the best I could, but all that I have told you about it is true. I am totally at your disposal. Please give my regards to your household and to your brothers.

Anthony Claret, Priest.

### 8. [8] To the Mayor of Sallent

(EC I, 76-77)

#### Introductory Note

Don Francisco Riera, the *Alcalde* (roughly equivalent to our office of *Mayor*) of Sallent, as well as his locally influential family, were

close friends of Mossèn Claret, as may be seen in the letters that follow. *Mossèn*, by the way, is the usual Catalan expression for a diocesan priest, equivalent to our English expression, "Father." *Padre* would ordinarily be applied to a religious, which is the reason why a number of Spanish works comment on the fact that Claret, though a diocesan priest, began to be referred to popularly as 'Padre Claret' during his days as an itinerant missionary in the 1840s.

The present letter reflects something of the troubled atmosphere of civil unrest at this time by reason of the Carlist Wars, which would continue sporadically for several years. The last paragraph and the postscript reveal how firm and resolute young Father Claret could be when he was convinced that God's honor was at stake. It has been suggested that the "ungodly crew" to which he refers circulated the following bit of doggerel verse: *Sallent, pobla xica I mala gent, fora el P. Claret que era el més dolent* - Sallent, small town, bad people, except for Fr. Claret, who was the meanest.

### Text

Parish of Sallent.

For several days now I have been the butt of some quite considerable insults at home, in church and outside it, and have thus far managed to put up with all of them most patiently. But now I find it necessary to inform you of the most recent incident which, though very small in comparison with some of the others, was done publicly and could thus have the direct consequences. Hence I feel obliged to mention it to you, although you may already have heard of it, namely, the indecent, irreverent and irreligious behavior of some who attend the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at noon. These impious persons regularly gather in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, at the door of the church and in front of the church.

Moved by what the Holy Gospel says [cf. Mt 18:15, Lk 17:3], I have gone a number of times to restrain them. But when I went to do so yesterday, those standing in front of the Church instead of hearing Mass, as soon as they saw me, left, hurling curses and epithets at me. But not all of them withdrew. Some brazened it out to my face, and I, since I had not that day been prepared for such conduct, withdrew. I deeply regret that I, wishing to imitate Jesus Christ when he cast the undevout out of the temple [cf. Mt 21:22 ff.], should have met with such a disgrace. I am sharing this with you in order that you may remedy such wickedness. Otherwise, I shall have to go to another

parish, so that I won't have to be continually struggling with such and such persons, whose names prudence bids me to pass over in silence. For although I can see that people of good will appreciate me better than I deserve, there is an ungodly crew who are vexed with me. And these people must be restrained by the civil authorities who will, in so doing, fulfill their duty by ridding the parish of the pesky crowd that is upsetting it so much. Meanwhile, I will calmly go about my duties, praying God to preserve your Honor for many years.

Sallent, 2 May 1836.

Anthony Claret, Priest and Econome.

P.S. The Reverend Community is unanimously agreed that you should be informed that, given the present circumstances, the May Procession should not pass through the public streets, but should be held within the Church.

## **9. [9] To the Town Council of Sallent**

(EC I, 78-79)

### **Introductory Note**

This official reply was addressed to the Town Council by Claret, in his capacity as Parish Vicar. To this day, nobody knows any more of the matter than Claret did in his time, nor does it seem likely that they ever will, because the parish archives of Sallent were burned during the Spanish Civil War in 1936. In the parish archives there were no less than 71 baptismal records signed by Mossèn Antoni as Vicar, the first of them dated 29 November 1836 and the last 25 September 1837.

### **Text**

#### **Curacy of Saint Mary of Sallent**

In answer to the official request of the 5th inst., in which I am asked for an account of the memorials, pious works, patronages and vacant chaplaincies in this jurisdiction, except those that are of blood or family, I must tell you that in this parish there is nothing to report save one Benefice which is vacant, and from time immemorial. It is indeed known that it was founded by Mr. Antrullol under the protection of Saint John, but nobody is keeping it up and I have been unable to learn even what this Benefice consists of. This is all that I have been

able to gather from the investigations I made with a desire to please your honored Corporation.

God keep Your Honors these many years.

Sallent, 10 September 1837.

Anthony Claret, Priest.

## 10. [10] **To the Hon. Francis Riera**

(EC I, 80-82)

### **Introductory Note**

While Claret was away from Sallent on a business trip to Vic, his adversaries accused him of going over to the “faction,” that is, the anti-government forces of the Carlist troops, who were then on the march toward Vic. Since his enemies couldn’t take revenge on the Saint directly, they took it out on his elderly father, John Claret Sr., whom they proposed to run out of town. This they were prevented from doing by the timely and effective intervention of the Mayor of Sallent, Don Francisco Riera.

The facts of the matter were as follows. On September 28th, two days after the Feast of St. Stephen, the Patron Saint of the Church, Claret had set out for Vic; however, the news of the Carlist advance led him not only to take a very roundabout way (through Olost, where his brother Joseph was the head of an important cotton textile factory), but also to disguise himself as a peasant. What Claret did not know --and this was what moved the Vicar General of Vic more than all the Saint’s reasoning-- was that Fr. John Domènech, the Parish Econome of Sallent, had in fact abandoned the Parish surreptitiously, so that there was now a far more serious “vacancy” in Sallent itself, which Claret would have to fill on October 29th, two weeks after he wrote this letter. Since no appointment had been made by the Liberal Government to fill the vacancy caused by Bishop Corcuera’s death in 1835, Msgr. Lluçia Casadevall (who governed the diocese of Vic as Vicar General until he was finally made its Bishop in 1848) was Claret’s ecclesiastical superior for several years. Casadevall’s relationships with Claret, whose apostolic potential he soon came to recognize (as other letters in this selection will show), were always most cordial.

As the next few letters will reveal, Claret was soon back in his post at Saint Mary’s in Sallent, where he would remain until his next eventful move in 1839.

**Text**

To Mr. Francis Riera  
Olost, 16 October 1837

My Very Dear Sir:

I was appalled to read two lines written to me by my dear Father, in which he informed me that they wanted to drive him out of town, although he did not tell me why. As I kept wondering what the reason might be, I at once sent an express letter asking him to tell me the reason. I added that if it was because people were accusing me of fleeing to go over to the faction, then it was a falsehood, and I could at once produce a certificate to prove it false. From his reply, I could see that I had hit the nail on the head, given my knowledge of the malice of certain Sallentines. But thanks be to the Almighty, who has seen to it that in the midst of such knaves there should still be some good people left, such as yourself and a few other worthy individuals. I tell you, Sir, with all the frankness and candor of a friend, that I have always held the House of Riera I Trabal to be most kindly disposed toward me; but now, by this action (as others have written to me), it has shown such great and evident proofs of its uprightness and kindness, that I shall never forget the impression it has left on me.

Now, so that you may know the motive behind my absence and current situation, I will inform you that in the evening of the very day we celebrated the Feast of our Patron Saint, I received a Dispatch from our Vicar General ordering me to go and act as regent of the Parish of Copons. Considering the size of that Parish, my lack of health (at times I still cough up blood), and above all the fact that I already hold a Benefice here [i.e., in Sallent], I resolved to take out a passport for Vic to see if I could persuade the Vicar General to change his mind. With this in mind, I set out; however, when I reached Olost I learned that the partisans were nearing Roda and Vic. On hearing this news, I did not wish to expose myself to danger along the road, and seeing that they continued lingering in the same vicinity, I stayed on here, to the great content of the Rector, who is disabled, and of the faithful, because I am working as much as I can. In the meantime I intend to remain here until the Vicar General stations me in a reasonable place, in keeping with what I have written him from here. Thus, I am prepared to serve everyone, but especially you, to whom I offer endless thanks and whom I will always regard as one of my truest friends, and as such I kiss your hand.

Anthony Claret, Priest.



## 11. [11] To the Town Council of Sallent

(EC I, 83-86)

### Introductory Note

This letter provides some interesting insights into Claret's qualities as a parish priest. He has received two communiqués from Barcelona: one from the civil government, the other from Bishop Martínez Sanmartín, both exhorting him to stir up sentiments of peace and charity among the faithful of his parish during these times of bitter animosity and even bloodshed between the opposing parties of the *Isabelinos* (who supported the reign of Queen Isabella II) and the *Carlistas* (who supported the claims of the Queen's uncle, Don Carlos de Borbón), to the right of succession to the throne. The Saint's plan for achieving civic harmony is, in typical Claretian style, both Eucharistic and Marian. Moreover, although his letter is as apolitical as possible, it is expressed in terms quite favorable to the legitimate government of Isabella II.

Claret shows good will and openness toward the Town Council in his desire to include them in the process required by the civil and ecclesiastical authorities in Barcelona. He also evinces tact in appealing to the good nature of the Council, gratefully recalling their help in response to earlier appeals (cf. letter of 2 May 1836).

On the more mundanely practical side, the Saint realizes that the ceremonies he is planning will involve additional expenses (candles, etc.) and has anticipated any objections on this score by assuring the Council that such expenses will be defrayed by special donations from a few individuals of good will.

From the closing, it can be seen that Claret has not only been restored to the Parish of Sallent as Parochial Vicar, but has assumed the added responsibilities of Parish Econome.

### A Linguistic Note

Although Fr. Gil is fairly consistent in noting the Saint's misspellings in the original, it would be foolish to try to convey them in a translation. Moreover, to note every occurrence in a footnote would be largely meaningless to those readers who do not know either Castilian or Catalan. The translator has therefore decided to dwell on the mistakes in this one letter --which contains far more errors (some 23 in all) than the Saint usually makes-- so as to give the reader a general notion of some of Claret's lapses in spelling.

1) *Escma* = *Excma.*, an abbreviation for *Excelentísima*, meaning “most excellent,” “most worthy,” etc. In his early years, Claret had a tendency to write “cs” instead of “x.” Here, he compounds the error by reversing his usual “cs” to “sc.” 2) *Máscimas* = *máximas* (“cs” for “x”). 3) *Esprecions* = *expresiones*, represents a double error: (“es-” = “ex-” and “-cions” = “-siones,” which reveals that Claret pronounces Catalan *expressions* as if it were spelled *espressions*, and carries this pronunciation into Castilian *expresiones*, and that he pronounces “c” like “s,” instead of the unvoiced “th” pronunciation of “c” or “z” in Castilian. 4) *Realisan* = *realizan*, again revealing the “s” pronunciation of a Castilian unvoiced “th” sound for “z.” 5) *Sorprehendido* - *sorprendido*, perhaps a rather Latinate hypercorrection. 6) *Ardientamente* = *ardientemente*, most likely because Claret pronounces an unaccented “e” or “a” with the same obscure Catalan sound. 7) *Cabar* = *acabar*, reflecting careless spelling, as well as the lightness of the unaccented initial “a,” which often leads to elision in everyday correct pronunciation in Catalan. 8) *trahe* = *trae*, another hypercorrection. 9) *Paralisado* = *paralizado*, “s” pronunciation of “z” (cf. Catalan *paralitzat*). 10) *Feroses* = *feroces*, again, an “s” for a “c.” 11) *Escma* = *Excma* (cf. number 1 above). 12) *Enarquia* = *anarquía*, again, a confusion of the unaccented “e” and “a” in Catalan, and the omission of the written acute accent on the “i,” as Claret does here and elsewhere in his correspondence, reflecting the different accentual rules of Catalan and Castilian. 13) *Ferosidades* = *ferocidades*, cf. number 10 above. 14) *Vatiendo* = *batiendo*. Confusion between “v” and “b” is common in several parts of Spain and Latin America. 15) *Gobierno* - *gobierno* (same reason). 16) *Inpio* = *ímpio*, reflecting everyday Catalan pronunciation and nonstandard spelling. 17) *Sismatico* = *cismático*, reflecting “s” pronunciation of “c” and the omission of the acute accent. 18) *Explicar* = *explicar*, indicating that Claret spells as he pronounces (cf. number 3 above). 19) *Esponer* = *exponer*, for the same reason. 20) *Echo* = *hecho*, omitting the silent initial “h.” 21) *Les* = *lo*, not a spelling mistake, but the use of the wrong pronoun. 22) *Sesacen* = *cesasen*, revealing double confusion of “s” and “c” sounds, which Claret obviously mispronounces and hence misspells. 23) *Alcansar* = *alcanzar*, cf. number 9 above. Many of these and similar errors continue (though at a lesser rate) throughout Claret’s correspondence.

## Text

Parish of Sallent.

By way of the Mayor of Manresa, I have just received some formulas or models and ordinances on parish matters from the Most

Worthy Deputation of Barcelona, and also a Pastoral Letter from His Excellency, the Bishop of Barcelona, together with an official letter in which the latter tells me to impress carefully on the minds of the faithful such maxims of peace and charity as are in our common interest. After expressing his mind firmly on the matter, he ends by telling me that he trusts I will do everything in my power to see to it that his wishes are carried out.

Considering, gentlemen, the bond of love which through God's grace unites us, I cannot hide from you how pleasantly surprised I am to see the Deputation so moved by sentiments of piety and religion as to take steps toward bringing about the peace and union we all yearn for, thus putting an end to this war that has so long afflicted us. Who would not second their desires? Who would not strive with all his might to end this war that brings every evil with it? It would be useless for me to try to portray for you the horrors that are the natural spawn of war, since you yourselves have witnessed the host of homes razed, people scattered and exiled, commerce paralyzed and everything turned topsy turvy. In a word, this Spanish Nation which in other times was the most humane, peaceful and religious country, is today the theater of inhumanity and irreligion, owing to a war that has turned this noble, well-ordered Republic into a howling desert of barbarians. All you need do is look around you, and you will see nothing but misery, hatred, enmity, rage and bloodshed.

Let us then, gentlemen, make common cause with the Worthy Deputation, taking refuge in the shade of our holy Religion, begging the Lord of Hosts and the Virgin Mary, Mother of Peace, to assist us in our trials and grant us the peace and charity we so need. As the Deputation is well aware, without the faithful observance of Religion we cannot have peace and happiness. Put it to the test. Try to forget the observance of Religion, and instead of peace you will have continual anarchy. Instead of charity and union you will see nothing but vengeance and ferocity even to the death. In effect, if the National Eagle is to remain well and happy, it must keep the two wings of Politics and Religion beating in tandem.

Gentlemen, I cannot conceal from you the twofold joy I feel. On the one hand, I rejoice to see the Deputation moved by these pious principles and maxims; for this is not only the sole way to achieve peace and happiness, but also the defending wall that restrains the Adversary, who is constantly accusing the Government of Queen Isabella II (whom God preserve) of impiety, blasphemy, heresy and schism. On the other hand, my joy is doubled at seeing the justice, piety and religion with which you, too, are animated. Indeed, it seems

to me that I would deserve the brand of rankest ingratitude if I did not offer you my heartfelt thanks for having helped me as often as I have sought your aid in restraining the unruly and the profane.

Hence, while I am eager to put into practice the dispositions of the Deputation, who have left the manner of doing so to my prudent judgment, I have nonetheless chosen to share it with you, so as to profit from your advice. For I am of a mind to add or subtract this or that detail according to what you may be pleased to advise me, which I hope you will do, either by word or in writing.

What I propose to do is this: to explain the Holy Gospel on Feast days at the main Mass, and then in the evening, after the customary and obligatory catechism of the little ones, to expose the Blessed Sacrament for a while, after the manner of the Forty Hours Devotion. This I would do on one Sunday or Feast day, while on the next I would hold a rather solemn Rosary to Mary, alternating these services as is done in other places. All of this could be accomplished without placing the slightest burden on any group. For as I was planning this, I shared it with a few of the faithful, and they assured me of an alms from themselves and from a few others. And although I have not yet had a chance to inform those others, I nevertheless feel sure that they will be only too happy to contribute to such a holy devotion.

Therefore I ask you to approve this plan. My aim in putting it forward is none other than to second the desires of the Deputation and to promote the piety we need so much. And as the Blessed Sacrament and the Virgin Mary are the very hinges of all piety, justice and devotion, it seemed to me to be the most opportune way to put it into effect. But for all this, I repeat, if you see anything that needs to be emended, please tell me of it and I shall humbly listen to you. And should it please you to help me, I will be much beholden to you, especially if you can see your way clear to have all gaming houses and taverns suspend their operations during the canonical hours, or at least during the time of these services, which are being held for the public good. This would doubtless increase attendance and reverence at these holy services, and thus obtain from the Father of all mercies and the God of all consolation [cf. 2 Cor 1:3] the blessings we so need, namely, peace, order and justice.

May God keep Your Honors safe for many years.

Sallent. 15 May 1838.

Anthony Claret, Priest and Econome.

## 12. [12] To the Diocesan Board of Vic

(EC I, 87-88)

### Introductory Note

From the outset of his priestly life, it seems to have been Claret's custom to enlist some of the neighboring clergy as his associates in ministry during the Lenten Season. Naturally, the host-parish would pay the extra expenses for their upkeep. In this Lent of 1839, Claret had four priests whom he fed not only materially but also spiritually by his example and practical wisdom. This appears to be our first glimpse of an idea that would take final shape ten and a half years later in the founding of his Congregation of Missionaries.

At the time this letter was written, Sallent had a little over two thousand inhabitants (the 1847 census lists 2,564), but it also served the needs of various other small towns in the surrounding area. Here again we see an instance in which *Claret i Clará* lives up to his family name, "clear and clear." He is by no means bashful in tweaking the nose of the Diocesan Board over their remissness in paying him what they already owe him, and in reminding them of the sad consequences that were likely to follow their tight-fisted lack of zeal in providing for the maintenance of the visiting clergy.

### Text

Parish of Sallent.

I am relying on your zeal to be so good as to send me such provisions as you deem suitable in order to maintain me together with my four fellow workers, to wit, the Rev. Joseph Planas, Vicar, the Rev. Joseph Costa, Master, the Rev. Joseph Prat, Econome of Sanmartín and the Rev. James Oliveras, Regent of Castellnou, who are doing me the favor of helping me throughout the present Lenten services in this most numerous parish.

Now as the parish must maintain them, and as I have not been allotted anything except 3,000 reales in specie (two thirds of which I have not yet received), I am hoping that, in your sense of fairness, you will not only make provision for what is still owed me, but will also send me what I need for the aforesaid indispensable expenditure. Otherwise I would find myself in the painful situation of having to let the parish down before the Lenten services are over, which I would

very much dislike having to do, because of the great harm it would cause to many of the faithful.

God keep you all for many years.

Sallent, 17 February 1839.

Anthony Claret, Priest and Econome.

### **13. [13] To Mr. Joseph Camps**

(EC I, 89)

#### **Introductory Note**

It is interesting to note that ever since he began signing as “Econome” of St. Mary’s, Claret had become busier and busier. Gone are the days when he could simply fulfill the requirements of his Benefice, study, say Mass, hear Confessions, catechize, visit the sick and alternate with the Pastor in preaching on Sundays and Feast days. Now he must attend to a number of financial and organizational tasks.

In the preceding letter, we saw his concern for working in collaboration with other priests during Lent -- a “peak moment” for the evangelization of the parish. In view of the Saint’s next move (as evinced in the letter that follows this one), we note a growing disenchantment with the limitations of parish ministry as it was practiced in his day.

It might not be out of place to remind the modern reader that preaching was much longer and much more of a social event in those days of limited communications and entertainment.

In the present letter we glimpse one more facet in Claret’s ministry, that of Docent in Theology, for which the Diocese and his fellow priests must have thought him qualified, as is shown by his ability to issue this kind of certificate.

#### **Text**

I, the undersigned, Econome of the Parish Church of Saint Mary of Sallent, in the Diocese of Vic,

Certify that Mr. Joseph Camps, a Student of Theology, has attended conferences in that subject which I, for the space of eight months, have been giving in this same parish.

And in proof thereof I issue the present certification in Sallent at the beginning of the month of July, eighteen hundred and thirty-nine.

Anthony Claret, Priest, Econome.

## 14. [14] To the Jesuit Superior General

(In Latin: EC I, 90-93)

### Introductory Note

This letter reveals the true direction in which Claret's restless zeal had been leading him. In the opening chapters of Part Two of his *Autobiography*, he tells us how he began his quest for a universal apostolate and eventually entered the Jesuit novitiate in Rome. The story of his journey by land and sea to the Eternal City is a little gem of colorful narrative writing (cf. *Aut.* 121-136). The present letter is the declaration he made on November 11, 1839, two days before he was invested in the Jesuit soutane. About the exact date of his entrance into the Novitiate, see the last note to this letter.

The special interest of this document lies in the fact that it forms, so to speak, the Saint's first "autobiography." Within the official framework of the declaration, he provides information on his birthplace, family and aspirations. He gathers together the data required for entry into the Society (or, as he calls it, the Company) of Jesus. He mentions his parents, brother and sisters, but only to the effect that they are not dependent on him for support. He discloses some of his vocational qualities, but only in order to establish that he has an apostolic vocation.

This passion for the apostolic ministry was a very good recommendation for entry into an Institute whose Constitutions state that its aim is not only the glory of God and the salvation of its members, but also "to strive intensely (*impense*) to assist in the salvation and perfection of the souls of their neighbors." On this passage, Rodriguez comments: "Not just in any way, but *impense*, a word of vehemence, efficacy and fervor" (cf. *Practice of Perfection*, pt. 3, ch.1 [Barcelona 1861], p. 1. *Ex libris Claret* ).

By this standard, Claret could have become a great Jesuit, but God had destined him for other apostolic undertakings -- indeed, to become the father of many apostles (cf. *Aut.* 167).

## Text

I, Anthony Claret, was baptized on the 25th day of December, the Birthday of Our Lord, in the year 1808,<sup>1</sup> in the Parish of Saint Mary of Sallent, in the Diocese of Vic, the Province of Catalonia, the Kingdom of Spain, having been born the day before.<sup>2</sup> I am the legitimate and natural-born son of the wedded couple, John Claret, textile maker, and Josepha Clará, both still living, but not dependent on me for support.

I have two Brothers, both manufacturers, each of whom has a large factory.<sup>3</sup>

I also have two sisters, one of whom is married to a manufacturer, while the other, though single, has absolutely no need of my support, because her parents and other brothers are alive and well.<sup>4</sup>

From early childhood until my eleventh year, I studied Christian Doctrine, Reading and Writing in the town's public school, under the direction of Mr. Anthony Pascual.<sup>5</sup> When I was eleven, I began studying Latin Grammar under Dr. John Riera, priest and public teacher, for a year.<sup>6</sup> But as the latter gave up teaching, I could no longer study, and had to join my father at work, where he taught me the art of textile manufacturing until I was seventeen. At that time I was sent to Barcelona to perfect myself in the art of manufacturing, in which I managed to do very well (if I do say so myself).

But after living there for three years, I could clearly see, by a light from above, the deceptiveness of the ways of the world. And thus, after long and mature thought, I decided to leave all things and

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<sup>1</sup>Although he was baptized on Christmas Day, 1807, the Saint says "1808," because his name is included in the baptismal record for 1808 of the Church's New Year, which began in Advent of 1807.

<sup>2</sup>The *pridie* ("day before," i.e., December 24th) of the Saint's declaration stands contradicted by his baptismal record, which states that he was *ante pridie natus* (i.e., born on December 23rd). Although there are those who support the 24th as the correct date, the weight of authority tends to favor the 23rd.

<sup>3</sup>John Jr. owned his father's workshop, while Joseph owned his own factory in Olost.

<sup>4</sup>His favorite sister, Rose, was married to Joseph Muntanyola. The unmarried sister, Mary, who served for a short time as Claret's housekeeper in Sallent, would later become a Carmelite Sister of Charity, in which she became Novice mistress. By the time this letter was written, six of the Saint's brothers and sisters --Marian, Bartholomew, Peter, Frances, Manuel and an unnamed baby sister-- had already died.

<sup>5</sup>Pascual received his bachelor's degree from the University of Cervera and was Anthony's teacher throughout his elementary schooling.

<sup>6</sup>Claret attended only one course, and perhaps not a complete one, because Dr. Riera died and the Latin School was closed in 1819.



follow Christ in the clerical state, and with this in mind I studied Latin Grammar for another year under Dr. Francis Artigas, a Royal Teacher in the same city of Barcelona.<sup>7</sup>

Afterwards my parents sent me to the Tridentine Seminary of the Diocese of Vic, where for three years I studied Philosophy, using the text of Andrew de Guevara.<sup>8</sup>

For three years in the same Seminary, as well as one year outside it with due permission, I studied the Sacred Theology of Saint Thomas.

We covered the treatises on God and His Attributes, the Trinity, the Angels, human acts, laws, virtues, the Incarnation, and the state of the soul after death.

For three years I studied Moral Theology privately, with the advice and approval of the Vicar General and the Superior of the Seminary, using the text of Fr. Lárraga<sup>9</sup> and the Compendium of Saint Alphonsus Liguori.

After finishing my third year of Scholastic Theology, I was promoted to the Sacred Order of Presbyterate. But because I was burning with zeal for the salvation of souls, and since I had already studied Moral Theology privately, I was examined and approved to preach and hear Confessions.<sup>10</sup> In this capacity I spent two years and two months as spiritual assistant or vicar, and a year and ten months as curate econome, of Saint Mary's Parish, Sallent, in the Diocese of Vic.

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<sup>7</sup>Don Francisco Más y Artigas, nicknamed "the Blind," because of his bad eyesight, lived to see Anthony become a Missionary and an Archbishop, and dedicated his Latin-Spanish Dictionary to him. The Saint sought his old teacher's advice more than once, as is clear from remarks in his correspondence (cf. Letter to Caixal, 11 June 1848, translated below).

<sup>8</sup>Claret, understandably, makes no mention of his frustrated intentions of becoming a Carthusian, which he later came to regard as a "temporary vocation" whereby the Lord wanted to wean him from the things of this world (cf. Aut. 93). The Saint refers here to the *Institutionum elementarium Philosophiae ad usum mexicanae juventutis* (Rome 1796), 8 vols. by A. de Guevara y Basoazábal. This course, both in Latin compendiums and Spanish translations, was the basic teaching text in philosophy in Spain during the first half of the 19th century.

<sup>9</sup>The Moral Theology text prescribed by the Seminary of Vic was that of the Salmanticenses, but for his own study Claret preferred the *Prontuario* of Fr. Francis Lárraga, a work which he later updated and published.

<sup>10</sup>He took his examination on July 25, 1835 and received broad faculties as preacher and confessor. On August 2, 1835 he heard confessions for the first time -- for six consecutive hours!

I am in sound health,<sup>11</sup> short in stature,<sup>12</sup> and not very facile of memory.<sup>13</sup>

I am strongly inclined to spiritual exercises, especially visiting the sick, hearing confessions and in exhorting the people, in such wise that I am tireless in these works, as I myself have observed during the past four years.

Rome, 11 November, 1839.<sup>14</sup> Anthony Claret, Spanish Priest.

## 15. [15] To the Spanish Ambassador in Rome

(EC I, 95-96)

### Introductory Note

For details of the intervening events in Claret's life, see chapters 5 and 6 of Part II of the *Autobiography*. Claret left the Jesuit Novitiate on March 3, 1840. On March 7th, exactly five months after his arrival in Rome, he wrote this letter asking the Spanish Ambassador before

<sup>11</sup>Until late 1837 he still had occasional hemorrhages, as he remarked in passing in a letter to Mayor Riera: "at times I cough up blood" (cf. Letter # 10 above).

<sup>12</sup>In 1891, his exhumed body measured 1.55 meters (approximately 5 ft. 1 in.), counting the thickness of his episcopal slippers. Regarding his stature and his apostolic vocation, he noted down the following lines from Bartholomew of the Martyrs' *Stimulus Pastorum*: "Thus we say of a short man with a loud voice: 'He is all voice.' And in Aesop's *Fables* we read that the wolf, hearing the nightingale's voice, though it must be a quite corpulent bird; but having once seen it, he exclaimed disenchantedly, 'You're all voice -- a mere nothing!' Let us all be nightingales of the Lord, then, and nothing but the Lord's voice. Let the world scorn us as being abject and of little bodily appearance, so long as we may be with all our being the voice of God and nothing more" (*Stimulus Pastorum* [Valencia 1695], p. 49. *Ex libris Claret*).

<sup>13</sup>In fact, he had an extraordinarily good memory, as many contemporaries attest. Fr. Feu, an Oratorian from Vic, stated that Claret "retained whatever he read" (Informative Process of Vic, sess. 44). In the biographical resumé published in connection with his appointment as archbishop, mention is made of his "tenacious memory, about which there are as many impressive stories as there are of his countryman, the lamented Balmes" (*Bulletin of the Spanish Clergy* [Madrid 1849], p. 11).

<sup>14</sup>This is not the exact date of his entrance into the Novitiate. The *Liber admissorum et dimissorum*, p.23, expressly states that it was October 30th, but the *Daybook of the Novitiate-House*, which the Minister, Fr. Geminiano Mislej, S.J. most carefully kept, gives these dates under 1839: "Oct. 29, Tues.-- D. Claret, Ant., on Prob. Oct. 30, Wed.-- The Spanish Prst. enters." In the *Libro degli ESAMI*, we find the following entry in Claret's own handwriting: "Antonius Claret, Pbrter, ingressus die 29 Octobris anno, 1839, respondi ad omnia affirmative." Finally, in his *Daybook* for 1840, Fr. Mislej notes the date of Claret's departure from the novitiate: "29 Feb. Saturday. Fr. Claret leaves for [reasons of] health."

the Holy See to help him retrieve his Passport from the French, who had taken it from him at Marseilles. The French, who had lost the Passport, issued him a new one on March 15th, and Claret embarked from Civitavecchia on March 19th, the Feast of St. Joseph.

### **Text**

Most Illustrious Sir:

Anthony Claret, a Spanish priest of the Diocese of Vic, represents to Your Honor:

That having come some five months ago to this city of Rome as an already ordained Priest, not for any political reason (as the enclosed Certificate clearly shows), but for his sacred ministry, and having now to return to Spain for reasons of failing health, he needs the Passport which he brought from France, since the French kept the one he had brought from Spain; and as this requires your permission or certification, the petitioner looks to obtain this from the kindness of your heart.

God keep Your Excellency for many years.

Rome, 7 March 1840.

Anthony Claret, Priest.

### **16. [16] To Mrs. Angela Pons**

(EC I, 97-99)

### **Introductory Note**

As the heading of the letter makes clear, Claret is not only back in Spain, but is again on the job, this time in the small foothill town of Viladrau, Southwest of Vic.

Claret feels obligated to make his excuses for not visiting Mrs. Pons and her family in Manresa, where the Jesuits had invited him to recuperate, while ministering in that Ignatian and Isabelline city. Meanwhile, he had received another invitation from Fray Fermín de Alcaraz, a Capuchin preaching missions in Berga (then General Headquarters for the Carlists), to minister with him there. The Saint did not accept either offer, but chose to retire for the moment to Olost among his relatives, and then go on to Vic, to consult with Msgr. Lluçia Casadevall, the Vicar General of the See of Vic, which would remain vacant for several more years following the death of Bishop Corcuera.

Msgr. Casadevall missioned him to the parish of Viladrau, whose elderly and infirm Pastor, Fr. Francis Corominas, could not handle the situation, even with the help of his assistant, an exclaustated Trinitarian. Viladrau had been sacked no less than 13 times during the recent civil conflict, leaving the townspeople bereft of goods and services, including medical help, which Claret would soon find himself called upon to supply through his newly-acquired skills as an herbalist. The mountain climate seems to have suited Claret admirably, since he began to recuperate there. In his *Autobiography* (nn. 167-182), the Saint offers many of the details of his stay in Viladrau. The letter opens with a well-drawn sign of the cross.

### **Text**

To Mrs. Angela Pons.  
From Viladrau, 29 May 1840.  
Esteemed and Dear Lady:

In view of our discussions, I think I should inform you that after I had made up my mind to move to Manresa, I received a letter from a close priest-friend who was most insistent in urging me to join him in the matter I told you about. But in order to be more sure in my deliberations, I went to Vic to consult with my Superiors, who told me that for the moment I should do neither of the things I mentioned, but that I should for the time being go to the Parish of Viladrau, which is in great need, not only because the disabled condition of the Pastor, but also because of the demoralization that the war has caused there, perhaps more than in any other Town. I obeyed, and in truth I have seen with my own eyes that much good could be done in the aforesaid Parish. I have been at great pains to do so, hoping that the Lord will send His holy blessing on my works. Meanwhile we must wait and see when my Superior may see fit to allow your servant to travel to Manresa.

Be so good as to share what I am telling you with my friend, Fr. Peter Cruells, offering him my regards. You and your whole household may rely on your most devoted Servant and unworthy Chaplain,

Anthony Claret, Priest.  
To Mrs. Angela Pons,  
whom God keep for many years.  
Calle Sobre Roca,  
Manresa.

## 17. [17] **To the Vicar Capitular of Vic**

(EC I, 100-101)

### **Introductory Note**

The present letter is really only a rough draft written on a piece of scratch paper, beneath a note in Catalan which reads as follows:

“St. Teresa. He who seeks you is the L[ord] who will judge us.

Case of the man told that unless he changed his life he would die.

Case of the one who was able to call on the name of Jesus.

Tree they wanted to cut down.”

Although this note (found some 90 years later by Fr. John Postius in one of the Saint’s books in Madrid) bears no date, it was doubtless written very early during Claret’s stay at Viladrau, probably in May or June of 1840. The Saint took possession as Regent of the Parish on May 13, 1840 and left Viladrau for good on January 23rd of the following year, when he moved to Vic in order to pursue the preaching of Missions, which he had begun doing in Viladrau in August of 1840.

The situation was this: The diocesan statutes forbade the ringing of church bells, except at the morning Mass, at which there was an explanation of the Gospel and, at the main Mass, which was more solemn and was attended by the largest congregation, at which an instruction in Christian Doctrine was given. During the civil war, this prescription had been set aside, and bells were rung for all Masses. This unauthorized custom prevailed at the time when Mossèn Claret arrived in town. By means of this letter, he wanted not only to accommodate the desires of his flock, but also to satisfy his own conscience that a diocesan regulation was not being broken while he was in charge. The letter opens with the abbreviations, “A.C.R. y Al. y Ayunt. de la misma” (= Anthony Claret, Regent, together with the Alcalde [Mayor] and Ayuntamiento [Town Council] of the same Parish). Here we see another instance (cf. Letter 11 above) of Claret’s desire to involve lay leaders in the decision-making process. By the way, as we shall see in Letter 22, he would encounter just the opposite problem in the parish of Sant Joan d’Oló in 1842.

### **Text**

A.C.R., together with the Mayor and Town Council.

The presenters are not unaware of the synodal determinations and constitutions forbidding this and other Parishes to ring bells on Holy Days, except for the morning Mass and the main Mass: at the morning Mass, so that more people may hear Christian Doctrine and the explanation of the Holy Gospel, and at the main Mass, because of its solemnity. Nevertheless, since it has been a custom in these parts for some years, because of the war, to ring the bells for all Masses celebrated on such days, the faithful of this Town now feel somewhat concerned about their compliance with the rule forbidding the ringing of bells for all but the morning and main Mass.

And so that you may see that the faithful of Viladrau do not hold the statutes of their diocese in contempt, the presenters, as the representatives of the whole Town, bring this request before your worship, asking that you would deign to grant the corresponding permission to ring the bells before the celebration of all Masses, over and above the morning and main Mass, on all Feast days. This favor they hope to obtain from you out of the kindness of your zealous and pious heart.

### **18. [18] To Miss Lucy Dordal**

(EC I, 102; EC III, 20)

### **Introductory Note**

This is Claret's last known letter written from Viladrau, which he left for good on January 23, 1841, to set up his headquarters in Vic, whence he would be sent out by the Vicar General on preaching assignments in and beyond the boundaries of the diocese.

Two things catch our eye in this letter, namely, that the signatories are acting as proxy for the persons who should be issuing these letters of referral and safe-conduct. Claret is acting "during the indisposition of the Pastor," which is a polite way of referring to the elderly, sick, cranky and incapacitated Fr. Corominas. As we remarked above, Claret was not alone in running the parish. He had the help of Fr. Joseph Vilanova, an exclaustrated Trinitarian, a native of Viladrau, who mainly attended to temporalities, although he was also obliged by his office to attend to the spiritual needs of the people. Because of this, Claret was able to preach his first Missions outside

of Viladrau, the success of which would lead to his amazing ministry as an Apostolic Missionary throughout Catalonia during the next seven years. It should be recalled that Claret's fame as a healer began here in Viladrau, which was one of the reasons why the parishioners dreaded the thought of his leaving. The Bailiff was simply away at the time, hence one of the town's Aldermen, Mr. Ignasi Vier, signs in his stead.

### **Text**

The undersigned Parish Curate and the Bailiff of the parish of Viladrau, in the Diocese of Vic, hereby certify:

That Lucy Dordal, unmarried, born in Barcelona and domiciled in the town of Viladrau, in whose parish she has remained at all times, has never given the least reason for suspicion, but rather has been utterly irreproachable in her conduct, taking very great care to attend divine services and to frequent the sacraments.

And that it may be known that she may fittingly be received into any town, we issue the present certification, at the request of the interested party, on the twenty-third of July eighteen-hundred and forty.

During the indisposition of the Pastor,  
Anthony Claret, Priest and Vicar.  
During the absence of the Bailiff,  
Ignatius Vier, Alderman.

## II. LETTERS OF AN ITINERANT MISSIONARY (1841-1849)

APOSTLE OF CATALONIA AND OF THE CANARY ISLANDS

### 19. [19] To Mossèn Pere Cruells

(Claret's first extant letter in Catalan: EC I, 103-105)

#### Introductory Note

Mossèn Pere Cruells (whom Claret greeted *via* Mrs. Pons in Letter 16 above), Archpriest and Pastor of the Cathedral of Manresa, collegiate Canon and chaplain of the hospital of the Sisters of Charity, was a friend of Claret before the Saint left for Rome. Cruells, a great admirer of Claret and backer of his enterprises, once wrote to Bp. Casadevall concerning him: "I would have expected no less a harvest from our Claret, who is truly one great prodigy." Indeed, they were such good friends that Claret felt free to take up most of this letter sending greetings and messages to others through Cruells.

After informing Cruells that he is at last recovered from his long illness, he sends greetings to Sister Dolores (who now resides in Manresa, but whose family were friends of Claret in Vic), congratulating her on her retreat and profession (at which he could not officiate because he was both busy and ill). He also offers her a biblical comparison in which Ahasuerus = Jesus, Esther = Sister Dolores, Claret = Mordecai, and the Hebrew People = the Spanish Nation. The multiple greetings at the end are added in order to save time in the midst of his already busy schedule.

This letter is exceptionally valuable, since it is, if not the first, at least the earliest-known of the personal letters he wrote in his native tongue, Catalan.



**Text**

J.M.J.

To the Rev. Peter Cruells, Priest.  
Vic, 7 February 1841.

My Dear and Esteemed Sir:

Because of my present arrangements, I can do no less than inform you that Monday I arrived from Barcelona entirely cured of my illness. From now on, I'll be established in Vic, working in the surrounding area, arranging some of my affairs and ready to serve you.

Do me the favor of telling Sister Dolores that I am very glad to hear of her profession and that they have resolved to make their retreat under the direction of someone other than me, because they could see how long they might have had to wait because of my physical indisposition. Tell her that now that she is espoused to Jesus, she must act as Esther did toward King Ahasuerus, namely, to ask graces for me and for the Spanish Nation. Tell her that I saw her uncle Francis when we dined together at Mossèn Fortian's house last Tuesday. Finally, tell her that I have not written to her directly, so that I would not have to multiply letters and that I might, so to speak, be able to "kill two birds with one stone." For I am so busy and have so little time, that I find myself obliged to economize in everything.

Regards to her and to the whole Reverend Community, asking them to commend me to God. --If you have the time, extend my regards also to the other Communities, especially the Sisters of Charity.

Regards to all my friends, and in particular to the girls, Josie and Josepha, and feel free to rely on your servant, who kisses your hand,

Anthony Claret, Priest.

## **20. [20] To the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda Fide**

(In Italian: EC I, 106-107)

### **Introductory Note**

The Vicar General to whom Claret refers is Msgr. Lluçia Casadevall i Duran (1785-1852). A native of Vic, Casadevall was ordained in 1809, received his doctorate in Cervera in 1811 and obtained a benefice at the Cathedral of Vic in 1814. The following year King Fer-

dinand VII bestowed a canonry on him. For twenty years he served as Secretary of the Cathedral Chapter, and after Bp. Corcuera's death was appointed Vicar General *sede vacante* of the diocese of Vic, a post in which he served for eleven years, to the great benefit of the diocese, so much so, in fact, that Pope Gregory XVI wrote him a letter lauding him for his good work. He was named Bishop-elect of Vic in January 1848, was consecrated in July and took possession of his See in October of that year. During all this time, Casadevall is the one to whom Claret refers as his "prelate" or "ecclesiastical superior."

While he was still in Viladrau, Claret began his famous *Missions* on August 15, 1840. His fame as a wonder-worker also began there, mainly because of the series of remarkable healings that began to be attributed to him, but also because he was reported to have extinguished a raging fire at the Noguera Farmhouse simply by making a sign of the cross over it. It was also in Viladrau that he formed the genial idea of scaling the peak of Matagalls and setting up a large cross on it with his own hands. This action is touchingly described by the great Catalan poet, Verdager, in the opening issue of his review, "La Creu del Montseny" [The Cross of Montseny] as being like that of "a father tracing the sign of the cross on the forehead of his beloved child, Catalonia."

Claret followed his first Mission at Viladrau with others in Saint Vincent of Espinelves and Saint Mary of Seva, the latter of which marked the beginning of his fame as a charismatic mission preacher. In a note at the end of the petition, the Cardinal Prefect granted him the Title of Apostolic Missionary: "July 9, 1841. Let the Decree be expedited." Although many might have accepted the title as an honorary grant of broader faculties, Claret took it as a confirmation by the highest Church authority and as his own self-definition for the rest of his life.

### **Text**

Most Reverend Eminence:

Anthony Claret, a Priest of the Diocese of Vic in Spain, being continually employed by the Vicar of the said Diocese in preaching and in giving retreats to the Faithful, desires to receive the Letters Patent of an Apostolic Missionary, with the attached faculties, whereby he may be able under the present circumstances to reap a greater harvest from his labors. May the... etc.

## 21. [21] To Don Francisco Vila i Galí

(In Catalan: EC I, 108-109)

### Introductory Note

This is a thank-you note to Don Francisco, “Cavaller de Vidrà,” a good friend of the Saint, for the warm hospitality he had extended to him during his stay in the small mountain town of Vidrà (population ca. 400 at the time), where the Saint had preached a service of some sort earlier that month. We do not know for a certainty, however, whether this service was held in the ancient Parish Church of Vidrà or in the Chapel of Saint Barbara in the addressee’s ancestral manor house.

The Saint informs his noble host of the ministries in which he has meanwhile been engaged. From Vidrà he had gone on to the larger town of Ribas de Fresser (population 2,000), to preach a Novena to Our Lady of Mount Carmel, beginning on Sunday, July 18, 1841 (two days after the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel!). This “Novena” was in fact a Mission, disguised under another title, so as to avoid the strictures the civil government had placed on such gatherings during these difficult times in Catalonia. The first week of this “novena” had been so successful that the Saint decided to extend it another week, but was prevented from doing so by some powerful though unspecified diabolic opposition. He thereupon returned to his home base in Vic, to prepare himself for further ministries at the end of summer.

On May 15, 1960, at the close of the *Holy Mission* preached by the Claretians on the occasion of the Millennium of the founding of the Parish of Vidrà, there was an unveiling of a stone commemorating the preaching of Claret’s preaching there in 1841. The inscription reads as follows:

In remembrance of the preaching  
of Saint Anthony Mary Claret  
in this parish in July of 1841  
and of the Mission preached by his  
Missionaries in the Millennial year of 1960.

## Text

Vic, 30 July 1841

Don Francisco Vila i Galí, Chevalier of Vidrà.

My Very Dear and Esteemed Sir:

I hereby wish to inform you that after a happy journey I arrived in Ribas, where on Sunday I began the Novena to Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Seeing the great fruit that had been produced during the first week, I had determined to lengthen in for another week, but the devil, enraged at seeing the numberless number of souls who were escaping his clutches, spared no effort at beating us down. Hence, on Wednesday of the second week, I had to stop working and return here to Vic, where I am resting and preparing myself for other undertakings once summer is over.

Be so kind as to convey my regards to the Pastor, Father Franch, to Mr. Pubill Bartroli and others who have asked after me, and in a special way give my greetings to all the members of your household, telling them that I shall never be able to forget the proofs of affection and honor they all showed me during all the days I spent in their amiable company, and that I shall always keep them in mind. But in particular I pray that God may give you, as head of the household, the spiritual and bodily graces you may need. On this occasion I offer you my sure and sincere services.

Anthony Claret, Priest.

## 22. [22] Pastoral Annotations

(In Catalan: EC I, 110-111)

### Introductory Note

Sant Joan d'Oló is located halfway between Vic and Sallent. The "Father Rector" (i.e., the Pastor), Father Eudaldo Arqués, was beginning to fail physically and mentally. He had alienated some of the town's leading families and created sharply opposing factions over his policies concerning the ringing of church bells, which he eventually stopped altogether. Looking for the right man to step in and solve this problem, Msgr. Casadevall turned to Claret, whom he took away from his missionary work in order to appoint him as temporary Vicar of the strife-torn parish in May of 1842. Claret managed to appease the testy old man, who later went on to Barcelona to take a water cure, but died there a short time later.

A new Administrator, Father Francis Nuri, arrived in February of 1843, thus freeing Claret to return to his missionary preaching. The first of these notes reveals Claret's tactful way of dealing graciously with the crotchety former Pastor. Before leaving, however, Claret wanted to set the record straight, seeing that the late Father Eudaldo (for whom he asks the Lord's forgiveness) could no longer be offended by the unpleasant truth, by stating as briefly as possible what had actually happened.

### Text

NOTE 1. A dispute having arisen in this parish concerning the ringing of bells, and the bell-ringing having thereupon been suspended, the faithful have entreated the Father Rector if he would be pleased to grant them the favor or charity of ringing the bells only for morning, noon and evening prayers. The aforesaid Father Rector, desirous of the greater glory of God and the good of his faithful flock, has granted their request gladly. To obtain this favor, the faithful have availed themselves of me, Anthony Claret, Priest. And to attest to this, I hereby note it in the parish book of services this 13th day of June, 1842.

Anthony Claret, Priest.

NOTE 2. I, Anthony Claret, should here add that I couched the preceding note in the above terms, in order to appease the Father Rector, who died on January 9, 1843. May the good Lord pardon his oddities, which had such dire consequences that the Illustrious Vicar General sent me here to calm the disturbances.

Sant Joan d'Oló, 20 January 1843.

Anthony Claret, Priest.

## 23. [23] To Canon Jaume Soler

(In Catalan: EC I, 112-116)

### Introductory Note

This letter, written after Note 1 but before Note 2 of the preceding *Annotations*, reveals an important dimension of Claret's growth as a missionary leader. The *Germandat de Santa Maria del Rosari* was the first of a series of apostolic fraternities that eventually led to the founding of the Congregation of Missionaries on July 16, 1849. For further information on this development, see Fr. J. M. Lozano's *The*

*Claretians, Their Mission and Spirit in the Church* (Chicago 1980), ch. II, "Gathering Companions," pp. 34-35.

Rev. Jaume Soler, Canon of Vic, was born in Sant Joan de les Abadesses (9/30/1796) and had a brilliant scholastic record in the Seminary of Vic and the University of Cervera, where he received a doctorate in theology. He was ordained a priest in 1825. After several years of distinguished service in the Diocese of Vic (Canon of the Cathedral, Chair of Theology and Rector of the Seminary, Secretary of the Cathedral Chapter, etc.), he was consecrated Bishop of Teruel in the Cathedral of Vic together with his lifelong friend, Mossèn Claret, who had been elected to the Metropolitan See of Cuba, in a ceremony presided over by their Ordinary, Bishop Casadevall. Claret, it seems, had something to do with Soler's election, for some years later, Soler is said to have remarked wryly: "M. Claret loaded me with the cross of this Bishopric, but I laid the cross of an Archbishopric on his shoulders" (cf. *HD I*, p. 565).

In the closing "item" of the longish postscript, the "news of the day" to which the Saint alludes probably refers to the troubles that had begun just twelve days earlier in Barcelona. An uprising against the Madrid Government and the Regent, General Baldomero Espartero, was eventually put down by the General's bombardment of Barcelona, which took place on December 3rd, eight days after Claret wrote this letter. Espartero had become Regent (during the minority of Isabella II) after the Queen Mother, Maria Cristina de Borbón, the widow of Ferdinand VII, had been forcibly removed from that position. But perhaps the Saint was referring to the overall political situation in Spain, which --after many fanatical and tragic countermeasures between the opposing liberal and conservative camps-- would eventually lead to Espartero's decisive overthrow and the dawning of a period of peace in Spain, at least for a while. The translator regrets using footnotes here, but it seemed the easiest way to explain some of the allusions the Saint makes in the body of the letter.

### **Text**

Sant Joan d'Oló, 25 November 1842

To Rev. Canon Soler.

My Most Esteemed Father of the Brotherhood of Mary of the Rosary:

I have received your two letters dated the 15th and the 19th, and can't tell you how touched I was to see the feelings that my letters

evoked in you, and how glad I am that you were so moved. Be glad... take heart... and hands to the task, that all may go well!

I am now going to reply to some of the issues you brought up:

1) As far as arrangements for me are concerned, that's the easiest, since I ask nothing for my subsistence other than what affects our aim, and in this I find none of the hindrances that you do. But no matter, for I will continue here if that is what you want.

2) There's no need to write to Fr. Arqués in order to arrange for my use of the rectory. Far from being a good idea, it seems to me that it would be quite inconvenient.<sup>15</sup> It would be better to come to an agreement with the housekeeper to pay her a stipend for each one that comes. I have discussed this with her, and she tells me that it suits her, and that she doesn't think the Pastor will take it amiss.

3) Any time you choose, you can send me two pledges, neither more nor less, since it takes as much time for one as for a hundred, but I don't think it prudent to send more than two.

4) After a two-day retreat, we will discuss the subject matter and the way in which we should deal with it.

5) In my opinion, it's better for them to dwell on an explanation of the Decalogue than on an explanation of Confession, although that is so necessary. For you know better than I, the advantage of explaining the Decalogue. Besides, I'm afraid that under the present circumstances the explanation of Confession wouldn't turn out so well, and that the devil would use it to show them how hard it is to make a good confession, especially in view of all the details we would have to explain to them. I remember reading in Segneri the Younger<sup>16</sup> that one should encourage poor sinners by telling them that confession consists of just two things: *mouth* and *heart*. *Mouth*, that they mention all their sins, and *heart*, that they have a corresponding sorrow for them. And this was the method that Father Minister<sup>17</sup> used to recommend to us in Rome during his conferences.

6) As for sermons, I am of the opinion, as you suggest, that they should be as follows: mortal sin, confession and the last things, all of them explained twice so that they can sink in on the people. For when

<sup>15</sup>On Fr. Eudaldo Arqués, see the notes to the preceding "Pastoral Annotations."

<sup>16</sup>*Ex libris Claret*. Claret signed his name at the beginning of each of the three volumes of the *Posthumous Works of Fr. Paul Segneri, Jr., of the Company of Jesus, collected and published for the first time by Abbé Francis Carrara* (Bassano 1795).

<sup>17</sup>Fr. Gemigniano Mislej, S.J. who, as Assistant Novicemaster, gave these conferences in the Jesuit Novitiate in Rome during Claret's stay there.

the same topic is given two days in a row (though stated somewhat differently each time), it impresses them more deeply. "Behold, I am sending you forth..." [Mt 10:16].

7) In my opinion, we should follow a sweet approach, to draw them like flies to the honey. If we try to terrify people, we will (as a general rule) do more harm than good, because we will only harden the wicked, while we will drive the weak mad. The few times I have resorted to terror I have always regretted it.

8) In my opinion, we shouldn't confront unbelief head-on. Rather, after a few days we can let slip some brief but penetrating remarks, and then keep adding them as we win people's confidence. For at the beginning they come with their minds made up, and if they see that we're not attacking them, they won't close their minds to us. Rather, even as they face up to their own guilt, they will be won over and will place their trust in us, especially if we limit ourselves to destroying the cause of unbelief. Its causes are ambition, pride, lust, greed and thoughtlessness.

9) As for children, I must tell you that up to the present, wherever I've gone, I have had them brought together into the church on the pretext of hearing their confessions. But both before and after doing so, I catechize them on keeping the commandments, on obeying their parents, on being reverent in church, on shunning evil companions, on not acting or speaking like wicked people, on not doing shameful things, on practicing the presence of God, on fearing hell and hoping for eternal glory, and on being devoted to Mary Most Holy. In doing this, I use the simplest and clearest terms, together with some homely comparisons and a few examples. Take about eight days to ruminate on this, and afterwards you can write me your opinion on all that I have said.

Yesterday the Novena at Oló ended and, thank God, it went well, indeed, very well.<sup>18</sup>

P.S.-- It would be very helpful if you could borrow Saint Liguori's *Selva* from Dr. Passarell and read it. I have it, and am quite pleased

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<sup>18</sup>The Saint is writing this letter from Sant Joan d'Oló, where he has just returned after preaching a successful Novena at Santa Maria d'Oló.



with it. Above all, read everything on page 388, paragraphs X, XI and XII.<sup>19</sup>

Item: It seems to me that you are more frightened than a hoot-owl over the news of the day. I can tell you that instead of making me cower, it actually spurs me on to the task at hand. Who knows? It may all blow over soon enough, and when it does, our help will be needed all the more to remedy it.

## 24. [24] To the Mother Prioress of St. Teresa

(EC I, 117-121; EC III, 573-578)

### Introductory Note

This letter clearly gives the impression that the “counsels” accompanying it were given in handwritten form to the Prioress of the Discalced Carmelites in Vic, so that her sisters could copy them. In his *Autobiography* (n. 313), the Saint, referring to this as his first published work, seems to state just the opposite, although we should bear in mind that the *Autobiography* was written several years after the event. According to Fr. John Lozano (*EBC*, p. 69), it first appeared under the title of “*Rules of Spirit* which St. Alphonsus and Ven. Fr. Segneri Junior taught to some sisters who were very eager for perfection” (Vic 1843), and later under the title *Advice to Nuns*. There is a handwritten copy by Claret in the Dominican Convent of St. Clare in Vic, entitled *Answer to the Request of a True Religious*. It is cited here, followed by the “new” first edition.

On April 30, 1985, Mother Elisa de Jesús María, archivist and librarian of the Discalced Carmelites of the Convent of St. Teresa in Vic, wrote to Fr. Gil, informing him of some hitherto unknown facts. Among other things, she remarks:

While I was happily reading the [first two] volumes of the *Epistolario*, which I greatly enjoyed and which afforded me a more profound and complete knowledge of Saint Anthony Mary Claret, I noticed that

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<sup>19</sup>*Ex libris Claret*. Claret’s bookplate is affixed to the two volumes of St. Alphonsus’ *Selva*, or “Anthology of Topics for Preaching and Instructions, for giving Retreats to Priests and also profitable for private reading; with a full practical Instruction on Mission Services, published by St. Alphonsus M. Liguori” (Bassano, 1833). The “paragraphs” the Saint refers to are actually chapters. Chapter X, “General Observations for Conducting Missions Well,” begins on p. 388; Chapter XI, “Duties Incumbent on the Superior of the Mission,” begins on p. 393; and Chapter XII, “Particular Virtues which Missioners Should Observe during the Time of Missions,” begins on p. 397.

the error committed in the BAC edition was repeated here, and while I lamented the fact, *I blamed myself* for not having shared this in due time with the Rev. Fr. Viñas, thus preventing the reappearance of the same mistake in a work of such importance as the *Epistolario Claretiano*.

Among the mistaken items that Mother Elisa points out, we would like to cite the following “annotations”:

1) When the Missionary Mossèn Claret established himself in Vic in 1843, “ours was the first Community that engaged the Venerable to direct its spiritual exercises. *He preached them in 1843, from the 3rd to the 12th of October.*”

2) Four days later, on October 16th, he sent the Mother Prioress (who was Mother Esperanza de la Concepción) the short letter that is transcribed in Letter 24 of the *Epistolario Claretiano*. This letter was sent to accompany some “AVISOS” [“counsels”] which he wanted each nun to copy for her own particular use. He had delivered them during this first set of Exercises, which would be followed by four others in succeeding years (1844, 1845, 1847, 1849).

3) The good nuns were so edified and moved that they asked the Saint to give them some norms to govern their conduct, which he did orally (as we have just noted), committing himself to write them out. Somewhat later, at the urging of his friend Don Jaume Passarell, he had them printed. We did not know of this “first printing” until Mother Elisa informed us of its existence: “In our Library of the Discalced Carmelites of Vic, we have found an ‘Opúsculo’ (‘short work’) which we suspect is a copy of this first edition.” This short work of 122 pp., the cover page of which reads: “Rules of Spirit which Saint Alphonsus Liguori and the Ven. Fr. Paul Segneri Junior used to teach to some religious women who were very solicitous for their own perfection. With permission. [Printed] by Joseph Trullás, Plaza de las Garzas, Vic, in the Year 1844.” This earlier printing is not explicitly numbered like the later printed text. More importantly, it bears no explicit mention of the author, although the structure, as well as the almost identical wording of both works clearly reveals that they are written by the same author, namely, Claret.

Perhaps this would be a good place for a few remarks on the books the Saint refers to in this letter.

“Junior” refers to Paolo Segneri, S.J. (1673-1713), called “the younger” because he was the nephew of another famous Jesuit preacher and writer of the same name (1624-94). The work of the younger Segneri cited appears in his *Posthumous Works*, vol. III (Bassano 1795), under the title “Notes on Some Counsels Given to a Religious” (pp. 244-48). Since Claret’s own copy is signed in ink “Anthony Claret, Priest,” and also bears his later episcopal bookplate, it is reasonable to assume that this is the very copy the Saint had before him when he wrote these “Rules.”

“*Saint Liguori*” may refer to the Redemptorist Founder’s *Maxims for the guidance of a soul who loves Jesus Christ* (1751), *Summary of the virtues which should be practiced by a soul who wishes to become a saint* (1761) or *Reminders addressed to the Sisters of the Holy Redeemer* (1778). On the influence of Saint Alphonsus’ writings in Catalonia, the reader would do well to consult Fr. John Lozano’s article, *Notes sur l’influence de la spiritualité italienne en Catalogne de 1700 à 1850*, in *Studia Claretiana* I (1963) 43-56. Fr. Lozano notes that Liguori’s *Glories of Mary* appeared in Spanish editions in 1774, 1779 and 1790 (p. 48), and that of the eleven editions of that work published between 1822 and 1860, nine were by Catalan editors (p. 52). The other Liguorian work mentioned in the present letter is *The Holy Nun*, 2 vols. (Naples 1760-61).

The influence of Liguori and Segneri, while significant, is rather generic, since the present *Rules*, both in style and content, bear the unmistakable stamp of Claret.

Two other works mentioned here are cited almost constantly in Claret’s later writings. *The Practice of Perfection and Christian Virtues*, by Alphonsus Rodríguez, S.J. (1538-1616), first published in 1609, formed part of the Saint’s daily spiritual reading. The *Religious Library* published an edition of this treasure-trove of spiritual teaching and ascetical anecdote (Barcelona 1861), a copy of which is in the Saint’s personal library. At the time he wrote these *Rules*, the Saint used the edition of Valero Sierra (Barcelona 1834), 3 vols. The other work is L.J. Menghi-D’Arville’s *Marian Yearbook, or the truly devout client of the Blessed Virgin*, Sp. transl. by Magin Ferrer, Mercedarian (Barcelona 1841), 2 vols., a collection of readings and 72 pious exercises in honor of the Virgin for all Sundays and Feastdays of the Church Year, with examples drawn from Scripture and the Fathers.

### **Text**

(Cover Letter: EC I, 117-118)

Very Esteemed Mother Prioress:

In fulfillment of my word, and as a token of the high esteem in which I hold you and all your Reverend Community, I am enclosing these counsels, which each nun in particular should copy.

Both of you and of your whole community, I remain your most attentive servant,

Anthony Claret, Priest.

P.S. I am planning to set out without delay; commend me to God.

(Body of Text from EC I, 118-121)

Dearly Beloved Spouse of Our Lord Jesus Christ:

In response to your request to me for a rule of life, I will give you the same one that the admirable [Paolo Segneri] Junior gave to a nun, together with some counsels from Saint Liguori and other authors.

1. Every year you will make the Holy Exercises.
2. Once a month you will have a day of spiritual retreat.
3. Twice a week, or at least once, you will make your confession, without any stories or circumlocutions, but humbly and succinctly, always adding some serious fault from your past life as certain matter, so as to assure your sorrow.
4. You will receive Communion every day of the week but one.
5. If you should happen to commit some venial fault and cannot confess it, you should not miss Communion, but should make acts of Contrition and go forward without scruples or dryness of spirit, since the devil will do his utmost to upset you.
6. Every time you confess and receive Communion, you should do so as if it were the last of your life, approaching it humbly and trustingly, like a poor woman, like a leper, but full of love.
7. You should be a lover of silence and prayer, the more the better; for these two things are the wings whereby you will fly to your Spouse.
8. Take care not to wander about the convent or go to the cells of others. You should always be recollected and in the presence of God, and you will therefore accustom yourself continually to make acts of

love of God, not only in words, but in deed and in truth [cf. 1 Jn 3:18]; I mean, by doing and suffering purely for God.

9. If you are sometimes mocked, scorned or persecuted, you should suffer it for God, since God has suffered worse things for you. Nor should you complain of it, but rather strive to commend your persecutor to God.

10. During recreation time you should strive to speak affably and lovingly, without having particular friendships, treating everyone equally, doing more only toward those for whom you may feel some repugnance.

11. Strive after inward and outward mortification, for without it you will not take a step toward perfection.

12. Never lose an instant, because idleness opens the door to the devil and all evils.

13. Rise promptly at the assigned time in the morning, for the devil will do his utmost to have you sacrifice to him an act of laziness as the first fruits of the day.

14. Be prompt also in obeying all community acts and whatever you are commanded, without answering back and making excuses, but with love and joy.

15. Be most observant of the Holy Rule and know that many nuns who are now in heaven have risen there by the stairway of this obedience, whereas others who are burning in hell arrived there because they paid no heed to little things. For as you know, *qui spernit modica paulatim decidet* [Sir 19:1: "One who contemneth little things, shall fall little by little"]. In order, then, to avoid so grave an evil, you should make a particular examen every day, so as to uproot evil inclinations one by one, and plant virtues. Therefore do not forget to practice some penance for every time you have fallen.

16. Consider --for it is so-- that we are standing between two eternities, one happy, the other unhappy, and that we will be given the one that we have chosen through our deeds.

17. I highly recommend that you be most devout to the Blessed Sacrament and the Virgin Mary. To this end, you should have some book that treats of her, such as the *Glories of Mary* and the *Marian Yearbook of Our Lady, Refuge of Sinners*.

18. In order to be a true Nun, you must practice the virtues proper of your state. To do this, it will greatly help you to have a book that deals with these virtues, e.g., *The Holy Nun*, or the *Practice of*

*Perfection* by Rodríguez. You should not have many books, but well-read ones. As for the ones I have mentioned, the more you read them, the better they get.

19. Insofar as possible, all that I have said here can be reduced to two things: 1) Let everything you do be done purely for God. 2) Whatever causes you to suffer, suffer it for the love of God.

20. Finally, I beg and beseech you by the wounds of Jesus Christ and by the love of the Blessed Virgin, that you read and practice these counsels, and that you commend me to God, so that we may all meet in heaven. Amen.

Your most attentive servant,  
Anthony Claret, Priest.  
(Body of Earlier Text from EC III, 575-578)

### **Rules of spirit for Religious Women solicitous for their Perfection**

Every year you will make the Holy Exercises. Each month you will have a day of spiritual retreat.

Twice, or once a week, you will make your confession, without stories or circumlocutions, but rather humbly, clearly and succinctly, always adding one of the most serious faults from your past life, so as to assure your sorrow.

You will receive Communion on the days assigned by the Director.

If you should happen to commit some venial fault and cannot confess it, do not therefore miss Communion; rather, make some acts of contrition and go forward without scruples or dryness of spirit, since the devil will do his utmost to upset you.

Each time you confess and receive Communion, you will do so as if it were the last of your life, approaching humbly and trustingly, like a poor little woman, or like a leper, but full of love.

Be a lover of silence and prayer, the more the better; for these two will be the wings whereon your will fly to your Spouse. Hence, flee from parlors or grilles, and if you must sometimes go there, let it be briefly and quite fearfully, mindful that it is the most bad and dangerous place in the convent, a place where the devil prepares his snares, in which many Religious have been caught. Do not be easy in listening to relatives; behave with them as you would with souls in Purgatory, whom you neither see nor hear, but only commend to God. Do the same with your relatives: commend them to God, and do not listen or write to them needlessly.

Take care not to wander about the convent or go to the cells of others. Be always recollected and in the presence of God, and therefore strive to be continually making acts of love of God, not only in words, but in deed and in truth; I mean, doing and suffering only for God.

If you are sometimes mocked, scorned or persecuted, you will suffer it for the love of God, since God has become man and has suffered worse things for you. And do not complain of your persecutors; rather, commend them to God in imitation of your Spouse Jesus.

During recreation times you will strive to speak affably and lovingly, without having particular friendships, treating everyone the same, doing somewhat more only for those in whom you observe some repugnant mood.

Strive after inward and outward mortification, for without it you will not take a step toward perfection.

Never lose an instant of time, nor be idle, for idleness opens the door to the devil and to all evils.

In the morning, be prompt to rise at the assigned time, for the devil will do his utmost to have you sacrifice to him the first fruits of the day with an act of laziness. And do not allow yourself to be deceived under pretexts of indisposition or illness, for see, the devil is quite astute.

Be prompt also in attending all community acts and in obeying in all things that you are commanded to do, without answering back and making excuses, but with love and joy.

Be most observant of the Holy Rules and know that many Nuns who are now in Heaven have risen there by the stairway of this observance, whereas others who are now burning in hell have ended there because they paid no heed to small things, for as you already know, *qui spernit modica paulatim decidet*. In order to avoid so great an evil, every day you will make a general examen of whatever you may have failed in that day, and also a particular examen, so as to uproot evil inclinations one by one, and plant virtues. Therefore do not forget to practice some penitence each time you find you have failed.

Consider -for it is so- that we are standing between two eternities, one happy, the other unhappy, and that we will be given the one which, with the help of God's grace, we have chosen and which we have striven for by holy and good works.

I highly recommend that you be very devout to the Most Blessed Sacrament and to the Most Blessed Virgin. To this end you should have some book that treats of her, such as the *Glories of Mary* or the *Marian Yearbook*.

In order to be a true Religious, you must practice the virtues proper of your state. To this end it will greatly help you to some book that deals with them, such as the *Holy Nun*, Or the *Practice of Perfection* of Rodriguez. Do not have many books, but read well these that I have mentioned.



Insofar as possible, all that I have said thus far can be reduced to two things: 1) Let all that you do be done purely for God. 2) Whatever causes you to suffer, suffer it for the love of God.

Finally, I beg and beseech you by the wounds of Jesus and by love of the Most Blessed Virgin, that you read and practice these counsels. LONG LIVE JESUS!

With great earnestness I recommend that you frequently say this ejaculation, which I know is most pleasing to Mary: “Oh Mary, Mother of Mercy, through the love and merits of Jesus Christ, I beg you to intercede for the conversion of sinners, for the perseverance of the just, and for the eternal rest of the souls in purgatory.”

## 25. [25] To Sister Mary Dolores

(EC I, 122-123)

### Introductory Note

From Claret’s letter to Fr. Peter Cruells (2/7/1841), which also begins with a “J.M.J.” (= Jesus, Mary and Joseph), we know that Sister Dolores, whose convent was in Manresa, belonged to a family with whom the Saint was well-acquainted in Vic. Claret is writing from Sallent, which shows that he has moved on, as he said he would in the preceding letter to the Prioress of St. Teresa’s. From Sallent he would proceed to Manresa, where he had to preach a Novena.

This short letter is notable for its praise of Saint Catherine of Siena, in whose life Claret found so many incentives for his own busy apostolate (cf. *Aut.* 212, 235-38, 654, 741, 781). The *Life* he refers to is Fr. Lorenzo Gisbert’s *Portentous Life of the Seraphic and Splendid Virgin, St. Catherine of Siena* (Valencia: Peleguer, 1784), which was one of his favorite books. Unfortunately, we no longer have the Saint’s own copy of Gisbert, although we do have his personal copy of Bl. Raymond of Capua’s *Life of St. Catherine of Siena* (Rome 1866). From Catherine, Claret learned and copied the practice of the “interior cell,” in order to maintain the sense of the presence of God in the midst of his almost ceaseless itinerant missioning. He later wrote of this at length in the *Temple and Palace of God our Lord* (Barcelona: Religious Library, 1866; cf. Engl. tr. in SSW, 175-208), one of his most autobiographical short works.

N.B.- In EC III (pp. 21-23), Fr. Gil presents a newly discovered set of *Acta* for the establishment of a pious cause in the neighboring

town of Avinyó. These notarized *Acta*, written in Catalan, are omitted by the translator, but would otherwise belong here because of their internal dating of January-April 1843. The same is true of a brief note to the Rector of St. Eulalia, dated 14 October 1843 (cf. *ibid.*, p. 24).

### **Text**

J.M.J.

To Sister Mary Dolores  
Sallent, 30 October 1843.

My Lady and Sister in J[esus]. C[hrist]:

I remember the last words you spoke to me, namely, that you wanted me to be your director. This is something quite new to me, since I have never thought that I had the knowledge and other necessary and indispensable requisites to be a good director. Therefore, let us commend the matter seriously to God, lest it be a case of “the blind leading the blind, so that both fall into the pit” [Mt 15:14]. However, I will omit nothing that I know might help you to advance in virtue. In proof of this I am sending you the Life of Saint Catherine of Siena, who is my teacher and director. She so moves me to fervor that whenever I read her life I have to hold the book in one hand and a handkerchief in the other, to dry the tears that in continually brings to my eyes. Ask Mother Prioress for permission to read it (and greet her for me). Read it as much as you can without prejudice to your obligations, and after you have read it, return it to me when I get back to Vic, because I cannot live without this book. Read it and see if I’m not right.

Commend me to God and rely on your Servant and unworthy Priest,

Anthony Claret, Priest.

P.S.- When I am away from Vic, do not write to me, because I am so busy that I am good for nothing else.

## **26. [26] To His Prelate in Vic**

(In Catalan: EC I, 124-128)

### **Introductory Note**

This is one of the most curious letters in the Saint’s lengthy correspondence. It reflects his first known encounter with one claiming to be demon-possessed. While Mossèn Antoni was preaching in

Taradell, he received an unexpected visit from an “energumen” or demon-possessed woman, who told him that she had come from the distant town of Molsosa, driven by the evil spirit, to seek out and talk to the famous preacher Claret. Claret, on the basis of this interview, sent the present account of the affair to his ecclesiastical superior, Msgr. Lluçia Casadevall, the Vicar General and Administrator of the Diocese of Vic. This strange document is included here not only to show the variety of cases the Saint dealt with in his ministry, but also to contrast it with the prudent skepticism he later manifested regarding real or alleged cases of possession or obsession, as he tells us in his *Autobiography* (cf. *Aut.* 183-191). In a small handwritten note that was later introduced during session 82 of the Apostolic Process for his Beatification at Vic, Claret states that, despite her ‘scary’ theatricals, he later discovered the “energumen” of Taradell to be a fraud.

In Fr. Gil’s edition of the *Epistolario claretiano*, this letter appears for the first time in Catalan. A Castilian translation appears in Fr. Cristóbal Fernández’ *HD I*, pp. 171-172. Because of the different ‘voices’ of the allegedly possessed woman and the various ‘spirits’ who speak through her, it is hard to sort out her voice and that of “Gayno.”

### Text

#### An Account of What the Energumen Told Me

*Salutem ex inimicis nostris et de manu eorum, qui oderunt nos* [Lk 1:71: “salvation from our enemies and from the hand of those who hate us”]. Margaret Miralpeix, a twenty-nine year old spinster, born in St. Hipolit, a maid in the rectory of Molsosa, was forced to come to Taradell by the Evil Spirit “Gayno,” who has possessed her since she was five, and by “Caifando,” who has possessed her since she was eleven. Together, they rule some 10,000, with 13 Captains. She stated that Gayno and Asmodeus are the Main Ones who tempt people to impurity, the one in the shape of a man, the other in that of a woman. Caifando, she said, tempts people against faith, and will be in the world until the Last Judgment, always continuing to tempt people.

The way she found me and recognized me is remarkable enough; but even more remarkable is what she told me, the tenor of which is as follows.

With great fury and most dreadful screams she told me: “*Claretus*, great Preacher, *La Carmelita* [a mocking reference to Our Lady of

Mt. Carmel] commanded me to tell you certain things.” I answered... “I am aware that in times past God used a brute beast in order to counsel an evil Prophet, so if He now chooses to use an infernal beast to counsel a perverse Priest, I will most humbly listen to such counsels.”

She said: “I feel your humility strongly and it irritates me greatly... La Carmelita commands me to tell you to do more preaching against styles of dress, plays and dances --which you seldom do-- and also against fraud, usury and cheating. Understand that I would not be telling you this unless they had ordered me to do so. La Carmelita is most irritated, and when some impure man or woman enters a church, she, in Heaven, covers her eyes so as not to see them, and her ears so as not to hear their prayers, because she is so upset with them. And even if they are not impure, but are not dressed as they ought to be, she does the same. Nowadays she is even more upset with the way men dress than with the way women do, though she is also very vexed at the scandalous styles in Paris, Genoa and three other cities where, some 27 years ago, he [Gayno] and 20 companions, in the shape of handsome youths, appeared at promenades and balls, and had a great following. He introduced the same costumes into Spain some 14 years ago.” She said that on Shrove Tuesday 6 years ago, Gayno, the demon of lust, appeared in the shape of a 25-year old man at a dance held in Vic, and that those who danced with him were caressed by him and committed mortal sins of lust.

“The same devil, Gayno, is the one who attends dances and comedies, and who prevented Lenten services from being preached in Vic (and the power that this demon has over Vic is well known).” She also told me that it was he who made me sick this year before All Saints Day, in order to prevent me from preaching, but that as I had recognized his game, I got better and all my illness vanished promptly, without the use of any remedies.

She also told me: “Be thankful to God for the great benefits He has shown you, and know that if God were to leave you to yourself, you would do all the evils I have done, and even worse. “La Carmelita also says that she is highly annoyed at immodesty, especially in dress, and that this was the reason she sent that cloudburst last year, and will soon send another and still greater one (in another four months, she later added), unless people do penance. It would have happened already, if it weren't for good people.

“At the time when La Carmelita commanded him [Gayno] to show you these things --for he must obey despite himself, since she

is his Queen-- he told me that he by no means wanted to show them, because the other demons would persecute and torment him..." I then said: "Tell me, without lies, just what the Blessed Virgin ordered you to say, and you needn't be afraid. She answered: "Will you help me?"

"It is La Carmelita's will that you go to preach wherever she inspires you. She also wants you to devote yourself to possessed persons, who are many and are now manifesting themselves because of the lack of faith. You should study this matter of the possessed, because neither you nor other priests know enough about it." While I was exorcizing her, she gave a start and turned her face toward some priests who had come to see her, and said: "Also at La Carmelita's bidding I have to tell priests to study more, and that they should not be so easy in absolving the lustful, and that few of them are saved."

While I was exorcizing her he [Gayno] interrupted me and said: "Do you want me to tell you the sins you have absolved during missions, how many and of what species? But now they are forgiven." I told him: "Yes, liar, remember the glory you have lost and the pains you are suffering!" "Don't speak to me of that, for it consumes me with rage. I was condemned for a single sin, while there are very few men who have not sinned many times, yet are not damned. But ah! if they die in their sins they will suffer more in hell than we do..."

I ordered him to be silent and I went on with the most dreadful exorcisms. He cried out: "Anthony, why are you persecuting me after I have done you the great favor of counseling you on behalf of Mary Most Holy? Anthony, I will be your adversary and I will persecute you wherever you go. In the confessional I will come to trip you up so that you won't know what to do. Even at night I will fill you with dread... What then? You're not afraid of demons?" "No," I answered. "Ah, if only you saw the dragon who is Satan!" (Note: he also told me some other things I can't remember now. But from this you can see how great is God's kindness and mercy, since to save us He uses not only His friends, but also His enemies. *Quid amplius facere vinea mea quae non feci?* [cf. Is 5:4: "What more could I have done for my vineyard that I have not done?"] A defective citation of the Latin of the Vulgate].

Further remarks: "Ah, if I had but an instant of time in which to repent!" "At the name of Mary, all hell trembles, even the Dragon."

Taradell, 29 November 1843.

Anthony Claret, Priest.

## 27. [27] To the Rev. Peter Cruells

(In Catalan: EC I, 129-131)

### Introductory Note

We have given some details regarding Fr. Cruells, in the Introductory Note to Letter 19 above. Don Jaume Passarell was a professor at the Seminary of Vic and Canon Penitenciar of the Cathedral.

Claret had many close ties to the city of Manresa. His godmother, Mary Claret (his father's sister), married a Manresan, Adjutor Canudas (whose Christian name he received in baptism). It is not surprising, then, that during his childhood and youth the Saint had often visited them for days and weeks at a time, and had even lent a hand to the bobbin-threaders in a local textile-making shop. During his seminary days in Vic, he had enrolled in several Manresan confraternities (the Congregation *Laus Perennis*, that of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, that of the Perpetual Rosary [*Aut.* 94; cf. *Autob. Doc.* V.], and, on November 11, 1831, that of the "Heart of Mary, newly established at the Jesuit College of Manresa," the last-mentioned of which would be the first manifestation of Claret's *cordimarian* piety (cf. C. Ramos, *Un apóstol de María* [Barcelona 1936], p. 25).

The Saint also speaks of this in the third person in his short work, *Método de misionar en las aldeas* [Santiago Cuba 1857], p. 63. When he returned from Rome in 1840, he thought for a while of taking up residence in Manresa (cf. Letter 16 above). In 1843, he had preached a renowned Novena of All Souls there. Two illustrious Manresan priests (Fr. Manuel Subirana, a classmate and friend of the Saint, and Fr. Anthony Barjau) later accompanied him to his Archdiocese in Cuba. Finally, he later recruited another Manresan, the Servant of God Jaume Clotet, C.M.F., as one of the Co-founders of his "Great Work," the Claretian Congregation.

At the time Claret wrote this letter, he had just finished giving a retreat to the Carmelite Sisters of Charity, whose vows he received on February 8th as delegate of Msgr. Casadevall. He had been assigned to preach not only the Lenten Services in the Cathedral of Manresa, but also the famous "Sermon on the Light," to commemorate the mysterious appearance of a great light in the Church of O. L. of Mt. Carmel in Manresa in the year 1345. In addition, he preached a series of retreats to Sisters and Priests.

The news item regarding Father Fortian Bres, with whom the Saint had lived during his seminary days in Vic and who had become

a lifelong friend, is part of a most intriguing story, attested to under oath by more than eight witnesses in the Processes for Claret's Beatification held at Vic and Tarragona. Father Cristóbal Fernández tells the *fioretti*-like story with such charm, that it is hard to resist translating at least part of it here:

...Near the beginning of the year 1844, when the Saint had recently turned thirty-seven, the historian runs up against an event so unusual, yet so well proven and so resolutely attested to by eye-witnesses, that he is constrained to tell it, even though materialistic naturalism will only smile at it.

After preaching in Roda, he [Claret] preached in Ripoll... On the 14th of January, after satisfactorily completing his spiritual tasks, he took a detour to Olost, where his brother Joseph lived, in order to rest there a few days before returning to Vic... That same evening he arrived in Olost, where, as was his wont, he stayed as a guest in the house of the friendly pastor, Fr. John Domènech, who had formerly been pastor in Sallent.

Very early the next day, he celebrated the holy sacrifice of the Mass, made his thanksgiving and, it seems, sat down to hear Confessions. It must have been about a quarter to seven when, moved by an unexplainable inner urge, he arose and went to the parish house where, standing at the half-open door of the pastor's bedroom, he remarked dryly but firmly, "I'm going to Vic," and thereupon left the house and the town, paying no heed to the offer of a horse for the long journey of four leagues of snow-covered road. With all the speed he could muster, the pastor told his servant to saddle the horse and take off after the wayfaring missionary. But for all the boy's haste, when he reached the neighboring town of San Salvador, some five kilometers distant, he was unable to catch up with him. Stranger still, he could find no trace of footsteps in the snow, showing the direction the Saint might have taken.

Meanwhile, that same 15th of January...Don Fortian Bres left his house early to say his customary morning Mass in the Cathedral. The snow, which had blanketed everything, and the mud-puddles that were forming as it melted, caused the dear old man to fall in the Cathedral Square...breaking his right leg. Led to his nearby home, he was attended to by his friend, Fr. Raymond Pi, and the latter's nephew. Somewhat later, they decided to send a message to Olost, to inform Mossèn Claret of the sad news. They decided to send Fr. Raymond Prat to deliver the message in person, and without delay he prepared to do so. But to his great surprise, as he was about to

leave there was a knock at the door and who should he meet there but Claret himself, showing no traces of mud or snow. He said that after saying Mass, he had felt drawn there by a mysterious call...

Fr. Prat, who was personally involved in the events, later gave the following deposition: "Very early one winter's day, I went, without knowing just why, to the home of Fr. Fortian Bres. On arriving there, I noted an unusual commotion among the family, because the aforesaid Fr. Bres had broken his leg while he was on his way to celebrate Mass. While I was readying myself hastily to go looking for the servant of God, who was then in Olost, some four leagues, that is, four hours, distant from this city, there was a knock at the door and I myself went to answer it. On opening it, I was met by servant of God. Somewhat later, when some friends of the patient asked him the reason for his unexpected arrival, he answered that he had felt an irresistible urge that led him to come. Since his arrival had aroused the wonderment of all, they asked him whether he had celebrated Mass, to which he answered in the affirmative. It seems to me that he also said that he had heard the confessions of a few of the faithful. This only increased our wonder, given the hour of his arrival [7:15 a.m.] and the distance of the town, and having verified the hour of his departure and arrival, we all believed that he had made the journey in a few minutes."

### **Text**

To the Rev. Pere Cruells, Priest  
Vic, 16 January 1844.

My Dear Sir:

Today Dr. Passarell handed me your letter of the 4th of this month, and I am apprised of what you say concerning the books. I also see that, God willing, I am going to be preaching the Lenten Services there. Would you therefore be so good as to write and let me know how many sermons there are each week and which days I'll have free, so that I can pace myself. You can send your reply, as well as the history of "the Light," to Passarell. I'll do my best to be there by the Sunday before Carnival, although the services I still have to conduct before Lent may prevent me from doing so. At any rate, I'll do my utmost to please both you and the citizens of Manresa, for you know how highly I regard them.

I must share with you a sad bit of news I learned on arriving here from the services I was giving in Ripoll. Because of the recent snows, the streets were slippery with mud puddles, and Father Fortian, who was on his way to say Mass, fell and broke his right leg. He's on the



mend and I think he'll do well. Please be so kind as to inform the Rev. Preciado, Miss Angeleta and the Capuchin Nuns.

Your friend, who kisses your hand,

Anthony Claret, Priest

P.S. Please tell me if the Sermon on the Light should be given in Catalan or in Castilian.

## 28. [28] To the Rev. Peter Cruells

(In Catalan: EC I, 132-133)

### Introductory Note

After acknowledging the receipt of Fr. Cruells' latest letter, and rejoicing over his news concerning Fr. Coma, Claret goes on to inform his friend that he will soon be leaving for Vic (on Friday, June 14th), to receive his marching orders from Msgr. Casadevall. These orders included preaching retreats to the clergy of Vic, followed by retreats to various religious communities in that city.

On March 16, 1969, Don Joseph M. Gasol, Director of the City Archives of Manresa, wrote a letter to Fr. Joseph M. Gil, C.M.F., in which he cites a passage from his study, *Sant Antoni Maria Claret i la ciutat de Manresa*: "Among the group of illustrious Manresans who dealt with Saint Anthony Mary Claret during the period of his missionary activity in Catalan territory, we might also call to mind the Servant of God *Fra Jacint Coma i Galí*, an exclaustated religious of the Order of Minims. This virtuous priest, who died in the odor of sanctity in 1864, was especially famous as an apostolic missionary. But it seems that at the beginning of his preaching career he was more concerned with the rules of rhetoric than with the content and spiritual fruit of his sermons. It happened that Father Claret heard him deliver the panegyric on St. Thomas Aquinas in the Church of St. Peter Martyr. Afterwards, with great liberty of spirit, he told Father Coma that with that sort of preaching he would hardly bring any souls to heaven. Father Coma took Mossèn Claret's admonition very well, and was grateful to him ever after for this timely lesson."

Before closing, the Saint send his regards (in this as in other letters) to the "Josepas" or "Pepas" ('Josephines' or 'Josies') -- a Catalan nickname commonly given to parish housekeepers at that time.

In the postscript, S.C. = Senyor Canonge (Lord Canon). Canon John Soldevila was the Dean of the Cathedral Chapter of Manresa.

**Text**

To the Rev. Pere Cruells, Priest  
Barcelona, 12 June 1844.

My Dear Sir:

I have received your letter and am most gratified at your kindly sentiments. Likewise, I was filled with contentment at what you told me about Father Jacint Coma; let us commend him to God, that He will continue favoring him with His graces, for I can already see the great good he can do in that city. Friday I'll be marching off to Vic to get my orders, and we'll see where I'm going. But no matter where it may be, know that I am your servant, who kisses your hand,

Anthony Claret, Priest.

P.S.-- Give my regards to the Josepas and my other Friends, especially to S. C. Soldevila.

**29. [29] To the Bishop of Plasencia**

(EC I, 134-137)

**Introductory Note**

Don Cyprian Varela (not 'Valera' as misspelled in some works) was born at the Royal Estate of El Escorial in 1776. He was proposed by H.M. King Ferdinand VII as Bishop of Plasencia in 1826 and consecrated that year in Madrid. In 1835, Bishop Varela was exiled from Plasencia and sent to Cádiz, because he refused to take an oath to uphold the new antireligious Constitution of Spain. We do not know where or when Claret and Bishop Varela began communicating, but in this letter we can see that the Bishop has written to tell Claret of his present painful situation, and in answer, the Saint offers his services in Bishop Varela's diocese, if that should prove possible.

He then gives an account of some of his own ministries and mentions a short work, *Advice to Priests* (full title: "Advice to a priest who has just finished making the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, to help him maintain the fire that the Divine Spirit has kindled in his heart"), which he has just published (Vic: Trullás, 1844). This small book was really a copy of the Saint's own retreat resolutions for 1843, minus a few of his own, more heroic, resolves. It first appeared in English translation by Fr. Manuel Jiménez, C.M.F. (who signed it as "E.M.J."), under the title of *Priestly Pathways* (San Gabriel, California, 1939; cf. Engl. tr. in SSW, 288-321).

Claret congratulates Bishop Varela on the latter's short religious-didactic novelette, *Luisita de Cádiz* ("Little Louisa of Cádiz"), which was soon to be reprinted. In fact, Claret had this little book reprinted a number of times by the Religious Library, under the title of "The Catholic Childhood of Little Louisa of Cádiz."

This letter reveals something of the strongly, even naively, affectionate nature of Claret, who would love to throw his arms around the neck of Bishop Varela. Moreover, the elliptical closing sentence of the postscript is not without a touch of humor. The Mountain, Valley and Coastal districts to which the Saint refers are regions of the Catalonia, with Olot (northwest of Girona), Sabadell and Mataró (northwest and northeast of Barcelona) as their respective centers.

### Text

J.M.J.

Vic, 22 July 1844

Your Excellency and my Most Reverend Father:

It is impossible for me to explain the joy I felt on reading Your Excellency's letter dated the 10th of this month, although I can see in it the persecutions and sufferings you are undergoing. These have never been a motive for sadness, but rather one of great contentment and joy for true disciples of Christ crucified, who told his own disciples, *Gaudete et exultate* ["Rejoice and be glad" (Mt 5:14)]. *Beati qui persecutionem patiuntur propter justitiam* ["Blessed are they who suffer persecution for justice' sake" (Mt 5:12)]. Thus they, encouraged by these and other words, and with the grace of the divine Spirit, *ibant gaudentes* ["went forth rejoicing" (Acts 5:41)], holding themselves happy to have suffered for Jesus. For this is what we must glory in: the cross of Jesus Christ [cf. 1 Cor 2:2].

Jesus has given me such a great desire to suffer for Him, that I cannot live without sufferings and persecutions. I do not fear them; rather, I seek them everywhere and have found many, thank God, but still not enough to satisfy me. For I consider them so necessary for entering heavenly glory that when I see someone whom the Lord has gifted with them, it seems that he has been given a free ticket of entry there. My dear Father, take heart and be glad; you have many reasons to be overflowing with joy. You can't imagine the great love I feel for you when I see you so adorned with persecutions. If someone could enable me to see you, I would throw my arms around your neck, as a child would embrace his loving father. I trust that in time

I'll be able to do so. Perhaps when Your Excellency is restored to his See, I will come and preach the Holy Gospel in your Diocese.

I should tell Your Excellency that we have just finished giving the Holy Exercises of Saint Ignatius to the Clergy of the Diocese of Vic. The gathering was so great that it seemed more like a synod than a retreat group. But the fruit of it has been no less great, and in order to preserve that fruit I deemed it well to give each retreatant a copy of these counsels, which I am sending to Your Excellency so that you can tell me what you think of them.

Today, the Feast of Saint Mary Magdalene, we have begun the Exercises for both the Dominican and Carmelite Nuns, after which I will go up to the Mountain District to preach in various places until mid-September, when I must go on to the Valley and Coastal Districts. My travel schedule is full until after Easter, without a single day off. Throughout it all, I will be preaching to Clergy, Nuns or the People.

You can readily see how much I need grace, for without it I can do nothing. I have no less need of humility, for without it, woe is me! Pray that the Lord will grant me both, and that He will never leave me alone for a single moment, or else I am lost. Commend me, too, to the Blessed Virgin, to whom I have offered all my labors, apostolic burdens and tasks. Please avail yourself of the services of your most attentive servant, who kisses Your Excellency's ring.

Anthony Claret, Priest.

P.S. I say that in time we may perhaps meet, because my licenses or dispatches are for the whole of Spain, and if I have not gone beyond the dioceses of Catalonia thus far, it is because there is so much to be done here. I am sending Your Excellency some of the little papers I hand out during Missions. The book, *Little Louisa of Cádiz*, is being reprinted. Pardon me for not having more time.

### 30. [30] To the Rev. Peter Cruells

(In Catalan: EC I, 138-139)

## Introductory Note

We have already encountered Fr. Peter Cruells a number of times thus far, and we know of Fr. Coma from the notes on Claret's letter of 6/12/1844 (Letter 28 above). The present letter acknowledges the receipt of the latest letter from Fr. Cruells, laments some undisclosed

misfortune of Fr. Coma, and encloses a letter to Coma (which, unfortunately, we do not have and which would have helped us understand Claret's further dealings with this holy priest), together with some books which Claret had been unable to send with Fr. Rosanes at the time of the latter's departure from Vic.

In 1880, Fr. Joseph Rosanes, who had been a schoolmate of Claret's in the Seminary of Vic, wrote a note to Fr. Mariano Aguilar, C.M.F., in which he tells the latter of one way in which the Saint used to exercise a minor apostolate of charity in the Seminary some fifty years earlier. Whenever anyone lent him a book, he used to leave in it, as if by accident, a little note containing some prayer or maxim that he thought might be helpful to the lender (cf. M. Aguilar, *Vida admirable*, Madrid 1894, vol. I, pp. 65-66). Canon Soldevila is also mentioned in Letter 28 above, and the "little book" concerning which Claret would like to have the learned Canon's opinion, was doubtless his *Advice to a Priest*, written as a reminder of the Clergy of Vic who had participated in the retreat he refers to here (cf. the notes to Letter 29 above). It apparently arrived from the printers too late for delivery to Fr. Rosanes.

The present letter (a copy) is written so hastily that here and there its wording is obscure, not only because of the elliptical construction of some of the sentences, but also because here as elsewhere, the Saint sometimes seems to be spelling phonetically, in accord with his oral pronunciation, rather than lexically, during this period when written Catalan had not yet achieved its present-day standardized form. In this instance, the reader (and certainly this translator) would have profited from a few more linguistic footnotes on the part of the editor of the *Epistolario*.

### Text

To Rev. Pere Cruells, Priest  
Vic. 31 July, 1844

My Dear Friend:

I have read your letter and was saddened to learn what you told me about Fr. Comas, to whom I have written [the enclosed] letter. [Please] read it, dress it up and send it [to him].

When the Rev. Rosanes left town, the books were still not ready to be sent. I am sending them now. There are enough of them to give to the Rev. Priests who made the retreat, especially to Canon Soldevi-

la. Be so kind as to greet the latter on my behalf and ask him what he thinks of the said little book.

Regards to the Josies and others who have asked after me, and rest assured that I am your friend,

Anthony Claret, Priest.

### 31. [31] To Father Peter Cruells

(In Catalan: EC I, 140-141)

#### Introductory Note

In Vic there were four Communities of Nuns devoted to a strictly cloistered and austere form of life: the Discalced Carmelites of St. Teresa's Priory, the Dominicans of St. Clare's Convent, the Dominicans of St. Catherine's *Beaterio* (hence called the *beatas*) and the Franciscans of the *Davalladas* (i.e., of the "Descents," presumably so-called because they were located down the hill between the higher town square of Vic and the lower *Riera*, or river-front road). The Saint had a lifelong predilection for these four communities.

In this letter, he tells his friend, Mossèn Pere Cruells, that after preaching a retreat to the clergy of Vic, he has begun preaching retreats to the four groups of Nuns just referred to. He also sends him some copies of a *llibret* (booklet) to give to the Nuns of Manresa, asking him to have them pray for the success of his ministry. The little books are doubtless copies of his first printed work, *Advice to Nuns*, mentioned above and translated in the *Selected Spiritual Writings* of Claret, dedicated to helping souls who aspire after perfection.

He sends his regards to Canon Soldevila, the "Prior" (by which he may mean either the *Praepositus* of the Cathedral Chapter, or the Rector of St. Michael's Church, Doctor Ramon Soler), and to the "Pe-pas" (which, as we have already explained, was the common Catalan appellation for the housemaids or housekeepers in the rectories of parish priests).

Finally, in the postscript, he lays out in broad strokes the plan for his upcoming missionary campaign through the Mountain, Valley and Coastal Districts (explained in the notes to Letter 29 above), until after Easter of the following year.

## Text

Vic. 5 August 1844

My Friend, Mossèn Pere:

This is to let you know that after preaching the Clergy retreat here, I have begun preaching one to the Nuns of the *Davalladas* and the *Beatas*, and am presently going to do so at St. Clare's and St. Teresa's. To help them recall what I've told them, I give each of them a booklet like the ones I'm sending you now, so that you can hand them out to the nuns there [in Manresa]. Thus, since I can't speak to them in person, I can do so by means of the booklet. Tell them to commend me to God that I may have the graces I need in order to fulfill my Ministry.

Regards to Canon Soldevila, to the Prior and to the Pepas. You can rely on your faithful servant, who kisses your hand,

A. Claret, P[riest].

P.S.-- On the 10th of this month I will begin my task in the Mountain district and afterwards I will go on to the Valley and Coastal districts until after Easter.

### 32. [32] To Father Peter Cruells

(In Catalan: EC I, 142-144)

#### Introductory Note

Mataró is a coastal city located about halfway between Barcelona and Girona. The retreat for the clergy of Mataró was heavily attended. Claret mentions it in passing in his *Autobiography* (n. 308; cf. n. 455). In St. Mary's Church, the Archconfraternity of the Heart of Mary (which Claret had founded there) placed a memorial plaque honoring the Saint in 1961. A far more lively memorial is the transcript of a dialogue between Claret and a Beneficiary of Mataró, which was published in the Claretian *Bulletin of the Province of Catalonia* (1949, p. 50):

Q. Why don't you want to take money for your preaching? A. Because I don't need it. Q. But even though you travel on foot, surely you must need money sometimes. A. Not so, since I will have lodgings in some rectory. Q. But you won't always find rectories while you're on the road. A. Then I'll stay at an inn. Q. But you'll have to pay there, won't you? A. They don't ask anything

of me. Q. But if they should demand some payment, *quid faciendum*? A. Then I'll just have to shift as best I can."

Mossèn Cruells was the Major Beadle, Pastor and Archdeacon of the Cathedral Church of Manresa, and a close friend of Claret, with whom he had been corresponding since at least 1841 (cf. Letter 19 above). In Manresa, Claret had preached the Lenten services in the Cathedral, as well as the famous Sermon on the Light in the Church of O. L. of Mt. Carmel (cf. Letter 27 above). A new figure we meet is Father Manuel Subirana, a native of Manresa and a schoolmate of the Saint in the seminary of Vic, who would embark with Archbishop Claret on December 28, 1850, as a member of his missionary team in Santiago, Cuba.

The main interest of this letter is the light it throws on Claret's growing involvement in the Catholic press. The little books (*llibrets*) that Cruells enjoyed were most likely the "Advice to Priests" (23 pp.) and "Advice to Young Ladies" (36 pp.) both published in Vic in 1844 by the Printery of Joseph Trullàs. Both are of autobiographical interest: the former because it is an almost literal transcription of the Saint's own retreat resolutions for 1843, the latter, because it was written "for one of his sisters." Of the two new books the Saint mentions, the first was written in Catalan and published in Barcelona by Pla in 1845 (75 pp.) under the longish title *Avisos molt útils als Pares de família que per son bé espiritual i temporal los dirigeix* (Very useful advice to Fathers of families, addressed to them for their spiritual and temporal well-being). The one for young men appeared in Vic in 1846, again by Trullàs, in both a Catalan and a Castilian edition (144 pp.), under the elaborate title of *The basket of Moses, afloat amidst the nine mouths of the Nile, or, Collection of salutary counsels to young men, to preserve them from the perils of the age.*

The book for married women, written in Catalan (Vic: Trullàs, 1846), entitled *Salutary counsels to married women, or Spiritual letter which Father D.A.C. wrote to one of his sisters* (64 pp.), was really an update of his "Advice to Young Ladies," minus the section on virginity, adding a new foreword and a statement on a wife's duties to her husband and children. Claret does not mention another short work (72 pp.) in Catalan (Vic: Trullàs, 1845), *Màximas de la moral més pura* (Maxims of the purest morality), which appeared from 1846 on under the title *Avisos saludables als Nois, que per son bé espiritual los dirigeix...* (Salutary counsels addressed to Boys for their spiritual well-being...).

The Saint's remark on robbing himself of sleep is the first mention of his working late into the night on his writings. In his *Autobi-*



*ography* (n. 8) he tells us that even as a child he was not much of a sleeper, and in later life he seems to have slept very little, perhaps as little as three or four hours a night.

### Text

Mataró, 19 March 1845

My Dear Sir and Friend Mossèn Pere:

I have received your letter and am glad of the news about Fr. Subirana, whom I would like you to greet for me and tell him that the Retreat for the Clergy will begin in the evening of Monday of the Octave of Easter [March 31]. (I think that many, many will be there).

I am delighted that you liked the little books I sent you, but I think you will be no less pleased with the others that are in the press in Barcelona and Vic, for Fathers of families and for Youth, respectively. I am also writing one for married women. Seeing the great and extraordinary results that are being done by means of booklets, I am driven to outdo myself in them -- which, I can assure you, I have to do by robbing myself of my time for sleep.

For now, thank God, the Lenten course is going extremely well. Give my regards to the Fr. Preacher there (I don't know his name), to all the members of your household, to the Nuns, and to anyone who asks after me. Ask them all to commend me to God, and you yourself can avail yourself of the good offices of your servant, who kisses your hand,

A. Claret, P[riest].

To the Rev. Peter Cruells, Priest and Beadle of Manresa.

### 33. [33] **To His Holiness, Pope Gregory XVI**

(In Italian: EC I, 145-146)

### Introductory Note

This letter underscores the importance that Claret attached to the title of "Apostolic Missionary," which he had first received on July 9, 1841 (cf. Letter 20 above). Although the letter is undated, one must suppose that, given the slowness of international postal service, the Saint wished to apply in good time for a renewal of his five-year faculties before his present ones expired.

Claret lived during the reign of five Popes: Pius VII (1800-23), Leo XII (1823-29), Pius VIII (1829-30), Gregory XVI (1831-46) and Pius IX (1846-1878). Bartolomeo Cappellari (1765-1846), who at the age of eighteen took the name Mauro on becoming a Camaldolese monk, was made abbot of St. Gregory's monastery in Rome in 1805, and for many years taught theology in the schools of his order, of which he became procurator general and vicar general. In 1826 he became Prefect of the Congregation of Propaganda Fide and cardinal priest of San Callisto. He was elected Pope (after nearly a hundred ballots) on February 2, 1831, and consecrated and crowned on February 6 as Gregory XVI. Reversing the policies of appeasement of his predecessor, he remained an intransigent foe of liberalism (whether Catholic or non-Catholic) throughout the fifteen years of his reign, with disastrous consequences for his successor.

This letter was transmitted (and most likely translated) by Brother Francis Bosch, S.J., whom Claret had met in Rome during his stay in the Jesuit Novitiate. Bosch, a native of Manresa, was for some time adjutant and secretary to the great Jesuit General, Fr. John Philip Roothaan. He not only helped Claret negotiate the renewal of his title, but later applied to have it extended to the members of Claret's band of mission followers (cf. Letter 35).

### **Text**

Most Blessed Father:

Anthony Claret, a priest of the Diocese of Vic in Spain, after receiving the favor of being declared an Apostolic Missionary, has been continuously employed for the space of more than four years in this Sacred Ministry, with a large concourse of the faithful and (thanks be to God) with most copious fruits. But as the time attached to the aforesaid favor is about to expire, he therefore, prostrate at the feet of Your Holiness, begs that you would deign to prolong for another five years both the pagella and other faculties usually granted to Apostolic Missionaries.

And as some letters regarding the faculties have gone astray, he would once more like to have them assembled in a unit.

For this Favor, etc...

To His Holiness, Pope Gregory XVI.

By way of

The undersigned petitioner,

Bosch.

**34. [34] To His Holiness, Pope Gregory XVI**

(In Italian: EC I, 147-150)

**Introductory Note**

In late August 1845 Claret, again through the good offices of Brother Francis Bosch, requests the faculties, privileges and title of Apostolic Missionary for a group of ten collaborators, among whom we might single out Fr. Stephen Sala, who became the Claretian Director General after the Founder's departure for Cuba, and also Fr. Manuel Subirana, who accompanied him there. The list also includes a rather elite group of Canons, Seminary Professors and Synodal Examiners, one of whom, the Oratorian Fr. Peter Bach, was Claret's confessor and spiritual adviser. The petition was granted on January 25, 1846.

This letter not only throws light on Claret's own missionary work, but also on his efforts to form a missionary group (which would eventually lead to the founding of his Congregation of Missionaries) and on his desires to evangelize beyond Catalonia. In a separate note to Brother Bosch, Claret also tried to add the names of six other collaborators, including Fr. Manuel Vilaró, later a co-founder of the Congregation of Missionaries and a member of Claret's Cuban expedition. This added petition was not granted.

**Text**

Most Blessed Father:

Anthony Claret, Priest and Apostolic Missionary of the Diocese of Vic in Spain and in residence there, prostrate at Your Holiness' feet, humbly sets forth how he, considering the harm that the Catholic Religion was undergoing in Spain, resolved to oppose it manfully. For the past five years he has been constantly employed in the sacred ministry of Missions and Retreats for clergy and people, and has assiduously ministered in the Confessional, often into the night (since the day did not suffice), hastening in Apostolic fashion throughout the Dioceses of Catalonia.

His efforts were blessed by God, and he very soon witnessed the return of a great number of stray sheep to the fold of the Heavenly Father, who in His great mercy has now deigned to call other truly zealous Evangelical workers, ready and resolved to follow the same tenor of life and apostolic labors as the Petitioner, so that they can

thus spread to other Provinces of Spain to sow the Word of God. For this holy enterprise, and with the consent and approval of the Vicar General administering the Diocese (*Sede Vacante*), who testifies to the probity and sound doctrine of those mentioned in this Document, he submits the names affixed below.

To render their work even more fruitful, to benefit the Faithful more fully and to bring greater glory to God, they have need of the following faculties, which they humbly ask of Your Holiness, namely:

1. To use a portable altar during their Missions, if need be.
2. To bless Rosaries, Medals, Crucifixes and other religious Images, attaching to them the customary Indulgences.
3. To grant a Plenary Indulgence *in articulo mortis* to the Faithful who attend.
4. To grant the Faithful a Plenary Indulgence at the end of Missions and Retreats.

The names of these Priestly Collaborators are:

1) Canon James Soler, 2) Canon James Passarell, 3) Mariano Puigllat, 4) Mariano Aguilar, 5) Peter Bach, 6) Francis Gonfaus, 7) Stephen Sala, 8) Emmanuel Subirana, 9) Emmanuel Battle, 10) Raymond Vicens ---Who... etc.

### 35. [35] To the Fr. John Tuñí

(In Catalan: EC I, 151-153; EC III, 27-28)

#### Introductory Note

Mossèn Joan Tunyí was the chaplain of the Capuchin Nuns in Mataró, the coastal city where Claret spent the whole of Lent in 1845. The Tunyí family's house led to the rectory by way of a connecting garden, and for lack of room in the rectory, the Lenten preacher (Claret) probably slept in the Tunyí house. Mossèn Miquel Tunyí, the brother of the addressee of this letter, was at that time Econome of St. Mary's Parish.

The clergy of Solsona had been trying to engage Claret's missionary services for almost a year, and when he at last arrived, they received him as an angel of peace. By 1845, as a result of the ongoing civil strife of the Carlist wars, the population of Mataró had fallen from 12,000 to 2,300 inhabitants, while the number of buildings had been reduced from 509 to 151.

The temporary Vicar General of Solsona (later Bishop of Puerto Rico) was Doctor Gil Esteve. For an account of the Saint's journeys in the Diocese of Solsona, see Fr. Cristóbal Fernández, *HD I*, pp. 212-222. On his way northward to Bagá, he had passed through the town of Ripoll, where at the request of Fr. Tunyí he had interviewed a young woman who was a potential vocation to the Capuchin Nuns, of whom, as we mentioned above, Tunyí was chaplain.

Contrary to the Claret's declared plans to proceed directly south from Bagá to the Carlist stronghold of Berga, we know that he went much further to the southwest, to San Llorens de Morunys --a twelve hour journey made on foot and fasting, over very rough and hilly terrain-- as he would recall quite vividly some twenty years later in his *Autobiography* (n. 367). One can only speculate on why the Saint expresses a great longing to leave the world and go to heaven, but certainly the missionary campaign he was engaged in was enough to try the stamina of an athlete and even, apparently, the patience of a Saint.

The postscript, which refers to an otherwise unknown Fr. Masdeu, closes with another of Claret's excuses for being in such a hurry (cf. Letter 29 above).

### Text

Bagá, 20 September 1845.

To the Rev. Mossèn Joan Tuñí, Priest

My Very Dear Sir:

I would hereby like to inform you that on coming to preach this September throughout the Diocese of Solsona, I passed through Ripoll, where I listened to and examined the reading and the vocation of Antonia Tiner, who would like to enter the Capuchin Convent there. I can briefly state from the little I know of her, that she reads Latin well, that she has a good vocation, that she will (I believe) pass the test, and that the good Nuns will be pleased with her. I have not dealt with her very much, but from the little I have seen and heard of her, it seems to me that she will make a good Nun, and you may tell the Nuns so on my behalf. Also greet them and ask them to commend me to God.

A thousand good wishes to Mossèn Miquel, to Mossèn Anton, to Mr. Joseph, and to the Ladies and boys of the household. Tell them that I think of them all, that I commend them to God and would like to see them again. Now I am on loan for a while to the temporary Vicar

General of Solsona. I began in Pobla de Lillet and am at present in Bagá, preaching to the people and giving the spiritual exercises to the Clergy who could not attend the exercises we held in Pobla. I'll be here the whole month and then go on to Berga, S. Llorens de Morunys, Cervera, Tàrraga, Solsona, etc.

At present I am well, thank God, and am longing greatly to go to Heaven. Pray the Lord that it may so please Him.

Ask what you will of your constant servant, who kisses your hand,

Anthony Claret, Priest.

P.S.-- I am also sending you the enclosed little letter from the Rev. Masdeu concerning some particular matter he would like you to know about.

Forgive me for being in such great haste.

### 36. [36] To Canon Anthony Palau

(EC I, 154-157)

#### Introductory Note

The present letter was published in the daily *El Católico* (vol. 25, year VII, number 2,181, Tuesday, 7 April 1846, p. 50). The "friend" addressed in this letter was Father Anthony Palau i Termens. Born in Valls (Tarragona) in 1806, he studied at the Seminary of Barcelona, took courses in mathematics at the University of Cervera, and in philosophy and theology in Tarragona. Ordained in 1831, he received a Licentiate in Theology from Cervera and taught in the Seminary of Barcelona until he was made a Canon of Tarragona. He founded the influential periodical *La Revista Católica*, which he personally directed for eleven years.

On May 1, 1854, two years after the death of Bishop Casadevall, Palau took possession of the See of Vic, where he began editing the "Official Ecclesiastical Bulletin," finished the printing of the Diocesan Ritual, and started a reorganization of parishes, which he could not complete because he was transferred to the See of Barcelona on November 18, 1857. The following year he founded the "Ecclesiastical Bulletin of Barcelona," and in 1860 authorized the foundation of the Claretian Mission House in Gracia (then a suburb of Barcelona), to which he brought any Bishops who happened to be passing through Barcelona. His death in 1861, when he was in his mid-fifties, came as

a shock. Saint Anthony Mary Claret, who happened to be in Barcelona at the time, was present at his death and officiated at the burial of his good friend.

The Mission at Falset (or Falcet, as the Saint spells it) lasted from the 14th to the 25th of March. Four days after the Mission, a local correspondent wrote to Canon Palau as follows:

For fifteen days, we have had the zealous priest, Don A. Claret, preaching three sermons a day here, at eleven, at four and at night: the first two for the clergy and the one at night for the people. The sermons lasted an hour and a half. On the Feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin, there was a General Communion, and the evening sermon lasted for two hours without a moment's pause. Such a huge crowd from the surrounding towns attended, that they could not fit in the church, although it has three great naves, each with its chapel. It is something never seen before. Many had to stand in the church square because they could not all fit inside the church. The Rev. Claret also heard confessions in the evenings. He always travels on foot. From here he is heading for Porrera" (*El Católico*, 4/7/1846, p.49).

The "faction" to which the Saint refers was the Carlist party. When Ferdinand VII died in 1833, there was an outbreak of hostilities between the old-time "royalists" and the "constitutionalists," now called "Carlists" and "Cristinos," respectively. The Carlists were allied with the late king's brother, Don Carlos, who claimed succession to the throne in keeping with the "Salic Laws" of male succession (commonly held by the House of Bourbon). The Cristinos rallied around Ferdinand VII's three-year old daughter, Isabella II, to whom he had granted succession to the Spanish throne and who was for the time being under the regency of her mother, Queen María Cristina. The fierce loyalty of many to the Carlist cause was based on the Carlists' defense of the traditional religious spirit of Spain and their support of the ancient regional rights and privileges of Spain.

The Saint then offers a summary of his priestly life up to that point, stressing the legitimacy of his apostolic mission, his loyalty to the Church and his avoidance of all partisan politics. He wants to make it clear that everything he has done has been for the establishment of peace and charity, including his latest "little book" for soldiers. This was published as a *Catechism of the Principal Duties of a Christian Soldier* (Barcelona: Pla, 1846), and later included among Claret's Collected Short Works as *Advice to a Christian Soldier* (Barcelona: Religious Library, 1850).

### Text

Falset, 25 March 1846.

My Esteemed Friend:

Today I have finished the Mission here. It is impossible to form an idea of the crowd and of the fruit which, by God's mercy, were gathered from it. All towns on both sides of the River Ebro showed up, and some great fish were caught. The devil is furious on seeing that so many fine birds have slipped his grasp, and that those caught off guard have been converted and now sing the praises of virtue. This is why he is now shrieking against me and causing his followers and ministers to accuse me of being a member of the faction, of joining the Carlists, and of achieving with the Crucifix what I could not achieve with the sword. This is the only charge that has been leveled against me, not only by some ill-willed people from a neighboring town (nobody from Falset says so, because I am as content with them as they are with me), but also by a few unconverted people from other towns where I've preached. It is true that some have said such things about me at the beginning of the Mission, but after being converted, they come to me and ask pardon for what they have said or done against me. Some of them have gone to confession and have truly repented, after being away for 12, 20, 27 and even 35 years.

Now although it makes no difference to me whether they praise me or slander me, I nonetheless think that the Evil One may use this lie against me in order to turn some unhappy people away from the sermon, and thus from conversion. Hence I believe that I am obliged to do as the Apostle Paul did in his second letter to the Corinthians, or to say as Jesus Christ himself did: *Dæmonium non habeo* ["I am not possessed of a demon," Jn 8:49]. I leave it to your good judgment to use the truth I am about to state in any way you choose, in order to change people's minds concerning the aforesaid false rumors about me.

In 1835 I was ordained a priest with title to a benefice of Sallent. And although I had not quite finished my studies, I was nevertheless licensed to hear confessions and preach, meanwhile completing the last of my ten years of courses, namely three of philosophy and seven of theology, as demanded by the plan of studies that was in force during the time I was enrolled in the Conciliar Seminary of Vic. During these later studies, the illustrious Vicar General of Vic appointed me parish vicar and later vicar economo of Sallent. Thus, from the year 1835 to the year 1839, when I left for Rome, I was always stationed



in the town of Sallent, which was defended by the national forces. In 1839, desiring to produce more fruit in the Lord's Vineyard, I went to Rome to join the foreign missions; but in 1840, because of failing health, I was sent back to Spain. While convalescing here, I was sent as regent to the parish of Viladrau, where I began my apostolic tasks in the year 1841. I received from Rome the title of Apostolic Missionary *ad honorem*, which came from the Sacred Congregation of *Propaganda Fide*, together with other faculties granted me by the Sacred Penitentiary and other Congregations.

From this it can be seen that well before the Revolution and until 1835, I was in Vic; from 1835 to 1839 I was in Sallent; from 1839 to 1840 I was in Rome; and from 1840 to the present I have been preaching with the permission or mandate of my Diocesan Superiors, and thus have never joined the so-called faction or meddled in political affairs. And during the four years I spent in Sallent, where I preached very many sermons, as well as in the sermons I have preached up to the present, I have never, never let slip from my mouth the least word of alarm. On the contrary, I have always exhorted people to peace and unity, teaching them detachment from the things of this world and striving to make charity prevail, inculcating it not only by word but also by example, which is attested to not only by the prisons and civil and military hospitals I have visited, but also by the latest little book, soon to appear, which I have written for our soldiers.

### 37. [37] To Canon Anthony Palau

(EC I, 158-159)

#### Introductory Note

This is really only a fragment of a letter, a printed extract that Palau chose to cite in an *apologia* for Claret that appeared in the 8/13/1846 issue of *El Católico*. One should note that Claret did not mean his remarks for publication; it was Palau who chose to "leak" them to the press. As the Saint preached all May of that year, mainly in Lérida (Lleida), the original letter must be dated later, probably in mid-June.

In this extract from the letter, Claret complains that he has been lampooned either ignorantly or maliciously in the newspapers by an unnamed journalist. It seems quite clear that the offending party

in this case was Modesto Lafuente (1806-1866), a journalist whose highly popular satirical sketches were published in the moderate Madrid daily, *El Tiempo*, under the pen-name of *Fray Gerundio* (after the 18th-century satire, *Fray Gerundio de Campazas*, by the gifted Jesuit writer, Padre Isla, whose work included many clever parodies of clerical bombast in his day). Lafuente mocks Claret's "Society of Mary Most Holy against Blasphemy," founded a year earlier in Mataró. He thinks that while the vice deserves to be stamped out, the means used are in bad taste; that the verses that open its membership certificate may be pious, but are hardly poetic; that the hawking of religious articles at bargain basement prices is in bad taste; that people collect the preacher's used shirts as relics; finally, that it is ridiculous to see the long lines of penitents "huddled together in clumps until ten in the evening, waiting their turn to go to confession." The characterization is as unjust as it is amusing. Claret's missions and his society were having such a salutary effect that the 'smart set' were galled by them.

Canon Palau introduces his citation from Claret's letter as follows: "By chance an issue of *Fray Gerundio* (volume II, service 5) fell into my hands, and when I noticed that the heading of one article was "The Society of Mary Most Holy," I could hardly refrain my curiosity from informing myself of its contents, since it reminded me of something of the sort that the apostolic man, Mossèn Claret had written me just a few days earlier, regarding the results that have been obtained through it in his Missions in Lérida."

### Text

[Mid-June (?), 1846]

"...You will not be unaware of the silly pack of lies that some ignorant or malicious person has placed in the newspapers concerning my preachings. Indeed, it came as no great surprise to me, since we know from the Holy Gospel that this is the sign of the true disciples of the Lord. Woe betide me if I met with no contradiction in the fulfillment of the sacred ministry! I would hold myself suspect. Far from being hurt by this, I even glory in it, in imitation of the Apostle. Would that I could seal with the blood of my veins the truths that I preach!"

### 38. [39] To Canon Joseph Caixal

(In Catalan: EC I, 162-164)

#### Introductory Note

Since the addressee of this letter figures so prominently in the life and works of Saint Anthony Mary Claret, this is perhaps the best place to offer an autobiographical sketch of him. Josep Caixal i Estradé was born in Vilosell (Archdiocese of Tarragona and Province of Lérida) on 9 July 1803. He studied grammar and rhetoric with the Piarists in Igualada, whence he went on to study philosophy, theology and Sacred Scripture in the seminary of Tarragona and in the University of Cervera, where he obtained his doctorate in Church and Civil Law and taught oratory and theology to, among others, Jaume Balmes. He was ordained to the Priesthood in 1827.

In 1831 he competed for and won the chair of theology in the University of Cervera. In 1833, Archbishop Echánove of Tarragona, impressed by Caixal's obvious gifts, made him a Canon of the Cathedral Chapter. During the first outbreak of the Carlist Civil War, both the Canon and the Archbishop were confined to Madrid, whence Caixal marched off to Berga, the Carlist stronghold, to become Chaplain in the military hospital of the Carlists. His adherence to the Carlist cause (which the ruling government referred to as "the faction," i.e., of Don Carlos, the Pretender to the throne) was so open that he was forced to emigrate to Perpignan in France, from which he was unable to return because of the clash between the ruling Isabellines and the opposing Carlists, until 1846.

Claret arrived in Tarragona on February 4th; on the 5th began the Holy Mission to the people and on the 9th the Retreat to the Clergy. It was on this occasion that Claret met his great friend and collaborator, Canon Caixal, with whom he held frequent and cordial interviews in the Archbishop's Residence, where Claret was staying as a guest and where Caixal came and went with ease as the closest member of the Archbishop's inner circle. We do not know the details of their conversations and the projects they discussed, but we can guess at it from the later correspondence between the two friends: the acquisition of a press, the overall organizing of ministry of Catholic press (leading to the creation of the publishing venture of the "Religious Library") and the cooperation of all their friends and of others who shared their burning concern for the greater glory of God.

The present letter shows that Claret --even though he was intensely committed to his wide-ranging and seemingly unceasing missionary commitments-- immediately turned his mind and hand to this work of written evangelism, as if he had nothing else to think about. As we will point out later, Claret and Caixal would remain in collaboration and correspondence for many years to come. In 1852, Caixal was made Bishop of Seo de Urgell, but was again exiled, this time to the Balearic Isles, in 1855. The Saint and Bishop Caixal last met during the First Council of the Vatican (1869-1870, which both attended and in which Caixal played a notable role. But Caixal could not stay indifferent to politics, he intervened as a partisan of Carlos de Borbón in the last of the Carlist Wars. When Urgell fell to General Martínez Campos in 1876, Caixal was taken prisoner and brought to the Fortress of Alicante, and thence to Rome, where he died in the Mercedarian House of Sant' Adriano (where Claret had stayed as a guest during the Vatican Council) on 26 August 1879.

The postscript has an interesting reference. It seems that the Saint moved on to the town of Torredembara --which he calls "La Torra"-- on 27 February. Here, someone entered the Church door and fired a gun at him while he was preaching in the pulpit. This was not the first attempt on his life, because in May of the previous year, 1845, in the populous Coastal city of Vilanova i Geltrú, someone had set off a bomb outside his confessional, obliging him to suspend the mission that he was preaching.

### **Text**

To the Illustr. Canon Caixal  
Altafulla, 25 September [1846]

My Very Dear Sir:

Pax Christi. Concerning what you tell me in your welcome letter of the 24th, I should answer that I like the plans you have for the press. But it also seems prudent to me that you make no move for the present, and that if Fr. [Anthony] Carbó goes to Barcelona, you can give him instructions on what to do. I have made some inquiries in the matter, but have not yet received an answer.

Regards to His Excellency [Abp. Echánove] and our other Friends, and you can rely on your servant, who kisses your hand,

Anton Claret, P[riest].

PS. Here, I am preaching and hearing confessions, and as I near the end, the fervor keeps growing. As you know, I will be going on to La Torra, by orders of His Excellency.

(Make haste)

To the Illustr. Canon Caixal  
Tarragona

### 39. [46] **To Some Priest Friends**

(EC I, 176-178)

#### **Introductory Note**

The present “circular letter” which appears in the handwritten notebook of Dr. Caixal comes immediately after the three preceding letters published in EC I. This leads us to believe that it was written on the same date, namely, December 5, 1846, and that it was not from Barcelona, but from Pondarmentara. The heading we have supplied was the same one given by Fr. Ramón Ruiz Amado, S.J., when he published it for the first time in the “Printed Catalogue” for the International Exposition of Barcelona (1929-1930). It was later published by Fr. Cristóbal Fernández in HD I, 496. Although the letter has no concrete addressee, the letter was doubtless to be sent to any priests zealous for the greater glory of God, such as those the author mentions in closing.

Fr. Claret is extremely deferential to his good friend, Canon Caixal, in attributing to him the idea for an enterprise which was almost exclusively his own. Throughout this letter we can feel Claret’s deep concern for the Apostolate of the Press, for which he harbored some very ambitious projects. Here, he merely sketches a plan to print a series of spiritual booklets dedicated to the people. In February of the following year he was to establish an Association called “Spiritual Brotherhood of Good Books,” which soon developed so notably that he reorganized it under the new name of the ‘*Libreria Religiosa*’ (Religious Library or Bookstore), with which we will deal later.

Among the names of those mentioned at the end, the first, Don Jaume Soler, was Magistral Canon and Secretary of the Cathedral Chapter of Vic, and Rector and Professor of the Conciliar Seminary. Doctor Mariano Puigllat was Vice-rector and Chairman of the Seminary. Don Jaume Passarell was Secretary of the Ecclesiastical Government of the Diocese of Vic. The Very Rev. Peter Bach (1796-1866), restorer and for thirteen years superior of the Oratory of Vic, was the

great spiritual director of the Saint since his years as a seminarian. Don Pere Naudó was vicar curate of Santa Maria del Mar in Barcelona. Don Francisco de Asís Bofill, also residing in Barcelona, was Chaplain of the Magdalens and Beneficiary of the College of San Severo. Dr. Pere Tusquets was a beneficiary at the College of San Severo. Dr. Joaquim Masmitjà was Penitenciar and Archpriest of the Cathedral of Gerona and Founder of the Daughters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Don Juan Torrabadella was Professor of Religion and Moral Theology in the Seminary of Solsona. Fr. Ramón Vincents was Professor of Canon Law, Synodal Examiner and Rector of the Seminary of Solsona. Don Julián (*not* Thomas) Martí was Chairman of Moral Theology in the Seminary of Gerona and Synodal Examiner of the Diocese. Don Josep Galí was Canon of Sant Joan de les Abadesses. An imposing list.

### **Text**

Barcelona..., 1846.

Dear and Reverend Sir:

If I did not know you deeply and see that you were moved by the kind of zeal that should consume every good priest, I would not be sharing with you the following plan of the illustrious and most worthy Canon of Tarragona, Don Josep Caixal who, driven by his great love of God and neighbor, has thought it would be well to print and reprint those spiritual and dogmatic books he knows to be best suited to the present circumstances, or which others have brought to his attention, and to spread them throughout Catalonia, Spain and perhaps beyond, printing them in large quantities and then selling them at a low price, or even distributing them gratis, as the wicked do with their own bad and pestilent works, causing ravages beyond number.

How long will the children of darkness be more prudent and diligent than the children of light? [cf. Lk 16:8]. If the impious do all this to corrupt others, why, then, do we not do as much to preserve and increase the piety of the faithful? Let us not be deceived, my friend: the people of today are avid readers, and if we don't give them good books to read, they will undoubtedly find bad ones, which are unfortunately all too abundant in our unhappy days.

On learning of this good and necessary project, I could do no less than applaud it, cooperating to the best of my ability in the indispensable and considerable expenses that this plan entails. And knowing that the aforesaid gentleman, far from looking to gain anything from

this work, is using his Mass stipends and the income from his canonry to support this work, I could do no less than offer him my own Mass stipends, which are the only thing I can count on. And I regard them as so well spent, that the more I had, the more I would give.

But as I myself can do no more, I am going to seek the cooperation of other friends whom I know to be animated by these same sentiments. Now since you are such a friend, I make bold to share this important undertaking with you, hoping that you will see fit to cooperate with 3 or 4 Mass stipends per month, more or less, as your zeal inclines you. Not only this, but if you yourself know someone of like sentiments who would like to contribute, combine his stipends with your own, and send them or send for information concerning them to the aforesaid Canon. On this occasion I again place myself at your disposal as your most attentive and ready servant,

A. C., Priest.

Vic: [the Reverends] Soler, Puigllat, Passarell, Nadiu, Pou, Feu, Bach.

Barcelona: Naudó, Bofill, Rodríguez, Tusquets.

Manresa: Cruells. Igualada: Senmartí. Olot: Masmitjà.

Solsona: Torrevadella, Vicents

Girona: Tomas Martí. Mataró: Miguel. Figueres: Domer.

Teruel.

S. Joan de les Abadesses: S.C. Gali.

#### 40. [49] To Canon Joseph Caixal

(In Catalan: EC I, 184-87)

### Introductory Note

This date of this letter is lacking the year, but the closing address to the addressee is followed by the clearly legible postmark: "29 December 1846." In reply to the latest letter from Canon Caixal, Claret informs his good friend and collaborator of his opinion on a number of printed materials, such as the Saint's own very popular work, *El camí dret* [*The Straight Path*], to which he wants to add "A Method for Devoutly Hearing Mass, Following it Step by Step" and some other matters, some pious prints illustrating the mysteries of the Rosary and the Chaplet of the Sorrows of Mary and his little book of "Advice to Boys." He had distributed so many holy cards and booklets at this mission, that he urgently needed more of them.

He does not like Canon Soler's overly theoretical booklet on the *Philomenas* (seven out of eleven chapters were spent on explaining the nature of vocation). Practical material for the book could be found in Saint Alphonsus Liguori's "The True Spouse of Jesus Christ, that is, The Holy Nun," and in his "Selva di materie predicabili," an anthology of preaching materials, especially among the 'Discourses to Devout Single Women.' Soler's failure led Claret, during his forced ministerial hiatus in early 1847, to write his own successful book, "Nuns in Their Own Homes, or Daughters of the Most Holy and Imm. Heart of Mary," which a century later became the inspiration for the Secular Institute of Cordimarian Filiation.

Regarding his own ministry, he mentions the faculties he has received from Rome for *the Way of the Cross*, and hints at the extraordinary results of the missions he is preaching, while lamenting the dearth of willing and able confessors.

In the first postscript to this letter he asks Canon Caixal to inform the Archbishop of his plans to go on to the town of Cornudella. In the second, he states that he is overwhelmed with work and that his companion (Fr. Manuel Vilaró, later to become a Co-founder of Claret's Congregation of Missionaries, and its only member to accompany the Saint to Cuba) is exhausted and has a headache. He avows that he himself is undergoing a daily martyrdom to see some two or three hundred persons who need and want to make a general confession, for although he is in the confessional from 4:45 in the morning until night, it is impossible for him to accommodate them all:

"Even the men weep with compunction and spend the whole day fasting, despite the rigorous winter cold. They suffer, and I suffer to see them suffering. Ah! would that God were to carry me off to heaven!"

### Text

J.M.J.

Sarreal, December 26 [1846]

Rev. D. Joseph Caixal

My Dear Friend:

I have read your letter of the 21st, and in reply I will tell you: That I have already sent Fr. Naudó the 'Way to hear Mass' and some other matters to add to the same little book, *The Path*, etc., which is held in high esteem wherever people have read it: of it alone, more copies are sent out than all the others put together. How are the holy



cards of the Mother of God of the Fount and of the Mysteries? The people are quite taken with the one on the Seven Sorrows and derive much good from it. In all towns I gather the boys and girls together, and after I speak to them from the pulpit, I give all of them one of these holy cards, or I give each of the boys [a copy of] 'Advice to Boys.' Luckily, Michael sent me some other booklets, since they don't send me any from Bar[celo]na, as they used to. I don't have anything now, hence I'm of the opinion that you'll send me some to give away.

The little book on the Philomenas was not much to my liking. Seeing that I didn't have time for it, I entrusted it to Canon Soler, after telling him my thoughts on the matter. The said little book should contain three things: 1) The Excellence of Virginity (matter for this can be found in The Holy Nun). 2) It is not indispensable that they enter a cloister; they can also keep their virginity while living in the world (see the discourse on single women in St. Liguori's *Selva*, which I already translated for this purpose). 3) The way of living in the world as Christian maidens did in the first centuries of the Church, and as the 'Nuns of St. Philomena' do today.' That is what I had in mind; but he [Soler] has dwelt much too long on vocation, which could have been been done far more briefly.

I will send you the contrasting version, etc. But first I'd like to have some time to bring out something I like, on a practical way for first communicants to renew their promises.

From Rome they have sent me and my companions the faculty to make *the Way of the Cross* with a single image of the Crucifix and we will be able to bless other images, so that the faithful can do the same with them. Since the Rev. Fr. Provincial of the Franciscans is now in town there, ask him on my behalf whether in virtue of this faculty we can place crosses of the Via Crucis in Churches and Chapels, and in the houses of the faithful who ask for them. Likewise, if this faculty is not included, see whether the Provincial can and will grant it to us, since it is a very good thing for the greater honor and glory of God and for the welfare of the neighbor. Moreover, this is the understanding of my companions from the Mountain district, who have written and pressed me on the matter.

I am happy that you are working and bearing fruit.

Here, thank God, we have been bearing extraordinary fruit, though we are in need of confessors. My companion [Vilaró] and I are working night and day, going as fast as we can, but we never finish. The other Priests are helping us now, but since they are so unaccustomed to hearing so many confessions, and moreover are so

little inclined to do so, that they soon grow tired. This is one of the predominant evils of the Clergy of the Archdiocese: few clergy and little liking for hearing confessions. And this is a pity, because there are some very good-hearted souls who, if cultivated properly, would bear fruit a hundred fold. Regards to His Excellency the Archbishop and the other priests in his household; all of you can dispose as you will of your servant,

Anton Claret, Priest.

P.S.-- Be so good as to inform His Excellency that I have received his response to the petition from here. I have set aside the time, that is, I will remain two more days, namely, Monday and Tuesday. I will leave here on Wednesday, and will arrive and begin in Cornudella on Thursday, as I have written to the Pastor there.

Today, December 27th

My friend: Commend us to God. Today I felt utterly exhausted and my companion is worn out and has a headache, as has happened to him in the other towns of Pon, Pla and Barbará during the last days of the mission. I assure you that it kills me every day to see two or three hundred persons who need and want to make a general confession. They are ignorant, simple folk, but are involved in a thousand complications of many years, each conscience a highly tangled skein. We hear confessions from a quarter to five in the morning until night, but we still can't take care of them all. Even the men weep with compunction and spend the whole day fasting, despite the rigorous winter cold. They suffer and I suffer to see them suffering. Ah, would that God were to carry me off to Heaven!

Today the 28th

To the Illustr. Don Joseph Caixal, Canon of Tarragona

#### **41. [52] To the Vicar General of Vic**

(EC I, 193-196)

### **Introductory Note**

The addressee of this letter, the Reverend Vicar General Capitular, Don Lucian Casadevall, was a native of Vic and Canon Rector of St. Michael of the Cathedral. Formed under Bishops Veyán (d. 1815) and Corcuera (1825-1835), he kept a firm grip on the reins of the Diocese of Vic as its Vicar General during the difficult decade of 1838-1848.

Claret begins by informing Casadevall of the state of his health, which had always been good, despite the overwhelming amount of work he had performed everywhere. His work here in Poboleda was to prove no exception, both in its difficulty and in the benefits with which God in His mercy blessed it.

He then tells his ecclesiastical superior of the success of the preceding services at the Charterhouse of *Scala Dei*, and concludes by offering in broad strokes his plans for the next mission, which will involve a clash with the strange eccentric and 'heresiarch,' Michael Ribas, a landowner (called 'Father Ribas' by his followers) in the town of Alforja). Ribas had once been an exemplary Christian who made a yearly retreat at the Capuchin Mission House of Escornalbou, where one of his relatives was a friar. In time, he came to claim that in his long prayers he held intimate converse with God and with various inhabitants of heaven, purgatory and hell, and many of the local inhabitants revered him. He misled several of them into breaking a number of ecclesiastical laws, etc., and at the time of this letter, he was trying to keep Claret away from Alforja by spreading a number of false accusations against the Saint. Little did Claret realize how far Ribas would go in thwarting him.

He convinced the Military Commandant of Tarragona that Claret was inciting political unrest. The Commandant was about to have Claret arrested and brought to Tarragona, but was prevented from acting by the political leader of the province, who knew Claret well, at least until he had spoken with the Archbishop, in Claret's presence. Claret was summoned to Tarragona and left Poboleda very early in the morning of February 3rd, traveling on foot through the snow, reaching Tarragona before four in the afternoon. Both the Archbishop and the Commandant were convinced of the falsity of the charges against him. The Commandant was both edified by Claret's apostolic conduct and embarrassed at proceeding against him with such levity, and the Archbishop sent him back, with a blessing, to his missionary work.

Claret eventually confronted Ribas, converted him and made him publicly retract his religious errors, and although Ribas later relapsed into them, he eventually recanted again and was reconciled with the Church on his deathbed.

In the postscript, Claret tells Casadevall of learning the sad news of the death of Peter Vilaró, the eldest brother of his missionary helper, Fr. Manuel Vilaró.

**Text**

To the most Illustrious Vic. Gen. Cap. of Vic  
Poboleda, 23 January 1847

My Very Dear and Honored Sir:

Since last I wrote you, we have continued in perfect health, thank God, despite our exorbitant and constant work. The labors have been great, but no less have been the fruits which, through God's mercy, have been reported in all the towns in which we have preached.

We hear confessions morning and evening, and even though the other priests help us, we can't possibly attend to all the penitents who have been waiting overnight. And when they see that we are not going to be able to accommodate everyone, they begin to state why they deserve to have the next turn, saying, 'Its been so many years since I've been to confession.' Another says: 'I have never, ever made a good confession, since I kept silent about some sins out of shame, etc.' Yet another says, 'I'm a great sinner; for the love of God let me get to the confessional, since I need it more than all the rest.' It moves one to pity to hear this bickering going on, but it also depressing every day to see hundreds of penitents piled up outside the confessionals, for though we hear confessions for hours on end, we will never be able to console them all.

If we go to the wilderness, they follow us there. It's a pity we can't multiply loaves and fishes as our divine Master did, for the poor people have to bring a bit of bread with them from their homes. In proof of this, even as I write, we have just arrived here from the Charterhouse or *Scala Dei*, where, at the request of His Excellency, we preached for five days to the farming people who have come here to cultivate these great tracts of wilderness and are said to be the wickedest people around. It almost seems that what has happened here is like what happened in the Holy Land in the days of the Roman Emperor Hadrian. At the Manger he set up a statue of Adonis, on Calvary one of Venus, and in the place of the Resurrection, one of Jupiter. However, we were impressed by their docility in coming to hear the divine word and to confess, and as very many others came for the same purpose from very far away, it was impossible to satisfy all who came, since the former had preference over the latter.

We will spend nine days in this town, and then as many in Alforja, where we will have to struggle with a Heresiarch, Don Miquel Ribas, an unhappy fellow who has misled some people with his errors, trying to persuade them to receive Communion right after eating something, etc., etc.

I have no more time. Dispose as you will of your most attentive and obedient servant,

Anthony Claret, Priest.

P.S.-- Today we have learned that in that town the brother of my companion has died.

To the Illustrious Vicar Gen. Capitular of Vic.

## 42. [53] To Don Lucian Casadevall

(EC I, 197-199)

### Introductory Note

The day after he arrived in Tarragona, Claret wrote to his Major Ecclesiastical Superior in Vic, explaining the reasons for his presence in the provincial capital of Tarragona (cf. preceding letter). Although everyone suspected that Michael Ribas was the source of the anonymous charges against Claret, it was not possible to prove it. Claret then informs Casadevall of the flight of a Teaching Sister from that city and, finally of the arrival there of Fr. Ignasi Carbó, an exclaust-rated Cistercian monk of Poblet, who would later become a Claretian Missionary. In fact, Fr. Carbó proved to be one of the best Claretian Missionaries, and his death in 1851 was a severe blow to the newborn community.

### Text

Very Reverend and Esteemed Sir:

Although it has been a short time since last I wrote you about our occupations and about the abundant fruits which we have, through God's mercy, obtained by them, I nevertheless think, because of the nature of the case, that I should write to you concerning what has just happened. That is, not very long since, I was well nigh arrested and brought thus to this city of Tarragona. The reason for this is that the Military Commandant General of this Province had received an anonymous report with a thousand trumped-up charges alleging that I was involved in various political intrigues and, acting with soldierly haste, he dispatched a group of his boys from Riudoms to take me prisoner. Meanwhile, the said Commandant met with the Political Chief of the Province, after which he suspended the order to arrest me and informed the Archbishop of what was going on. The latter zealously and energetically defended my innocence and told the

Commandant that he would order me to appear before him so that he could see with his own eyes my innocence.

In effect, His Excellency ordered me to come to Tarragona, which I did in such a manner that on the morning of the 3rd I marched off from Poboleda, some nine hours distance from Tarragona, where I arrived before four in the afternoon, after travelling for three hours through a snow that covered me from head to foot, for it snowed constantly during the first three hours of my journey. When I arrived here His Excellency explained to me what had happened, and told me to appear before the Commandant, which I in fact did. The latter gentleman was fully convinced of my innocence and rather shamefaced at having proceeded with such levity against me.

Now both ecclesiastical and civil authorities are making the most lively inquiries to discover the identity of the guilty party, and perhaps they will find out, because they have heard from a few speakers who are not vague at all, but well founded. At the moment it is strongly suspected that the guilty party is none other than the Heresiarch of Alforja, who used this ruse to prevent my going there to unmask his infernal maneuvers. But despite all his efforts, I am going there to start the Mission this coming week.

Last week, a Teaching Sister of this city ran off. The unhappy woman was already professed though she was young; she had entered with a true vocation, was heiress to a fat patrimony, and had abandoned it all for the religious life. Now she is abandoning that life and her own soul, as a result of listening to idle conversations held behind the grille. How much His Excellency had done, and how much I had said to them in sermons on this very matter!

The Rev. Don Ignasi Carbó (that Monk who attended our conferences in summer) has just arrived in this town from his voyage to Rome, etc., etc., and among other very interesting items, he tells us that His Eminence, Cardinal Ostini charged him to convey his greetings to me and to the Ecclesiastical Governor of Vic.

For the rest, there is nothing new. Mossèn Manuel Vilaró is working hard and is in good health, as I am, too, thank God.

Regards from my aforesaid companion and from me. Ask whatever you will of your obedient and ready servant,

Anthony Claret, Priest.

To the Illustrious Don Lucian Casadevall, Vicar Gen. of Vic.

**43. [54] To Don Lucian Casadevall**

(EC I, 200-201)

**Introductory Note**

After acknowledging the receipt of Casadevall's last letter, Claret proceeds to inform him of the retraction and conversion of the 'heresiarch,' Michael Ribas. He asks his Church Superior to join him in thanking God for this victory.

He then informs him of the infernal opposition he is facing in his plans to preach in the liberal and anticlerical town of Reus. The Prelate had always been concerned about the religious revival of that troubled town, but his plans had always been frustrated. He was especially anxious to do something at precisely this time, when not only the Church, but also the civil and military authorities were well disposed for it. Because of some enormous difficulties that had come up at the last moment, these plans had to be put off for a time, only to be abandoned completely because these difficulties grew even worse with time. On February 20th, Claret's good friend, Canon Caixal, wrote him from Tarragona: "My dearest friend: His Excellency wants you to find a reason for staying in Alforja until he advises you otherwise, which he will surely not fail to do. The case is, that the devil seems bent on your not going to Reus, despite the efforts of the Political Chief (who greatly admires you) and of His Excellency, the Commandant General, who said that he'd go there with twenty battalions to put down those rogues..."

He closes with words of high praise for his missionary companion, Fr. Manuel Vilaró.

**Text**

To the Illustr. Don Lucian Casadevall,  
Vic. Gen. Capit. of Vic  
Alforja, 22 February [1847]

My Dear and Reverend Sir:

I received your letter of the 11th of this month and now with all haste I will give you the plausible news of the conviction and retraction of the Heresiarch Don Miguel Ribas. I am herewith sending you a copy of the written statement he made according to the dispositions of the Lord Provisor of Tarragona, after having given him part of his reduction.

Help me give glory to God for having deigned to avail himself of this poor little David in order to knock to the ground this Goliath, who seems to have been sent by the devil himself to cast opprobrium on the Clergy and the Catholic people, besides profaning the august Sacrament of the Altar and, by his alleged visions and conversations with God, and with those in Heaven, Purgatory or Hell, was causing God knows what mischief.

The Angels sing on my behalf, but all Hell is ranting and raving against me. As of now, I'm due to go to Reus for some three weeks, but I still don't know whether or not I'll be going. Here goes the letter.

I still find myself in this town, and tonight, by order of His Excellency, my companion Vilaró has preached in the Parish of la Morera. After delivering a number of sermons he will rejoin me. Thank God he is good and works very hard and the people are very pleased with him.

Keep well and ask what you will of your servant,  
Anthony Claret, Priest.

#### **44. [58] To Rev. Peter Cruells**

(In Catalan: EC I, 208-210)

### **Introductory Note**

Father Cruells, Pastor and Archpriest of Manresa, Canon of the Collegiate Chapter and Chaplain of the Hospital of the Daughters of Charity, had been a friend of Claret's even before the latter left for Rome in 1839. He was a great admirer of the Saint and a backer of all his enterprises. Writing to Bishop Casadevall, he stated his impression of his friend as follows: "I expected nothing less of our Claret, who is truly an all-out wonder."

The present letter reveals how deeply Claret was involved in this "Brotherhood," which was in fact a direct forerunner of the important editorial enterprise of the Religious Library. The little book he is sending is probably his "Advice to a Priest," written in 1844 and re-edited during the years that followed. After a few remarks on "bending" the subscription rates, which some find difficult to come up with, Claret goes on to inform Cruells that despite the good work being done by Canon Caixal, Fr. Sala (later a Co-founder and Director General of the Claretian Congregation) and himself, they still need as much help as they can get from both clergy and laity, since this, like any other good work, must face contradiction.



An endearing personal touch (seen in other letters of Claret) is his remembrance of the “Josepas” or “Pepas” (“Josephines” or “Josies”) -- a familiar Catalan nickname for parish housekeepers.

In the postscript, he ends with a reference to a circular letter by Abp. Echanove of Tarragona (probably the one in which the latter commends Claret’s ministry), along with a short schedule of his planned itinerary and an expression of best wishes to the Pons family.

### **Text**

To the Rev. Peter Cruells, Priest  
Vic, 3 April 1847

My Very Dear Sir:

I just received your letter, which I greatly appreciated, along with the book on the Blessed Virgin Mary, for which I give you many thanks. As a proof of the debt of gratitude I owe you, I am sending you something I’ve put together in my desire for charity and uniformity among all of us priests. I can see what you’re telling me about the Spiritual Brotherhood of Good Books, in keeping with what Fr. Stephen [Sala] has written to you. Let us hope that it will continue to have the same happy results as, thank God, it presently bids fair to do.

As for the subscribers, let them do what they can, because I can see that some of them will find it hard to take on a monthly charge for that amount, although it’s only a trifle. In that case, let them give what they can, without undertaking a commitment for so many months or years. After all, our aim is to gather alms for the spread of something good, and if other things or alms can be applied to this end, it seems to me that we ought to do what we can, because this is a spiritual aim preferable to any bodily aims, and because it is just what is needed in our unfortunate days. We must, Fr. Peter, set up walls and dikes, lest the great flood of impiety and indifferentism carry away the little good topsoil that still remains in the field of the Lord’s vineyard.

He knows our aim and likewise understands our unselfish motives. I would tell you as a friend that those promoting this affair are the illustrious Canon Caixal of Tarragona, Father Stephen Sala, and your servant. Far from making any profit from it, we are spending as much as we can on it. The Canon is handing over all income from his Canonry and his Mass stipends. Father Stephen is doing what he can, and I am handing in my alms for Masses, which is the only asset I can dispose of. If we alone could run the whole machinery of

this matter, we wouldn't be troubled in the least. But as the great amounts we are distributing cost so much, we can't manage it alone and we need the charity of the zealous faithful, whether clergy or laity. I am telling you this so that you will know how to answer anyone who may have questions or suspicions about this work; for we know that good works must always be accompanied by contradictions.

I pray that you and the Josepas have a happy holiday Season and that you will rely on your obedient servant, who kisses your hand,

Anthony Claret, Priest

P.S. I don't know whether you know about the Archbishop's circular that I'm sending you. I believe that you will already have received the packet of pious prints I sent you. Some other very interesting ones will soon be coming out, as well as some other things of great importance for the salvation of everyone.

Here, on the 10th, I will begin my talks to boys and girls for their First Communion. On the day of the General Communion, I will give each of them a copy of the latest edition of the *Straight Path*, which I have just revised. If you see the Pons family, give them my regards. Last Sunday Louis, who is quite well, came to see me.

#### 45. [63] To Canon Joseph Caixal

(In Catalan: EC I, 218-222)

### Introductory Note

Canon Joseph Caixal was one of Claret's closest collaborators in various enterprises. A former theology professor in the University of Cervera, he was a Canon of Tarragona when he first met Claret during the mission that the Saint preached in Tarragona in 1846. From that time on, they were in almost continual correspondence. Fr. Claret consulted Caixal on the most varied matters, sent him sketches of his books for his opinion on them and (as one can see in this letter) occasionally offered him some rather frank criticism. The Religious Library, the Congregation of Missionaries and the Congregation of the Religious of Mary Immaculate (Claretian Sisters) were among the undertakings that took shape and matured in the conversations and correspondence between these two apostolic men. Two years after Claret's consecration as Archbishop of Cuba, Caixal was nominated to the vacant See of Urgell, from which he was twice exiled for his political convictions. Both men later took part in the First Vatican Council.

The correspondence between Claret and Caixal is both abundant and marked by great spontaneity and trust. Saint Anthony Mary Claret frequently scolds, warns and advises Caixal, interlacing his criticisms with terms of encouragement, affection and friendship. The present letter is concerned almost exclusively with affairs of the Religious Library. The Saint asks Caixal's opinion on the engraver's plates, criticizes the printer's shortcomings, upbraids Caixal for his neglect of the fine points of printing, reminds him of the need that Claret and his companions have for preaching materials, instructs him on the best and most economical printing methods and the books that should be printed, informs him of his own near-fatal illness and of his desire to travel into the interior of Spain.

Claret's concern about the quality of engravings is understandable if we bear in mind that many of them were meant to illustrate points he was making in his text. For example, in his drawing of *The Dove*, the various parts of the bird are visual metaphors for various aspects of the spiritual life. In the present letter, the Saint complains of Caixal's apparent lack of concern over the didactic illustrations for his own *Catechism Explained*. Despite the rather trite tastes of his age and his own limitations, Claret was an able draftsman, capable of producing some elaborate (indeed, rather busy) creations, such as his certificate for the *Academy of Saint Michael*.

Among the works Claret wants Caixal to reprint, he mentions Fr. Gaspar de la Figuera's *Spiritual Summa, in which all cases and difficulties on the road to perfection are resolved* (Madrid 1634) and the *Maxims* of the great 15th-century Valencian preacher and reformer, St. Vincent Ferrer. For *Luisita de Cádiz*, see the Saint's letter to the author, Bp. Cyprian Varela, above.

The *dramatis personæ* mentioned in Claret's letters are always interesting and often surprising. A large number are either seminary teachers or chancery officials. Fr. Anthony Oliva, for example, was Master of undergraduate students at the Seminary of Vic, where Dr. Mariano Aguilar was Chairman of the Physics Department. Fr. Francis Coll was an eminent preacher in his own right, as well as a staunch supporter and sometime collaborator of Claret. He had studied to become a Dominican, but was ordained for the Diocese of Vic when the Order was disbanded in Spain in 1835.

Besides his parish ministry, Fr. Coll took long periods off to preach rather protracted missions in various places. Claret, whose services were urgently required in several dioceses, could not follow such a leisurely course. Nevertheless, he greatly admired Coll's work.

He used to say that wherever he went he could always reap some harvest, but if Coll had been there first, there was not so much as a straw left to glean. Dr. Martin Figuerol was the Vicar General of Tarragona; Dr. Manuel Llopis was the Rector of the Seminary of Tarragona; Dr. Anthony Carbó was the Attorney of the Diocesan Curia, while his brother, Ignasi Carbó, an exclaustated monk of Poblet, eventually became a Claretian Missionary; Fr. Joseph Clanxet was Chairman of the Philosophy Department of the Seminary of Tarragona.

### Text

To the Illustr. Can. Caixal  
Vic, 28 May 1847.

Very Dear and Esteemed Sir:

I can see what you're trying to tell me in your Ascension-Day letter about [my views concerning] the engraver's prints: *peritis in arte credendum* [art experts should be trusted in their own field]. Well, it seems to me that one must distinguish between those who speak as disinterested connoisseurs and those who speak as self-serving craftsmen. It's like the tailor who was chided because the seams of a suit he made had come apart and was asked to re-sew them more sturdily. The tailor replied that if he sewed the seams too tightly, one part would not fit with the other, all of them would be stiff, and the suit would not hang as loosely as it ought. Self-serving craftsmen often talk like that. But in this case, I knew what I was talking about, because although I don't know everything, I can tell you frankly, without boasting or failing in humility, that when I was a layman living in Barcelona, I devoted myself, among other things, to design, and was three times awarded a prize by the Board of Trade. Although I haven't done much of this kind of work since then, I believe I still know how any part of a print or landscape ought to be rendered, how the shadows should appear, etc., etc. At any rate, I told the engraver that I was in no mood to quibble about the matter.

The printer, too, made a number of mistakes that upset me considerably, because they blurred the point I was driving at in these prints, but I trust he'll mend his ways. I really wish you'd show a bit more effort and interest in attending to these matters, for it seems to me that you're not doing enough in this important business of printing, seeing that you are in charge of this whole branch. So I hope that you, too, will mend your ways.

You will already have learned *via* Fr. Oliva, who is in charge here, that I sent Fr. Peter Naudó eleven remittances, seven of which are made up of money from Fr. Aguilar, Canon Soler and myself. They are going into the fund, from which we neither want nor are expecting to gain anything. The other four remittances are my own money, which I have also assigned to the fund and which might go towards paying the engraver.

Since many priests of this diocese are going out to preach not only within the diocese but beyond it, we need a goodly quantity of materials to send to them if they are to achieve the desired results. But as we haven't dared ask you for all that we need, we have resolved with Fr. Oliva to ask either Fr. Peter or the printer in Barcelona for whatever we need, paying for it on account, meanwhile busying ourselves with collecting the money, of which we need a good deal every month. Since I've been here, we've spent as much as 229 *duros* a month, and every month the bill is as high or even higher, not counting what we buy from other printers in Vic, Manresa, Gerona, etc., when the one in Barcelona doesn't have what we need.

You should see to it that at least the "Dialogues" of Fr. Figuera's *Spiritual Summa* are reprinted in a little book. On another occasion the earlier part of it could be made into another small book. The meditations, though good, can be omitted. It would also be good to reprint Ferrer's twenty maxims on perfection (which the printer already has in stock), as well as *Little Louise of Cádiz* and *The Correction of a Philosopher*, which the Pastor of Creixell has. You should see to it that several thousand copies of these and other good books are printed at a time, so that the printer can proceed calmly, printing and binding some, while leaving the rest unbound. For when things are run smoothly, everything turns out well; but if they aren't, then everything costs more and turns out poorly, as it has done thus far, mainly in matters of binding.

I believe you must have heard of my indisposition, of which they thought I might die -- as I wanted to do, if that were God's will. It would not have been unusual, since others in this city have died of the same malady. It could still carry me off, because four days ago another tumor appeared between my shoulder and my back, though I haven't had to stay in bed. May God's will be done.

This week one of our companions, Fr. Coll, arrived from Gerona, where his preaching met with great results. It seems a comedy troupe performing there were furious at him and lodged a complaint with the chief of police to have him stopped, since people were no longer

attending the theater. The chief advised him to stop preaching within fifteen days, to let the fracas die down, and not to go on to Aiguaviva, a town near Gerona, where he was scheduled to go after finishing the Rosary Services he was conducting there.

If God our Lord gives me health, I'm thinking of going to the interior of Spain with a few companions or, if I myself can't go, they might go there on their own. *Quid tibi videtur?* If you answer in the affirmative, then you'd better have something printed in Castilian, because everything they now have is in Catalan.

I think that our illustrious ecclesiastical governor, Dr. Lucian Casadevall, will soon be visiting your city. I would like you and the Archbishop to urge him to establish Moral Conferences in our parishes, like the ones already established in your Archdiocese.

This week I sent the installment of manuscripts and illustrations for the *Catechism* to Fr. Naudó in Barcelona, so that he could send them on to you.

Regards to the Lord Archbishop, to Fathers Figuerol, Llopis, the two Carbó brothers, Clanxet, etc., etc. You may all rely on your servant, who kisses your hand.

Anthony Claret, Priest.

#### 46. [66] To Canon Joseph Caixal

(In Catalan: EC I, 226-228)

### Introductory Note

Here again we see Claret involved in a number of projects, most of them dealing with the apostolate of the press. He mentions a French dictionary he has sent to Caixal, doubtless because the Saint has been (as he tells us in this letter) devoting an hour each day to translating Fr. Jean Antoine Pellissier's *Lover of Jesus Christ* into Castilian. He is presently engaged in instructing an ever-growing group of young priests on the way to preach and hear confessions effectively and suitably. He mentions upcoming establishment of the Archonfraternity of the Heart of Mary in Vic and is getting ready to preach the All Souls' Novena, for which he has written an additional page for the novena booklet. He wants Caixal to get to work on correcting and printing several religious works, some of them by Claret himself.

The mention of these French authors suggests a recent change in Claret's vocabulary. Although he had a longstanding devotion to

the Mother of Fair Love and had already joined a Confraternity of the Heart of Mary in the 1830s, he now uses the expression “Most Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary,” relating to Mary’s apostolic charity as refuge of sinners, which reminds us of the Parisian Archconfraternity begun on 3 December 1836 by Fr. Charles Éléonore Dufriche Desgenettes, Curé of Notre Dame des Victoires, which had been instrumental in a veritable explosion of conversions not only in France, but outside it.

### Text

To the Illustr. D. J. Caixal  
Vic 3 July [1847]

My Very Dear Sir:

I imagine you’ve already received the French Dictionary I sent you from Olot via Barcelona. In it I enclosed a letter telling you that it would be good if you’d ready the manuscript on the souls [in purgatory], because in this diocese the [All Souls] Novenas already begin with the September moon. Enclosed I am sending you that paper and the novena so that you can set it up, if it seems good to you.

I hope you’ll keep working on revising the catechism, since they’re anxiously awaiting it here. Just now I’m finishing the little book on widows, which they’re also anxiously awaiting. It has been corrected by Father Rodriguez, who is here to take the waters, the same one who had corrected some things I’d written before.

You should know that on the [first] Sunday of August [1847] the Confraternity of the Heart of Mary was installed [in St. Dominic’s Church] in this city and that it will very rapidly spread through all the Parishes of the Diocese. Hence they have seen fit to publish a booklet [Brief Account of the Archconfraternity of the Most Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary for the Conversion of Sinners] with novena, which is already being printed [Barcelona, Pla, 1847, 128 pp.]. As I was sick at the time I wasn’t able to write it. Tell Fr. Palau, and let you and he strive to spread it throughout your Archdiocese.

Now I am, among other things, extremely busy with some young priests who are being prepared for preaching and hearing confessions, and their number will surpass that of last year. Every day I devote an hour to translating a very beautiful little book entitled *The Lover of Jesus Christ*. It seems to me that you would do very well to

put together some lives of the Saints, one for each state [in life], somewhat in the style of the life of Saint Isidore composed by a Rev. of the Dioc. of Bar[celo]na in the year 1844. Country folk enjoy them very much and benefit greatly from them. If you don't have it, I'll send it to you and you'll see how the Author keeps introducing a moral into it, which is the most important thing. With few differences that's how I'd like you to do it, at about the same length, omitting the novena. Incalculable good can be done by means of the lives of Saints, especially if there is an explanation of the practical things they did in order to become holy. This arouses the reader to ask, "These men and women did it, why can't I do the same?" [cf. St. Augustine, *Confessions*, 8.2]. St. Francis said that the Gospel is like music to be sung. The little book I'm putting together now has some admirable things to say on this... Do it, for the love of God.

That's all the time I have... Regards to His Lordship the Abp. and to all the rest at his residence and to other friends. All yours,

Anton Claret P[riest]

#### 47. [70] To Canon Caixal

(In Catalan: EC I, 238-240)

### Introductory Note

In a letter to Caixal dated 12 August 1847, Claret complained of "not understanding the mystery" of not hearing from his close friend, the good Canon, although he had written him several letters (cf. Letters 67-69 of EC I). The present letter shows that Caixal has just written Claret a letter that has finally cleared up the mystery. Claret, who is about to go off on retreat, proceeds to answer Caixal's letter in his usual business-like way, point by point. He acknowledges some of Caixal's suggestions for improving one of Claret's leaflets, but adds that his friend should read some passages on the matter from St. Alphonsus and Friar Thomas du Jardin before revising the leaflet. He informs Caixal of the progress being made by some young priests to whom he is giving his usual summer conferences in Vic, of the Archconfraternity of the Heart of Mary, of his book on the 'Nuns' of the Heart of Mary, of his catechism and of his work on the Holy Souls, namely, "Help for the Deceased."



**Text**

Vic, 18 August 1847 Pax Christi  
A.D.J.C.

My Dear Friend in Jesus Christ:

Thank God we've cleared up the mystery of why I haven't heard from you or received a letter from you or the Provisor or any other of my friends and masters there. I'm going to answer quickly and briefly, for I must soon be off to begin the Exercises. Commend me to God that I may make them well.

I take in good part your reflections on the leaflet, as well as the addition you suggest on the slip of paper you sent me. Indeed, it might be better for those parts. But as for here (where, thank God, there is nothing to compare with what's going on there), the judgment has been made by the Gentlemen of this City, where the said leaflets were printed, and things had to go on just as they were, while I had to do my duty and keep silent. But if you judge that some further or stronger point must be added for your territory, then do so with all freedom. Nonetheless, in order to do it right, I would first like you to read Saint Liguori in his great work, number 55 (the whole number) Bk. 2, tr. 3. and also Fr. Thomas du Jardin's *De Officio Sacerdotis*, Section 3, § 2. And would that it might produce the same good effects as it has done here, thank God, by means of the teaching sorties that have been scattered throughout the city. I must tell you that the priests of the Conference are, at present, most zealous Catechists. Ever since Lent eight or ten Priests, spread throughout the neighborhoods of City, have continued teaching Christian Doctrine in factories and in the entry ways of great and small houses every day, and on Sundays, each neighborhood priest joins with the children of his neighborhood, and they march off singing, until they all meet at the Church of the Capuchin Fathers.

The Archconfraternity is going quite well here, thank God. In the course of the Novena, some 10,000 confreres were enrolled and they are continuing as well as ever. Eleven hundred booklets have been given out and even more would have been given out if they had been bound, but the printers can do no more than they have already done.

Now, seeing that the Lord Archbishop is so beset by opposition, it might not be opportune to write him as you suggested. When you deem it prudent, tell me, and I will do anything you'd like.

If you're uncomfortable with issuing the little books on the Nuns of the Heart of Mary under your own name, issue them if you will under mine, since I have a hide thick enough to bear the blows and go on *per infamiam et bonam famam* [2 Cor 6:8].

I am quite content with what you tell me of the Catechism. In these parts people are looking forward to it most eagerly, so busy yourself with it as much as you can. As for the print of the Blessed Trinity, I don't know where to tell you to place it. Put it where it is best suited to the explanation.

I give you thanks for having arranged the booklet on the [Holy] Souls. The novenas for them will begin here in the coming month. Get the people in Barcelona to send me some holy cards of Jesus agonizing on the Cross. They prize them highly here. Tell Mossèn Peter. Also send some of those leaflets on respect for the temple. Regards to all those Gentlemen, and rely on your servant, who kisses your hand.

Anton Claret Priest.

#### 48. [73] To Fr. Peter Cruells

(In Catalan: EC I, 248-249)

### Introductory Note

During his stay in the Jesuit Novitiate in Rome, the Saint had met and become a close friend of Bro. Francis Bosch, S.J., a native of Manresa, who was at that time an assistant and private secretary of the great Jesuit General, Fr. Johann Philipp Roothaan ("The General Who Rebuilt the Jesuits"), who governed the Society from 1829 to 1853. In 1845 Brother Bosch had handled the Saint's request to the Holy See to grant eleven of his companions the title of "Apostolic Missionary," a title he himself had held since 1841.

Brother Bosch had recently arrived ill in his native town of Manresa, where he was cared for attentively and lovingly by his own sister. Despite its brevity, this is one of the most affectionate letters in Claret's correspondence. Although his duties prevented him from visiting the Brother at once, he was able to do so a few months later when he had to preach some rather lengthy services in Manresa in November and December of this year. He was thus able to visit him frequently throughout his last illness and commend his soul to God. In Claret's letter of December 10th to Fr. Roothaan, he was unstinting in blessing God for the opportunity He had granted him in allowing him to render these final services to his dear friend.

In Vic, where their motherhouse was located, the Carmelite Sisters of Charity, founded by St. Joachima de Vedruna, were familiarly referred to as the Sisters of El Escorial.

### **Text**

To the Rev. Peter Cruells  
Vic, 26 Sept. 1847

My Very Dear Sir and Friend:

I believe you must have received a parcel of books and holy cards of the sort we are handing out everywhere, with great benefit to souls, thank God. I have learned that my very dear friend, Brother Francis Bosch, is staying there... Ah, how very much I would like to see him and give him a big hug! Do it for me. Tell him that we would be most happy to have him here in Vic. I know that he's not at all well, but he shouldn't let that hold him back, because he would not be wanting for a good infirmarian, since I would gladly fill that post. Moreover, there are many others here who would be quite happy to look after him. Tell him that he need only ask me, and I'll be ready to do anything for him. Right now I am giving retreats to the Nuns of Saint Teresa and to the Sisters of El Escorial, after which I'll give them to the Poor Clares and the Dominican Nuns, and afterwards...

As soon as I can after I've finished this round of retreats, I want to go and see Brother, not for anything he can do for me, but simply because of my great affection for him. Do me the favor of visiting him now and then on my behalf. You and your friends can rely on your servant, who kisses your hand.

Anthony Claret, Priest.

### **49. [74] To Canon Joseph Caixal**

(EC I, 250-251)

### **Introductory Note**

This letter is an example of Claret's good-humored prodding of Caixal for the latter's "demon of laziness." In some ways, despite the many ideals they shared, the two men were opposites. Claret was a "divine workaholic," while Caixal was a chronic procrastinator; Claret was apolitical, while Caixal was overtly pro-Carlist (and later even became the Carlist chaplain general). Paradoxically, a year later, when

Caixal was keen to work on some urgent projects, the Saint, who was missioning in the Canary Islands and gave no signs of returning to Spain, did not have time to answer Caixal's letters.

There was great civil unrest at the time, as we can see from the reference to the arrest of a gang of thieves. This was only a tiny part of the overall climate of sporadic anarchy that ruled in 19th-century Spain. The intermittent Carlist conflicts, in which the followers of Don Carlos (called the *matiners* or "early risers" in Catalonia) were pitted against the reigning monarch, the young Queen Isabella II, prevented the Saint from leaving Vic for a great part of 1847. He took advantage of this situation to organize an association of priests, laymen and laywomen to carry out an exemplary campaign of Christian instruction and apostolic ministries that was totally new for those times.

The Constitutions were already printed, but met with the strong disapproval of the Archbishop of Tarragona -- possibly because of their "mixed" character (men and women working together in the apostolate), or more likely because Claret dared to call the women members "deaconesses". Claret instantly complied with the Archbishop's mandate, withdrawing all copies of the work from circulation and destroying them. All, that is, except the one he enclosed in this letter to Canon (later Bishop) Caixal. In January 1848 Claret wrote to the Canon: "I have received your letter informing me on His Excellency's behalf that I should withdraw the little notebook of the Brotherhood, which speaks of deaconesses. I have done so with all dispatch, for God forbid that I should do anything opposed to the will of the Prelates of the Church. That is why, before circulating it, I sent His Excellency a copy so that he might state his opinion on it." This interesting Claretian initiative was thus nipped in the bud, but it was not utterly lost, because the headstrong Caixal kept his copy, the text of which may be found in English translation in *SSW*, pp. 389-395).

The other works to which the Saint refers are his own *Advice to Widows* (Barcelona 1848) and his *Nuns in their own Homes, or Daughters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary*, aimed at facilitating the practice of the evangelical counsels by young women who, for lack of health or dowry, were unable to enter the convent. This work, which was not published until 1850, would serve some hundred years later as the inspiration for the Secular Institute, Cordimarian Filiation, a branch of the Greater Claretian Family. The other work mentioned is *Luisita*

*de Cádiz*, a piously didactic novelette written by the long-suffering Bishop Varela of Plasencia.

### Text

To the Illustr. Don J. Caixal C[anon].  
Vic 21 October [1847].

My Very Dear Sir:

The other day --or perhaps I should say *in illo tempore*-- you told me that the demon of Avarice had eaten up the letters you were going to write me. I don't know whether that same demon is as greedy as ever, or whether another demon --that of laziness- may be aping him. God be praised!

Herein I'm sending you a copy of the Constitutions of the Fraternity which I have established in this city and which, through the mercy of God, is spreading to other cities. Let's see whether you might also see to its spread in your own territory! I'd like to know what's going on there.

I'd also like to know how the little book on the Daughters or Nuns of the Heart of Mary is faring. Likewise, that on Widows. Likewise, "Little Louisa of Cádiz," and finally, how you are doing. Before I left your pleasant company, you urged me to nag away at you, as I indeed believe I should do, since you have given me good cause for it. For despite all the letters I wrote to you and His Excellency (who I feel must have said something to you), you have not written to me, either about our concerns or about the Archconfraternity, although you know that I sent the little book to His Excellency, as per your instructions to me.

For the moment we are enjoying the utmost peace. For, ever since the Captain General caught a dozen thieves in a house, we haven't heard of any more robberies. My companions and I have been busy preaching Novenas for the Holy Souls. After the Novena in Manresa, I will give retreats to the Nuns of that city.

Regards to His Excellency and the other members of his household and other friends.

You can count on your faithful servant, who kisses your hand,  
Anthony Claret, P[riest].

## 50. [76] To the Rev. James Sitja

(EC I, 255-256)

### Introductory Note

The only thing we know about Fr. Sitja is that he was a priest of Gerona who supported the Spiritual Brotherhood of Good Books, which was spreading throughout Catalonia and would eventually lead to the foundation of the Religious Library. Some details of the Brotherhood round out what the Saint had said in his letters of April 3 and September 26, 1847, to Fr. Peter Cruells. Claret was not happy about the haphazard and old-fashioned way in which the enterprise was being handled, and would soon set matters straight with the Archbishop of Tarragona. For further details, see J. M. Lozano, C.M.F., *Anthony Claret: A Life at the Service of the Gospel* (Chicago-Los Angeles-Manila 1985), Engl. transl. by J. C. Daries, C.M.F, p. 100 ff.

The recipient of this letter wrote the following note on the back of it: "Letter coming from Bp. Claret, written in his own hand. It is to be hoped that in time he will be venerated on the altars. J[aume]. S[itja].P[riest]."

### Text

To the Rev. M[ossèn] James Sitja, Priest  
Sampedor, 20 November 1847

My Very Dear Sir:

I received your two letters and give continual thanks to God and to all of you, because I can see the great zeal that spurs you to spread good books, thus showing that the children of darkness are not more solicitous to spread their noxious errors than the children of light are eager to spread salutary writings [cf. Lk 16:8].

As for the way to subscribe members, I should tell you that I'll be going to Barcelona around Christmas and, among other things, we will establish a more exact procedure, since thus far it has all been the result of the zeal of many persons, rather than of a methodically directed effort. Some subscribers have been giving one *peseta* per month, some two, some three, some four, while others have been giving a *duro*. Many couldn't be bothered with monthly installments and have been giving five, six or seven *duros*, repeating their alms whenever they feel like it.

Out of these moneys the Fr. Depositor buys books in Barcelona, where he gets them at the lowest price, and then dispatches these books and prints in the following way:

To all subscribers or contributors, he sends a copy of all new selections as they appear.

To those who bring in any bad or forbidden book, he gives a good book in exchange.

To those who are unable to buy good books yet need them, he sends them gratis, and he does the same to those who have the means and the need for them, yet don't wish to acquire them.

To those who are not contributors yet wish to buy books, selections are sold at the cheapest rate possible, and in this way, between those that are sold and those that are given away, very many books are sent out.

It seems to me that for the time being you might do what we're doing in Vic, that is, ordering books through Mossèn Peter Naudó, Priest and Vicar of the Church of Santa Maria del Mar in Barcelona, and he will take charge of sending them to you, paying the costs of mailing.

I don't have time to tell you any more just now. I've finished preaching a novena in Manresa and am presently preaching one in Sampedor. Then I have a septenary of Our Lady of Sorrows, and will afterwards direct retreats for the nuns of Manresa and Barcelona.

Be so good as to greet all of the gentlemen there and tell them that I would love to spend some time chatting with them.

Rely on your servant, who kisses your hand,  
Anthony Claret, Priest.

## 51. [78] **To the Superior General of the Jesuits**

(EC I, 258-259)

### **Introductory Note**

Fr. J. P. Roothaan (1785-1853), born in Amsterdam, joined the Jesuits in Dvinsk, Russia in 1803, where the Society survived and where he completed his studies and was ordained. When the Jesuits were banned there in 1820, he went to Switzerland to assist the Jesuit Vice-Provincial there. As the 21st Superior of the Jesuits he served from 1829 until his death in 1853, and is regarded as the rebuilder of the Society.

When Fr. Claret fell ill in the Jesuit Novitiate in Rome, Fr. Roothaan discerned that his illness was a sign from God that he should return to Spain to preach the Spiritual Exercises. In his Autobiography, Claret views Roothaan's words as providential and even inspired. "He told me, without faltering for an instant, 'It is God's will that you go quickly, quickly to Spain. Have no fear. Courage!'" (Aut 166). "In a letter he wrote me later, he said, 'God brought you to the Company [of Jesus], not that you should remain in it, but rather that you might learn in it how to win souls for heaven'" (Aut 167). Roothaan's actual words were, "I admire and praise the Providence of the Lord who, having first brought you here to master this weapon [the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius], then took your health away from you, and afterwards returned you to do so much good in your native land" (Roothaan, *Correspondence*, 12/8/1844, p. 625).

In a Latin summary note added to the inside page of this letter, a secretary's hand has added: "Manresa, D. Ant. Claret, 10 Dec. 1847: 1) He says he is speaking in the name of the sister of Bro. Francis Bosch, who died two days earlier, noting her assiduous care for her brother. 2) He mentions a few things about the passing of the most pious Brother, and his gratitude for the chance to visit him during his illness. 3) He mentions the ministries he is performing there, and that he will soon be leaving for Barcelona. 4) He commends himself for prayers, etc. Answered on 26 Jan. 1848" (Cf. Roothaan, *Correspondence to Outsiders* [Rome 1939], vol. IV, pp. 416-417).

### Text

To the Very Rev. Fr. General of the Company of Jesus  
Manresa, 10 December 1847.

Most Esteemed and Venerable Sir:

I am writing the present letter not only to convey my own attentions and respects to Your Reverence, but also to address you on behalf of the sister of Fratello Bosch (R.I.P.). Your Reverence may already know that when our Brother Bosch arrived in this city of Manresa, he stayed in the house of his sister, who painstakingly waited on him with all diligence and charity throughout his illness up to the hour of his death, which took place at two in the morning, the very beginning of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, a day most fitting for one who was so devoted to Mary as our Brother Bosch was. All of the citizens of this town, as well as those of Vic, vied in paying him homage and in visiting him both before and after his death. I can do no less than give very many thanks to God for granting me the chance



to visit and wait upon our Brother many times during his illness and death, since during those days, by order of the Illustrious Vicar General of Vic, I have had to be in this city where I have preached a Novena of the Holy Souls and have given the Spiritual Exercises to the Dominican and Capuchin Nuns and the Teaching Sisters, and am presently conducting a Novena of the Archconfraternity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, before I move on from here to do the same in Barcelona, God willing.

Please commend me to God that He may always assist me with His divine grace, for I am firmly convinced that with it I can do all things and without it I can do nothing.

Ask what you will of your most attentive and constant servant, who kisses your Paternity's hands,

Anthony Claret, Priest.

To the Most Rev. Father General of the  
Company of Jesus in Rome.

## 52. [79] **To Canon Joseph Caixal**

(EC I, 260-261)

### **Introductory Note**

We cannot establish all of the reasons that led Archbishop Echanove to oppose the circulation of Claret's little book on the "Fraternity of the Most Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary," although we have mentioned a few above (see Introductory Note to the letter of 21 October 1847). The following lines in a letter of Canon Soler to Fr. Masmitjá shed some light on the matter: "I can do no less than inform you of one thing, namely, that with Fr. Anthony Claret we had formed this society, of which these were the Constitutions. We sent some copies to the Archbishop of Tarragona, and they were disapproved. I believe that this was only over the matter of the "Deaconesses," all of whom would have been good women... Perhaps His Excellency wished to indicate that this name should not be revived, since, as Pelliccia tells us, Pope Zachary did away with them in the 8th century because of their incontinence."

The "Don José María" Claret refers to is the printer of the Catechism, José María Bocabella. The "harvest" of souls to which the Saint refers, especially at the ancient Church of Saint Michael, was very great indeed. Five years later, the number enrolled in the Archconfraternity of the Heart of Mary in Barcelona was more than 40,000.

**Text**

To the Rev. Joseph Caixal, Pr[iest and]. Can[on].  
Barcelona, January 1, 1848

My Very Dear Sir:

I have received your letter informing me on His Excellency's behalf that I should withdraw the little notebook of the Brotherhood, which speaks of deaconesses. I have done so with all dispatch, for God forbid that I should do anything opposed to the will of the Prelates of the Church. That is why, before circulating it, I sent His Excellency a copy so that he might state his opinion on it.

Mossèn Peter Naudó told me that he asked you for the prints of the Catechism, but that he does not know whether you have already sent them to Don José María.

Today we have begun the Novena of the Heart of Mary. God grant that we may harvest the same abundant fruit that we gathered in Vic and Manresa. I trust that they will not be scarce here, or so it would appear from the multitude of men and women who have asked to make their confession after I have come down from the pulpit.

Please be so good as to give my regards to His Excellency and to the other Gentlemen of his household. Ask what you will of your most attentive and constant servant, who kisses your hand,

Anthony Claret, Priest.

**53. [80] To Don Lucian Casadevall**

(In Catalan: EC I, 262-263)

**Introductory Note**

The letters "V.Gl.Cr." are an abbreviation for Vicar General Capitular, indicating the post of ecclesiastical governance that Msgr. Casadevall held for several years until his nomination as Bishop-elect of Vic on January 28, 1848 and his taking possession of the Diocese on October 21 of that year. Claret informs Msgr. Casadevall of his ministries in Barcelona, the Capital of the Principate. He tells him that in ten days, as Casadevall had asked, he will be coming to Vic to consult with him, after which he will return to Barcelona and travel to Madrid and thence to Cádiz, whence he will embark with the newly created Vincentian Bishop, Bonaventure Codina, who has asked Claret to

evangelize his new diocese of the Canary Islands. With this journey, a great new phase will begin in the Saint's ever-widening career as an Apostolic Missionary (cf. the Saint's own account in Aut 477-480).

### **Text**

To the Illustr. Don Lucian Casadevall, V. Gl. Cr.  
Bar[celo]na, 19 January 1848.

Most Worthy and Esteemed Sir:

The present letter is to inform you of what I have done and am doing in this city. I arrived late on the 23rd [of December, 1847], and on the 24th I gave the dispositions for and began the exercises to the Teaching Sisters. On January 1 [1848] I held the opening of the novena of the Most Pure Heart of Mary, which was extraordinarily well attended and was marked by very many truly great conversions. Next I began the retreat to the Hieronymite Nuns in the morning and to the Magdalens in the evening, and today we have begun the retreat to the Clergy which, thank God, is very well attended. After this retreat, or in about ten days, I will trudge up [to Vic] to fulfill your will, after which I will return here and then march on to Madrid, as His Excellency Bishop Codina has written, and from there we will travel to Cádiz whence we will embark for the Canary Islands, since his plan is that Lenten Services be held in the Cathedral there, in the form of a Mission.

Besides the services I just mentioned, I should tell you that the day before yesterday, Sunday, we began catechizing young and old, and moreover I gave a strong push for the Sodality of Saint Aloysius in [the church of] Bethlehem, where I preached to a very large crowd. You would surely be astonished if you saw the crowd of youths who entered the Sodality of that Saint as they would a Noah's ark, thus freeing themselves from the flood of vices in this city, although they say (glory be to God and Mary Most Holy!) that since I have arrived and preached here, this city has greatly changed. I have no more time; they're waiting for me. Until we meet again,

I remain your faithful servant who kisses your hand,

Anthony Claret, Priest

To the Illustrious Don Lucian Casadevall,  
Vicar General Capitular of Vic.

**54. [81] To Canon Joseph Caixal**

(EC I, 264-266)

**Introductory Note**

Saints have some of the same problems we all have. It seems that Claret has just received a rather unpleasant letter from his fiery friend Caixal, who fails to understand all the mishaps the Saint has gone through recently in Barcelona, where he couldn't get in contact with any of the important people he should have met with. He explains these, and then goes on to tell Caixal, who is in charge of books, that the latter's main aim should be to issue good books, many of them, at an affordable price, and that they should be sent throughout all of Spain, not just Catalonia. He goes on to describe the method for gathering subscriptions, as well as the general organization of the Society for Good Books, which has met with a warm welcome everywhere. He tells Caixal of the forthcoming publication of Claret's "second catechism," which will be well received in Vic and other Dioceses, though not, perhaps, in Tarragona, for the reason given here. He also mentions another little book, the "Daughters of the Heart of Mary." Since the Archbishop of Tarragona, has already disapproved another little book (because of its mention of "deaconesses"), which Claret promptly withdrew from circulation (cf. Letter of 1 January 1848 above), the Saint fears he may also disapprove this other work as well, since the Archbishop is rigidly opposing the very idea of women being engaged in any sort of public ministry of the Word.

**Text**

Vic, 29 January 1848 Pax Christi

To the Illustr. D. Joseph Caixal, P[riest]. C[anon].

My Very Dear Sir:

I received your letter and hardly know what to say. Well, blessed be God, for I so wanted to see or speak with one of you, since one can't express everything in letters, or if one does write, one receives no answer. Be that as it may, I have not had the good fortune of seeing my very dear friend Don Figuerol, who was away from Barcelona when I arrived. Then Don Clanxet came, and I also did my best to speak with him on this matter, but from day to day time flew by, and when he wanted to speak with me he was unable to do so because of the death of his father. Nor have I thus far been able to see Don Palau. Blessed be God. And now you come out like a curtain-raiser for a comedy or

tragedy, with epithets of rejoicing or reproof, etc., etc. God deliver us from such thoughts.

We are now, if possible, going to say much, clearly, and in a few words. What we need to do is to send out good books, many books, at a low price, and spread them throughout Spain. The way of contributing by way of Mass stipends can't be proposed for some reasons or for some persons, nor would they care to hear of it if it were proposed. The center for this house has to be in Barcelona and nowhere else, etc., etc., etc.

In each Diocese or large city, there will be one person in charge, and he will take care of sending the books and collecting the subscription payments and alms which the zealous send in to that end, etc., etc. At the proper time, they will gather together works that can be printed or reprinted, which they will send to Barcelona, and those that are [unintelligible word, "susmsores" perhaps "suministradores" = suppliers] in their Dioceses are already approved by the Ordinary of Barcelona, etc., etc. You can now see how the matter stands and how it ought to be run. Hence you shouldn't imagine that you've been retired; rather, you're in charge of the Archdiocese of Tarragona in particular and of the whole society in general. Would that you were in Barcelona! Hence you may keep on dealing with your subscribers by way of Masses or in whatever way you think best. The important thing is that you work as much as you can on writings, especially now that you are finishing up the burdensome works of M. Claret, which will mean that you will have more freedom, not just for writings, but for subscribers. This idea has been very well received in Barcelona, where the Lord Bishop has chosen to be the first subscriber, and has handed in 40 *duros* as his opening installment. Canon Valls has also subscribed, and given the fervor that the activity of Mr. Riera has stirred up in gentlemen of the Clergy who made their holy retreat, I believe that much will be done. Here in Vic, I have proposed it to the [Ecclesiastical] Governor [Casadevall], to Canon Soler, Fr. Puigllat, etc., etc., and all of them have been quite happy with it.

The second catechism will soon be coming out. They are going to adopt it in Barcelona. Here in Vic, too, so much so that the [Ecclesiastical] Governor has promised me to issue a circular letter ordering it to be taught throughout the Diocese. I hope that the same will be done in the other Dioceses of Catalonia, except, I fear, in your Archdiocese, where another one has just been printed, so I fear that the Lord Archbishop will refuse to adopt mine. We shall see. Meanwhile, you can keep working on the plates. I also hope that you will tidy up

the little book on the Daughters of the Heart of Mary, of which I am expecting much good, although I don't know what the Archbishop will have to say about it, since its says that they will be teaching Christian Doctrine; it is well known that he can't stand the idea of women teaching... I don't know what Church History has to say on the matter, but I can see the great good that can be and has been done by some zealous women who are well instructed in Catechism.

I have seen the Ecclesiastical Governor of this Diocese and have asked his approval through Vilastimó. He answered that a memo should be made of it and that he would grant what was asked of him. I hope that the person you mention will come for the business and that all that was desired will be done. Perhaps he'll not be able to come because there is a lot of snow and he won't be able to get through the roads. In case he can't make it, I'll leave written instructions on what he ought to do, as well as the copy you sent me.

Regards to the Lord Archbishop and other friends. All yours,  
Anthony Claret, Priest.

### 55. [82] To the Very Rev. Lucian Casadevall

(EC I, 267-269)

#### Introductory Note

This letter requires more by way of explanation than an introduction to the *dramatis personæ*.

The addressee, Msgr. Lucian Casadevall, had served as Vicar General and Ecclesiastical Governor of the Diocese of Vic (*sede vacante*) for almost 13 years, ever since the death of Bishop Corcuera in July of 1835. Political turmoil and a series of liberal governments in Spain had blocked the filling of many vacant episcopal sees, including that of Vic. During much of that time, Claret had carried out his missionary evangelization of Catalonia under Casadevall's orders, and was now preparing to do the same in the Canary Islands. Casadevall was nominated Bishop in January, 1848, preconized in July, consecrated on October 5 and installed in his See on October 21 of that year.

The Bishop-Elect of the Canary Islands, Fr. Bonaventure Codina, C.M., was consecrated on February 20, 1848 in the Church of St. Isidore by Abp. Giovanni Brunelli, the Papal Nuncio in Madrid.

Don Juan José Bonel y Orbe had been Cardinal Archbishop of the powerful See of Toledo since August 16, 1847.

Don Judas José Romo y Gamboa, Archbishop of Seville, had been the Bishop of the Canary Islands since 1833, and was now being replaced by Bishop Codina, whom Claret was accompanying.

Don Joaquín Fernández Cortina, Bishop of Sigüenza, was consecrated at the same ceremony with Bishop Codina.

Jaume Balmes, S.J., the noted Spanish philosopher, had attended the Seminary of Vic with Claret. Gravely ill at the time, he would return to Vic, where he died on July 9, 1848, when he was only 38 years old.

Rev. José María Ramírez y Cotes, Rector of the Italian Hospital in Madrid, was the uncle of the Viscountess of Jorbalán, the future Saint Micaela of the Blessed Sacrament. Rev. José Rodríguez de Carasa had entered the Jesuits, had been Court Preacher to the late King Ferdinand VII, and was the current confessor and spiritual director of Saint Micaela of the Bl. Sacrament.

### **Text**

To the Illustr. Don Lucian Casadevall,  
Bishop-Elect of Vic  
Madrid, 9 February 1848

Most Esteemed and Venerated Sir:

This is to inform you that after a very happy journey I arrived here in Madrid last evening, well and rested, in order to make visits in the company of the Illustrious Bishop-Elect of the Canary Islands.

I am going to tell you of some of my visits. I visited Signor Brunelli, who showed in many ways how happy he was to see me, but he was utterly unstinting in his praise of you when, after he had informed me that you were Bishop Elect of Vic, I told him about you and about how you had acted throughout all this time. I did this compelled by justice and by the love in which I hold you, and he was so edified and pleased that, in our presence, he raised his eyes to heaven, thanking God for the good choice, his eyes filled with tears of contentment and satisfaction. I, too, most humbly thank God and the Blessed Virgin and, though you may chide me for doing so, I offer you a thousand good wishes. I knew nothing of all this when I came to bid you farewell, but --as you may recall from what I told you at that time-- it seemed clear to me that you would be made Bishop.

I also visited the Lord Archbishop of Toledo. He spoke to me about you, and I went on unrepentantly to relate to him your pranks, in the same vein as before, at which he was mightily pleased, so much so that he granted me his full faculties, because they would also like me to do some work here in Madrid.

I also visited the Lord Archbishop of Seville, the Bishop of Sigüenza, Fr. Balmes, and the Sisters of Charity. At one in the afternoon we broke off our visits in order to dine at two in the house of Don Ramírez, where I am lodging at the good pleasure of that worthy Gentleman. Meanwhile, I am taking the occasion to write you before we are seated at table.

The Bulls for Bishop Codina's approval have already arrived here, but they are very slow in putting the final touches on them.

I have no more time now, because they are waiting for me, but I wanted to finish this letter first.

If you see Mossèn Fortian [Bres], give him my best.

Ask what you will of your most attentive and constant servant, who kisses your hand,

Anthony Claret, Priest.

P.S. Don't forget your promise that you would have them teach the Catechism I mentioned to you. I believe that it has already been delivered to you. I have not brought a copy with me, but Fr. Carasa and the other gentlemen in this household have praised it, especially as accompanied by the illustrations, some of which I brought with me and showed to them.

## **56. [1474] To Bishop Codina**

(EC III, 36-39)

### **Introductory Note**

We have already met Bp. Codina in the preceding letter. The story of the way in which Claret came into his service is told by the Saint himself in his Autobiography (nn. 477-479). This letter is most interesting for its insights into the way the Saint conducted his missions, adapting them to the needs of the people and the local scene. His 'paraliturgy-within-a-liturgy' is as naive as the people he is dealing with (and one would add, it was very effective, to judge from its spiritual impact). He is fully aware of the spiritual neglect in which many of the people have been living. He knows that many have not



been instructed in the fundamentals of the faith or in such devotional practices as the Rosary.

He has a deep concern not only for families and children, but also for broken marriages, and even for the conversion of pimps and prostitutes. He is also sadly aware of the uncovered. As we saw in the preceding letter, he has been trying to bring out his justly famous *Catechism Explained and Illustrated*, but those in charge have been dragging their feet. Eventually, Claret wrote his own catechetical work for the faithful of the Canary Islands: the *Very Brief Catechism, containing only what every Christian must indispensably know, composed by Don Antonio Claret, Priest and Apostolic Missionary* (Las Palmas, 1848) 104 pp., with an Introduction by Bishop Codina.

### Text

The Most Rev. Bishop of the Canary Islands

My Very Dear Sir, worthy of all my veneration and esteem:

This letter is to inform you that I decided to conclude the Holy Mission yesterday, and to remain here Monday and Tuesday in order to arrange some indispensable matters and to hear the confessions of many who are still asking to make a general confession. On Wednesday I will be marching off to Agüimes, as Your Excellency told me.

I don't have the energy or time to be able to give you an idea of the great good that has been done through the great mercy of God and of Mary Most Holy, but I'll briefly tell you a little for your comfort, since you are the Shepherd of this flock, and let all due thanks be given to God, not to me, for His great mercy. Before all else I must say that these poor people are very good-hearted, but alas, they have had no one to advise or tell them what they ought to do. Hence the poor little things have been left on their own and have been living as one might well imagine. Yet all of them have been so deeply touched that I don't know how to explain it.

Knowing how much impurity there was among girls and boys at an early age, I resolved to preach to them, and I believe that all that one might have hoped for has been achieved.

As for the grown ups, I myself observed in church that they were saying the Rosary without recalling the mysteries and almost without the form of a rosary. I therefore resolved to teach it to them and I myself recited it with them every day throughout the services. Every day attendance has been very great.

For the General Communion, I invited all the Mayors and authorities, and all very gladly accepted the invitation, first making a general confession to me. These gentlemen and a very large crowd attended it. In order to move the people to greater feelings of tenderness, I arranged beforehand to call in four children from the best households, and had them dressed up as angels. This was done and it was a pretty sight. In advance, I myself taught them some verses and rehearsed them in some ceremonies in a way that seemed best suited to achieve the aim I proposed, which took place as follows. When the celebrant reached the time for Communion, he left the ciborium open and sat down with his assistants. I immediately came forth from the sacristy with two 'angels' on either side and after duly and uniformly reverencing the Blessed Sacrament, we took our place on one side of the presbytery entoning our songs. After this we returned to the altar to render homage to the Bl. Sacrament, and the 'angels' strewed the whole presbytery with flowers, singing all the while. After this act, which moved everyone to tears, the 'angels' sat down on either side of me. Then I ascended the pulpit. After the talk, the 'angels' rose, two carrying the towel and the other two, the torches. The three priests distributed Communion, while I alternated with the organ in songs of aspiration. The service lasted until almost three in the afternoon, with the people kneeling all the while in rapt attention.

That night I can't explain, nor do I know, what happened; because at the end, when I tried to bid them farewell, the people began to wail and lament so that it cost me a great effort to silence them, but I managed to calm them to the point that they could hear what I was trying to tell them in the midst of their sobbing. Finally, they all wanted to kiss my hand, and seeing that it was impossible to content them all, I waited more than half an hour for them to leave. But seeing that they were not going to leave, I was hustled out a side door.

The fruits of the mission are beyond explaining. I will only say that I called all of the broken marriages that I knew of before the Curate and the Mayor, and all without regrets have listened to my voice. They all made a general confession in my presence and are now living with the greatest peace and joy, giving endless thanks to God and to Mary. Those living out of wedlock have separated and confessed. Whoremistresses have abandoned their abominable trade and have been converted. Many prostitutes have also been converted, but not all, because many of them serve very wicked men who would not come to the mission but led others who were coming into sin. I greatly fear lest these wicked women may sew tares in the field. Now I have no more time; others will tell you of it verbally at greater length.

I am enclosing this list of the books that they say are coming by this mail. They are all paid for. I am told that the Catechism is much behind schedule, and that one or another will have to do. It seems to Me that Your Excellency should decide on one, or else send me a parcel of Catechisms by [Fr. Gaspar de] Astete [S.J.], or else I could copy the main items from my own Catechism, for the people need one or another of them.

Regards to my friends and I am glad that those who were sick are getting better. Your most attentive and constant servant, who kisses you hand,

Anthony Claret, Priest.

### 57. [83] To Bishop Codina

(EC I, 270-272)

#### Introductory Note

For a firsthand account of the Saint's outstanding mission campaign in the Canary Islands, see his Autobiography, nn. 477-486. For a thoroughly enjoyable account of the whole campaign, see John M. Lozano's *Anthony Claret: A Life at the Service of the Gospel*, (Engl. tr. J. C. Daries) Chapter VIII, "Mission to the Fortunate Isles," pp. 114-133.

After the missions at Las Palmas and Telde, this third of Claret's missions in the Canary Islands began on the evening of May 31, 1848. In this town of Agüimes, people were referring to the already famous "Padrito" as "*San Antonio*." After the mission, the Pastor of Agüimes, Fr. J. P. Saavedra, wrote his Bishop an interesting account of the wonderful results of Claret's preaching. Bishop Codina also wrote his own summary of Claret's preaching, for the benefit of those who lived in some of the scattered villages of his diocese which the Saint was unable to reach.

The Pastor of St. Dominic's, the Servant of God Anthony Vincent González, a native of Agüimes, was a good friend of Claret's and would serve as the main local representative of the Religious Library. In 1849 the Saint founded the core-group of the Archconfraternity of the Heart of Mary in the Canary Islands.

When Claret finished his mission at Telde at the end of May, an enormous crowd of the faithful who had attended it accompanied the Saint to Agüimes, to hear him preach at greater length. Among the

“little books” the Saint brought with him, one was the *Camino Recto* (*The Straight Path*), of which we have the copy he gave to the Pastor of Agüimes, Fr. Saavedra.

### Text

Agüimes, 9 June [1848]

Most Rev. Bishop of the Canary Islands

Your Most Venerable and Esteemed Excellency:

I have just received your letter of the 8th of this month in which you inform me, to my delight, that the books have arrived. I am hoping that you will be so kind as to send me a consignment of them by way of the Curate of St. Dominic's, who I know wants to come to distribute some of them to the fervent people here, as well as to those who have come from Telde, so that they may have a reminder of what they have heard me say to them. As for the rest of the books, they are all at your disposal, and you may give them away or sell them as you please. The mission and my health are both doing fine, thank God.

Regards to all the other gentlemen and friends.

Anthony Claret, Priest

P.S. I am also waiting for some holy cards, along with the little books.

### 58. [84] To Canon Joseph Caixal

(EC I, 273-276)

### Introductory Note

This is a most interesting letter because of the details it gives of Claret's missionary activities from his own point of view. He asks for more copies of *The Straight Path*, *The Daughters of the Heart of Mary* and *The Catechism Explained*. He closes with an S.O.S. for help from all his friends in Tarragona. Chief among the latter was Canon Caixal who, as we shall see, was quite vexed at the departure of his friend for the Canary Islands at the very time when they both had matters of the greatest importance pending in Spain -- matters in which Claret's involvement was crucial.

The Saint has been very busy indeed. From March 20, 1848 to April 15 inclusive, he preached his first mission in Las Palmas in the Cathedral and in two other churches. His second mission was in

Telde, from April 30 to May 28. The third mission, in Agüimes, lasted from May 31 to June 25. He spent most of July in Arucas and most of August here in Galdar where, as Bp. Codina remarked, "he has made a conquest, among others, of the greatest importance." As the postscript shows, he moved on to Guía after finishing the mission in Galdar. Notable, too, is the last line, in praise of obedience.

Even here, in the midst of all this work, Claret found time to write a *Very Brief Catechism, containing only what every Christian must indispensably know, composed by Don Antonio Claret, Priest and Apostolic Missionary* (Las Palmas, 1848) 104 pp., with an Introduction by Bishop Codina.

Of the priests to whom Claret sends greetings, Don Martin Figuerol was Vicar General of Tarragona, Don Manuel Llopis was Rector of the Seminary, and Canon Palau was Chairman of Moral Theology and Sacred Oratory in the Seminary, as well as founder and director of the *Revista Católica*.

### Text

Galdar, Grand Canary Island,  
5 August 1848  
To the Rev. Canon Joseph Caixal  
My Very Dear and Esteemed Sir:

My reason for writing you is none other than to encourage both of us to work in and cultivate the vineyard of the Lord. As for these Isles, it can be said that *Digitus Dei est hic* ["The finger of God is here," Ex 8:19]. The people come from far-off places to hear God's word. I have to preach in public squares, because even if the churches were five times larger, they couldn't hold all the people. I am hearing confessions day and night, and can in no way console them all. The men have to wait five or more days for their turn to confess. Two soldiers stand outside my confessional in order to fend off any disorder that might arise from the great press of people who are keen to confess.

I have preached in the city of Las Palmas, in Telde, in Agüimes and in Arucas, and am presently preaching in Galdar. When I go from one town to the next, all the people accompany me, including the authorities, who surround me lest the people, who want to kiss my hand or robe, should crush me. We all travel on foot, reciting the Rosary as we go. After the Rosary, everyone shouts, "Long live the Religion of Jesus Christ! Long live Mary Most Holy! Long live the Father Missioner! Long live the people of Catalonia!" They also sing some verses of the

Rosary and thus, singing and shouting, they enter the towns where I am going to begin the Mission.

On arriving in the town church, I bid them all farewell and they return to their homes, except for those who could not yet go to confession. During the first days of the Mission I hear their confessions, while those of the new town prepare themselves for it. I stay in each town for a month, and there is still not enough time. I preach to the boys and girls separately, and also to the priests, and I am very much displeased with the latter. This very week I have been assured that of the ninety priests on this island alone, barely twelve recite the Divine Office, despite all I have said to them publicly and privately. “Ho vist al Pere, tan ser com cera” [Catalan: “I have seen Peter, and he’s as weak as wax”]. As for other vices, it seems they’ve held back from them not out of disinclination, but out of human respect. I ask you: How are they going to care for the salvation of others when they are so careless of their own?

The people, however, could not be more or better disposed. They are hungry for the divine word, whether spoken or written, and all the books that reach them are gone with the wind in a moment. I have given some away, while others have been sold. The demand for books is greater than our supply, and people are asking for them with money in their hands and tears in their eyes. Please write to Barcelona to send us more little books, especially the *Straight Path*, unbound, as we have so often requested. Also the last little book I composed, *The Daughters of the Heart of Mary*, would be most useful. You have my manuscript; it’s something like the nuns of St. Philomena. Tell them that this book would be very useful and fruitful here, because until now, as far as purity is concerned, they have been living like heathen, since they didn’t even know about it. That is why many girls from here were running off to Havana and other places in America to fill the ranks of whorehouses. I know some who were resolved to go there, but when they heard what I had to say in favor of chastity, they immediately changed their minds and have now resolved, like modern-day Theclas, to live chastely. I beg you, in God’s name, to arrange things as soon as possible and send me a thousand copies.

I am anxiously awaiting the *Illustrated Catechism*. I have been obliged to prepare one for the people here, for they are very poor even in catechism. Work as much as you can, then, for the glory of God and the good of souls. I don’t know what else I can do. I expose myself to dangers by land and sea, I deprive myself of all rest by night and by day, and I don’t have a cent to my name (since all my Masses are said

for the intentions of Fr. Peter Naudó, so that he can send me booklets out of his alms). My dear Canon, for God's sake help me as much as you can. Mention this to the Archbishop and to Fathers Figuerol and Llopis, and also to Father Palau.

I have no more time. Regards to the Archbishop and other Fathers, and you may rely on your servant, who kisses your hand,

Anthony Claret, Priest.

P.S. September 8th. I have finished the Mission in Galdar and in Guía. All has gone perfectly well. In these last two towns, to the great consolation of my heart, some priests have made their general confession.

Would that someone suitable could write an account of the events at these Missions, for surely Dr. Palau would have subject-matter enough to fill many pages of his *Revista Católica* and his readers would be astonished.

It seems to me that God has taken me out of Catalonia, where they said it was impossible to preach Missions for want of peace, and has placed me here, where such abundant fruits are being harvested. Blessed Obedience! For I let myself be led by it and give constant thanks to God.

## 59. [85] To the Bishop of Vic

(EC I, 277-280)

### Introductory Note

Fr. Fortian Bres was the Majordomo of Bp. Casadevall's residence. When Claret entered the Seminary of Vic as a day-student, Fr. Bres had received him in his own lodgings as a retainer. But soon grasping his extraordinary qualities, he made him his confidant and lifelong friend.

Msgr. Lucian Casadevall y Durán, Bishop of Vic from 1848 to 1852, after serving as Vicar General *sede vacante* for 13 years, was in fact not consecrated until October 5, 1848 and took possession of his See on October 21 of that month.

Claret reached Santa Cruz, Tenerife, on March 11, 1848, together with Bp. Codina, who entered Las Palmas, the Diocesan See of the Canary Islands, on March 14. On March 20, Claret began his first Mission there in the Cathedral. Bp. Codina gave 27 talks on the De-

calogue, while Claret preached an equal number of sermons on moral points. The Mission ended on April 15, but Claret went on to preach in the churches of St. Dominic and St. Francis, and gave separate retreats to the clergy and to the Daughters of Charity, who ran St. Martin's Hospital in the city. Low Sunday fell on April 30 of that year. The Saint and the Bishop set out from Las Palmas to Telde, where he preached a month-long (April 30-May 28) Mission and clergy retreat, and where the Saint's reputation as a holy man was bolstered by a number of unusual charismatic occurrences. He then went on to Agüimes, where he also preached a Mission and gave a clergy retreat (May 31-June 25), at which more prodigies were reported. His daily schedule began with Mass at 4:00 a.m., confessions until noon, confessions again from 2:00 p.m. until evening, when he led the Rosary and preached for two hours, retiring at God knows what hour. He spent most of July in Arucas and most of August in Galdar, before moving on to Guía, again preaching with extraordinary signs and results. After returning to Las Palmas, he set out for the Town of Teror, where he opened the Mission on September 27 (the date of this letter) and remained until probably October 22.

As for the excessive number of clergy in Vic, the Ecclesiastical Guide for 1848 reveals that the Cathedral Chapter had 21 Canons and 17 Benefice holders; that the three collegiate parish churches (Manresa, Sant Joan de las Abadeses and Calaf) had an even larger combined clerical force; that the 207 parish churches had their own resident pastors, and that there were 912 students in the Seminary of Vic. Small wonder, then, Claret suffered at the thought of this glut of clergy in Vic as compared with the dearth of clergy in the Canary Islands. As for the latter, Claret was, as we have already seen, appalled at the behavior of many.

Among other priests whom Claret mentions in this letter were the bishop's brother, Fr. Salvador Codina, who had been a Capuchin in Olot but was presently exclaustrated because of the anticlerical measures enacted by the liberal Spanish government. The bishop took him with him to the Canary Islands as his private and diocesan secretary (cf. Claret's account of one comic episode with Fr. Salvador in Aut 484). As his chaplain, Bp. Codina chose Fr. Fernando Agullana, who in early life had been a Carlist soldier, reaching the rank of colonel before he received a wound from which he limped for the rest of his life. After his military service, Agullana entered the Carthusians, from which he, too was exclaustrated. People who met him now could not help being shocked at the meek and mild character of the once despotic ex-colonel.



**Text**

To His Excellency the Bishop of Vic  
Teror, 27 September 1848  
Very Reverend and Esteemed Sir:

From the letters I have written to Don Fortian Bres, you will already know of my happy arrival in these Isles, and of the beginning and admirable progress of my Missions. I have addressed my letters to Fr. Fortian and not to Your Excellency for two reasons: one, because I was told that you were absent from Vic, the other, because while I was away, your well-deserved election to the episcopate intervened. And from what I witnessed in Madrid, I was aware of all the efforts and transactions involved in episcopal elections, bulls, exercises and consecrations, which you too must be facing. Hence, I have not written alternately to you and Don Fortian as I promised, but have addressed all my letters to him, always asking him most kindly to share them with you, thus sparing you the burden of answering them. But now that we are near the end of September when, from what I have heard, you may have already received your holy consecration, you will be less occupied, so I am addressing the present letter to your Excellency.

In the first place, let me congratulate you and wish you the grace and virtues of Ambrose, Augustine and Isidore, and the many years of St. Peter. In the second place, I ought to tell you something of my Missions.

On my arrival on this Island, we began straight off with the Mission in the Cathedral. The Bishop gave the doctrinal talk and your servant gave the moral sermon. The Mission ended on Passion Sunday, but I continued preaching in different Churches of the city until Low Sunday. The following Monday I began the Mission and Month of Mary in the city of Telde, and from there without stopping I gave Missions in other main cities, e.g., Agüimes, Arucas, Yena, Moya and Teror, where I am missioning at present. I have to preach in the squares, since the churches cannot hold the people. In each town, the fruits of the Mission are beyond all explaining.

These poor people were left all on their own and had no priests to counsel and instruct them in their obligations. Please God they have not been scandalized by the depraved conduct of the latter!

The priests are the ones who have caused me the greatest concern. A reliable person told me that of the 90 priests on this Island,

scarcely a dozen recite the Divine Office. They neither recite nor pray nor read nor study, but are given over to a fatal idleness. If indeed they received any teaching when they were seminarians, it is all the worse, since, until a short time ago, the only authors followed in the Diocesan or Tridentine Seminary were Jansenists. This is why, having been taught such doctrines, they were not absolving people from their sins. Thus the priests were well at ease, since they didn't have to hear confessions, because the people, knowing that they would not receive absolution, did not approach the confessional. Dear God, how abandoned they all were!

What the Bishop ought to do is to look for some good professors from Spain in order to renew the Seminary, otherwise he will make little headway. This is why he told me the other day that he wanted to write to Your Excellency to see whether some suitable young professors might want to come here. No doubt it would be a great thing for the glory of God and the good of souls. It breaks my heart with pain to think how many priests there are in the Diocese of Vic with nothing to do, while there is such a great need in these Islands. Three of us came with the Bishop. One is his Secretary, who stays at the Episcopal Residence in the City, to handle matters between the Islands and the [Iberian] Peninsula. The second is a Carthusian, who accompanies the Bishop on visits to the places where I have missioned, confirming the people both with the Sacrament and also with God's word, which he preaches to them. Hence, I'm going it alone, like a desperado, preaching and hearing confessions day and night, and even so, the people have to wait as much as nine days and nights for their turn. They bring with them from their homes a bag of cornmeal-mix which they call *gofio*, and this is how they manage to live while waiting. They are very constant and persevering in their Mission resolutions, so that with this and other virtues I see them practicing, they have so stolen my heart that I will feel it deeply when the time comes for me to leave them to mission elsewhere in keeping with my ministry.

I pray the Lord that Your Excellency may have the grace and health you need in order to carry the great cross He has deigned to place on your shoulders. Meanwhile, ask what you will of your most attentive and constant servant, who kisses your hand,

Anthony Claret, Priest.

## 60. [86] To the Bishop of Vic

(EC I, 281-283)

### Introductory Note

The Saint's retreat to the seminarians began on November 2nd and lasted a full eight days. His fourth apostolic journey began with the Mission at San Lorenzo on October 13th and ended on December 3rd. A mean boil on the thigh, followed by a low-grade case of pneumonia, made this Mission doubly difficult. Despite his sufferings, Claret not only did not interrupt the Mission, but managed to preach and hear confessions every single day.

The War the Saint refers to was one of the last forays of the Carlists in Catalonia. In this same year of 1848, General Pavia managed to dominate them completely there.

Claret's marching off to the Canary Islands had left the incipient Religious Library and other enterprises in which he and Caixal had been involved "up in the air." Poor Caixal was so upset, that he was considering breaking off relations with his old friend, as the next letter shows.

### Text

To His Excellency the Bishop of Vic  
San Lorenzo, 7 December 1848.

Very Reverend and Esteemed Sir:

In the last letter I wrote you from Teror, I told you how the Lord had showered His blessings on the Mission I am giving in these Isles, reaping a copious harvest in all parishes. At present I must report similar harvests, for when I wrote you it was at the beginning of the Mission at Teror, which lasted four weeks and had unfathomable results. I came to the city at the beginning of November, and the Bishop asked that I give formal spiritual exercises to both the boarding and day students at the college or conciliar seminary. This I did, thank God, but with results so great that they are beyond all telling.

After the retreat, the Bishop sent me out into the field again to begin the Mission of San Lorenzo, with stops at Fenoya and Tamaraceite. I now find myself in the last days of the Mission with most abundant results. Everywhere it seems that it is not just the finger of God, but the power of the Lord's arm. *Non nobis, Domine, non nobis,*

*sed nomini tuo da gloriam* [Not unto us O Lord, not unto us, but to Your name be the glory, Ps 115:1].

In my last letter I congratulated you on your ascent to the high dignity of the episcopacy; in this one I would like to ask you to tell me how you find this new charge. Miters have always had points, but in times like these it seems to me that they must be sharper than ever. Nevertheless, trust in the Lord; He will give you the graces you need, which is what I am praying for Your Excellency every day. For although I am very busy day and night, I very often remember you and the other Fathers and friends of mine in that Diocese of Vic.

God grant Your Excellency a good year's end and beginning, and you may rely on your faithful servant, who kisses your hand,

Anthony Claret, Priest.

P.S. I had already finished writing this letter when I received a letter from Canon Caixal telling me that he had begged you to send me back to the Peninsula. To which I reply that you know full well that I have always obeyed Your Lordship, and that if you asked me to go, I'd start the trip at once, despite the fact that it would be very hard for me if, on arriving there, I would be unable to work because of the war, whereas there is so much to do here and in good season, thank God. Nevertheless, I'll do whatever Your Excellency disposes. But as Caixal is one of the principal members of the Apostolic Fraternity, I would like to please him, and as he writes me so insistently to come, he has some hopes. I am therefore resolved that should Your Excellency see fit, I will undertake the voyage on the May sailing, or if not, whenever Your Excellency determines. I hope you will be so good as to write me on the matter.

## 61. [87] To Canon Joseph Caixal

(EC I, 284-287)

### Introductory Note

Canon Caixal was extremely upset over Claret's departure for the Canary Islands, and during the period of the latter's stay there their long friendship was strained almost to the breaking point. In Claret's absence, even enthusiastic supporters like Caixal grew disheartened and angry. Some went so far as to break off epistolary relations with the Saint. He, in contrast, continued writing to them as he had done before his departure -- not that he had much time for

correspondence. His August 8th letter to Caixal from Galdar had so disarmed the Canon that he began writing an answer at the beginning of September, though he could still not bring himself to finish it until October 17th.

Fr. Anthony Palau (later Bishop of Vic and of Barcelona) had striven bravely on behalf of his cherished project of founding a seminary in the Canary Islands to provide missionaries for the extremely neglected Spanish possessions in the Gulf of Guinea. In an open letter to the Queen, he had asked for approval of a "Spanish Mission Society," the bases for which he had laid out in his influential *Revista Católica*. While Palau's projected seminary did not flourish in the Canary islands, the one in Aranjuez did, to some extent.

Who would have guessed that within a few decades the real supply of missionaries for Spanish Equatorial Guinea would come from the ranks of the Congregation of Missionaries that Claret was soon to found in Spain! It was precisely here, in the Canary Islands, where he faced a grave dearth of evangelical workers, that Claret's idea of founding a Congregation of Missionaries became fully clear to him. With this idea of an Apostolic College in mind, he would soon leave for Spain, where he had already been promised a house. Prophetically, the first city he mentions --Vic-- would be the chosen place. Claret was about to set out on his fourth and last missionary foray in the Canary Islands with his journey to Tunte de Tirajana.

For an account of the long gestation of Claret's Congregation of Missionaries, see J. M. Lozano's *Anthony Claret: A Life at the Service of the Gospel*, ch. IX, pp. 134-146, and *Constituciones y Textos, "Documentos de la Hermandad Apostólica,"* pp. 12-123. For a different view, see J. Alvarez Gómez, *Claretian Missionaries*, vol. I, *Return to Origins* (Engl. tr. J.C. Daries, ClarPubl, Quezon City, 1994), pp. 186-204.

### Text

Long Live Jesus and Mary

Las Palmas, 11 Dec. 1848

To the Illustrious Don Joseph Caixal, Canon

My Very Dear and Cordial Friend:

My heart cannot hold back; it must overflow with joy on seeing that one whom I'd given up for dead is risen, and one I thought lost is found [cf. Lk 15:32] -- or so I am led to believe on the receipt of your letter, which was begun at the start of September but not finished until October 17th.

Twice before I've dealt with Canons for God's cause which I defend, and as many times the projects have been foiled. True, I'm just a little donkey who only knows how to bray, but God Himself sometimes uses asses to make His will known to Prophets [cf. Num 22:22-30]. On one occasion God was calling a Canon to be a companion of mine. I told him so, but he was like the sluggard who now would, now would not, act. I don't know whether it was out of malice or because he was dazzled by vain hopes of clerical preferment, but he couldn't see what he ought to do. What is certain, is that he failed to act. A short time later the Lord dealt with him like the wicked servant who was cast outside into the darkness. For God chastised him with a long illness, accompanied by acute sufferings.

The same thing almost happened to you, but endless thanks to God and His Most Holy Mother, you have opened your eyes and are resolved to undertake what God desires of you. How happy I am!... If my arms were as long as my wishes, I'd reach out and give you a big hug for it! As for my returning there, I'm ready to start the voyage today if that is God's will, which is the only thing I want to comply with. But as you know, we must not base ourselves on human prudence or allow ourselves to be led by every spirit [cf. 1 Jn 4:1]. You know full well that St. Joseph went to Egypt because the angel of the Lord told him to do so, and that he did not return from there until the same angel told him to do so [Mt 2:13,19-20]. I would likewise remind you that I came to the Canary Islands because my Superior, at the request of the local Bishop, told me to do so; and the moment he tells me to return, I'll return.

I can see your plan, and I assure that it is of God, and that it will all come true in due time. For some years now, I have conceived this same idea within me, but the time for its delivery has not yet arrived. So I have striven, with the Lord's help, to act like a good mother who, before the birth of her baby, sets in a store of swaddling clothes for her offspring. For your consolation I should inform you that there is already a house destined for this purpose and personnel as well, etc., etc. But the delivery cannot be forced... For you must see, my dear sir, that we're like that pregnant woman in the Apocalypse who is faced by a terrible dragon that wants to devour the child she is about to bear [cf. Rev 12:2-4].

Meanwhile, the rest of you should be doing all you can by word of mouth and by writing, and especially in the spread of good books. And the moment you know that the time of delivery has arrived, you

must tell my Superior to write to me, and I'll come there flying. You would be doing an incalculable good, at least for these Isles, if you'd see to arranging that little book on the Daughters of the Heart of Mary. Perhaps you are hesitating because you know that the Archbishop [of Tarragona] doesn't like the idea of our becoming involved with arrangements for women. Without in any way failing in the veneration we owe to that great man, I nevertheless feel that this little book would be most helpful. Ah, what a great benefit it would bring! I trust that through it many young women who are now preparing to march off to fill the whorehouses of Havana will turn back towards their heavenly homeland and follow the Lamb without blemish. Do it for the purity of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

Regards to the Archbishop, to Fr. Figuerol, to Canon Llopis, to his Majordomo and to the rest at the Bishop's residence. Also tell Fr. Ignatius Carbó to take heart and work as hard as he can in one way or another, but above all in having good books and papers circulated. Regards to Fr. Clanxet and other friends, and you may rely on your most constant servant, who kisses your hand,

Anthony Claret, Priest.

P.S. Tell Fr. Palau not to give up on his plan for a College for Missionaries. Perhaps with a single project or permission we can make one thing serve many uses. The local Bishop would very much like this College to be located in the Canary Islands, but it seems to me that it would be easier to recruit workers in Vic, Manresa or Gracia (and I've been promised a house in each of these places, should the plan be carried out). And don't let it be said that they should wait to be acclimatized in these lands, because I've spent the whole Summer here and can tell you that I've had to put up with much hotter weather in Spain than in these Isles. It's true that when the East or African wind blows, it's like a fiery furnace, but if a person wants to, he can protect himself against it. Besides, other towns are hardly touched by these winds, and it's always cool in the northerly parts where I preached my Summer Missions, which are less hot than in Spain.

When I last wrote you, I was missioning in Galdar. I then went on to Guía, Moya, Firgas and San Lorenzo, whence I have just come. From here I'm going on to Tirajana, etc. The results have been beyond explanation, thanks be to God. If Fr. Palau were apprised of all that's happening in these Isles, he'd have more than enough to fill the pages of his *Revista Católica*.

**62. [88] To Fr. Manuel Batlle**

(EC I, 288-290)

**Introductory Note**

Fr. Manuel Batlle was one Mossèn Claret's earliest companions in his work as an Apostolic Missionary. He was an outstanding member of the Fraternity of the Most Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary and a founding pillar of what Fr. Postius called the "Pre-Congregation."

The present letter confirms Claret's intention of setting sail for Spain in May of 1849. It also contains a colorful description of the enthusiastic crowds that accompanied him on his trips between Missions. Claret's friends all wanted him back in Catalonia to carry forward the many plans and projects that they were immersed in before he left for the Canary Islands, but his common sense told him that he was doing much more for evangelization than he could possibly accomplish amidst the current turmoil in Catalonia. In a letter of December 1st, Fr. Batlle --aware of Claret's great devotion to the Pope-- had suggested that Pius IX might be forced by Garibaldi's troops to flee the Papal States and that he might even come to Barcelona.

Fr. Francis Bofill, chaplain of the Magdalens, lived in Barcelona with his elderly sister, Margarita and his niece, Rosa. Claret, a lifelong friend of the Bofill family, always stayed with them when he passed through Barcelona, and had been an eyewitness to some of the frequent rows between the old lady and her niece -- hence his question about the weather's being cloudy or sunny. The envelope of this letter is clearly postmarked: "Tenerife, 10 January 1849, Canary Islands."

**Text**

6 January 1849  
Tunte de Tirajana  
Rev. Manuel Batlle, Priest.  
My Esteemed Friend:

I have just received your letter dated December 1st. I can see your desires and those of all my other friends that I should rejoin your company as soon as possible. Canon Caixal has told me the same.



Thus, in view of your great insistence, I have been thinking of leaving by the May embarkment. I shall come no sooner for two reasons: first, because the clergy are so busy with Lenten tasks that I would be unable to do what Caixal says; second, because I would like some clarification on the state of war in which I am told you are living.

I can only register my surprise that you have all been so insistent on my return, if what you have told me about the war in Catalonia is true. For we know that people don't attend Missions during war-time, and if instead of Missions we were busy training clergy, all such gatherings, however innocent, would be suspect. I never cease thanking God for having meanwhile sent me to these Isles, both because it freed me from my commitments there and because of the great results that have come from the Missions among these Islanders.

If I had time, I would describe the trip from the City to the Mission of Tunte, where I am now. Many pages would not suffice to portray the immense crowds that accompanied me during the ten-hour trip, the triumphal arches of lilies and palms made for me in all the villages I passed through, the streets strewn with flowers, the fences and walls festooned with palm branches, the balconies hung with cloth of damask, and the people constantly casting flowers on the streets and roads. Some were burning incense in thuribles, others firing rifles in the air, still others setting off fireworks, and everyone shouting "Long live the Religion of Jesus Christ! Long live Mary Most Holy! Long live the Missionary Father!" etc., etc., etc. I have no more time because I have to say my prayers when I finish hearing confessions.

I have been thinking of returning by the May sailing, if the Pontiff is coming to Barcelona. If, as you say, he might leave [the Papal States] before May, write me and I'll come earlier, otherwise I'll do as I said. A thousand regards to all my friends, especially Fr. Bofill. Ask him if the weather is cloudy or sunny.

Yours,

A. Claret, Priest. Catalonia.

To the Rev. Manuel Batlle, Priest and Beneficiary of Santa María. Barcelona.

### III. LETTERS OF AN ORGANIZER, FOUNDER AND ARCHBISHOP (1849-1850)

#### 63. [89] To Canon Joseph Caixal (EC I, 291-292)

#### Introductory Note

As the heading of this letter shows, Claret is back in Catalonia. He had left the Canary Islands at the beginning of May and by the middle of the month was back in Spain, in Barcelona, whence he repaired to Vic.

The “happy occasion” of which the Saint speaks is probably the period of political calm that has come with the new government. This has allowed him to consult freely with his old friends, Canons Soler and Passarell, concerning his plan to establish a “Congregation of Priests” who would be called and be “Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.” Both men applauded the project, and Soler, who was then rector of the Seminary of Vic, offered Claret the use of its buildings for the foundation as soon as the seminarians left for summer vacations. The foundation took place on July 16th, when the Spanish Church celebrated the double festival of Our Lady of Mount Carmel (for the Universal Church) and the Triumph of the Cross over the Moors at the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212 (for the Spanish Church). The Founder expressly referred to this in choosing as the theme of his opening talk the words of Ps 23:4: *Virga tua et baculus tuus ipsa me consolata sunt* (“Thy rod and thy staff have comforted me”) -- a play on the words *Virga* (Latin for “rod,” applied by accommodation to the *Virgo*, our Lady) and *Baculus* (Latin for “staff,” applied by accommodation to the Cross of the Lord).

“The idea we have proposed” is none other than the Congregation of Missionaries.

The “suitable subjects” (i.e., persons) chosen beforehand and soon to gather in the Seminary were: Stephen Sala (1810-58), Joseph Xifré (1817-99), James Clotet (1822-98), Dominic Fábregas (1817-95) and Manuel Vilaró (1816-52).

The “you” referred to in the last paragraph is of course Caixal, the first one on whom Claret had always counted for the realization of many of his projects, e.g. the “Religious Library,” but also for this “Great Work” of the Congregation of the Sons of the Heart of Mary. However when the time for the founding came, Caixal --very much against his own will-- did not receive his Prelate’s permission to join with his “brethren” in Vic bodily, although he was always united with them in spirit. From the first day of the foundation, Claret considered him a member of the newly founded Institute, as is clear from the appellation, “Brother,” with which he later addresses Caixal (cf. Letters 68-70 below).

### **Text**

To the Rev. Canon Joseph Caixal  
Vic, 29 May [1849]

My Very Dear Sir:

By the happy occasion afforded me, I must tell you that in this city I have the good fortune of having at my disposal some suitable subjects who will in time be most useful for the idea we have proposed. You should take care of the books and I, of the men: this seems to be God’s will.

Yours,

Anthony Claret, Priest.

### **64. [90] To Canon Joseph Caixal**

(EC I, 293-295)

### **Introductory Note**

This letter is interesting for several reasons. It reveals Claret’s unusual combination of constant reliance on God and of practical business sense. It also shows how much the Saint, gifted with spiritual insight even as a child (cf. Aut 52), has profited from the Ignatian rules for spiritual discernment. Moreover, he has a keen sense of following one’s own vocation and not letting anyone or anything interfere with it, since it comes from God.

As for Canon Palau’s prospectus, the Saint regards it as an unwelcome intervention that affects the Religious Library’s policies and practices regarding the publishing of good books. As Claret sees

things, this is Caixal's purview and it is so by God's design. Although Palau was a gifted churchman and publicist, his mentality was quite different from Claret's. Palau's projects were often idealistic and far-fetched, whereas Claret's were concrete, simple, practical and effective and, for most people, more affordable. This was in fact, precisely Claret's aim in founding the Religious Library: to counteract the effect of bad literature on ordinary people by providing them with a flood of good, short and economical books, rather than works of high literary, artistic or scientific pretensions such as those Palau strove to create for a real or imagined elite. For Palau's views, one need only consult his *Revista Católica* for 1849, where he gives a very detailed account of the activities of the Religious Library during its first year of existence.

José María Bocabella was the founder of the editorial house of the Heirs of the Widow Pla, in Barcelona. While Claret's dealings with him were very cordial, those with Pablo Riera, the other printer mentioned here, deteriorated over the years because of the latter's hard-headed and egotistical manner. When the episcopal residence closed its doors to Riera, he was deeply wounded, but he always got along very well with Palau, who had his *Revista Católica* printed in his shop. Of all Claret's genial initiatives, perhaps the Religious Library would become the greatest thorn in his side over the years.

### Text

To the Rev. Canon Joseph Caixal  
Vic, 1 June [1849]

My Very Dear Sir:

I am enclosing these two letters to show you the stir that Fr. Palau's prospectus has aroused in Barcelona. To calm their fears, I have just finished writing them not to send or print any paper of Fr. Palau's except by your express orders, and I am hereby writing you to that effect.

I must tell you that it is by God's doing that you are in charge, and He will take care of giving you the graces you need in order to discharge it well. If you need any advice, ask for it in good time, but never let anyone else, no matter how well-intentioned, take in hand the work entrusted to you, since this would ruin it, as I have already told you, following the teaching of Saint Ignatius.

In my opinion, the simpler the [Religious] Library walks, the better it will run... And all my friends in Barcelona are of the same opin-

ion, so that they are highly displeased with the plans and projects of Dr. Palau. His projects have already made our enterprise fall flat when it had hardly begun, and I'm afraid that if he goes on with his projects and plans, our friends are going to abandon us the way they did the other time. In my opinion, Dr. Palau should do for his Review, on the level of a periodical, what has been and is being done for the Library, without interfering in our plans. etc., etc. Moreover, Mr. Bocabella is very downcast and fears that Mr. Riera is going to take over the printing and leave him out on the street. I encourage him and tell him that if he acquits himself well, it will not be taken out of his hands and given to someone else. In truth, however, his fears are not unfounded, because he is aware of Riera's spirit. And to share my feelings with you, things will not turn out well for us if we get mixed up with Riera. And why should we be tied down to Riera? What special attentions do we owe him?

In my opinion, the more centralized and simple we keep the business, the better the results we'll have. Therefore, we should not have more than one printer, such as Bocabella. This is my opinion; nevertheless, I leave it in your hands, because you are the one in charge, not I. Try to help Bocabella rid himself of this hesitancy and distrust. Otherwise I fear he'll not give us the kind of service we need. Remember how I told you all of this on the walk we took to the port, speaking of the two printers, Bocabella and Riera, and you were of the same opinion.

For the present I can't think of anything else than what I've mentioned.

Regards to my friends, and ask what you will of your constant servant, who kisses your hand,

Anthony Claret, Priest.

### **65. [91] To Canon Joseph Caixal**

(EC I, 296-297)

### **Introductory Note**

It seems that the "storm" mentioned in this letter was stirred up by a little group of innovators, led by Palau and Riera, who wanted to introduce certain reforms in the Religious Library that would have contradicted its founding aim of providing good and affordable reading to the masses.

Don Francisco de Paula Mas y Artigas, called “el ciego” because he had in fact become blind, is first mentioned by Claret in his letter of application to the Jesuit General in 1839, where the Saint states that he studied Latin with him in Barcelona. Although physically blind, the old man was noted for the clarity of his spiritual vision. He later dedicated his *Diccionario Español-Latino* (Barcelona, Heirs of the Widow Pla, 1853) to the then Archbishop Claret.

Claret’s ability to win over and form “apostolic men” deserves a separate study. The names of Soler, Puigllat, Caixal and Vilamitjana might head the long list of collaborators and “subjects” who would soon become bishops of different Spanish dioceses.

The four matters that kept Claret so busy at the moment all concerned the formation of missionaries and ministers of the Word. One involved “New Holland,” i.e., Western Australia. Fray (later Bishop) Rosendo Salvado, a Benedictine monk of Montserrat, had founded the Abbey of New Norcia, near Perth, in 1846. At the time of this letter, another Benedictine, Fray José María Benito Serra, Auxiliary Bishop of Perth, was touring Spain to recruit some evangelical workers. Fr. Claret immediately put himself at his disposal and began preparing 40 men for this work (21 Catalans, 10 Spaniards from other regions, and 9 Neapolitans), who left for this new mission on October 5, 1849. Barely a month after his return from the Canary Islands, he was also preparing four priests to fill some of the many needs he had witnessed in those islands. He continued his work of preparing priests for the ministry of preaching and administering the sacraments worthily and effectively. Claret’s work of combining clergy retreats and conferences in connection with his missions had been an important preparatory stage in the founding of his own Congregation of Missionaries, which was soon to take place.

### Text

To Canon Joseph Caixal  
Vic, 11 June 1849.

My Dear Friend:

I have just received a letter from Fr. Francis Mas (“the blind”) in Barcelona, and from it I can see that the storm raised against the Religious Library, about which I wrote you, has not yet calmed down. I repeat, the storm has not yet been calmed. You may have to go there

yourself to see what's going on, and Fr. Francis is of this opinion. He would even like me to go there so that all of us together might work out a peaceful solution. All things considered, it seems that you should go quickly to Barcelona to look things over, and should you deem it prudent or fitting that I come, write me and I'll be there in a trice, although I think you can handle it without me, since it is fully in your power to do or undo anything regarding the [Religious] Library.

You may seek counsel from anyone you please in good time, but you are the only center of this circle of books, as I am of personnel for preaching. I am quite occupied in this business: 1) with those who are going to New Holland, who are learning their offices and being formed in virtues; 2) with the four who are going to the Canary Islands; 3) with conferences for many priests who are perfecting their preaching, etc., etc; 4) with those who are being shaped for Missions, etc.

From this you can infer my great and daily occupations; nevertheless, if there is any way in which you wish me to help you, write to me and I will do it most promptly and gladly.

Ask what you will of your constant servant, who kisses your hand,

Anthony Claret, Priest.

## **66. [94] To Fr. Joachim Masmitjá**

(In Catalan: EC I, 302-303)

### **Introductory Note**

Fr. Joachim Masmitjá (1808-1886) was pastor of the capital city (Olot) of the Mountain District when Claret gave a famous mission there from mid-August to mid-September, 1844. One of the richest fruits of this mission was the founding of the Daughters of the Most Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary. The fundamental study on this subject is Fr. John Postíus' exhaustive and documented work, "Paternity of the Sons and Daughters of the Heart of Mary," in AG CMF, C-D 10.4 (1).

Since this letter was written only eight days before the founding in Vic of the Congregation of Missionaries, Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, it seems clear from Claret's absolute silence on the nature of the clergy retreat he would be giving, that he did not choose to invite Fr. Masmitjá to join them.

### **Text**

Vic, 8 July [1849]

To the Rev. Joachim Masmitjá, Priest.

My Very Dear Sir:

I am enclosing these books and prints as a token of the love and esteem I have for you and your brethren.

In the middle of the present month I will be giving the Holy Exercises to the Clergy here.

Regards to your Brethren and other friends, and you may all rely on your faithful servant, who kisses your hand,

Anthony Claret, Priest.

### **67. [95] To the Apostolic Nuncio**

(EC I, 304-305 [copy] ; EC III, 40-43 [original])

### **Introductory Note**

His Excellency, Dr. Giovanni Brunelli, Titular Abp. of Thessalonica (and later Cardinal of St. Cecilia in Trastevere) was the Papal Nuncio to the dominions of Her Catholic Majesty, Isabella II, a post he had at this time held for a little over a year.

After the founding retreat for his Congregation of Missionaries, Claret began another retreat for the clergy of Vic around the beginning of August. At the end of this retreat, on August 11th, Bishop Casadevall handed Claret the nomination referred to in the present letter, which was dated Madrid, August 4th. Claret, who was still living in the first glow of his new foundation, was appalled at the thought of leaving it a virtual orphan. In his Autobiography (n. 491) he noted: "I was struck dead by the news. I said that I would by no means accept it and begged the bishop to be good enough to answer for me, telling them that I would by no manner of means accept." A few pages later (Aut 495) he adds: "Even after prolonged reflection on the matter, I concluded that, even if I had the required knowledge and virtue, it would be wrong for me to abandon the Religious Library and the Congregation, which were just coming into being. Therefore I forcefully rejected all the overtures of the Papal Nuncio, Monsignor Brunelli, as well as those of the Attorney General of Spain, Don Lorenzo Arrazola."



Claret was not the first choice for the post of Metropolitan Archbishop of Cuba. Some months earlier, Bp. Dominic Costa y Borrás of Lérida had been proposed. In a letter dated May 23rd, the Attorney General of Spain, Don Lorenzo Arrazola, wrote the latter as follows: "Besides that, would you like to go to Cuba as Archbishop? How much good you'd do for both the Church and the State!" In an undated note, the Bishop of Lérida replied: "For many years now my elderly mother has been living in my company, and the very report of my transfer to such a far-off country would affect her extraordinarily... I cannot, Excellency, sacrifice my lady mother. But don't think that I would leave you without an Archbishop for Cuba, for I'm going to indicate one, and a very suitable one at that.

Let us agree that the Overseas Churches need Missionaries, and that the best Prelate would be the best Missionary. Well, there you have the Bishop of the Canary Islands who, with the help of Father Claret from this country, and another from elsewhere, has changed the face of those Islands. He [Bp. Bonaventure Codina] is the right man for the See of Cuba, while the Missionary Claret could succeed him in the Canary Islands. He is an apostolic man of some learning, and I have no doubt that both appointments would be applauded by judicious and knowledgeable people." It seems certain that on passing through Madrid en route to the Canary Islands, Claret had been marked out for the episcopate. The one who most influenced this appointment may well have been the Rev. José María Ramírez y Cotes, with whom Claret stayed during the events attending Bp. Codina's episcopal consecration.

The matter did not, of course, end with this letter.

On September 5, 1849, the Nuncio wrote to Attorney General Arrazola: "One of the first concerns I had when I had barely arrived here, was to take under serious consideration the grave matter of which we already spoke in this Royal Estate [of San Ildefonso], concerning the provision of the Metropolitan of Cuba. After carefully weighing all the reasons militating one way or another, and having sought the advice of esteemed and trusted persons so as to proceed with greater peace of mind in such a matter of conscience, I do not believe I am in a position to impose on Mossèn Claret a precept demanding him to accept the Royal Nomination for the aforesaid Church. Among the many reasons that have held me back from doing so, which would take too long to relate here, he mainly called my attention to the harm to the whole Peninsula that this promotion would cause, since he feels that it would dash the fair hopes he has zealously placed in many fervent

Missionaries whom the apostolic man has been forming with such happy results. Hence we must seek another with the necessary talents and gifts to occupy that See, which is crying out so urgently for a Shepherd.”

On September 21st the Nuncio wrote to Claret: “In the Royal Estate of S. Ildefonso I received your letter dated the 12th of last month, which I have thus far delayed in answering, in consideration of the very grave matter to which it referred. During this time, after receiving due reports and taking counsel with persons who as men of spirit are fully trustworthy, I find myself in a position to tell you the following.

First of all, I must tell you frankly that if you...expect a formal precept from me, I don't believe it should be given, not because I believe the necessary conditions are lacking, for I am persuaded that all of them exist, but because I do not feel disposed to descend to such an act, which not even the Supreme Pontiffs are ordinarily disposed to do.... But this does not stop me from... manifesting to you most clearly my opinion that you should not reject this assignment. The fact that you weren't even thinking of it when it occurred to me to propose you to Her Majesty's Government, which was quite satisfied to accept, leaves me with no doubt that the nomination has been providential. Moreover, I have a full knowledge of the state in which the Island of Cuba lies, and of your disposition to stir up the faith in it again and to do very much good by your Apostolic labors.

Among the many reflections that have claimed my attention in particular, there was that of the great advantages you are providing the Peninsula by equipping several zealous Missionaries. But from the reports mentioned above, I have learned that there is among them one [i.e., Fr. Stephen Sala] who is very advanced and can perhaps take your place in the event. Besides, if your promotion as Metropolitan of Cuba takes place, several months should pass before you are ready to set out for that Island, and you would hence have time to perfect as much as possible the most advantaged of them. And as for those who are not advanced enough when you leave..., you could take them with you there, where there is such a need for evangelical workers. There, while they could be helping you in the seminaries, curacies and other assignments, they could at the same time continue to be perfected under your direction.

Thus two advantages would be gained: one for the Peninsula, where your replacement could continue educating the Missionaries; the other for Cuba, where you and those you choose to take with you would, with the Lord's help, do immense good. I abstain from making

many other reflections, and only add one word: namely, that I looking forward to your acceptance. For the rest, no matter what resolve you take, I feel I deserve an answer from you by return mail, so that that [Cuban] Church, whose condition is so urgently crying out for a Shepherd, should no longer remain an orphan.”

### **Text**

To His Excellency the Apostolic Nuncio

Most Excellent, Reverend and Esteemed Sir:

Yesterday as I descended the pulpit after giving the holy spiritual exercises to two hundred priests on retreat in the church of the Conciliar Seminary of this Diocese of Vic, my most worthy Prelate, Don Lucian Casadevall, called me aside and handed me your letter and the Lord Minister’s nomination for the Archbishopric of Cuba. Your Excellency can have no idea of the pain that rent my heart at this nomination, and that for two reasons: first, because I have neither the taste nor sufficiency for dignities; second, because it overthrows all my apostolic plans, which I will share with Your Excellency confidentially in a few words. Seeing the great lack of evangelical and apostolic preachers in our Spanish territories, the people’s great desire to hear the Word of God, and the many requests that I have received from all parts of Spain to go and preach the Gospel there, I determined to gather and instruct some zealous companions, so as to be able to do with others what I could not do by myself alone. Thanks be to God, my idea is off to such a good start that I find myself with fifty-nine clerical disciples, some of whom will turn out to be very gifted preachers. But this is with the understanding that these gentlemen stand, so to speak, on my shoulders, in such a way that if I withdraw because of this nomination, they will all fall to the ground, because they are still too weak to stand on their own.

Besides, I would thus be tying myself down to a single archdiocese, whereas my spirit goes out to all the world. But even on that small dot on the map I wouldn’t be able to preach as I would like, since I’ve seen with my own eyes how many business affairs an Archbishop has to attend to. It seems to me that the best thing to do would be to elect another, and then, if he liked, I could go there with some other companions to preach missions for a time.

Your Excellency can meditate on this, and if after these and other inquiries you may make, you reckon that it is God’s will that I accept the Archbishopric, then feel free to send me, for in imitation of

my Divine Master I will, with His most holy grace, obey unto death, even death on a cross [cf. Php 2:8].

God keep Your Excellency for many years, and ask what you will of your most affectionate and attentive servant, who kisses Your Excellency's hand,

Vic, 12 August 1849.

Anthony Claret, Priest.

## **68. [98] To Canon Joseph Caixal**

(EC I, 310-313)

### **Introductory Note**

This is mainly a "business" letter, but it reveals a number of the Saint's personal traits.

Both in the salutation and closing of the letter, we note that Claret refers to Caixal as "Brother," which would seem to indicate that the Saint regards Caixal as a member of his inner group of Missionaries.

In the first paragraph (and throughout the letter) we see Claret's genuine and practical concern for the apostolate of the press, as well as some of the vexing details he had to deal with in the business of printing. By stressing his discontent with the poor quality of some of the printed materials he has received (as well as the unpleasantness of dealing with the hard-headed printer, Riera), he implicitly lectures Caixal on being more attentive to the fine points of printing, which is, after all, Caixal's ministry. He also shows a practical concern for getting his money's worth for the work done. By the way, he slips into a Catalanism, writing "esmersando" instead of the Castilian "gastando" for "spending."

In the second and third paragraphs, he gives us an insight into his "philosophy" of letter writing. He has read his correspondent's letters carefully so that his responses may be short and to the point. He shows practical good sense in not wanting to overload the Religious Library with a glut of moral theology handbooks, and is even willing to deal with a printer as disagreeable as Riera in order to get the job done properly. Although he "pushes" some of his own writings, he is not vain or touchy about them, since he is quite willing to let others polish them or translate them.

In the closing paragraph, he shows how busy he is with the apostolate of forming, instructing and sending out mission preachers, yet he adds the personal touch of sending the missionaries' greetings to Caixal and telling him that they include him in their prayers.

The postscript reveals Claret's attention to the procedural details of printing, distributing and selling religious goods, and his sensitivity to mixing ministry with any kind of sales profits. The last "Item" is meant as a word of encouragement to Caixal.

### Text

To the Rev. Canon Caixal  
Vic, 1 September [1849].

My Esteemed Brother in Jesus Christ:

I have just received your most welcome letter of the 28th. Because of the rains the post arrived very late, and that is why I couldn't send the circular to Barcelona before the Monday mailing. It seems good to me, and I'm sending it to you signed. I'm quite pleased that the *Straight Path*, both in Catalan and in Castilian, is so far advanced. Since I didn't know what state it was in, I was spending a few little alms that I have gathered so that I could buy the ones I need from Bocabella. But as soon as the other editions are ready let me know, and I'll send my requests to the Religious Library. I would say the same of the holy cards, which I also get from Bocabella. If the [Religious] Library has them, I'll also deal with them. But the images have to be better than those little ones of a few days past, for I can tell you plainly that I wouldn't want even to give them away.

As regards that booklet or little catechism you mentioned, it is already in its second printing. It was printed in Barcelona and Vic, and I'm quite pleased with it. They told me there were so many orders that they don't have hands enough to work on sending it out. If you say so, I'll take them from you. There are two reasons why I didn't insist on these details. In the first place, when it comes to plates, Mr. Riera and I don't agree, because he considers and praises some that I don't like and disparages others that I do like. But as I don't like to quarrel, I keep my mouth shut, even though (if I do say so myself) I think I know better about such things. Nevertheless, if I'd seen the plate of the Blessed Virgin that he printed in the second volume of the Short Works, I tell you frankly that I would not have kept quiet. The second reason is that when I take booklets and holy cards I want to know what I'm getting and what I have to pay -- and I pay at once.

As for my answer about Lárraga's [Handbook of Moral Theology], I must tell you that when I answer a letter I am fully aware of the farthest-reaching ramifications it may involve, and if I don't answer at once, it's either because I don't know the answer or because I don't consider it prudent to answer on the spot. This is the case here. I would like Lárraga to come out, but I'm afraid it would take too long with the [Religious] Library. For if, as you say, you want to print Escabini or some other author on moral theology which (as Father Carbó informs me) the Jesuits are currently using, it seems to me that it wouldn't be suitable to overload the [Religious] Library with two or three authors on Moral Theology, above all with Lárraga who, although he is the most necessary author, has come to be frowned on as rather ordinary.

I tell you frankly that I would prefer that another printer such as Pons, Riera, Bocabella, etc., or anyone else should bring it out. For I can assure you that very many copies would be sold, above all if it included the foreword I wrote, together with the added notes on the most necessary points by Neyraguet or St. Liguori, as well as the reflections for sinners that I have written, though they need to be polished. I have sketched them out roughly, but I neither have nor expect to have the time to polish them or to put the matters on the sixth commandment into Latin. I have left the last-mentioned item in Castilian, so that a translator can express my ideas.

The said edition of Lárraga should also include the *Praxis* of Saint Liguori in Castilian, except for the points *contra sextum*. I asked Mr. Pons' permission to include the *Homo Apostolicus*, which is his property, and he granted it. I also asked him whether, in case the Library didn't want to issue this new Lárraga, he would like to print it, and he told me that he'd be glad to do so. The matter is now up to you. Do as you see fit.

I must say, I'm going on too long, because we are just now in the midst of a three-day retreat for those who are going out to preach missions this week. There are six of them. They all send you their greetings and we are including you in our prayers.

Ask what you will of your Brother,  
Anthony Claret.

P.S. I have already sent Fr. Peter Naudó the holy cards that should be prepared for the Missionaries. When they are printed, they can be sent to the Library's agent in this city, and Pastors can have recourse to him to buy them for the Missionaries who are going to

preach in their parishes. For some Pastors have some alms set apart for that purpose, and things will go better if we don't have to sell them ourselves.

Item. I have been asked to tell you that there are some 50 here who have asked to subscribe to the second series: It seems that all will be going well, thanks be to God.

### 69. [99] To Canon Joseph Caixal

(EC I, 314-317)

#### Introductory Note

As the opening sentence makes clear, Claret still believes that he can escape being named Archbishop of Cuba. He is both tactful and forceful in his good and practical advice to Caixal on running the Religious Library properly. It is significant that he addresses Caixal as his "Brother," a title reserved for members of the Congregation. It seems that both men foresaw the founding of a house in Tarragona, where Caixal could live with the Missionaries. This plan would fail when Claret became Archbishop of Cuba and Caixal became Bishop of Seo de Urgell. The second paragraph begins with a scratched-out opening in Catalan.

The works Claret refers to specifically are Liguori's *Eleven Discourses for a Novena in Preparation for the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ* (the first work of that Saint published by the Religious Library), the *Treasury* by Fr. Theodore de Almeida, and the *Ossequi speciali*, appended to *Il Divoto di Maria Vergine* by Paolo Segneri, S.J., "the Elder" (1624-94).

The most interesting passages are those describing the early work and community life of the newly-founded Congregation of Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (who are still living in the "College," i.e., the Seminary of Vic), as well as their outreach, not only to the secular clergy but also to the Carmelite Sisters of Charity, founded in the "Escorial of Vic," by Saint Joachima de Vedruna. The greeting to Fr. Paul Bofarull is meant to encourage the latter to emulate the good work being done by the *Fraternity of Christian Doctrine* which Claret had founded in Vic on August 20, 1849, which had already, in less than a month, "reached great heights."

**Text****Pax Christi**

To the Rev. Canon Joseph Caixal  
Vic, 5 September [1849]

My Dear Friend and Brother in Jesus Christ:

My earlier letter to you was written rather hastily for two reasons: first, to relieve you of any concern over my election by letting you know that I had declined it, and second, to alleviate the needs of the Religious Library both here and in Gerona, for I am relying on your zeal and charity to do everything possible to prevent the downfall of this great Work of God, which the devil is striving to bring about by all means possible.

And although it is true that this work, which is so pleasing to God, has been entrusted to you, allow me to make a few remarks concerning it -- not because I want to dip my sickle into another man's harvest, but simply to share my opinion with you. It seems to me that every month you should see to it that each subscriber receives the book and pamphlet of the month, and if you foresee that Bocabella will not be able to fulfill his commitment, then call on other printers --making sure that they use the right kind of paper and print-- and they'll be glad to accept your offer. In this way you'll be well off, the subscribers will be content, and their numbers will increase every month. If you don't, the subscribers will become upset and quarrelsome, and will not only cancel their own subscriptions, but dissuade others from subscribing.

It would also be good if every month, over and above the free pamphlets, you would also send the Distributor a free bonus book that he can give to anyone he pleases, in case some selection might not turn out well (as sometimes happens), or for some other reason. If Printers in various places ask for Catechisms with or without illustrative plates, it would also be good to offer them a discount on larger orders, or on requests for unbound copies. I believe that Bocabella doesn't like this, perhaps because he would like to be the only one to do both the binding and the selling. But sometimes he does neither --which quite upsets all of us here-- so you really must do something about this.

As for your question regarding the little book by Liguori, the translator is working on it. I'll press him and we'll see whether it will be possible to bring it out soon.



As for the *Treasury of Protection of Mary Most Holy*, perhaps it could be sent out in larger print and appear as a monthly volume, together with the History and Novena of the Heart of Mary. And if that isn't enough, we might add some other novenas, say, for the Immaculate Conception, Christmas, the Annunciation, the Rosary, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel or Our Lady of Sorrows. If this isn't to your liking, then we could use the "Homages" that Segneri has in his *Devout Client of Mary*.

It might also be a good idea to offer a Holy Week selection for Lent, and in the month of April a selection for the Month of Mary.

Let us now turn to other matters. The Missionaries are doing very well and can't go any faster than they are doing at present. We are very busy from four in the morning until ten at night. Indeed, one occupation is linked to another in a continual chain. Our occupations are: mental and vocal prayer, divine office, conferences on catechesis, preaching, hearing confessions, and on moral, mystical and ascetical theology. There are conferences for insiders and outsiders. Seven of us are involved in the ones for insiders. We are exercising ourselves in all the virtues, especially humility and charity, and in this College we are living a truly poor and apostolic life in community. The conferences for outsiders are attended by 56 ecclesiastics, some of whom will turn out to be well-qualified preachers. Some of them have even asked to live with us, but we are going rather slowly about this, carefully weighing their physical and moral abilities, for one can't be too cautious in such matters, since one mangy sheep can infect the rest of the flock.

As for our ministries to women, both this year and last year we have been quite occupied with an Institute called [The Sisters] of El Escorial, or of Mother Joachima [de Vedruna], since she founded them and is still alive. They do exactly the same things mentioned in that manuscript you sent me to read. They are engaged in teaching and in attending to the sick. The spirit of evangelical poverty, prayer and charity reigns among them. At present they have more than a hundred girls in their care, and have a Novitiate in this town.

Every year I give their retreat and will soon do so again. More keep entering every day and their novitiate is very full. They have already marked out a well-beaten path, so that I feel excused from starting another Institute, for it could do no more than this one is doing, and if this one needs some finishing touches, we can supply them, since it's already at hand. So it seems to me.

Tell Fr. Bofarull to promote instruction in doctrine. Oh, if he could only see the heights it has reached in this city!

Regards to all.

Your servant,

Anthony Claret, Priest.

## 70. [100] To Canon Joseph Caixal

(In Catalan: EC I, 318-320)

### Introductory Note

Regarding the work by Liguori, see the preceding letter. Despite all Claret's efforts, the work could not come out before Christmas, for the reasons Canon Palau pointed out in the *Revista Católica*, XV (1849), 390-391. *Virginie* refers to a didactic novel, "Virginia, or the Christian Maiden: a Model Story for all Ladies who Aspire to Gospel Perfection," translated from the French by C. de Aguirre y Rosales (Barcelona, Religious Library, 1857), 3 vols.

At the beginning of the second paragraph, there is a mention of a Claretian Co-founder, Fr. Stephen Sala, who was to succeed Claret in the Directorship General of the Congregation. Even here, Claret's high opinion of Sala can be inferred from the way he defers to the latter's judgment.

The third paragraph has some interesting insights into the life and ministry of the newborn Congregation of Missionaries. The illnesses that the Saint refers to are those of another Co-Founder, Fr. Dominic Fábregas, who required the attendance of a physician for some 30 consecutive days. The main infirmarian was Claret himself, who not only gave the patient his medicines, but changed his bed-linens and performed the other menial tasks associated with caring for the sick. "The rest of us," says another Co-Founder, Fr. Clotet, in his memoirs, "simply followed our Master." Claret himself was by no means well. In 1847, during his stay in Vic after preaching in Tarragona, he had suffered strong pains in his knee. During his Missions in the Canary Islands, these pains in his legs spread to his whole body, producing painful swellings, infections and overall miseries.

The expression, "our own Sisters," is a rather strong indication of the close relationship between the Missionaries and the Sisters of Mother Vedruna. The "more troublesome charge" is doubtless the still-unsettled question of his nomination as Archbishop of Cuba.

Although the Nuncio had initially been swayed by Claret's letter of August 12th, which presented the reason why he could not in conscience accept the assignment, further conversations with the Attorney General of Spain and other persons of sound judgment had led the Nuncio to change his mind, as he made clear in a letter he would write to Claret on September 21st.

"The place" the Saint refers to is the future Motherhouse of the Congregation, the former Convent of our Lady of Mercy [La Mercè] in Vic, which was in such a disastrous state of disrepair that it seemed it would never be ready. The "Brothers" are the Sons of the Heart of Mary. For Fr. Bofarull, see the preceding letter.

### **Text**

#### **Pax Christi**

To the Illustr. Canon Joseph Caixal  
Vic, 17 September [1849].

My Very Dear Sir and Brother:

In my last letter I told you I would do my utmost to have the book by Liguori issued by Christmas, but despite all of my efforts, I must tell you that it will not be possible, so another book will have to be offered that month. From Barcelona I have received a French book called "Virginie" which, if I'm not mistaken, is already translated into Spanish. I wonder whether you know if the Translator has reserved the rights to it. If so, tell me before I go ahead and have it translated.

I was very keen to see you and talk with you on some matters pertaining to the Religious Library, but Fr. Stephen Sala told me that I could by no means absent myself even for a day, given the situation in which we find ourselves. Nonetheless, I will at least say a word or so to you. See to it that there are always a number of Catechisms in stock in Barcelona, that they are available to everyone, and that those who buy them in bulk may receive a discount. Kindly see to these three matters. As you know, I've already begged you to do so a number of times, yet in a letter I received yesterday I learned that there are no catechisms in stock and that those who buy in bulk don't know the prices. I don't know whether this is due to Bocabella's ill-will or your own oversight; hence, I beseech you by the five wounds of Christ and the seven sorrows of Mary that you would promptly look after this.

We are forging ahead and applying ourselves to learning and virtue, though the devil has been hard at us now and then. Our Divine Master has allowed him to beset us a few times, and the Lord Himself has also tried us. One of our companions is ill and has to be watched over day and night by one of us. I myself have a bad knee and they are applying remedies to it... I am giving a retreat to twenty-some ordinands, and Fr. Stephen is giving one to the Hospital Sisters, and between the two of us we have to give retreats to the Teresian Carmelites, the Poor Clares and the Dominican Nuns, as well as to our own Sisters of the Escorial [of Vic]. And besides this, they want to burden us with a more troublesome charge. *Benedictus Deus* [Blessed be God!]. Thus far we have been living in this College, but the seminarians will soon be coming back, so we'll have to leave our rooms here, although I still don't know where we'll go, because it seems that the place where we are to stay is going to take forever to arrange. But as you are well aware, those who are at the mercy of others don't do what they wish, but what they can.

God be praised!

Give my regards to our friends, especially the Pastor, Fr. Bofarull, and tell him not to neglect his commitment to Christian Doctrine, which is going well, very well, here, thank God.

You can rely on your servant, who kisses your hand,  
Anthony Claret, Priest.

P.S. Regards from all the Brothers.

To the Illustr. Joseph Caixal, Canon of Tarragona.

### 71. [101] **To the Apostolic Nuncio**

(EC I, 321-322 [copy]. EC III, 44-45 [original])

#### **Introductory Note**

This letter, together with the two that follow it, marks the beginning of a new stage in Claret's life. Almost two months had passed since Claret received the letter of nomination to the See of Santiago, Cuba. From the outset, he had resolutely declined to accept the nomination, even after repeated instances on the part of the Papal Nuncio, Monsignor Brunelli, and the Attorney General, Don Lorenzo Arzola (cf. Aut 495). Bishop Casadevall had already hinted that Claret might be resisting the will of God. But the Bishop wrote him much more forcefully on October 1, 1849: "Having consulted the Virgin of

Montserrat in prayer, I command you to accept the aforesaid Archbishopric.”

Claret at last gave in, but even so he asked for a few days to think the matter over and consult Canons James Soler and James Passarell, his spiritual director, Fr. Peter Bach of the Oratory, and Fr. Stephen Sala, his successor in the directorship of the Claretian Congregation. They all concurred that it was God’s will for Claret to accept the nomination, and so he did on October 4, 1849 (cf. Aut 496). The “person” appointed to handle arrangements not only for the canonical transactions with the Royal Court, but also for the recruitment of personnel to accompany the Archbishop to Cuba, was Fr. Fermín de la Cruz, who, on Claret’s return to Spain in 1857, would provide him with lodgings at his residence alongside the Italian Church.

### **Text**

To His Most Excellent and Illustrious Lordship:

My Most Reverend and Esteemed Sir:

In view of the two most appreciated letters of Your Excellency, dated August 6 and September 21, and after much prayer, my spiritual director has resolved that it was God’s will that I accept the nomination for the Archbishopric of Cuba. I humbly submit to this, not relying on my own powers, which are nil, but on the help of heaven. Hence, via the present letter I am informing Your Excellency, and am likewise writing to His Excellency the Lord Minister, that I, though unworthy, am accepting the aforesaid nomination. Without losing time, I will appoint a person in Madrid to handle the necessary arrangements for attending to the canonical procedures, as Your Excellency indicated to me in your letter of August 6.

Nevertheless, I would ask one favor of Your Excellency, namely, that when you write to Rome you would deign to seek from His Holiness the favors and faculties He esteems necessary for the arduous and necessary cases that will have to be dealt with in that Archdiocese.

God preserve Your Excellency these many years.

Vic, 4 October 1849.

Your Servant, who kisses Your Excellency’s hand,

Anthony Claret, Priest.

To His Excellency the Apostolic Nuncio.

**72. [102] To the Attorney General of Spain.**

(EC I, 323-324)

**Introductory Note**

Don Lorenzo Arrazola (1797-1873), the head of the Moderate Party, was seven times Attorney General (Ministro de Justicia y Gracia) of Spain --and hence in charge of church-state relations-- and served three times as the head of government. Fr. Cyril de Alameda y Brea, former Minister General of the Franciscans, was born in the diocese of Toledo on 9 July 1781. In 1831 he was proposed by King Ferdinand VII for the Archbishopric of Santiago, Cuba, where he served from 1832 until February of 1849, when Queen Isabella II proposed him for the recently vacated See of Burgos. He would later become Cardinal of Toledo and a great thorn in Claret's side regarding arrangements for the huge monastery-seminary complex of El Escorial. The Saint's spiritual director was Very Rev. Fr. Peter Bach, of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri in Vic.

**Text**

His Excellency:

Words cannot explain, Your Excellency, my surprise at the Royal Order of August 4th, wherein Your Excellency notified me that Her Majesty the Queen (whom God preserve), by royal decree of the same month, had seen fit to nominate this unworthy priest for the Church and Archbishopric of Santiago in Cuba, which lay vacant because of the transfer of Don Cyril de Alameda to that of Burgos.

I determined not to accept this nomination without receiving an order to do so. Meanwhile I commended the matter to God, in order to discern how I might comply with His most holy will, which I wished utterly to do. Thus it was, after many days of prayer, and after considering the reflections of the Very Reverend Nuncio and of my most worthy Prelate, Bishop Lucian Casadevall, that my spiritual director has resolved it to be God's will that I accept this very heavy burden. Hence I humbly submit to and accept it in the way that was proposed to me, in order to do the will of God and that of Her Majesty the Queen, whom I pray the Lord may grant a long and happy life for the prosperity of the Church and of the State.

God preserve Your Excellency for many years.

I kiss Your Excellency's hand,

Anthony Claret, Priest.

Vic, 4 October 1849.

### 73. [103] To Bishop Lucian Casadevall

(EC I, 325-326)

#### Introductory Note

Almost two months had passed since Claret received the nomination to the See of Santiago, Cuba. From the outset, he had promptly and resolutely declined to accept the nomination, even after repeated instances on the part of the Papal Nuncio and Minister of State Arzazola. But after Bishop Casadevall hinted rather strongly that he might be resisting God's will, Claret at last gave in. He nevertheless asked for a few days to think the matter out and consult with some of his closest friends (Fathers Passarell, Sala and Bach). When they, too, assured him that this was God's will for him, he expressed his acceptance in the present letter, letting himself be led by obedience to his bishop. He does so in a paraphrase of the words of Mary to the Angel Gabriel in Lk 1:38.

Claret in fact wrote (Letters 71 and 72 above) to the Nuncio and Minister, and on October 18th the Queen signed a dispatch to her Minister Plenipotentiary in Rome, asking him in her own name to present to the Holy Father Don Antonio Claret, Priest and Apostolic Missionary, for the Archiepiscopal See of Santiago, Cuba, left vacant by the promotion of Don Cirilo de la Alameda y Brea to the Archbishopric of Burgos. It seems that Claret had a hand in the election of his old friend, Canon Soler, as Bishop of Teruel, since Soler later wrote: "M. Claret laid the cross of this bishopric on me, but I laid an archbishopric on his shoulders." Both men were consecrated by Bishop Casadevall at the same ceremony in the Cathedral of Vic on October 6, 1850.

#### Text

Vic, 4 October 1849

To His Excellency, Don Lucian Casadevall, Bishop of Vic

As Your Excellency knows full well, I have always allowed myself to be led by the hand of holy obedience. Hence, in view of your very welcome letter of October 1st and of those enclosed from the Nuncio and Minister of State, I can do no less than say *ecce servus Domini, fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum* ["Behold the servant of the Lord; be it done unto me according to thy word"]. Therefore I humbly tell you that I accept the Archbishopric of Cuba, and am writing to the gen-

tlemen in question by the present post. I am mentioning nothing to them about the exact expenses involved in this, since it seems to me that you told me that the Minister of State was aware of this matter. I have already told Canon Soler, and we will continue to treat of our affairs. I will be most grateful to Your Excellency for any instructions you may find fit to give me.

May Your Excellency keep well, and ask what you will of your attentive and constant servant,

Anthony Claret, Priest

#### **74. [104] To Bishop Lucian Casadevall**

(EC I, 327-328)

#### **Introductory Note**

The die is now cast, and Claret begins facing up to the concerns of the immediate future. He has been in Madrid before (at the time of Bp. Codina's consecration), and knowing that there is a great deal of protocol to be attended to, as well as the fact that he, being a stranger to the pomp and circumstance of the Court and Capital (and not at all looking forward to the prospect of it all), needs some contacts to weather it through. In this polite and truly helpful letter, he asks Bp. Casadevall to intervene for him in this matter, as the good bishop in fact did.

On October 11th, Casadevall wrote to Claret: "On this very date I am writing to my Cousin, Fr. Antonio Tolosana, who resides in Madrid, charging him to look after the affairs both of yourself and of our friend and brother, the Bishop-Elect of Teruel [Canon Soler], and I have no doubt that he will please both you and me." In Letter 73, Claret had given Bp. Casadevall some hint of his concern over the expenses involved in the business surrounding his episcopal ordination. He offers a helpful suggestion, based on his own experience. He remembers that a year earlier, Bishop-Elect Joaquín Cortina, though he had been long approved for consecration as Bishop of Sigüenza, waited for a double service in which he and Bishop-Elect Codina of the Canary Islands could be consecrated together in the Cathedral of Madrid, thus saving considerably on expenses. And thus it was that Claret and Soler were jointly presented in the Capital and jointly consecrated in Vic.



**Text**

To His Excellency, Don Lucian Casadevall, Bishop of Vic  
Vic, 6 October 1849

Most Venerable and Esteemed Sir:

In my last letter, I wrote to Your Excellency that, in order to obey God, Your Excellency and the Gentlemen in Madrid, I was yielding myself to accept that dignity. At the same time I wrote to tell them that I was accepting it and that without delay someone should be assigned to handle the necessary diligences, just as the Very Reverend Lord Nuncio had told me. I was thinking about how this might be done and it occurred to me that, as Divine Providence and those Gentlemen in Madrid had availed themselves of Your Excellency to have me accept this charge, perhaps God would have you bring to perfection what He has begun [cf. *Php* 1:6]. For, as I understand, you have some relative or acquaintance there in Madrid, who could practice the necessary diligences in order to consummate the work that has begun. I surely do not wish to abuse Your Excellency's kindness, but you can see my quandary, since I don't know whom to avail myself of, and you would be doing me a great charity. Meanwhile, I will write to Sallent to have them send me my Baptismal Certificate, witnessed by three notaries which, as I have been told, is a necessary requirement.

During these days, too, I have been thinking that if things could be so arranged as to have the consecration of both of us take place on the same day and in the same place, many expenses could be spared. This is what happened with Bishop Cortina of Sigüenza and Bp. Codina of the Canary Islands. Though the Bulls for the former had been dispatched for some time, he nevertheless waited for the latter. Be that as it may, I bow to the arrangements of Your Excellency, whose attentive and constant servant I am.

Anthony Claret, Priest.

To His Excellency, Don Lucian Casadevall, Bishop of Vic.

**75. [105] To the Cathedral Chapter of Santiago, Cuba**

(EC I, 329-330)

**Introductory Note**

This is Claret's notice officially informing the Cathedral Chapter of his nomination as Archbishop of Santiago, Cuba. He tells them of his former unwillingness to accept this assignment until it had been shown to be God's will. He trusts in our Lord and in our Lady, and

is relying on the generous and effective cooperation of the Cathedral Chapter, at whose disposal he places himself at this time.

As a note added to the upper left-hand corner of the first page states, this letter was "Received and acknowledged on 22 December 1849. [Signed] Portuondo." Since the letter was posted in October, we can see how slowly the mails moved between Spain and its overseas territories and, as we shall see, how they were slowed even more by bureaucratic intrigues of shifting Liberal-Conservative governments in Spain and among their representatives in Cuba. On the extraordinary manifestations of rejoicing shown in Cuba upon the receipt of this notice from the Archbishop-Elect of Santiago, see the *Annales CMF*, XXIV [1928] 759-760.

### **Text**

Illustrious Sirs:

God our Lord, in whose hand are the hearts of Kings [cf. Prv 21:1], by another of the inscrutable secrets of His adorable Providence has, by inclining the heart of our beloved Sovereign toward my insignificant person, chosen through her to call me to the Archbishopric of that Holy Church, appointing me to it by Royal Decree of August 4th.

Dismayed at the thought of such a high dignity, I dared not accept it until the 4th of this month, when my spiritual director and other men of virtue and learning voiced the opinion that it was God's will, which I wish to fulfill perfectly, even at the cost of my life.

Hence, trusting in heaven's help and the intercession of Mary Most Holy, my esteemed Mother, who has always upheld me, and relying on the noble and effective cooperation of your most worthy Chapter, which I have always held in highest respect, I will endeavor to shake off my timidity in order to undertake this new and arduous task, resolved to sacrifice myself on the altar of God's will and on behalf of that flock which I am already longing to know.

In view of all this, I am most pleased to inform the Illustrious Chapter of this news, trusting that you will be so kind as to commend me earnestly to God that I may succeed in this task, and at the same time placing myself at your orders, which I hope you will communicate to me so that I may fulfill them shortly.

God keep your Worships well these many years.

I kiss the Illustrious Chapter's hands,

Anthony Claret y Clará, Priest.

Vic, 6 October 1849

To the Illustrious Chapter of the Holy Cathedral Church of Santiago, Cuba.

## 76. [109] To the Apostolic Nuncio

(EC I, 335-336; EC III, 51-53)

### Introductory Note

The Papal Nuncio, Archbishop Giovanni Brunelli (1797-1861), was nominated Apostolic Delegate to Spain in April 1845, but waited for some time before traveling to Spain. He left Rome on 26 April 1847 and entered Madrid almost a month later, on 24 May 1847. On 22 July 1848 he was named Apostolic Nuncio: Archbishop of Thessalonica, Domestic Prelate of His Holiness, Assistant to the Papal Throne and Apostolic Nuncio in the Realms of Spain. He was created Cardinal on 19 December 1853 with the title of Santa Cecilia in Trastevere.

The main thrust of the letter is to inform Abp. Brunelli about the *two most important works* that Claret had in hand when he was proposed for the Archbishopric of Cuba, namely, the Congregation of Missionaries, which he had just founded, and the Religious Library. He fears that both may suffer during his absence in Cuba. As regards the first, it will be in the hands of Mossèn Stephen Sala, a Co-founder of the Congregation. As regards the second, he asks the Nuncio to authorize Dr. Caixal --a Canon of Tarragona-- to reside in Barcelona, where the publishing house of the Religious Library is located. Both Sala and Caixal played an important role in the Saint's life and enterprises, so that it would not be out of place to offer a few relevant details about both of them here.

Stephen Sala Masnou (1810-1858) had an excellent ecclesiastical formation, including two years of rhetoric in Moyá, three years of philosophy in the Seminary of Vic, six years of theology in the then-famous University of Cervera, where he received his baccalaureate degree in 1834. He studied canon law for a year and was ordained to the priesthood on 23 September 1839. He then went on to serve as Master of Primary Education and of Latin in Vallfogona, where he made the Spiritual Exercises with Mossèn Claret. In 1842 he became a Beneficiary in Vic, and in mid-November 1844 began his career as a preacher and popular missionary under Fr. Claret, and was so impressed by the latter that he offered his services to him when he began gathering his first companions for the founding of the Congre-

gation. The founding took place on 16 July 1849, when Claret, with Sala and four other companions, gathered in the Seminary of Vic for the opening retreat. They soon inaugurated their headquarters in the Mission House of Vic, and Sala (whom the people called “the heir of Claret”) became the Director of the group in December of 1850, when Claret left to take possession of his Archiepiscopal See in Cuba. On 8 February 1852, the Holy See named him “Apostolic Missionary,” under the title of Director of the Mission House. A year earlier, Bishop Casadevall had appointed him Director General of the Carmelite Sisters of Charity, a post in which he served until 1854, when he was relieved in that post by his brother, Bernardo. He died four years later, on 18 April 1858 in Barcelona and was buried in Vic on the 20th. He was succeeded in office by Fr. Joseph Xifré, who remained in that post until almost the end of the century.

Don Josep Caixal i Estradé was born in Vilosell (Tarragona) on 9 July 1803 and died in a cell of the Monastery of Saint Adrian in Rome (where Claret had been a house guest during the First Vatican Council) on 26 August 1879. He studied Humanities at the Piarist College in Igualada, Philosophy at the Seminary of Tarragona and Theology in the University of Cervera, where he became chairman of the faculty and had among his pupils Jaume Balmes the famous philosopher, theologian, polemicist and political writer. In 1833 he was named Canon of Tarragona and was consecrated Bishop of Urgell on 5 June 1853. From the moment he and Claret met (February 1846 during the Mission Claret preached in Tarragona), “those two souls, which beat in unison of love for God and souls, were always united and interconnected” (Joan M. Prats, “El Beat P. Claret i el Dr. Caixal” in *La Paraula Cristiana* 11 [1935] 198-199). A close friend and sedulous collaborator of the Saint, he was always treated by the latter as a member of the Congregation of Missionaries. Caixal himself later told the Claretians of Algiers: “I believe I have a right to your prayers, because I belong to the Congregation in spirit. I had the misfortune of not being allowed to enter the ranks of the companions of your Founder, my dear and best friend and companion in works of zeal, Archbishop Claret... I was one of those who were due to form part of it, but they [i.e., the Archbishop of Tarragona] would not let me” (cf. F. Cruz Ugalde, *Vida anecdótica del B. P. Antonio María Claret*, Buenos Aires 1940, p. 78).

## Text

Excellent and Illustrious Sir:

Your Excellency knows full well that when he proposed my insignificant person to the Government for the Archbishopric of Cuba, I was entirely taken up with two matters that merited my whole attention, since I regarded them to be for the greater glory of God and the good of souls, as indeed they are. One of them was training Missionaries and the other was the Religious Library, which every month puts out a volume from among the best works known in Spain and abroad.

God had availed Himself of my worthless self to bring these twin works to birth, and I was gladly sweating and working to nurse them; but with my promotion he is tearing them from my breast, and they must surely perish unless I find them some good and zealous nursemaids. As for the Missionaries, their care will be entrusted to the most advantaged of them, namely Don Stephen Sala. Now I need one to care for the Religious Library, and the best and perhaps the only one of my friends suited for this is the Illustrious Don Joseph Caixal, Canon of Tarragona. But he must be granted permission to reside in Barcelona, where the publisher is located, during his tenure in the Library. For during my absence, his residence in Barcelona is necessary as the head is to the body or as the bellows are to an organ.

I believe that Your Excellency is well informed of the plan and aim of the aforesaid Religious Library, yet I will state it briefly. It consists: 1. of printing the best books known of, and at the cheapest price possible, so as to provide good reading for all. 2. to give them free of charge to those who are too poor to buy them or to offer them as gifts to those who have the means but not the will to buy them. 3. to give all who turn in bad or forbidden books, good books in exchange, and to burn the bad books.

Through the mercy of God, the fruits we are reaping are incalculable, not only on the Peninsula but also beyond it. There are some seven thousand subscribers, without reckoning the very many copies that are sold, exchanged or given as gifts. And it would indeed be a pity if due to my absence so beneficial and necessary a work should fall by the wayside in these times; and I fear that it will indeed fall if the good Canon does not go to reside in Barcelona.

Hence I trust that in your heartfelt zeal, Your Excellency will see fit to grant me this favor, which I almost dare call a matter of justice; for since you have taken me away from this place, you ought to fill

this void. I am confident that you will do so, for which I will be most grateful and beg the Lord to keep Your Excellency these many years.

Vic, 11 November 1849.

Your most attentive and constant servant, who kisses Your Excellency's hand,

Anthony Claret, Priest

To His Lordship the Apostolic Nuncio

### 77. [113] To Don Juan Oliveres

(EC I, 342-343)

#### Introductory Note

Don Juan Oliveres Gavarró, a printer and editor in Barcelona, was a native of Cervera. As a printer he always shown great technical ability and was distinguished for the beauty of his editions. The printery he managed in Barcelona was one of the most important of the time. He worked with the materials he had acquired from the effects of the former printery of Bergnes de las Casas. He was honored for his work by Pope Pius IX.

In this letter, Claret thanks Oliveres for the instalments of the "Lives of the Saints" and encourages him to continue in the holy enterprise of publishing the illustrated writings on the great deeds of the Saints.

On the interest which Fr. Claret always had in publishing the lives of the Saints, see his letter of 3 July 1847 to Caixal. On the influence of the Lives of the Saints on Claret's spiritual and apostolic life, see his Autobiography, nn. 87, 214-226, 234-263, 616, 642, 650.

#### Text

Don Juan Oliveres

Dear and Most Esteemed Sir:

I have received the instalments of the *Lives of the Saints* which you have been so kind as to send me, and I can do no less than offer you my warmest thanks and encourage you to carry on in the holy and noble work of publishing the deeds of the Saints with illustrations and writings. For they, by their example, invite and spur us on to imitate their virtues. This idea is worthy of all commendation because it so redounds to the glory of God and the moral uplift of

people. At the same time it acts to counteract and stem to the tide of indecent prints, booklets and scandalous books that is, alas, flooding the land. For the greed of many for quick gain does not deter them in the least from speculating and trafficking in what is most toxic and poisonous to the public good.

I am your most attentive and constant servant.

Barcelona, 21 December 1849.

Anthony Claret, Priest (Archbishop-Elect of Cuba)

## 78. [115] **To the Bishop of Vic**

(EC I, 347-348)

### **Introductory Note**

As busy as Claret was with arrangements for the future of his Congregation and of the Religious Library, we can see from this first letter he wrote in the new year of 1850, that he was engaged in all sorts of apostolic assignments in the neighboring Diocese of Tarragona, about which he informs his own bishop. He is also thinking ahead to his episcopal consecration, and has drawn his shield, which he explains to Bishop Casadevall in some detail, although he fails to include his motto: “*Caritas Christi urget nos*” (2 Cor 5:14). Note that he has added the name of Mary to his baptismal names. He is in fact so overwhelmed with work, as Fr. C. Fernández points out in his Documented History (I, p. 570), that he wants to return to Vic shortly to rest.

### **Text**

His Excellency, the Bishop of Vic

Barcelona, 23 January 1850

Venerable and Esteemed Sir:

Today I just arrived from Tarragona where I saw and talked with our venerable Prelate the Archbishop. I cannot tell you how pleased he was with my visit, and despite the fact that I had been there all those days, he still felt bad to see me leave so soon.

During these days I have been busy with different matters. On Sunday I preached to a huge crowd of the people, and at a certain point in the sermon, the congregation burst into a most heartfelt fit of weeping, fearing that they would not be hearing me preach to them again. Yesterday in the Bishop’s Chapel I baptized a Protestant lady

who converted from Calvinism. Afterwards the Lord Archbishop administered Confirmation and then I began Holy Mass and distributed Holy Communion to the lady, her fiancé and her godmother. Finally, the Very Reverend Provisor married the couple.

Herein I am sending you a sample of my seal, and I will give you a brief idea of this sketch of mine. It is divided into two parts. The upper part signifies my spiritual birth, and the lower part, my bodily birth. The bridge signifies the one in my town. The cascade or cascades run through it, and because of the saults or leaps they make, the town is called Sallent. My father, Claret, is from the east side of the river and my mother, Clará, is from the west side. These two names and places are symbolized by the Sun and the Moon.

My spiritual birth is symbolized by the most sweet name of Mary the Mother of God, since she is the Patroness of the Parish of Sallent and of my name. The palm is for St. Stephen, also a patron of the town, while the lily alludes to St. Anthony my Patron Saint and to St. Aloysius Gonzaga, the patron of the Sodality we had in that Seminary, and also because I was ordained a Priest on St. Anthony's day and celebrated my first Mass on St. Aloysius' day. Moreover, these symbols are also hieroglyphs for Mary Most Holy: *Sicut palma*, etc.... *Sicut lilium*, etc.... *Pulchra ut luna, electa ut sol...*

I think we'll be seeing one another in a few days, because I want to rest from the very many who are pressing in on me so much that they hardly let me breathe.

Ask what you will of your most affectionate and attentive servant,  
Anthony Claret, Priest.

To His Excellency the Most Rev. Lucian Casadevall, Bishop of Vic.

## 79. [117] To the Bishop of Vic

(EC I, 351-352)

### Introductory Note

After thanking the Bishop for his letter, the Saint informs him of why he is still in Barcelona. The new printing-press for the Religious Library has just arrived from Paris, and he has to stop by every day to see that it is in good working order. He will arrive in Vic on the evening of February 4th.



**Text**

Barcelona, 27 January 1850

My Very Dear and Esteemed Sir:

I have just received your welcome letter of the 25th inst., and as to what you ask me in it, I was on the point of beginning my return journey there, but was unable to do so because of some affairs that we have in hand. Canon Caixal has come with me from Tarragona and we have been arranging things for the Religious Library. Now that the great printing-press has arrived from Paris, he needs me to visit him every day in order to see to it that it is in perfect running order. My advice on machines has been well worthwhile in past years. With this machine, the Library is going to take a new and higher flight. Thus far, it has been issuing ten thousand copies monthly, but with the new machine the output will be much greater.

Your Excellency shouldn't be surprised at my taking such a great interest in the Religious Library, and that for two reasons: first, because of the good results that it is producing, thank God; second, because this is the will of the Supreme Pontiff.

Besides the Library, I also have to arrange a few other matters. I plan to return home in the evening of February 4th.

Regarding what you tell me of your cousin in Madrid, I have had no other letter than the one he wrote me notifying me of the dispatch for Rome dated the 25th last, which I answered. I have as yet received no letter mentioning faculties. Perhaps it went astray.

Until we meet again, ask what you will of your most attentive servant,

Anthony Claret, Priest

To His Excellency, the Most Rev. Lucian Casadevall, Bishop of Vic.

**80. [118] To Canon Joseph Caixal**

(EC I, 353-354)

**Introductory Note**

It seems impossible to omit this letter from our selection, because it contains Claret's first epistolary reference to a remarkable woman, Antonia París (1813-1885), who was soon going to play an important role both in his own life and in that of the Church -- indeed, a far more important role than the Saint seems to have dreamed

of at the time. The following summary of Antonia's life until the time of the present letter is taken from John Lozano's study on the religious experience of the Servant of God, Mother Antonia Paris: *Con mi Iglesia te desposaré* [I shall espouse you with my Church], Madrid 1974, pp. 11-12.

On 28 June 1813, in the little town of Vallmoll, near Tarragona, a daughter was born to Teresa Riera, widow of Francisco Paris, who had died in April of that year. Teresa had arrived in Vallmoll the day before, fleeing from the army of Napoleon. The newborn daughter had a sister, Teresa, who was three years old at the time. On June 29th, the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, the one-day-old baby was christened Antonia Josefa Francisca. Shortly afterwards Teresa Riera returned with her two daughters to the family home in Tarragona. In 1826 or 1827, during a mission preached by the Capuchins of Escornalbou, Antonia was touched by grace and decided to consecrate herself entirely to God. In 1828, weakened by fasts and vigils, Antonia fell ill. Indeed, some of these illnesses were so unusual that they brought her close to death. Canon Caixal, who became her spiritual director, suspected that these illnesses were diabolical in origin, so he exorcized her, whereupon they disappeared. From then on, the bond of trust between the two grew closer over the years. But alas, the fiery Canon's political involvements eventually led to his having to go into exile in France.

On 23 October 1841, at 28 years of age, Antonia entered the Company of Mary in Tarragona. Since the anti-religious laws of the time forbade the taking of the religious habit and profession, she remained a Postulant for nine years, in charge of lace making and the infirmary. In 1842, when she was 29, she offered her life for the needs of the Church, which was being severely persecuted in Spain at that time. Christ Crucified answered her with an intellectual vision in which she understood the demands of the Gospel and saw the sad condition of the Church and the religious life in her day. She was given to understand the need for the reform of the Church and of the religious life, through a return to the demands of the Gospel, especially as regards poverty. She also saw that God wanted her to found a new apostolic Institute, which would in some way include a masculine and feminine branch.

In 1844 or 1845 she had her first vision of Mossèn Antoni Claret (whom she had heard of, but had not yet met). The Saint, who was at the height of his missionary preaching throughout Catalonia at the

time, was the "Apostolic Man" who was being enriched with graces and called to respond to the ills of the Church. During these years, Antonia had visions of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and of the Virgin and Child, as well as some visions and prophetic insights on the Mission of Saint Anthony Mary Claret in the Church.

In 1846, when Canon Caixal returned to Tarragona from exile in Perpignan, he again became the postulant Antonia's confessor. During these years she had visions of the Heart of Mary with the Child Jesus, as well as new visions and prophetic lights concerning the mission of Saint Anthony Mary Claret in the Church. In 1848, at Caixal's orders, she wrote the Rules of the future Institute. Caixal wanted it to have a men's branch, as well as a women's branch. Sister Antonia informed Caixal that it was God's will that Claret should gather a community of his own for preaching. Probably as a result of this indication, Caixal set the matter before Claret, who was then in the Canary Islands, and offered to become a collaborator in it, in a letter he finished on October 17th. On December 11th, the Saint replied that he had had the same idea for some time, and that he had even been offered a house for that purpose.

Between 8-23 January 1850, Claret had his first interview with Sister Antonia. Suspicious of new foundations of religious women, his first impressions of Antonia and of her purported call to found an Institute were by no means favorable. Now, a few days or weeks later, she and her director, Caixal, wrote to the Saint, but he was understandably too busy to commit himself to the task just then. Besides, as the Saint remarks in this letter, he had some unpleasant personal knowledge of the twists and turns such matters could take. On 20 April 1850, Queen Isabella II, during a visit to the school of the Company of Mary in Tarragona, gave permission for the Postulants to take the habit. On 21 April Sister Antonia took the habit, but was greatly troubled as to whether she should profess or leave the Institute to prepare for the future foundation. She wrote to Saint Anthony Mary Claret, but he was preparing to leave for Cuba. The unknown "French woman" is referred to in the next letter.

In contrast, the Saint is most enthusiastic about the publication of a little work, "Daughters of the Most Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary," later known by its subtitle, "Nuns in their Own Homes," which would become the inspiration, almost a hundred years later, for the Secular Institute of Cordimarian Filiation.

**Text**  
**Pax Christi**

To the Rev. Canon Caixal  
Vic, 9 February [1850]

My Very Dear Brother:

I've just received your letter and see what you are saying, but I'm surprised at your referring the question of that or rather of those Novices from Tarragona, since I need more time to commend the matter to God and to obtain the grace of handling it accurately. I was thinking of combining the cause of the French woman with that of the one from Tarragona, but I doubt that they can be made compatible, for I know that one has the spirit of Martha and the other that of Mary. It seems that each of them must have her own aim. I wouldn't want to be mistaken in this at the outset or to compromise my name and honor. We must remember that we're dealing with women, who often act with haste and without reflection and can be tricky, since they want to have their own way, and sometimes correspond very poorly. There are two cases going on right now in this city. One is the case of a girl who was very good in the world and is very bad in religious life. Seeing how good she was, I provided her with the means (which she did not have) to enter the religious life. The whole thing went well and she entered. In a short time she grew tepid, began to be finicky and fatuous and, as if that were not enough, she contracted a friendship with...which is scandalizing the whole Community. She scorns all advice and correction and has become, in a word, a bad religious. Another case is going on that is even worse. These and other cases I know of have made me quite reticent whenever I have to deal with such business.

To sum it up, I tell you that I can't see myself resolving this matter soon. I need more time to commend it to God.

All this is quite different, thank God, from the plan for the Daughters of the Heart of Mary, whose little book, as you tell me, will be coming out. Here there will be no compromise or danger, but rather much good. Meanwhile, do what you deem prudent.

Regards to all our friends and you can rely on you brother, who kisses your hand,

Anthony Claret, Priest  
Don José Caixal, Canon of Tarragona

**81. [120] To Canon Joseph Caixal**

(EC I, 357-358)

**Introductory Note**

A week later, we find Claret informing Caixal of the many great problems that were burdening him during these days. He kept up his intense ministerial schedule during the period preceding his episcopal consecration (not to mention the preparations the latter involved). Aside from this work and the physical illnesses (including several abscesses, one of which required surgical removal) with which God had tested him in the last few months, he has also had to deal with some "very grave matters," namely, arrangements for the Religious Library and for his newly-founded Congregation of Missionaries. The considerable difficulties that the coming separation from Claret would entail were finally beginning to dawn on the personnel of both these enterprises.

As if this were not enough, the Saint was now being asked to help Sister Antonia París, who was striving to found a new teaching Institute with Caixal's help, but has now turned mainly to Claret, whom the Lord had pointed out to her in a vision as the "apostolic man" who would help her. The Saint was still not clear on the matter, but when he finally came to understand it, he would call Mother Antonia and her companions to Cuba, but for the moment he was cool to the idea of any new foundation for women. The identity of the "French woman from Perpignan" (where, by the way, Caixal had lived in exile for a time) is still unknown.

Two other matters claimed Claret's immediate attention. First, he wanted to work out further details for the Daughters of the Heart of Mary -- not to be confused with the Congregation of that name founded in Olot by Dr. Joachim Masmitjà, but rather, the group referred to in the Saint's short work, "Nuns in their own Homes." Second, he had to repair the former Mercedarian convent of La Mercé in Vic, which had been allotted to Claret's new Congregation of Missionaries, who had moved into it from the Seminary on October 8, 1849. During its secular occupation the old house had fallen into a sad state of disrepair and was almost bereft of furnishings. Now it had to be renovated, not only to serve as a Retreat House, but also to provide an austere residence for the Missionaries.

The Saint mentions that the Missionary Priests are growing. Three who had entered shortly after the Founding deserve special

mention. The first was Fr. Stephen Sala's brother, Bernardo, a Benedictine monk who had left Spain in 1835 when the suppression of religious orders was decreed. He then went to Italy, but had to return to Spain in 1848, when Liberal Revolutions were breaking out everywhere. He joined the new Congregation on July 30, 1849, just a half-month after it was founded. A well-educated man who spoke many languages, he played an important role mainly inside the Congregation, both as a teacher (of languages, Liturgy and Moral Theology) and as a wise administrator (standing in for his brother Stephen during the latter's absences and illnesses). Because he had professed solemn vows in the Benedictines, he later returned to Montserrat, after giving many of the best years of his life to the Claretians.

Another young priest, just one year ordained, was Fr. Antonio Barjau, who accompanied Abp. Claret to Cuba, where he served as missionary and as Rector of the Seminary of Santiago and later as Rector of the College of El Escorial. His appointment as Canon in Cuba prevented him from dying in the Congregation. Finally, another exclaustated monk, the Trappist Ignasi Carbó, joined the new Congregation and served in it as a mission-preacher of great distinction. In December of 1851 he died of pneumonia while preaching a mission. Although Claret does not mention it, the first Coadjutor Brother, Miguel Puig Cadena, entered the Congregation on 15 September 1849. Although he did not persevere, other Coadjutor Brothers began entering from 1851 on. For further details on the Claretian Brothers, see Jesús Alvarez, "Return to Origins," pp. 393-405.

### Text

Vic, February 16 [1850]

My Esteemed Brother:

I have just received your welcome letter, together with the one from Sister Paris. I don't know what to answer for the moment. I find myself -- God knows how! *Tribulationes sunt mihi undique* [Dan 13:22: "Anguish surrounds me on all sides"]. Yesterday I felt tempted just to die, because *melior est mors quam vita amara* [Sir 13:22: "Better is death than a bitter life"]. I need to put down all the anchors of prayer in order to avoid shipwreck in the storm that is buffeting me. I have many great things to do, yet I'm not allowed to work at them as I ought. Very grave matters are weighing me down. I don't know how to escape them, yet I'm told that if I don't do them nobody will -- precisely because they're so important for the glory of God and the salvation of Souls.

Then, on top of all my wounds comes this Sister Paris. What shall I ever do? One plan has to be formed for her; another for the French woman from Perpignan; another for the Retreat House; yet another for the Daughters of the Heart of Mary -- not to mention one for the Missionary Priests who are, thank God, growing. Add to this what I mentioned above, and God help me! What I shall do is to commend the whole matter to God, so that He may inspire you with what to do concerning this Sister, so that you may do what you deem prudent.

Feel free to rely on your brother and sure servant,  
 Anthony Claret, Priest  
 To the Honorable Joseph Caixal, Canon of Tarragona

### 82. [121] To Fr. Stephen Sala, C.M.F.

(In Catalan and Castilian: EC I, 359-363)

#### Introductory Note

This letter is included in this selection for three reasons: 1) because it is the first of the Saint's very few extant letters to Fr. Stephen Sala, who became his successor as Director General of the Congregation this year; 2) because of the light it throws on the next letter; 3) because it reminds us of the great value that Claret attached to catechesis and the catechism. Not only did he delight in studying and even memorizing the whole catechism when he was a boy (Aut 23), but he taught and explained it regularly (Aut 106, 109, 275-284, 287-288, 570, 614, 735), wrote and even illustrated several Catechisms (Aut 56, 476, 799), established and fostered the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (Aut 560), and during the last years of his life advocated the adoption of a uniform catechism for all Spanish dioceses.

In this letter he offers a response to five difficulties or quibbles posed by some "learned men" who examined his "little catechism," i.e., *Compendium or brief explanation of Christian Doctrine in the form of a Dialogue between Father and Son*, composed by Dr. Francis Matheu i Smandia, enlarged, methodized and perfected by *Don Anton Claret, Priest and Missionary Apostolic* (Barcelona, Sons of the Widow Pla, 1849). It was written in Catalan and later translated into Castilian.

The second part of the letter is written in Castilian, and is filled with news of various persons, some of whom deserve special mention. The first is Fr. John Nepomucene Lobo. Born in Madrid in 1816, he completed a brilliant course of ecclesiastical studies, receiving his

Doctorate in Jurisprudence when he was 27. Ordained at the age of 30 by Cardinal Bonel y Orbe of Toledo, he met Claret for the first time when the latter was accompanying Bishop Codina to the Canary Islands. In 1849 he offered to accompany Claret to Cuba and Claret gladly and very wisely accepted his offer since, as we shall see, Fr. Lobo will play a large role in the Saint's life and correspondence. When Claret left Cuba, Fr. Lobo became an important figure in the revival of the Jesuits in Spain.

Claret also mentions "five or six companions" who will also accompany him. These included five priests, Frs. Anthony Barjau, Lorenzo Sanmartí, Philip Rovira, Manuel Subirana and, last by no means least, Fr. Paladio Currius; and two laymen, Philip Vila and Ignatius Bertriu. All would become members of his household and missionary team in Cuba. Fr. Currius would play a special role in Claret's life, both as a private secretary and, more importantly, as spiritual director, in which capacity he would later be involved (not always with the greatest prudence) in the matter of Church Reform as it appeared in the religious experience and writings of both Claret and Mother Antonia Paris.

### **Text**

To the Rev. Mossèn Stephen Sala, Priest.  
Vic, 27 February 1850

Dearly Esteemed Brother:

I have received Canon Caixal's letter and as he tells me he's leaving for Barcelona Saturday, my letter can't possibly reach him here, so he charged me to answer you about some scruples that have arisen concerning the little catechism. But before giving you my response, I'd like to point out that I have taken the censured items from other approved catechisms. Likewise, that I have changed some of these items myself, though others have counseled or told me that they shouldn't be dealt with in this way. Well, you know how it is when you're dealing with learned men: one sees things one way, another in another way, and without changing the essence of the matter, they change it considerably in accidentals. I have no intention of going against what they deem prudent, but as the Rev. Canon tells me that I ought to respond to their observations, I will obey:

1. On page 56, line 9. I don't know how they understand this question so as to find any difficulty with it. For the question presup-



poses that the person involved has neither stolen nor actually cooperated in the act of stealing, but has advised another to do so. He wants to know whether he has sinned. For country folk think that if they don't steal something with their own hands, it's not a sin. But this is not so; for counseling someone to steal is itself enough to constitute a sin. That's the spirit of the question.

2. On page 86, line 19. As regards the word "concomitancy," I had put it down and they made me change it and leave it as it formerly was in the old Catechism of the Company, because they said that country folk don't understand scholastic terms, although it's hardly an error of substance. I find myself like [the China painter] Apollos, who ended up making two paintings [of Aphrodite], because what some critics took to be a defect, others took to be a perfection, and vice versa.

3. On page 38, line 20. The matter of a forgotten sin, etc., has been put this way because some simple folk believe that if they have forgotten some sin in confession they have to go back and confess it to the very same confessor who heard their confession. And since they are sometimes unable to do this it causes them great pangs of conscience. Nor can I see why they find any difficulty in an answer that is so clear and necessary, as anyone would know who has had to hear confessions in country places. For it sometimes happens that when he tells a simple rustic to say three parts of the rosary as a penance, the poor fellow will tell him that he can't do it, because he's only got one pair of rosary beads, and can't recite three, as asked of him.

4. On page 100, line 22. How can one determine this without explaining it? By the way, this question and answer are taken from the Catechism that people have been using up to now in this diocese.

5. On page 116, line 23. Regarding the word *hurled*, if they like, it can be changed to *cast down*. But I'd like them to weigh well the force of Jesus' expression when He says, *Discedite a me maledicti in ignem æternum* [Mt 25:41, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire"], and that other saying of Jesus himself: "I saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning" [Lk 10:18].

These are the responses I am giving because I was asked to do so. In any case, let them do what seems best to them, and I'll go along with it.

[The rest is in Castilian]

Be so kind as to tell His Excellency the Archbishop that in this Diocese of Vic, the Catechism we are speaking of is gladly and quickly learned. A few says ago, when I was in the Parish of St. Eulalia, I was astonished at the way that it is grasped by many boys and girls who don't know how to read, but have picked it up through the viva voce method taught by the Rev. Puigneró who is Vicar there. I can say the same of the Parish of St. Eugenia, etc. Two Catechists from our conferences have been sent to Sallent. I know they've been well received. They've been given the use of the dance hall, and factory owners have been ordered to send their boys there at a certain time of day. In the Diocese of Barcelona and in other Dioceses in the interior of Spain they are also making progress. We will have gone a good way toward easing our future work if we manage to instruct our youth well in the Catechism.

Also tell His Excellency that today I received a letter from Dr. John Lobo, who tells me that he arrived in Madrid last week, that he saw the Nuncio, that he told him of him my request to allow Canon Caixal to reside in Barcelona for a time and meanwhile handed the scrivener my petition to the Holy Father requesting the same thing. He tells me that the Nuncio told him he would go along with the request and that he would ask a report on the matter from the Archbishop of Tarragona.

I hope that the latter will give a favorable report for two reasons: one because if Canon Caixal goes to Barcelona for a time, it will redound to the good of the Church in general, through the work of the Religious Library, and to the particular good of the Archdiocese of Tarragona, because when the Bishop is in Barcelona, two or three of our members from Vic will be going there to form a House for Missions and Retreats, and Caixal will be in their house. Afterwards, Caixal, together with some other companions, will go on to that Archdiocese in order to form another House with the same aim; for my plan is to set up a House like this in each diocese. Be so good as to convey this notion of mine to the Archbishop. for I am sure he will like it. Tell him that the men needed --and good ones-- will not be lacking.

I should inform you that after Lent five or six companions who want to come with me to Cuba will be gathering in the House of La Mercè for our conferences, so that as soon as we get there they will already be able to go to work. A charitable person has given me five

gold ounces which have stood me in good stead in buying beds and other items needed to furnish the rooms.

My regards to the Lord Archbishop and other Friends both in his residence and outside it. And you yourself should push for the teaching of the Catechism, explaining to them the method used. You can rely on your brother and unworthy Chaplain, who kisses your hand,  
Anthony Claret, Priest.

### **83. [122] To Canon Joseph Caixal**

(EC I, 364-367)

#### **Introductory Note**

This letter is hard to classify. If it were not so intensely personal here and there, one would tend to call it a business letter. It is also hard to read and even harder to translate, for two main reasons: 1) it is a point by point response to Caixal's letter of 24 February -- a letter we don't have before us; 2) it is written in such haste that it fairly bristles with elliptical sentences, abbreviations and misspellings, even in the postscript, which is another indication of how hurried and indeed harried Claret was at the time.

Claret offers his reactions 1) to Caixal's scruples regarding some doctrinal expressions in a catechism Claret is working on and 2) to the high but worthwhile cost of some silver crosses he wants to have made. He talks about the latest state of the petition being sent to Rome for Caixal's residence in Barcelona, which Claret has good reasons to insist on. He urges Caixal to hurry with the printing of "Nuns in their own Homes." He mentions some requests from Bishop Costa y Borrás of Lérida for a possible foundation there. He expresses his discontent with cheap and sloppy bindings that have marred some of the Religious Library's offerings. In the postscript he gives some directions for his illustrated catechism and sends an enclosure for Fr. Stephen Sala. Indeed, if we compare this with the preceding letter, we can see how Claret saves as much time as he can in epistolary relations by answering letters point by point, and by sparing himself an extra letter (and postage) by enclosing letters within letters.

**Text**

To Don José Caixal  
Vic 28 February [1850]  
My Esteemed Brother:

I have received your letter of the 24th, and seeing that you would not find it in Tarragona, as you informed me, I have written the responses to those doctrinal scruples to Mossèn Stephen Sala. You have certainly set my brains at the boil, for I had put the things you hint at in another form, and they ordered me to put them in the way they appeared in the old catechisms from which I took them. I had also used the word *concomitancy*, and they made me change it because it was a scholastic term not adapted to the capacity of ordinary people. Poor Mossèn Claret! He's like Apollos and his paintings! What one tells him to put in it, another tells him to take out, thus disfiguring the whole work.

The crosses are indeed expensive, but I don't wonder, since they are being made of silver. In this case they would have been made -- and well made-- by the silversmiths of Barcelona. And perhaps they ought to be of silver, like those of the Royal Salesian Nuns. Silver is a symbol of purity, and we must indeed keep true and great purity both of body and intention. Perhaps this mistake has been according to the disposition of God; for even though it may seem a little opposed to poverty, it seems that here the twofold purity prevails over simple poverty..., as we see in the Divine Master Himself who, though He was always so poor, nevertheless desires ... for the institution of the Blessed Sacrament... Think well on this.

I have had a letter from Dr. Lobo, who tells me he has sent the scrivener my petition for your residing in Barcelona, and he tells me it will be dispatched without delay. Nevertheless, he also requested the same permission from the Nuncio, who said he would grant it but would ask the Abp. of Tarragona for his report. I have written to the Abp., reminding him of the promise he made me of giving a favorable report.

You can't imagine how upset I was to learn that as late as the 26th, the printing of the book of the month was still not finished because of some problems with the printing press. God help me! I mean, as soon as you and I leave Barcelona, nothing goes well, everything

stops, there are always excuses. For God's sake don't budge from Barcelona or the whole thing will go under. You can already see how hard I've worked to get the permission needed.

In return for all that I've done for you, I hope you'll not delay in having the "Daughters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary" printed. Don't omit the little bit I added at the end, which I think I gave to Mossèn Peter or to Bocabella. It contains the formula of consecration. Also hurry with the card, which M. Peter also knows about.

The Bishop of Lérida has written to me that when he is there he will take some of our members to form a Mission and Retreat House. Here, after Lent, the number of members will be growing and there will be enough for all.

Above all, I charge you to take care that the Religious Library keep on time and that the binding turn out well, for last month some bindings were badly smudged with paste. I was visiting in a house here when the consignment came in from Barcelona, and they were complaining that they had been sent a book in an old binding. Of course this wasn't so, but the pages had hardly been mottled and the back had no luster. Thus I won't take anything from Barcelona if I can find it here, because they do them well here. God knows how many I've bought since I returned from Barcelona, because I've received and still have many alms for this purpose. I repeat, as long as I'm here, I will take nothing from there. They have, it's true, sent me a number of copies of *The Straight Path* in Castilian for the soldiers, since there were no copies here. Can't you do something to remedy the problem of the bindings?

Regards to our Friends and ask what you will of

Anthony Claret, Priest.

P.S. In the Illustrated Catechism, on p. 2, where it says, "qui didi[cerint] ista, invenient quid respondeant" [= "They that have learned these things, shall find what to answer" Wis 6:11], the translation is in Catalan and will have to be corrected and put into Castilian.

When you have a chance, send the enclosed to M[ossèn] Stephen [Sala].

To Canon Joseph Caixal  
Barcelona

**84. [123] To Mossèn Pere Naudó**

(In Catalan: EC I, 368-369)

**Introductory Note**

Oddly enough, Fr. Gil cites a copy of this same letter as Letter n. 55 (EC I, p. 202), and in a footnote states that it was wrongly dated by another hand as being from 1849, whereas the *true date* is 1847 [!]. The present handwritten original was more aptly dated by Fr. Postius, as being from 1 March 1850.

Father Peter Naudó was born in the town of Enveig in French Cerdagne in late 1801, studied with the Dominicans in Puigcerdá, entered the Diocesan Seminary of Barcelona and was ordained in 1826. He was a beneficiary at the lovely Gothic Church of Santa Maria del Mar in Barcelona, where he served as Vicar for a long time and as Econome from 1866 until 1868. He was a good friend and influential supporter of Claret for many years. In 1844, the Saint had preached a series of 36 long sermons for the “Month of May” devotions in this church, which greatly contributed to his fame as a preacher. He was, so to speak, the Saint’s literary agent in the “City of the Counts” (= Barcelona). He founded many pious and charitable works and was a wise spiritual director. Bishop Rosendo Salvado put him in charge of the Benedictine missions in Western Australia. Six years older than Claret, he outlived him by several years at the time of his death in Barcelona in 1882.

We have often referred to *El Camí dret i segur per arribar al cel* [The Straight and Sure Path for Reaching Heaven], the first short edition of which (88 pp.) was printed in Vic by Trullás some five or six years earlier. This became an immensely popular book of prayers, devotions and a way of Christian life, which went through very many editions and appeared in several translations, including Castilian and Portuguese. By the time of the oft-cited 1859 edition of Madrid, it had grown almost six times over (506 pp.).

Margaret Bofill was the sister of Fr. Francis Bofill, a close friend of the Saint, at whose house he nearly always stayed whenever he passed through Barcelona.

The Saint had written his little book on the “Daughters of the Heart of Mary” in 1847-1848, except for the “Acts of Consecration,” which he wrote at the beginning of this year of 1850. The book would finally be printed this year, but how much it had cost the Saint to prod his dilatory friend Caixal to put the final touches on it and send it to the printer!

The Saint provided four Formulas of Consecration to the Blessed Virgin in this little book. They also appeared in the Saint's "Collection of Short Works,"

Barcelona 1850, vol. 2., pp. 326-334.

As usual, the Saint is busy preaching retreats, this time to several priests in Vic.

### Text

To the Rev. M. Peter Naudó, Priest

Vic, 1 March [1850]

My Very Dear Sir:

This is to inform you that the other day I received the package of books of *The Straight Path*. I already have the payment ready (which I will entrust to Mrs. Margaret Bofill when she passes by), and a little more besides, to send me some holy cards of the soul spurning the devil and his suggestions, as well as some of the new images of Mary Most Holy, which I need for Lent. I believe that Bocabella has still not sent me all that I paid him for. He knows what I mean.

I think that the Canon will not be long in coming. When he's there, remind him of the little memo on the Daughters of the Heart of Mary. Ah! How long I've been yearning for that little book. It has been three years since I wrote it, and it still has not come out, and God knows when it will come out. Don't forget to hand him that little addition of the formulas of consecration to Mary Most Holy. Know that I will be quite busy this coming week, giving a retreat to more than thirty [priests].

Regards to my Friends, and rely on your servant, who kisses your hand,

Anthony Claret, Priest

To Rev. M. Peter Naudó, Priest and Vicar of St. Mary's Barcelona

### 85. [126] To Fr. John N. Lobo

(EC I, 374-376)

### Introductory Note

From their first meeting in Madrid in 1848, when Claret was en route to the Canary Islands, he was struck by the qualities and abili-

ties of Fr. Lobo, and his first impressions only grew over the years. Born in Madrid in 1816, Lobo studied humanities and philosophy with the Piarists; he received his Baccalaureate in Laws at the University of Toledo in 1834, his Doctorate in Jurisprudence at the University of Madrid in 1843 and was ordained in 1846. Claret devotes a paragraph of his Autobiography to the praise of Fr. Lobo (Aut 591). With Claret's nomination to the See of Santiago Cuba, he offered Lobo the post of Vicar General, for which he was particularly apt because of his prudence and his studies in Law. After they were in Cuba, Claret appointed him Dean of the Chapter, to watch over and channel all its activities. He became Claret's right-hand man and his close confidant, and was the soul of Abp. Claret's governance in Santiago. After his service to Claret in Cuba (during which he was greatly slandered and persecuted), he abandoned everything to become a Jesuit. In the 1868 Spanish Revolution, he fled to France, where he made his tertianship. He served as Jesuit Provincial of Castile from 1871-1876. He died in Madrid on December 5, 1882.

The Servant of God, Don Jerónimo Mariano Usera y Alarcón was the Canon Penitenciar of the Cathedral of Santiago, Cuba. Born in Madrid in 1810, he took the Cistercian habit in 1824 and was professed in 1825. He studied philosophy, theology, Scripture and oriental languages in Zamora, where he was ordained in 1834. Ex-claustrated with other members of the Order, he served as a priest and teacher in various places in Spain and as military vicar in the Gulf of Guinea from 1845-1846. He returned to Spain as pastor and teacher. In 1848 he went to Santiago Cuba as a Canon, served as rector of the Seminary in 1849, the same year becoming governor and ecclesiastical Vicar, and became Canon Penitenciar in 1850. In 1851, Archbishop Claret sent him to Spain to transact matters of worship and the Clergy. His later long and distinguished career involved ecclesiastical posts of high importance in Puerto Rico and in Havana. He founded the Congregation of the Sisters of the Love of God in Zamora in 1864, and founded or fostered several charitable institutions in Cuba. He died in the odor of sanctity in Havana in 1891. He was so generous in helping the poor that he died penniless. The Cause of his Beatification is in process.

During these days when Claret was preaching a retreat to the clergy of Gerona, he also made an invaluable acquisition for his new Archdiocese in the person of Don Paladio Currius, who had been ordained some seven years earlier in Rome. He held several parish assignments and was chaplain to the Poor Clares. He became a member of Claret's household in April of 1850 and later accompanied the



Saint to Cuba. He received the title of Apostolic Missionary in 1851. In Cuba he served as Claret's secretary and as professor of moral theology in St. Basil's Seminary. In 1852, Fr. Lobo appointed him confessor of the incipient community of Claretian Sisters (Teaching Sisters of Mary Immaculate). He was engaged in the building of Claret's model ranch, the House of Charity in Puerto Principe (Camagüey) and by orders of Claret remained in Cuba until 1859, when the Saint called him back to Spain with Mother Antonia Paris and Sisters Josefa Caixal and Gertrude Barril. He remained in Claret's service in Madrid from 1859 to 1861, when he went to serve in various capacities at the seminary at El Escorial. He left El Escorial in 1868 at the time of the Revolution and went to Reus to serve as chaplain of the Claretian Sisters until 1879, when he became chaplain of the Carmelite Sisters at Valls. He spent his last years with the Claretian Missionaries at Selva del Camp (Tarragona). In November of 1900, he was a witness at the Apostolic Process for Claret's Beatification. During the last four years of his life, he was attended to constantly by Claretian Brother Salvador Martorell. He died a pious death at Selva del Camp on 13 September 1903. Claret devotes a paragraph to him in his Autobiography (Aut 598).

At the time this letter was written, Currius' current bishop felt the loss of such a gifted collaborator deeply, but --as he said, referring to Claret-- "Who could deny this holy man anything?" (cf. Informative Process of Tarragona, sess. 12). Claret informs Fr. Lobo that when he returns from Girona, he will join his companions at the Convent of La Mercé in Vic, to preach a retreat for them and give them some preparatory Conferences.

The "Señor Tolosa" to who the Saint refers was Rev. Antonio Tolosa y Casadevall, Director and Administrator of the College of Our Lady of the Presentation, a school for orphaned girls, founded by Don Antonio Spinola in 1630. As his name suggests, Tolosa was a cousin of Bishop Casadevall of Vic, and was the influential relative to whom Claret refers in his letter of 6 October 1849. Fr. Tolosa has sent the remittance of 5,000 duros to cover the expenses involved in preparations for Claret's episcopal ordination, though the Saint derived little benefit from it.

Claret is surprised to learn of Bishop Codina's near-fatal illness during the first months of 1850. Indeed, the Bishop of the Canary Islands felt ill enough to request Holy Viaticum, which was done with full solemnity so as to set a good example to others. The Bishop recovered and lived another seven years.

We have already encountered the three very distinguished clergymen mentioned in the farewell of this letter. The oldest of them, Don José Ramírez y Cotes (born in Palencia in 1777) was a friend of the Nuncio. He had more than once refused the miter. He had been rector of the Church of the Italians, in Madrid, where he founded the Forty Hours' Devotion. He lived at number 4, Plaza de las Cortes, where he was host to a number of priests, among them Balmes and Claret in 1848, at the time of Bishop Codina's episcopal consecration. Claret refers to him as "an exemplary and zealous priest" (Aut 479). He was often consulted on high church matters and proposed Claret as Archbishop of Cuba. He died in Madrid on 23 August 1855.

Fr. José Rodríguez de Carasa (born in Cádiz in 1793) had already had an impressive career in the diocesan clergy before he entered the Jesuits in 1823. He became an eminent and famous preacher, renowned for his elegance of diction, serving, in fact, as Court Preacher during the last years of King Ferdinand VII. When the Jesuits were banned, he went to live at Fr. Ramírez' house. He was confessor to many of the aristocracy, including the Viscountess of Jorbalán (the future St. Micaela of the Bl. Sacrament). He died a pious death in Madrid in 1857.

In 1848, Don Fermín de la Cruz was rector of the church and hospital of the Italians and was majordomo of Fr. Ramírez y Cotes. He was in charge of bringing the papal bulls to Fr. Claret in Vic in 1850 and returned with him to Madrid to receive the pallium from Nuncio Brunelli. When Claret returned from Cuba in 1857, he was happily surprised to find that Don Fermín had prepared lodgings for him at his own house and was accompanied by him in his first steps in the rarified atmosphere of the Court. He was chaplain of honor to Queen Isabella II and administrator of the Royal College of Santa Isabel in Madrid.

### **Text**

Don John Nepomucene Lobo, Priest  
Vic, 30 March 1850

My Very Dear and Esteemed Sir;

I just received your letter and am apprised of all you tell me in it. I am most pleased with it all, and in the future do not hesitate to tell me whatever you learn quite frankly, for there is no need to beat around the bush when dealing with me. The more clearly and frankly people talk to me, the better I like it.

I will write to S. Usera regarding the furnishings in the style you told me of. I shall likewise strive to acquire some subjects to come with us, so that I have given orders that as soon as I return from Gerona, where I'm going to give a retreat to the Clergy of that Diocese, we will also make our retreat and begin our own Conferences, which will last until our departure.

Today I received a letter from S. Tolosa with an order of payment of 5,000 duros that will be deposited in Barcelona. Then when I return from Gerona and pass through Barcelona I will have them send some 30,000 reales to the said gentleman so that he can pay the expenses that have already been incurred and will be incurred hereafter.

I'm very sorry to hear what you tell me of Bp. Codina. I knew nothing of it. In his last letter he told me what you have indicated, the earnest desires he had to see me and speak with me. Blessed be God!!... Let us commend it all to the Lord.

Keep well yourself. As soon as I'm consecrated I'll come, God willing. I already took care of telling S. Caixal to send you the books from the Religious Library for the Lord Minister, in the way you told me about, with you yourself taking charge of the binding. But I would like you to tell me frankly of all expenses incurred, not only for this, but also for the dispensation, etc., etc.

My fondest regards to Señor Don José Ramírez, Fr. Carasa and Don Fermin. I'm anxiously awaiting to give these dear friends a hug.

Ask what you please of your devoted friend,

Anthony Claret, Priest.

## 86. [129] To Canon Caixal

(EC I, 380-381)

### Introductory Note

This letter is a point-by-point reply to Caixal's latest letter. It refers to various items of business (Caixal's remarks on a Catechism; a paper not yet received, some "quinquets" [a form of lamp originally manufactured by a Monsieur Quinquet with a glass chimney and lamp-shade and an attached reservoir of oil higher than the wick], and a dispatch from the Nuncio.

The Saint also informs Caixal of a clergy retreat he will be preaching in Barcelona, although he doesn't expect much of it, because it will be too short, although he is glad to preach it because he

was sent to do so. Afterwards he will return to the house of La Mercé in Vic, where he will continue his Conferences and add some rooms for retreatants.

Shortly after he founded the Congregation of Missionaries, Claret planned to assign an Apostle as patron-saint and model for each of his Missionaries. He obviously considers Caixal a member of the Congregation, since he has assigned him the great Saint Paul. On a later trip to Barcelona, the Saint bought a picture of these Apostle-Patrons for each of the new Missionaries.

This letter is dated 5 May [1850 -- Fr. Postíus later added the year], the day of the Consistory in which Pius IX preconized (i.e., publicly proclaimed the appointment of) Claret as Archbishop of Cuba.

### Text Pax Christi

To S. Don José Caixal, Priest  
Vic, 20 May [1850]

Most Esteemed Brother:

I just received your letter and am aware of what you tell me of the Catechism; paper we still haven't received; the **quinques**; and the dispatch from the Lord Nuncio, etc.

Tomorrow I'm going to Barcelona to give some spiritual exercises to the Clergy there; but they'll be rather lame, because they will consist of only one act per day, and with one foot one can't walk very well; still, I've been sent, and that's enough for me. Nevertheless, I'll write you if anything comes up and I'll be back here because, over and above the endless conferences we are engaged in, we're going to begin work on making some more cells for retreats.

You have been assigned the Apostle Saint Paul and I want you to imitate him in humility, charity, zeal and other virtues.

My best regards to His Excellency the Archbishop and the rest of the household and friends; and I'll carry out the charge I'm entrusted with by the Bishop of this city.

Yours,

Anthony Claret, Priest.

To the Illustrious Don Joseph Caixal, Canon of Tarragona.

**87. [135] To the Cathedral Chapter of Santiago, Cuba**

(EC I, 390-392)

**Introductory Note**

This is a letter of thanks and reassurance to the Saint's future Cathedral Chapter, who have sent him their special regards and best wishes in a letter signed by Canon Usera, referred to in the introductory note to the preceding letter. Claret informs them of his preconization in Rome on May 20th, mentions the amount of time that it will probably take for the Bulls to be sent from Rome to Spain, and gives an optimistically rough estimate of the time of his consecration, his journey to Madrid and his embarkation for Cuba. These papal bulls -in this case, twenty in all- took a long time to transact and post. For example, five were for Claret (regarding the Pallium, the authorization of his Consecration and the formalities of the oath of office, etc.); others went to the Queen, the Chapter of Santiago, the Clergy and people of Santiago, the whole Archdiocese in general, etc. In the Claretian General Archives there are sixteen of them, all signed in Rome at St. Peter's on 21 May 1850; two more were signed on May 28th and another two in June. All twenty were reviewed by the Spanish authorities in Rome on 11 July 1850, and stamped with the Royal seal in Madrid on 9 August 1850.

As things turned out, Claret was to be consecrated on 6 October 1850 (cf. Aut 499) and would embark on his voyage to Cuba on Saturday, 28 December 1850 (cf. Aut 501).

One very interesting aspect of this letter is the signature. It attests to the fact that at least four months before his consecration, the Saint had chosen to add the name of "Mary" to his baptismal name (cf. Aut 5). In fact, in the fourth paragraph of Claret's letter of 23 January 1850 to Bp. Casadevall, he already stated that "Mary...is the Patroness of...my name."

**Text**

Illustrious Sirs:

In due time I received your very kind official letter dated 24 December of last year, together with the acta of the Chapter. I can do no less than offer God and the Blessed Virgin Mary, my dear Mother, the deepest thanks for having thus prepared the hearts of all in my favor. At the same time as I address my thanks to Heaven, I cannot forget

those on earth. Indeed, I shall never forget the kind sentiments and fervent affections expressed by all the Islanders, and especially those of your most respected and beloved corporation. I earnestly long to give each one of its members a most tender and paternal embrace.

By the present letter, in passing, I should tell your Lordships that we have just received news from Rome that last May 20th, after His Holiness approved my election, the preconization of our worthless person for that Archbishopric of Santiago Cuba was made. We are awaiting the regular sending and dispatching of the bulls between Rome and Spain, which takes at least three months. Afterwards, the Consecration will be celebrated in the Cathedral of this city of Vic. As soon as I am consecrated I will go on to Madrid, and at the first suitable moment I will undertake the voyage to my destination there, which I calculate will be in mid-October.

I am telling this to your Lordships in all frankness and detail, so that you may understand that I do not regard you as servants who do not know what their Master wishes to do, but rather as friends, as Jesus Christ told His beloved disciples [cf. Jn 15:15]; and likewise that you may answer any questions that people may make as to my arrival. Nonetheless, when I know for sure the day of my departure, I intend to write you of it.

Meanwhile, I pray God to preserve your Lordships for many years.

Vic, 7 June 1850.

Anthony Mary Claret, Archbishop of Santiago  
To the Illustrious Chapter Members of the  
Holy Cathedral Church of Santiago, Cuba

### **88. [141] To the Superior General of the Jesuits**

(EC I, 403-404)

#### **Introductory Note**

Ten years after his departure from the Jesuit Novitiate (cf. Letters 14-15 above), and three years after his last letter to Fr. J. P. Roothaan (1785-1853), who sent Claret back to Spain to recover from his mysterious illness (cf. Letter 78 above), the Saint now writes to inform the same Jesuit General of his election to the See of Santiago, Cuba, to ask for his prayers, and to express to him the hope that he will be able to invite the Jesuits to preach and even found houses in his future Archdiocese.

Claret, who not only preached but prepared his own edition of the Ignatian Exercises, never lost his fondness for the Society of Jesus, which some of his closest associates in Cuba (especially his Dean and Vicar General, Fr. John N. Lobo, as well as the Rector of his Seminary and three of its most outstanding students) would later enter. In his book, *San Antonio María Claret en el País Vasco* (Ed. Monte Casino: Zamora, 1983), Fr. Jesús M. Alday has a wealth of information on Claret's relationships with various Jesuits (cf. especially op. cit. pp. 250-252 ).

### **Text**

J.M.J.

To the Very Rev. Fr. General of the Company of Jesus  
Vic, 30 June 1850  
My Very Dear Father:

By now Your Reverence will have learned that Divine Providence has chosen to lay on my weak shoulders the enormous burden of the Archdiocese of Santiago, Cuba, not for any merits of my own, but rather for my sins. I was but a simple missionary, and now this!... I assure you its a great penance for me. Blessed be God... May His holy will be done...

In view of my situation, I have not the least hesitation in asking a favor of Your Reverence, namely, that you would remember this miserable and unworthy priest in your prayers and, moreover, that you would ask the other members of the Company to do so, since you can see how much I need them.

On this occasion I can do no less than to renew the offering of my useless person that I made to Your Reverence and likewise to place at your disposal the dignity that has been bestowed on me.

I hope that I may have the occasion to be able to lend the Company some service, or better still, that I may have the long-desired satisfaction of having some members of the Company to come to that Isle, to preach missions or to found a house wherever it may seem best to Your Reverence.

Your Reverence may ask what you will of your attentive and sure servant,

Anthony Claret, Priest

To the Very Rev. Fr. General of the Company of Jesus

**89. [142] To Canon Caixal**

(EC I, 405-406)

**Introductory Note**

Claret once again reminds Caixal of his mission as head of the Religious Library. He then offers him some hints on how it can be better managed, and, in particular, calls his attention to giving the books some less abstract and more attention-getting titles, which he explains with some examples in keeping with the melodramatic style of the times. The Religious Library has on hand eight "Treatises... written in French by the learned and pious Canon M. Marius Aubert, and translated for the first time into Spanish by some collaborators of the Religious Library." Claret deals with two of them here, beginning with the volume to be issued this month of July, and continuing with the volume for the following month.

**Text**

To the Illustr. Canon Caixal  
Vic, 7 July [1850]

My Very Dear Sir and Beloved Brother in J.C.:

I was told you are already in Barcelona. Hence I must tell you that works on this house are quite advanced for the giving of retreats. We must work on missions and retreats, as we are now getting ready to do, and you must work on the Religious Library. On this point I should tell you two things: first, when they send books here, have them put one in for me; second, I must repeat something that I've told you other times, and that others have pointed out to me, that you should give the books an interesting title, because there are some people whose taste is so caught up in novelty and immorality that all they need to do is look at the sad title of a book in order to sneer at it and criticize it; but if it is dressed up in the frock of the day they will read it. And perhaps they will be like a fish who sees the bait as a tasty morsel and gladly goes on to swallow both it and the hook, and so is caught. This has happened with the Confessions of Saint Augustine. Young people of both sexes have been converted by reading this work, although they originally picked it up out of curiosity to learn about the sins of the Saint.



I beseech you to do the same, for example, with the volume for the present month, which could be called **Theophilus**, or also the two poles of the great moral sphere, which are the existence of God and the immortality of the Soul. The one for the following month, which is on the Church, could be called Noah's Ark, Conformity with the will of God, The Cure-All Balm, or better, the Secret of not foundering on the storm-tossed sea of this world. Instruction for Youth could be called Compass and Map to help youth safely navigate the sea of this world, and so on for the rest.

I have no more time. Ask what you please of your friend and brother, who kisses your hand,

Anthony Claret, Priest  
 To the Illustrious Canon Caixal  
 Calle de las Molas  
 Printery of Pablo Riera, Barcelona

**90. [145/145a] To Sister Dolores Sánchez**  
 (EC I, 411-414)

**Introductory Note**

The addressee is the same Sister Dolores to whom Claret had written on 30 October 1843 (cf. Letter 25 above). What we have here are two papers [Letters 145 and 145a], found together and hence copied together, although they apparently come from two entirely different dates.

The first paper [145], a letter of spiritual direction, may have been written some years earlier, while the second paper [145a], dealing with the Saint's episcopal seal, was surely written in 1850, when he was preparing for his episcopal ordination. In the first paper, the Saint mentions the Convent of St. Francis de Paula, which had been founded near the end of the 18th century, but was abandoned some time after the laws of exclaustation of 1835. He tells the sisters not to worry about suffering the same fate, but to trust in the Lord and our Lady, who will protect them.

In the second part [145a], which contains a rather detailed account of the meaning of his seal, the Saint refers to "yesterday, Saturday," in the postscript. Now supposing that "yesterday" was 24 July 1850, it would not have been a Saturday, but a Wednesday. This, plus the internal evidence about the troubles recently experienced at the Convent of St. Francis, leads Fr. Gil to conclude that this first

paper was written on 25 July 1844, while the second was written sometime in 1850.

### **Text**

[145]

To Sister Dolores Sánchez  
Vic, 25 July [1844?]

My esteemed Sister in J. C.:

I am very busy and am answering your letter in great haste. You must always strive after total detachment from self and from all created things, even those that seem most necessary to you, for a mere thread suffices to tie down a bird's wings and prevent it from flying. Anything can suffice to prevent us from flying to perfection and union with God. If you have the [Spiritual] Exercises of St. Ignatius, read many times the three degrees of humility, until you fall in love with the third degree.

Tell those good Mothers not to be alarmed or frightened over what happened to the Convent of St. Francis. All God's works suffer contradictions. Tell them on my behalf that they should serenely and calmly go on doing and suffering, praying and keeping silent, always trusting in the Lord and in Mary Most Holy.

Commend me to God and ask what you will of your servant,  
Anthony Claret, Priest.

[145a]

Here is my archiepiscopal shield, so that you may recall my counsels and commend me to God. If you want to show it to the other Sisters, I give you leave to do so, but I would not like you to talk about it to any outsider.

I will explain it a little, because it is somewhat enigmatic. The bridge, river, cascade and houses indicate Sallent, my birthplace. My father was from this side of the river and my mother was from the other. They are symbolized by the sun, Claret, and the moon, Clará. The name of Mary indicates my spiritual origin, for she is my mother, and Mary is the Patroness of the Parish in which I was baptized. Mary freed me, when I was a young man, from the waves of the sea, etc. The Host that she has in her breast [i.e., cradled in the intersection of the overlapping letters "M" and "A"] signifies that she is the

Mother of God, and also the great devotion I want to have toward the Blessed Sacrament. The palm alludes to [the martyr] St. Stephen, the patron of the Parish and of myself. The lily refers to my patrons, St. Anthony, St. Aloysius Gonzaga and St. Catherine of Siena. The above-mentioned items are also symbols of Mary Most Holy, ***Pulchra ut luna, electa ut sol, sicut palma exaltata sum in Cades, sicut lilium inter...*** ["fair as the moon, bright as the sun" (Song 6:10), "I was raised aloft...like a palm tree in En-gedi" (Sir 24:13-14), "like a lily among thorns... (Song 2:2)]. The motto which says "***Charitas Christi urget nos***" [2 Cor 5:14] means that it is not the love of gold or silver that impels me to rush from one part of the world to another, but rather, the love of Christ, as St. Paul, from whom these words are taken, used to say.

I have no more time. Adieu.

Yours, Anthony Claret, Priest.

P.S. -- Easter Tuesday I'm going to Gerona to give a retreat to the Clergy of that Diocese. Ask God to make it fruitful.

If you have a chance, tell the Daughters of Charity at the Hospital that yesterday, Saturday, at five in the evening, Fr. Raymond Vila, a Priest of the [Congregation of] the Mission arrived here. He returned ill from Havana, and at a quarter after six he died in my arms, after I myself had administered Extreme Unction to him and had attended him in that dread moment of death.

### 91. [1481] To Pope Pius IX

(In Latin: EC III, 56-58)

#### Introductory Note

The Saint's main concern in this letter is the Religious Library. He writes asking the Holy Father the favor of allowing Canon Caixal to move to Barcelona in order better to attend to the business of the Library. He obviously did not obtain the favor, because there is no record of it and above all because Caixal did not move from Tarragona. The fact is, that Rome consulted the Archbishop of Tarragona, who in turn consulted the Cathedral Chapter, which in turn voted to the contrary. In a letter that Fr. Michael M. Panadés wrote to Fr. Philip Maroto, then Superior General of the Claretians, on 15 November 1934, he states that he knows this from the minutes of the Cathedral Chapter, which he has personally examined.

In the same letter, Fr. Panadés wittily observes that the Canons heaped such praise on Caixal that they must have influenced the decision to appoint him as Bishop, and thus lost him altogether. He also notes 1) that Claret refers to the Primacy of the Church of Tarragona, which seems to have been a moot point in the days of Abp. Echánove, and 2) that he first all too modestly ascribes the work of the Library to Caixal and himself (“Caixal una mecum”), but later states more accurately that both the Congregation and the Library were begun by himself (“*utrumque opus a me inchoatum*”).

### **Text**

Tarragona, 14 August 1850

Most Blessed Father:

In the course of this 19th century of the Year of Our Lord, eager to avert the evils that were threatening this Kingdom of Spain, I resolved to instill in human hearts the spirit of God and of His holy religion, and heedless of any sort of danger, I strove to do whatever I could in order to enlighten those who sat in darkness and the shadow of death [Lk 1:79]. And so I entered into fellowship with some priests of upright life, in order that any of us might be sent by his Bishop to evangelize the people, to teach the law of God and to confute unsound teachings. The harvest was great and the workers few [Lk 10:2], yet I dare say the fruits that we gathered were no less great.

Now although the efforts of this newborn mission were enough and more than enough for the conversion of souls, they were in part rendered useless by the spread of wicked books which, under cover of vain speech, conceal their poisonous message.

Bibles translated into the vernacular and published in a way contrary to the decrees of the Council of Trent, lewd novels, indecent newspaper articles often smacking of heresy or blatantly heretical, pictures inciting to evil pleasures, were all being sold at a low price. Troubled by this, Doctor Joseph Caixal, a Canon of the Holy Primate Metropolitan Church of Tarragona, together with me, conceived a plan, approved by our Prelates, to issue holy books at an even lower price and even, if need be, to be give away free of charge.

Now just as God, to whom we give thanks, blessed our missions, He has likewise deigned to favor this other holy work, called the Religious Library, so much so that it has steadily grown to such a degree that it requires the constant and assiduous attention and care of Doc-

tor Caixal, especially now that I, the most unworthy of all, must soon leave to assume the post of Archbishop of Cuba.

I deem it opportune that Canon Caixal should direct this holy work, not only because of his wisdom and prudence, but also because it is difficult and well-nigh impossible to find another clergyman who has both the will and the wit to choose such books as will strengthen the virtuous in goodness, warm the tepid, make the indifferent blush at their skepticism, and correct and convert the wicked. To which I might add the promise that Your Holiness' Nuncio made to me: assuring me that both of the works begun by me should not be left leaderless on my promotion (by God's inscrutable design) to the Archbishopric of Cuba.

In my humble opinion, this work, to which God has given the increase [cf. 1 Cor 3:6], cannot survive unless Canon Caixal directs it and, by his constant zeal and diligent care, protects it. But as Canon Caixal is bound by the norms of Trent to reside in his own Church and may not dwell in Barcelona or move elsewhere unless he can be excused from the condition of residency by Your Blessed authority, I therefore humbly beg Your Holiness to deign to allow Doctor Joseph Caixal, Priest and Canon of the Holy Metropolitan Church of Tarragona, to be absolved of the bond of residency, so that he may dwell in Barcelona or wherever the service of the aforesaid work of the Religious Library has need of him, in such wise that he may validly and licitly receive and enjoy all the fruits of his canonry, even those that are strictly residential, so long as he serves the Holy Church of God in the aforesaid work.

May God keep Your Holiness' life safe from all harm,

Barcelona, the 3rd day of February of the year eighteen hundred and fifty.

Most Blessed Father, I, your most devoted servant in Christ, humbly kiss Your Holiness' feet.

Anthony, Archbishop Designate of Santiago, Cuba.

## 92. [147] **To the Apostolic Nuncio**

(EC I, 417-418)

### **Introductory Note**

On 17 September 1850, the day before Claret wrote this letter, he had received the Papal Bulls and the granting of the Pallium,

through the good offices of Don Fermín de la Cruz, the “someone” mentioned at the beginning of the second paragraph, who would return to Madrid with Claret for the reception of the Pallium from the Nuncio, Archbishop Giovanni Brunelli. The Saint informs the Nuncio that Bishop Casadevall, assisted by Bishop Costa y Borrás of Barcelona and Bishop Lorente y Monton of Gerona, will consecrate both himself and Don Jaume Soler, the bishop-elect of Teruel, on 6 October 1850 in Vic. Aside from this, the letter is self-explanatory.

### **Text**

Most Excellent and Very Reverend Sir:

During these days I have just received the Bulls and the Pallium, and the Bishops concerned have resolved that my consecration, together with that of the Bishop-Elect of Teruel, will take place on the 6th, the first Sunday of October, a day dedicated to the Holy Virgin of the Rosary, who is my advocate and most sweet Mother. After the consecration I will come there to Madrid, and as soon as I am dispatched I will set out for my assignment, God willing.

Someone wrote me from Madrid that Your Excellency would especially like to impose the Pallium on me. If this is so, I would take it as a great honor. Your Excellency need only indicate this to me before the day of the consecration, and I will forego asking the consecrating bishop to impose it, and will gladly go on to receive it at the hands of Your Excellency.

God keep Your Excellency well these many years.

Vic, 18 September 1850.

Your most attentive and constant servant, who kisses your hand,

Anthony Claret.

To the Most Excellent and Very Reverend Apostolic Nuncio.

### **93. [148] To Canon Joseph Caixal**

(EC I, 419-420)

### **Introductory Note**

This short letter informs Caixal of the date Claret’s consecration and of his immediate departure for Madrid and return to Barcelona, whence he hopes to embark for Cuba in early November. He encour-

ages Caixal to keep working in the mission that has been entrusted to him, since although it may sometimes be painful, it will be for God's glory and his own lasting reward, and also, as the saying goes, "no pain, no gain."

### **Text**

To Don José Caixal  
Vic, 18 September [1850]  
Esteemed Brother in J. C.:

This letter is to inform you that the Bulls arrived yesterday, and that if nothing new crops up, the Consecration will be on the 6th, the first Sunday of October. After the Consecration I'll travel to Madrid, return to Barcelona and then embark with some companions which, I believe, will be sometime in early November. Thus I hope to have the happiness of seeing you and Mossèn Stephen Sala either at the Consecration or after my return from Madrid. The surest chance of our being able to meet would be at the Consecration, so I hope you won't miss it.

Meanwhile, take heart in the work that has been entrusted to you, which greatly glorifies God. And though we may presently have to undergo some hard labors, we know that the wages will come afterwards. Besides, we know that all God's works are like roses -- always surrounded by thorns. Hence, anyone who chooses not to suffer, will never undertake anything good.

Commend me to God and ask what you will of your faithful servant, who kisses your hand.

Anthony Claret  
To the Illustrious Don José Caixal,  
Canon of Tarragona.

### **94. [149] To Canon Joseph Caixal**

(EC I, 421-422)

### **Introductory Note**

He informs Caixal of the imposition of the Pallium, which took place on the 22nd Sunday after Pentecost (which was also the Feast of the Purification of the B.V.M.) in the chapel of the Nuncio's Palace.

He also tells him of his dealings with the Attorney General (Arrazola) regarding Cuba and the Religious Library. He very strongly insists on the need for Caixal to reside in Barcelona to attend to the works of the Religious Library, notwithstanding the good Canon's dislike for that idea. He even proposes securing a canonry for Caixal in Barcelona, should the latter see fit, and asks him to send his answer to Don Nicolás de Castro Palomino, a Collaborator and Commissioner of the Religious Library in the Court and Diocese of Madrid.

### **Text**

To Don Joseph Caixal  
Madrid, 20 October 1850

My Very Dear Sir and Beloved Brother in J. C.:

I am doing well here and am busy arranging my affairs. Today the Lord Nuncio imposed the Pallium on me and I am dealing with him about my business. I have also dealt frequently with the Attorney General. Today's conference lasted more than two hours. The main topic is Cuban affairs, but we have also dealt with the Religious Library. He is most grateful for the gift you made him of all the themes that have come out thus far, and is very much in favor of the spread of good books. I told him that when I leave the Peninsula you will be heading this enterprise, and that since you found it so troublesome to be going back and forth between Tarragona and Barcelona it would be fitting that you reside in Barcelona. He is utterly persuaded that if you are going to be able to suitably run this enterprise (which he is very fond of), it is indispensable that you reside in Barcelona.

Hence, the two of us talked of the means to accomplish this, and he remarked as follows: It would be very hard for you to move to Barcelona without relinquishing the canonry of Tarragona -- a step which, he says, neither the Archbishop nor the other Canons would allow, given the scarcity of Canons, etc., etc. The means that seems most expeditious to him is that you be transferred from a Canonry in Tarragona to a Canonry in Barcelona, and he told me that I should write to you at once, which I am doing, and get your answer as soon as possible, since he is trying in every way to please me and cannot deny me any favor. If you write to me soon, I can still receive your letter and take the necessary measures myself. But as I don't know whether I'll still be here when you answer, you can write to Don Palo-



mino or anyone you'd like, telling them to inform me of your opinion. And if I've already left here, tell them to present your opinion to the Attorney General, who will grant it in a trice.

Don Miguel de Neira, your onetime companion in France, came to visit me and has asked me to give you his regards.

On my behalf, kiss the Lord Archbishop's ring and give my regards to all our other friends. Ask what you will of your close friend and brother in J.C., who kisses your hand.

Anthony, Abp. of Santiago, Cuba.

### 95. [150] **To the Rev. Fortian Bres**

(EC I, 423-425)

#### **Introductory Note**

Any reader of the Saint's Autobiography will know that Don Fortian Bres (1781-1855) had been Claret's protector since his seminary days. Fr. Bres had been the Steward of Bishops Veyán, Strauch and Corcuera before Monsignor Casadevall's régime as Ecclesiastical Governor and later as Bishop of Vic. Claret had entered Don Fortian's lodgings at the Casa Tortadès as a boarder and retainer, but very early on, despite the difference in their ages, they became close and trusted friends. It was in this house that the young Anthony had received his vision of the Victorious Virgin, freeing him from temptations against chastity. In 1844, when he was an Apostolic Missionary, Claret is reported to have miraculously traveled from Olost to Vic to attend to his elderly friend who had slipped on the ice and broken his leg. Father Bres was Claret's sponsor at his episcopal consecration (cf. Aut 84).

As the address and date make clear, Claret has already been consecrated and is now in Madrid, where he received the Pallium and other honors mentioned here, and concluded a good deal of business connected with his Cuban assignment. Claret genuinely dislikes the idea of receiving royal decorations and honors, and would like to leave the pomp and circumstance of the capital city as soon as possible. In fact, he did not wait to receive the Cross from the Queen and would not pay the price expected for the knighthood, though some charitable friends paid it on his behalf.

### **Text**

To the Rev. Don Fortian Bres, Priest  
Madrid, 24 October [1850]

My Very Dear and Esteemed Sir:

The present letter is to inform you that together with Father Stephen [Sala] we are doing well and are dispatching all matters happily. I am looking forward to come and bid you all farewell as I promised. This coming Monday, the 28th, we are leaving this city. On arriving in Igualada we will leave the coach and go up to Montserrat, Manresa, Sallent and Vic. I should tell you that on the 22nd, the Queen, through her Minister of Government, the Honorable Mr. Pidal, sent me an ordinance which among other clauses contains the following: "Anthony Claret, Abp. of Cuba..., I have just named you Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Order of Isabella the Catholic..." I resisted taking it as much as I could, but have not been able to escape accepting it. Ah my God! If one cross was enough to take my Savior's life, what will become of me with all these crosses!... Their Majesties, Highnesses and Ministers have all received and treated me very well, showing me the greatest proofs of love. I am anxiously longing to get out of Madrid, because they are driving me crazy with receptions and paying visits to persons of the highest class. Among others, General Castaños, who is 86 years old, came to visit me. I have no more time just now. Convey all this to the Lord Bishop, and give him and the rest of his household my regards. You may ask what you will of your poor, crucified friend, who kisses your hand. Anthony, Abp. of Cuba

P.S. Greet all the Brethren at La Mercè on my behalf.

### **96. [155] To Canon Joseph Caixal**

(EC I, 434-435)

### **Introductory Note**

Once again, Claret is harping on the theme of the need for Caixal to reside in Barcelona in order to attend to the affairs of the Religious Library. Claret truly understood the importance of the Catholic press and he knew, by long and bitter experience with various printers, how necessary it was to be on top of affairs in the place where the selections for the Religious Library were being printed, in order to prevent the printers from taking ill-considered shortcuts and putting out shoddy work. To encourage Caixal, he tells him of the success

and good effect of the Library's publications, even among "important" people in Madrid, by whom he seems to be rather naively impressed. He is unabashedly delighted with the success of his own books, but he is equally sincere in adding his "Non nobis" ["Not unto us, O Lord, but to Your Name be the glory..." Ps 116:1]. The Saint went on from Igualada to Vic to Barcelona, accompanied by Father Barjau, who served as his Secretary and would be accompanying him to Cuba.

### Text

To the Rev. Canon Joseph Caixal  
Igualada, 1 November [1850]

Dear Sir and Beloved Brother:

I believe you will have received the letter I wrote you from Madrid, in which it seems to me I asked you to state what you wanted to do: either to move to Barcelona and take on a new Canonry, or to be allowed to stay in Barcelona while keeping your Canonry in Tarragona. As for the former option, both the Attorney General and the Nuncio would prefer it; as for the latter option, it depends on the Archbishop and the Chapter [of Tarragona]. At any rate, choose one of these two options, so that you stay in Barcelona and in charge of the [Religious] Library.

I can't tell you the good that's being done by the reading of the books (including my own short works) issued by the Library, and also the very great enthusiasm there is in favor of it. The Nuncio raves about it. The Attorney General is just as enthusiastic, for every time I deal with him about the affairs of my diocese, he talks in season and out of season about the books. One of the chief men of the realm has just arrived in Court. He noted a great change for the better in customs (love of peace, union, fulfilling duties, etc., etc.) wherever he went, so he kept asking the reason for the change. Everywhere he was told the same thing: none other than reading the books of Mossèn Claret, so much so, that it's all they're talking about in Madrid, and many have expressly come to meet me. Even their Majesties showed that they were happy to meet me and converse with me. **Non nobis etc.** When we see one another I will talk to you at greater length. Eight days after I leave here, I'll be in Barcelona.

My regards to the Archbishop [of Tarragona] and other friends. I'm in a hurry.

Your brother Anthony, Abp. of Cuba.

To the Hon. Joseph Caixal, Canon of Tarragona.

**97. [156] To Canon Joseph Caixal**

(EC I, 436-437)

**Introductory Note**

Yet again --and not for the last time!-- Claret insists, and indeed, orders, Caixal to move to Barcelona to attend firsthand to the affairs of the Religious Library. He leaves the means for doing so up to Caixal's prudence, although he proposes three options for his doing so. He expects to see him soon in Barcelona. In the original, the last line of the letter is interesting and not without a touch of humor. Claret first wrote "Tarragona," then crossed it out and wrote the word "Barcelona" beneath it in parenthesis.

**Text**

To the Hon. Don Joseph Caixal  
Vic, 9 November [1850]

My Very Dear Sir:

By this time you must surely have received the letter I wrote you from Igualada, in which I spoke to you of the Religious Library. And now I must insist again and order you to go on to Barcelona and not put it off or lose sight of it, because you can do more good through it than you can through any other works and occupations.

I shall not tell you what means you should adopt in order to go there, because I leave it up to your own prudence; but it seems to me that it ought to be one of the following three.

1. To exchange your Canonry [in Tarragona] for another in Barcelona, which the Attorney General has promised me he would grant in a moment; and the Nuncio is of this same opinion.

2. That Lord Archbishop and Canons of Tarragona grant you leave to live in Barcelona during your stint there.

3. That you renounce the Canonry, as you mentioned to me.

Choose whatever means seems most fitting, for whatever you do will be fine with me, so long as you go to live in Barcelona.

We are all well, thank God. Regards to friends.

Your servant, who kisses your hand,

Anthony, Abp. of Santiago, Cuba

P.S. I had already written this letter when I received yours. Now we'll see one another in Barcelona, where I'll be going within a fortnight.

Item. Because of his bad behavior, we dismissed Fr. Badia from our company.

To the Hon. Joseph Caixal, Canon of (Barcelona).

### 98. [157] **To the Bishop of Vic**

(EC I, 438-439)

#### **Introductory Note**

The Saint has been working very hard indeed. Besides preaching every day in several convents, in the Seminary of Barcelona and other places, he has been attending to official correspondence and putting the final touches on several books, including the "Rules of the Sodality of the Immaculate Conception and of Saint Aloysius Gonzaga," the "Dialogue on Prayer" and the devotional book, "Manna of the Christian." The "master of the ship" is Don Rafael Mazo, master of the corvette "Nueva Teresa Cubana," which would in fact not set sail on the 12th, but rather on Saturday, the 28th of December, at ten in the morning.

On a more personal note, the Saint refers to his 76-year old father, Mr. John Claret Sr., who had worked all his life at the loom, which he at length had to abandon because of his failing eyesight. He died on 11 April 1854. His son Anthony, the Archbishop, would help him from Cuba with a regular pension sufficient to attend to his needs. The Saint's older brother, John Claret Jr., the family heir, born in 1804, was also a weaver, but on a larger scale than his father. Nevertheless, he too had to call on his younger brother for help later in life. When the Saint himself was on the verge of a stroke in the last year of his life, he mentions in a handwritten note: "15th day of May [1870]. I have written to the Rector of Sallent, asking to give my brother John whatever he needs. He had a stroke on April 21st."

**Text**

To His Excellency, the Lord Bishop of Vic  
Barcelona, 27 November 1850

My Very Dear and Esteemed Sir:

I have just received your quite welcome letter and am apprised of what you tell me in it. I will presently write to Madrid to see if we obtain the desired end. I am working here to the breaking point. Aside from the time I spend defending conclusions, I mean, dashing off requests and arguments so that I can do more work, I can tell you quite frankly that I am earnestly looking forward to the day of my embarkation, so that I will be able to have a little breathing space. The master of the ship has told me that we should embark on the 12th [of December]. My father is well, thank God, and the day after tomorrow he will be going off with my brother to Sallent.

Keep well and ask what you will of your attentive and constant servant, who kisses your hand.

Anthony Claret, Abp. of S. Cuba

To his Lordship, the Bishop of Vic.

**99. [158] To Canon Caixal**

(EC I, 440-441)

**Introductory Note**

By now, Claret must have been completely fed up with Caixal's delaying tactics. Caixal has had recourse to others for advice, including an unspecified member of the Fuster family, with whom Claret was well acquainted, and also to his good friend, Father Peter Naudó. The Saint offers the Canon a fourth way of attending to his duties both in Barcelona and Tarragona, reminds him of the earnest wishes of the Attorney General and the Papal Nuncio, and firmly impresses upon him the consequences which, given the evil zeal of the publishers of evil books, Caixal's lukewarmness and stinginess with God will doubtless have on the welfare of souls.

**Text**

To the Rev. Canon Caixal  
 Barcelona, 7 December [1850]

My Very Dear Brother:

I read Fuster's letter and the two you sent, one to me, the other to Mossèn Naudó. Regarding what you say about having the correspondence, etc., sent to Tarragona, I am not of that opinion. What I would like is for you to come to this city in one of the three manners I proposed to you, and if none of these is to your liking, I am going to propose a fourth, namely, that you come to this city, and when Feasts such as Christmas, Holy Week, Corpus Christi, etc., come around, then you can go to Tarragona during those days and then return to Barcelona, thus not having to put off distributions during the year.

What is important and fitting is that you reside in Barcelona. The Attorney General earnestly wishes it and the Lord Nuncio desires it by all means, as I have already told you and as I, insofar as I can, order you to do. For I can see by experience what I told you by word, namely, that without your residing in Barcelona during my absence, the whole thing will be lost -- a matter that would trouble my soul and those of the Nuncio, Ministers and others who have communicated with me. Hell is bending every effort with its own books, as you know quite well, and we would be dealing with God in a tightfisted way.

The affair of the letter you sent me is truly vexing, and I will keep on commending it to God so that He will inspire us as to what ought to be done.

Regards to Friends and ask what you will of your Friend and Brother, who kisses your hand.

Anthony, Abp. of Santiago Cuba

To the Hon. Joseph Caixal, Canon of Tarragona.

**100. [159] To the Most Rev. Fr. Stephen Sala, CMF**

(EC I, 442-444)

**Introductory Note**

The body of the present letter was written by Fr. Antonio Barjau, acting as secretary for Abp. Claret. The postscript was added in the Saint's own hand.

This --the last letter written by the Saint in 1850 and in Spain-- is included here because it is one of the three extant letters that Claret wrote to Fr. Stephen Sala, C.M.F., Superior General of the Congregation of Claretian Missionaries. During these days, Fr. Sala was preaching Missions in the city of Berga. He had written earlier to the Founder, consulting him on certain difficulties or doubts that were resolved in the present letter. The reference to the three Gloria Patri's added to the Angelus reflects Claret's own custom and that of the early Congregation.

Fr. Anthony Barjau, who accompanied the Founder to Barcelona as his Secretary, and wrote the body of this letter in that capacity, was born in Manresa and ordained in 1848. He served as Assistant Curate at Sant Quirze de Bessora (diocese of Vic) from late September 1849 to early May 1850, when he was admitted into the "Congregation of Missionaries for Santiago Cuba." In all likelihood, he was among the young men who were being prepared that May by the Founder himself for his predilect work. Barjau himself states that he had enrolled among the Missionaries in the first days of the "nascent Congregation," and that it was he who led the Spiritual Reading for the retreatants in the Retreat that Fr. Claret was directing when he received his nomination as Archbishop. "One day during that Retreat, he [Claret] called me to the anteroom of the sacristy of the Church of St. Justus and told me: 'I have been nominated Archbishop of Cuba. I've already renounced, but I have a presentiment that they will not accept my renunciation. If they oblige me to go, will you accompany me?' I answered him at once in the affirmative" (cf. HD I, p. 543). Fr. Barjau was always at Claret's side, and should rightly be considered a member of the Institute. In this letter, he himself asks the Lord's protection for his Brethren (the Missionaries of La Mercè). If the vicissitudes of his life --first as a Missionary and Rector of the Seminary of Santiago, later as Rector of the College of El Escorial, and finally as Canon of Cuba where Claret himself sent him-- had not prevented him from living bodily in the Congregation, he surely lived and died within in it spiritually.

At this time the members of the Mission House of Vic were not religious in the official sense, hence they could not make use, as they sought to do, of the privileges (such as exemption from the draft) heretofore extended to the members of the older Colleges of Missionaries for Asia (in Ocaña, Valladolid and Monteagudo). The "Junta" in question, according to the terms of the Concordat between Spain and the Holy See, was made up of three Ministers of the Spanish Crown.



### Text

Barcelona, 16 December 1850

Rev. Fr. Stephen Sala, Priest

My Dear Sir and Esteemed Father in Jesus and Mary:

His Excellency has so many occupations at present that they do not even allow him time to write a letter; hence, acting on his orders, I am going to answer your welcome letter, telling you as follows: His Excellency, Don Antonio Claret, Archbishop of Cuba, grants an eighty days indulgence to all the faithful for each **Gloria Patri**, etc., that they recite in the prayer of the **Angelus Domini**, etc. He likewise grants an eighty days indulgence to all the faithful for each act of the Holy Missions that they attend. Another eighty days for each exercise of the Holy Retreat. Another eighty to all who are united to the Congregation and to as many as may be united to it.

We are overjoyed at the fruits that the Holy Missions are producing.

May the Lord deign to protect you and all my Brethren, so that you can continue working in the Lord's vineyard, for which I shall not cease begging God Most High.

Keep me present in your fervent prayers, because you and my companions are not forgotten by the undersigned, who affectionately greets you and is your faithful servant, who clasps your hand.

Anthony Barjau, Priest.

P.S.-- As for what you mentioned to me about the House of Vic's enjoying the privileges of Ocaña, etc., the Attorney General answered that this would involve some inconvenience, since the members of the House of Vic are not professed religious like those of Ocaña, etc.; but that he would nonetheless propose the matter to the Junta and see what they would answer, and they are waiting for this answer. As soon as their answer is known, the brother of Fr. John Lobo will write to inform you of it. The assured date for our departure will be the 28th of this month.

Let us commend one another to God. Tell this to all the brethren and greet them for me.

All yours,

Anthony, Archbishop of Santiago Cuba.

#### IV. LETTERS OF A MISSIONARY ARCHBISHOP (1851-1857)

##### 101. [1488] **To Fr. Fortian Bres (?)** (EC III, 68-71)

##### **Introductory Note**

We do not have the handwritten original of this letter, which lacks the name of the addressee as it was cited in the Barcelona daily, "El Ancora," in the issue of 23 January 1851. We are not sure to whom it was addressed, but judging from its contents, it was most likely to Fr. Fortian Bres. From the correspondence of Fr. Currius, we know that they caught sight of Málaga at six in the morning and disembarked there at one in the afternoon. The "we" of the letter were the 13 young members of the missionary expedition and the equally young Missionary Archbishop, who had sailed out of the port of Barcelona at exactly 10 a.m. on 28 December 1850. The Saint mentions their names in Aut 502 and offers a brief biography of each in Aut 591-605. The captain took inventory of the ship's stores, and calculated that they would run out before they reached Cuba, so he put in at Málaga to reprovision. Also aboard were 18 Daughters of Charity, assigned to Havana, who were accompanied by Vincentian Fr. Paul (not Peter, as the Saint states in Aut 501) Planas. The "organ" that accompanied the singing was in fact an accordion, played by Fr. Anthony Barjau. The Mr. Masó referred to in the letter was Don Salvador Masó, the ship's owner, a ship fitter and merchant, mainly in cotton goods, with Cuba. For further details of the voyage, including the Saint's preaching engagements in Málaga, life on board the *Nueva Teresa Cubana*, etc., see Aut 501-509. The italicised opening paragraph of the text is a statement by the editors of "El Ancora."

##### **Text**

*We are happy to share with our readers some sure and even satisfactory news concerning the voyage of His Excellency Don Antonio*

*Claret, Archbishop of Cuba, since we have before us a handwritten letter from His Excellency, which reads as follows:*

Malaga, 15 January 1851

Today we entered the port of Málaga. Since we left Barcelona we had only one day of favorable winds, during which we covered forty leagues. Nevertheless, thanks to the excellent shape of the vessel and the experience of its captain, we were entering the straits of Gibraltar. We had already come within three leagues of it when we were becalmed. The current drew us backward, and contrary winds were pushing us toward the beach of Gibraltar. Last night a storm came up: the sky was overcast and lighted up from time to time by lightning. The sea was pitching and the vapors that rose from the water formed a fog so dense that one could hardly see anything. This was most troubling, since there were some sixty vessels in the area, all waiting for an opportune chance to pass through the straits, so that they might easily have crashed into one another. The danger was all the more imminent, because the rough seas had prevented them from embarking on time. This, and the need to take on fresh provisions, led the captain to turn about and put in at Málaga.

We are all sound and healthy. We are living aboard as if we were living in a monastery. Every day we get up at five, spend an hour of mental prayer in community, after which I celebrate Mass and distribute Holy Communion to all the other priests except one, who in turn will celebrate Mass while all the rest of us make our thanksgiving. Since we embarked, I have failed to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice only once, because the pitching of the vessel made it absolutely impossible. The priests receive Communion every day, while the Daughters of Charity do so four times a week. We all attend the Holy Sacrifice daily. Every night we recite the Rosary on deck, then sing some spiritual songs with organ accompaniment. We also have conferences morning, noon and night. In brief, it is hard to explain the satisfaction and joy of everyone. Speaking for myself, it has been many years since I have enjoyed such happy days. I sometimes forget that I am aboard a vessel, and feel that I am in heaven.

Would you please tell Mr. Masó that we are all highly satisfied with the Captain and the whole crew.

Anthony, Archbishop of Santiago, Cuba.

**102. [160] To the Bishop of Vic**

(EC I, 445-449)

**Introductory Note**

This letter to Bishop Casadevall was written by the Saint on board the “Nueva Teresa Cubana” as it lay at anchor off Las Palmas, Grand Canary Island. Fr. Currius has left us a detailed account of the intervening events (beginning in Barcelona on 28 December 1850), as he found them in Fr. Lobo’s “daybook of the voyage,” which includes, among others, the following items: “We were all gathered in the house of the Curate [Don Francis Bofill, Director] of the Magdalen Sisters... At eight in the morning we set out on our way as follows: 1) We went down to the Church of The Magdalens, where we recited the Itinerarium of the Clergy, alternating with His Excellency, who led it. All of us missionaries left there in procession, in double file, with Coca and Pladeveya in the lead and His Excellency and his Vicar, Don Juan N. Lobo bringing up the rear, accompanied by the Rector of El Pino, Fr. Bofill, and the Vicar’s brother, together with many other people who surrounded and followed us. We then went to the Cathedral, where we visited the main chapel of St. Eulalia, the Blessed Sacrament Chapel and the chapels of the Agony in the Garden, of Saint Olegarius (whose body we viewed), and finally, we visited the magnificent Chapel of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, our Mother. We at once entered the Palace to bid the Bishop farewell... The procession continued (in tomb-like silence on our part) until we reached the dock at nine-thirty, accompanied all the while by an immense crowd that surrounded us on all sides. The Fr. Vicar [J.N. Lobo] bade his brother Thomas farewell. Then, with some difficulty, we boarded the ship: first, His Excellency (who blessed it), then the Fr. Vicar and then the rest of us...” In this same “Daybook of the Voyage”, we read the following: “The 14th (January 1851). Today, with great difficulty, we celebrated Mass. The wind had been gusting strongly all day, and we have remained below deck. Clouds, winds, sea swells and rain. Many ships sought shelter in the bay of Gibraltar, but most struggled on outside it. In the evening, or rather at night, the wind was gusting so strongly and the waves were pitching so heavily, that they were washing inside the corvette. All sails save those of the bowsprit and mizzen-mast had to be lowered. From 9 to 12 the blast was awful, and the ship, without proper steering, was a plaything of the winds... In this dire pass, the Captain, a practical and calm man, raised the brig sail and thus helped steady the ship a little and steer it clear of

the danger of crashing against the land or the very Rock of Gibraltar... January 15th. Turning back to Málaga. Today nobody was able to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. At six in the morning, as the storm carried on...we limped into Málaga some 20 leagues from the Straits... where the Captain reprovisioned the ship's store, which might have run out before we reached Cuba." Fr. Barjau adds some details. He tells us that in the midst of it all, Fr. Claret remained ever calm, encouraging all the rest, whom he kept telling, "Don't be afraid; God is with us." It was not easy to remain calm, since within the sight of their ship, they could see a number of merchant ships foundering ahead of them, seven of which sank off Málaga. "At noon, off Torremolinos, one league from the mouth of the Guadiana and two leagues from Málaga, we caught sight of that city, where we disembarked at one in the afternoon."

One of the Capuchins was the celebrated Mission orator Fr. Felix of Cádiz, who preached on the Particular Judgment in the evening service, which the missionaries attended. All were greatly pleased with the sermon, although Fr. Felix felt moved to upbraid the Malagueños for their indifference to conversion. The following evening, Claret preached the evening service, and Fr. Felix was moved at the palpably salutary effect on the people, and alluded to the Saint's being there like Habakkuk [Claret] in the lion's den, coming to the aid of Daniel [Fr. Felix]. Claret's own account of the matter in his Autobiography (n. 504) is very brief. "We were all well and happy as we set sail for Cuba, but on reaching the Rock of Gibraltar we had to wait for a change of weather before we could pass through the straits. The sea got worse, and so the captain had to turn back to Málaga, where we had to wait three days [i.e., three whole days and two half days] for better weather. Meanwhile, some work was found for me and I preached 15 sermons in the cathedral, the seminary, schools and convents, etc." They re-embarked on Sunday, January 20th, the feast of the Holy Name of Jesus. In his Autobiography, the Saint sums up the next leg of their voyage in a few words. "At last we set sail under fair skies for the Canary Islands, where we hoped to land and visit my beloved islanders. They were looking forward to it and so were we, but the sea was so choppy that we couldn't dock there, much to our mutual regret" (Aut 505). Indeed, the islanders had prepared rooms for Claret and his Missionary band in the Bishop's residence, and also for the Daughters of Charity who were traveling with them. Since they could not land, they floated some letters sealed in bottles and some other packets ashore on the swift-running waves. For an interesting account of life on board during the rest of the voyage to Cuba, see Aut. 506-509.

**Text**

Canary Islands, 23 January 1851  
To His Excellency, the Bishop of Vic

My Very Dear and Most Esteemed Sir:

As you are already aware, we left Barcelona on the 28th. Except for one day, we were either becalmed or met with contrary winds, so that when we were within sight of the Straits of Gibraltar, we were forced to head back to the port of Málaga, for fear of being lost at sea like three other ships that had already been lost in the bay of Gibraltar.

We remained in Málaga from Wednesday to Sunday; but I believe that our coming to this city was part of God's great design for its welfare. I could not help saying in a sermon that the Lord had brought me there as the angel had brought the prophet Habakkuk to Daniel in the lions' den. Just four days earlier, four Capuchins had begun a Mission, and my arrival came at a most opportune time. From the moment I arrived, I was well received by the Bishop. The authorities came to visit me, and they, together with the Bishop and the Canons, all begged me to preach to them. The whole city assembled in the Cathedral in a most orderly and devout way. I preached in several other locations during the four days of my stay there. It seems to me that I preached some fifteen sermons. The Malagueños were quite content with me, and I with them. What a great harvest of souls was set before me!

At five on Sunday morning, I left the [Bishop's] Palace to embark. The Lord Bishop, despite his old age, came to accompany me as far as the ship, along with the Authorities of the City, who accompanied me on board with lanterns.

From the time we left Málaga it seemed as if we were flying. Every day we made at least fifty leagues on our way. It is now the 23rd and we are off the Canary Islands and are going to disembark there tomorrow morning. I am relying on your kindness to share what I am telling you with Mossèn Fortian and with the brethren at La Mercè.

Your most attentive and faithful servant, who kisses your hand,

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Santiago Cuba.

Catalonia

To His Excellency the Most Rev. Bishop of Vic.

**103. [162] To Fr. Fortian Bres**

(EC I, 451-456)

**Introductory Note**

This is the first letter in this selection written from Cuba, dated on the very day of Claret's arrival in his See of Santiago. Claret tells his longtime friend and protector some of the events of his voyage from Málaga to Cuba, with some first impressions of his arrival in his new See. For further details of the Saint's voyage to Cuba, see his Autobiography, nn. 502-509. The Saint mentions his participation in the Capuchins' mission in Málaga, as well as his inability to land in the Canary Islands, where he had preached so eloquently just a few years earlier and had won the love of the Islanders, who called him *El Padrito*. The names of his traveling companions are given in full in Aut 502. Philip Vila and Gregory Bonet had to return to Spain shortly, but Ignatius Bertriu accompanied the Saint for many years in Cuba and Madrid, later entering the Jesuits as a lay brother. The Daughters of Charity, who were en route to Havana, so edified the locals that some of them had to stay on in Santiago. The Saint cannot resist mentioning the differences between tropical Santiago and wintry Vic.

For a more complete, current and masterfully-condensed background account, see J. M. Lozano's *Anthony Claret, A Life at the Service of the Gospel* (cited hereafter as LSG), pp. 164-168. For those who read Spanish, the first few chapters of Vol. I, Part II, of C. Fernández' *Historia documentada* (cited hereafter as HD), although rather dated, offer several rich and lively anecdotes.

**Text**

To the Rev. D. Fortian Bres, Priest  
Santiago, Cuba, 18 February 1851.

My Very Dear and Esteemed Sir:

From the letter I wrote you from Málaga and from the one I wrote the Bishop while we were off the coast of the Canary Islands, you already know that much of our voyage. I will proceed, then, to tell you what has happened since then. You know how long a way it is: 180 leagues from Barcelona to the Straits of Gibraltar and 1400 more from the Straits to Cuba, a total of nearly 1600 leagues. The first leg of our journey took rather long because we were becalmed; rather, I should say that it took so long because of a special providence of God, who chose to keep us 40 leagues from the Straits, making us turn back

and remain in Málaga. The Capuchin Fathers were just beginning a Mission there, and when it was learned that we had arrived, the town leaders, at the urging of the fervent populace, asked me to preach, which I did. In fact, within three days I preached fourteen sermons to the people, students, nuns, clergy, almshouses... on different topics, showing them the benefits of the Holy Mission, and how they should be taking advantage of the opportunity being offered them, etc., etc.

Hence, the good done was incalculable. May it all be for the Glory of God. We left Málaga on Sunday, January 19th, and four weeks later, on February 16th, we arrived here, some 1400 leagues from Málaga, despite the fact that we lost three days in the Bay of Grand Canary Island, where we were unable to land because of rough seas on that side of the Island. Since we could neither disembark nor send mail by proper post, we put it in a tightly sealed bottle which we attached to a line cast to us by a boat from the island, to be given to the local bishop, asking him to send it on to the Bishop of Vic. Be so kind as to ask him whether he received it.

From Málaga to here the voyage could not have been happier, either spiritually or physically. We were permanently divided into three separate compartments: We, the priests, together with the three houseboys, Philip, Ignatius and Gregory, were quartered aft; the Daughters of Charity were quartered amidships, while the other voyagers were quartered forward. Every day the Divine Office was recited in choir, and we had mental prayer and spiritual reading, as well as morning and evening conferences. I celebrated Holy Mass every day and gave Communion to all the priests but one, who celebrated Mass while I and the other priests made our thanksgiving. During this Mass a priest would read the prayers and meanings of the Mass, and thus the other passengers and crew were gradually being instructed. The Sisters received Communion four times a week, as their Rule allows, without counting a few other times that I added. The rest received once every eight days.

There were sermons for the priests, sisters, passengers and crew. This was done in the evening on deck, after the recitation of the Rosary, at which the Mysteries were sung. After the Rosary, the sermon began, ending with the singing of "Holy God" accompanied by the organ. It seemed as if the angels of heaven had come down to the ship. As a result of these evening sermons, everyone without exception made their general Confession and received Holy Communion. Perhaps such a complete Mission has never been seen. We all disembarked so happily that both the passengers and crew, like the Samaritan Woman, are still proclaiming the glories of the Lord.



On arriving here at noon on February 16th, the whole city came out to greet us in a great show of joy and jubilation. Today I took formal possession of the diocese and this evening we will perform the entrance ceremony, which will consist of a procession leading from St. Thomas' Church to the Cathedral, where I will preach to them. It is now time for the noonday post to go out. We are all very well, content and happy, and are not suffering from the cold. As I remarked on the last day of January, how different the climate here is from that of Vic! There, you are shivering at this very moment, while I can barely stand to have more than a sheet on my bed, and even so, I had to put a cloth soaked in cold water on top of it to lessen the heat. We don't feel the heat so badly here, because the bishop's residence is very cool. But we are all in good health. Although you may hear that the cholera is raging some forty leagues away from here, do not be alarmed. In fact, there was an outbreak of it as a result of an infected battalion that passed through, but the danger is now past.

I'm out of time. Regards to the Bishop and show him this letter. Also show it to our Brethren at La Mercè, to the Dominican Nuns and the Hospital Sisters. Tell them that all the sisters who came with us arrived in good health. They disembarked with us here, but tomorrow will be going on to Havana by steamer. Well, perhaps not all of them will go, because the leading ladies here were so edified with them that they want some of them to stay on at the almshouse, where they have been lodging these few days. I don't know what the outcome of this business will be. Regards to all. Yours,

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Santiago, Cuba

#### **104. [164] To the Attorney General of Spain**

(EC I, 458-459)

#### **Introductory Note**

The Attorney General --or to give him his Spanish title. the "Minister of Grace and Justice"-- Don Lorenzo Arrazola, was an outstanding political figure in 19th-century Spanish Politics. He belonged to the moderate party and was at various times a royal councillor, president of the supreme court, deputy and senator. He was Minister of Grace and Justice seven times (and as such in charge of Church-State relations), three times Minister of State and for a short time President of the Council of Ministers. He was also distinguished as an orator and writer of scholarly and literary works both in prose and in verse.

It was he who had insisted in 1849 that Fr. Claret should accept the nomination as Archbishop of Cuba. He and the Saint maintained a long correspondence and friendship. When Claret returned to Spain as Confessor Royal, Arrazola often visited him in his apartments. He was a member of the First Hierarchy of the Academy of St. Michael. Ten years older than the Saint, he outlived him by three years, dying in Madrid in 1873.

This letter is an official notification of Claret's taking possession of the See of Santiago. At that time, there were only two dioceses in Cuba: Santiago, the Metropolitan See, and Havana, its Suffragan Diocese. The Saint clearly reveals his readiness and generous disposition to fulfill as best he can the mission that has been entrusted to him. In this letter, only the signature is written in the Saint's own hand.

### **Text**

Archbishopric of  
Santiago, Cuba.

Your Excellency:

I have the honor of informing Your Exc. that on the 18th of this month I took possession of this Metropolitan See, after fulfilling the requirements foreseen to this end. On the evening of that same day I made my solemn entry in accord with the usual formalities. I recognize evermore clearly the arduousness of the mission which Divine Providence, acting through the munificence of Her Majesty the Queen (whom God preserve), has thrust upon my weak shoulders. But now that I find myself established, without any merits of my own, in this Dignity, I trust in God's mercy to grant me the grace not to be faint in fulfilling it. In this trust, Your Excellency can assure Her Majesty that the Archbishop of Cuba is ready and resolved to sacrifice himself for the sheep that make up his flock, sparing no means or labors in order to spread the faith, uproot vices and plant virtues in the hearts of the Cubans. Thus he will fulfill as best he can the demands of his conscience and do his part to assure the order and peace that can only find their most fast and sure mooring in the practice of the true religion. May it please Your Excellency to convey these sentiments to Her Majesty, our Lady Queen, should you see fit.

God keep Your Excellency well for many years.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba  
Cuba, 24 February 1851.

To His Excellency, the Minister of Grace and Justice

## 105. [165] To the Ursulines of Puerto Principe

(EC I, 460-465)

### Introductory Note

The House of the Ursuline Sisters in Puerto Principe (Camagüey) had been overrun by the military, who dislodged the Sisters and turned their convent into a barracks. Understandably dissatisfied with their provisional lodgings, which were both insufficient and uncomfortable, the Community had recourse to the Archbishop, asking him to authorize the sisters to return to their respective families or to secure particular lodgings with their personal friends.

The Archbishop answered them in this letter which is rich in the purest evangelical teaching on the religious life, not only for the Ursulines, but for all religious souls who might find themselves in the same or similar circumstances during those troubled times. This entire letter was submitted by the Saint to his Vicar General, Fr. J. N. Lobo, who corrected it.

### Text

Mesdames:

With unutterable feelings of sadness we have learned of the plight in which your Community finds itself, and as your Father, Shepherd and Physician we have considered how to remedy your ills and misfortunes, bearing in mind that in order to apply the right remedy, one must seek and determine the cause, for in removing the cause, one removes the effect. From what we have read in history and from our own experience, we deduce that as a rule there are two causes for religious' being cast out of their Convents. The one is by way of a chastisement for their sins, and the other is by way of a trial that God wishes to make of their virtues and fidelity to their religious vocation.

As for the first cause, you yourselves will know how you kept religious observance. We would like to believe that you were entirely innocent; but if you are humble, you will say with the brothers of Joseph: *merito hæc patimur, quia peccavimus* - "We have deserved to suffer these things, because we have sinned" [Gen 42:21]. And even though you in fact be innocent, you will always be better off by humbling yourselves like the Publican, than by praising yourselves and protesting your innocence as did the Pharisee in the Gospel [Lk

18:9-14]. If the Lord allows you to undergo this trial as He did Tobias, Job and others, He is always mighty enough to restore you to your first state with an increase in grace and virtues. *Happy and blessed is the soul*, says St. James, *who endures throughout the trial, for the Lord will give it the crown of glory* [Jas 1:12]. Happy will you, too, be if you remain faithful in this temptation, but woe to her who allows herself to be led astray by the enemy. Hence Jesus so often spoke of lazy and cowardly souls. He said that they were like a house without a foundation which was toppled when the tempest came [Mt 7:27]. He said that they were like a seed sown in rocky ground, which lacked strength and dried up in the heat of the sun [Mt 13:20]. And finally, he said that one who lays his hand on the plow and looks back is not worthy of the kingdom of heaven [Lk 9:62]. And the expositors say that this parable applies to men and women religious who leave their Community to go and live in the bosom of their families.

You will perhaps tell us that the house you are temporarily lodged in has no comfort whatsoever and that it is even unhealthful. I know this, Ladies, but this is only an interim measure, for, without prejudice to the just claim I am going to lay before His Excellency, the Governor of the Isle, that you be reinstated in possession of your Monastery or convent, I know that it will not be long before you are provided with another more comfortable house. And if this should not take place, I would have you come to this city of Santiago rather than allow you to go out to the homes of your relatives or benefactors. You have no idea what a sister is outside community. We know by experience that a religious outside her community is like a fish out of water, which dies very quickly. We repeat: experience itself has taught us what we are saying, because we have often had to be the tear-soaked handkerchief for many religious on the Peninsula whom the circumstances of war drove from their cloisters. For, although they did not leave the cloister of their own will, but rather by force, God knows what a great many of them had to suffer. What, then, can those hope for who attempt to leave the cloister under some vain pretext, even when it is for reasons of health? Ah, beloved daughters, beware this pretext. For the enemy knows how to cause sicknesses, as he did to Job, and God allows it in order to prove the fidelity of His own. And if God sends you illnesses for leaving cloister and community, will you be able to evade or escape from His jurisdiction? And if God allows

such illnesses to befall you, as he has other religious, do you believe, perhaps, that they will be cured by going out into the world? Can the world do more than God can? Do we not recite every day, *Domini est salus, our health is from the Lord* [Ps 3:9]? Now if God is the master of health and holds it in His hand, why not ask God for it, with the condition *if it is fitting?* Instead of doing this, are we seeking health from the world? Have a care, Ladies, lest under the pretext of seeking bodily health, you lose your spiritual health. And this often happens, without even gaining what was sought. We tell you frankly that we never allowed any religious to leave community for reasons of health, even when we were no more than a particular director of souls. Still less, then, will we countenance it now that we are a Prelate, however unworthy.

The advice we usually give Religious is that they stay in their own house or convent and take the remedies prescribed by the doctor, and for the rest, that they resign and conform themselves to the will of God, trusting that if it is fitting He will give them health. Moreover they should think and meditate on the fact that they are spouses of Jesus, who chose to be born in a stable. What a house that was: so ill furnished and unhealthful! He spent seven years in Egypt, and not only without a home of his own, but often without the necessary food, so that he had to beg... Throughout the course of his life, what a small and ill-furnished house he lived in at Nazareth. And when he went to preach, he said of himself: *The birds of the air have nests and the beasts of the field their lairs, yet the Son of Man has not even a rock on which to rest his head* [Lk 9:58]. Finally, he died in the open air at the mercy of the elements and stripped naked on a cross! Brides who truly love their spouse do not hesitate to dress, live and die just as their spouse does and alongside him. My daughters, we have no more time; very many things surround us like a herd. But have a little patience and await our arrival in that city, as we very much hope to do and will indeed do as soon as we possibly can. Meanwhile, we commend you to God and send you the holy blessing of Almighty God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, praying that He may give you all graces and glory. Amen.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba

Santiago, Cuba, 2 March 1851.

To the Mother Prioress and Ursuline Nuns of Puerto Príncipe.

**106. [1489] To Sister Anastasia Conget**

(EC III, 72-74)

**Introductory Note**

Sister Anastasia was one of the 18 Daughters of Charity who made the 50-day crossing from Barcelona to Santiago with Abp. Claret and his companions. Many years later, on 14 August 1884, when she was stationed in Quito, Ecuador, she wrote to the Claretian Missionaries in Santiago, Chile: "Honorable Fathers: I am very pleased to be writing for the first time to your Reverences, to thank you for your kindness in sending me the books and photographs of His Excellency, Bp. Claret, a gift most precious to me. So will the one I am sending your Reverences in thanks, namely, this letter which he wrote to me in Cuba a month after his arrival. I don't doubt that you have many other letters of Bp. Claret, but as this one is original and in his own handwriting and speaks of the First Mission he gave in Santiago, Cuba, it will be all the more precious to you." On the last page, the Claretian Visitor of Chile, the saintly Fr. Paul Vallier, acknowledged the receipt of this letter. We should perhaps say a word about Fr. Manuel Vilaró, the only Claretian Co-founder who accompanied Claret to Cuba, and, after contracting tuberculosis, was the first to die, in Vic, in the year 1852. St. Anthony Mary Claret mentions him in his Autobiography, nn. 489, 502, 511, 526, 592 and 596, and praises him highly. One incident that is less well known: Before Fr. Vilaró's return to Spain, a Chinese Doctor named Joseph who attended him during his illness in Cuba, was converted to Catholicism. In the Claretian General Archives, there is a short biography of Fr. Vilaró, written by Fr. Joseph Berengueras, who lived for some years in Claretian Provincial Curia in Los Angeles and wrote a very lengthy history of the United States Claretians from the beginnings to the 1940s.

**Text**

To the Lady Sister Anastasia Conget  
Santiago, 16 March [1851]

My Esteemed Sister:

I have just received your letter of the 4th of this month. I am delighted that all of you have arrived without incident. I strove to cast a blessing on you from this [Episcopal] Palace on the day of your departure and we have all been commending you to God, and I believe that you will have done the same for all of us, especially since we

need it all the more, now that we are in the midst of our labors in the Holy Mission. I am preaching in the Cathedral and Don Vilaró in St. Francis, with very great attendance in both places. Divine Providence is looking after all, for we not only preach to adults, but also catechize the little ones, both boys and girls, and they are profiting from it in a seemingly incredible way. Today we had a long procession for those studying catechism, and three public contests were held in three different places, to the admiration and awe of all the people. I see to it that they receive the “Manna of the Christian” and the Catechism with Pictures, and their eagerness to learn it is astounding. They cry when they are not called up to the platform for the contest.

I do not have any more time to explain to you the admirable things that grace is performing in these lands. I repeat: commend us all to God, and your yourselves should keep in mind the holy counsels that we gave you, which I will state briefly here, so that you can remember them.

1. Walk always in the presence of God.
2. Do all that you do for the greater glory of God.
3. Have a dread of all sin; for however small it may be, it always displeases God, wounds charity and makes it grow cold.
4. If anything causes you pain, suffer it for love of God.

I have no more time.

Yours, Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba.

I just got back from the confessional and am busy with I don't know how many matters.

To Sister Anastasia Conget. Havana.

### **107. [169] To the Captain General of Cuba**

(EC I, 473-485)

#### **Introductory Note**

Don José Gutiérrez de la Concha (or, to give him his full name, Don José Gutiérrez de la Concha Irigoyen Mazón y Quintana) was born in Córdoba, Argentina on 4 June 1809. In 1814, he and his parents, Juan and Petra Irigoyen, moved to Spain. He entered the Academy of Artillery in 1822, graduating as a second lieutenant in 1826. He took part in military operations in Portugal in 1832 and in the north of the peninsula in 1833. He was appointed Captain General of the Basque Country and Deputy for Logroño in 1845. He first

served as Captain General and Governor of the Isle of Cuba from 18 September 1850 to April of 1852. In Madrid in 1853, he published his *Essay on the Political Situation of the Isle of Cuba*. In one of his works, he wrote: "The north star of my politics has always been the conduct of the law, justice and morality" (*Memoirs... of Cuba* [Madrid 1853], p. 9). He assumed the post of Captain General and Governor of Cuba for the second time on 21 September 1854 and left it on 20 September 1859, when he was replaced by General Francisco Ser-rano. He was named First Marquis of Havana in 1857 and Grandee of Spain in 1864. He served as Captain General of Cuba for the third time in 1874. He has been described as "the most intelligent, hard-working and coldly energetic chief in command of the Island" (V. Morales, *Iniciadores y primeros mártires de la revolución cubana*, Havana 1963, vol. II, p. 117). In 1877, he was named Senator for life, and served as the President of the Senate and of the Supreme Council of War and the Navy (1881-1883). He also held the title of Viscount of Cuba and was a professed Knight of the Order of Santiago. He had very frequent dealings with Abp. Claret in Cuba. When Claret was returning to Spain, during his stop in Havana, he gave the General's youngest daughter her First Communion on 2 April 1857. In Madrid, he officiated at the wedding of Concha's daughters Vicenta (in 1861) and Maria (in 1864).

In this letter, Claret appeals to the Captain General concerning two very painful events: 1) The Territorial Court of Puerto Príncipe's trial against Fr. Francisco Delgado, and 2) the outrage committed by military authorities against the Ursuline Convent of Puerto Príncipe. When Abp. Cyril de la Alameda y Brea left the Isle in January of 1837, he appointed Don Francisco Delgado (Precentor of the Cathedral) Ecclesiastical Governor of Cuba. In 1838, the willful Queen Regent Cristina made so bold as to assign Don Juan Pacheco, against Church Law, to this post. This probably led the Court --most of whom were supporters of Pacheco-- to institute legal proceedings against the lawful Precentor, Delgado, for the supposed commission of a common civil offence. Though the accused was found innocent for lack of evidence, he was sentenced to exile for allegations raised during the trial. As for the Ursulines, cf. the preceding letter.

### Text

Most Excellent Sir:

In public life, complete satisfactions are few; and in the great family of a town or province, things ordinarily turn out the same as they do in particular families, where it is a rare thing for a father not



to have to shed tears at seeing some of his children fare more poorly than others.

Two lamentable events oblige me to address you in order to unburden my heart and to seek redress, relying on your rectitude, generosity and above all your piety. I know by my own experience that in the needs and tribulations of life one must turn to God alone as their one sure remedy; but I likewise know that in the natural order of things God ordinarily makes use of men as instruments of His mercies. And such is the present case.

Listen kindly to my request, then, for God has put it in your power to remedy it, and I, as an instrument of Divine Providence, will be beholden to you for the attainment of my just pretension and the relief of my suffering. I trust that I shall never come away un comforted and unattended to, above all since this is the first instance in which I am having recourse to you.

Before coming to Cuba, I had already learned of the case being pressed by the honorable Court of Appeals of Puerto Principe against Doctor Don Francisco Delgado, heretofore Ecclesiastical Governor of this Diocese, and since I have arrived, I have acquired still further extra-official news of the matter. Without having a copy of the proceedings in hand, it is not easy for me to form a clear-cut judgment on the innocence or guilt of the accused. But if I have understood the case aright and am not mistaken, the defendant stands accused of a common offence which is not so heinous that it calls for the death penalty, the loss of a bodily member or something of equal gravity, yet he has been tried by a civil tribunal that is incompetent to do so. During these last days he has addressed me from Puerto Principe, where he is being held, appealing to me as his Prelate and lawful Superior for the support and protection that I owe him in justice, and informing me that in the honorable Appellate Court he is being condemned to perpetual banishment from the Island.

As you know full well, my mission is purely one of peace and my only desire is to banish tears and help people forget old resentments, and thus I must be very much on guard against even indirectly offending anybody, whether it be a corporate or an individual person. Rather, I must strive to render everyone the utmost consideration and decorum that is their due. And so I will seek favor and even be importunate in doing so, if need be, following every avenue possible rather than resort to the use of the rights that belong to me by law. In a word, I must imitate as best I can my gentle Master, Jesus Christ, who went so far out of love for his ungrateful children as to become

incarnate and die on the cross to save them. His apostles, too, following in his footsteps, strove to become all things to all men, so as to win as many as they could [1 Cor 9:22]. Moreover, as I am inspired by the noble and truly Christian sentiments that you evince, I have not wanted to hazard any official step without first appealing to your uprightness, kindness and clemency. Hence I hope that you will be so good as to send me all records of the actions being pressed against the Priest Delgado, as well as the accumulated acts that have been carried out in this untimely and ill-advised case. You know full well (apart from the justice of my claim, which is founded on the Sacred Canons and on the law of the land), that it is always fitting, but above all under the present circumstances, to avoid doing anything that would directly deprive the Clergy of the consideration and respect with which people should regard them. For if this class, which is doubtless the most respectable one in society, were publicly scorned; if people came to regard the Priest as just another man; if a higher ecclesiastical authority like Delgado could be brought before a civil tribunal without a clear and just reason for this procedure; and finally if no good is achieved, but rather only a scandal is caused by it, then how can we expect people to pay any heed to the Clergy when they exhort them to fulfill their individual, domestic or civil duties? Good example is the best form of preaching. But when people see that the real or imagined offenses of Priests are dragged into the public forum, Priests will be denied the submission that is due to them, as well the right they have to correct people's faults. And if the accused happens to be a high-ranking church authority, his discredit will reflect ill on the other ministers of religion who depend on him. But apart from any concern over a matter for which there is no reasonable excuse, it is certain that even the ill-repute that parents deservedly incur by their personal crimes will also fall upon their children. Thus anyone, however wise and virtuous he may be, will do his best to cover up any hint of bastardy, and even change his hereditary name. A man who sees his father die on a scaffold will emigrate, if he can, from the place where the sentence was carried out, so that no one can point him out as the son of a criminal who suffered a well-deserved penalty. In all these cases, the son is bereft of authority, however much he may have abhorred the offense.

Ask yourself, then, whether you can be content to abide by a ruling which, after consulting reason and experience, you deem mistaken. Therefore, recognizing how wisely and cautiously the Church proceeds in substantiating criminal cases against its ministers, you will also see how fitting, nay just, it is to draw a veil over the sad

event that concerns us, and to hand Delgado over to me, so that by my authority and character I may fulfill the law insofar as it lies in my power. And should Delgado be found guilty, I can impose on him the penalties best suited to my authority, which are also the ones best suited both to cut short the scandal and to correct the delinquent.

The attentive communications wherewith you have seen fit to honor me assure me that you are persuaded of my good intentions and of the fact that I have come to this Island for no other purpose than wholeheartedly to promote the public and private good of my Diocese and to help my two worthy brother-bishops of the Antilles [i.e., of Havana and Puerto Rico] to do likewise, as well as to give the secular authorities of this Island whatever support they may require of me in doing good. And here I must confess that since my arrival in Cuba I have received, both from the authorities and from individual persons, nothing but proofs of such consideration and respect, that they bind me still more to sacrifice my life and if need be to shed my life's blood for the beloved flock which the Lord has entrusted to my care. You yourself and other high authorities have kindly acknowledged the rectitude of my intentions, for which I give you sincerest thanks. And so long as we all work as one, there need never be the slightest divergence among us. For my part, I assure you that, far from placing the least hindrance to your lawful and prudent administration of the government of the Island, I shall be the very first to submit to it, and I will see to it that all the Clergy of my Diocese follow my example, striving without stint to see to it that the whole Island is obedient to the lawful authorities that govern it, as commanded by the Lord's Holy Law, which we preach. I ask very little in return, namely, that none consent either directly or indirectly to infringe upon the rights of the Church, of which none can ever be prejudicial to Her Majesty, and over which I can never relinquish my faithful and zealous guard without causing grave scandal and injury to my own conscience. Grant me, then, my lord, what I so rightly ask of you, and remand Delgado over to me, so that I may judge his case and all actions taken against him, thus safeguarding the interests of justice in a matter of such gravity and delicacy. In so doing, none can label your conduct imprudent, since it will be seen as an act of deference to the new Prelate, who for his part will remain all the more bound in gratitude to cooperate effectively in respect of your good and worthy intentions for the prosperity of the Island.

I repeat: I will be the first to adhere to whatever measures and provisions you see fit to establish to keep order. Finally, I beg you not to forget that although you foresee some discrepancy between the

judicial claims that church and civil authorities might press in order to safeguard their respective rights, it will never be unseemly for you to show generosity at this first appeal of a Prelate who, unworthy though he be, will overlook the quarrel occasioned by Delgado's more or less ill-measured behavior, so long as the court drops the charges that stirred up so much ill will and unpleasantness. Let the man's penalty be his outrage during the trial, the good name he unduly lost in the course of clarifying the truth, and the sufferings of all sorts that he endured in a costly trial that ended with a declaration of his innocence. By being generous nobody loses the right to assist him, and this at least you will do by not consenting to the execution of the sentence and by placing the person of Delgado at my disposal.

But there is yet another disagreeable matter that has filled my soul with bitterness ever since I set foot on Cuban soil. The fearful outcry of some ill-fated ladies who, though they live many leagues hence, have rent my ears and broken my heart. A few years ago the charity of the faithful of Puerto Príncipe was so stirred by a famous missionary, whose zeal and holiness Cuba will never forget, that they erected a newly-founded nunnery for the Ursuline Sisters, consecrated by their Institute to teaching. The most notable and decent people of the city not only paid for the building, but also, following the example of Father Valencia (for such was the venerable missionary's name), carried the building materials on their own shoulders and labored alongside the hired workers. This was such an admirable and very rare example of evangelical charity --a fact which of itself would suffice at any time, but especially in such recent memory-- that it should merit due respect for the intentions and aims which the founders assigned to the building. The work was finished, the Ursulines occupied their Convent; and the very people who had contributed with their resources and material labor to the construction of the edifice were also the first to entrust to the sisters the dearest treasures, namely, their daughters, to be educated in the holy fear of the Lord. The Ursulines corresponded both to the desires of their Institute and to the trust of the people of Puerto Príncipe by training good future mothers who in time would instill in the hearts of their own children the love of God and respect for those who governed them in His name. In this work, the good done for the family, for the country and for the metropolis was palpable. Nevertheless, I doubt not that you will be troubled in mind to learn that, disregarding these many services, their beneficiaries have now thrust the Sisters out of their convent. The resolution was taken and carried out, and the Sisters were moved to a small house. And what is the result? I will tell

you, my lord, though I am saddened to the point of tears as I relate it. Among the religious themselves there has arisen a discussion and discord the like of which they had never experienced before. Some of them want to leave the cloister and have pressed me to allow them to do so. Parents have removed their children from the school where they were being educated so well. The people are complaining that they have been despoiled of something that belonged to them in justice, since those who paid for and erected the building are still alive. They expect me to see to it that the laws which protect both them and the Church are enforced. Thus I, as faithful custodian of the rights of the Church, am bound in conscience to remind you of these rights, else I will stand reproved in the sight of God. The church has at all times hurled some dreadful anathemas against those who dare to usurp the pious goods or places that belong to her, without human respect for anyone, including Kings, Emperors and even Clergy who consent to such usurpations. Read, if you will, chapter 11 of session 22 of the Council of Trent, and you will see that both you, if you insist in your resolve after I have called this matter to your attention, and I, if I tolerate and assent to it without effectively raising my voice in protest, will incur these awful censures. As Bishop, I am obliged more than anyone else to fulfill and safeguard the Church's holy Teaching. Consider, now, the great conflict in which you place me if you do not desist from pursuing this business, and also the sad consequences that it will entail. Hence, I have deemed it my duty to consult my prudence and, following its dictates and the respect I have for your honorable person, to advise you in charity of the perilous step that you have unwittingly taken. In virtue of the love I profess for you in Jesus Christ, and knowing how favorably you regard the thirty-six Sisters and their feelings, I have not hesitated to speak to you heart in hand. Nevertheless I assure you that, however much it might have pained me, I would in any case have had to proceed in this manner, because I know how far my responsibility goes before God in virtue of the thorny charge I must fulfill, and that it is not lawful for me through silence or negligence to sacrifice the cause of God and of the Church out of mere human respect.

To these many reasons I may also add that this measure would bring little into the royal coffers, since the savings gained on the annual rent of a house to serve as a barracks is insignificant. Indeed, it would even be less worthwhile, because of the expenses involved in adapting the house for this new use. Indeed, the 20 or 30 pesos can do little or nothing to affect the Royal Treasury, whereas they are inflicting a very deep wound in the heart of the inhabitants of that

city. I know how widespread is the discontent and disapproval of all classes, even those whom one would expect to be most supportive of the Government. And in truth, today more than ever before, any measures that are taken to govern the Island should eschew the least appearance of violence. I would go even further: according to the most reliable reports, this would seem to be the policy you find most fitting, for which I congratulate you wholeheartedly. For this is the same line of conduct that I have set for myself, which I doubt not will yield the most promising results. Yet as I see it, there is another very weighty reason under the present circumstances.

You know better than I the intrigues and stratagems whereby certain foreigners, by deceiving the careless and conspiring with malcontents, are trying to wrest from our homeland its lawful possession of the greater Antilles. The main means that the unruly are using today in order to foster revolutions everywhere, is to attack religion, family and property. Brandishing this horrid motto on their banners, the leaders of false human progress, appeal to this *threefold* motto, which is an outrage to the Godhead, in order to spearhead their attack on the very symbol of the world's truth. Examine the theories of the communists, which are so much in vogue today, and you will see that they declare: that it is insufferable for free men to bear the yoke that religious authority would impose on the inner man, the conscience; that the sacred rights of parents, children, spouses and brothers should be destroyed, sacrificing them on the absurd altars of absolute equality, with grave injury to customs and to nature itself; finally, that private property is a violent and scandalous despoilment carried out by a few privileged classes against the defenceless people. No one can say that I am exaggerating, because these absurdities are brazenly sustained in schools, in tribunals and in the press, and revolutionaries proclaim them with weapons in hand, inciting the people to rebellion. If, then, you would stamp out the seeds of conspiracy that are budding on this Island, the first thing you should attend to is to remove any pretext that might be seized upon by these ill-intentioned people who never fail to take advantage of anything that might help them carry out their projects. And of course they will congratulate one another whenever they see lawful authorities adopt measures that damage religious rights, even when such measures are taken in good faith and, as I mentioned earlier, unwittingly. The family, too, as I also pointed out, will be harmed by the blow struck to a religious congregation that is devoted to forming good mothers and wives. The revolution is surely not an inconsequential matter. It began by declaring that corporations were incapable of holding possessions.

Some careless governments have fallen into this error, without realizing that they were committing suicide. Several years have passed since this happened, and now this insatiable monster is shouting for all the world to hear, teaching everyone that neither corporations nor individuals have ownership over anything to the exclusion of others. It has decided that the rich are simply robbing the good which nature produces for all, and following this fateful principle, it calls all private property a usurpation. The people, who are impressionable by nature, tend to rise up against this supposed abuse, and in the interests of what they believe a just levelling-off of fortunes, consider themselves to be defending a holy cause. Tell me, I ask, whether these are not the very same pretexts (though not at first stated so frankly) on the basis of which those who would 'improve' things are in fact converting Cuba into a theater of disasters and misadventures. Tell me, in fine, whether they might not seize upon any well-intentioned but ill-considered act of alienation of property by lawfully constituted authorities, in order to dupe the unsuspecting into regarding this as a practical example or endorsement of their deadly theories. I believe that you will accord this argument the full weight which I think it carries, and thus I will dwell on it no further. Suffice it to say that easily-led people are often more to be feared than those who are noted for their inflexibility. Docility and weakness go hand in hand, though they are not therefore to be confused. But this much is certain: the unruly easily triumph in the minds of the timid or diffident.

This being so, how many ills are to be feared on this Island, given the natural bent of its inhabitants, unless one walks with great caution?

In the month and a half of my residence here I have learned by experience how docile and religious the Islanders are. And I reckon rightly that Cuba and another country I have stayed in will not prove an exception to the rule. I have had recourse to the Lord; I have begun my Holy Mission. The Blessed Virgin, my most special protector since my childhood, is blessing my desires and bringing me promising results. The Cuban people listen to the voice of their Prelate, and hasten, so to speak, in droves to listen to the Word of God. Aside from those times when I must eat or rest, after I have fulfilled the other duties of my ministry, I spend the whole day hearing confessions, with the help of the missionary companions I brought from Spain and of many priests from this Capital City.

At this time, thousands of persons who have come to terms with their conscience are approaching the altar to receive the Bread of

Angels. For several days we have spent as much as twelve hours in the confessional. On the Feast of the Annunciation, which I assigned for a General Communion, in the cathedral alone nearly 1500 adults approached the Sacred Table at the Solemn High Mass. Many of them were among the most respectable people of the town. Over 500 of them were men, and the races, both masters and slaves, stood side by side in the presence of God. In other churches and in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel of the Cathedral, Communion was distributed non-stop until 12:30. Hence it has been calculated that more than 4000 persons received Communion on that day alone. Thus we have begun to gather the fruit of the apostolic tasks of a lifetime: frequent restitutions, many of them considerable; marriages constantly being regularized; concubinage being stamped out, and other triumphs of *still greater transcendence*, in virtue of which it is not too daring to hope that if the rest of Cuba imitates my Diocese and cleanses its conscience, we may, through the mercy of God and the protection of Mary Most Holy, look forward to days of peace and true happiness in this part of the Island that forms my Diocese. In your good and sound judgement, you know full well that people are brought more readily to order by the exhortation of their Prelates, by the preaching of God's Word, by the good example of Priests and by the other practices of our holy religion, than by bayonets. For since the practices of religion are of heavenly origin, they directly reach and conquer hearts.

I have intentionally dwelt on what may seem a digression, because I believe that it is just the opposite. For by this practical test and by what I myself have been experiencing, I can bolster my opinion, namely, that these are very docile and religious people; that their belief should not be attacked either directly or indirectly; that it is very risky to adopt measures that would in the least way wound their religious sentiments; that to despoil some sisters of their Convent, in disregard of the recentness of its foundation, would be to touch the very apple of the people's eyes. On the contrary, if you would have the Islanders bless the hour in which Providence brought you here to govern them, it would be very much to your purpose to respect everything touching upon religion, to give ear to the prelates who, with the Gospel in one hand and charity in the other, will be able to move their consciences and to disarm those who might try to delude the masses with vain promises of more palmy future. I make so bold as to assure



you --and in this I have no doubt that I am faithfully interpreting the sentiments of my two brother bishops and those of all the sound clergy on the Island-- that no worldly interest has brought me here from Spain. Indeed, at the very outset I declined the appointment, insisted again on declining it and, when pressed a third time, accepted it under obedience. I have never possessed anything, and today, when I find myself invested with a dignity that I rightly find so repugnant, since its burden so far surpasses my powers, that I continue in it only by placing myself in the hands of Providence. Under the glitter of my Dignity I glimpse naught but my misery: I was poor, I lived poor and I remain poor. I repeat, only obedience has been able to subdue me, and that, only on the supposition that I may thus provide fuel for charity, for the love of God and of my neighbors, in which I desire to be set aflame. The day I find my mission blocked, the day my hands are tied to prevent me from doing good or my voice goes unheard, so long as my aims are founded on justice and charity --the only incentives I deem worthy of acting for-- on that day I will leave my post and will not regard it as any sort of loss to my person, since all I need, as a missionary, is to be poor, to love God, to love my neighbors and to win their souls and at the same time, my own.

I will doubtless have tired you with this long written account, but I am sure you will forgive me, both because of your kindness and because of the delicacy of the matters I have dealt with in it. My aim is not to flatter myself that the reasons I have put forward must needs move you. Rather, it is my hope that if you value them, you will follow your enlightened conscience and act on them, as if I had laid no claim to them, for I seek nothing else than what is good. And I will do my utmost to see to it that nobody so much as knows that I am behind it. In fine, I hope that you will do justice to my intentions. For my part I promise you that I will ask God to grant you all the skill you seek and need in order to carry out the delicate commission which our Lady Queen has entrusted to you, a commission in which I, without exceeding any of my attributes, can do no less than cooperate as much as I can. May God bless you for your loyal and Christian sentiments. And know that you have the utmost consideration and special respect of your ever attentive and ready servant and Chaplain, who kisses your hand.

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba.

Santiago, Cuba, 28 March 1851.

**108. [171] To the Captain General of Cuba**

(EC I, 488-494)

**Introductory Note**

The Saint again addresses Don José de la Concha, this time concerning two dispatches (which the Archbishop encloses) sent to him earlier by the Captain General regarding some men who had been nominated to fill two vacancies among clerical “Congregations” or associations of priests in Santiago and Bayamo. The ‘Congregants’ had varying fee-schedules, depending on whether they were religious or secular priests. If any of them accepted the very underpaid charge of running a Parish on an interim basis, the modification of their fee-schedule was (quite unfairly) regulated by law. The Saint therefore offers some answers to remarks made on the subject by the Public Prosecutor and the Comptroller of the Royal Exchequer, who were inclined to do away with both kinds of “Congregations.” In his own analysis of the situation, the Saint shows a keen appreciation of the dearth of qualified sacred ministers in Cuba, which the suppression of these Congregations would only exacerbate. This letter, though undated, was surely written during the month of April 1851, and very likely early in the month, because the “Holy Mission” the Archbishop mentions here, which he preached in the Capital of his Diocese, ended on April 6th. From other sources we know that in the wake of this mission, he kept on conferring the Sacrament of Confirmation until the end of May. He also offers an answer to a question which the Captain General himself had posed regarding the band of Missionary Priests that Claret had brought with him from Spain. They are there for the itinerant ministry of the Word, for the ongoing evangelization of the much neglected faithful of his archdiocese, on which the Saint places one of his highest priorities. The last paragraphs of this letter offer us a rich insight into some of the core essentials and still valid elements of the Claretian notion of the missionary life.

**Text**

Your Excellency:

I am returning to you the two attached dispatches you saw fit to send me so that I could manifest my opinion on them before any decision was made. Let me begin by applauding and thanking your Excellency for taking such a wise measure, because the judgment of

the Prelate, aside from his being competent in these matters, is indispensable, in the interests of both justice and propriety.

The terms of the nominations to the two vacancies in the Congregations in this City and in Bayamo have given rise to a question between the former ecclesiastical Governor of this Diocese on the one hand, and the Prosecutor and Comptroller of the Royal Exchequer of this Province, on the other. The Governor fixed his attention on the priests who were managing two parishes on an interim basis and bestowed on them the two vacancies, pending Your Excellency's approval insofar as it pertains to you. The two public officials opposed this bestowal, thus stirring up a question which, as I understand it, can be summed up in four points:

- 1) The Congregants receive their income as such, and not as Pastors; 2) according to the current ordinances, Regular Congregants can manage parishes on an interim basis, while taking a fifteen per cent cut in their income as Congregants; 3) this ordinance does not extend to Secular Congregants who, in case they are assigned as Pastors, should opt for one of the two offices; 4) if the Congregants serve in parishes more than they do in their Congregations, their Congregations should be suppressed.

In passing, the Comptroller points out the considerable savings that this would involve for the royal coffers. I would agree with him regarding the first three points, in which the Congregants have not been established to manage Parishes, and that if Regulars have been allowed to take charge of them this should entail a lowering of their allotment, but this is not the case with Seculars. Yet would it not be useful to extend this concession to the latter? I haven't the slightest doubt that it would be; since there are scarcely any Regulars available to fulfill this task, though there is a crying need for it. This need would not be so great if all Pastors had the due allotments, but Your Excellency knows as well as I do how badly they are provided for. Getting down to precise cases, the Parishes of Santa Cruz and Nuevitas are ordinarily poorly attended to and are sometimes even abandoned; because whenever anyone is found to manage them, especially the second, he soon clamors to be removed so as not to die of hunger. The Parish of Nuevitas has an annual endowment of three pesos, and last year all the burials that took place were performed gratis, as an alms. Well, then, if a Congregant, who is already receiving twenty-five pesos less than is coming to him, is sent there, how will the faithful in that place be able to receive the services they need?

Which is more important? To effectively suppress a parish, which is a necessity in any town, let alone in an area so far from the

next parish that the latter cannot reasonably attend to it or send a substitute even in a case of urgent necessity; or to send it a Congregant who can fittingly take charge of it? And what need could be more pressing than that of a town which does not have so much as a minister to administer the Sacraments to it? To expand on such an obvious and simple point would be both useless and burdensome for someone like Your Excellency, whose time is already taxed by many other peremptory matters that need to be attended to -- and this is said without the least intent to disparage your good judgment.

This brings me to the final point, which is of greater importance. It would seem that the Comptroller of this Province would not disapprove the suppression of the Congregations, since he feels that their members would be more usefully employed in serving Parishes. According to the gentleman himself, this would result in a saving of more than 4,000 pesos for the Royal Coffers; but the Prosecuting Attorney is moved not so much by the saving, as by the better assignment or investment of funds, endowing Pastors with more than is their due. I cannot help differing with both of these opinions if set forth in this fashion. The Congregations should not be suppressed, in the first place because this would gravely prejudice the spiritual nourishment of the faithful. These Congregations were established in order to repair, insofar as possible, the harm done to the Church by the suppression of the Monastic Congregations. Let us take the case of Cuba, for example, and then broaden it to include other places where there are Congregations. In Cuba, Your Excellency, there are no more than four Pastors with 40,000 faithful under their charge. Each one of these Pastors must administer the Sacrament of Penance to at least 6,000 adults. Supposing that each adult goes to confession no more than once a year, the Pastor must daily hear over 30 confessions. Now since such a long time elapses between one confession and the next, these confessions could never be brief. Besides this, he alone has to administer everything else relating to the care of souls, such as baptisms, marriages, anointing the sick, burials, keeping parish registers, providing birth certificates for those who request them, as well as preaching God's word and catechizing (and for these two tasks he can do no less than prepare himself), not to mention all that concerns his personal priestly ministry, such as celebrating Mass, reciting the Divine Office and devoting at least some time to the study of moral questions.

This succinct recital will serve Your Excellency as a résumé of the notion of what a Pastor is, without adding such matters as the healing of broken marriages, vigilance for the customs of their faith-

ful, and attending to other extraordinary tasks which nonetheless crop up every day. In attending to such a heap of concerns, what would happen to Pastors of one church, if a neighboring church with the same burden of confessions and preaching were suppressed?

I would likewise make so bold as to remind Your Excellency that none of those who work alongside me are exempt from fulfilling their duties and none of them is allowed to remain idle. In proof of this, suffice it to say that during the time I have been governing my diocese, the number of confessions and communions administered in the Capital alone have been in the thousands. Now if the Congregation of Saint Francis, whose Congregants have helped me during the Holy Mission I have just given, were suppressed, how much harm would this not involve for the vicinity? It is precisely one of the Churches where the greatest worship is offered to the Creator and the greatest benefits are provided for the faithful. And if one should still insist that the Congregations should be suppressed because Pastors are more useful than Congregants, I would answer that just because one thing is less valuable than another, it is not a sufficient reason for destroying it. If abuses have sometimes been committed in the appointment of Congregants by choosing persons little or less apt for the job, this is not reason enough to proceed against an institution which is in itself so beneficial. And on this point I would respond that under my command, for a man to become a Congregant, he must be deemed worthy by reason of his good conduct and hard work. I believe that this protestation should satisfy Your Excellency, because it is a responsibility incumbent upon me to oblige each of my subordinates to fulfill their respective duties.

As for the savings alluded to, suffice it to observe that these 4,000 pesos are but a tiny part of the goods that rightly belong to Regulars. In my opinion, until such time as the Church is indemnified for these prejudicial measures, it should by no means be deprived of this scant compensation.

And now I would like to reply to the Prosecutor, who seems bent on suppressing the congregations so that, with the savings accruing from this, the government could increase the endowment of pastors, which is, alas, all too slight and insufficient, as the gentleman himself allows. As far as it goes, I am happy to know that he recognizes this need, which I wholeheartedly endorse. But without failing in conscience I cannot agree with the kind of compensation he proposes, which would be tantamount to meeting one obligation in justice by failing against another. The Government has acknowledged the debt

it incurred toward the Church when it saw fit to suppress her religious communities and appropriate their assets, and doubtless this circumstance influenced the establishment of the congregations we are dealing with, because this reparation is something sacred to us Catholics. But above and apart from this, the Government also recognizes another and no less sacred duty, namely, fittingly and decently to endow all the Clergy of the Island, since the Government has appropriated the tithe, in virtue of the papal bulls that made this dire concession, and also since the remainder from the tithe is highly useful to the Government, even after it has attended to its duty.

Having answered the remarks of the Prosecutor and the Comptroller of the Royal Exchequer in this Province, it remains for me to deal with a matter that Your Excellency saw fit to call to my attention regarding the Priests who have come with me from the Peninsula. Your Excellency believes that these priests could be very well assigned to Parishes whenever necessary. But in this regard I must remind Your Excellency that my aim in bringing them with me was none other than to have them help me in the work of preaching Holy Missions; and if I tie them down in parishes, I will be depriving myself of a service which is of the highest importance to me, a service for which the priests of the Island are unsuited, for it is a very heavy work which requires considerable learning and special practice if it is to be done well, and those who carry it out should, if possible, not be tied to any occupation that demands a fixed residence, such as the care of souls. I will only commission them to do so in given cases in order to make up for the faults which a pastor has committed in office, above all when he must be removed or transferred or for some other reason ceases in office. And even in this case, the commission will last for no longer than it takes for a new pastor or economo to arrive there. There are many and very forceful reasons that oblige me to proceed in this fashion, and I will do no more than touch on them. If a missionary is to work with due independence, he must not have a fixed residence or any other office of responsibility that would entail even the least occasion for discrediting him. I could go on at great length on the need for this independence, but it is not to the point, nor would it be right to do so in a communication that deals with this only as a side issue. The missionary needs to stir up his spirit by continual study and by complete withdrawal from the world several times a year, so as to be ever ready to fruitfully fulfill his apostolic tasks at the beck and call of his Prelate. To do so, it is by all means indispensable that he live in community, as is done by those who live with me in my residence. For in this way we can establish and follow a plan of life that com-

bines prayer and both private study and group study in conferences that are very profitable and even necessary; with daily and continual application to the confessional, to preaching and to other obligations of the sacred ministry in general, as well as to those that affect their ministry as missionaries in particular. This will enable them to alternate going out to minister in towns and coming back from time to time to their main residence in order to prepare themselves anew. An outgoing group will replace the incoming group; thus the mission will not cease to be constant and fruitful, and the workers will not lack the needed rest that this work demands. Moreover, in Capitals or important towns, mission houses like these are indispensable as gathering places for clergy or laity. For in them the clergy, by my arrangement, or both clergy and laity of their own will, may pass some time in recollection to obtain God's mercy by prayer and penance, or the reform of manners or perseverance in virtue. With this very brief response to Your Excellency's query, I would close by entreating you not to touch the existing congregations of secular clergy on the Island which, God willing, will serve as a base for my missions, and in future not to bestow any vacancies in them except on secular clergy. Thus, the pension that the Royal Exchequer sends them will serve to sustain them without the least burden on anyone, even when they go out on mission. Rather, they will be able to pay out of their own pocket the price for distributing among the poor such good books, rosaries, medals, holy cards and whatever else they may deem necessary to make the fruit of their apostolic tasks in towns more lasting.

I conclude, then, relying on Your Excellency's upright and religious intentions, so that after hearing my reasons, should you deem them well founded, you should not proceed to suppress the Congregations of the Island, for in this I am also following the judicious and no less correct report of the Accountant General of the Army, who kindly asked that I should give you my opinion, in order to proceed in this matter with the greatest assurance.

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba.

### 109. [178] **To Don Paladio Currius**

(EC I, 509-511)

#### **Introductory Note**

For the English-speaking reader who wishes to keep up with the cast of characters who keep reappearing in these Cuban letters,

now would be as good a time as any to consult John M. Lozano's *LSG* for background. See especially its headings *Cuba: Social Realities and Economic Situation*, pp. 169-171, *The Church*, pp. 171-173, *First initiatives*, pp. 173-174 and most importantly, *The Team of Collaborators*, pp. 174-178, which has some keen insights into 1) the meaning of Claret's two interrelated teams devoted, respectively, to the *governance* (including seminary formation) and *evangelization* of his sprawling Archdiocese and 2) the significance of Claret's own archiepiscopal household for the development of his view of apostolic-fraternal community life. Then, in the same work, see *Missionary Excursions*, p. 181 and *The First Expedition*, pp. 181-185.

While the Archbishop was missioning, visiting and ministering to the capital of the archdiocese, he sent out an "advance guard" to prepare the work of evangelization in El Cobre and Caney, which, because of their relative proximity to Santiago, were, so to speak, a complement of the work he himself was doing in Santiago. On May 20th, Frs. Coca and Subirana opened the mission in the town of El Cobre, and four days later, Fr. Currius and Capuchin Fr. Stephen Adoain opened one in Caney.

For a brief sketch of the life of Fr. Currius (1817-1903), see the Introductory Note to Letter 85 [126] above. For a masterly summary of the life of the very charismatic Navarrese Capuchin, Fr. Adoain, whose missionary life had driven him from Spain to Italy, France, Venezuela and Havana and then (because of the strong resistance which his fiery preaching had aroused among the undesirable element) to Santiago, see *LSG*, p. 176, where we also learn of his later missionary career in Guatemala and finally in Andalucia, where he died with such a reputation for holiness and healing gifts that the Cause of his Beatification is well advanced.

The present letter is in response to an earlier one from Currius who, to the Archbishop's surprise had apparently not yet received the copies of Claret's little (64 pp.) book, "The Christian's Manna," as an adjunct to the mission. He notes that stories have been circulating about Fr. Adoain's alleged trouble-making in Havana, as the General of the City, Field Marshal Joseph MacCrohon, has informed him. MacCrohon, a tall, agreeable and well-mannered man, had personally gone out to meet Claret on his arrival in Santiago in February. He had been replaced in office a short time later. The postscript announces that Claret is coming in person to close both missions.



**Text**

Santiago, 27 May 1851

To the Rev. D. Paladio Currius, P.

My Very Dear Sir:

I just received your letter and I am delighted that all has been going well, despite the rains. I believed that you would already have received the “Mannas,” since I left orders for them to be sent to you on the day you set out.

I don’t know whether you know what is going on in El Cobre against the Missionaries who are there. I have no doubt that this is the work of the enemy and that he is availing himself of ill-meaning men in order to hinder them from doing good; but sometimes the lack of caution on the part of apostolic workers gives rise to this. This is why St. Paul said: “See then that you walk circumspectly... because the days are evil” [Eph 5:15-16]. Read the present letter to the Capuchin Father and tell him that for the present I have had no complaint about the two of you, but that the landholders are most concerned about the Capuchin, whom they say was sent away from Havana under suspicious circumstances, as the General of this City told me last night. And though I stood up for his honor, this does not dispel all doubts, so that he must proceed in a doubly cautious way.

Commend to God what I am already doing for you, and ask what you will of your attentive servant and unworthy Chaplain, who kisses your hand.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba

P.S. Tomorrow the steamboat is arriving and on Wednesday the 4th we will be setting out.

**110. [188] To Fr. Currius**

(EC I, pp. 546-547)

**Introductory Note**

Claret informs Currius of the good results obtained in El Cobre and of the Missionaries’ opinion that in view of the extraordinary results achieved by his presence “to confirm in both ways” (that is, not only in the sacrament of Confirmation, but also in strengthening the faithful through his presence and through the sacrament of Matrimony administered to numerous unwed couples), Claret should person-

ally appear in all of the cities where they are going to give missions. Thus, the last days of the mission would coincide with the beginning of his first Pastoral Visitation of the Archdiocese. And so he asks Currius how the present mission in Morón (four and a half leagues from Santiago) is going, and what day he and Adoain think it best for him to arrive there. As things turned out, Claret's departure from El Cobre was delayed. New business arose, demanding that Claret proceed directly to the important town of Puerto Príncipe (Camagüey), so that he was not only unable to close the mission at Morón, or the one that Currius and Adoain preached at Guananicum, but also the one preached by Subirana and Coca in Tiguabos.

### **Text**

To Rev. Paladio Currius, P.  
Cobre, 26 June 1851

My Very Dear Sir:

The present letter is to inform you that in this town of El Cobre, where I arrived on the 14th, I have preached for nine straight days. All of us have had to hear confessions constantly, and unwed couples (of whom there were 200) are getting married (one day, the wedding banns were proclaimed for more than 80). The whole thing couldn't go any better, thank God, and I am not thinking of leaving without arranging them all, lest they grow cold. Perhaps this very Tuesday I will already go on to the City. My companions are of the opinion that I should go to Morón to confirm in both ways, since they have seen the happy results of my coming to El Cobre. So they have asked me to arrange things so that I can always go on to administer Confirmation and conclude the missions in town, both those given by you two and by the others.

Answer me and tell me how the Mission is going and on what day it seems prudent to both of you for me to arrive. You can communicate with the Curate, and after you tell me the day, the Curate will be informed...

I have thought of sending M. Subirana and Coca to Tiguabos and Santa Catalina, with the French.

If you need anything, you can write me. Let the present letter serve for both of you. However, give my regards to Fr. Stephen [Adoain] and the Curate, and ask what you will of your servant, who kisses your hand.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba.

## 111. [196] To the Governor of the Province

(EC I, pp. 571-576)

### Introductory Note

This letter, dated 15 July 1851, is in reply to a rather curt note, dated 2 July 1851, from the new Governor General of the Province, Field Marshal Don Joaquín del Manzano (who replaced General Mac Crohon on 26 March of that year). In essence, the Governor General was reacting to Claret's approval of some racially mixed marriages during the First Pastoral Visitation of his Archdiocese. Manzano's letter to Claret may be seen in Fr. J. Bermejo's *Epistolario Pasivo de S. Antonio María Claret* (cited hereafter as EPC), vol. I, p. 115. A Royal Decree issued on 16 October 1805 required that the Governor's permission be obtained for any marriage between a Spanish *noble* and a woman of color.

In practice, this decree had been wickedly enlarged to include all white males, most of whom were in no sense of the word noble, thus leading to the rampant spread of concubinage in Cuba. It seems that Manzano had been moved to question the local priest's (and by implication, the Archbishop's) alleged infringement of the Governor General's right, by a report from the rather two-faced Commandant of El Cobre, who should have known better. For a further account of this whole matter, see Claret's Autobiography, nn. 518-520. Moreover, in the letter itself Claret points to the existence of a later law (of 6 December 1847), which in practice removes the basis for these iniquitous evasions of public morality. The letter reveals Claret's tactful but forceful efforts to maintain good relations between Church and State, in a land where anti-Catholic and anti-Spanish prejudices were being fanned by their great neighbor to the North.

### Text

Archdiocese of  
Santiago de Cuba

The desire to make the truth clear obliges me to reply to Your Honor's official dispatch of the 11th day of this July. In it you assert the need, more than ever under the present circumstances, for complete harmony to prevail between the respective [Church-State] authorities. Such is my own feeling, as I believe I have manifested to Your Honor more than once, assuring you that I would never take

an official step in any affair of importance without first coming to an understanding with you by word or unofficially, because that is the best way to overcome the difficulties that may arise in any affair. For my part, I have not failed in this proposal I offered Your Lordship, and I hereby ratify what I said then.

I will go on, then, to answer your dispatch. I respect the opinion of those who hold that attempted marriages between people of unequal social rank may be harmful to the State; but not absolutely. That is to say, there are cases, such as those at El Cobre, in which it is more important both politically and morally to authorize them. As for the argument that marriages contracted out of caprice or momentary passion are prejudicial to the country, it applies to marriages between persons of equal rank no less than it does to those between persons of unequal rank, no matter what the article of instruction for justices of the peace may state. For I discover in its dispositions another motive besides inequality of rank itself, namely, that of mixing races. Be that as it may, there are cases where this mixing cannot be avoided, since it has already taken place, as happened in the cases the Archbishop has dealt with. Indeed, he noted that one such liaison had resulted in eight children. Now, where there is no fear that such a union would alter peace and harmony (the very reason on which this article is based); when, on the contrary, to judge from what the Commandant himself said, yet now seems to contradict, the disunion might lead to a suicide (necessarily followed by other more or less long-term catastrophes in such families); when it would otherwise be morally impossible to avoid scandal or a breach of public morals since it is not easy to break off relationships of several years' standing (witnessed to by the very existence of their offspring).

In these exceptional cases, I say, the reason underlying any such law ceases to exist. And it would seem that this article should be more reasonably interpreted according to its proper intent, because it states that such marriages should be suspended when, because of the disparity between the rank of the parties or for some other reason, it may be presumed that the loving union between the parties will not be long-lasting. Besides, it rarely happens that dark-skinned sons of white fathers are so described in baptismal records. Because of this incorrigible abuse, many presumptively but not really white males, will in future try to avoid getting married, on the pretext that they do not want to mix the races. Over and above this, where native-born adults are concerned, the enforcement of this royal authorization is neither demanded nor in practice exercised, since it suffices that the parties themselves be in agreement. And as the disposition of the act

granted on 6 December 1847 is of a general scope, I believe that it would not constitute a misinterpretation to apply it to any class, since it makes no exceptions and its terms are absolute.

Be that as it may, I will now pass over the matter of whether such mixtures are a social and political evil that should be avoided if possible -- so long as no offspring has resulted therefrom-- or whether illicit liaisons ought to be broken off, without proceeding to a marriage. But if this excess cannot be corrected otherwise, what good would come from impeding it? A non-mixing of races? No; because it is a fait accompli. A prohibition of intimate relationships between whites and blacks? No; because the law does not go that far. In contrast, many good things would necessarily follow the authorizing of such marriages. First of all, it would satisfy morality and respect religion. I believe that this is the most considerable reason, and one that cannot be set aside by a Government that happens to be exclusively Catholic. For my part, I am the one most responsible for this matter, and I must in conscience bend every effort to see to it that neither morality nor religion suffer any detriment. In this field, Your Lordship knows full well that my testimony is exceptionally important, however unworthy I may be, and that you ought to aid and abet me in it, because it is one of the most delicate affairs of my ministry, and one for which I must give a strict accounting before God. Besides, Her Majesty's Government keenly impressed on me the fact that I should bend every effort to see to the reform of customs in this unhappy country.

I would be failing in my duty to my Queen and Country, and to my conscience as well, were I to do otherwise. It is essential that we put a curb on this scandal, in which, alas, all classes are involved. Cohabitation is a normal state, at least in this part of the Island. Your Lordship knows this as well as I do, because you handed me the lists of those who live thus in all parts of the Province under your command. Why else did I ask for them, and why else did you hand them to me? Was it not to avoid concubinage at all costs, because there is no worse evil hereabout? I believe that religion is the first and most effective element in society.

Therefore, it must be strengthened, even if this means the intermarriage of whites and blacks. Moreover, if concubinage were allowed to continue between persons of unequal station, the mixture of races is not the only thing that would be involved: the education of their children would be unattended to. A lawful father takes better care of his offspring than one who is not. The children of the former have no reason to be scandalized at their parents; but as soon as the

children of the latter reach the use of reason, they begin to sense and grasp that one doesn't have to have a sacramental marriage in order to join with a person of the opposite sex and set up a conjugal life. Now, as to whether this licentiousness of manners may or may not have an influence on the sad events that we who are loyal subjects rightly fear, Your Honor knows well enough, without my having to point it out to you. For the fact is, that by granting the assurance that nothing obliges a couple of unequal station to contract marriage, one is authorizing one of the disorders that does most harm to society and to the family. Moreover, I believe, in those cases where there are children and a separation is impossible, that by not exerting any sort of coercion --which I, for my part, have never done and will never do-- some of these disorderly liaisons are allowed to go on, thus in some way fostering an attitude of assurance that they can proceed with impunity.

The wicked cannot fail to find encouragement in the knowledge that they will not have to legitimize their bad relationships, since it has, unfortunately, become public knowledge that there is a divergence on this point between the two authorities [Church and State], so that some who were ready to marry now see their marriages suspended as a result of the circular passed around to the District Captains by the Political Government, doubtless with the best of intentions, but not without at least some harm to ecclesiastical authority in a matter affecting morals. The Archbishop does *not* believe that the most important question of the day is the fact that a few white men have married dark women by whom they have had children; he *does* believe it to be of the utmost importance to see to it that the greatest vigilance should be exercised so that beliefs are not lost, that good customs are not corrupted and that bad ones are corrected. This is something that is very much at issue today in order to win the public's trust.

The very ones who are trying to change this realize that morality is the most insuperable obstacle blocking them from carrying out their plans. As for the Commandant of El Cobre, I did not display any indignation or hurt feeling in my earlier dispatch to him, but simply asked him to fulfill his duty. I was only surprised that before he took action he said nothing to me, since theretofore we had always acted by agreement. He might have taken action at the right time, but in view of these consequences, I believe that it would have been much better if he had spoken to me ahead of time, or had at least told me of the harmful results which, to his way of thinking, might ensue. His

conduct is all the harder to explain, given the harmony I maintained with him in reaching an agreement on various marriages that should take place. I should like to see how Your Honor, were you handling this matter, could defend the conduct of a functionary whom I accuse of making inexact statements to the Pastor in a letter which I held in my own hands, a letter which the Captain himself took care to ask me for, thus collecting a document for which a Prelate of the Church should not have to insist on without prejudice to his sacred character.

I limited myself to requiring that those living in unlawful liaisons should either separate or get married, according to the commands of divine and human law. In so doing I exposed myself to mockery by one whom I warned, who chose to scorn my charitable exhortations. But I gladly submit to it all, so long as I have satisfied the demands of my conscience.

Finally, since the Captain in question has by his own admission acknowledged that one of these marriages had to take place in order to avoid a suicide, and likewise, since he also understood at least the rashness of his letter to the Pastor, which I returned to him at his insistence, then the language I used in disapproving his unexpected behavior should be viewed not so much as an expression of indignation on my part, as one of surprise and dismay. And now I repeat that I can only attribute it to the ill will of other persons who suggested that he proceed in this fashion. I believe this all the more, since the enemies of order will not fail to take advantage of the least occasion to cause disagreement among the authorities. Thus it is being said here, and has reached my ears, that the Governor has sent a forceful letter to the Archbishop, protesting his approval of marriages between persons of unequal rank. Who knows whether those who directly or indirectly promote such disagreements are not the very ones spreading this gossip, padding and exaggerating the facts, doubtless in order to discredit both Church and Civil authorities?

I believe that Your Honor must know this as well as I do, and that it behooves both of us to remain united, since our aim is the same: to promote the happiness of the country by honoring religion, morality and homeland. For my part, I assure you that I am ready to yield whenever it is possible, because contradicting one another rarely or never leads to any good, and also because I am well aware that now, as never before, prudence and discretion is necessary for those who govern.

May God preserve Your Lordship for many years. [Santiago] Cuba, July 15, 1851.

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba.

To the Political and Military Governor of this Place.

## 112. [198] **To the Captain General of Cuba**

(EC I, 578-581)

### **Introductory Note**

The present letter asks for a stay of execution for the members of the so-called Liberationist Society of Puerto Príncipe, who had led a failed insurrection against the Spanish. Naturally, these men were regarded as heroes by Cuban secessionists, but as dangerous criminals by the Spanish Government. The Archbishop's petition was granted for all who had conspired in the attempt, except for the four leaders, although they, too, would have been granted clemency if they had asked for it. However, they made the mistake of thinking that they could escape on a North American vessel that was supposed to sail from Nuevitas and pick them up off Punta Ganado. But the government was on the watch, and they were caught. In early August the Council of War met in Havana and condemned the four ringleaders to death, and they were in fact executed on August 12th. The Saint speaks of his effectiveness as a peacemaker in his Autobiography: "Thus there were three attempts to overthrow [Spanish] Cuba during my stay there; the first was very powerful but disappeared completely with the Lord's help; the second was not so strong; the third was totally ineffective. Because of this, the enemies of Spain could hardly stand the sight of me. They said that the Archbishop of Santiago did them more harm than the whole army. They were sure that as long as I remained on the island their plans would fail, and so they began plotting to kill me" (Aut 524). The Saint's remarks here about 'having the people in the palm of his hand', might seem a bit vainglorious, but he was speaking in view of the magnificent spiritual results that were already forthcoming from his pastoral visitation. At the beginning of his ministry as Archbishop, he used to keep a "Notebook Record" which shows that in under two years he counted up "77,447 Communions, 90,070 Confirmations, 8,517 marriages between persons living in concubinage and 210 reconciliations between divorced couples" (Cf. Currius' testimony at the Apostolic Process of Tarragona, session 6).



The present letter is addressed to the highest civil authority in Cuba, Governor General José Gutiérrez de la Concha, whose residence was in Havana. For a sketch of General de la Concha's life, see the Introductory Note to Letter 107 [169] above. Although the letter bears no date, Fr. Fernández (*HD*, p. 652) states that it was written on 25 July 1851. Some of the letter is illegible, since at a later date someone seems to have overturned an inkwell, thus blotting out a good part of the text. Hence the numerous ellipses that appear in the present translation.

### Text

Most Excellent Sir:

In his Holy Gospel, Jesus Christ tells us that "the Good Shepherd lays down his life for his sheep" [Jn 10:11]. And in effect, what He taught by word, He upheld by His deeds; since to save and redeem us He gave Himself over to suffering and even death. Now, how could I regard myself as a good shepherd of this flock that the Lord has entrusted to me, unless I strove by all means possible to save the lives of these unhappy people who, though they have rebelled against and disobeyed the authorities, are still my subjects and my sheep? The men I refer to are Don Joaquín Agüero, Don...

Your Excellency will tell me that according to every law they ought to die. I know it, sir. But let me also say that at times there are circumstances in which the capital punishment due to certain crimes is commuted to exile or imprisonment.

The aim of applying penalties to the guilty is not just to punish those who have committed crimes, but also to serve as a warning and a lesson to others. As for the former [namely, the punishment of the guilty], these proud and haughty men are so fond of their independence they would be punished more keenly by chains and imprisonment than by death itself. A sentence such as I propose would have a greater impact than the news of 700 killed in battle. As for the latter [teaching others a lesson], I can assure you, my dear General, that no good will come of the [death-] sentence, but rather a great deal of harm to the public cause; for if these men suffer the death penalty, they will be regarded as heroes, victims and...[there is a large inkblot here, perhaps followed by the words "martyrs for"] the freedom of their homeland. From then on, they will be thought or spoken of only with enthusiasm, the people's blood will boil, and they will always be plotting to shake off the yoke and tyranny (as they say) of the Spaniards.

And what will our enemies in other countries say? ... I leave that for Your Excellency to conjecture... Besides, we hardly need a lesson of this sort at the present moment, when the country is at peace and both the troublemakers and the troubled are disenchanted. Thus, if they see that the Government is of a kindly bent, they will at length be persuaded that the Spanish Government is paternal and not tyrannical, as some charlatans would like to characterize it.

As Your Excellency already knows, I have never meddled in political affairs, but on this island religion is so closely entwined with politics that when a person speaks of one, he can hardly avoid clashing with the other, even when he does not mean to do so. It is true that in my exhortations to the people I have thus far not budged --nor will I budge-- from the holy and salutary maxims of God's good news; but I have inadvertently and unthinkingly disarmed the revolutionaries and undermined all the plans of the ringleaders, so that some have said that 'no one did them more harm or caused them more fear than the Archbishop, because through his preaching and alms he has completely won the people over, and we can do nothing without the people. And not only does he lessen respect for us among our own countrymen, but also among those from abroad.' For if the day comes when the foreigners arrive, all the Archbishop has to say is: "These men are protestants and heretics, you cannot communicate with them or favor them, rather you must resist them." Then the people will simply get rid of them. This is why, since they know of no way to get around me, they have tried to poison me, and would have succeeded in doing so, except that one of them who had been hired to execute the deed repented of it. I pardoned them wholeheartedly. I am telling Your Excellency this so that you may better understand the current state of the country. I can assure you that I have the people in the palm of my hand, and that so long as God preserves my life on this island, there will be no revolution. And if some ringleader raises the banner of insurrection, he will be left dangling alone on the horns of the bull, as has happened in the present attempted coup, which has had practically no followers.

And thus, my dear General, I ask you, not only as Prelate but also as a Spaniard, to spare the life of these seven men, and I trust that you will grant what I ask, because I know that your intentions are both holy and praiseworthy.

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba.

### 113. [199] To the Diocesan Clergy

(EC I, 582-584)

#### Introductory Note

This letter concerns the reforming of procedures for recruiting vocations to the priesthood. It is a decree abolishing the former system of recruitment, which had been a miserable failure. Claret himself remarks on the dreadful state of affairs in the diocesan seminary: "More than 30 years had passed without seeing the ordination of a single resident seminarian. At the beginning of their studies they all said they had a vocation and were educated at the seminary's expense; but toward the end of their studies they would say that they didn't want to be priests, after which they were graduated and became lawyers. And so it came about that Santiago had a swarm of lawyers, all fed and educated at the seminary's expense, while the few priests there were outsiders. With God's help this situation was completely changed" (Aut 555-556). For more background, see J. M. Lozano, *LSG*, especially the chapter on the "Renewal of Diocesan Structures," under the heading "The Seminary" pp. 216-218. The letter was written on 4 August 1851, during the Archbishop's pastoral visitation of Puerto Príncipe. The letter was addressed to the clergy of Puerto Príncipe, but in its last few lines, it was extended to the whole Archdiocese. It is signed by the Secretary of the Visitation, Fr. Manuel José Miura, Secretary of the Visitation. Fr. Miura was born in Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic) in 1815. He emigrated to Cuba in 1827, did his ecclesiastical studies privately until 1838, and was ordained in 1839, served as a hospital chaplain until 1845 and filled many posts of responsibility and eventually (at Claret's recommendation) became Dean of the Cathedral Chapter. He was deeply admired and esteemed by Claret, who addressed several letters to him, and by Mother Antonia Paris, who named him executor of her will in 1855. For further information, see J.M. Bermejo, *EPC*, vol. I, p. 183, note 3.

#### Text

In order to ascend to the sublime state of the Priesthood, one ought to have a true and perfect vocation, and not be moved merely by the prospect of incomes from benefices. Now there are some speculators like this who are not called, as Aaron was, to the priesthood, and who, though they lack both virtue and learning, nevertheless aspire to be enrolled in the ecclesiastical state. And since one must

never tolerate, let alone aid or abet, the utter blindness of laymen who hold such benefices, we have been led to issue the following mandate: Each one of these individuals must manifest in particular whether he has a true vocation and, lacking one, he will renounce his benefices, so that title to them may be bestowed on others more fitting and worthy of belonging to the clerical state. These aspirants must be fully aware that they should be chaste, because the lustful are unworthy of the Priestly state. They should practice the virtues, frequent the Sacraments and have a great love for the things of God our Lord. They must be fond of Church services, devoted to Mary Most Holy, zealous for the salvation of souls. They must edify the faithful by word and good example, and teach them catechism. They should apply themselves to study, for a clergyman without learning is like a bell that does not ring.

Hence the youngest of them should devote themselves to study the basics of letters, while the more advanced should study Latin grammar. Every three months, their teachers will give an accounting of their application and advancement to us or to our Vicar in this City. If it is shown that they lack such application, then the benefices they held will be declared vacant, because they are henceforth deemed unworthy to hold them. Those who have studied Latinity will go on to our Seminary College of Cuba, to pursue courses in Philosophy and Theology, and to learn the other sciences that should adorn a Priest. At least every month, they must receive the Holy Sacraments, and prove that they have done so by a certificate that they will present to their confessor, with a notation that it has been issued to them by their preceptor. It is most painful to see that some, after wasting their boyhood and youth in idleness and then frittering away the incomes derived from their benefices, later go on to present themselves for ordination solely on the commendation of their possessing several benefices. Now as this does not give them the required virtue and learning, but rather makes their vocation all the more suspect, it offers a sad prospect of the gain they tend to make on their Priestly Ministry. Such persons must be warned that no one will be advanced to Holy Orders unless he has given proof of his decided vocation, virtues and learning. And that these provisions may take effect, let the corresponding communication be sent to Our Vicar, so that he may make it understood to the parties concerned, by publishing it in the official periodical of this City, for all to know. Given during the Holy Visitation of Puerto Principe on this fourth day of August of the year eighteen hundred and fifty one.

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba.  
 By order of His Excellency, my Lord Archbishop.  
 Father Manuel José Miura, Secretary of the Visitation.

And as this act and provision was given for the City of Puerto Príncipe, His Excellency ordered that it should also be extended to all Vicarages and Parishes of the Archdiocese.

So His Excellency has provided and ordered, and so attest I,  
 Manuel José Miura, Secretary of the Visitation.

#### 114. [200] To the Captain General of Cuba

(EC I, 585-588)

### Introductory Note

For biographical details on General Concha, see the Introductory Note to letter 107 [169] above. During his stay in Cuba, the Saint had to deal with three Captains General, namely Concha, who was succeeded in office by Cañedo, who was succeeded in office by the Marquis de la Pezuela in December of 1853. The most sympathetic of these was Pezuela, a poet and soldier of great Christian conscience (somewhat similar to Wilberforce in England), who shared Claret's views on the abolition of the evils of slavery, both in theory and in practice. General Concha, who was something of a fence-sitter, returned to power in August of 1854. For a concise treatment of Claret's dealings with these men, see J. M. Lozano, *LSG*, p. 207 f.

Claret shows considerable --even prophetic-- insight into the matter of this insurrection, which Lozano terms the "first Cuban battle for independence." His earlier letter to General Concha (cf. letter 112 [198] above) had probably prevented all the participants in the failed coup from being executed. But the leaders, Joaquín de Agüero, Miguel Benavides, Tomás Betancourt and Francisco de Zayas, had been condemned to death. Unfortunately, as things turned out, the four were in fact executed, despite Claret's charitable and prudent appeal for clemency. General Concha set greater store by the harsh opinion of the Commandant, General José Lemery, who wanted to teach all rebels a lesson. He indeed succeeded in teaching them a lesson, but one which would eventually (as Claret had predicted) lead to Spain's loss of the Island of Cuba. As for the Saint's reference to the uprising being "more the work of women than of men," Lozano notes: "It was said in local songs that the women of Camagüey [Puerto

Príncipe] shaved their heads as a gesture of mourning and protest. Four palm trees were planted to commemorate the four heroes" (LSG 183).

To appreciate the background of this situation, one has to bear in mind that a number of Cubans, many of them with pro-slavery and pro-Masonic sentiments, had been educated and become expatriates in such places as New York and Philadelphia, where they wrote and worked against the Spanish Government of Cuba. Moreover, in the Southern States, there was a pro-slavery, pro-Protestant and anti-Hispanic movement to annex Cuba in favor of the future Confederate cause. Claret, as a Roman Catholic Prelate, indeed, as Primate of the Indies and a member of the Queen's Council, was in honor bound to oppose this movement. As both Prelate and Spaniard, he now appeals to the conscience of General Concha, for clemency on behalf of the ringleaders of the failed coup.

### **Text**

His Excellency

My Very Dear and Honored Sir:

I received your letter with such sentiments as you may well imagine, in view of the fact that I had gained nothing from your noble, humane and generous heart, although I know that it is animated by the same sentiments that animate my own. Moreover, with the keenest concern and sorrow, we have been in dread lest the Commandant General, in keeping with the instructions he received, should carry out his instructions condemning such, such, such and such a person to the death sentence.

This being so, Your Excellency, I have been advised that as Prelate of this country, Primate of the Indies and Councillor of Her Majesty (God save her), I had the faculties to tell the said General to suspend the execution of this sentence until I had recourse to Your Excellency, to acquaint you with my feelings: which I now do with all those affections of charity and zeal that befit the heart of a Spanish Prelate.

Most Excellent Sir: unworthy though I be, I am Archbishop, and undeserving though I be, I am a Councillor of Her Majesty. Therefore, Your Excellency should deign to heed carefully what I have to say to you. I respect and honor all the motives and ends which Your Excellency has indicated to me in support of levying the death penalty

against these unhappy men; and in truth, I can see that they are most just and fair. Nevertheless, allow me to state my feelings on the matter. I, perhaps more than anyone else, understand how things are in this country. For, besides seeing with my own eyes what others see, very many persons have opened up their hearts and confided in me. I know the complaints, plans and motives that they inwardly harbor. God knows the good that I have been able, with their help, to do in this regard in the City of Santiago, and I trust that I shall do even more in this city, because in truth there is more reason for it here. And so I tell you: it does not behoove you to apply the death sentence to these guilty men. In the first place, since the coup has already failed, this penalty would smack more of vengeance than of justice. In the second place, if this sentence is carried out, it will rankle in people's minds and they will never again be Spaniards at heart, but only outwardly and by force, whilst inwardly they will always be scheming, taking advantage of external pressures and preparing the country to yield to the pretensions of ambitious men from the United States. Moreover, as this uprising (I am not sure if Your Excellency realizes this) is more the work of women than of men, they will be infuriated and will nurse their families, from the cradle onward, on the milk of insurrection. And I dare say that if this sentence is carried out, the day will come when the Spanish Nation will lose this rich Isle. But if, on the contrary, these men are spared the death penalty and given a lesser one, I have been promised, and I believe it, that the people will be so grateful that they will ever after be faithful subjects of the Spanish Nation, and that if they learn that outsiders are planning an invasion, they themselves will be the first to prevent and oppose it. Moreover, the whole people rely on me, so that, after God and Mary Most Holy, they place all their trust in me; and if I can obtain for them this favor, my prestige among them, great as it already is, will be much greater and I will be able to do much more to foster public order. Moreover, besides being a Prelate, I am also a Spanish Prelate, and I dare say that if I did not take this step, it seems to me that I would neither be deserving of the confidence that Her Majesty's Government has placed in me, nor fulfilling the Mission that it entrusted to me.

Therefore, having seen, since the last letter I wrote you, how greatly the sentence given has affected the public Cause, I can do no less than to write you once more, as Prelate, on behalf of these poor members of my flock, and to advise you, as Her Majesty's Councillor, that it is not fitting for them to be put to death. But if Your Excellency fears compromising yourself or failing in your rightful duty, then be

so good as to order a suspension of the sentence and allow me to have recourse to Our Lady Queen. For since I am acting with this conviction and with these sentiments of charity, and for the national good, I have no fear of compromising myself, and I am ready to sacrifice my life for the good of my flock and that of the Spanish Nation.

On this occasion, I again offer myself as Your Excellency's most attentive servant, who kisses your hand.

A.M.C.

Puerto-Príncipe, 8 August 1851.

### **115. [201] To the Faithful of His Archdiocese**

(EC I, 589-590)

#### **Introductory Note**

This is a Circular Letter announcing that the First Sunday after Pentecost would mark the beginning of the Holy Mission and Pastoral Visitation of the important city of Puerto Príncipe (today's Camagüey). The city of Puerto Príncipe, which had not had a pastoral visitation in decades was, as we have seen, something of a political powder keg. In fact, during his stay there, on 12 August 1851, the ringleaders for whom he had sought clemency were executed. On that same day, proceeding from the United States, ex-General Narciso López landed on Cuban soil at the head of 400 or more men in another failed coup against Spanish rule. Located some 180 miles northeast of Santiago as the crow flies, Puerto Príncipe was really over 250 miles away by road. Hence on 16 July 1851, the Archbishop and his party set out by ship along the southeastern coast of Cuba, stopping at the port town of Manzanillo, where the Saint preached, and then sailed on to Santa Cruz, where they boarded a coach and traveled through torrential rains to Puerto Príncipe, the third-largest capital of the Island, where they arrived on the evening of July 19. The Saint began with a retreat to the clergy, which lasted until August 2. Claret himself preached a mission in the central Church of Our Lady of Mercy from August 16 to September 24, while his associates preached four missions in other churches. After numerous other activities in the city and thereabouts, he left Puerto Príncipe by train on November 15, heading for the eastern port city of Nuevitas, where more work --and troubles-- awaited him (cf. Lozano, *LSG*, pp. 181-184).



### **Text**

Since it is one of our principal sacred duties to announce the divine word to you by means of the Holy Mission, we had determined to begin it on Sunday, the seventeenth day of the present month, and to continue it during our Holy Pastoral Visitation of this City. Thus we will provide spiritual nourishment to our whole flock, so that through this holy food those who are already in grace may be further strengthened by it, while those who are deprived of grace may recover it, and thus all may gain the many indulgences which we hereby grant to all who attend the sermons of the Holy Mission, both those to whom we ourselves preach and also those to whom our Collaborators preach, and receive the Holy Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist.

The Holy Mission will take place in the following manner: We will preach in the Parish of Our Lady of Mercy after the Holy Rosary at nightfall; and since this Church alone, despite its spacious interior, cannot hold all those persons who, we are sure, will gladly hear the divine word, we have also determined that at the same hour our Secretary, Don Manuel Vilaró, will preach for some days in Saint Anne's Church and for others in the Church of Saint John of God, while another member of our household will do the same in the Church of Our Lady of Charity and in that of Saint Joseph, after giving the customary advance signal for the attendance of the faithful. When the Mission is finished, we will begin administering the Sacrament of Confirmation, in keeping with the order that we will announce.

During the time of the Mission, catechetical instructions will be given in all Churches, especially in Parishes, and boys and girls of ten years of age who have received the necessary instruction will receive their First Communion from us in a general Communion, followed directly by Confirmation. Those who do not take part in this general Communion will be confirmed after the Mission, as has been stated.

We have no doubt, then, given the religious devotion and pious sentiments of this vicinity, that you will all take advantage of the grace of this Holy Mission, which God and the Blessed Virgin are sending you through us, their unworthy servant.

Given in our Episcopal Residence, while we are making the Holy Visitation of Puerto Príncipe, on the fourteenth of August, eighteen hundred and fifty one.

Anthony M. Abp. of Cuba

By order of His Excellency, my Lord Archbishop.

Fr. Manuel José Miura, Secretary of the Visitation.

**116. [208] To the Bishop of Vic**

(EC I, 607-610)

**Introductory Note**

Although the Saint was unaware of it, this would be his last letter to reach Bishop Casadevall during the latter's lifetime. Casadevall died on 11 March 1852, and the news did not reach Claret for some time. Indeed, he addressed yet another letter to him on 7 April 1852 (cf. EC I, 630-631), still not knowing that he had died, for in it he mentions that he has not yet received an answer to his last letter to Casadevall. Oddly enough, Fr. Gil, who edited both letters, makes no mention of this.

This letter is of special interest for several reasons. First, it reveals that the Saint has by no means forgotten his struggling community at La Mercè in Vic, who were living in dire poverty because of their policy of not accepting stipends for the exercise of their preaching ministry. Bishop Casadevall made Claret aware of the situation and he, in turn, arranged for Currius to send a goodly number of Mass stipends to his Brethren in Vic to help alleviate their distress. Claret himself has had to practice some rather careful economies in his own numerous household.

Second, it gives us an insight into Claret's continuing interest in the ministry of the printed word (especially regarding the work of the Religious Library, as can be seen in letters 202 ff. of EC I, not translated here), despite his truly heroic preaching efforts during this first Pastoral Visitation of his Archdiocese.

Third, it reveals something of the difficulties the Saint had to face during this visitation. He mentions the misery and squalor in which some pastors have to live, as well as the grave state of disrepair into which many churches had fallen, largely because the tithes for their upkeep were not being applied for that purpose by the Spanish Government, which had forced the Pope to agree to their collection by the State rather than by the Church. The Saint mentions that he has just returned to Nuevitas from his mission and visitation in nearby Bagá. He does not mention the unpleasantness that led to this unscheduled visit. He had arrived in Nuevitas on November 16 and began his mission there on that day, but saw his plans frustrated by the local bureaucracy. Lozano sums the matter up quite succinctly: "Here, he was to give some evidence of the strong side of his temperament. The Queen's birthday was approaching, and the district governor thought

it his duty to organize a gala ball for the local elite and festivals of all sorts for the general public. The Saint earnestly requested that he give up these projects, since they would distract the people from the more serious business of the mission. His requests fell on deaf ears. On the 19th, the day of the festivities, the Saint showed his displeasure by leaving town in the morning, while Vilaró remained behind to continue the mission, and he himself made the rounds of various villages and plantations, preaching and hearing confessions. He did not return until the 23rd" (*LSG*, p. 184).

To add to Claret's miseries, Fr. Currius had contracted yellow fever and was at death's door. But the "two" members of the Archbishop's household who went to rescue Currius and bring him back to Santiago fared worse still. They caught his disease and one of them, Mr. Telésforo Hernández (whom Fr. Lobo had brought from Spain as a scrivener), died on September 21, followed two weeks later by the other, Fr. Juan Pladebella, Professor of Moral Theology in the seminary. Currius, though too ill to go back to the strenuous work of the mission, had to substitute for Pladebella in the seminary.

### Text

His Excellency, the Bishop of Vic  
Nuevitas, 24 November 1851

My Dear and Most Esteemed Sir:

I have just received your most welcome letter and am apprized of all that you tell me in it. As regards La Mercè, I have not forgotten it, although you can well imagine how greatly I myself must economize, since I and my companions follow the same style of life as they do in La Mercè. Here I have to spend a great deal and am maintaining many. Before two of them died the other day, I was maintaining 21 in food, clothing and salary, as well as the serving staff, all of whom earn from 15 to 10 strong *pesos* per month. Everything is quite expensive here. Any sort of priest's biretta costs seven *duros*; binding a booklet, such as the one on the Daughters of the Heart of Mary, which is like a preparation for Mass, costs a *duro* and a half; and so it is with everything else. And, as you already know, I still can't get my whole income, as I would like to do, in order to repair some chapels or parish churches, which are as full of straw as a Christmas crib. I hardly feel right celebrating Mass, preaching missions or confirming in them, because they are so unsuitable.

My Lord, as I go about missioning and visiting the parishes of this Archdiocese, I am greatly consoled to see the docility of the people and the great good that is being done; on the other hand, it fills me with indignation to witness the Spanish Government's criminal neglect of Worship and Clergy in this Archdiocese. I am going to tell you a simple truth that might perhaps seem impossible to you. There are Parish Churches in which there is no endowment either for Worship or Clergy, and sometimes the poor curate is forced to go to a Black man's hut to ask if he can share his yam and plátano, in order not to die of hunger. God knows and you know, too, that I am a Spaniard and that if need be I'll die one; but I tell you that although the Spanish Nation had no other sin than the great injustice it is committing with the Parishes of this Archdiocese, God would have to chastise it dreadfully. When the Supreme Pontiff granted the King the tithes, he obliged him to maintain both Worship and Clergy with corresponding splendor. But this is not done, which is one of the reasons why the sons of this country complain so much of the Spaniards, seeing that despite the great sums they offer in tithes, besides other ever-growing contributions, they are left in such great neglect. I have just returned from my mission and visit in the town of Bagá, where I spoke with the proprietors. There are two of them. One told me that he pays 450 *duros* in tithes, yet the people are so neglected that they are left to die unattended like dogs. Mass has not been celebrated there for two years. And the pity is, that since everything they receive comes from the Royal *Patronato*, they can achieve nothing at all.

I'm out of time. For the rest, we are all well, thank God, except for the two who, as I said, died of yellow fever. One was Fr. Juan Pladebella, an acquaintance and pupil of Dr. Passarell, and the other was a young man whom the Rev. Vicar General had brought from Madrid as his helper.

I often think of everyone at Vic, and especially of you. Ask what you will of your attentive servant, who kisses your hand.

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba.

**117. [209] To the Attorney General of Spain**  
(EC I, 611-614)

**Introductory Note**

For some remarks on the Attorney General, Don Francisco Arzola, see the Introductory Note to letter 104 [164] above. This is a

letter of complaint about the unhappy and shabby state of Worship and Clergy in Claret's Archdiocese. The Royal Spanish Patronage had assumed the right to collect tithes, which had always belonged to the Church, yet was not using these revenues for their rightfully assigned purpose. He therefore begs Arrazola, the 'Minister of Grace and Justice' [as the Attorney General was called], to use his considerable influence with Her Majesty's Government to remedy things as soon as possible.

### **Text**

Most Excellent Sir:

Since I am aware of the Catholic sentiments that move Your Excellency's noble heart and the good that you are continually striving to do for our beloved Spanish Nation, both by your very character and by the high post that you so honorably hold, I feel obliged to have recourse to you in the sad straits in which I find myself by reason of the Holy Visit I am making of my Archdiocese, in compliance with the dispositions of the Sacred Canons.

And although it is true that I already knew something of the unhappy and unbecoming state of both worship and clergy in Parishes, especially in country areas, now, by reason of this Holy Visit, I have seen with my own eyes and felt with my own hands, things that cannot rightly be mentioned by a Catholic Prelate, save only to see if he can obtain help to allay the confusion and shame he feels at the sorry state into which the Royal Spanish Patronage has allowed both cult and clergy to fall in this Archdiocese of mine. For I would not like our enemies to use this as a motive for speaking ill of the Spaniards, stirring up the embers of insurrection by citing these undeniable facts, while contrasting them with the severity and rigor with which tithes and other contributions destined to remedy these very needs, are collected. These enemies can also allege the [Spanish Government's] contempt for papal dispositions and its injustice in not fulfilling the promise that the Kings of Spain made when the Supreme Pontiff allowed them to collect the tithes, with the obligation to maintain worship and clergy. Nor do they overlook, in order to turn people's minds against the present governors, their inobservance of the Laws of the Indies in this matter.

In truth, Your Excellency, my great love for the Spanish Nation, which I cannot bear to hear maligned, makes me hold my tongue and repress the blood that boils in my veins when I see churches without

the necessary vestments, and even the few that they have are torn, dirty and utterly unusable, and cannot be replaced because the factory doesn't have any. Larger churches are in an even worse state, since for lack of funds for repair they cannot buy tiles for the roof, so that when a little squall comes up one can't take shelter in them. Speaking from my own experience, I have been preaching in churches where I have had to move from the place I was standing to another spot in order to escape the water that was falling on my head. Church buildings are in such an appalling state that in some places, since there is no tile-factory to buy from, they are covered with straw. Others are so filthy that I haven't dared to celebrate the Sacred Mysteries in them, but have sought out a warehouse in better shape than the Parish Church, and have administered the Sacraments of Penance, Confirmation and the Eucharist there.

The lot of the Clergy is in much the same sad state. Who would believe it! Each of the four Curacies that make up the city of Santiago, the Capital of this Diocese, gets no more than thirty-three pesos a year; the Curacy of Manzanillo, which is one of the most distinguished towns of this Archdiocese, gets five pesos a year; that of Guiza, six; while others, such as Ti-arriba, Santa Catalina, San Miguel and Baire, get nothing by way of endowment, except for an occasional Mass stipend, of which there are very few. This is why some clergy have to go to a black man's hut where they are invited to share his yucca, yam and plantain, lest they die of hunger.

Your Excellency can now form some idea of the great pain that breaks my heart when I see such miseries and of how hard I am working to remedy them. I have already sent a Commission to this effect to the Government of Her Majesty (God save her), without neglecting to apply to other sources; and while all have held out great hopes, I fear that the same will happen to me as happened to my predecessors, who, after much work in this matter, achieved nothing. For while they were writing reports and waiting for answers, either the Ministers of State or the Form of Government changed, and their replacements neither knew nor did anything about what their predecessors had planned. And thus it happens, that over many years nothing has been achieved, after the many labors of Prelates and Ecclesiastical Governors.

In view of this miserable state of affairs, I keep doling out all my incomes on worship and clergy: now on buying vestments and

repairing ruined churches, now on supporting the clergy --not only the missionaries who came with me, but also native sons-- since they would otherwise neither wish nor be able to live in the places to which I have assigned them.

For all these reasons, Most Excellent Sir, you can grasp the pitiful state in which I find myself, and so I hope that you will kindly interpose your powerful influence in order to obtain, in the shortest time possible, a favorable outcome for my petition before the Throne, to remedy these many ills and misfortunes. For although I am using all the economic resources available to me (which verge on mortification and privation for my own maintenance), not even all my savings suffice to remedy these needs.

I am making this petition not only as a Catholic and a Prelate, but also as a Spaniard. For if these needs are not met, the most fatal results will follow, which I will not dwell on here, since they are so well known. Would that the Supreme Government were well apprised of the state of this Archdiocese! For I am sure that even if it did not care to do something about it as a Catholic government, it would do so for its own good.

God preserve Your Excellency's most important life for many years.

Holy Visit of Puerto Príncipe. 23 December 1851.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba

### **118. [1491] To the Faithful of His Diocese**

(EC III, 78-80)

#### **Introductory Note**

This is really a rough draft of a letter, written by the Saint, but dotted with many corrections and inserts in Fr. John Lobo's handwriting, which make it hard to translate. Fr. Gil notes that the original "bears no date. It may have been written around the end of 1851 or the beginning of 1852, and we entertain some serious doubts as to whether it was ever published." The letter is largely self explanatory, but it does give us an insight into Claret's notion of 'keeping holy the Sabbath day.' People who live too far away to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation are excused, but he recommends that they sanctify the day by various devotions that are dear to him.

### Text

To all the faithful of our Diocese: Health and peace in Our Lord Jesus Christ!

You are not unaware, dearest brethren, that all Catholic Christians are obliged to hear Holy Mass on all those days which our Mother Church commands, since she recognizes it to be the most holy and sacred devotion that we can offer God in fulfilling the tribute of love, honor and homage that we all owe Him. But as she is wise and prudent in all her precepts, she does not demand the impossible. Hence, those who cannot attend Mass, either because they live very far from church, as is the case with those who live on *estancias* that are located far from towns, or for some similar cause, the Church, as interpreter of God's will, is quite understanding. And although the faithful may occupy themselves in other devotions, it is nevertheless fitting that, insofar as possible, those in such a case should adopt the same practice, so as in some way to make up for missing Mass. And after thinking the matter over carefully, we believe that we could recommend no other devotion more warmly to those in such a case, than the practice of the *Way of the Cross*, as it is set forth in the book entitled *The Straight Path*, and in case some of you have not yet acquired one, we will copy it at the end of this letter so that this devotion may spread more easily throughout households in the mountains and plains, so that all may practice it. This devotion can be practiced by each one in particular or by many in common. But you should know that prayer said by many gathered together is more pleasing to God and obtains more graces from heaven; hence if some of you gather together to practice it, you will derive more profit from it. And so that you may gain all the graces and indulgences granted by the Supreme Pontiffs to those who perform this holy exercise with the due dispositions, we ourselves grant that you may receive them all if you practice it before an image of our Crucified Lord.

Besides this devotion that you will practice in the morning on Feast days, you should add some other devotions throughout the day. For just as we would not pay a day's wage for a half-hour's work, neither will God Our Lord be content with Christians who say a half-hour's devotion instead of hearing Mass, and then do nothing else to honor Him the rest of the day. It's true, of course, that God Our Lord is not so rigidly demanding that a Christian should spend the whole day in pious devotions, as most employers would demand a full day's work for a full day's pay. Nevertheless, He is well pleased if we spend the day in good works, such as reading from some spiritual book,



learning or teaching Christian Doctrine, reciting the Holy Trisagion, the Chaplet of O.L. of Sorrows, the Holy Rosary or similar devotions. By this we do not mean that you have to practice all of these devotions on each Feast day, but only some of them.

We rely on your docility, fervor and devotion, that you will do this. May the Lord grant you His holy grace, while we give you our fatherly blessing. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba

### 119. [211] **To Father Fortian Bres**

(EC I, 619-621)

#### **Introductory Note**

For autobiographical data on Fr. Bres, see letter 95 [150] above. For the account Claret gave to Fr. Bres of his voyage to and first impressions of Cuba, see letter 103 [162] above. The Saint informs his longtime friend and sponsor since his seminary days of his impressions of the climate, soil and vegetation of Cuba and of the religion and working conditions of the Cuban people. In a letter to his father, Fr. Vilaró describes some of the changes that had to be made in the heavy clerical clothing that they had brought with them from the relatively colder climate of Europe, so as to survive the rigors of the tropical heat (cf. footnote 49 to this letter in EC I, pp. 620-621).

#### **Text**

To the Rev. Fortian Bres, Priest  
Puerto Príncipe, 5 January 1852

My Very Dear Sir:

Although I am not of a letter-writing turn of mind, the love that I bear you obliges me to make this sacrifice. Since I wrote you not many days ago about ourselves, I will now write you a little about the country. You already know that the climate is quite warm; we are usually sweating by the bucketful, and not only we, but still more the natives of the country. The sun is scorching, the moon quite harmful, the terrain dangerous and the north wind bad for the health. Thus the torrid season is the most healthful, though the sweat that comes with it is quite annoying. The vegetation of the whole land is luxuriant, yet one can hardly find a stone for building or soil suitable for

making bricks. For the black earth is so fertile that the woods are so thick as to be impassable. There are many cedars and mahoganies and other precious woods, but the difficulty is getting them out of the forest.

The earth is very fertile, but little cultivated. Only Black slaves cultivate it, since those who are free hardly want to work. The European Whites do not care to work, except in home-based commerce. Native-born Whites like work even less, especially the women: White ladies do no work at all; poor White women do a little sewing; Black women do everything: washing and ironing, but to save work they do not use bleach, but only soap, so that if stains do not come out with soap, they iron them the way they are and remain content with that. Yet even though they wash so poorly, they receive a goodly pay each week. Moreover, in this country, they do not sort out or mend the different kinds of clothing, but lump them all together, torn, unmended and rags, along with the good clothing, and iron them together.

There are very many poor people, and every week I need very many *duros* for ordinary alms; for the smallest alms one can give to a poor person is a coin that you would call a *vinti-vuit* (a twenty-eighth), but that is next to nothing here. Indeed, if you offer some of the poor people who come to the door a *peseta*, they will say that they don't want it. Those who seek extraordinary alms are quite capable of asking for *duros* in the hundreds...

As a result of the missions, they apply themselves more to work and to virtue. You can't imagine the docility of these people, the fruit that the missions have yielded and are presently yielding. What fervor! What devotion! There is never a day on which we have finished dispensing the holy sacraments to the people by noon.

The Clergy of this country have changed completely.

As you already know, all of the Priests have made the Spiritual Exercises in my residence. Every month they make a retreat-day, and every week, three days of conferences. No-one misses them, however old he may be; and if someone neglects to come, he pays a fine of one *duro*. They all wear the long cassock, and if anyone fails to do so, he pays a fine of ten *duros*. Thus far, no one has had to pay this fine, except one who went out in public wearing a frock coat.

On the mornings of all feast days the articles of faith are read and the catechism is explained, and in the evening the boys are taught and form a procession: the Whites with a white banner and the Blacks with a pink banner. And in every square two tables are set up where each side questions the other, and they know the Manna

of the Christian and the dialogue of the Catechism so perfectly that it is a delight to hear them. They are better acquainted with this Catechism in this diocese than they are back there, but I must add that the boys of this country are much more lively than those over there. The slowest of the Blacks are those from the Congo and from African Mauretania, and one needs all one's patience to understand them and make them understand religion. But most of the Blacks who are born in this country are very talented: they are the tailors, shoemakers, etc.

Regards to all, and ask what you will of your servant,  
Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba

### 120. [215] **To the Majordomo of the Palace**

(EC I, 628-629)

#### **Introductory Note**

The present letter, in the handwriting of Fr. J. N. Lobo, is an extract of Claret's minutes for a congratulatory message to be delivered by the Majordomo of the Palace to Queen Isabella II, on her providential recovery from an attack on her life by a deranged and fallen priest. On 20 December 1851, the Queen had given birth to the Infanta Isabella, who was declared the Princess of Asturias. On 2 February 1852, as the Queen was on her way to Mass to present her daughter in the Temple (the Royal Chapel), a fanatical apostate Friar, Martín Merino, who had been lurking in the royal galleries, viciously stabbed the Queen. When she came to herself after her wound had begun to heal, her first words were, "My daughter! Don't let them put that unhappy regicide to death!" Despite her express will to pardon the offender, he was immediately arrested, tried and executed. Though undated, the letter was without doubt written early in March, 1852, since Claret mentions that he plans to break off his Pastoral Visit and return to Santiago before the end of that month in order to celebrate Holy Week and Easter there.

#### **Text**

"This is to manifest my sentiments on the occasion of the unheard-of attempt on our beloved Country committed against the August person of Her Majesty, from which she was visibly delivered by the hand of the Almighty... At the same time I am sending Your Excel-

lency another exposition from my venerable Chapter in the same vein, and we hope that Your Excellency will be so good as to present them to Her Majesty as we desire. My whole diocese was overcome with shock and indignation on learning of the attempt, and all parishes have given thanks to God for guarding the precious life of Her Majesty the Queen (God save her) and for thus saving us from the great evils that might have ensued... Although I have not yet finished the Holy Pastoral Visit, I have resolved to return to [the Metropolitan See of] Cuba from this place, suspending the Visit early, in order to celebrate in my Holy Mother-Church the holy offices of Holy Week and Easter.

To this end, God willing, I will leave here for the Capital on Monday the 29th [of March] and I believe that the Lord will grant me to enter my See on the 31st, to bless all my beloved brethren and especially my venerable Metropolitan Chapter. God preserve Your Lordship..."

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba.

### 121. [216] To the Bishop of Vic

(EC I, 630-631)

#### Introductory Note

The present is a friendly letter to Bishop Casadevall, informing him of the gratifying results of the Missions and Pastoral Visit that the Saint is making in all parishes of the Archdiocese. He also tells him of the marvelous results that have come about from his efforts at spreading good books, especially two of his own most popular and influential works, namely, *"The Catechism Explained"* and "The Straight and Sure Path that Leads to Heaven." As we mentioned above in the Introductory Note to the letter of 24 November 1851, Claret had not yet learned of the death of Bishop Casadevall almost a month before he wrote the present letter.

#### Text

To His Excellency, the Bishop of Vic  
Santiago, 7 April 1852

My Very Dear and Most Esteemed Sir:

Without waiting for your answer to the last letter I wrote you, I am sending you the present letter since I have some chance to do so

now, but will later have none, because I will once more be in the midst of the Holy Visit and Mission that I am giving, which I interrupted in order to come here to attend Holy Week Services. It is impossible, my Lord, to explain the happy results of the Mission and Visit. We have to suffer much and work very much, but the fruits are a hundred fold, thanks be to God. Each town makes a complete turnabout both in the moral and political sense, although I never speak to them about the latter. All go to Confession, receive Communion and are Confirmed, not to mention the contracting of Matrimony between those who have been living together unwed, and there are many of these in each town. There have been parishes where there were more than three hundred such marriages, and so as not to dispense with the banns, yet not to have to wait the three Feast Days required, I have disposed that during the Mission all days should be regarded as Feast Days because of the great attendance. For those who attend the sermons and go to confession are not only people from my own Archdiocese, but others who come from Havana. There are people who have expressly traveled some 156 leagues in order to hear the Word of God and go to Confession.

Another of the means I have used in order to do good are good books, which I either give away or exchange for bad books, thus taking poison out of people's hands and replacing it with the savory and salutary bread, mainly, "*The Catechism Explained*" and "*The Straight Path.*" One cannot explain the enthusiasm with which they procure these books, the eagerness with which they read them and the benefit that they derive from them. I keep seeing to it that there is a copy in each household, even though they cost me many *duros*, which thus far have come to several thousands. But I hold it all as well spent, so long as souls are saved, for this is what God has sent me to do, and not to make or amass money.

I am glad to hear that all of your household and other friends in your Diocese are keeping well. You can rely on your attentive and constant servant, who kisses your hand.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba

His Excellency, the Bishop of Vic - Spain | Catalonia.

**122. [222] To Her Majesty the Queen**

(EC I, 646-652)

**Introductory Note**

This letter sets before the Queen some of the evils of ignorance and laxity that exist in the Saint's Archdiocese of Cuba. He states his belief that these evils need to be remedied as soon as possible, for which purpose he urges Her Majesty to allow the installation of the Society of Jesus in this part of her overseas domains, to establish schools and preach missions.

**Text**

Lady:

The growing knowledge that I have been acquiring of the evils that afflict this Island of Cuba, judging by what I myself have observed during the course of this Holy Mission and Visit of my Diocese, leads me to have recourse to Your Majesty to unburden my conscience by manifesting them to you in the hope of obtaining some remedy for them. Last year I already had the honor of making a representation to Your Majesty concerning the need to make some arrangement, as soon as possible, for the support of the Clergy, on whom the project for moral betterment must necessarily rest: worship provided for, fitting support assured for God's ministers and sufficient workers to carry out the work. I trust that at this moment these arrangements have already been or are about to be carried out. And as the Holy Mission is the element most apt for assuring the reform of customs, I believe that the time has come to consider the importance, in such critical moments, of proposing to Your Majesty what I deem to be most fitting.

The ills that need to be cured are great: *ignorance and laxity*: crass ignorance in country areas and laxity in the cities and towns of any importance. Now the two adequate remedies for these are the Mission and education. I have, my Lady, already made the rounds of a great part of my vast Diocese; I have felt with my own hands the wounds from which it is ailing; I have studied the illness in its results; I have discovered its origin, which is none other than abandonment and perfidy: an abandonment (I limit myself to Christian morals) whose existence is explained by an arithmetical proportion, namely, a clergy very scarce in numbers and resources, unable to

teach a very widespread and ever-growing population; a perfidy on the part of external enemies who have recourse to the fatal proselytism of heterodox sects, introducing and circulating books which mesmerize these poor and unthinking people, all the more so since they have no one to guide them, teach them, call their attention to error and make them abhor it. We have a multitude of copies, my Lady, gathered from books of perverse teaching: mangled Bibles and Protestant catechisms printed in the Spanish language in England and North America; readings that are highly offensive to manners --what am I saying?-- to modesty itself, written in barroom language and accompanied by engravings representing the most lascivious scenes imaginable.

These are the 'noble' arms wielded by the enemies of Spain in order to lead astray an unthinking Cuba and wrest away from the Peninsula its precious transatlantic possession. Your Majesty knows full well that the evil is deep-seated, that the intention is perverse, and that the means are assured unless they are withstood. This obliges me to invest a great part of my official income on good books of sound doctrine that I distribute during missions and exchange them for bad ones. Thus we have to a great extent, especially in some important towns, purged them of that fatal venom that goes directly to the heart and perverts it.

And as if this damage were not enough, we must still deplore another whose consequences are worse and more pervasive. Allow me, Your Majesty, to call your attention to this point. The sympathies of the natives of this land toward the neighboring republic are all too manifest. The events of the past speak for themselves, and the functionaries who have thus far governed the island in Your Majesty's name have doubtless minutely informed the Supreme Government, with telling details, what the spirit of the white races is in this matter. Now this attachment, developed by different causes --which I could very well indicate to Your Majesty if I did not fear that they would bore you and distract me from my purpose-- has led most families with even a very middling fortune to send their sons to North America to be educated; that is to say, to receive their childhood impressions from the hands of enemies; to be filled with errors against the purity of Catholic dogma, or to put it better, to become accustomed to practice no religion at all, while at the same time being dreadfully scandalized at a tender age by seeing all sects being more or less respected, except the Catholic religion. They see these sects being tried out, making proselytes, and nurturing in the bosom not only of their own adepts, but also in that of unwary Catholics unfounded

in solid doctrine, an indifference in matters of religion that smothers the noblest sentiments of the soul, destroys the memory of helpful traditions, materializes the spirit, corrupts everything and aims at sanctifying individualism alone.

My Lady, this evil is most grave. Herein lies the germ of revolutions among peoples; this is the seed that produces discontent; hence comes that uneasiness that begins to be manifest at first in ill-founded comparisons, which then become unjust complaints, awakening hatred, quickening evil passions, begetting unrestrained behavior and the love of novelties, and ends by turning everything upside down. Education forms the individual and it forms cultured people. Childhood impressions never fade away, and the future depends on the children.

How, then can we afford not to give education the only thrust that becomes it? How can we afford not to strive to win the young by the bonds of right knowledge? In the present case, how can we afford not to seek means to uproot from native born Cubans' hearts this fatal mania that alienates their children from their own land and soon denatures them, only to return them after a few years, not as their own children, but as foreigners in sentiments, ideas, desires, attachments, and even in their way of dress and in their manners? Is this, perhaps, a matter of little importance? But how shall we rid them of this itching for things so opposed to the happiness of their consciences, to the material and moral well-being of the island and to their union with the Motherland? The answer is quite simple: The lawful and stable mastery of hearts belongs to our religion, and fortunately, the faith has not disappeared from Cuba. Indeed, thanks to the wise laws by which it has been governed, it is so deeply rooted in the faith that is the only element that has uninterruptedly held sway since the Conquest, that religious practices are a real need among its inhabitants, although the scarcity of evangelical workers has made it hard to fulfill this need among the many people who dwell in the countryside.

It is true that demoralization has become widespread, but at least in this part of the island, about which I can speak with some knowledge, a more or less well intentioned piety is being maintained and preserved. Let us, then, take advantage of this element; let us not leave education in the hands of speculators as if it were just another sort of merchandise; let us set aside our concerns, and if we find a wise and holy institute in the Church which is capable of perfectly blending the lights of the age with the light of the Gospel, then let us



call it to our aid, let us offer it a friendly hand for our own good. Let us open our eyes only to the social ills that demand a prompt remedy, and let us close our ears to slurs and unjust imputations that good criticism condemns and impartial history reproves. And in passing let us observe that those who slander religious institutes are barefaced enemies of the family, of society, of morality and of religion.

Now this wise and holy institute, which is so strongly fought against by the ministers of error and enemies of the Catholic Church, this institute that is today welcomed by the generality of well-established governments, whatever their political form, is the Company of Jesus. In the present state of today's world, they can be asked to champion the truth without the least misgiving, in the assurance that whoever calls on them will be listened to. The Company of Jesus is dedicated to teaching all classes of society. I have no doubt that if Your Majesty asks them, the wise ministers who surround her will tell her how successfully they have done so, as will the enlightened Prelates of Catholic Spain, whose judgment in these matters is of greater weight. If the Company of Jesus is re-established on this Island, it is to be hoped that they will gain the trust of families, who will entrust their sons to them, and thus we will see the end of the mania for sending them to be educated in an enemy nation, with the grave risk of losing them, to the detriment of our beloved homeland.

The same Company of Jesus is likewise consecrated by its Institute to Missions. As to how successful they have been, let the once wandering tribes of both Americas who have been converted to God and civilized tell us; though we do not need to look to other regions or look back in history to verify the fruit that they have borne. Now if the Jesuits embrace both poles of mission and teaching, and if it is to be hoped that their results will be as satisfactory in Cuba as they have been elsewhere, then I do not believe it too bold to consider them as an apt means and to propose them as such, in order to correct the two evils that I indicated at the outset, namely ignorance and laxity, the former holding sway in country areas and the latter gaining ground in towns.

Therefore, Lady, as concerned as my conscience is for the welfare of the island, and recognizing that I am unable by myself to preserve the abundant fruit which I have been gathering by God's grace and mercy and by dint of my own sweat, together with a few charitable and zealous companions who are helping me, I deem it my duty to manifest to Your Majesty how fitting it would be by all counts to try to establish in the [Iberian] Peninsula Mission Houses for this island

as soon as possible, as foreseen in the arrangements for worship and clergy. Then let the preference be given to the Jesuits, by reason of the advantages I have pointed out, let alone the many others that militate on their behalf, without prejudice to the possibility of assigning other congregations to the same end, such as the Fathers of the Mission of St. Vincent de Paul and others of that type.

Lady, the only thing that brought me to Cuba was the desire to give glory to God through the sanctification of my neighbors. Happy will I be if I reach the grave seeing my efforts and labors crowned by having the Mission planted and regularized, public education well directed, the manners of my beloved flock corrected by these means, and thus having done my part to assure the true peace and future of this precious pearl of the Antilles. Then I will have fulfilled my arduous ministry in the best way possible, and I will also have satisfied my sacred commitments to my Country and my Sovereign, whose precious life I pray Heaven to preserve for the good of the whole Kingdom.

The Holy Visit of Manzanillo, on the twenty-fourth of May of the year 1852.

I remain, Lady,

At your Majesty's Royal Fee

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba

### **123. [224] To Mother Antonia París**

(EC I, 655)

#### **Introductory Note**

On 22 February 1852, Mother Antonia París and four companions, one of whom was a niece of Canon Caixal, embarked in Barcelona en route to Cuba, where they arrived on 26 May 1852. They were shown an extremely warm reception from the devout women of Santiago, who rivaled one another in showering them with favors and services, since the arrival of sisters was an uncommon event in the Capital of the Archdiocese. Because Abp. Claret had already resumed his Mission-Visit, he could not be there to greet them, but he asked their prayers in order to make an apt discernment of God's will both for him and for them.

**Text**

To the H. Sr. M. Antonia Paris  
Manzanillo, 3 June 1852

Dear Sister in Jesus Christ:

I just received your two welcome letters, one written in the Canary Islands and the other in Cuba. Thanks be to God, you have already arrived. Rest, now, and commend me to God that He may inspire us as to the manner in which He wants to make use of you. As you indicate, although I am not present there, everything that I arranged before I left has been done.

Regards to all the other Sisters, and you can all count on your faithful servant,

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba.

**124. [231] To the Captain General of Cuba**

(EC I, 669-672)

**Introductory Note**

An answer to an official dispatch from His Excellency, Don Valentín Cañedo, Captain General of the Island, who had asked the Archbishop's opinion on three points: 1) whether the suppression of the Department of the Center [of Cuba] should or should not subsist; 2) whether it was fitting to establish a Suffragan See in Puerto Príncipe; 3) whether the Metropolitan See should be transferred to Havana.

**Text**

Most Excellent Sir:

I have received Your Excellency's dispatch of 23 June past, asking my opinion on three points of great importance and moment: Whether or not the suppression of the Department of the Center should subsist; whether it is fitting to erect a new Suffragan See in the City of Puerto Príncipe, and whether the Metropolitan See should be transferred to Havana. I understand perfectly well that the civil territorial division should be in harmony with the ecclesiastical division: thus, the question of suppressing or not suppressing the Department relates to the establishment of a new Bishopric. Considering the civil question apart from the ecclesiastical, I frankly confess that I do not

have sufficient data needed to appreciate it under all its aspects. In one sense, I see the administration of justice divided into two departments and the administration of economy divided into three, although in my judgment this is less important for any reform, because it does not constitute an essential element relative to the Civil and Political Government. But it is not thus with the ecclesiastical division, which of its natural bent ought to be in continual contact and work in combination with the other two, the political and the judicial. Supposing this, it seems that there ought to be as many Sees as there are Departments. Now it is my belief that in the machinery of Government, the greater its simplicity, the greater its ease in handling and managing the common deal. To multiply its main wheels without some patent need is simply asking for trouble. To multiply its main officials by subdividing the administration is inviting confrontations of authority; it sometimes means placing them in the conflicting position of having to adopt possibly contradictory measures in analogous and even similar cases; it means overburdening them with work and doubly distracting their attention with prejudice to the public and private good, by having to communicate with various authorities of each sort; and in matters of government, time is the most precious element that ought to be economized as much as possible. Besides, with the new administrative wheel, there will be an added burden on the general budget without any recognizable advantage. Thus one more door will be opened to the abuses which any administration, however perfect, entails. And finally, in the critical circumstances of the Island, all sorts of contentions might easily arise, especially between military authorities of the same rank, and action could not be taken as swiftly and uniformly as it would if only one lesser authority were working in concert with the superior whom he must obey.

I have touched on these questions out of deference to Your Excellency, although I confess and acknowledge that I feel somewhat of an outsider regarding such things, and in pointing them out, I have been able to consult nothing more than my own little-informed reason on such matters. But as I said before, and repeat now, political divisions affect ecclesiastical ones, and on this point I can already state with greater assurance that the establishment of a new Bishopric is neither necessary nor opportune nor advantageous. It is not necessary, because the Island can be well administered with only two prelates. It is not opportune, because in the state of immorality in this Island, rather than multiplying Dioceses, it is more fitting to attend to the existing two, by supplying them with sufficient personnel, which they now lack, and by providing for their decent subsistence, which

is highly neglected, at least in this Department. Today, the high-level resolution of arrangements for the maintenance of the clergy of the Island is pending. Those authorities and all corporations that have been consulted are in agreement on the great light thrown on this matter by the proposal expressly drafted for this purpose some years ago concerning the urgent need to multiply parishes, to endow them fittingly and to establish effective means so that they may not be lacking useful workers. If this matter of a new See arose today, the decision to make arrangements for it would be long drawn out. Moreover I can assure Your Excellency from the experience of my Diocese, which I have visited almost entirely with the utmost scrupulosity, that the enlightened government of Her Majesty should tarry a little in deciding a question which is so vital, at least for the flock that has been entrusted to me. Otherwise the Archbishop of Cuba will have exhausted his efforts in vain, the government itself will be disappointed in the aim it foresaw in appointing a poor missionary as archbishop, and the result of his tasks and those of his good companions will act on this weak part that constitutes my archdiocese like water on a patient with dropsy: to increase his thirst and hasten his death. If you add to all this the low state of morality in the Island today, you can see that it is more fitting than ever to give it a uniform impulse by means of the mission, so that in the eastern and the western part the battle may be waged with equal arms and the same spirit. Your Excellency will at length be convinced that to add a new diocese would be to create a new power, thus impeding uniformity of action in this point which, if it would not save the patient, could alleviate his discomfort considerably. Whence you can infer that the Island would boast of no advantage by establishing a new diocese which, apart from other inconveniences, would put a heavy strain on the ecclesiastical budget, perhaps to the detriment of the other two existing budgets.

As for transferring the Metropolitan See to Havana, it hardly becomes me to enter into this question, for the simple reason that I am the [present Metropolitan] Archbishop. However, I cannot overlook the fact that if it were done with the proper canonical formalities, without prejudice to any of the parties concerned, and respecting the personal rights that have been acquired, the leading Prelate could exercise [from Havana] a greater influence over the whole Island. Being based in the same center as the higher civil authorities, being able to exercise his prelacy directly over the most populated and influential part of the Island, and with an increase, however honorary, in his hierarchical dignity, he could doubtless make his preponderance better

felt, walking in common and easy accord with all the leading authorities of the Island.

I believe that with this I have answered, however lightly, the three points set forth in the dispatch that Your Excellency addressed to me. I would conclude by thanking you not only for your honorable words regarding my humble person, but also for the consideration you have for the Church in matters which are of such great importance and which affect it so closely.

God keep Your Excellency for many years.

Cuba, July of 1852.

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba.

**125. [234] To Don Fortian Bres**  
(EC I, 678-679)

### **Introductory Note**

The Saint informs his old friend of the towns in which he has been carrying out the Pastoral Visitation and Mission since May. He gives some more particular notices on the most recent events in Bayamo, where he is presently preaching and ministering. Incidentally, the Saint tells us in his Autobiography that earlier, while he was preaching in Manzanillo, “without realizing it, I let slip some remarks about great earthquakes that would be coming soon” (Aut 528). It is a short letter, because the Saint is so very busy. Nevertheless, he takes time to remember and greet Fathers Vilaró, who has returned to Vic gravely ill, and to Fr. Stephen Sala, Director General of the Congregation (of which both were Co-founders), to Canon Pasarell, who had counseled him at the time of the founding, to the Dominican [the “Beatas”] and Carmelite nuns, to the Carmelite Sisters of Charity and to his own younger sister, Mary (1815-1894), who had joined the Carmelite Sisters of Charity and later became Mistress of Novices. She also testified at the Cause of his Beatification. He also remembers his faithful friend and factotum, Miguel Yter, who had accompanied him on his campaigns as an itinerant missionary in Catalonia, bringing along religious goods and books. This letter took the usual long time

in reaching Spain, since Fr. Bres wrote on it: "Received 1 October 1852."

### **Text**

To Don Fortian Bres, Priest  
City of Bayamo, 20 August 1852.

My Very Dear Sir:

It's been a long time since I have had any news from you and the rest in that house and from my other friends. We are all enjoying good health, except for Mossèn Manuel Vilaró, whom by now you will already have seen and spoken to. You can tell him, as I am now informing you, that since this May when we set out, we have made the Pastoral Visit and Holy Mission in the jurisdiction of Manzanillo, Vicana, Guá, Yara, Zarzal, San Fructuoso and are now in the City of Bayamo, whose people are of rather ill repute. But for the time being, things are going very well for us. On the 15th we held our first General Communion and the Lieutenant Governor and the Town Council received Communion, along with a crowd that was so large that the service lasted from seven to eleven. On Sunday we will hold the second General Communion and we expect that it will be no less crowded. Since May, more than two thousand couples who were living together have been married during the Mission.

In this city of Bayamo I preached the spiritual exercises to the Clergy and set up conferences on rubrics and moral theology on two days of every week. I preside over them each day, all attend and apply themselves quite well.

I have no more time just now. Regards to Mossèn Vilaró, to Mossèn Esteve [Sala] and all at La Mercè, to Don Passarell and other friends, and especially to those of your household, and also to the Beatas and Nuns and to yourself. Ask what you will of your servant, who kisses your hand.

The Abp. of Cuba.

P.S. -- In particular, greet my sister, Mary. The other day I received a letter from Miguel Yter.

To the Rev. Fortian Bres, Priest. Vic.

**126. [238] To the Governor of the Province**

(EC I, 688-689)

**Introductory Note**

Claret informs the Governor of the Province, Field Marshal Joaquín Martínez de Medinilla, of the severe effects of the recent earthquakes in Santiago, the Capital of the Archdiocese. He invites him to take part in the Mission-Novena that he is planning to hold in order to ask the Lord for pardon and mercy under the “terrible scourge” that has struck his flock. For a vivid description of the physical havoc and psychological turmoil caused by the earthquakes in Santiago, see the Saint’s Autobiography, 529-533.

**Text**

Archbishopric of  
Santiago Cuba

Your Excellency:

The terrible scourge with which Divine Providence has just threatened the Capital of my Archdiocese can do no less than fill my heart with bitterness, obliging me to suspend the Holy Mission and Visit that I was busy with in Bayamo in order to return and address some words of comfort to my afflicted children and to invite them in the Lord’s name to peace through repentance. For great disasters and calamities, when seen at first blush and superficially, are often perceived as the effect of natural causes, whereas when considered with the eye of faith, they are warnings or chastisements of God’s justice, provoked by human wickedness. In my sacred character, I am a mediator between God and my flock, and as such I should raise my fervent supplications to the Almighty, arouse the just to join their prayers with mine, and move sinners to confess their failings and to repent. We should all weep and we should all pray, because the hand of an offended God can reach us all. But this is especially true of those who govern the people in the name of God from whom all authority comes. They should be the first to join their prelate and set an example by hastening to the foot of the altar to ask for clemency. Deeply aware of the feelings of piety that animate Your Excellency, in which all worthy secular authorities, the Honorable Municipal Chapter and other public functionaries concur, I, as a tender and loving father whose heart is consumed with the fire of charity, invite all of



you to attend and take advantage of the mission novena that I am planning to begin on the seventh of this month in St. Thomas' Square at five-thirty, in order to implore the God of justice, but also of mercy, to show us His pardon and clemency in the grave conflict we are passing through, relying on the Patronage of Mary Most Holy, Our Lady of Charity, who is never unmindful of the Cuban people.

I would like Your Excellency to spread the news of these desires of mine to those whom I address through your good offices, later giving them the publicity that you deem fitting.

God save Your Excellency these many years.

Cuba [i.e., Santiago, the Capital of the Archdiocese],

4 September 1852.

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba.

To His Excellency, the Governor General of the Province.

### **127. [240] To the Regent of the Royal High Court**

(EC I, 692-693)

#### **Introductory Note**

Abp. Claret was a prudent and patient man, but he was by no means timid when it came to addressing public scandal. Don Agustín Villarrodonga, a public figure and tenant of a State-owned farm, had been living in open concubinage. When reproached for this by the Archbishop, he publicly made light of the matter, so the prelate proceeded to excommunicate him. This aroused quite a panic among others who were living in the same state, but not so Villarrodonga, who appealed to the civil authorities of the Department of Central Cuba (many of whom thought as lightly of such matters as he did), to question the legality of the action taken against him, and so they did. This handwritten memo is the Saint's reply to a dispatch issued by the High Court of Puerto Príncipe. In it he informs the Commandant General, Don José Lemery, that he cannot send him the proceedings of Villarrodonga's excommunication, for no such proceedings had been drafted, since the Archbishop, prompted by most pressing reasons of conscience and acting well within his rights, had taken action against the offender under the exceptional circumstances of the Pastoral Visitation.

To understand the background behind this whole question of marriages in Cuba, especially of interracial marriages, it should be noted that a royal decree of October 16, 1805 required that the Gov-

ernment's permission be obtained before any white man of noble blood might marry a woman of color. The terms of this decree had been falsely broadened to apply to any white male whatsoever. The practical outcome of this distortion of an already morally dubious law was a huge increase in concubinage. This marriage question was drawn out until 1854, when the Marquis de la Pezuela revoked the erroneous interpretation. With the liberal General Espartero's rise to power, however, it was reinstated. Meanwhile, Claret had regularized more than 10,000 marriages and legitimated more than 40,000 children of such unions.

The ensuing events bore out the rightness of the Archbishop's strong action. When Villarrodoná perceived that not only all legal doors, but all the doors of polite society as well had been closed to him, he could not bear the weight of the anathema. He therefore went to Bayamo, resolved to submit to the conditions of the Archbishop and to amend his life. But as the Archbishop had already returned to Santiago, Villarrodoná immediately traveled there to confess his guilt before the Prelate and beg his pardon, which was granted after he had given suitable public satisfaction for his scandalous example.

### **Text**

I have just received Your Lordship's letter, accompanied by the ordinary Royal Provision issued by the Royal High Court at the request of the Public Prosecutor, in view of the case made out as a consequence of the major excommunication leveled against Don Agustín Villarrodoná for his rebelling against the warnings given him about his living in concubinage. In reply, I must tell Your Lordship that having been apprised of its contents, I cannot send you any proceedings, since I did not form any. I was acting during the holy pastoral visit and was prompted by most pressing reasons of conscience, after having recourse to all ordinary and extraordinary means, the only result of which was that my warnings, corrections and threats were mocked. I have therefore taken action out of fear for the accounting that I must give to God, with no intent to circumvent the laws. Rather, I have acted within the limits of my faculties as set forth in the Sacred Councils, especially those of Trent, Sess. 24, chapter 8, and I can do no less than confess and make known that by reason of my character, I am ready to lose my life a thousand times rather than to yield a jot of what I know to be my duty in conscience.

As for Villarrodoná himself, the excommunication produced the desired result, because he acknowledged his fault, asked pardon for

it and submitted to the penance imposed on him, and some days ago I absolved him of the censure following the due formalities.

God keep Your Lordship.

[Note added by Fr. John Lobo:

22 September 1852.

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba,

to the Interim Regent of the High Court of Puerto Príncipe].

### **128. [242] To Rev. John N. Lobo**

(EC I, 696)

#### **Introductory Note**

This short letter is really self-explanatory. The Saint informs Fr. Lobo of his bout with a cold, and of the apostolic ministries of two of his missionary team, Fr. Lorenzo Sanmarti (who is mentioned six times in the Autobiography, and later became a Jesuit) and Fr. Stephen Adoain, a Capuchin Friar (who is mentioned five times in the Autobiography, and whose cause of Beatification has been introduced).

#### **Text**

To Don Juan Lobo.

Bayamo, 4 October 1852.

My Very Dear Sir:

By the present letter I must tell you that on the day we left El Cobre we arrived in Baire, which is a very long journey, and the following day, without the least incident, we arrived here in Bayamo at nine fifteen. But after we arrived here, as the house is very high up and the gusting winds are very cold, one of them caught me and made me so ill that although I got up at the regular hour today, I had to go back to bed and remain there until three in the afternoon, and I feel better now.

Sanmarti and the Capuchin Father have returned from the mission at Cauto. Tomorrow the Capuchin will go on alone to preach the Mission at Datil, while Fr. Sanmarti will remain here a few days, because he, too, is somewhat indisposed.

For the rest, there is nothing new. Regards to all our companions and friends, and you can rely on your servant, who kisses your hand.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba.

## 129. [243] To the Governor General of Cuba

(EC I, 697-699)

### Introductory Note

Moved by the ugly slanders which several vicious and licentious men had leveled against him and his missionaries, Abp. Claret appealed to the Supreme Authority of the Island to effectively intervene and not allow these insults and persecutions to continue. It should also be noted that the truly Christian and upright Governor General of Cuba, Don Valentín Cañedo, effectively protected the holy Archbishop in words and deeds, and always dealt with him as a true friend.

### Text

His Excellency, the Governor General of Cuba.  
Bayamo, 15 October 1852.

My Very Dear and Most Esteemed Sir:

I had always fulfilled my sacred ministry with great fruitfulness and with the admiration and applause of the whole Catholic world, which stated the same even in writing. That is to say, this was the case until September 11th of this year, when the High Court of Puerto Principe, to the scandal of the faithful, stated that *cases of concubinage should not be regarded as serious matters*. From that time on, wicked men have become so insolent and brazen against my person, ministry and teaching, and against the missionaries of my household, that it is impossible for me to hold back, put up with or dissimulate it any longer, since not only our ministry but our very life is being endangered, not only by the foul slanders that they are raising against us, but also by other plots that they are hatching. Since any and every Spaniard has the right to ask for the help of the Authorities in any straits, I, too, can claim this right, not only as a Spaniard, but as a Prelate, and I hope that You will be so good as to come to my aid in the danger that I find myself in, with your Authority and power, while I have recourse to Her Majesty's Throne, simply setting forth how I acted within my rights, without ever losing sight of the object

of my Mission to moderate the moral life of the country, in keeping with the aims that the Higher Government had in sending me to this Archdiocese, never departing an iota from the limits of my faculties; and how, despite my upright procedure, I have been ill-treated by the Royal High Court of Puerto Príncipe and by certain vicious and scandalous men.

The missionaries of my household have behaved in the same way, reproving vices, exhorting to virtues and teaching all to obey Authorities, as I have instructed them. And although they have never departed from the road I marked out for them, while I was away from the Mission consoling the Cuban people of Santiago in the sufferings incurred by the earthquakes, these missionaries have been subjected to slanders that went to appalling lengths. But this will come as no surprise to you if you consider the men who have formed and signed these slanders. They are wicked men, living in sin with women, and some of them have been prosecuted for political entanglements. To let you know who they are, I will name a few of them here: Don José Fornaris, a bachelor who is living with a married woman and has been prosecuted for political intrigues; Don Francisco Castillo Moreno, a lawyer who is married but living with another woman; Don Jorge Milanés, a licentiate living with a woman; Don Esteban Estrada, a lawyer living with a woman. As for the three last-mentioned, I know that His Excellency, General Concha had them marked down as wicked and troublesome, and all four were involved in drawing up the libel, although they did not sign it. It was signed by the following: Don Rafael Contedor, Collector of Royal Rents, who is living with a woman; Don Jaime Arbós, a district lieutenant, also living with a woman, and Don Francisco Puig, likewise. These three are the main ones involved. I omit the rest and only mention these so that you may know the sort of men who have had the audacity and daring to draft and sign such a libel. For it seems to me that men of this stripe, instead of being listened to, should rather be watched and restrained by the Government and not allowed to insult and persecute the Holy Mission that we are carrying out not only as Ministers of God, but also as envoys of the Higher Government of Madrid to moderate the moral life of the country. Hence, by helping us you will not only be performing a service to God and to His Religion, but also to Her Majesty's Government, as you are, happily, doing.

On this occasion I present myself to you as your most attentive and loyal servant, who kisses your hand.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba.

**130. [1505] To Her Majesty the Queen**

(EC III, 101-110)

**Introductory Note**

For a further background to this letter, see Letter 127 [240], to the Regent of the Royal High Court. Among the many traits of the Saint that it reveals are his clear knowledge and view of the separate but complementary functions of civic and ecclesiastical rights in law, his concern for the rights of the Church, but above all his zeal for the holiness of Christian marriage, family life and public decency in an officially Catholic country.

**Text**

Archdiocese of Santiago, Cuba

Lady:

In this world it will always be true that there is no rose without thorns. In the midst of the satisfaction that I naturally feel on seeing the docility of the inhabitants of this Island, their fervor in listening to the word of God, the way they benefit from it and are becoming truly new beings in both the moral and political orders, I have, nonetheless, been pained to learn that there are some who, at least apparently and perhaps unwittingly, are conspiring against me. If it were only a matter of my person, it would be of no importance to me. But as it touches upon my teaching and ministry, it would be a crime for me to remain silent and a failure to imitate Christ who, though he remained silent when people spoke ill of his sacred person, always broke that silence when he saw that his teaching and holy mission were affected. I do not, my Lady, intend to accuse or incriminate anyone, but only to manifest to Your Majesty the kind of behavior that Your Royal High Court in Puerto Príncipe has shown to me. For instead of helping me, it sometimes places obstacles in the way of the fulfillment of my sacred pastoral ministry. I have always made use of persuasion, gentleness and meekness in order to win hearts, and have, thank God, succeeded, so that the generality love me very much, obey me and follow in the way of gospel morality and obedience to authorities.

Only in two cases, however, have I had to resort to rigor, after exhausting all other means; and even then, I have laid aside that same rigor the moment I have achieved the emendation of the delinquent. The first case was that of a strayed priest who, yielding to bad advice,

had recourse against my authority to the High Court. This respectable Tribunal did not, to be sure, give him a hearing; but its first view of his recourse led to discord, for although I was proceeding in the due exercise of governance during the Holy Visit [of the Archdiocese], my lawful authority was exposed to being viewed as highhanded and unable to correct a priest unmindful of his sacred ministry and of his office as Pastor, a priest whom I had warned several times, adhering to the procedures laid down by the Sacred Councils and especially by that of Trent. And though his ignorance was not such that he could not read the Divine Office or perform the Holy Sacraments, which as pastor he had to administer at every step --which would have been more than enough to deprive him of the exercise of his office-- I still waited longer, so that he would not have the slightest excuse, meanwhile using counsels and even threats, though without obtaining the desired emendation until one night, when he was surprised by my own Vicar, who was accompanied by an officer of the law. They had gone to seek him out and found him outside his house, dressed in an unworthy and indecorous way, and they brought him, just as he was, into my presence.

What less could I do, Lady, given his ineptitude and immorality, than to suspend him and deprive him of the exercise of his ministry, and replace him with a more worthy Priest, to the benefit of the faithful and the decorum of the Church? And in doing this I made use of those attributes that belong exclusively to my charge. Now if the present Archbishop of Cuba has (though undeservedly) won Your Majesty's trust in his ability to morally regenerate a country in which corruption so abounds, how is it possible that in the very bosom of the honorable Court of Puerto Príncipe there should be such a divergence of opinions that the moment would come in which it sought to trouble its Prelate in the use of his prerogatives, when he was acting not in a role of judgment but of governance? At length, this blow was contained, because the honorable magistrate who was called in to settle the discord understood perfectly well the unreasonable charge of the claimant and the incontestable right of the diocese.

But Lady, a new event has made manifest I know not what intentions of the High Court regarding its unworthy Metropolitan who has the honor of addressing Your Majesty. Allow me, Lady to relate the facts.

In order to fulfill my sacred ministry I went to the Parish of Yara in the jurisdiction of Manzanillo, with the aim of carrying out the Mission and Holy Pastoral Visitation. All the faithful appeared with great

promptness and docility to hear the word of God from the mouth of their shepherd, and they drew such profit from it that nearly all of them received the Holy Sacraments of Penance, Eucharist and Confirmation, and also of Matrimony in the case of those single persons who had up to that time been living out of wedlock. Now in that same parish and district of Yara, there is a quarter known as *El Zarzal* [The Briar Patch], where there were some seventy men living in concubinage, among them Don Agustín Villarodona, who was living in public concubinage with a mulatto woman. A year earlier he had been warned by civil edict to give up his wicked life. After this he was again warned by the missionaries. Finally, in view of his stubbornness, I myself took him aside. But instead of mending his ways, he grew more obstinate in them and even led others who were living scandalously to pay no heed to their Prelate and not to separate from their concubines. As it is easier to follow bad advice than good, only six of the seventy resisted Villarodona's suasion and mended their ways. I commended the matter to God, and I resolved in prayer to send two of my household there to conduct a special mission aimed at remedying the evil as much as possible. The upshot was that all were converted except Villarodona, who remained contumaciously living with his mulatto mistress, scorning my counsels, precepts and threats, mocking all who spoke of the matter, and even scorning the local authority of the district, who intervened in the affair. Seeing how rebellious he was, I gave up any hope of his emendation. I knew that he was continuing in his scandalous conduct, that he mocked those who had changed their way of life, and finally, that besides scorning my Ecclesiastical authority, he even scorned the civil authority, all of which would be very prejudicial and even fatal in the moral and political orders, if it were allowed to go unpunished. I felt obliged in conscience to level an excommunication against this rebel, as the Sacred Council of Trent, Sess. 24, Chapter 8 commands. I would have considered myself guilty before God and Your Royal Majesty if I tolerated this and failed to apply the penalty due to a man who publicly scorned the ministers of both Church and State. I would have been accounted a bad shepherd if I left this mangy sheep in the midst of the sound ones, whom he would doubtless have infected, as I had already seen by fatal experience, and therefore I separated him from them by means of excommunication. Moreover, as I knew that he was seducing many others by his suggestions, I separated him as an *excommunicated vitandus* [to be shunned].

If we may judge the rightness of a cause and the fitness of its application by its effects, I can say that excommunication was the



best and most opportune medicine for Villarodona's illness. Because, like an arrow sped by the hand of God, it went straight to the heart that had thus far been so proud, rebellious and obstinate, and he repented, humbled himself and sought pardon. Thereupon I, seeing the sincerity of his conversion, with great joy of heart absolved him with all the formalities provided in the Sacred Canons, and thus admitted him anew into the fold of the Church. Moreover, he received the Sacraments of Penance and Eucharist, so that today Villarodona is an entirely different man than he was before.

I had already given God thanks for the good outcome of the excommunication, which led to the conversion of the excommunicated man. I had forgotten the unpleasantness and bad moments that it had brought me. I suspended the Holy Pastoral Visit of the City of Bayamo, where I was staying, so that I could hasten back to Santiago to bring comfort and spiritual help to my suffering flock who were in deep distress over the scourge of the great earthquakes. At that very moment, when my heart was most afflicted, as if it were the best occasion to add to my grief, the Royal High Court of Puerto Principe chose to send me a statement of the Royal Provision of Enforcement in the case of Villarodona, at the request of the Public Prosecutor who, although the party in question did not press any charge, took it upon himself to claim for himself the official right of recourse in this case, as if it were a matter that directly affected only the public good, and this despite the fact that the party in question had gladly submitted himself to me, acknowledging the justness of my procedure. In support of his dictate, the Public Prosecutor cited Law 47, Title 1 of Book 7 of the Compilation of Laws for the Indies, in which the King asks and charges Bishops and Ecclesiastical Judges to act according to the Council of Trent and therefore not to excommunicate anyone *for light causes*. Such are the words of the Law. Whereupon the Public Prosecutor made so bold as to state a dogmatic error, or to put it more clearly, a heresy, since he says in his report that *cases of couples living together out of wedlock cannot be reputed to be grave, since the laws give instructions on their penalty and their form, and moreover attribute their adjudgment exclusively to the temporal power*.

Lady: I know not by what law or royal decree it can be held that in Catholic dominions the adjudgment of couples living together out of wedlock --which is considered a crime against religion-- is a matter that belongs exclusively to the civil power. In such offenses, the Public Prosecutor confuses their religious with their social character. As religious offenses, it cannot be said that their adjudgment does not pertain to the Church. That would amount to denying the Power

of the Keys: nay, to denying or restricting the Sixth Commandment of God and contradicting the general discipline of the Church itself, which is quite clearly established in the Council of Trent (which is, moreover, the Law of the Land, which the Public Prosecutor invokes), whose Decree of Session 24, Chapter 8, cited above, leaves not the slightest doubt as to whether concubinage is a light or grave matter, as to which authority ought to chastise it as a religious offense, and as to the action that Bishops must take in order to extirpate it.

Now as the Council establishes excommunication for cases such as this, they cannot be considered as light offenses and cannot be reputed as such by the very law so ineptly cited by the Public Prosecutor. The same should be construed and said of the royal decree of 22 March 1789, dispatched from Madrid, ordering that the aforesaid law be kept, which also clearly says nothing regarding the present case; still less does another decree cited by the Prosecutor in support of his opinion, namely that of 21 December 1787, issued after consultation with the full Council of the Indies, the tenor of which has absolutely nothing to do with the point in question, since it refers only to general indults, summed up in these very words: *His Majesty commanded that when general indults were issued, they were enjoyed by delinquent ecclesiastics even when they were being judged, so long as the penalties being imposed were such as to be remitted by the said indults.* What does this disposition have to do with the case in hand? Why did the Prosecutor cite this royal order? As for the royal order of 28 February 1815, corroborated by the circular of 10 March 1818 and other rules and orders cited by the same Gentleman, I cannot imagine how he manages to draw two erroneous consequences from them. The first of them is that the offense of concubinage should be reputed to be light, because before beginning legal proceedings, recourse must first be had to warnings and exhortations. Aside from the greater or lesser gravity of the offense committed, in good logic nobody will argue with this previous procedure; in this case, surely, before applying the penalty to Villarodona, the Archbishop of Cuba, in his desire to help him, exhausted all means, even warning him through civil authorities, not once, but repeatedly. But stranger still is the second consequence of the Prosecutor's action. All of these royal decrees and orders aim at having both Royal and Ecclesiastical judges support one another in using private warnings and exhortations, and at having both of them proceed, *according to the rightful law*, against those who obstinately hold them in contempt. Yet from this, he [the Public Prosecutor], I know not by what rule, deduces that if one must have recourse to the *order of right*, this belongs to the adjudication of the royal jurisdic-

tion, without considering the fact that the right involved is both civil and canonical, each of which belongs to the same persons, without considering that in the royal decrees cited, His Majesty was simultaneously addressing both royal and ecclesiastical judges, and that he was not concretely giving the former the right to proceed according to the law. In this we can only admire the Crown's respect for the indubitable rights of the Church in cases which, like the present, affect nothing less than dogma, as I have pointed out earlier. Finally, he [the Prosecutor] has not noted that this argument, on which he bases his case, works against him. For when His Majesty commanded that when these warnings and exhortations failed to obtain any result, then the royal and ecclesiastical judges should proceed in keeping with the law. In the present case, I believe that the Royal High Court would have better observed both the letter and spirit of the Sovereign's law, not by hindering the action of the Ecclesiastical Authority, but rather by doing its part in prosecuting the obstinate and scandalous party. Villarodona, instead of complaining against his Prelate, though he could easily have done so, chose instead to abide by his authority, acknowledge the offense, ask pardon, submit to the penance imposed, and obtained absolution. What a contrast!

Lady: a delinquent submits, while a magistrate, who is supposed to defend the law, advises a respectable body to confront the lawful authority who is correcting the guilty party, and at the very moment when the latter is granted pardon! Force or violence is alleged, while the supposedly outraged party belies the allegation, for he kisses the hand that chastises him as the hand of a father who in chastising him was simply holding him back from plunging over a precipice!

But, over and above this, the Public Prosecutor claims that these public penalties have *upset society*. I do not know which is more harmful: whether to trouble deliberately, though momentarily, one who obstinately perseveres in his offense, or to foster, if only unintentionally, a widespread and in some sense authorized disarray of manners in this country, due to a failure on the part of the Royal High Court. The fact is, my Lady, that the excommunication leveled against Villarodona, after many exhortations and threats to no avail, finally led to his amendment and that of many others who were following his bad example. Yet what is happening now that the Prosecutor's dictate has been circulated everywhere? The Prelate and his missionaries are accused of being fanatics. People are holding, most scandalously, that concubinage is a light offense, *because the Royal High Court has so declared against the Archbishop*. In the good-sized city of Bayamo, where there were no more than 150 married couples (most

of them separated) when I arrived, the fruit of the mission has largely been lost, while the unruly are planning and drafting representations against the Prelate and his missionaries, forging a thousand slanders, and even threatening them and striving at all costs to discredit them by these means, with grave prejudice to morals and public tranquillity. Thus the Royal High Court has unwittingly brought down such conflict on the Archbishop who, unworthy though he be, it ought to have upheld. It has undermined his authority with this false allegation in the report of the Public Prosecutor, who gratuitously assumes that Villarodona was unable to defend himself and prevented from having recourse to that respectable Tribunal for a favorable decision. Now no such prevention took place, since the ordinary power of the realm is represented by all Circuit Judges and the concerned party was in fact convened by one of them, through whom he could have had a hearing before the Resident Judge in Manzanillo, just a few hours from his home. Indeed, the Public Prosecutor needed to assume this lack of recourse in order to justify his officious procedure, since the party concerned gladly submitted to reason and justice. But it would be well for Your Majesty to know that this same Royal High Court, doubtless based on the strange notion that concubinage is a light offense, allowed a well-known employee to live on one of its properties in a public and scandalous liaison, with children who were the offspring of his criminal behavior, despite the efforts my Vicar of Puerto Príncipe had made in order to correct the scandal. And in support of this claim, I should add that when the lists of concubinaries was passed on to that respectable corporation, demanding their strong and effective help --as the Public Prosecutor himself admits in his allegation-- it gave me no support at all, and the disorder that I deplored and sought a remedy for remained almost the same, save for a few exceptions due to the Holy Mission and to the help and zeal of other authorities, especially that of the worthy General Lemery, who at that time was in command at Puerto Príncipe.

And while I am on the subject of the note on concubinaries handed down by the High Court, I cannot fail to reply to and disavow another mistake made by the Prosecutor. In his report, he sets it down that I have recognized the Royal authority's right to try concubinaries, because in my complaint I appealed to the High Court to act against obstinate offenders. It is true that I had recourse to it, asking its help against them, *after I had admonished the offenders both privately and publicly*, thus recognizing the High Court's faculty and duty to help me, according to human and divine laws and those of the realm, to chastise this offense as one of the common but by no

means light crimes against society and the public good, aside from its moral religious character. But nobody can infer from this that I meant to prescind from this character, in which it belongs exclusively to the authority of the Church to judge and correct it by imposing the penalties that the Church itself lays down. Unfortunately for me, the Court did not lend me its aid at that time, as I have indicated; nor, to speak frankly, has it done so at any other time that I needed its help in matters that directly affect the good of the Church.

To conclude, Lady, may Your Majesty allow me to say four words. I believe that the reason that led Your Majesty to choose my humble person as Archbishop of Cuba was my missionary character. This was clearly told me by Your Majesty's worthy Councilors in the Government of the Monarchy when I passed through Madrid in order to kiss Your Royal Majesties' hands before undertaking my voyage to Cuba. Since my arrival in the Diocese, all government functionaries can say what Archbishop Claret's tasks have been. I did not wait to become acclimatized, but set to work at once by immediately opening the Holy Mission and Pastoral Visit in the Capital City. I have been in Cuba a year and a half, and I have already visited and given missions in the greater part of my vast Diocese, crossing barren plains and broad and swampy savannas untraversed by others, sometimes having nothing to eat and others taking cover under trees to take a little rest, leaving no corner unvisited without making Jesus Christ known and adored there. Thousands living out of wedlock have been brought to marry, plentiful restitutions have been made, reconciliations have taken place between those long divided by hatred, inveterate vices have been healed, not to mention the other benefits of all sorts that have been brought about by the Holy Mission preached in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, during my stay in Cuba, I have upheld with deeds the missionary character that moved Your Majesty to designate me for this most heavy charge. The same life that I have led, has been and is still being led by the few but very zealous priests who accompany me, some of whom have already received the reward of their labors from the hands of the Lord, while others are almost out of combat because they are worn out and exhausted to the point of being near that same reward. We regard all our works, however, as very well spent, so long as we are tirelessly fulfilling our Holy Ministry as best we can. And we seek nothing more of human beings, than that all who observe us, but especially the public officials of this Island, should recognize our sound intentions and those of Your Majesty in sending us to these regions, that they should continue helping us by doing their part to remove the obstacles that hell at every step places

in the way of God's work, and that they cooperate in their own sphere to the regeneration of a country that is demoralized for many reasons that need not be detailed here. In this way they will be able to claim a share in the reward with which God will one day crown our mutual efforts to promote, each in his own way, the moral welfare of the docile inhabitants of this land, which concerns the glory of God, of Your Majesty, of this Island and of the whole kingdom.

Holy Visitation of the Parish of Guiza, 22 October 1852.

**131. [247] To Fr. Stephen Sala, C.M.F.**

(EC I, 704-707)

**Introductory Note**

Writing to the Director General of his Congregation of Missionaries, the Founder informs him of his present position on resigning from the Archbishopric of Cuba. He mentions three destructive groups at work in Cuba: some native-born petty lawyers and slave owners, and even some wicked Spaniards, and tells him about the libelous dispatch these have written against him and his missionary team. He has, however been largely supported by military officials, and the people have responded wonderfully to the Mission. Interestingly enough, he states that *God had shown him three great misfortunes threatening the island: earthquakes, epidemics and the loss of the island.* It should be noted that the loss of the island did not come as soon as Claret surmised; it did not, in fact take place until 46 years later. On 16 November 1852, he resumes this letter, which he began on November 4th. He sends greetings to the community of La Mercè and to Fr. Sala's brother, Bernardo, through whom he has learned of the last illness and pious death (in Vic on September 27th) of one of the Co-Founders, Fr. Manuel Vilaró.

**Text**

To the Rev. Mossèn Stephen Sala  
Jiguani, 4 November 1852.

My Dear Sir and Dearly Beloved Brother in Jesus Christ:

I just received your welcome letter of 16 August, and am surprised of what you tell me about the other Brethren of La Mercè. Greet them all for me and tell them to commend me to God, that I may have the helps and grace I need in order to fulfill my sacred ministry.

As for what you ask concerning my renouncing the Archbishopric, I must say that there is nothing positive to report. I have had many longings, as I told you once before, and this time I have written. For the moment, I do not know God's will in the matter, but as soon as I do know it I assure you that I will spare no effort to attain it. In this land much good, indeed, very much good is being done; but there are some forces of destruction and corruption that provoke the Justice of God, which I am sure they will bring down. They are of three classes: native-born petty lawyers, slave owners and Spaniards. The petty lawyers are native sons, most of whom have gone to study in the United States. They are baptized and are Christians in name, but not so in deeds, for they are amoral intriguers and enemies of Spain. The slave owners are men who, it is true, have had their slaves baptized. But for the rest, they live like brutes, assigning female slaves to male slaves like so much cattle, and sometimes --indeed, not a few times-- they themselves and their brothers and sons lie with their black slaves. These men are, of course, enemies of Missions, religion and morality. One owner told his foreman that if any slave went to hear the Mission he should receive forty lashes.

But the most evil of them are those who have come from Spain, and the Catalans in particular are among the wickedest and the worst. They never go to confession or receive communion or go to Mass; all of them either live in concubinage or have illicit relationships with mulatto or black women, and worship no other god than greed. During the Mission of the Embarcadero of Cauto in September of this year, a group of these men wrote a truly horrible dispatch against the Missionaries. They are still working on it, and we do not know what results will come of it, though I believe that they will not be good, because they are going to send it to the High Court of Puerto Príncipe, which just issued a most unjust, heretical and scandalous statement against my way of proceeding. Hence I have been forced to appeal to the Higher Government of Madrid about this wicked behavior. Would that God made use of this to remove me from this land, so that my eyes may not have to behold the misfortunes that are to come! In mid-May, God gave me to understand the great misfortunes that are drawing near: first, earthquakes, second, sicknesses or plagues, and third, the loss of the Island. I publicly mentioned the first two in different sermons, but I kept the third to myself, although I mentioned it in a general way, since it deals with politics, in which I have never meddled. Of these predictions, the first began to come true on the 20th of August, causing terrible destruction; the second is now taking place to such an extent that in the City of Santiago alone some seventy die

every day of cholera; and I believe that the third, namely the loss of the Island, is not far off.

Those who have favored me most have been the military: lieutenant governors and district captains, especially if they are retired military officers, as all of them seem to be, lately.

The people could not be better disposed. All attend the holy Mission and receive the holy sacraments. Some are baptized and confirmed, others make their confession and communion, and get married, especially those who had been living in sin. All of them seem so happy and content that they don't know how to express the joy in their hearts. And if they get hold of one of the books or rosaries that we distribute, their enthusiasm swells to such a point that words cannot describe it. When we finish the Mission and go from one town to the next, all of them accompany us along the way. They themselves do not know how to express the love and veneration in which they hold us.

Today, the 16<sup>th</sup>, I have received a letter from your blood brother and my spiritual brother, Fr. Bernardo [Sala], telling me about your Missions and about the illness of our companion, Vilaró. And in the same mailing I received a letter from Vilaró's father, informing me of his death. Blessed be God. We can only conform ourselves to God's will.

Be so good as to give my regards to Fr. Bernardo and the other brethren at La Mercè, and ask what you will of your servant, who kisses your hand.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba.

### **132. [248] To Mr. Peter Vilaró**

(EC I, 708-709)

#### **Introductory Note**

On receipt of the letter of Mr. Peter Vilaró, informing him of the death of his son, Fr. Manuel Vilaró, C.M.F., the Archbishop replies with the present letter of heartfelt condolence, stating how much he loved his son and how much he had done for him. He even promises the father that he will personally make economic provision for him. He also mentions the untimely death by yellow fever of another missionary companion, Fr. John Pladebella, who remained in Cuba. As usual, instead of writing further letters, he asks the addressee to convey his greetings to his friends in Spain.



**Text**

To Mr. Peter Vilaró  
Jiguani, 14 November 1852.

My Very Dear Sir:

I have just received your letter of 29 September in which you send me the sad news of the death of your beloved son and my dear friend and companion, Fr. Manuel Vilaró.

You know quite well how much I loved him and how many proofs of love I showed him, since I myself sought and obtained from the Government a benefice which would have brought in more than a thousand *duros* this coming year by reason of the increased allowance that I also received for benefice holders. Moreover, besides the benefice I just mentioned, I made him a private secretary, which brought him quite a bit, and in the last months he was here he also served as interim secretary of the Visit. Hence, when he saw how honored he was above his other companions and the amount he was earning, he paid out of his own pocket for a few poor clothes and for his voyage home.

By this favorable treatment of your son and my friend Manuel, I not only meant to honor him, but also to assist you, as you know full well he would have done if God had given him a few more years of life in his assignment. But as we know, man proposes and God disposes. And since the Lord has been pleased to dispose of him as He has done, we can only conform ourselves to His divine will, since He is the Lord of death and of life, which he sends us when, how and where He will, as I and my other companions have experienced as much as anyone. For another of our companions, Fr. John Pladebella, who never left Cuba, although he enjoyed all the conveniences this Island has to offer and was only engaged in teaching Moral Theology in the Seminary, was yet the first of the group to die.

You ask me to take pity on your situation, and I am ready to do so. By this same mailing, I am writing to Fr. Currius to look into and take note of all that belonged to your son, Don Manuel, and afterwards I will write to Fr. Peter Naudó, Vicar of Saint Mary's in Barcelona, to pass it all on to you. But you must have a little patience, because there is little at hand after months of waiting and with considerable loss. This is due to the little that came in and the many who

are leaving the Island after the earthquakes and the cholera epidemic, which caused some grave misfortunes.

Regards to your other son Mossèn Joseph, to Dr. Passarell, to the household of Don Fortian Bres and to other friends who ask after me, and in a special way to my companions at La Mercè. You can rely on your most affectionate servant,

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba.

P.S.- Be so good as to hand the enclosed to Don Fortian Bres, and tell Dr. Passarell that I received his letter. I am apprised of it all and am not writing in order not to multiply letters.

### **133. [1507] To the Captain General**

(EC III, 114-115)

#### **Introductory Note**

Although his earliest contacts with the future Mother Antonia París de San Pedro had been unpromising, Claret had not forgotten her. Once he had taken a good look at his Archdiocese, he soon grasped that she and her daring fellow novices could prove most useful in the ministry of educating girls and in improving worship in many abandoned parishes. He did not wait long before he wrote to Tarragona (where the sisters had until then belonged to the Company of Mary as novices for several years) to authorize the embarkation of his future collaborators and aspirants to a special way of life in God's Church. On 22 February 1852, Mother Antonia and four companions, one of them a niece of Canon Caixal, left Barcelona and arrived in Santiago on 26 May 1852. For further background on the relationships between St. Anthony Mary Claret and Mother Antonia París de San Pedro, see the Introductory Notes and Texts of Letters 80 [118], 81 [120] and 123 [224] above. This letter shows his interest in establishing and promoting a new religious Institute in a more official manner. In August of 1854, Claret, together with Mother Antonia, founded the Institute of the Religious of Mary Immaculate for Teaching (later known also as the Claretian Sisters). Although the new institute was sound and robust, it did not grow well until it was transplanted to Spain, when it took root in the Novitiate of Tremp and in the houses that would spring from it later.

**Text**

Holy Visit of Cuba  
9 December 1852.

Whereas I have seen the statement of our Fiscal Promotor General, together with the unanimously assenting report of our Very Venerable and Illustrious Dean and Chapter, of the Venerable Parish Curates of this Holy Metropolitan Church, and of the Illustrious Council of this City, which our worthy Governor, the Commandant General, both agrees and adheres to;

Whereas I have myself learned of the high regard in which those on the Peninsula hold the usefulness of the moral and religious education imparted by the different congregations of this Religious Institute of the Society of Mary (commonly called the Teaching Sisters);

Whereas I have likewise been struck with the great urgency for installing this Institute in our diocese, which under the present circumstances is in greater need than ever such indispensable associations in order to promote and advance the sort of domestic, moral and religious instruction by means of which good mothers of families should be formed;

And whereas, finally, I have become convinced of the Christian virtues that shine in an uncommon degree in these sisters who, full of fervor and desirous of contributing to the greater glory of God, have left the Peninsula and their Convent to hasten to where they are more needed; in view of these powerful reasons and of the fact that this is one of the Institutes in keeping with the new arrangement for the Clergy which the wise Government of Her Majesty (whom God preserve) is striving to set up in Cuba;

We therefore support their petition and effectively urge His Excellency, the Captain General and Viceroyal Patron, that if he deems it within his competency, he be pleased to allow it to be provisionally installed, given the present urgency to attend to this need, without prejudice to the possibility that His Excellency the Viceroyal Patron might also see fit to refer this petition to the supreme resolution of Her Majesty, Doña Isabel II (whom God preserve), should she be pleased to approve the formal installation and extend to this new Religious House all the advantages which are reserved to the Government with regard to those houses that are to be established in consequence of the new arrangement for the Regular Clergy of this Island.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba  
By order of His Excellency, my Lord Archbishop,  
Philip Rovira

**134. [264] To The Captain General of Cuba**

(EC I, 750-767)

**Introductory Note**

This is a very lengthy answer to a confidential communiqué sent to Abp. Claret by His Excellency, the Captain General of the Island, relating to some charges and accusations leveled against him and his missionaries, mainly the Capuchin Friar, Father Stephen Adoain, whose transfer from Havana to Santiago was being portrayed as an expulsion by the Bishop of Havana, Don Francisco Fleix y Solans, although the latter had written to Abp. Claret, leaving him satisfied with the way Fr. Adoain had been treated. One by one, the Archbishop refutes all charges, strongly upholds his missionaries and offers a beautiful apologia for them. Abp. Claret and his missionaries were often attacked in periodicals (mainly *El Eco de Cuba*, *La voz del Pueblo cubano* and *La Verdad*) published in the United States by Cuban émigrés. *La Verdad*, a self-styled “journal supported by the patriots of Cuba for the dissemination of republican principles,” which the Saint mentions here, was the official organ of the members of the “Junta Cubana,” including Valiente, Betancourt, Pozos Dulces, et al. Many of those who attacked Claret and his missionaries were pushing for the annexation of Cuba, since its toleration of slavery was appealing to those States which opposed its abolition. One of the ulterior motives behind the attacks on Claret and his missionaries was the whole question of blatant and unrepentant concubinage on the Island, which was closely connected with a royal decree regarding mixed interracial marriages, some details of which are given in paragraph 2 of the Introductory Note to letter [122] 240 above.

**Text**

Archdiocese of  
Santiago Cuba  
Your Excellency:

While I was somewhat bewildered at the charges made against my missionaries as mentioned in the thoughtful and confidential communiqué which Your Excellency kindly sent me on January 26th, they did not take me completely by surprise. For although I had received no official notice of them, I had heard that some more-or-less vague claims were going to be made against them to the civil authorities.

When I wrote Your Excellency on this matter in an earlier confidential letter from Bayamo, I had to advise you that according to reliable reports, neither my own person nor that of my missionaries was being held inviolable. I am happy to state that the District Governor of that city helped me in every way to avoid the slightest trouble for me and mine. I must also state that the only ones whose machinations put us on our guard were a few ill-mannered troublemakers of dubious antecedents. Because the local people in general, and those of Cauto in particular, have given us undoubted and patent proofs of docility, respect, submission and religious sentiments. I believe that I should state this at the outset and then go on to refer to the confidential letter, whose contents I would like Your Excellency to keep before him as we review this affair.

I can only applaud the discretion with which Your Excellency has acted. For since it was a delicate and thorny matter of heeding or not heeding several accusations which the [district] government saw fit to level against priests of my diocese for alleged abuses in the exercise of their ministry, it was only natural that you should address the Prelate on whom they depend. For these charges did not involve government functionaries, but ministers of God who received from Him the divine mission of teaching His holy law, correcting evil customs and opening the way to heaven to the whole wide world. But quite apart from their dependence on the lawful Shepherds whom the Holy Spirit has sent to rule his Church, they were owed some input into the judgment in question, by the very fact that the dispatches Your Excellency refers to are of a governmental nature, and every accused person has a right to be heard before he is condemned. I can readily perceive how rightly Your Excellency acted, since before proceeding to exercise your office in this matter, you deemed it your duty to address the Archbishop of Cuba, manifesting to him some of the main charges made. You have thus sought to remedy as best you can the wrongs inherent in an underhanded action taken against persons acting publicly within the sphere of their sacred duties; an action which the accusers, in order to remain anonymous and thus act with greater impunity in their slander, resorted to without first applying to the lawful superior of the men accused or even giving him the remotest notion of what the charges involved, so that he could, if need be, have informed those who were presumed to be guilty that they were so regarded, imposing some penance on them, either as such or as a precautionary measure for the good of society. For up to that critical moment they had not been informed that their conduct was under study, and indeed that they were being charged with excesses and that an attempt was be-

ing made to verify the allegations. Moreover, in the prudent way in which Your Excellency has proceeded in enumerating these defects, I recognize some reasons of far greater importance: the character of the persons incriminated; the reverence due to the first ecclesiastical authority of the Island, who is more-or-less directly attacked in this case; respect for the rights of the Church itself, which is obliged more than anyone else to support and defend its Patron; the grave scandal that would follow if it were perceived that there was any sort of discord between the two authorities [i.e., of Church and State] who ought to be helping one another, since their aim is the same, namely, the good of society. Both of them trust in Her Majesty's government and share the same resolve: to reform customs that have been greatly vitiated and to correct inveterate abuses. For their responsibility before God and men is similar and awesome since, each in its own way, they are rulers of their fellow humans.

Finally, because the present delicate condition of the Island demands that the chief functionaries of both should show more than ordinary temperance and good sense, more concern to walk hand in hand, more watchfulness to avoid being innocently caught in artful traps and more conformity with a view to the future. Thus morality and religion are given all possible importance in order to win human hearts, and these arms are wisely combined with the energy and strength which a good government needs to display more than ever in extraordinary circumstances. All else should yield before these high concerns; and if any disturbance in the mutual relations of both powers, they should be settled privately, without clashing; for the sound of each clash puts the enemy on the alert, and for him, the least disagreement is an initial victory.

Having established these principles, whose weight and importance I leave it to Your Excellency to conjecture, I will now go on to deal with the whole contents of your letter to the best of my ability.

Almost all of the charges Your Excellency refers to are expressly directed against the Capuchin Missionary, Fr. Stephen Adoain, a religious beyond reproach for his doctrine and behavior and tireless, moreover, in the pulpit and confessional and in his concern for the reform of customs. I cannot help believing that the circumstances under which he became associated with my mission, at the very time I was beginning my apostolic tasks, were not a matter of chance, but of Providence. I watched him, took him along with me, tested him in many ways, and was convinced that I had been truly fortunate in acquiring his services. The good results of his continual efforts justified

the judgment that I had formed of him. And here I should point out that his background is not what his accusers suppose of him. It is not my business to qualify his departure from Havana; I know, however, that while he was there he acquired some enemies who managed to discredit him in some way with my most worthy brother Bishop there. But I do not believe that his Lordship censured him for his excesses in the pulpit, for I am assured that from the pulpit he lashed out with energy and holy independence against some doctrines that had been twisted by certain published authors. And I have also heard that these same literary productions were anathematized by that same Prelate, which, if it is true, is a quite telling proof against this point that has been aimed at him. I also know with complete certainty that many pious persons of Havana still bless and respect him, and lament the loss of an evangelical worker who is in no way less worthy than the best in that Capital. For I assigned him to help me, and I give God thanks for having increased the number of my workers with a member so useful to His holy Cause. It is not at all surprising that since he has had such great zeal and such glorious results, he should have suffered the trials with which the world, as the Apostle says [cf. Rom 9:3], always rewards piety.

As I now turn to the specific charges that have been alleged of him, my only regret is that the confidential character of this letter, though it is otherwise so prudent, does not allow me more room to make my words more splendid and triumphant. I will base my statements on what I know from my own experience and on the trustworthy reports that I have received from the missionaries themselves, regarding the data in question. All the statements made against this worthy religious are utterly unfounded. It has been said that he used force to cause people whom he viewed as living in sin to get married. Aside from the fact that I cannot imagine the sort of force that a poor priest could use in such cases --as if the very law of God did not demand the fulfillment of a sacred promise that had deceived a woman into prostituting herself!-- for the only force at work here is the force of conscience that must surely exist as a result of the crime committed. Apart from this case, in which the missionary does no more than remind people of their duty --in which case the force does not come from the missionary, but from the law of God and from their own conscience-- apart from this case, I repeat, my missionaries (including Fr. Adoain, whose learning in matters of morals is well-known to me) go as far as they must, *leaving the sinfully unwed completely free to marry or to separate*. If anyone says otherwise, he is only trying to discredit the mission for more or less ulterior reasons. Nor can it be

said that Fr. Adoain only imagines that this or that couple is living in sin; the public accuses them, for the wantonness of those who live in this part of the Island and the brazenness of the way they live is beyond all fathoming. The best proof of this are the nine thousand marriages of this sort that I have authorized in a year and a half of heavy work. But that is not all: Fr. Adoain and all the missionaries stick to the lists that are handed to them, not by the pastor, but by the justice of the peace. How, then, can it be supposed that they are shocking or discrediting innocent couples, misjudging their customs to be disorderly? Let them rather blame the head justice of the peace or the district governor who turned them in; let them blame the public who point their fingers at them; or indeed, let them blame their own conscience, which accuses them and makes their scandalous behavior manifest; but not the minister of the Lord, who either counsels, warns or threatens them, seeking only the glory of God through the conversion of poor sinners. Let it not be said, Your Excellency, that the missionaries offend against decency by using improper expressions against those who may be sadly scandalizing people by their disorderly conduct; and above all, let no one use such hypocritical language in a country where there is no shame, seeing that concubinage is the normal state of things. For on this point, the disorderliness of manners reaches back to the earliest years of life, in a country where public nudity causes nobody to blush, and where, for this very reason, the differences between the sexes is not a deep mystery from earliest childhood on. Where... But what am I saying? If Your Excellency were a confessor and missionary, you would understand even better how ridiculous such accusations are. I will move on to another matter, letting what I have said suffice to allow Your Excellency to form an impartial and exact judgment of your own.

No less gratuitous is the accusation of ranting against the current ordinances regarding slaves on holy days. In their doctrinal explanations on this matter, if they say anything, it is by combining the dispositions of the law for the protection of the slaves with the divine precept to worship, which no human ruling can alter without a just cause, as these very laws uphold. If anything other than this is attributed to Fr. Adoain and his companions, it is unfounded. And what shall I say of the ideas of racial equality that they are also alleged to be spouting? On this and on the preceding issue, I must inform Your Excellency that at the beginning of my holy mission I gave the missionaries my rules for preaching, which they must adhere to, and I expressly forewarned them to tread as they would on hot coals when they dealt with the third and fourth Commandments, which



border on these matters. It costs me dearly to see that my forewarnings are adhered to, and I am not surprised that Fr. Adoain or any of my companions may be incriminated on this point; for I myself have been included, although no expression of the sort has ever slipped from my lips. On August 30th past, a revolutionary paper of New Orleans, called *La Verdad* [The Truth], went so far as to insert a report full of slanders against me and my companions, stating among other things that we were publicly preaching or teaching the equality of races and even anathematizing the worthy General Medinilla, for his alleged sympathies with people of color. It would be well for Your Excellency to dwell on this coincidence: that we are all included under this anathema. It also would be well for you to note that these charges proceed from the forges of annexationist rebellion, and that those who are advocating rebellion and working against the order and loyalty of the Island, far from expecting any support from the missionaries, regard them as in large measure prejudicial to the attainment of the aims of their machinations. And it matters not that the persons who rail against the missionaries might seem at first blush to be loyal subjects of Her Majesty's Government. They might be doing so in good faith by giving ear to tales of wicked origin unawares, without any accurate knowledge of the matter and without having personally heard such teachings from the missionaries. Or perhaps some of them, led astray by inexcusable passions, especially among those who have been denounced for scandal, are trying to excuse themselves by distorting the law, and who, because they are stung by the reprimand and lack the spirit to mend their ways, yield to more or less covert suggestions and without realizing it, become the tools of their own enemies.

Limiting myself now to the cases which Your Excellency chose to specify, I shall say what is certain about them, speaking with the frankness that I should always use by reason of my sacred character, a frankness to which I feel invited by Your Excellency's decorous procedure and by the respect in which you hold my humble person.

Don Angel Maria Santisteban, included in the lists of the justice of the peace, was called in like the rest and admonished without the least acrimony to give up his evil life either by marrying or separating from his partner. Since he declined to marry and gave his word to separate, his name was erased from the list. Three days later he made an official appearance, without being called either by the Capuchin Father or his companion, and manifested his desire to marry after having thought better of the matter, adding that he had obtained

permission from his parents. The missionaries urged him to reflect further before making his decision, and thus they bade him farewell. When he returned, again officially, they still put off the rite, so that he could meditate on it some more. The third time, however, seeing his insistence, they proceeded with the marriage. These are the facts. Let Your Excellency judge, then, whether the charge of moral coercion is or is not well founded, and who, by way of supposition, would have been blamed in case the priest had not authorized the license.

Also included in the lists were Don Antonio Milán and Don Antonio Pavón, who presented themselves and voluntarily offered to contract matrimony with their partners, although the missionaries were not apprised of their racial differences, because, since in such large numbers it is impossible to discern whether a person's skin is more or less dark and because all of the country folk of the Island seem to be indistinguishably sun-tanned. If there were some inequality, they should have manifested it, because one cannot always get hold of baptismal records, either because of the excessive number of those living in sin whose conscience must be attended to, or because if they live outside the Parish these records must be sought elsewhere, and always with the risk that they will, alas, not turn up, as happens ordinarily. All of this obliged me to issue an Act of Visitation in El Cobre at the beginning of the mission, dispensing with the presentation of these documents during the mission, making up for it with an extrajudicial affidavit of the couples' being christened. These and other drawbacks are safeguarded with the advisements whereby any impediment may be discovered. And as no canonical or civil impediments were disclosed in the present case, the responsibility of the missionaries was completely covered, and as it is certain that neither Milán nor Pavón put up the least resistance, it is equally certain that Fr. Adoain appealed to the equality of races as a way to level them. Hence, the accusation is slanderous.

As regards Don Antonio María Céspedes, Don Juan Urrutia and José María Tamayo (a black cutter of very wicked behavior in every sense), in view of the bad reports given about them, the Capuchin Father advised the justice of the peace to try to have them removed from the area so that they might not continue giving scandal. This the good Father did, and nothing more; but to suppose that he himself exiled them is a charge so ridiculous and laughable that it cannot even be entertained. There would be nothing strange about it if, in a long list of concubinaries who were either proclaimed or warned as such, the name of Don Antonio Céspedes should have been included and not erased. But this is neither a charge nor is it in any way significant or

worthy of consideration, so long as it is not proved that having made a mistake and being apprised of it, no effort was made to correct it.

It is likewise denied that the Capuchin Father urged the justice of the peace to enforce a writ of procedure against Santisteban and Don Esteban Acosta. What is indeed true, is that in consideration for the unfortunate children of these cohabitations, he tried to bring both of these men to give a written assurance that they would provide food for their offspring, since they were separating from the women with whom they had been living. That is to say, a counsel that was so worthy, so moral and so in keeping with the gospel, has been so twisted that it had been replaced by a ridiculous procedure with no basis to sustain it.

Likewise, the charge of using moral coercion against Don Miguel Milán is not true. At first his mistress --not he, although he had been cited like all the rest on the list-- appeared and assured us in his name that he wanted to get married. After the first warning went out, Milán appeared and did not oppose it. He then complied and was erased from the list, by agreeing to provide his children with food and to separate from his mistress. All of the 'coercion' that was exerted in his case boiled down to this.

Three times the missionaries asked the justice of the peace to make Don Perfecto González appear, and the justice either did not reply or stated that he was not in the area, which the missionaries found to be untrue, since on one occasion when they were in Cauto, some trustworthy persons told them that they had seen him. If he was included on the list mistakenly, since so many were cited, he should have presented himself, if only to clear his name, yet the missionaries never saw him. With this, the special cases alleged in Cauto against Fr. Stephen Adoain remain answered. As Your Excellency specifies no others of this sort, I can say no more, except that they, too, might suffer from the same defects -- a supposition that cannot be viewed as rash or hasty, since it seems that in the cases considered he did not act lightly, but rather discreetly and prudently, aside from the fact that his holy desire to avoid sins and correct abuses was sufficient motive to make enemies for himself.

Here I believe it is fitting to answer another insignificant charge: to wit, that he misused the summons for citing concubinaries by signing them, "The Capuchin." Even when seen in this light, there were only two inoffensive results: 1) the summons had their effect and the justices of the peace did not oppose them in the least; and 2) it made the aim of the summons clear to those who were called.

This meant working expeditiously and knowing how to appreciate the use of precious time, but without any fault in doing so, because the justices of the peace themselves gave him the lists of the disorderly and even put their subalterns at his disposal, thus saving themselves some work. Now it seems that in denouncing this matter, the justices of the peace, instead of being grateful, take it as a rebuff. Then why did they allow it? Who obliged them to do so? And why did they have to authorize someone, at least by their silence, to do something that did not involve anything evil or offensive in itself? If tomorrow you and I were meeting in your house and agreed to take a measure in both our interests, which I would promote, and we went ahead with it in perfect accord and harmony, I don't believe that Your Excellency would blame me for taking a larger part in it than one of your lieutenants or servants. Surely you would not blame me for a lack of respect. Well, then, I ask you: In grave matters that affect morality, such as helping or not helping one who by his very office guards, teaches and puts morality into practice, is the attention of higher officials to be distracted by such excessive accusations? If a person sees that the bearer of a citation is dependent on authorities, there should be no doubt that he does so with the advice and consent of the authority, even though he does not materially refer to the name of the justice of the peace; and if he does so, there should be no charge against him.

What is certain is that all of this reveals a suspicious intention, furtive aims, refined efforts and a rather deep plan that is not easy to discern at first sight. Indeed, in these matters Your Excellency is much more discerning than I, who neither understand nor ought to be concerned with things not incumbent on me. And if I do point these things out, it is only as a means of defending and of upholding as I ought the sincerity of my subordinates.

Only two charges remain to be answered regarding Fr. Adoain, and I have intentionally left them till the last: the first, because it concerns an event that occurred in another part of Cauto, namely, in Santa Cruz; and the second, because of its very nature it is alien to any other Tribunal than that of the Bishop. According to Your Excellency's communiqué, Fr. Adoain *stirred up some lamentable scenes in Santa Cruz, by taking the images of the Redeemer and the Shepherdess out the Church and moving them to his lodgings*. No one mentioned that for thirteen days the missionaries had been busy preaching, teaching, admonishing and trying to move the people to repentance, yet in all that time had heard the confessions of barely 20 adults. They have not told Your Excellency that in order to move the hearts

of these people they had prepared the children for their First Communion and had celebrated it, yet even this tender spectacle had not managed to move the hearts that had thus far remained hardened. They have not told Your Excellency that, seeing they were wasting their time and had duties elsewhere, they were thinking of leaving Santa Cruz, when they thought it their duty to try one last resort and remain there if the people could be touched. And with this in mind, they gathered up their own images, which they carry with them in their missions, not those of the Church. I say this lest not knowing it, your Excellency might be led to believe that they had committed a theft. This explanation, I believe you will agree, puts an entirely different complexion on the matter. And now I must add that Jesus Christ himself expressly commanded his Apostles that when they were not received in a place, they should shake the very dust of their shoes against them and go elsewhere [cf. Mt 10:14]. For the only way to receive a mission and lend it a willing ear is by hastening to the font of grace, the sacrament of penance. And what was the outcome of this pious stratagem? what might have been expected: the people were moved to repentance and the fruit of the mission was extraordinary. The lieutenant governor was alarmed, it is true, as the missionaries themselves told me; but he soon came to see that no disorder arose or could arise from this prodding. Nonetheless, so that there may be no pretext on our part for accusations, such scenes will not be repeated without my express agreement; and I shall only resort to them (which I do not expect to do) if I see that my voice is entirely unheeded, that my purely charitable love and efforts are harassed and that, in fine, that the glory of God should be gravely slighted.

Finally, the missionary is accused of demanding in the Tribunal of Penance the revelation of the accomplice in sins of incontinence. Could it be possible that such accusations be addressed to any authority but my own? To put it better: such a sin bears its own penalty and one who commits it incurs that penalty *ipso facto*. And even if it were possible to prove what goes on between the priest and penitent in the secrecy of the confessional, the penalty is spiritual, for the crime is purely of the same species. How, then, should it be denounced to Your Excellency or to any authority other than my own? I am far from even thinking that Fr. Adoain should have incurred such a crime; on the contrary, wretched in the sight of God is he who dared abuse the role of penitent in order to find a pretext whereby to slander such a worthy priest!. If civil authorities could even indirectly prosecute such delicts, alas for confessors, or rather, alas for penitents, who would not easily find anyone to disentangle them from their sins! The

Church, far wiser than any human power, applies this penalty *ipso facto*, as I have said, in the internal forum, though without prejudice of declaring it solemnly by bringing it forth and judging it in the external forum; but always through a spiritual penalty, because it cannot be otherwise.

This is one more proof that the aim here has been to discredit the mission at all costs; for one must not lose sight of a fact supporting this, namely, that the other missionaries are constantly at my side, and that, because of his expertise and intelligence, I only send Fr. Adoain out, though not far from me, generally accompanied by another missionary with less expertise. The blow is well aimed: first to discredit the workers and then their chief -- and it is always aimed at him, if not in person, then at what he esteems as dearly as the apple of his eye, namely, his tireless companions, full of charity and evangelical zeal.

I believe that I have answered the charges against Fr. Adoain that Your Excellency has referred to me. Wicked tongues may rage against this good religious, but the Archbishop of Cuba deems it his duty in conscience to manifest the judgment that he has formed of him after mature and lengthy knowledge of the case; and I doubt not that this will serve as an antidote against slander, as well as a rightful homage to his virtue and evangelical zeal.

I shall conclude my answer, which is longer than I would have wished, by taking up the incidental accusation made against me, for detaining the scandalous curate and sexton major in Las Tunas. The pastor himself was involved in the case of Las Tunas, and sentenced to eight years of reclusion, and by order of the government he went on to Havana, where he is fulfilling his sentence. Aware of the bad conduct of the sexton major whom Your Excellency nominated, I by no means wanted to entrust the parish to him, and thus I began to chastise him without regard for the recommendations of high functionaries who took his part. Being short of clergy, I had to send on an interim basis the only one I found available between Cuba, Puerto Príncipe and Bayamo. I tried to send three different subjects, and all made excuses. I then trained my attention on the most worthy curate economo who governed the parish a half-year ago, Don Juan Fonte, one of the most respectable of the native-born priests of the Diocese for his virtue, zeal and aptitude for the care of souls. But since he was at the time in Havana, it took effort and time to bring him from there where, as I understand, the Worthy Prelate there was also rightly trying to place him. All of this brought delays, and meanwhile it was

impossible for me to remove the interim curate, against whom these accusations were undoubtedly directed. Moreover, at that time I could not remove the sexton major, because, for all his very grave faults, he is well instructed and experienced, while the interim curate is largely lacking in these qualities, and I was thus unable to leave him alone in the Vicarage and Parish without exposing myself to a thousand conflicts, so long as I had no one else available. But today the accusation is utterly unfounded, since happily, with the good choice of Fonte and his residence in the Parish, the problem has for the most part been remedied and the scandal of the other two has been repaired by the provisions I took to that effect.

I am well aware that Your Excellency is not of a mind to even think of censuring my acts in these matters, which would be in prejudice of the authority and exemption of my sacred character; but now that Your Excellency has pointed out these appearances, I must not allow the truth to be obscured. And now that the occasion has arisen, it is good to recall what the Archbishop of Cuba stated even before he came to the Island, namely, that without workers he cannot work. If those he found were not good and were in short supply, that is not his fault. And if until now most of the clergy have been unpaid, how can one find fit personnel from outside to come and die of hunger? For there are not many priests who, like his slandered missionaries, will leave their comforts and positions, to give God greater glory without the least material remuneration; nor do all of them have to be missionaries, either. What more could the Archbishop of Cuba have done after incessantly pressing the supreme government, by word on arriving in the Island, and later by energetic representations and reports on arranging the endowment for priests, the increase in parishes, the establishment of mission houses, and especially those of the Society of Jesus, and by sending a zealous and well-informed Prebendary [Don Jerónimo Mariano Usera y Alarcón] to the Court in order to enact the resolution of these urgent needs?

Thanks be to God, the enlightened government of Her Majesty listened to his claims and has begun to satisfy them, with the Queen (God save Her) dictating the recent Royal Documents on arrangements for worship and clergy. But in the meantime the Archbishop has had to rely on no more than a hundred and twenty priests in his whole vast diocese, including the Cathedral Chapter, and on elderly and unable priests, of whom there are not few. Even so, up to the present he has had to remove eight pastors, and has even had as many as seven in reclusion at one time. Yet he is still blamed for tolerating excesses and for keeping the unworthy in their assignments!

What should he do, then? Should he at once inactivate all the clergy of more or less suspect conduct, thus leaving the parishes abandoned and with no one to provide them with spiritual nourishment? Believe me, Your Excellency, only the desire for the greater glory of God could keep us from flagging in the midst of so many privations, troubles, travails and contradictions.

But I still have to struggle with other inconveniences which are sometimes insuperable. If I proceed with a cause against the clergy, the cure is rendered useless, because in a country like this where it is so easy to find legal support for slanders, as in the present case, this means is a noose that authority hangs around one's neck, a shackles that stop one from acting, while the delinquent mocks the Superior's inability to act, because he can make a show of legal proofs of the innocence of his conduct. On this point I could cite some very notable cases, but I fear it might distract me and lead me to ramble on. Thus by summoning the clergy I expose myself to not being able to prove anything and in doing so to cause an even greater scandal, because I bring forth in judgment what should remain hidden, with all the unpleasantness that follows. And if in virtue of my own lawful authority, and for reasons of conscience that I should keep to myself, I proceed to suspend a scandalous pastor, without following procedures that I do not need to use in such cases, I must resort to forceful measures and expose myself to being treated with contempt, as has almost happened on one occasion.

How sad it is for a Bishop when, in order to answer sinister and unjust charges, he finds himself forced to disclose the faults of a clergy that he himself has not formed, yet which is the only clergy he can rely on, apart from the few missionaries who accompany him! But why should I complain over this and the other contradictions that befell me, if they are the most patent proof of our efforts and that the cause we are defending is a holy one? If we were lazybones, you may be sure that no one would bother us and that we would have nothing to fear; but where there is war, there must be bloodshed. And indeed, two missionaries have already succumbed as victims of the exhausting work that they took upon themselves, if one measures it in terms of prudence. Others have lost their health and I do not believe they will recover it. And those of us who remain will follow in their steps, thus meriting, like the Apostle Paul, to be anathema to the world for the glory of the Crucified [Rom 9:3].

Doubtless I have taxed Your Excellency's attention more than is right; but the charges were many and it behooved me to see what the



alleged 'excesses' of these harmless missionaries might be during the year and a half in which they have traversed almost the whole diocese with me, crossing impassable plains, suffering wants of all sorts and exposed to the rigors of a climate that Europeans find unbearable, without resting a single day in the whole year. It was fitting that Your Excellency should know what has been done during this year and a half by these seven men, among them Fr. Adoain, whom some have tried to present as promoting public disorders, for allowing themselves to be carried away with excessive zeal. They have effectively contributed to winning over to me the hearts of the great majority, indeed, almost all the hearts of my flock, who bless our name everywhere, seeing that it is for their good that we gladly sacrifice ourselves. It was fitting that Your Excellency should know that these poor missionaries have helped me to create nearly ten thousand families, to give a name and character in society to more than 40,000 illegitimate persons: an immense service rendered to society itself and to public and private morality, for which they neither seek nor wish for any recompense other than heaven. At my own expense, they have distributed among the people more than a hundred thousand books and brought in a countless number of shameful books, whose entry, circulation and evil consequences the isolated action of the government, without our help and cooperation, has been incapable of holding back. In brief, Your Excellency should know that with their help I have won over consciences for God, so that according to the data that I keep, as many as 70,000 persons have received the Bread of the Eucharist, and this only in the different General Communions held this year and a half and, according to the same data, we have heard more than three hundred thousand Confessions. God be blessed for it all and to Him alone be the glory. Finally, I ought to let Your Excellency know that, far from being remiss in correcting the unworthy, I press forward to do so without regard for difficulties and contradictions of any sort. And if I do not at once separate and completely disqualify all who deserve it, the fault is not mine, since I do not have substitutes or other titles of ordination in order to create new clergy for the existing benefices, of which there are up to the present no more than 36 for my whole vast diocese.

I believe that with my explanations I have satisfactorily replied to the reports that Your Excellency sent me in your attentive communication, and I am very grateful for your prudence and consideration in this delicate business.

And in rightful tribute to the public good and the authority which Your Excellency so worthily exercises, I assure you that I shall

redouble my efforts, if possible, to avoid henceforth the least pretext being brought against my missionaries and other subordinates.

God keep Your Excellency these many years.

Ti-Arriba, 7 February 1853

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba.

### 135. [270] **To the Bishop of Havana**

(EC I, 776-777)

#### **Introductory Note**

This is a copy of a memo sent by Saint Anthony Mary Claret to Don Francisco Fleix y Solans, Bishop of Havana. From the Bishop's answer to the Saint, we know that the original note was written on 22 March 1853. Easter fell on 27 March of that year. The "relaxation" of which the Saint speaks is the moral breakdown attendant upon slavery, which could not have been more lamentable and degrading, going to shameful extremes. The slaves had resorted to thieving, dissimulation and sensual behavior, while the slave owners were driven by greed, cruelty and lust in their dealings with them. In a letter to Canon Caixal, dated 6 July 1851, the Saint had stated the matter as bluntly as possible: "Indecency is in full swing on this Island: men commit fornication with as few scruples as if they were going to urinate; living together out of wedlock is called living decently; adulteries are viewed as a pastime and a diversion; masters lie as easily with their slave-girls as they do with their own wives, etc., etc. But I am hardly surprised, since they have neither read nor heard it preached that this is a sin. Quite the contrary, they see the ministers of the Lord, who ought to be warn and instruct them, teaching them indecency by practice..." (EC I, p. 554). See also, in much the same vein, the Saint's letter of 4 November 1852, to Fr. Stephen Sala, where he mentions that a slave owner in Dátíl had threatened to give any slave who dared to attend the mission forty lashes. Bishop Fleix y Solans, who was making a pastoral visit in Villaclara, answered Claret's letter, in which he states: "I am enclosing the Circular Letter in which I have set forth my arrangements, to see if you can find anything in it that should be reformed, or which might be of help to you in setting forth your own." For a wonderfully succinct account of Abp. Claret's very kind dealings with Bp. Fleix y Solans, and his more difficult dealings with the crafty and slanderous Fr. Santiago López de San Roman, see John Lozano's *LSG*, pp. 227-228.

**Text**

Consultation to the Bishop of Havana

Most Esteemed Brother:

God willing, I plan to finish the visitation of the whole Diocese before Easter, and through His divine mercy, God alone knows all that has been done. Until the present, I have not meddled in matters concerning slaves, but have received all who have spontaneously come before me. In some places of this diocese, slavery is in the greatest relaxation. They [slave owners] only have them baptized, and this only if and when slave owners are agreeable to it; but on many plantations they are not allowed to receive matrimony or the other sacraments. Through parish books and other reports, I have come to know that this relaxation has been going on for some years, though it was not thus formerly, [but has developed] especially since the French came from the Isle of Santo Domingo and from the revolutions in Spain.

I would like you to tell me:

1) If there is a similar neglect in the camps, plantations, farms, etc., of your Diocese; and how you deal with it; and how I should deal with it.

2) As slavery is something forbidden by the law of God, by Synodal laws, by the Laws of the Indies, and which is, by the Edict of Governance and according to the new agreement for the Clergy, highly prejudicial to the Royal Treasury, how am I to correct it?

3) It seems to me that arguing from the damage to the Royal Treasury is the best approach to follow in order to persuade the Authorities to order that this neglect be halted, especially on the plantations and farms of the French.

I rely on your kindness and zeal, together with your superior knowledge and experience, to tell me the way that I should proceed in this very delicate and important matter.

**136. [1516] To the Apostolic Nuncio**

(EC III, 129-130)

**Introductory Note**

Archbishop Claret was so weary of his office that he wanted to resign from it as soon as possible, but he would have to wait another four long years. As he writes more than a decade later in his Auto-

biography: “Despite the fact that I had visited and given missions in all the parishes of the diocese during those first two years, I kept on doing so even afterwards. The Council of Trent demands that the pastoral visitation be made every one or two years; during my six years and two months in office, I visited every parish in the diocese four times” (Aut 550). In fact, the 1st pastoral visit lasted for a little more than two years (from February 1851 to March 1853); the 2nd began in July 1853 and ended in September 1854; the 3rd from November 1854 until April 1855; and the 4th, from August 1855 until it was abruptly interrupted by the attempt of the Saint’s life in Holguín (1 February 1856). In March of 1857, as the Archbishop was getting ready to resume his interrupted visit, he was summoned to Spain by Queen Isabel II of Spain, to become her Confessor. During his visits, we know that every morning the Archbishop usually confirmed some 500 persons. More concretely, in reference to this first pastoral visit, Fr. Currius testified at the Informative Process of Beatification at Taragona: “Before the end of the first two years of our stay in Cuba, there were 73,447 Communion, 97,070 Confirmations, 8,577 marriages between couples living out of wedlock, 210 divorced couples reunited” (IPT, sess. 12).

### **Text**

To His Excellency, the Most Rev. S. Brunelli,  
Archbishop of Thessalonica  
Apostolic Nuncio of Spain  
Santiago, Cuba. 20 April 1853

My Very Dear and Esteemed Sir:

I received your most welcome letter in which you ask me for news about Mrs. Magdalena Merinetti, widow of the late Mr. Galdiani. I am enclosing as much as I have been able to learn with a letter from the lady herself.

For the moment I have nothing new to report, thank God. On March 20th I concluded the Missions and Pastoral Visit of the whole Diocese, and the results have been most copious, though mixed with many labors, but we have borne them all for God. In the very next post I am thinking of writing to His Holiness, giving him an account of the mercies that the Lord has shed on these people by means of this unworthy and useless minister of his. At the same time I was thinking of writing to both His Holiness and to our Lady Queen, as to whether I might resign and retire to my College in Catalonia [i.e.,

the Claretian Mission House of La Mercè], or even, if they wish, to the Society of Jesus, because I am quite tired of being an Archbishop and have fulfilled my mission to this Island.

After finishing the pastoral visit with all my companions, I came to the City to celebrate Holy Week Services, and after Easter we made the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, as is our custom every year. I am now giving the same Exercises to the Canons, Pastors and other Priests from the city and from 30 leagues around. Meanwhile two pairs of missionaries are already going out into the field, and I will also go out to the missions in a month, perfecting what they have begun, until the Lord sees fit to unburden me of this most heavy Cross.

In the meantime I am and will always be your most attentive and constant servant, who kisses your hand,

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba.

### 137. [271] **To the Governor of the Province**

(EC I, 778-779)

#### **Introductory Note**

Concerned over the neglect of the Christian and moral education of girls in Cuba, the Saint points out that the poor are hardly cared for at all, while the rich are often sent to the United States, where they lose not only their faith, but also their allegiance to Spanish Cuba. The Queen has allowed religious schools for boys in Cuba, and those of the Company of Mary for girls in Spain. He argues that the latter permission be extended to Cuba.

#### **Text**

Archdiocese of Santiago Cuba

Most Excellent Sir:

I am returning to Your Excellency the dispatch on establishing in this City the Institute of the Sisters of the Company of Mary, devoted to the education of girls. With it I enclose the note on the bases that you requested from my Vicar General on the fifth of February.

In view of the Royal Edict of the twenty-sixth of last November, dispatched by Her Majesty our Queen (God save her), commanding that Communities of men consecrated to the education of boys be

established in this Island, it is quite in accord with the spirit of Her Majesty in making this apt decision, to extend her concern to the weaker sex, which is no less in need of being assured of a moral and religious education. This has been little cared for among the poor classes, and entrusted to mercenaries among a small number of the well-to-do. This lack is a constant occasion for families to send their girls to study abroad, thus exposing them to the great dangers attendant on this in the moral, political and even religious sphere, as Her Majesty was well aware when she made her sovereign disposition. Moreover, the fact that the aforesaid Institute has been established in various places on the Peninsula, with the approval of the Supreme Government, is just one more reason for allowing it to be established on this Island. God keep Your Excellency for many years.

Anthony Mary Claret, Archbishop of Cuba

To His Excellency, the Governor General of this Place and Province.

**138.** [280, 1519] **To Canon Joseph Caixal**

(EC I, 791-792 [excerpt]; EC III, 137-138)

### **Introductory Note**

The Saint tells his old friend about the progress of the “Teaching Sisters” [by which he means the Company of Mary, in the person of Sister Antonia Paris, still a novice of the Institute, and some companion novices, who are to form the nucleus of the future Claretian Sisters, later co-founded by him with Mother Antonia in Cuba], as he has learned from the Captain General, Don Valentín Cañedo (who held that post from April 1852 to September 1853), that there have been some welcome changes in the laws regarding their establishment. He also speaks of his manifold tasks in complying with all the red tape involved in establishing 53 new parishes canonically and civilly. He tells him of the many clergy retreats he gives each year, and asks him to have the *Straight Path* reprinted for Cuba. He asks him for more rosaries, of which he has a great need. He goes into some detail in describing the kind of rosaries he wants, because the links have to be made of brass to withstand the tropic heat, and the beads must not be made of rosin, because the rats tend to eat them. Oddly enough, Fr. Currius had these rosaries made by a man named “Anthony Claret.” The Saint good-humoredly asks his gruff old friend how he likes the idea of becoming a bishop, and hopes that God gives

him "more liking for it than I have." Caixal was consecrated on 5 July of this year in the Cathedral of Tarragona. The consecrating bishop was Bishop Costa y Borrás of Barcelona, assisted by the Bishops of Lérida and Tortoise, with Archbishop Echánove of Tarragona presiding from his Chair.

### Text

Illustr. Don Joseph Caixal  
Bishop-Elect of Urgell  
Santiago, 27 April 1853

My Very Dear Sir:

I already told you from the outset, when dealing with the Sisters' coming to America, that there are more difficulties here than on the Peninsula when it comes to establishing Institutes, by reason of the Royal Patronage, because we have to follow the steps that are marked out in the laws. The dispatch for this has been drawn up in accord with all of the legal formalities, and hence there has not been time enough to carry out all that needed to be done. But as the Captain General has just come to Cuba during these very days, he has informed me that in the meantime the strictures in the law have been done away with, so that the Sisters will now be able to open their public schools for teaching, etc. All of them are happy and healthy.

I am very busy drawing up dispatches for the 53 new parishes that are going to be established canonically and civilly. A month from now I will be going out on missions again. I already have two pairs of missionaries out in the field, and I will be going there, too. I don't know whether you know that after Easter all of us missionaries gathered to make our retreat, after which I gathered half of the Canons, half of the Pastors and half of the rest of the clergy to make a retreat, after which the rest did the same. This was indeed done, and last Saturday the third set of retreats was concluded, which all Canons, Curates and other Priests from thirty leagues around made with great fervor and devotion. May God preserve them.

Be so good as to have *The Straight Path* reprinted, with the corrections I sent you. I forgot to add that instead of the picture of the Virgin that appears on page 188, you should put a picture of the Virgin of Charity, which is the one for which they have a special devotion. Have an issue of ten thousand copies run off for me, charged to my account, and then send them. If it turns out well, I'll order as many again. Keep sending the books in batches of two or three thou-

sand, so that they'll have time to bind them, which they know how to do quite well, if they want to. Some of them should be bound in fine red leather or with gilt imprinting, like the last time, because the ladies like them in that style.

Be so good as to tell Fr. Peter Naudó that if someone brings him rosaries in the name of Fr. Currius, he should receive them, pay for them and send them to us, because we have a real shortage of them, especially if they are made of wooden beads *with brass links*. *Those made with iron wire links tend to rust with sweat and if the beads are of rosin, the rats eat them.* [Italicized words in Catalan].

How does the idea of becoming a Bishop suit you? When will you be consecrated? May God give you more liking for it than I have, for I assure you that for me it is a heavy and bitter burden. During retreats and every day at prayer, I resolve to conform myself to God's will; but at every moment during the day I almost forget my resolution and am beset with desires to shake off the yoke and escape or flee. God give me strength to do His most holy will!

Be so kind as to give my regards to the Archbishop [Echánove, of Tarragona] and tell him that I received his letter in today's post. Regards also to all my friends. And you can rely on your servant, who kisses your hand.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba

### 139. [286] To the General of the Piarists

(EC I, 809-811)

#### Introductory Note

This is a handwritten memo by the Saint, to which Fr. Lobo added some corrections and from which he crossed out certain parts. The text presented here is the one written by the Saint himself. The first paragraph is from the handwritten original and the following paragraphs are taken from the copy of the Studium Claretianum in Rome. Claret asks the Very Rev. Fr. Gennaro Fucile de Sant' Andrea, the Neapolitan Superior General of the Institute of St. Joseph of Calasanz, to send some Piarists to his Archdiocese, to devote themselves to teaching not only the poorer classes, but also to the painstaking and religious education of the well-to-do. The royal edict referred to here was a singular triumph for Claret. It authorized the establishment in Cuba of communities of Vincentians, Piarists, Jesuits and



the Daughters of Charity. The first of its dispositions ordered the creation of two Vincentian communities: one in Havana and the other in Santiago, both in charge of teaching, government and discipline of their Conciliar Seminaries, both of them directly dependent on their respective Bishops. The second called for the founding of two Piarist communities. The third provided for the founding of a Jesuit College in Havana, with the option to found others in other places later. In due time, the Piarist General complied with his part of the bargain, founding a College in Guanabacoa (in the Diocese of Havana) in 1857, and another in Puerto Príncipe in 1858.

### **Text**

To the Very Rev. Fr. General of the Pious Schools  
Santiago, 12 May 1853

My very dear and honored Sir:

As you already know, our Lady Queen (whom God preserve) has deigned to dispose and command, by Royal Edict of 26 November 1852, that the Fathers of the Pious Schools should come to this Island, for she says in number two of the said Edict: "It is my will that you establish where you deem fitting, and set aside the required resources, for two Houses of Piarist Fathers, in whose Schools, not only the poorer classes may be given their primary education, but also the well-to-do may receive the painstaking and religious education that is imparted in their Schools on the [Iberian] Peninsula." Hence, I am relying on your well-proven zeal to send us as many members as you can, not only to fulfill the sovereign dispositions of Her Majesty, but also for the great glory of God that your holy Institute will garner if it is established in this Island, and the great benefit that souls will derive from it. I hope that your generous heart will see fit to console us by sending us some Fathers for the purpose indicated, for which all of us will be eternally grateful to you, and especially this, your attentive servant who kisses your hand.

Please let me know whether, and in what terms, the Government has already sent you this sovereign resolution. In any case it would be quite fitting for the greater glory of God that we keep each other informed on whatever happens in this particular. I am not allowing the matter to escape my grasp: in my Diocese, nearly all the assets of the regular clergy, which were considerable, are still unsold. Offhand, I am thinking of asking for the establishment of a House of the Piarist Fathers in the City of Puerto Príncipe. I believe that at least the Captain General is of the same mind. I will be grateful if you

frankly manifest to me your thoughts, the personnel you have available and, in fine, whatever you deem fitting for the realization of this wise measure.

Enclosed, I am sending you a copy of the Royal Edict on the matter.

I have no doubt that you will be aware of the great glory of God that will necessarily result from the establishment of this holy Institute. The people of this country are highly docile and I dare assure you that the fruit awaiting the sons of Saint Joseph of Calasanz will be quite considerable. The diocese will gladly receive them and thank them for their holy detachment, parents and their children will bless them, and I will not be the least in acknowledging their cooperation.

#### **140. [288] To the Viscountess of Jorbalán**

(EC I, 815-816)

#### **Introductory Note**

The addressee of this letter, María de la Soledad Micaela Desmaisières López de Dicastillo, Viscountess of Jorbalán, was born in Madrid on 1 January 1809. From an early age she manifested a great love for the Blessed Sacrament and zeal for the ascetical life and charitable works. During a cholera epidemic in Madrid, she attended to the stricken (1834) and set up home assistance boards to help them. In 1845 she established a home to rehabilitate wayward girls, with whom she had come in contact through her charitable work at the Convent-Hospital of San Juan de Dios founded in 1552 by the Venerable Antón Martín. She was much slandered by the men who had formerly taken advantage of these young women. To perpetuate this work she founded her religious Congregation, the Handmaids of the Blessed Sacrament and of Charity, Sisters Adorers (1859), which received papal approval (1866). Mother Mary Micaela of the Bl. Sacrament (as she was known in religion) acted as Superior General of the Congregation until her death. In the homes established in several Spanish cities, her sisters cared for young women between the ages of 14 and 25. As a complement to this work, they established trade schools where the girls, after their rehabilitation, could continue to live. After a period of spiritual formation, they could make private vows as Minims of St. Mary Micaela of the Bl. Sacrament. In addition to the sisters devoted to adoring the Bl. Sacrament and to the works of the Congregation, there were coadjutor sisters who did domestic

work in the convents. Mother Mary Micaela died in Valencia on 24 August 1865, after contracting cholera while attending to her own religious during another epidemic. She was beatified 7 June 1925 and canonized 4 March 1934, by Pope Pius XI.

Saint Anthony Mary Claret first met Saint Mary Micaela in Madrid in 1848, when he was en route to the Canary Islands with Bishop Codina, staying as a guest in the home of Don José María Ramírez Cotes, the uncle of the Viscountess. Fr. John M. Lobo, now Provisor and Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Cuba, had once been spiritual director of the Congregation of Christian Doctrine in Madrid, of which the Major Sister was none other than the Viscountess of Jorbalán.

In her letter to Abp. Claret, the Viscountess had sent a copy of the Constitutions of her Institute, along with a request for an alms for her school. The Archbishop approved of her Constitutions and promised to send her something for her house. He would like to have some of her sisters in Cuba. He cheers the Saint and encourages her rehabilitated charges, to whose prayers he commends himself.

### **Text**

To Her Ladyship, the Viscountess of Jorbalán  
Santiago, 13 May 1853.

Most Esteemed Lady:

By this post I have received your most welcome letter, together with the Constitutions which you so kindly sent me. I have read them and was most pleased with them. I have shared what you asked of me with Fr. John Lobo and we are both agreed to send you something for your house, although not as much as I would have liked, because my incomes are not for the poor and needy of Madrid, but for those of Cuba -- which are many after the earthquakes and the epidemic. As St. Thomas of Villanova says, the Prelate must think of how to remedy the needs of the poor of his own Diocese and not those of others, since it is not the latter, but the former, that the Lord has entrusted to him. For it is not right to deprive one's own children of bread, in order to give it to others.

I have often thought and spoken of you, of your House, and of the great good that you are doing... Would that I had such a house in my Archdiocese! Take courage, then, for the Lord will not forsake you, It is His work and if need be He will work miracles as He did for the Hebrews in the desert and as he does every day for Christians who trust in Him and not in men.

Be so good as to tell your poor little ones to keep me in their prayers, for although they have been sinners, if they are contrite of heart and humble before God, He will not spurn them. Quite the contrary. Perhaps by their fervor and devotion they will merit a hearing with God as if they had never sinned. For as we know, Mary Magdalene saw the Risen Jesus before the other Marys and even before the Apostles did. Which is a blessing for which to praise the Mercy of God.

I remain your most affectionate and assured servant,  
The Abp. of Cuba.

### 141. [294] **To Don Lorenzo Arrazola**

(EC I, 829-832)

#### **Introductory Note**

We have mentioned Don Lorenzo Arrazola in the Introductory Note to Letter 72 [102]. A notable Spanish politician and legal expert, he was born in Checa (Guadalajara) in 1791 and died in Madrid in 1873. A member of the Moderate Party, he was one of its main figures and sometimes had to risk unpopularity for serving its principles faithfully and honorably. He was at various times Royal Councilor, Procurator General, President of the Supreme Court, Deputy of the Cortes [Parliament], Senator of the Realm, Attorney General seven times, Minister of State three times, and President of the Council of Ministers. As Attorney General (Minister of Grace and Justice), he played a primary role in Claret's nomination as Archbishop of Cuba -- as the Saint reminds him in this letter. Arrazola was not only a gifted orator who won some great triumphs in Parliament, but also a cultured and polished writer. From the moment he met Claret, he regarded him as a sincere and close friend. On 31 May 1852, Canon Usera wrote to his Prelate from Madrid: "Greetings to Your Excellency from Don Lorenzo Arrazola, who asks me about you whenever I meet him, and is delighted when I give him news of your good works."

From March 20th, when he ended his First and most laborious Pastoral Visitation of his sprawling Archdiocese, until June 8th, when he began his Second Visitation, the Archbishop was in Santiago, busy with many and various occupations: Holy Week Services, the yearly ten-day retreat with the members of his household, the canonical establishment of his Teaching Sisters, the drafting of his First Pastoral Letter to the People and various other letters to the Attorney General, to the Queen, to Pope Pius IX, etc. Hence, though undated,

the present letter must have been written in early June, 1853. The two Capuchins to whom he refers were Frs. Stephen de Adoain and Antonio de Galdácano.

### **Text**

To His Lordship, Don Lorenzo Arrazola

My Very Dear and Esteemed Sir:

The continual labors of the Holy Mission and Visitation, which I began the moment I arrived in my diocese, have not allowed me time to correspond even once with persons like yourself who honor me and offer me such unmerited support. Today, having concluded my visit and made the first rounds of my whole vast diocese, before beginning the second, which will be in a few days, I am profiting from the lucky coincidence of the departure for there [Spain] of Don Juan Urtany, treasurer of this Intendencia, whom I truly appreciate. He knows something of what we are doing here and will be able to help you understand it; hence, I will limit myself here to giving you a few data to let you know the deplorable state in which this diocese is. I have performed nine thousand marriages of people who had been living together publicly, and I have thus legitimated more than forty thousand natural children. I have reunited around three hundred broken marriages. There isn't a parish or ranch that I have failed to visit and where --either by myself or through my companions-- a Holy Mission was given. Thus, more than eighty thousand persons have received Communion in the General Communions of the Missions alone, and we reckon that some three hundred thousand have made their Confession. There were seventy-eight Confirmations, etc.... I have distributed more than a hundred thousand books, almost all at my own cost, and I have gathered up countless perverse books. I availed myself of the holy artifice of offering to exchange a good book for a bad one.

In towns where there are three of the clergy, I have reestablished conferences twice a week, under a simple and profitable plan. I myself lead them wherever I am, and in my absence, my Vicar General does so in the Capital. In cities, I have managed to banish secular dress among the clergy, imposing stiff penalties on offenders. I cannot be sure that my orders are being fulfilled in the countryside. I give a retreat to the clergy every year. Even the Canons attend them, and now I am going to Puerto Príncipe to repeat the mission, beginning with a retreat. I am no more indispensable in the Capital than I am in

other parts, because I am indebted to all. What is quite urgent is that the royal decree of 26 November be carried out as soon as possible. I am now going to ask Her Majesty to establish in Navarre a College of Capuchins for the missions of this Island. I have two very good Capuchins at present, and there are many who want to come to help us. Installing them has the advantage that the government does not have to make the slightest expenditure, at least here. All will be done out of charity, so that they will not have to put out anything.

I beg you --since it was you who thrust this Cross upon me-- to help me as much as you can, supporting me, if need be, in renouncing my office. For I have already done all that I could, namely, to set up the general reform of customs. But I can do no more.

I have no lack of contradictions; rather I am experiencing great ones, especially by not being able to go against certain existing rules against marriages between different races. Article 44 of the Decree of Good Governance --which greatly restricts the Royal Edict of 15 October 1805 and the Accord of 7 July 1806-- leaves it up to a mere justice of the peace to forbid any marriage that he deems unfit to be sanctioned by a loving conjugal union. The observance of this article, carried to such extremes, has often acted to discredit my authority, and still worse, is hurting my Mission and hindering my reform, since it is regarded as the bastion of men living out of wedlock, because it does not oblige them to honor the women they have led astray. I call this to your attention in a special way, and I promise to send you a copy of the representation that I sent to the government, asking for its cooperation in a matter of such great moment.

In the coming month I will also have the pleasure of sending you a copy of the Pastoral Letter I addressed to the Clergy, with an Appendix, and also a copy of the one I am having printed, addressed to the People. By way of these letters you will see the state in which I found the Island, and what we have to work on in order to purge it of the vices and abuses which, to tell the truth, are supported by the Europeans more than anyone else.

But I have already done what I could, by setting up the plan that I have seen fitting, in order that the reform of customs may be carried out. And as I am not allowed to resist those legal dispositions that I find so repugnant to my conscience, since I know that this would lead

to conflicts that would greatly harm the public good, I believe that it is my duty to renounce my post as Archbishop and go where I believe the Lord is calling me to continue promoting His holy glory under other conditions, free of the burden of a Bishopric. Thus I am asking you to support me when I submit my resignation to Her Majesty, which will probably be when I send her an account of my labors up to the present.

Commend me to God as I do you,  
and dispose as you please of your attentive servant, etc.

### 142. [316] To the Bishop of Urgell

(EC I, 891-892)

#### Introductory Note

Caixal (now a bishop himself), who had been Mother Paris' spiritual director even before she entered the religious life and had later followed her spiritual life and development as a future foundress, is naturally concerned about her Sisters' not having a more distinctive rule than that of the Teaching Sisters of the Company of Mary, which St. Jeanne de Lestonnac had chosen for her daughters, and which Antonia and her companions had already followed in Tarragona. Later, the statutes that they added would form the body of the Constitutions, in the ordering and drafting of which Fr. Paladio Currius played an important role, giving them their own markedly personal stamp. Claret tells Bp. Caixal that as their Prelate, and as one far more experienced in such matters than Caixal, he knows what he has to do and how to do it, in order to get around the red tape of the Spanish Government and the Curia. Even so, the new Institute of solemn vows and papal cloister would not be approved until 25 August 1855. Claret's leadership style in this matter is one of non-interference, partly because he is so busy with his pastoral office, but largely because he does not want to hamper the process whereby the Spirit is leading Mother Paris. Also interesting is his remark on the 'newness' of the New World, where plans made in Europe are not practicable. The Saint mentions two of his pastoral letters and asks his friend's opinion of them. As we can see from the remarks on the plate for the reprinting of "*The Catechism Explained*", he still views Caixal as an associate in the ministry of the Press.

**Text**

To His Excellency the Most Rev. Bp. of Urgell  
Puerto Príncipe, 24 Sept. 1853

My Esteemed Brother:

I received your letter of 27 July in today's post, and am apprised of all you tell me in it. Regarding the Sisters or Nuns, it is quite all right for them to have written to tell you they have bought a house and grounds for erecting a building in keeping with their aims. Besides what I have already given them, I have also handed them a thousand *duros* and I am ready to do anything for them.

You have stated that you do not like the fact that they have asked for the Rules of the Teaching Sisters. But I tell you that this was necessary. Even so, there will be plenty of work to get royal approval for them. Remember what I told you from the outset: Here, by reason of the Royal Patronage, we are in a quite different position than you are in Spain and France. What I'm telling you is that the main thing is for them to be approved in one way or another, and I know what I have to do or approve as their Prelate. I say 'approve,' because I would like Sister Antonia to say "I want such and such," for I'm ready to approve it. But if she's waiting for me to tell her everything that has to be done, then it seems to me we'll do very little, for I have little bent or inspiration toward this style of directorship, nor is it looked upon very well in this country. You can have no idea of what this country is like. I'll only tell you what I read in Almeida. Speaking of America he says: In the New World all is new. All plans made in Europe cannot be put into practice in America.

By this time you will have read my pastoral letter to the people. What do you think of it? I will presently be sending you the appendices to the pastoral letter to the clergy. I think you'll like them.

Has the plate for the Catechism been fixed? It has to be reprinted. Here we are all keeping well and working. May it all be for God.

Keep well, and ask what you will of your affectionate Chaplain and Brother, who kisses your hand.

From Him of Cuba.



**143. [325] To Pope Pius IX**

(In Latin. EC I, 909-912)

**Introductory Note**

This letter is a copy of the Saint's summary account to the Holy See of the events and circumstances of his First (and most laborious) Pastoral Visitation of the Archdiocese of Santiago, Cuba. For a more detailed account see Chapters I-VI of Part Three of the Saint's Autobiography (Aut 511-547) and John M. Lozano's *LSG*, ch. XI, pp. 179-189.

**Text**

Most Holy Father:

Anthony Mary Claret i Clará, by the grace of God and of the Holy Apostolic See Archbishop of Cuba, humbly prostrate at Your Holiness' feet, deems it his duty to give Your Holiness an account of the events and circumstances of his pastoral visitation.

Designated Archbishop of Cuba by the Catholic Queen on the third day of August in the year eighteen hundred forty nine, I resisted accepting such a dignity, not only because I deemed myself unworthy, but also because of the very grave burdens it entailed. However, on the fourth day of October, moved by the advice of my spiritual director who told me that it was the will of God, I accepted it. I resolved to obey that will closely, and after being proclaimed by Your Holiness in the Sacred Consistory on May 25th of the following year, I was consecrated in Vic by the Prelate of that Diocese, assisted by the Bishops of Barcelona and Gerona. Not long afterwards, together with nine priests, one of whom was my worthy Vicar General and the others missionaries of the secular clergy, none of whom were moved by the hope of any reward or remuneration except the glory of God and the salvation of souls, we took ship in Barcelona. Two of these priests are already enjoying the reward of their virtues in heaven. On the sixth day of February of the year eighteen hundred and fifty, I arrived in this Holy Metropolitan Church.

I was, Holy Father, utterly amazed to see that this great and far-flung Archdiocese (some 2,850 Roman square miles) had only 125 Priests to administer spiritual nourishment to the faithful; yet I was even more greatly afflicted in mind when I learned that of these few, many were living in public sin with their own mistresses, and that they had more than 83 offspring begotten of these sacrilegious un-

ions. Mindful of my duty, I immediately called all the clergy together and admonished them, addressing them in tears. Citing Ezekiel's words [Ezk 34], I implored them not to set such a bad example to the faithful, but for goodness' sake to turn their minds without delay to the Church's flock, to lay aside secular garb and put on the clothing assigned and prescribed by the sacred canons. I told them that in Priests, Priestly garb would produce in them the same effects as peel does in fruit, for they should choose not to be corrupted by worldly passions lest, like fruit unprotected from the air, they might fall to the ground. I then firmly enjoined them to cast out their mistresses and offspring as soon as possible, avoiding any familiarity with them, adding that if any of them chose to disregard my fatherly admonitions as a shepherd, all that they could expect from me would be the most severe penalties of a magistrate and judge.

In March of this year, I spent ten days with them [i.e., the clergy] making the Spiritual Exercises under the patronage of St. Ignatius. Then I launched into the Holy Mission which went on until the fifth day of May, when I began the Holy Pastoral Visitation. In about mid-July I went out to make the Mission and Holy Visitation throughout the Diocese, and reached Puerto Príncipe, the second city of the Archdiocese, in the month of July.

This city, no less than other towns of the Diocese, had been invaded by corruption among clergy and laity. I happily made use of the same admonitions and arguments mentioned above, bringing the Clergy to lead better lives, except for nine who, led by stubbornness and ignorance, resisted my injunctions, so that I removed them from the sacred ministry.

When the Missions were over, the Missionaries came in from all of the towns of the Archdiocese, each bringing in the sheaves [Ps 126:6]. Indeed, Blessed Father, these are some of the fruits which I have obtained through God's mercy: In the space of two years, 9,000 who had been living together in public sin have been joined in matrimony; 40,000 illegitimate children have been given a name and family and are being educated in religion and in Christian practice; 200 separated couples have been reunited in the same space of two years. But going on to even higher numbers, I distributed 98,217 pious books, 89,000 religious prints, 20,669 rosaries and 9,831 religious medals, paid for out of my income as bishop and given freely for the greater glory of God. Many books tainted with heresy or immorality

were collected and burnt, or exchanged for other books aimed at fostering virtue and Christian charity. Hence it is no wonder, especially with God's favor, that such rich fruits have come in such a short time from these books and from our assiduous preaching. In the whole Diocese there were but twenty-six Parishes, some of which were as much as forty-five or even sixty miles in diameter. But both the Pastors and the church buildings were not receiving their annual allotment. Hence I was reduced to beg and acquaint Her Catholic Majesty with the extreme want under which worship and the Church were laboring, whereupon she gave me a pledge of a decent increase for the upkeep of Churches and Parishes.

Hence, the number of Parishes has grown, and in all of them the Sodalties of the Most Holy Rosary, of a Happy Death, of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and of Christian Doctrine were established.

Not long after my arrival in the Archdiocese, God saw fit that five priests of good morals, moved no doubt by godly inspiration, offered their services to me. Two of them who belong to the Capuchin Order are working on Apostolic Mission with my own staff, while another two are stationed in Parishes, in addition to one who is acting as Vicar in Puerto Príncipe at my discretion.

Holy Father, many obstacles stood in my way, I had to put up with many persecutions and the Devil waged a fierce battle against me, but relying on God's providence I bore them all with an even mind and this gave me strength to withstand all these hindrances. I consider and recognize that God's hand is at work in all things, and this consideration led me to institute certain rather severe disciplinary measures that did not seem feasible at first; but through constancy and firmness they have come to bear most abundant fruits.

I have sent Your Holiness the Pastoral Letters I addressed to the Clergy and People, asking for your perusal of them. At the same time I have prayed that Your Holiness, after many years of happily governing the Church, may be awarded the crown of everlasting life. Meanwhile, humbly prostrate at the feet of Your Holiness, I ask your Apostolic Blessing.

Given at Puerto Principe this twelfth day of the Kalends of November [= 21 October], in the Year eighteen fifty-three.

I remain, Most Holy Father,  
Your Most Humble and Devoted Servant.

## 144. [330] To the Bishop of Urgell

(EC I, 920-921)

**Introductory Note**

From Sibanicú, several miles southeast of Puerto Príncipe, the Saint sends Caixal a very summary account of some of the rough times he and his companions have undergone during his Second Pastoral Visitation. He manifests his continuing interest in projects for the Religious Library. He asks his friend's opinion on the Pastoral Letter to the People and on the Appendices to the Pastoral Letter to the Clergy. Very much in passing, he mentions a great social project, namely, the founding of a Model Ranch in Puerto Príncipe to house the elderly poor and to maintain and train orphaned girls and boys who could not afford an education, so that they might be prepared for gainful employment later on (cf. Aut. 563, 598; cf. also Lozano, *LSG*, pp. 213-214, and Fernández, *HD I*, pp. 188-189).

**Text**

To His Excellency, the Lord Bishop of Urgell  
Sibanicú, 28 October 1853.

My Very Dear Sir and Esteemed Brother:

I am making my 2nd Visitation. Monday we set out from Puerto Príncipe, some 13 leagues hence. The blazing sun made two horses and one mule sick, but after we put lemon juice in their ears they recovered somewhat and we resumed our journey. When we arrived here one of the Missionaries grew ill from the heat, but he is now better. I am healthy and robust as ever, and am preaching, hearing confessions and confirming every day.

In the midst of my tasks I have not forgotten the Religious Library, and I was thinking that it would be very good if you became acquainted with a work that came out in London. It is called *The Instructor*, and the work is truly in accord with its title. It appeared over 8 years in a row, it seems to me from 1834 to 1842. An issue appeared every month, and at the end of the year it formed a book in folio. I have read them all from beginning to end and line for line and greatly enjoyed them. It is written in Spanish in very good style by two Spaniards. I bought the whole work and it cost me 40 *duros*. I would like you to select some points that are very good, so as to form monthly volumes for the Religious Library. The aforesaid work has

many plates and drawings of the objects which it explains, but these would have to be obtained or redone, either because they no longer have the plates or because duodecimo or octavo sizes will not accommodate them. You can choose them, because some of them are very pretty, curious and instructive.

Stay well and ask what you like of your attentive servant and Brother, who kisses your hand,

Anth. M. Abp. of Cuba

I imagine you've received my Letter to the People and the Appendices for the one to the Clergy. *Quid tibi videtur?* Now I am forming a great project, but don't know how it will turn out. I hope it will be good.

### 145. [331] To the Governor of Santiago

(EC I, 922-924)

#### Introductory Note

Fr. Cristóbal Fernández (HD I, p. 771) provides the background for this letter: "The virtuous priest of the town [of El Cobre], Don Francisco Miroso, acting on the instructions of his Prelate (previously approved by the Captain General of the island), had to confront the Lieutenant in charge of El Cobre, Don J. Simón, for living in public and brazen concubinage with his mistress. Simón had recourse to the Governor of Santiago, Field Marshal Don Joaquín Martínez de Medinilla, who not only levied a fine of fifty pesos on the Vicar, but also had Miroso brought in chains to the capital, under singularly harsh and brutal circumstances. When Fr. Claret learned of the matter, he broke off the pastoral visitation he was making in Bayamo, heading straight for the capital to resolve the matter personally. For this was not just one more case of petty interference in his own ministry, but rather concerned the defense of a faithful collaborator who had been persecuted and outraged in the fulfillment of higher orders. Fr. Claret who, as we have seen, could be inflexible in chastising wicked priests, was also capable of risking his own life for even one good priest who needed protection in the rightful exercise of his obligations. But before he set out for the capital, he sent the Governor of Santiago an advance letter that was so bold and well thought-out, so able and sincere, that it deserves to be quoted."

**Text**

His Excellency, the Gen. of [Santiago] Cuba  
Bayamo, 28 November 1853

My Very Dear Sir:

By this very post I received a message from my Provisor and Vicar General, along with the dispatch concerning the controversy that arose between you and him regarding the concubinage of Don Juan Simón, the Lieutenant of El Cobre. I have seen from this dispatch and have also been confidentially informed on all that was done against the Ecclesiastical Judge of that Jurisdiction, the reverend and most virtuous Francisco Miroso, whom I love as the apple of my eye for the very exact fulfillment of his sacred duties.

It is impossible, Your Excellency, to express my surprise and sorrow on learning that you had fined the aforesaid Vicar and Ecclesiastical Judge of El Cobre, and that although he was ill, had him carried off in the rain (how inhumane!) and had him brought by an escort of soldiers to [the capital] of Cuba, and that he is presently being detained in the College! And why? Because of the concubinary, Don Simón -- a public servant who instead of being virtuous and exemplary as demanded by royal law, has a number of children by his mistress and is indeed a hardened sinner. True, he has tried to make a show of staying away from that house, but he has not broken off his liaison, to the scandal of the neighborhood and in contempt for Church authority and for the laws of the Realm. Captain General Cañedo, with whom I communicated confidentially, knows this, for he answered me about it on 28 May. His letter is in my possession and I will gladly show it to you as soon as I arrive. In it you will see what he tells me about this employee and of others I discovered in my diocese during the Mission and Holy Pastoral Visit. To tell the truth, what you have done is completely contrary to what the said Captain General promised me you would do.

But as I was leaving Cuba [i.e., Santiago] at the beginning of June, I shared this by word with the Ecclesiastical Judge of El Cobre, who came to the City to bid me farewell. But as he did not want to disclose either the plan of His Excellency the Captain General, which I had shared with him, or the orders I gave him as his Prelate, as well as other particular motives which he deemed it neither prudent nor just to manifest, the said Vicar --who wants to act correctly in all matters-- asked for a short delay in order to consult with his Superior. Not only was this denied him, but he was fined then and there for no

less than 50 pesos and treated outrageously, without consideration for his priestly dignity, his authority as an ecclesiastical judge, or his illness. And despite the heavy rains that were falling that day, he was led off by soldiers to Cuba [i.e., Santiago]: something unheard of in this island, something utterly new.

This very disagreeable occurrence obliges me to suspend the holy pastoral visit I am making and to present myself in that city, despite the daily rains and impassable roadways, to see to it that this matter is cleared up, and that both his fine and his freedom be returned to the Reverend Judge of El Cobre, Don Francisco Miroso. Meanwhile I will abstain from informing the Higher Authorities of what has happened until I have spoken with you, because it would pierce me to the heart to have to fight with the might and main of a Spanish Catholic Prelate who would rather lose his life than budge an inch from what he deems it his duty in conscience to uphold, as in this case, precisely when this fight would be against a friend like you, whom I have always loved and defended whenever anyone has come to talk to me about you or your ways of governing. And I have no doubt that your enemies will rejoice over this affair. Hence, Your Excellency, you and I must see how we can deprive your adversaries of this satisfaction.

I am your most attentive and sure servant, who kisses your hand,  
Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba.

P.S. I expect to arrive in El Cobre Thursday night. Hence, I would like you to be so good as to set the Reverend Miroso free, so that he may receive me in his Parish and jurisdiction. But if for any inconvenience you cannot afford me this favor, I myself will take responsibility for it.

### **146. [332] To the Captain General of Cuba**

(EC I, 925-926)

#### **Introductory Note**

This letter is self-explanatory. It contains a report by the Archbishop on the places where the Piarist Houses called for in the Royal Order of 26 November 1852 should be located. It also refers to the need to open a second house of the Jesuits in the city of Santiago, Cuba.

**Text**

Archdiocese of Santiago, Cuba

Most Excellent Sir:

I have received Your Excellency's communication of the 15th of last month, in which you asked me for information on sites in which to locate the two Piarist houses, in keeping with the dispositions of Her Majesty in the Royal order of 26 November 1852. If the two Colleges referred to are, as I deem necessary, to be established in my Diocese, I believe that the most important and suitable places are the cities of Puerto Príncipe and Bayamo which, besides their considerable population, have many other advantages, among others, their excellent topographical position as central places located on the Royal Highway of the Island, their very mild climate, fertile land and abundant water supply. In this case, the most suitable buildings for the purpose, because of their central position, the size of their lands and housing, and the size and beauty of their churches, would be the Convent of Mercy in Puerto Príncipe and the Convent of St. Dominic in Bayamo. I should here inform Your Excellency that a good part of the plentiful property that the Dominican Fathers used to possess in the City of Bayamo, which is still being administered by the Royal Department of State, was bequeathed to them with the obligation of instructing the public, a circumstance that should be borne in mind for the solution that is adopted. I have intentionally not designated Cuba [i.e., Santiago] as one of the two locations, because I deemed it my duty to call Your Excellency's attention in particular to the suitability, not to say the need, of establishing in it, as soon as possible, a second house of the Jesuit Fathers, given its political importance as capital of the Eastern District, at a great distance from Havana, since both cities are located at the opposite ends of the island. If, however, this is not done, it will be impossible to stem the evil tide (which Her Majesty rightly deplores in her Royal Order) of parents' sending their children to be educated in foreign countries, an idea that I had the honor of bringing to Her Majesty's attention in my request for the re-establishment of the Society of Jesus. And finally, it seems to me worthwhile to bear in mind that as this great part of the Island is much poorer than the Western District, it should not therefore be deprived of the benefits that are rightly expected of the Fathers of the Society. For the Diocese will doubtless progress greatly in a good religious spirit, if it sees those good men working in it with the fervor, concern and intelligence they display everywhere.



And do not think that this will increase the budgets for the income of the Assets of the Regulars, because Jesuit houses soon prove a credit and provide for their own maintenance, or with little burden, and this in addition to the income of Regulars in the Archdiocese. These are considerable, and there would be no lack of commodious and fitting convents in which to reestablish them. Your Excellency may tell me that in the Royal Order there is no mandate to erect more than one Jesuit College in Havana; but without prejudice to what I told Her Majesty on this same point, I would like Your Excellency to bear in mind what I have manifested for your consideration in the brief indications that I have made. All of what I have told Your Excellency is in response to your aforesaid letter. God preserve Your Excellency for many years.

Cuba, December 7 1853.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba.

To the Hon. Captain General of the Island.

### 147. [333] **To the New Captain General of Cuba**

(EC I, 927-928)

#### **Introductory Note**

This is a personal and confidential note of congratulations to Don Juan, Marquis de la Pezuela, Lieutenant General and future Count of Cheste. The numerous and insistent intrigues of the Archbishop's enemies had led to the dismissal of Don Valentín Cañedo, who was removed from his post in September of 1853 and turned his powers over in December of that year to the Marquis de la Pezuela, who has now taken possession of the Presidency of the High Court or Audience and of the Captaincy General of the Isle of Cuba.

#### **Text**

To His Excellency the Captain General  
Santiago, 15 December 1853.

My Very Dear and Esteemed Sir:

Besides the official reply, I want to write to you confidentially regarding the communication you were so kind as to send me of your having taken possession of the Audiences and of the Governorship and Captaincy General of the Island. With all the warmth of my heart I want to congratulate you, and I promise myself, based on your noble

character and on the singular virtues that distinguish you, as I have learned by good report, that you will continue in the same good harmony that has always existed between your most deserving predecessors and this unworthy Prelate Archbishop of Cuba.

For now, I offer you my respects and attentions, and promise that I will keep you in my prayers, asking the Lord to give you those helps and graces that are needed for the fulfillment of such a great office.

I take this occasion to offer myself as your affectionate servant and chaplain, who kisses your hand.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba.

### **148. [339] To the Captain General of Cuba**

(EC I, 939-956)

#### **Introductory Note**

This long letter, addressed to Don Juan de la Pezuela, the new Captain General of Cuba, is a report stating the Archbishop's practice and policy regarding the celebration of marriages between members of different races. When the Bishop of Havana, whom Claret had consulted earlier on the matter, read this statement, he decided not to publish his own, declaring his enthusiastic and unconditional endorsement of Claret's. For his part, the Marquis de la Pezuela gave it his wholehearted approval.

#### **Text**

Most Excellent Sir:

I have received Your Excellency's official dispatch of the 4th of this month, in which you enclosed the one sent you by the Regent of the Pretorial Court with his opinion about asking the Diocesan Directors for a report on the celebration of marriages between members of different races.

I believe that I have already sufficiently cleared up the question of fact that gave rise to the report now being sought and, in my letter of 7 February of last year, to which the Prosecuting Attorney refers in his report, I have already rebutted the false charges brought against the worthy missionary, Fr. Stephen de Adoain, in the dispatches that are even today moving for a consultative vote by the Royal High Court.

The prudent zeal of this virtuous Priest and that of his companions who tirelessly share the labors of my ministry, has won my full appreciation and led me to regard their cause as my own, for I am resolved not to abandon them or separate myself from them either in the glory of our mission or in any sacrifice called for. All of them without exception, and I along with them, will gladly bear the cross of our adorable Redeemer, for with His efficacious help, its burden will always be light.

In my aforesaid letter of 7 February, I did not go fully into the question being raised today, because I deemed it my duty to restrict myself to answering the letter that Your Excellency's predecessor sent me, without exceeding the limits that were laid out in it.

I believe it quite fitting that this matter be brought up at this level today, because airing and resolving it once and for all would perhaps be the best way to avoid henceforth many of the gravely annoying contradictions that it has posed for my good missionaries and for my own eagerness to reform customs which, especially in this matter, have hardly been in accord with both human and divine laws. The Prosecutor, in his measured and reverent report, deems it most important to declare whether bonds between members of different races are lawful and fitting, and to hear what the Diocese has to say to this effect, for the matter we are dealing with pertains to both powers, ecclesiastical and civil.

Matrimony is not just another contract, but a contract quite distinct from all others, because, since it has been elevated to the level of a Sacrament, the Sacrament and the contract cannot be considered in isolation from one another, according to the teaching of the Catholic Church. Because the contract is the matter of the Sacrament and thus, even as a contract, it is subject to the jurisdiction of the Church. His Holiness, Pope Benedict XIV, in his Brief to the Catholics of Holland, declares that a marriage contracted against the dispositions of the Holy Council of Trent is invalid, both as a contract and as a Sacrament, and that those who dare marry in that way are not lawful spouses. Pius IX, in his Bull *Auctorem Fidei*, condemned as heretical the proposition of the Council of Pistoia that stated that the civil power can in principle exclusively establish impediments to matrimony, and he reproves, as false and contrary to Catholic teaching, the opinion that it is a merely civil contract. Moreover, in one of the propositions he addressed to the Bishop of Warsaw, he declared that a marriage was not valid if it was not contracted in the form established by the Church, to which alone it belongs to decide on its validi-

ty or nullity. This teaching does not prevent matrimony, considered in its relationships with society, whose most serious interests it affects, from being subject, in this sense, to civil authority, as St. Thomas teaches. Hence, I agree with the Prosecutor in this sense and under this aspect and always safeguarding the doctrine stated above, that the temporal authority can dictate for the celebration of matrimony such rules as the public order and social decorum may demand.

I now come to the questions of the legality and suitability of these unions between persons of different races. The legal doctrine on these matters is established in the Royal Order of 15 October 1805, in the Accord given on 22 May 1806, and in Article 44 of the Regulations for Justices of the Peace issued by the Captain General of this Island on 14 November 1842.

The Royal Order of 1805 holds that those adults belonging to families of acknowledged nobility and of notoriously pure blood lines, who wish to contract matrimony with mulattos, Negroes and other castes contained in the Decree of 10 April 1803, must have recourse to the Viceroys and Presiding Judges of the Higher Courts, who may grant or deny them permission.

The Accord of 22 May 1806 establishes, in keeping with the preceding sovereign disposition, that when adult members of a distinguished family plan to contract matrimony with one who is not their peer, the Ecclesiastical Tribunal must inform their parents or relatives of their intention, so that they may take the recourse they deem fitting within a time proportionate to the distance they live from the residence of the Viceroys and Presiding Judges. And if the proportionate time passes without such recourse, the contracting parties are at liberty to proceed to marry.

The Regulations for Justices of the Peace state as follows in the first two paragraphs of Article 44: "It is important for the welfare of the State that people not be led by caprice or fleeting passion to contract marriages which are reprovved by public opinion and become, soon after they are celebrated, a constant source of discord and scandal.... Hence" (it goes on), "Justices of the Peace are obliged to exhort Pastors and Vicars, either by word or in writing, that until they receive the opportune resolution from the political government (to which they will give a well-founded claim), they are to suspend the celebration of marriages which, by reason of inequality of the parties' caste, condition or other reason, will presumably be lacking the lasting and loving union which the spouses should seek, and which is so important to the well-being of families."

The Royal Order and the Accord, which are true legal dispositions in total agreement, do not forbid the marriage of unequals, but only their performance without due permission, and they do not extend to all cases of inequality in general, but only to those that take place between nobles and people of color.

As for unions between ordinary folk and people of color, these dispositions make no provision, and therefore when couples like this wish to marry, the priest does not even have to inform the relatives of the white party of the future marriage. Any attempt to introduce and even establish a practice contrary to these dispositions and to their letter, should be regarded as an abuse that has no force or effect. There are already too many obstacles and restrictions on the natural freedom to marry, to justify adding any more. For even when such restrictions come from competent authorities --and not from mere functionaries of the executive power-- they must be seriously pondered, lest the common good prejudice the individual good in the moral order, or the Church be harmed in its mission or authority. For in matters that belong so directly to the Church, it is hard to grasp how dispositions affecting marriage can be established without having any recourse whatever to it. The Prosecutor is quite right in holding that the civil power must be deeply concerned for the question of matrimony, since it is *a matter of the utmost importance, not only because it is a Sacrament, but also because of its impact on customs, for which reason it behooves the civil power to hear the respectable report of the two Diocesan Leaders regarding it.* This consideration is most apt in matters that affect both powers. It is best, indeed necessary, that the civil and ecclesiastical authorities proceed by common accord in such matters.

But getting back to the lawfulness of these unions, what has happened up to the present? With the informed and unopposed agreement of the relatives of the interested parties, or lacking it, with the permission of higher civil authorities, many such 'unequal' marriages have always been celebrated before I ever set foot on this Island, doubtless because neither relatives nor civil authorities had any well-founded reason to believe that the conjugal bond would be broken. And it should be noted that this question was brought to the fore precisely when I began my efforts and tasks in the mission: that is, when with my own hand I touched the wound that is eating away at the Island; when I began applying a remedy to a long-standing illness; in fine, when I attacked it head-on with all my might, winning for myself the hatred of those immoral persons who could not tolerate

my putting a curb on their licentious living. Note well what the law says on this question of the unsuitability of marriages between different races: it does not prohibit them. All that it establishes concerning them is that permission for them must be obtained from the competent authority when the white party is of the nobility. This question, I say, arose in El Cobre, a Parish of some 12,000 souls, which eight years ago had only *two* marriages, and only *thirty* when I began the mission there. This town, which is full of Protestants connected with the mining business and of people of evil life -- for those who live together out of wedlock are living quite wickedly in view of the teaching of Jesus Christ-- as most of the inhabitants were living. This town unfurled the banner of implacable war against the Holy Mission, a war which the enemies of religion and morality have taken up on all sides.

To conclude the legal teaching in this matter, the only thing that remains for me to deal with is the article of the Regulations for Justices of the Peace, the worth of which, as opposed to the previous, properly legal dispositions, the expert and worthy magistrates who make up the Royal High Court will be able to rule on better than I. But just what is provided for in this article? What evil does it seek to avoid? That marriages not be entered into out of *caprice or fleeting passion that may soon cause them to become a constant source of discord and scandal*. And when this is feared, whatever the motive may be, the justices of the peace, showing the reasons on which their case is founded, should ask their Superior not to allow these marriages to take place, if he deems that the case against them is just. In order that a law, a regulation or a disposition may be equitable, it must be well founded; hence, the regulation for justices of the peace does not forbid unions between persons of different races absolutely, but only when it is believed with good foundation that such unions will break up because they are based on *caprice or fleeting passion*, which is indeed a very bad basis for conjugal happiness. But when other circumstances are involved --when a couple has stayed together for a sufficient time, when they have persisted in their illicit relationship and when children have come to draw their interests and hearts together-- in each and every one of these cases no one should presume that if a man and woman have lived together in peace with the devil's blessing, their peace is going to be altered with God's blessing. What are we to say, then? That the special graces given by the Sacrament of Matrimony for the fulfillment of all its aims are of no avail or are, still worse, opposed to the very aim of matrimony? To think thus would be absurd, a heresy. But the disposition of the Regulations

is stated soundly and in a good Catholic sense. It does not prohibit the union of couples because of the color of their skin, but because of other indications, above all because of insufficient age, because of the couple's not knowing one another long enough and because those who want to marry have not sufficiently weighed and studied their own interest and happiness against other considerations to which society, such as it is, with its mixture of good judgment and concern, attaches some importance. For these considerations can lead society to believe that the celebration of such marriages will almost surely result in evils and nullify the goods to be hoped of them. Indeed, in order to reach such an assured assessment, I myself, as well as my good missionaries, have worked in accord with local authorities to assure ourselves of all the reasons that might lead us to believe that the engaged couples would achieve happiness by being united, rather than separated. And although it pains me to do so, I feel I can do no less here than state a fact that throws a great light on discovering the origin of this question which, as I said, arose in El Cobre.

I was proceeding in such close accord with the Commandant of the place, that I expressly consulted him on all marriages planned by those who were living together out of wedlock, heeding his judgment, based on his knowledge of the people. A case arose concerning an Islander or Andaluz called Meloño, who had nine children by a dark woman who, he assured us, would commit suicide if we did not marry them. Despite this threat, I put off resolving the matter until I learned the opinion of the Commandant. The following day, informed of the marriage (which did not take place after all), he ordered the pastor to abstain from marrying whites with blacks, and he notified the Commandant General, because it had come to his attention that some marriages of this sort had taken place. When I called upon the Commandant, I could hardly hide my bewilderment that there had been any misunderstandings between both powers, since we had been working so well together. Acknowledging his fault (or so it seemed), he begged me to return to him the order that he had issued to the pastor, and he assured me that he had not and would not send a report to the Governor, who at that time was General Manzano. The said Commandant went against both his word and the truth, because he had sent the report and later allowed himself to commit other faults. The conflict took place, and unpleasant incidents and contradictions have multiplied from then on. In El Cobre they have just ceased, and God grant that they do not reoccur. I had confidential knowledge of the singular behavior of the Commandant of El Cobre, but I am not a tale-bearer, especially without proof positive, and the only reason I

am relating this matter to you now, is because the case calls for it and so as to acquaint Your Excellency and the Royal Tribunal of the shots that have been leveled at me, of their origin, of the all-out war on the mission, and of the many things that the undersigned unworthy Prelate has had to suffer from all quarters.

Marriages *have* been celebrated between “unequal” parties, although I do not believe that even one of them has been between a noble and a person of color. And although the dispositions of the law do not forbid permitting or participating in such marriages, so long as noble lineage is not involved, neither I nor my missionaries have knowingly omitted any due inquiries even in cases that merely involved a difference of races.

It follows from the aforesaid reading of the law, which has been both agreed upon and upheld by the Assessors of the Eastern District of the Island, that there is no absolute legal prohibition of marriages between unequals, but merely that some precautions be observed in order that their celebration should produce good, rather than bad, results.

The Mayor and First Assessor of General Manzano so established in the communications which the General sent me regarding this matter, especially in the letter of 14 August 1851, which reads as follows: “The Government wanted and still wants only this much, that when a proposed marriage involves a union of unequals, advance notice of it should be given to the parents or guardians of the party of *noble lineage or of a notably pure blood line* or, in the lack of parents or guardians, to the local authorities, who in either case can assign a prudent interval before such marriages can be performed, if there is no opposition to them.” The government professed this reading, which is the lawful reading. How, then, can this be reconciled with the official notice that the same government circulated to all justices of the peace on 12 June of the same year, recommending that they *forbid the performance of marriages between white persons and persons of color*, a prohibition that is not established in the aforesaid reading of the law, which has never arisen before, since it is an abuse of authority and one that has without doubt produced all of the annoyances, evils and contentions with the higher authorities that we had to deal with two years ago, after the end of the mission? Afterwards, regarding a similar case that arose in El Cobre, another Mayor and First Assessor restated the same reading of the law which, in my opinion, you will find to be in agreement with the Royal Accord. With this, I have stated my exhaustive opinion on the legality of unequal



marriages. I shall now deal briefly with the greater or lesser social and political suitableness of allowing them.

I believe, along with one of this century's wise publicists, that "it is fitting to favor marriage as much as possible, since it is utterly necessary for the welfare of the state, as well as for the spiritual and, I would add, temporal welfare of its subjects." This publicist goes on to refer to the customs of the Lacedaemonians and to a law of theirs which did not permit marriages between them and others in certain cases: "It will always be repugnant for the law to restrict a freedom that is granted by both natural and divine law."

The social worth of matrimony is undeniable: it is the basis of the family, the most effective guarantee of the education of future generations, the guardian of domestic virtues that live on forever in posterity out of grateful remembrance for their upright and Christian parents and elders. If this natural faculty is restricted, both public and private morality will necessarily suffer. For a legislator cannot rein in those natural instincts that the law can never repress; should he try to do so, all his schemes will only serve to promote illicit unions, to the great harm of all that is good in the religious, civil and political orders. Religion anathematizes and casts out the contumacious man who persists in his wicked life. Moreover, if the door is closed on legitimizing his unruly passion and on his way of satisfying it, does he not run the risk of being lost forever? People may mock the prohibition of civil law, just as they habitually scorn ecclesiastical law. Bad habits build such a callous around the heart, that repentance becomes impossible, above all if it entails a great sacrifice. As a general rule, one should not expect concubinaries to repent. They are like flesh-eating birds of prey. If anyone approaches, they abandon their prey out of fear. But they later come back and attack their prey and devour it with even keener appetite. The exactness of the comparison is brought out by the facts, which are the most convincing proofs. Since we began our mission we have never ceased to cry out against this licentiousness of customs. Those who truly repented have married if they were able to do so. The rest tried to flee, but as soon as we turned our backs, they again pounced upon their prey.

Sermons, exhortations, warnings, civil prosecutions: all prove useless whenever a separation is called for. They make a mockery of vigilance and inquiries; they make a pretense of repenting, or even try to bring legal proofs of their innocence. God abandons them to their stubbornness and their reprobation can be held assured. I support what I say by citing but one fact that relieves me of any further

burden of proof. Of the number of those born in my Diocese in recent years, two thirds are illegitimate, and so the Parish records show. What a scandal and sorrow it is, for a Prelate who feels the weight of his grave ministerial burden, to see the souls of those whom God our Lord has entrusted to his care being lost in this way, and to see obstacles and difficulties being raised on all sides to prevent him from fulfilling his sacred duty on behalf of his flock.

But it is no less harmful for civil authority, because this scandal, which so directly affects customs, likewise affects the welfare of society. What can the Government expect of subjects who see themselves beset with countless calamities --droughts, earthquakes and epidemics-- yet practice and flaunt their irreligious behavior, and remain unflinchingly in their disorder? The Priesthood cries out and lifts up its voice like a trumpet, as God charged a prophet to do in ancient times [cf. Is 58:1]; but they have eyes and see not and ears that hear not [cf. Is 6:9-10; Mk 4:12]. Well, then, if they are deaf to what is most important to them, namely, their souls, then what heed will they pay to civil sanctions in this or in any other case, so long as they are able to mock the vigilance of the authorities? If a man scorns the law of God, you can rest assured that he will have no respect for the laws of men. Still, if the evil went no further than this, in the social order... Yet we must also weigh the consequences of this state of affairs, because all of the goods that marriage bestows on society are stolen away by this living together out of wedlock.

There is no point of thinking about the education of offspring, about a sincere sharing of interests between couples or about a future for these families reproved by the laws. How could it be otherwise, since the motive for such unions is the most vile and unworthy one possible, namely, the satisfaction of a brutish passion. What attachment can a man of this sort have to his mistress? If he had any concern for her at all, he would not burden her with infamy, but would rather assure her honor by taking her as his wife and not as his mistress. And what love can children have for parents who do not even give them a name, or at most only lend it to them? And in due time, what kind of citizens will they become, without families, without fond memories of their elders, without honor and generally without inheritance? Since they have been thrust into this world as it were by chance and have been scorned by society, will they therefore not hate society, since it will regard them as unfit for public office and will constantly pass them over? Moreover, they will regularly have no profession or job, as I myself can bear witness, since I have seen it with my own eyes in my Diocese. And here I should point out another fact

which should grieve even the hardest heart, as one more proof of the need for both powers [of Church and State] to work together in order to utterly wipe out the evils that come of concubinage on this Island, since it is to their mutual interest. I have seen many concubines burdened with sickly children, abandoned by as many as five different men. Like the Samaritan Woman in the Gospel, none of these five men was her husband. Therefore, let the Government meditate on and calculate the dire results of such a scandalous disorder. What will become of all these children of perdition and sin? What can we hope of them but crime and misery? Without the slightest exaggeration, my Archdiocese is full of these outcasts.

But just as a conjugal union blessed by God results, among many other good things, in the painstaking care and education of the family, as well as in the smooth functioning of family interests and domestic economy, so concubinage results in the dissipation of interests and in the ruination of the unhappy man who finds himself to be the root cause of his well-deserved suffering. A proper wife saves assets both for her husband and children, because they share a common interest in their future. But a mistress, so to speak, bleeds the miserable man who takes up with her today and abandons her tomorrow. Because she has to prepare herself for this event, and all the more so if she cannot find a man to repair her lost honor and rehabilitate her to some degree in society.

But there is yet more to add. As I was struggling to sift through the reasons that might have influenced this general disarray, I found one that was told me by the unwed couples themselves. Poor folk, such as field workers, although many of them are white and Island-born and all of them are ordinary people, cannot find white women of their own class to marry, because the pride of these women makes them disinclined to perform household tasks. Poor though they be, none or very few will be content to live without at least one black woman servant; and perhaps there is not a single white woman who will ever adjust to performing the humble tasks that black women do. I ask you, then, what cowhand or mountaineer can meet with such demands? Moreover, since people of color are not averse to work, poor whites prefer black women and choose to live out of wedlock with them if marriage with them is hampered or forbidden. And what answer is there for this? None at all, except to agree that it is wrong to forbid unions between ordinary whites and people of color.

A man needs bread in order to conserve his bodily life; and, unless God expressly calls him to celibacy, he needs a good woman with

whom to join in matrimony in order to conserve and propagate the species. Now, in time of famine, governors must see to it that their subjects do not go without essential bodily nourishment, so they set aside a supply of wheat or at least rye bread, and take measures to see that some people do not die of hunger while others take possession of this supply by violence. In like manner, many great political and moral evils come from preventing marriages, above all when the scarcity of white women has reached the point that it has, at least in this part of the Island, where there is a disproportion between men and white women because of the constant immigration of both Island-born and Spanish men who come here to engage in small businesses, or are dismissed from the army and become so used to the Island that they do not return to their fatherland. Besides these, there are people from other countries who come to our shores in search of a livelihood. The enlightened Government must meditate carefully on this matter, for in view of this disproportion, great evils will ensue unless the ban on such marriages is lifted. For if, on the one hand, difficulties are set in the way of marriages and if, on the other, the scandal of concubinage is not prosecuted with the zeal and diligence that Prelates are obliged to demand of the Government, to what extremes will we not come at last? What new evils will yet arise? Religious morality would be wounded yet more deeply and society would suffer from the more pernicious and horrifying reactions that would result from just prosecution. One cannot go so far in interfering with a right that is bestowed by nature, morality, religion and the public and private good, without inflaming all of these sacred concerns.

Thus, from whatever side you look at it, this restriction on matrimony, which necessarily fosters concubinage, opens deep wounds in the very bowels of society: in public and private morality, in society's deepest interests, such as safeguarding the family (which is its basis), the well-being and painstaking education of offspring, the love of work among its subjects, the development of their physical, intellectual and moral faculties, leading to their increased income, and thus to the economic good and domestic order of society.

That the political order is also hurt by placing obstacles in the way of matrimony necessarily follows from what we have said above. And above all, paying very special heed to the circumstances of the Island, if there is any single means that will undoubtedly prove effective in avoiding revolts within it and in preventing innovators from duping the people and winning them over to their side, that one means is to keep our attention always fixed on gospel teaching and on practices that will root piety and catholic faith in people's hearts. This is both

acknowledged and published by the enemies of our mother country and of the Island, although the people may suppose the contrary to be true. The Government is well aware that these enemies, above all by newspaper articles in the neighboring republic and by other reprehensible tactics, are untiring in their efforts to discredit Claret's mission by slander and trickery, cursing the hour when he arrived on the Island. The success of this means can easily be explained, because an ignorant people, a debased generation, uneducated masses without a name, without interests and in a certain sense without honor, can be manipulated at will. But if the people have the truth preached to them, are instructed in their duty, are lifted up when they fall, healed when they are ill, honored when they are reviled, and are rehabilitated and given a name and place in society, such a people will learn their duties, will govern their conscience by them, will kiss the hand of those who in God's name lift them up from their misery, and, in the practice of the Gospel will find not only an impregnable wall against disorders and revolts, but also an assurance of the reward of the just: quiet of mind, peace of heart and hope of eternal happiness. I repeat that I am speaking from experience. I have already traveled a thousand two-hundred leagues throughout my Diocese with my long-suffering missionaries and in this time, with the Good Seed of the Gospel, we have created more than ten thousand families that were not so before, and given a name to more than forty thousand unhappy children of sin. Even so, the evil is so deeply entrenched that, as I said above, the number of births out of wedlock still exceeds the number of legitimate births by a third. These considerations can do no less than call the attention of the Royal High Court and of its worthy President. But before I end this letter, I cannot forego rebutting two arguments that might be leveled against me in the matter of permitting the performance of these unequal unions. The first is that in the mixture of races, the colored will gain preponderance; the second is that this will weaken *the prestige or influence that the white race exercises over slavery, for they wish to maintain others in subordination.*

As for the first argument, even supposing that it were an evil, it is already too late to remedy it, for the greater part of the Island's population are people of color -- an effect, by the way, of the widespread concubinage of long ago-- since all or nearly all of the mistresses are women of color, while very few of them are white. And the fusion is all the more deeply entrenched since it is quite common to baptize natural children as foundlings or of unknown fathers. Moreover, since light-skinned mothers do not speak up on the matter, they are registered as white and pass as such, not to mention the fact that

the law itself protects foundlings. If one looks carefully into this matter, one can easily see that this mingling of races has not led to the evils that some would have expected of it. For those of mixed race who are passing as whites, far from sympathizing with people of color, are most opposed to them and loath being confused with them, because nobody wants to step down from a higher to a lower class.

The second argument, which appears to its proponents as invincible as Achilles, is no less vulnerable. I always come back to arguing from the facts: Which rebellions have been caused or what insubordination has been fostered by the very many marriages of this nature that have always been celebrated before my arrival in my Archdiocese, as well as the many that have taken place in the Diocese of Havana? None. Well, then, if in earlier days when slavery was rampant there was nothing to fear under this pretext, there is even less reason for such fear today, when the number of slaves has been diminished by the prosecution of those engaged in the trade, by epidemics and by other cases which one would like to point out some day.

This is what the two arguments boil down to. And although they are still not well enough refuted, they do not outbalance the very grave evils that the absolute prohibition of racially mixed marriages entails, as I have pointed out above, in the political, social, domestic and religious orders.

As a Prelate, unworthy though I be, I shall never fail to refute the idea that a well carried-out use of moral means for the reform of abuses and disorders, and the application of the law of the Gospel with all its consequences, can ever be the cause or occasion of any evil whatsoever. On the contrary, I shall always uphold that societies, states and governments, whatever their conditions, will constantly face the threat of subversion when many of their subjects live unconscionably, treading roughshod over the most basic precepts of our Holy Religion. For experience has shown that those who treat the law of God and of the Church with contempt, are ever-ready to trample the laws of men underfoot. This is indeed the cancer that eats away at order and at institutions; this indeed is the seed of the perennial rebellion of the Island against the motherland: licentiousness and the breakdown of customs.

I will now conclude my already lengthy report by manifesting to Your Excellency that in my judgment regarding the Royal Order, officially agreed upon by the Royal Court of Puerto Principe, every

*absolute prohibition* of marriages between unequals be lifted, as being contrary to the dispositions of that Order, which only demands that proposed marriages of nobles be reported to their elders, or in their absence to Your Lordship or to the Governor of Cuba or to the Lieutenant Governors, when the said white nobles, who are of age, and none but them, wish to wed people of color; that in these cases a short interval be set for those marriages that are opposed, to test whether they fulfill the requirements of these dispositions, namely, that the motive for such marriages should not be a caprice or fleeting passion; and that commoners, even if they be white, should be left at liberty to contract marriage at will, with due regard, of course, to existing provisions regarding the marriage of minors.

In the three years that I have been working on the Island, I have promoted as many good things as were within my grasp, both as a Spaniard and as a missionary Bishop. Perhaps there is not a single inhabited corner of my Diocese that I have not visited. Thus I can say that I know my sheep, and that all of them know me, and that there is perhaps no evil that I have not probed and studied in order to apply a remedy insofar as it depended on me. If these circumstances, if my concern for the well being of my flock have any weight in the light of the Royal Accord in Your Excellency's mind, you can do no less than recognize the importance of my opinion. If you do not, and if the difficulties are not smoothed out, then heeding the cries of my conscience, I shall quite rightly be able to say to my virtuous and loyal companions: "Curavimus Babilonem et non est sanata; derelinquamus eam" [Jer 51:9: "We tried to cure Babylon, but she was incurable. Let us leave her"].

As this matter is really one of great importance, I have had to run on at greater length than I would have wished in order not to burden you, but I trust that both Your Excellency and the Royal High Court will forgive me for taking up so much of your time with the reading of this report, which was asked of me. I and my worthy brother Bishop of Havana are well aware of the circumspection, respect and concern for the Church that such illustrious officials as Your Excellency and the Magistrates have shown in a matter of such interest to them. May God....etc.

I remain, Most Excellent Sir,  
Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba

**149. [340] To the Governor of Santiago**

(EC I, 957)

**Introductory Note**

As head of the Church in Cuba, Claret is naturally on the alert against the boatloads of anti-Catholic literature being smuggled into Cuba from North America. He had already brought this matter to the attention of his clergy in a circular letter of 24 March 1852, and would again do so in a Pastoral Exhortation to the Faithful of his Archdiocese on 22 March of this same year of 1854 (cf. the next letter). Because of the close Church/State relationships in Spanish territories, he has a right to expect the civil government, in the person of Field Marshal Joaquín Martínez de Medinilla, to support him in his efforts to combat this trade. He points out that it is, moreover, of particular importance to the Civil Government as such, since much of this literature is aimed at the secession of Cuba from Spain by all means possible, even by violent revolution.

**Text**

To His Excellency, the Governor General of the Place  
Santiago, 7 March 1854

I have learned that in the Port of Santiago and in that of Nuevitas, and in other ports of this Diocese, some ships have been bringing in from North America loads of books and leaflets that are not only contrary to the Catholic religion, but some of them are also subversive and contrary to public tranquillity. And while I am warning both the clergy and people both orally and in writing to be on their guard against this pernicious reading, I am relying on Your Excellency's zeal and religiosity to carry out for your own part the dispositions of the law in this particular.

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba

**150. [345] To the Faithful of His Diocese**

(EC I, 963-971)

**Introductory Note**

As pointed out in the Introductory Note to the preceding letter, Abp. Claret felt constrained to warn his flock of the dangers inherent



in certain anti-Catholic and anti-Spanish books being smuggled into various ports of Cuba. Here, he focuses on various Bibles and New Testaments in Castilian, alleged to represent one of Claret's favorite Spanish translations, namely, "The Latin Vulgate Bible translated into Spanish and annotated in accord with the sense of the Holy Fathers and Catholic Expositors, by Fr. Philip Scio de San Miguel, of the Pious Schools" (Valencia, 1791-1793, 10 vols. in folio). Claret notes that these smuggled works lack Scio's notes and omit some Books that are part of the Canon as defined by the Council of Trent. He argues from Scripture against the "sola fide" doctrine of the Reformers, about whom he makes some rather anti-ecumenical observations, much in the style of the times, on both sides of the Protestant/Catholic debate. This was obviously long before the days of ecumenical biblical scholarship, in which a number of texts have been prepared for interfaith dialogue and even liturgical use. The present letter was published in Cuba in 1854, and again in Spain, in 1918, in the Cordimarian review "El Iris de Paz," XXXV (1918, v.1), pp. 352-354 and 367-369.

### **Text**

WE, DON ANTONIO MARIA CLARET Y CLARA, by the grace of God and of the Holy Apostolic See, Archbishop of Cuba, Primate of the Indies, Prelate Grand-Cross of the American Order of Isabella the Catholic, Member of Her Majesty's Council, etc.

To the beloved faithful of our diocese, health, grace and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ.

With the deepest sorrow we have come to learn that the enemies of the true Faith and of our most holy Religion, which we profess through God's bounty and mercy, have recently introduced into this and other ports of our Diocese a quite considerable number of copies of the New Testament and the Bible in the vernacular, which are falsely alleged on their very cover with being the same one written by Fr. Philip Scio. This imposture is self-evident, because that enlightened minister of the true God accompanied his translation with many very wise notes that are indispensable for a grasp of the genuine sense of the sacred text, without which Our Holy Mother the Church well-foundedly forbids translations into the vernacular. But besides this total suppression of notes, these Protestant publications omit several books of Sacred Scripture declared canonical by the Holy Council of Trent in its 4th session, skip over whole chapters of others, and vary, suppress and add words in order to alter the true Catholic sense. Yet despite all these fraudulent innovations, they do not blush

at claiming on the title pages of these unhappy versions that they are the same as that of Father Scio, in order thus to lead Catholics astray and underhandedly attack their orthodoxy under cover of his highly respected name.

From all of this you can deduce the bad faith of these Protestant biblical societies, and the obligation you have to abstain from reading and keeping such books. To this end, we would remind you of what the Holy Council defined in its aforesaid 4th session: "If anyone does not accept these books as sacred and canonical in their entirety, with all their parts, according to the text usually read in the Catholic Church and as they are found in the ancient Latin Vulgate, but knowingly and willfully contemns the traditions previously mentioned: let him be anathema" (Conc. Trid., *De Canonicis Scripturis*). Hence, dearly beloved children and brethren, if you want to read the Holy Bible translated by Father Scio, by all means do so; we exhort all, especially the Clergy, to do so, as we have so often done in speech and in writing. But read the genuine version with notes, not one adulterated and truncated by the Protestants. For all are obliged under the severest censure to hand the latter over to us or our Vicar General, or else to their confessors, that they may in turn hand over to Us as many copies of this sort that fall into your hands, however that may be.

You are equally obliged to hand over to us many other books and leaflets that have lately been fraudulently introduced, some of which are of unknown provenance, while others come from the neighboring republic of the American union, books which are steeped in Protestant errors, for it is to be feared that their reading may contaminate your faith. Just as a corpse horrifies people and they call in the priest to give it proper burial, so should you likewise do regarding these corrupt books and squibs: be horrified at them and hand them over to the Church for burial. Unless you do so, their stench will kill your faith: for you will not accompany your faith with good works; and faith without works, as St. James says, is dead, a dead faith [Jas 2:17].

And in order that you may be on your guard and able to recognize these wicked monsters at first sight, we will offer you a tell-tale signal, among others, whereby you may discern them, and that is the very word Faith. If they say that faith by itself alone suffices for salvation, without doing good works or repenting for evil ones, without mortifying the passions or frequenting the holy Sacraments of the true Catholic Church, the source of all graces; if they do not demand obedience and submission to that Holy Mother, or foster other errors of the same sort, then you can securely judge that such books, notebooks or squibs are evil and forbidden, so that you should neither

read nor retain them. For they are a venom that will infect you, a viper that will bring death to your souls. In fine, in just obedience to the Church, which forbids you to read them, you should comply with its precept, since it is in your own best interest.

This faith, so highly regarded by Protestants, is not the faith whereby the just man lives, but that which even the demons have, as St. James says: *Daemones credunt et contremiscunt* [Jas 2:19: "Even the demons believe -- and shudder"]. For just as the demons have faith without good works and without repenting of evil deeds, so you will find the faith that is inculcated in the forbidden books they regale you with. This faith is a skeletal body that has neither mortified flesh nor life-giving spirit: it is all bones, dry and cold. For lack of good works it has no life-giving spirit, and for lack of repentance for evil deeds, it is corrupt.

We would like those who write these books, which they regard as so well based in faith, to do what they themselves ordinarily use as the epigraph or motto printed in their books and Bibles: "Search the Scriptures." [Cf. Jn 5:39].

If they did so, they would find that faith without good works does not suffice for salvation. At each step they would run into the most energetic expressions that would undeceive them, if they were capable of being undeceived. In St. Matthew they would read that when a young man asked Jesus Christ, "Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" [Mt 9:16]. And Jesus himself answered him, "If you will enter into life, keep the commandments" [Mt 9:17]. And in the same Gospel of St. Matthew it is said that when Jesus comes to judge us all, he will say to some: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, take possession of the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," and will refer to the good works that they have done [Mt 25:34]. And to those who have omitted doing good works, he will in turn say: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire" [Mt 25:41]. In his epistles, the Apostle St. Peter exhorts all as follows: "Wherefore, brethren, strive the more earnestly to make you calling and election sure by means of good works" [2 Pt 1:10. "by means of good works" is found in the Vulgate and in some Greek MSS]. And in his epistles, St. Paul, whom Protestants so abuse to support their errors, they would see how the Apostle of the Gentiles, with his distinctive zeal, advises everyone that God will reward the good for their good deeds and chastise the evil for their evil deeds [Cf. Eph 6:5-9; Col 3:22-25]. He tells the Romans that God will reward each one according to his works [Rm 2:6] and he tells the

Corinthians that every man will receive his own reward according to his labor [1 Cor 3:8]. “Make no mistake: no fornicators, idolaters or adulterers, no sodomites, thieves, misers or drunkards, no slanderers or robbers will inherit the kingdom of God” [1 Cor 6:9-10]. But the place where they would be utterly confounded, if they were to search the Scriptures, would be in the Epistle of St. James, chapter 2, where the Apostle says: “If, my brethren, a man says he has faith, when he has not works, what is the use of that? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister has nothing to wear and no food for the day, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, keep warm and well fed,’ yet does give them their bodily needs, what is the good of that? Just so, faith, if it has no works, is dead in itself. But someone may say, ‘You have faith, and I have works.’ Show me your faith without works, and I will show you my faith by my works. Do you believe that God is one? You do well. The demons believe as much and tremble. But do you really want to know, vain man, that faith without works is idle? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, by offering up his son Isaac on the altar? Do you not see that faith was accompanying his works, and that by his works his faith was perfected?” [Jas 2:14-22].

These and other texts in the Holy Bible should be more than enough to convince them of their errors. But neither the whole Bible, nor a thousand Bibles if such existed, would be enough to undeceive them; for they would not apply the remedy to the place where the wound lies, which is in the heart and not in the understanding, as the Prophet [David] says: *Dixit insipiens in corde suo, non est Deus* [Ps 14:1, “The fool has said in his heart, there is no God”]. He says ‘in the heart,’ and does not so much as mention the understanding.

But, my beloved and dear brethren, in order that you may more clearly understand this important truth, you must know that there are two kinds of faith: a true one that comes from above, as St. James says: “Every good gift and every perfect endowment comes from above, descending from the Father of lights, with whom there can be no variation nor a trace of change” [Jas 1:17]. And Jesus Christ himself, speaking through St. John, says: “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him” [Jn 6:44] by means of a true faith, by means of an inner grace that enlightens the understanding, that pleases and sweetly draws the will.

There is another faith, a false one, that does not come from above, but rises upward from the depths, that is, one that passes from a corrupt heart to the understanding and stimulates it and fills it with willful errors. The history of all generations reveals this truth, which we are going to show you. Men have always understood their need for

faith in order to regulate their works. But when these works are evil and men do not want to correct them, they have left the true faith to follow a false one which they can reconcile with their bad behavior. Epicurus, who wanted to follow pleasures and delights, forged a faith in an unjust God, so that he and his followers could pursue earthly pleasures as their happiness. Mohammed was fleshly and hence his faith believes in a fleshly heaven. The master teachers of the Protestants, Luther and Calvin, were lax and remiss idlers who did not wish to hear or celebrate Mass, and hence, suppressed it. They refused to administer and receive some Sacraments, and hence, denied them. Tired of reciting prayers and loath to mortify themselves, they scorned them and concluded that good works are not necessary for salvation, and that faith alone was enough for salvation, a faith as easygoing as the life they led, a faith that has taken as many forms as the vices and passions that one might care to cover and justify under its mantle.

It may be said of these comfortable believers after their fashion, that they are a step away from losing religion along with faith. Dominated by this fatal indifference, they live like irrational animals and so the sentence of the Apostle is fulfilled in them: "The natural man does not perceive the secrets of the spirit of God" [1 Cor 2:14]. Hence God himself exhorts us through the Royal Prophet: "Do not become like the horse and the mule, who have no understanding." And then goes on to say to the Lord: "With bit and bridle bind fast their jaws of those who withdraw from you or refuse to obey you. Many are the sorrows of the sinner, but mercy shall encompass him who hopes in the Lord" [Ps 32:9-10].

Here, beloved brethren and dear children, you see the explanation of the word "Mystery" that is written on the forehead of false faith, who holds in her hand a cup that is made of gold but is full of abominations, inviting all to hasten to her while leading those who follow her to everlasting woe. She is dressed in purple [cf. Rev 17:4-5], but a purple like that worn by the Rich Man of whom the Gospel speaks, holding him up to as an example of those who are bound for hell [cf. Lk 16:19 ff.].

Let us end, then, paraphrasing the words the Apostle wrote to the Ephesians: "I beseech you to walk in a way worthy of the Catholic dignity to which you have been called, with perfect humility, meekness and patience, bearing with one another in charity, careful to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is but one body and one Spirit, just as there is but one hope given all of you by your

call. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism” [cf. Eph 4:1-5]. There is but one Lord who has created us, one Lord who conserves and governs us, and hence we must keep his law and his precepts because he commands it, and we should therefore unquestioningly bow to his yoke which is easy and his burden which is light [cf. Mt 11:29-30]. There is but one Christ who has redeemed us, one who has sanctified us and one who will glorify us if we follow in his footsteps with the cross of mortification and self-denial, and if we receive the holy Sacraments he instituted in order to apply to us his merits, which are of infinite worth.

But just as the most effective medicine will not produce its effects if it is not applied or taken by the sick, we may say somewhat the same of the merits of Christ, the heavenly physician, and of the medicine that he prescribes and gives us in the doses of the holy Sacraments as a most effective remedy to cure all our infirmities. Doubtless, my beloved brethren, all times are good for receiving the holy Sacraments, but some are more appropriate than others, and this is most true of the holy time of Lent.

Of it we can say with the Apostle, “now is the acceptable time” [2 Cor 6:2]. The days of Lent are days of healing, and thus we hope that as good Catholics you will comply with the sacred duties imposed by the most holy religion which you have the glory to profess. Bear in mind that it does not suffice to bear the name of Catholics, if by your deeds and omissions you live as Protestants, without keeping the commandments, without hearing Holy Mass and without receiving the other Sacraments and fulfilling the other obligations which our Holy Mother the Church imposes on you. In that case this sacred name will only serve to make you more criminal before God and men. To anyone who lives in this fashion, the sentence of the Apocalypse may be uttered: “You have the name of being alive, but you are really dead” [Rev 3:1]. Our desire for all of you is the life of grace and after that the life of glory. And this desire and the love we bear for you have impelled and obliged us to address to you this pastoral exhortation, which will be read before the Offertory on three holy days. Meanwhile, we give you our fatherly blessing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Given in our Archiepiscopal Residence of Santiago, Cuba, March 22, 1854.

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba

With the approval of His Excellency, my Lord Archbishop,

Philip Rovira, Priest and Secretary.

**151. [347] To the Governor of the Province**

(EC I, 973)

**Introductory Note**

Although this letter is largely self-explanatory, it is an example of Claret's attention to the formalities required on important public occasions. It is an invitation to the Governor of the Eastern Province of Cuba to attend the ceremonies for the inauguration of the Cathedral of Santiago, which has undergone major repairs after the considerable damages it suffered during the earthquakes of 1852. It also shows his concern for practical details of a civic nature, such as street cleaning and providing a special police duty in the event of any possible disorders attending the large crowds expected to participate in the event.

**Text**

Archdiocese of Santiago, Cuba.

To His Excellency, the Governor General of the Province.

22 March 1854

Your Excellency:

By the enclosed invitation, you may be pleased to learn how we plan to celebrate the inauguration of my Cathedral Church, after repairs for the damages it sustained during the earthquakes. As it has been dictated in complete accord with the opinion obtained after consulting the Metropolitan Chapter, I hope that Your Excellency will see fit to honor us with your presence at the religious ceremonies scheduled to take place on Friday evening at five o'clock and on Saturday the 25th at nine in the morning, and that you will arrange everything else favoring the attendance of persons and corporations who might lend more splendor to the ceremony, and also that you might give opportune orders regarding the musical escort, street cleaning and adornment of houses along the way that the procession will pass. At the same time I beg Your Excellency to be so good as to give orders to the Chief of Police or whomever it may concern, to see to it that the acting Chapter President and Capitular Commissioners in charge of carrying out all these arrangements may count on a sufficient number of safeguards on the days referred to, so that as they go about their tasks, order may be kept both in and around the Church itself. God keep your Excellency, etc.

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba

**152. [353] To the Captain General of Cuba**

(EC I, 986-989)

**Introductory Note**

This letter reveals Claret's concern for agriculture and for the plight of small farmers on the Island. In this same year, 1854, he wrote and published his 22-page essay, *Reflections on Agriculture* (Barcelona, 1854) which he followed with a much longer book, *The Delights of the Field*, in 1855 (311 pages, publ. Barcelona, 1856). In this connection, see Father J. Bermejo's Introduction to his edition of *Reflections on Agriculture*, In *Studia Claretiana*, vol. X (Rome, 1992), pp. 135-140, with text, pp. 141-154. But Claret went well beyond mere words. In Puerto Principe he founded a "Model Farm" for poor boys and girls. As he tells us in his Autobiography: "I myself planted more than 400 orange trees with my own hands" Aut 567).

As Primate of the Indies and Archbishop of Cuba, Claret had a right to speak his mind on the disposal of the assets of Religious Orders that were wrested from them at the time of the Liberal Government's anticlerical and antireligious decrees of exclaustation and disamortization some decades earlier. Some of these extensive religious holdings tended to be ill-used by the rich, the powerful and especially by slave-owners, and were well beyond the reach of small tenant farmers, most of whom were very poor and had little ability, let alone inclination, to set money aside for savings. This brings us to another of Claret's favorite social causes, which he mentions in passing at the end of this letter. Following the lead of the former Governor of Cuba, Lieutenant General Pedro Téllez de Girón, under whose auspices a "Licensed Credit Union" had set up in the Capital, Claret re-established this work. Its charter was approved in 1854. In granting loans, preference was given to those interested in farm work or in some mechanical trade. Liquid profits were distributed to deserving widows and to provide dowries for poor girls (cf. Aut 169 and note).

**Text**

Archdiocese of Santiago, Cuba

Your Excellency:

After receiving your official letter of 11 February last, with the two economic proposals drawn up to promote improvements in the leasing of the Assets of the Regular Clergy in the jurisdiction of Man-



zanillo, I sent them for a review and report by the Vicar and by the Pastor in charge of that Town, who knows all of the ins and outs of them, since he has resided there for many years and, until the period of exclaustation, administered them as the former Prior of the Priory of Saint Dominic in Bayamo to which they belong. Enclosed, I am sending Your Excellency a copy of their report, which can throw considerable light on the matter. However, as the Attorney of the Royal Exchequer has set the question in its true context in his opinion of 9 January, I will of course adhere to his opinion.

The farms should be disposed of by lease, as provided for in the Royal Warrant, in keeping with the latest Concordat agreed on by Her Majesty by sovereign disposition of 26 November 1852. As regards the alienation of these properties, I must in conscience also manifest the way of doing so which I deem most in keeping not only with fairness and justice, but also with the character of charity that should always preside in matters that affect or concern the Church. Even in its material interests, the Church sets greater store by leniency and mercy than by the strict legal calculation of utility down to the last detail. On this supposition, the allotment of these lands, which consist or should consist of fields, should be adjudicated, if not exclusively, then preferentially, to the poor folk who have cultivated or could cultivate them as settlers of the little properties to be alienated, rather than to the rich. To this end, and in order to proceed with greater assurance, I reduce my plan to the following basic points or conditions, taking into account, as I have said, the great light thrown on the matter by the report of the former Prior, now Pastor, of Manzanillo.

1) In each administrative district, a commission should be formed of two or three individuals appointed by both authorities [i.e., of Church and State], to organize the form of leasing the lands once held by Regulars, in keeping with these basic points.

2) These commissions, availing themselves of the advice of experts, if need be, will mark off and establish those ranches that should be kept in their present condition, determining their boundaries, and likewise those that should be changed or converted into another class of plots of land.

3) They should divide the latter properties into irrigable lands, the outlay for which will at most, in keeping with the Royal Warrant, correspond to an annual interest of 200 pesos, so that they may thus be adjudicated to persons of small means and proven integrity.

4) These commissions will fulfill their charge within a period of four or five months at most, so that the alienation may proceed forthwith.

5) In adjudicating these lands or lots, preference will be given to those settlers who have religiously complied with their bids in the rents they have paid thus far, even though their lots exist on plots of land other than those they now wish to lease.

6) The other lands that are not subdivided into smaller plots, should be put up for public auction, in keeping with due formalities, and adjudicated to the highest bidder.

7) In order to ensure their contract, the farms themselves will be mortgaged, as usual, in preference to any other responsibility.

8) Lessees must pay the annual fee agreed upon; and if within the following semester they do not pay it, the farm will be put up for auction under the same terms, and the lessees will have to pay expenses and costs of the executive actions taken in order to cover accounts payable that were not met.

9) In the meantime, the auction of further rentable lands that become available this year will be suspended, with the understanding that the latest ones made are prorogued until the farms in question are auctioned off.

I leave it to Your Excellency to consider the great advantages that this approach holds out for agriculture, by staking out property boundaries and thus beginning to correct the great evil, especially in this part of the Island, of land holdings that tend to be overly large. Moreover, it will offer a stimulus that will encourage a very numerous and most useful class of people to bring forth a great yield from the fertile soil of this Island by the sweat of their brow. I will not trouble to dwell here on the many benefits that this will have on public customs and in the political order, not only because I have already indicated these in another message I sent you on January 10th last, proposing some means that would be conducive to the fostering of agriculture, among them the establishment of licensed parish credit unions, but also because they can in no wise have escaped Your Excellency's enlightened eye. With this, I believe I have answered Your Excellency's inquiry, to which I refer, enclosing the aforesaid two reports along with my reply.

God save Your Excellency these many years. [Santiago] Cuba, the 27th day of April, 1854,

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba.

To His Excellency, the Captain General of the Island.

**153. [356] To the Captain General of Cuba**

(EC I, 1001-1003)

**Introductory Note**

In this letter Claret asks for an inquiry into the status of the request he submitted on building a convent for the new community co-founded by himself and Mother Antonia París de San Pedro. He calls them the "Sisters of the Heart of Mary." He probably wanted them to be called such, but they were at length called the "Apostolic Institute of Mary Immaculate for Teaching." Having formerly belonged to the Company of Mary, they chose to adopt its rule, written by the Spiritual Director St. Jeanne de Lestonnac, Fr. Jean de Bordes, S.J. The Teaching Sisters of Mary Immaculate have come in time to be known by the official co-name of Claretian Sisters. Through their presence and activity, Claret hopes in some measure not only to provide a Catholic education for all Cuban girls, but also to counteract the trend among the well-to-do of hiring French and other governesses to educate their daughters, and even of sending them to the non-Catholic environment of the Republic to the North.

**Text**

Archdiocese of Santiago, Cuba

Your Excellency:

On the 8th of this month, I received an official notice informing me that on August 12th of last year, your Excellency's worthy predecessor submitted to the supreme government of Her Majesty, a dispatch on the installation of the Sisters of the Heart of Mary in this City, for which I have supplied more than six thousand pesos from my own income. Your Excellency will readily grasp how indispensable it is to attend to the serious need for a good religious education of the weaker sex, which in my Diocese has heretofore been entrusted to hired help, with the single exception of the Convent of the Ursuline Sisters in Puerto Principe, who were dispossessed of their Convent some years ago, to the grave and inevitable detriment of their being able to maintain strict religious observance and to follow the aims of their rule as they ought.

Recognizing the urgent need to entrust the education of young men to religious institutes, and in keeping with the requirements that

Her Majesty called for in her Royal Warrant of 26 December 1852, we are already seeing some good results with the establishment of the College of the Jesuit Fathers in Havana. I am gratified to see that the Royal Warrant contains some of the ideas and even phrases that I used in the exposition I sent Her Majesty on the pressing need to reestablish that worthy Order on the Island. But it is no less pressing by similar means to attend, from early childhood on, to the education of those who as future mothers will have such an effective influence on the sentiments of the Cuban people. To this end I conceived and took the first step in this direction by issuing a timely decree for the establishment of a convent for the good Sisters of the Heart of Mary, whose rule, dictated by a venerable Jesuit, is based on that of St. Ignatius. Several of these religious women have preferred to come to Cuba, where there was a greater need for them, rather than remain in Europe. Sacrificing themselves for the sake of their neighbors, for the glory of God and the good of their own souls, they have chosen to make their profession in their own convent of the Order to which they were admitted. I had the occasion to examine their proposal even before I came to the Island. I learned more of them, both through my own inquiries and through their Prelates and directors. And, ever solicitous for the welfare of my Diocese, I not only issued them an opportune invitation, but provided them the funds with which to buy a house, along with a fund enabling them to erect a nunnery as soon as Her Majesty's sovereign resolution arrives, which I cannot imagine will be anything else than favorable. But as so many months have passed without learning the least results of my request, I hope that Your Excellency will be so good as to call attention to the dispatch, together with a favorable recommendation on your part. In this respect, I should advise you that the City Council, the Cathedral Chapter, the parish clergy and the Governor General of this City and Province [Don Joaquín Martínez de Medinilla], have unanimously agreed on the advantages sure to come from erecting this convent.

God keep Your Excellency for many years. Cuba, 17 May 1854.

I remain, Your Excellency,

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba.

To His Excellency, the Marquis de la Pezuela, Capt. General and Chief Civil Superior of the whole Island.

## 154. [357] To the Captain General of Cuba

(EC I, 1004-1005)

### Introductory Note

Although St. Anthony Mary Claret was endowed with the proverbial *seny* (solid common sense) of a Catalan, and had acquired considerable business acumen in his years as a textile craftsman, he had a lifelong trust in Divine Providence. He appreciates the Captain General's kindly concern over the resources needed in order to found his 'Model Ranch' for poor young people, yet he reminds him of the reasons for his great trust in Providence. He also reveals this trust by backing it in a practical way with the savings he has scrimped together out of his own income. All he asks is to be left free to proceed with this enterprise, since he is sure that God will bless any work that is undertaken for the sake of "His beloved poor."

### Text

Archdiocese of Santiago, Cuba  
To His Excellency, the Captain General of the Island  
29 May 1854

Most Excellent Sir:

I received Your Excellency's letter of the 9th of this month, in which you kindly inquire what resources I am relying on for the building of a House of Charity in Puerto Príncipe. None but the savings I can spare from my episcopal income, together with the inexhaustible treasure of God's Providence, since I trust that since this is a work that is only for His greater glory and the good of the faithful, He will provide all that I need, and by the means one might least imagine.

First of all, with the savings I have gathered from my income, I will be able to begin as I have planned, by acquiring the land and raising the building. This is the way things have always gone in the establishment of the many pious foundations on which Catholicism has left its human imprint throughout the world. In purely human undertakings, prudence would counsel the amassing of more resources; but in God's undertakings, He alone more than suffices; and if He chooses to avail Himself of the help of other human beings, it is no more than as instruments, though this does not mean that they are necessary in order to carry out His beneficent designs for His creatures, above all if they are for His beloved poor. If Your Excellency grasps my intention

and feelings in this matter, I shall consider it as one of the first helps of Divine Providence that you leave me free to work, for I assure you, I repeat, that I am not relying on any human resources, other than those which Providence may spontaneously choose to grant me.

God save Your Excellency, etc.

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba

### 155. [361] **To the Captain General of Cuba**

(EC I, 1011)

#### **Introductory Note**

To form some notion of the population, size, geographic extremes and poorly educated and miserably underpaid clergy of the Archdiocese of Santiago, see Fr. Lozano's *A Life at the Service of the Gospel*, ch. X, p.171, ff. With some 241,562 inhabitants scattered over such a large terrain, Claret desperately needed some religious priests to make up for the dearth of diocesan clergy. He urges the Captain General, the Marquis de la Pezuela, to do his best to enable him to bring some religious priests into Cuba, such as the Jesuits, but in particular the Vincentians, so as to satisfy in some degree this crying need.

#### **Text**

Archdiocese of Santiago, Cuba.

To His Excellency, the Captain General

2 June 1854

Most Excellent Sir:

The absolute lack of regular clergy is keenly felt in my Diocese, all the more so since there is such a scarcity of secular clergy. Perhaps their number is less than 150, for my whole vast Diocese. For this reason my efforts are in large part useless, for lack of these new, efficacious helpers. Now, among these helpers, the most indispensable are the Fathers of the Mission of St. Vincent de Paul who, according to the Royal Warrant on this matter, should establish a house of this sort in Santiago, Cuba, and also take over the direction of the Conciliar Seminary. In view of this, I am hoping that Your Excellency will remind the Higher Government of my claims, so that as soon as possible they may attend to this crying need, issuing the suitable orders to the Visitor General of the Institute in Madrid, to whom I will also address a request in this matter. And here I can do no less than

reproduce the petition I made for them and the Jesuits, for the Convent of St. Francis in this Capital City and for the two other houses for either of them, as indicated in the note which I placed in Your Excellency's capable hands of the 7th of last September. God keep Your Excellency for many years.

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba.

### 156. [362] **To the Captain General of Cuba**

(EC I, 1012-1013)

#### **Introductory Note**

This is a letter acknowledging the receipt of the Marquis de la Pezuela's latest letter, advancing the cause of the Claretian Sisters. It also expresses Claret's deep gratitude for the constant support of the Marquis, who defended Claret's policies against a racist mentality on marriages between Blacks and Whites on the Island. Relationships with Pezuela had been much more friendly and favorable to the Church than with his predecessors, Concha and Cañedo. But the Saint's hopes for a long stay of Pezuela in the Government of Cuba were not to be realized. Fr. Lozano sums it up: "[Some] complained to...Madrid. Their complaints had no immediate effect, but when Espartero returned to government he annulled this disposition by the Captain General. Shortly thereafter, due to the intrigues of Concha at Court, the Marquis --an upright man, sincerely interested in the needs of the Cuban people-- was recalled to Madrid. He was replaced by the temporizing General Concha" (*LSG*, p. 205).

#### **Text**

To His Excellency, the Captain General  
Santiago, 11 June 1854

My Very Dear and Esteemed Sir:

Yesterday I received your welcome reply to the letter I wrote to you, asking you to remind Her Majesty's Government to issue the dispatch regarding the teaching Sisters, and I feel secure in the hope that in a short time I will obtain what I have been working for from the outset, namely, the education of Girls... Your Excellency's keen eye cannot fail to see the benefits that will come from an education imparted by religious and well-educated persons... I give you my heartfelt thanks not only for this, but also for the many other favors that I

have received from the government which you have led so well. May Divine Providence keep you on this Isle for years to come, for I have no doubt this will result in the remedy of many ills. I will ask the Lord in my daily prayers, however poor they may be, to keep you in good health for many years of able service, as I desire.

Your attentive servant and Chaplain, who kisses you hand,  
Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba.

### **157. [380] To Pope Pius IX**

(Copy of Latin Original: EC I, 1043-1045)

#### **Introductory Note**

This letter is largely self-explanatory. Claret requests competent authorization from the Holy See in order to receive the religious profession of his Novice-Sisters. He likewise requests approval of some modifications that he has introduced into their Rule, in order to accommodate them to the times and climatic circumstances of their new Cuban milieu.

#### **Text**

Most Blessed Father:

Anthony Mary Claret y Clará, Archbishop of Cuba, prostrate at Your Holiness' feet, reverently sets forth: That certain young women who had committed themselves to the service of God in the religious state and had begun their novitiate in a monastery devoted to teaching in the city of Tarragona, were unable to pronounce solemn religious vows because of the political circumstances then prevailing in the Spanish government. Among them were two sisters, namely, Antonia and Florentina, who were still in the novitiate after a period of ten years, practicing the religious virtues. By God's Providence and with Your Holiness' approval, in virtue of the presentation made by the Royal Patronage, I, though unworthy, was promoted and consecrated to this Archdiocese. When the aforesaid novices learned of this, moved by the desire for greater perfection and yearning for the greater glory of God and the welfare of their neighbors, they did not hesitate to leave their homeland and commit themselves to Almighty God in a higher degree of perfection than they were following in their monastery. Enkindled with charity for their neighbor, they desired to undertake the charge of educating young girls in this region, which



lacked an admirable institute such as theirs. After seeking God's help, duly and humbly submitting the matter to their Confessors, and examining and meditating on so great an undertaking, they asked me if I would kindly allow them and three other young women, who earnestly sought the religious life and were moved by the same principles of holy charity as they were, to travel to these regions. The said young women arrived in this port of Santiago, Cuba, on May 26th, 1852, and later, another nine arrived on January 15th of the current year.

All of them (except for one of the two from the monastery of Tarragona, who died of a tropical disease called 'vómito' in Spanish), are with great joy of soul, gladness and fervor of heart living as novices and observing strict cloister. They daily recite the divine office, have mental prayer and spiritual reading, and after attending completely to their spiritual obligations, commit themselves to manual work. They lead a common life and most strictly observe, as if they were professed, the three outstanding virtues of poverty, chastity and obedience. Since they aspire to their own greater perfection and the good of souls, they soon opened a public school in the building I prepared for them, though their own living quarters are far separated from it, lest cloister be broken. It is clear to this Christian people that the girls are being educated both in religion and in the other branches of learning.

Now as no religious house of religious women or men can be established in Spanish dominions without royal authorization and permission, I addressed my humble petition to Her Royal Majesty, together with a witness from my Metropolitan Chapter, pastors and magistrates attesting to the need, convenience and usefulness of erecting such a Monastery. The Supreme Royal Government, after weighing the reasons set forth by me, acceded to my request and totally approved of it, as is clear from the Royal Edict given in Madrid on the 30th of April of the current year.

All of the young women presently living in this religious house are novices, none of them being professed, and there is no hope that any nuns from Tarragona, who have taken solemn vows, will move from there to here, not only because of the dangers involved in an ocean voyage and other hazards that afflict and frighten the feminine sex, but also because of the more stringent observance of the Evangelical Counsels that I have established in this house. I am therefore having recourse to Your Holiness, humbly asking that if Your Holiness sees fit to approve of their Novitiate, You would likewise grant me the faculty of admitting some of these young women to profession. Thus this very useful Institute will take root in this region; thus, too,

its spirit of serving God and helping the neighbor will spread most rapidly. The new religious house will have the same name as that in Tarragona and will in essence observe the Rule of St. Benedict.

However, I deemed it necessary to make some modifications in it, in keeping with the circumstances of the times and climate, as I have in fact done, not in writing, but only *viva voce*. Yet fearing lest I be in error, before consigning them to writing, I have commended a business of such moment to God in earnest prayer. Now they are observing in practice what may later be established.

Experience has taught me that what I have established by spoken word is quite in keeping with the religious life. Therefore, not without foundation, I hope that Your Holiness will stamp my dispositions with the seal of Your approval. And I pray God that after many years of happiness in governing the Church, He may grant Your Holiness the crown of eternal glory. At Santiago, Cuba, on the 20th day of November, of this year of eighteen hundred and fifty four.

Your Holiness' most humble servant,  
Anthony Mary,  
Archbishop of Santiago, Cuba.

### 158. [381] To the Faithful of His Diocese

(EC I, 1046-1048)

#### Introductory Note

In compliance with the dispositions sent from Rome, prescribing that the Catholic world offer prayers to God, imploring Him to give special assistance to Pope Pius IX, before his contemplated Dogmatic Definition of the Mystery of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, the Archbishop of Cuba addressed the following circular letter to the faithful of his Diocese. The Dogmatic Definition was in fact declared on December 8, 1854 (cf. Pius IX, *Ineffabilis Deus*; D 2803), although the news did not reach Cuba until some months later.

#### Text

WE, DON ANTONIO MARIA CLARET Y CLARA, by the grace of God and of the Holy Apostolic See, Archbishop of Cuba, Primate of the Indies, Prelate Grand-Cross of the Royal American Order of Isabella the Catholic, Member of Her Majesty's Council, etc.

To our venerable Dean and Chapter, Vicars Forane, Pastors, Curates and other members of the Clergy, and to all the faithful of our Diocese, health, grace and peace in our Lord Jesus Church.

At this very moment the Capital of the Christian World offers a great spectacle which all the faithful of both hemispheres are observing with religious awe, since its outcome promises to be of great moment for the greater glory of God, of His Most Holy Mother and of the Church. Our Holy Father, Pope Pius IX, in his ardent devotion to the Virgin Mary, from whose powerful mediation he awaits the remedy of the evils which in our unhappy age afflict not only the Church but society as a whole, has determined to decide what the Holy Spirit tells him concerning the IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF MARY. This holy thought has preoccupied him since the beginning of his Pontificate, which has been so happy for the Spouse of the Lamb. In order to proceed with full maturity and accuracy, he has rallied the devout faithful to lift up their prayers to the Most High, uniting their intentions with his and, after consulting all the Bishops of the Catholic World, he has summoned two of them from every nation in order to solemnize the act in which he will define a matter of such great importance.

Nothing is more befitting of true Catholics, but above all of those who like you are distinguished for their devotion to the Mother of our adorable Redeemer and Lord Jesus Christ, than to join in spirit with the common Father of the faithful and to pray to the Divine Son and his Most Holy Mother, that the Spirit of wisdom and understanding may descend upon him.

To this end, we have disposed that a Novena to the Immaculate Conception be celebrated for this intention in our Holy Cathedral Church and all Parish Churches and Shrines in towns of considerable size, and that a Triduum be held in all others.

In [Santiago] Cuba the Novena should begin on the 30th of the present month. In the rest of the Diocese, it may begin later, unless the Vicars Forane and Pastors receive this Circular before the date set. The Triduum will take place on the 6th, 7th and 8th of this December. And so that we all may be one not only in spirit and intention, but even in the form of prayer if possible, the Novena will be celebrated as follows:

-- At six-thirty in the morning, the Votive Mass of the Immaculate Conception will be celebrated, either in solemn or recited form, as opportunity allows, and we expect the respective priests to apply this Mass for the assigned intentions, without taking a stipend. This Mass

will be followed by the recitation of the third part of the Holy Rosary meditating on the Glorious Mysteries, ending in morning prayers with the Novena of the Immaculate Conception, or lacking it, with the Novena of the Most Pure Heart of Mary.

-- In the evening, after the ringing of the bell for prayer, services will begin with the recitation of the same third part of the Rosary, meditating on the Glorious Mysteries; the Novena will be repeated; then there will be a sermon or moral talk, which the preacher may adapt, if it seems fitting, to the aim of the Novena or to the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. If there is no sermon or talk, its lack will be made up with spiritual reading that may be chosen from the GLORIES OF MARY, for example, or from some similar book. The service will end with the singing of the "Salve" and of "Holy God."

In the Triduum, the same procedure will be followed, except that [the themes for] three days of the Novena may be chosen at the discretion of the Pastor.

All the faithful of both sexes who attend these Holy Exercises, joining their prayers with that of the common Father of the faithful, provided that they go to Confession and receive Communion on the day of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, may obtain a plenary Indulgence; and we ourselves grant another eighty days Indulgence for each time they visit their respective parishes with the same intention.

Santiago, Cuba, the twentieth of November, eighteen hundred and fifty four.

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba

By mandate of His Excellency, my Lord Archbishop

Philip Rovira, Priest and Secretary.

### **159. [1568] To the Dean and Chapter**

(EC III, 205)

#### **Introductory Note**

This is a brief note informing the Chapter of his plan to embark the following day to continue his Pastoral Visit. He is relying on their prayers for the success of the Visit and reminds them that, as usual, he is leaving his Provisor and Vicar General in charge of the Archdiocese during his absence.

**Text**

Archdiocese of Santiago, Cuba

Tomorrow, the 21st, I plan, God willing, to embark for Baracoa and Nuevitas, in order to continue the Holy Pastoral Visit. I am counting on the prayers of your Venerable Corporation in order to obtain the same good results that I have always obtained through God's mercy, never doubting that you will want to cooperate in this way in my Holy Mission, so that united as we are in the same spirit, and above all by the bond of charity, we may bring down upon it the blessings of the Lord. As ever, I leave the government of the Diocese in the hands of my Provisor and Vicar General.

God preserve Your Worships these many years.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba.

To the Most Venerable Dean and Chapter of my Holy Metropolitan Church Santiago, Cuba. 20 November 1854.

**160. [392] To Fr. Anthony Barjau**

(EC I, 1068-1070)

**Introductory Note**

In this letter, the Archbishop touches on a number of points concerning the Archdiocesan Seminary of St. Basil, of which Fr. Barjau is the Rector (cf. Aut 600). It seems that Fr. Damian Limia, first Succentor of the Choir of the Metropolitan Church of Santiago, has submitted a petition relating to continuing his duties as a seminary professor. When Claret arrived in Cuba, the seminary was in such a sad state that not a single resident seminarian had been ordained in thirty years. For a fuller grasp of the situation, see Claret's own account in nn. 555-557 of the Autobiography. For further information on the Cathedral Chapter of Santiago, see the very informative document and notes in EC III, pp. 594-598. A year after this letter was written, we find Rafael Tirado in his home parish of Cauto, as interim Curate. Of Renart, we know that he was sent back to Spain, because, as Fr. Currius wrote to some of his friends, "he doesn't know a whit of Latin, and without this requisite, His Excellency will not ordain anyone." The present letter provides us with an insight into Claret's close concern for the personal lives of his collaborators. He tries to cheer Fr. Barjau with a tale from the Fioretti and a bit of homely wisdom.

Perhaps this is a good place to speak of the addressee of this letter. Fr. Antoni Barjau i Codina was born in Manresa on 7 May 1825 and was ordained in 1848. He served as Vicar of Sant Quirze de Bessora until May, 1849. In 1850 he accompanied St. Anthony Mary Claret to Santiago, Cuba. During the voyage, Fr. Barjau used to accompany the hymn-singing on the accordion. He and Fr. Sanmartí taught catechism in Puerto Principe until Abp. Claret arrived there for his pastoral Visit (Aut 514) and preached the mission at El Cobre. He fell seriously ill with yellow fever, and the Saint nursed him devotedly, watching by his bedside day and night, until he was cured (Aut 527 and n.). "As he was exceptionally gifted for teaching and instructing boys, I made him rector of the seminary, a task he performed very well, remaining at his post until the arrival of my successor. He then returned to Spain, where I made him rector of the royal monastery of El Escorial..." (Aut 600). He was nominated Canon of Santiago, Cuba, but declined, only to accept later at the urging of the Saint. Proposed for the bishopric of Badajoz, he would not accept. He remained in Cuba until 1880, when he returned to Spain to become spiritual director at the college of Valldemia of Mataró. He had the honor of testifying at the process for the Saint's beatification. He died in Vic on 12 August 1892.

Claret sends greetings to Fr. Galdácano (cf. Aut 601) and the other priests and students at the seminary. In the postscript he mentions the improved health of his "sick companions," who were Frs. Manuel Subirana (cf. Aut 593) and Francis Coca (cf. Aut 594) and his lifelong lay helper and page, Mr. Ignasi Bertriu (cf. Aut 605).

### **Text**

To the Rev. Anthony Barjau  
Puerto Príncipe, 12 January 1855

My Very Dear Sir and Companion:

I have just received your letter of the 9th of this month, to which I would reply as follows:

1) Regarding the petition of Fr. Limia, that he await my arrival so that I can speak personally to any of them, and that he remain as Professor so that this class can perform more assiduously than it has done thus far.

2) As for Rafael Tirado, if it is seen that he has virtue, disposition and vocation for the ecclesiastical career, he can be admitted to the College; and if he needs something, he can be given an advance that

he can repay when he is ordained. And even if some students come from Spain, there will be room for all of them.

3) I do not know Rovira's opinion concerning Renart, but if he knows moral theology and could learn at least enough Latin to understand it, he could be ordained and sent as acting Curate to a country parish. At least I believe that he would not give any scandal. But if your reverences see and know that he is not apt even for this, then let him return to Spain, and let him pay for the return voyage himself with the help of his friends; for there is no reason why I, having paid for his voyage here, should pay for his return trip, since he misled me by coming without being fit for the purpose. Talk it over with Rovira and resolve it as you see fit. Will any of the batch who are coming over be nearing ordination ? ... Ask them about this on my behalf.

I am very much surprised that you have had no news from Spain about your family; but you mustn't let this afflict or sadden you. Remember what St. Paul says: If we live, we live for the Lord and if we die, we die for the Lord, and whether we live or die, we are the Lord's [cf. Rom 14:8].

We must strive always to be happy and conformed to God's will, and rest in the arms of Mary Most Holy, our loving Mother. Don't you remember how it was back in Spain? The moment a crying child was placed in his Mother's arms, he stopped crying and felt like smiling, so that sometimes you could see the tears he had just shed still glistening on his smiling face. No doubt you are somewhat of a cry-baby, but I am sure that if you place yourself in the arms of the Virgin Mary, your Mother and mine, you will smile.

I am reminded of the time when Brother Juniper found his Father Guardian, who was very fat, crying over some sorrow he had suffered. The simple Brother Juniper told him: "Don't cry, Father; it isn't good for fat people to cry, because it makes them look very ugly. So fat people like you and me should never cry, except for our sins, and we should always be happy in the Lord."

Regards to Fr. Galdácano and the other Fathers and Students, and ask them to commend me to the Lord. I remain your most affectionate Servant and Chaplain,

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba

PS: My sick companions are already feeling better.

**161. [399] To the Marquis de la Pezuela**

(EC I, 1084-1085)

**Introductory Note**

Don Juan de la Pezuela (b. Lima, 1809; d. Madrid 1906) succeeded Don Valentín Cañedo as Captain General of Cuba. Cañedo was removed from office in September of 1853 and Pezuela took over his office in December of that year, but served only until September of 1854, when he was removed from office because of unjust intrigues against him. He returned to Spain, where in 1862 he became the First Count of Cheste. His relationships with Claret in Cuba had always been exemplary, and the Archbishop, who would sorely miss him as an ally, now writes him a letter of congratulation and thanks.

**Text**

The Marquis de la Pezuela  
Bayamo, 20 February 1855

My Very Dear and Most Respected Sir:

Now that you have arrived in Madrid, safe from the risks you ran in crossing from Havana to Cádiz, allow me to congratulate you and to assure you that the Archbishop of Cuba will never forget the religious way in which you deigned to protect him in his arduous apostolic mission during your brief but most happy governance of this Isle. Doubtless some have not understood the many benefits that you have bestowed on Cuba during this short period, and the many others that you still had in store for it.

But men of upright intention and magnanimous heart always act according to their conscience, pay little heed either to applause or scorn, and forgive offenses with Christian generosity.

I do not want to offend your modesty by telling you that I recognize these traits in you, but I must in justice render you this tribute and offer you my thanks, in witness of which I daily pray the Lord to pour all sorts of blessings upon you and your honored family, while repeating that I remain your most attentive servant and Chaplain, who kisses your hand,

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba.



**162. [400] To Don Paladio Currius**

(EC I, 1086-1088)

**Introductory Note**

This letter needs little comment. It does, however, give us an insight into the very practical bent of the Archbishop and into his well thought out attention to material details in the construction of the "House of Charity" he is having built in Puerto Príncipe. The "current events" alluded to in the letter are (prudently) not specified, but things were not going well in Spain. 7 July 1854 saw the publication of a manifesto that began a liberal revolt led by General O'Donnell. On 3 August 1854, General Baldomero Espartero became premier of Spain, O'Donnell became the minister of war (although he wanted to be premier), and the Regent, María Cristina, was exiled 15 days later. In 1855 a new Constitution came into effect, greatly prejudicing the Church's temporal assets and personnel, and leading to strong reactions among the opposing factions. In an already turbulent century, a rocky road lay ahead for the Church and for the Government and people of Spain.

**Text**

To the Rev. Paladio Currius  
Santiago, 20 March 1855

My Dear Sir:

I received your letter of the 16th and am aware of what you tell me in it. In my last letter I told you that I was thinking of using 7,000 pesos, over and above the first amount that I brought. But after reviewing my accounts more closely, I see that I cannot afford more than 6,000, so you should calculate on that figure in any dealings, and when Lladó comes, he will bring the rest, if they have not been covered, although I don't know when he'll come. For, because of current events, no steamships have been crossing. Only one had been allowed to do so, but it burned the night before last. We saw it on the way back from the Jubilee, which was a function brightened by the attendance of all civil and military authorities.

As for constructing the roof of plaster, I foresee many difficulties. It seems to me that it should be made of wood, because in time it will have to be expanded, and it is important that it be made of local materials, since you will not always find those who are inclined or can afford to send abroad for materials.

It seems to me that the walls ought to be built up to the level of the first roof or ceiling and the beams added, and to leave it thus for this year, so that the works may settle more solidly... Afterwards you could procure some more wood not cut this year, for this is the worst time of the year in which to gather it, as the sap is still in it and the walls of the building would begin to rot. The best time is September, so let's wait till then.

What I would very much like you to do is to divide the land into squares or similar shapes, and begin cultivating banana trees, sweet potatoes, yams and yuccas, etc. I am glad that the orange trees I planted are coming along well. I would like you to have many orange and fruit trees growing in seed beds and other places, so that they can sprout and grow and later be transplanted. These can be watered, while the rest can wait for the rains.

As for swapping land to give the place a more regular shape, I leave it in your hands, but I don't think it prudent to sell that bit of a square to Roure, because that's where the carriages of people who will eventually come to see the establishment must stay, because I don't want any of those two-wheeled carts coming inside.

Fr. Sansoli was quite ill. He went to the country for a few days and it did him much good. Hence, I've sent him to Mayari, in hopes that he'll complete his recovery there.

We are all well enough. Take care of yourself and ask what you will of your affectionate Servant and Chaplain.

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba  
To the Rev. Paladio Currius, Priest and Director of  
the Welfare House of Puerto Príncipe.

### **163. [403] To Don Paladio Currius**

(EC I, 1094-1095)

#### **Introductory Note**

The Archbishop gives further practical details regarding the House of Charity or Model Ranch he is building in Puerto Príncipe, showing his preference for a spacious one-storey building rather than a taller one, and giving his reasons for it. But notice, too, that even in such a seemingly mundane matter, the Saint has not only thought of it, but has commended it to God in a prayer of discernment.

He is troubled by the news of what is happening in Spain, where Church properties are being alienated and sold, and where the Cortes or Parliament, in an officially Catholic Country is discussing granting freedom of religion to all cults. To top it all off, one of the teaching sisters (who, to make things even worse, was a Catalan from Tarragona) had run off from the convent, to the great consternation of the other sisters.

### **Text**

To the Rev. Paladio Currius  
Santiago, 27 March 1855

My Very Dear Sir:

I have thought over and commended to God the House of Charity that we are building there in Puerto Príncipe, especially whether there should be a beamed or a vaulted roof, or else left as it is, and I'm almost inclined to the later, since it will make the building more spacious within and have space for as many rooms as if there were two storeys. That's the way it is in the hospital of St. Lazarus, that of our Lady of Carmel, etc. The local people would rather live on the ground floor than above, and so do I.

Beamed roofs always sag and loosen all the bricks, as happens in our [episcopal] residence, which already has to be re-bricked. And if that happens in this house, what will happen in that one, which will be occupied by boys who, as you know, tend to run and jump about? Think it over well. I, after thinking it over and commending it to God, am inclined to believe that it should be without an upper floor. Besides, if in time one wanted to add an upper floor, it could easily be done.

Look at the way the world is going! Here we are building this welfare house, while in Spain, as I learned by yesterday's post, they're selling what they call papal goods. The goods of this sort that they are selling come to some 5,000,000,000. It seems that the exterminating angel is free to do whatever he wants in that wretched Nation. In the Cortes, they're also discussing freedom of cults or, what is worse, tolerance for any belief, freedom to all non-Catholics, while Catholics are forbidden to speak. What do you think of that?

Here's another bad piece of news. One of the Sisters, a native of Tarragona, fled the convent at five in the morning last Saturday. She went through a house alongside and leapt from the roof onto a carriage. Unhappy woman! You can imagine how disconsolate the rest of the nuns are.

Commend them, and me as well, to God, and ask what you will of your affectionate servant and chaplain.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba

To the Rev. Fr. Paladio Currius, Priest and Director of the Almshouse of Puerto Principe.

### **164. [422] To the Bishop of Urgell**

(EC I, 1119-1120)

#### **Introductory Note**

Claret encourages his old friend, Caixal, who is undergoing many trials because of the anticlerical turn of events in Spain, which have not yet come to a peak in Cuba. Here, in contrast, parishes are growing and both spiritual and temporal help is being provided for the faithful. Temporal help is being given by way of alms (Claret was always generous with the poor), by the establishment of licensed credit unions, and by Claret's own "Notebooks" on agricultural methods. The Claretian Sisters have survived the death of one of their original members and the abandonment of the religious life by another. He mentions his own weariness and his desire to be in heaven, rather than on this strife-torn earth. He greets Canon Vilamitjana of the Cathedral Chapter of Urgell. In his postscript, Claret gives Caixal the shocking news that one of the seminarians Caixal had ordained a Subdeacon in Spain had to be expelled from the seminary. This person, "Tort," was intellectually bright, but was discovered to have been carrying on a cleverly concealed liaison for several years with a woman whom he had passed off as his cousin.

#### **Text**

To His Lordship

Santiago, 30 June 1855

My Dear Sir and Esteemed Brother:

I already know the annoyances, sufferings and labors that you are going through on the [Iberian] Peninsula. Blessed be God. Let us trust in the Lord, for He will not allow our temptation to be greater than the grace He will give us [1 Cor 10:13; 2 Cor 12:9]. Let us have recourse to prayer like the [Royal] Prophet, who said: "Ad Dominum cum tribularer...me..." [Ps 120 (119):1: In the day of my distress I cried unto the Lord, and He heard me"]. We, for the moment, are at

peace, and are profiting from it by forming good clergy by means of classes and conferences.

The number of parishes is growing and besides giving them spiritual nourishment, we are also giving them bodily help by means of alms, credit unions and Notebooks on agriculture. Just now, thank God, everything is going quite well.

The day before yesterday, the Vigil of St. Peter, I preached to the Sisters in the afternoon. They are all so encouraged and fervent that Sister Antonia told me: "I was afraid that some might be dismayed by what happened (for as you know, one sister died and another ran off), but thank God all are quite fervent."

Keep well, and I will also do my best, although I would rather go to Heaven, because I am tired of living any longer on earth. Be so kind as to give my regards to Don Benito Vilamitjana, whom I dearly love.

Ask what you will of your littlest Brother.

The Abp. of Cuba

Santiago, 30 June 1855

PS-- Tomorrow I'm going to ordain a group, some of whom are from your Diocese. With them came one named Tort, whom you ordained Subdeacon. When he came, the ship's Captain had to lay charges against him. He showed up with a woman whom he called his cousin, with whom he had been living out of wedlock for more than five years. I know this for sure. What do you think of that? Wicked priests provoke God's wrath... We must look closely at those on whom we lay hands, so as not to become accomplices in their crimes, and so as not to allow wolves to enter among the fold, mistaking them for sheep.

### **165. [424] To the Captain General of Cuba**

(EC I, 1123-1125)

#### **Introductory Note**

The Archbishop thanks Don José Gutiérrez de la Concha, the Captain General of Cuba, for his help in establishing the Daughters of Charity and the Jesuit Fathers in Cuba. Claret had worked long and hard to convince the Government in Madrid and the Vice-royal Patron of the Island to approve this work, as can be seen from the Royal Grant of 27 November 1852. The coming of the Jesuits would help avoid sending young Cubans abroad (mainly to the United States), where they picked up many anti-Catholic notions and anti-Spanish

and pro-revolutionary attitudes. In passing, he also mentions his thanks to Brigadier Don Carlos de Vargas Machuca, who was the head of Government and Commandant of Santiago, Cuba, from 1854 to 1860.

### **Text**

To His Excellency  
Santiago, 5 July 1855.

Very Dear and Esteemed Sir:

I have just received your letter, together with the draft for 5,000 pesos from Madrid, to pay for the debts incurred by the sisters until their arrival here. It is impossible to describe the joy I felt in my heart to see your concern on behalf of afflicted humanity, by seeking to alleviate and remedy their lot in houses of beneficence. As a Prelate who must address his attention to the relief of the poor and to the spiritual nourishment of all the faithful, it is a great consolation for me to be able to see in you a Vice-royal Patron who helps me in the former, as a charitable father who accompanies me in caring for the poor, and as a friend of wisdom and order who favors me in the practice of good.

I shall not fail to renew my former and repeated petitions, so that the Daughters of Charity may come as soon as possible and I doubt not that they will come, as they have promised me, all the more so now that the indispensable expenses, which are sometimes the greatest obstacle, are being paid with the amount you have kindly put at my disposal, for which I remain eternally grateful.

Now, there remains but one thing to add the finishing touch to this threefold aim, so dear to this Prelate and so favored by you, namely, the coming of the Jesuit Fathers, for which I have long petitioned the Government. I was pleased to see that no. 3 of the Royal Decree of 27 November 1852 expressed some of the ideas I presented to the Government on how much good it would do this country by having the opportunity to educate its sons here, and on how much evil it would avoid by not having to send them to foreign parts, whence they return not so much educated as infected in moral, political and religious matters.

I know that you are in full accord with these sentiments. The same is true of His Excellency [Brigadier] Don [Carlos de] Vargas, whom I greatly appreciate and am in deep sympathy with. May God keep both you and him for many years on this Island, which would doubtless be especially blessed to see my desires fulfilled and my

projects carried out. I hope that the Lord will grant me this consolation. Meanwhile I give you my most affectionate thanks for the great good you have done for this Diocese, and I pray and will continue to pray that God may keep you in good health in order to continue what you have undertaken.

I remain, Sincerely Yours....

P.S. It would be most convenient if you could work at persuading the Father Rector of the Jesuit College to send two Fathers to this City, in order to commence, though with few means and in a short time, an establishment in my Diocese, which is the main one.

### **166. [432] To the Claretian Missionary Sisters**

(EC I, 1136-1138)

#### **Introductory Note**

The following letter is self explanatory. It is the Decree of Establishment of the Apostolic Institute of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady, the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary, and of its Aggregation to the Order of Saint Benedict. This is as good a place as any to mention two related incidents in the Saint's life. On 12 July 1855, after completing his Pastoral Letter on the Immaculate Conception, he recorded the first of his "interior locutions," in which the Blessed Virgin spoke to him: "I heard a clear and distinct voice coming from the picture [of Our Lady of the Rosary], telling me Bene scripsisti [You have written well] (cf. SAW, "Lights and Graces," pp. 301-302; also Aut 674). On 2 September 1857, he received a special illumination on a call to a more universal apostolate, in connection with the Angel of the Apocalypse (cf, AutDoc VIII, "Résumé of His Life," SAW p. 31; cf. Introductory Note to "Lights and Graces 1857," SAW p. 305).

#### **Text**

WE, DON ANTONIO MARIA CLARET Y CLARA, by the grace of God and of the Holy Apostolic See Archbishop of Cuba, Primate of the Indies, Prelate Grand Cross of the Royal American Order of Isabella the Catholic, Councilor of Her Majesty, etc., etc., to all who shall see the present letter, send health and blessing in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our Holy Father in Our Lord Jesus Christ, by Divine Providence Pope Pius IX, by rescript of April 27th of the year one thousand and

eighty- five since the Birth of the Lord, signed by His Eminence Cardinal Genga of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, deigned to heed our reverent petition expressed in the instance we laid before him on 20 November of the preceding year of one thousand eighteen hundred and eighty-four, asking that we be allowed to establish in this City a Monastery of Teaching Sisters, with the same name as the Monastery of Teaching Sisters of the City of Tarragona in Catalonia, namely, the House or Order of our Lady, the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary, in which the rule of St. Benedict is observed in substance, with the modifications and variations which experience, after mature reflection, has shown us to be fitting. We were given the favor of being able of our free will and conscience to establish it, and thus to admit to religious profession Sisters María Antonia de San Pedro París, María Josefa de San Pablo Caixal, María Encarnación de Santos Simon y Judas Gual, and their other Sister companions who have asked to be professed when they have already completed a year of Novitiate in the same Monastery, with the requisites demanded by the Sacred Canons.

We, in turn, have acceded to the requests of the aforesaid Sisters, after we ascertained that they have kept cloister uninterruptedly, observing the rules for more than a year with a mind to have this serve as a Novitiate. We have found each and all of them to be resolved in their desire to profess the said rules, which we have before us, reserving the right to approve them later, after they have freely and spontaneously renounced any rights and temporal goods that might accrue to them. We have also seen to it that they are securely lodged in their dwelling or Monastery, which is sufficiently endowed according to the documents we have before us, and fulfills all the requirements in the aforementioned rescript.

Therefore, availing ourselves of the Apostolic faculties granted us in this rescript, we approve the time they have spent in strict Cloister as a Novitiate, and we likewise approve and henceforth adopt, as being best-suited to this Institute, the Habit and religious veil of the Order of St. Benedict, which they wore at the beginning of the Novitiate, in virtue of the permission we granted them during the time when we were setting our petition before His Holiness. Thereafter, admitting them to religious profession in keeping with the form prescribed by



the same Sacred rescript, we ourselves will receive the profession of our beloved daughter, Mother Antonia de San Pedro on the 27th day of this month of August, and we will receive that of her sisters and beloved daughters on the third day of this coming September. And after verifying that the profession has taken place, we will declare them to be Religious of the Apostolic Institute of the Immaculate Conception of Mary Most Holy, Mother of God and Our Lady.

And finally, we order that after they have made their Profession, they shall proceed to the ritual election of their Lady Prelate, for which rite we hereby delegate to act in our stead, Fr. Paladio Currius, our Private Secretary and householder. And once she has been elected and confirmed by us, she will proceed on her own to the election of the other offices, according to the rules of the Institute, as His Holiness has deigned to provide, at which time two books must be opened for the Monastery: first, the book of the Foundation, which will include our Petition to His Holiness, the Sacred Rescript, this act of establishment, and the Constitutions when they are approved; second, the book recording professions as they occur. The Sisters concerned, as well as their worthy Chaplain, will be suitably notified of the provisions of this act.

Given in our Archiepiscopal Residence of Santiago, Cuba, on this twenty-fifth day of August, in the year of our Lord 1855.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba.

By order of His Excellency, my Lord Archbishop

Paladio Currius, Priest, Pro-Secretary

### **167. [436] To the Bishop of Urgell**

(EC I, 1144-1145)

#### **Introductory Note**

The Saint congratulates his friend, companion and brother Caixal, on the persecutions directed against him and the Spanish Church by the current liberal and anti-religious government. In Caixal's case, the government has gone so far as to exile him from the See of Urgell, and has confined him in Ronda, Mallorca. The explicit citation from Luke is, of course, quite fitting; but the implicit citations from John and from the Song of Songs are both quite witty and touching.

## Text

To His Excellency, the Bishop of Urgell  
Santiago, 25 September 1855

My Esteemed Brother and Dear Friend:

I have just received your letter of July 14th, postmarked Ronda de Mallorca. I do not know whether to say whether I read it with sorrow or with joy, because while I am truly pained by the position of the Church in general, of your Diocese and of your person, I am gladened to see a friend, companion and brother, such as you are, in the situation in which our Divine Master, Jesus Christ, commands us to rejoice and be glad. Do not think it ill of me to call to memory those words of the 6th Chapter of St. Luke: "Blessed will you be when men hate you, when they ostracize you and insult you and proscribe your name as evil because of the Son of Man. On the day they do so, rejoice and exult, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for thus their fathers treated the Prophets" [Lk 6:22-23].

Thus the Prophets were persecuted, thus Jesus was persecuted and thus also the Apostles, and so, finally, will all those who want to live piously in Christ Jesus.

The Ven. Jerome López of the Society of Jesus says that God keeps a prelate in his diocese the way a country farmer keeps a dog in his courtyard to watch and bark. For if the dog barks, thieves will kill him with knives, but if he does not bark, his master will kill him with a club. You know what I mean.

May God not allow us to be dumb dogs who have not learned when we ought to bark. Blest are you who have been found worthy to suffer abuse for the name of Jesus. Blest are you who, having grown old in virtue, must follow another and be led to a place where you would rather not go; but I, as a young fellow, still follow my own way and go wherever I please in my own diocese [cf. Jn 21:18]. I would like you to commend me to God, because privation and prayer make a very aromatic mixture. Jesus Christ wants us to accompany him to the mountain of myrrh and to the hill of incense [Song 4:6].

Take heart, and if you need anything, tell Mossèn Pere Naudó. And ask what you will of your little brother,

Him of Cuba

## 168. [439] To the Captain General of Cuba

(EC I, 1150-1150)

### Introductory Note

This letter is interesting in that it highlights an aspect of Claret's very practical concern for the physical and social well-being and advancement of his flock. In the first volume of his *Historia Documentada*, Fr. Cristóbal Fernández comments: "In 1854, he published the first of these booklets, entitled Reflections on Agriculture, a work of some 22 pages, in 15 x 10 cm. format, the harbinger of another, more lengthy work published later, The Delights of the Country." [The edition published in 1856 by the Religious Library of Barcelona was some 312 pp. long.]. "He also sketched out other projects, such as the 'Model Ranch' at Puerto Principe, which began taking shape" (cf. HD I, p. 738). Claret was justly proud of these projects, as he wrote some years later in his Autobiography: "While the ranch was being built, I wrote a little work called The Delights of the Country, which contained a sketch in embryo of the foundation I had started. This little book has been very helpful in Cuba, and ranch owners give copies of it to their foremen and tell them to follow it. The Generals of Havana and Santiago, whose duty it is to provide for the welfare of the country, were among the work's chief backers. General Vargas, who was then in Santiago but is now stationed in Puerto Rico, has had this work reprinted there for Puerto Rico and Santo Domingo" (Aut 568). Anyone interested in this aspect of Claret's work should see Fr. Jesús Bermejo's presentation of the complete text of the earlier work, Reflections on Agriculture, preceded by a fine introduction and accompanied by excellent notes: *Un púsculo claretiano casi desconocido: Reflexiones sobre la Agricultura* (StCl, vol. X [Rome, 1992], pp. 135-154).

### Text

Archdiocese of Santiago, Cuba  
 To His Lordship, the Captain General of the Island  
 19 October 1855  
 Your Excellency:

I have the honor of sending you two copies of a little book titled "Delights of the Country," which I wrote in my spare time and have just had printed. I dedicate one of these copies to Your Excellency and the other to the Board of Public Works, over which you so worthily preside.

The object I set before me in this work is quite clear, and the aim that it addresses is self-explanatory. Your Excellency's keen eye will know the many sacrifices it has cost me, given the continual and grave occupations that surround a prelate who wants to fulfill his ministry. Fortunately, these tasks do not tire me, nor do I ever think of resting, ready as I am to sacrifice and deprive myself even of sleep whenever possible, in order to have more time to spend on works that are useful to my flock, not only those that affect their spiritual well-being, which is my first concern, but also those that relate to their material well-being, as far as it may depend on me...

As the little work has been printed in the press of the newspaper "The Redactor," which is published in this City, I have not been able to choose better type and paper, or to correct its edition fittingly. But such as it is, I felt that I should present it to you and to the honorable Board, moved by the just consideration that I owe you, trusting in your indulgence until I send you some copies of the more painstaking edition that I have ordered to be made in Barcelona, as soon as I receive them. And though my work may not be commended for its own merits, I ask Your Excellency and the Board to accept it at least for the good intention that made me decide to publish it.

May God, etc.

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba.

### **169. [443] To Fr. Anthony Barjau**

(EC I, 1158-1159)

## **Introductory Note**

This short letter reveals a few of the many concerns which Claret had to deal with in his ministry as Archbishop. Although he is busy in Puerto Príncipe (today's Camagüey), on the eastern side of the Island, he keeps in touch with what is going on in the far-off Capital of his Archdiocese. He approves the admission of a devout student from Spain to the Seminary, since he would be a good influence on the seminarians. But note also that he is thinking ahead to the time when the young man is ordained a priest and of the good pastoral influence he will have on encouraging the French population to practice their religion more constantly. On the contrary, he does not like to see the already-employed Chaplain of the Choir of his Metropolitan Cathedral meddling in seminary affairs. As we saw in the letter of 12 January 1855, Fr. Barjau, the Rector of St. Basil's Seminary, was

feeling homesick and somewhat worried over not hearing from his family. (For further details on Fr. Barjau, see the introductory note to the letter just cited).

Mr. Peter Llausás, who had come over to Cuba as a seminary student from the Diocese of Gerona, was ordained by Abp. Claret and served in many important posts. He later joined the body of Chaplains of El Escorial, where he remained until 1861, when he left to join the Jesuits.

### **Text**

To Fr. Anthony Barjau, Priest  
Puerto Príncipe, 20 November 1855

My Very Dear Sir and Companion:

I have received your letter of the 15th of this month and am surprised of what you tell me in it. In reply, I can tell you that I do not have any problem with your admitting Luis as a seminarian, because he is recollected and devout and this can contribute greatly to preserving and increasing the clerical spirit among the seminarians. But after he is ordained he can do a lot to influence the French to practice their religion more.

You have done quite well in not admitting Garzot into the seminary, since he has still not left his post as Chaplain of the Choir. I charge you to be on the watch and note whether he attends or not, whether he takes part in the Seminary Communion and other services or not, so that I can be ready to speak on it when he comes. Thus far I haven't seen him, except where he earns money by making vestments.

Let us go on to another point, namely, your visiting the [Iberian] Peninsula. I have no problem with your going, but I wouldn't want it to be an abrupt or thoughtless departure. To this effect, think well on whom we should put in charge of the Seminary. Also, see to it that you prod the boys you are teaching to study hard, because they're not likely to learn more than you teach them this year, as you'll see on your return. Take care to collect, either from here or from Bayamo, the allotment for the post of Congregant, as I told you, but I now add that this allotment is to you and for you. Tell Balthasar Ramón that during this last quarter, that is, between October and December, he should place Fr. Peter Llausás as Tenant Curate of Caney.

Take good care of yourself and rely on your affectionate Servant and Chaplain, who kisses your hand,

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba.

To the Rev. Anthony Barjau, Priest and Director of the Seminary of Santiago, Cuba.

**170. [444] To Mother Antonia París**

(EC I, 1160-1161)

**Introductory Note**

The first thing to note about this letter is the incorrect dating of the month, which, as we learn from Fr. Serra's journal, was December. Moreover, we know that the Saint gave the clergy retreats he mentions from November 19th to 28th. We should recall that the Saint and Mother Antonia had co-founded the Teaching Sisters of Mary Immaculate (Claretian Sisters) just a few months earlier, so that it was only natural for Mother Antonia to refer a number of points regarding the Institute and its works to Claret. The problem of illegitimate children was a vexed one, which could give rise to much talk and some doubts. The Saint gives Mother Antonia a simple rule of thumb here, and refers her to the *Summa Theologica*, I-II, q.87, art. 8, on whether anyone is to be punished for another's sin. He not only approves the Sisters' teaching ministry, but also shows an effective concern for an increase in vocations. In most matters, the Sisters dealt with Fr. Currius, whom they themselves had elected temporal administrator of the convent, though he was spiritual director of Mother Antonia and many of the first Sisters. The election the Saint refers to was that for Prioress of the Ursuline Sisters in Puerto Príncipe, whom he had bravely supported in their moment of great need (cf. Letter of 2 March 1851).

**Text**

J.M.J.

To Sister M. Antonia París de San Pedro  
Puerto Príncipe, 11 October [= December] 1855

My Esteemed Sister in Jesus Christ:

I received your letter and showed it to Fr. Currius, and I am herewith sending you my reply. I was happy about the services for the girls, for I want them to learn religion and morals, as well as those other things that women ought to know.

Concerning the two matters about which you consulted me, I have this to say. As for the boarding students, it suffices that they be daughters of a lawful marriage, though God knows who their fathers may have been. I will not dwell on the reasons alleged by St. Thomas, because it would go beyond the limits of a letter. As regards women who want to enter, I am of the opinion that their families should handle their dowry, and not entrust it to your convent or house.

In this city there are two or three young ladies who would like to enter. One is 20 years old. I have seen her briefly, and I have no doubt if admitted, she would do well. But her parents do not know of her intention, and the day they learn of it, all hell will surely break out to prevent her. Her director is Fr. Sanmartí, the Vicar here. He and Fr. Currius must see to it.

Given my many grave occupations, I do not have time to busy myself with particular problems that are so long and troublesome. Besides the many sermons we have given to the people, I have given the spiritual exercises to the Clergy in two sessions, and also to the Nuns.

There has been a new election for Prioress. It seems that everything as been quite reformed. At present they have 18 boarders.

Regards to all the sisters, and you can ask what you will of your most affectionate servant and unworthy Chaplain.

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba

### **171. [449] To the Bishop of Urgell**

(EC I, 1167-1169)

#### **Introductory Note**

On June 15, 1855, Claret's fiery friend and collaborator, Caixal (a pro-Carlist and decided foe of the Liberal Government), was banished from his Diocese of Urgell and exiled to Mallorca. Thus the Saint wonders how many of his letters may have reached him and also "laments and commends their sufferings and labors to God." He offers him some interesting details on his apostolic activities in Cuba. He mentions the work of two groups he had successfully brought to his Archdiocese, namely, the Jesuits and Daughters of Charity, who are beginning their ministries in Puerto Príncipe and Santiago. He then turns to his writings. The first is a re-issue of his "Reflections on Agriculture" (Barcelona: Religious Library, 1854, 22 pp. Cf. Introductory Note to letter of 19 October 1855). The second is a satire,

“The Recently-Arrived Traveler” (Barcelona: RL, 1856, 46 pp.), written in dialogue form, featuring a man who has just returned to Spain from England, where he was dazzled by material progress in industry, commerce and public works, but lost none of his feelings as a Spaniard and Catholic, nor his good common sense, which assures him that this material progress should not be attributed to Protestantism, which would prove disastrous in Spain, which is far superior in its spiritual and moral culture to the earthly allure of Northern nations. The third is a translation of the 28 chapters of the Gospel of Matthew, together with the first two chapters of Acts, forming a work meant to be read over a period of thirty days (Barcelona: RL, 1856), prepared with brief but clear notes from the Fathers and classic Expositors, “so that,” as its author says, “you won’t say that you don’t understand it because nobody explained it to you.” As for the fourth, *Lives of the Saints*, Cf. MSS Claret, vol. XIII, pp. 743 and 789: “Avisos para escribir Vidas de Santos” (Advice for writing Saints’ Lives).

### Text

To His Excellency, the Lord Bishop  
Puerto Príncipe, 21 January 1856.

My Dear Sir and Esteemed Brother:

I have just received your letter of Nov. 14th and am glad that you are well. From here, I look on at a distance, lament and commend our sufferings and works to God, and if you need anything that might be of help, just tell me and I’ll do it most gladly out of duty and love.

You wanted to know something about what’s going on in these lands, so I’ll tell you in brief: Besides the continual pastoral visits that I am making (the present one being the fourth), the Missionaries are also on the go, seeing to it that the spirit that has been kindled will not be stamped out. In all parishes I have set up the Confraternities of the Rosary and of the Heart of Mary. In Santiago and in Puerto Príncipe, which are the two largest cities, I installed the Congregation of the Happy Death, and the Jubilee of the Forty Hours Devotion to the Bl. Sacrament. In each of these two cities there are ten churches prepared for it, and His [Eucharistic] Majesty is exposed for a whole week in each church, and on every Sunday there is a Catechism contest and I preach the homily on the Sunday Gospel. Afterwards there is a procession and blessing, and thus the service ends.

Right now I’m in this city with two Jesuit Fathers who have come here to found a college. Later, the Daughters of Charity will be coming for the hospitals and welfare houses, of which there will be



two, one in this city and the other in Santiago. The one in Santiago is already staffed; the one here is still being built.

Perhaps you have already seen the little work on agriculture that has been reprinted in Barcelona. I wrote it for the good of my beloved flock, and I did it by robbing myself of sleep at night and of rest during the day.

And now I've something to consult you on: I've been thinking of writing a satire in dialogue form, ridiculing some of the main errors of Protestants, to see if it might in some way detain or slow the rush of this headlong torrent that is invading or inundating everything in its path: *quid tibi videtur?* [How does that strike you?].

I'd also like to put together a little book like that of the 1st series, which would contain just the four Gospels and Acts of the Apostles as translated by Scio, but with notes in the corresponding places against the chief errors of the day: *quid tibi videtur?*

Lives of the Saints, one by one, written by Ribadaneyra, with notes for the virtues most needed today: *quid tibi videtur?*

That's enough for now, since I haven't the time. I don't know how many letters I have written you; let's see if this one reaches you. Keep well, and ask what you will of your beloved brother,

He of Cuba.

To His Excellency, the Lord Bishop of Urgell,  
At the moment staying in the Estate of Aubeña,  
District of Algarda, Mallorca

### 172. [451 and 1592] **To Pope Pius IX**

(EC I, 1172-1176; cf. Latin original in EC III, 230-236, with maps of the Saint's four pastoral visits)

#### **Introductory Note**

This letter is the Saint's second written account of his ministries to Pius IX, to whom he had written first on 21 October 1853. He speaks of his pastoral visitations throughout his vast Archdiocese, noting that some of the earlier outward enthusiasm of the wayward in his flock has cooled, so that they are now showing their true colors. He speaks of his clergy retreats and other ministries and devotions. The "nuns" he speaks of are the Claretian Missionary Sisters. The Jesuit School, though well advanced in January of this year, failed. He has established the Forty Hours' Devotion in order to deliver the

just from earthquakes and epidemics, and from the “third scourge” of rebellion that would cost Spain the loss of Cuba, which he feels is imminent, although it would not in fact come for several years.

He then goes on to present the details of the savage attempt on his life in the city of Holguín, which occurred as he was leaving church after preaching on the Blessed Virgin on the evening of February 1st, the Vigil of Candlemas (the Presentation), accompanied by Frs. Llausás (the Secretary of the Visitation), Lladó (the Vicar Forane), Téllez and Carbó. In 1932, an account was published by an eyewitness, Don Roque Guerra, a native of Holguín, who kept watch while his own father, the pharmacist Don Manuel Guerra, treated the Archbishop’s wounds with sticking plasters. For the Saint’s own moving account of these and other details of the incident, see Aut 574-584.

There were many theories about the villains behind this attack, but the Saint himself says, in his own handwritten account, “I was wounded by two lustful clerics” (Mss. Claret XII, p. 18, line 7; cf. also letter 1594, EC III, 238-239, to Cardinal Brunelli). The assailant, a native of Tenerife, was saved from lynching or execution by the insistent and heartfelt pleas of Abp. Claret and by the able defense of the best lawyer of the day, Don José Manuel Mestre. The Pope’s reply, dated Rome, 8 May 1856, stated, among other things, “In view of your virtues, and mindful of the great good things which, with God’s help, are told and are yet to be told concerning your episcopal zeal in that Diocese, We would like you, venerable Brother, to continue directing and governing it, if in your prudence you know that you can do so without danger to your life.” Unfortunately, Claret did not receive this letter until nearly the end of the year, and did not answer it until 2 July 1857, when he was already back in Spain.

### **Text**

Most Holy Father:

Anthony Mary Claret i Clará, by the grace of God and of the Holy Apostolic See Archbishop of Cuba, prostrate at Your Holiness’ feet, has the honor of rendering a second account of his ministerial tasks.

Toward the end of 1853 I wrote Your Holiness, explaining the effects of my pastoral visit, missions and spiritual exercises, along with the pastoral letters I addressed to the clergy and people. Your Holiness was pleased to answer me in a letter of 22 September 1854, which brought me great comfort, joy and satisfaction in the midst of

my sufferings and labors. Seeing that Your Holiness approved of my zeal, I have continued in the same manner since then. Every year I have given the spiritual exercises to the clergy, continuing the conferences on Moral Theology and Liturgy, founding a Convent of Nuns for the education of girls and a College of the Fathers of the Society of Jesus for that of boys, and I am presently building a charity house for poor girls and boys. Every year I have gone out on pastoral visitation of the parishes, in keeping with the dispositions of the Holy Council of Trent, so that during these five years I have visited the diocese four times, preaching every day and administering the Holy Sacraments of Penance, the Eucharist and Confirmation.

Through the goodness and mercy of God, the harvest has been bountiful, though not with the same external show as in the beginning, since new wine is more heady. For I have observed in my latest visits that the wicked, since they are not of God, do not come to hear the word of God, whereas the good do, and they have profited well from it. For the comfort of the latter, so that God may deliver us from the scourge of earthquakes, cholera and the "yellow fever," and from a worse scourge yet to come, I have established the rounds of the Forty Hours' Devotion in honor of the Blessed Sacrament in the two main cities of the Diocese, namely, Santiago and Puerto Príncipe. Thus I went about continuing my course, until I received two wounds, one on my face, the other on my arm. Pray God that these were the seal of my sweet Jesus, since this is what he means when he says: *Pone me ut signaculum super brachium suum* [Song 8:6: "Place me as a seal upon thine arm"]; and on my forehead the Tau or the sign of the cross of Jesus! The event occurred as follows.

As I was continuing my pastoral visit, I reached this city of Holguín and opened the visit on the first day of February. In the morning I visited the only two parishes of the city, in the afternoon, the Cemetery, and at night I preached to a great crowd of people, exhorting them to put their trust in the Blessed Virgin, by reason of her offering, namely, Jesus, Son of God and Son of her Womb, whom she presented to the Eternal Father for our welfare (it was the Eve of the Purification). The service ended at eight thirty, and as I left the church accompanied by four priests and a great multitude of people and soldiers, lo and behold, a man approached me as if he wanted to kiss my ring, when suddenly he brandished a razor and dealt me a wound that ran from my ear to my chin, severing the cheek even to the inside of my mouth, doubtless with the intention of slashing the jugular vein. But as I naturally raised my hands to deflect the blow, he wounded my right arm in passing. I was drenched in blood,

but surgeons rushed to attend to me, and by the mercy of God I am nearly recovered. The assailant was caught in flagrante. I forgave him and declared in a loud voice that I forgave him. I prayed for him and have begged the authorities not to punish him. O Holy Father! The joys that Jesus and Mary gave me that night were so great that I can't explain them.

With the Lord's grace I am ready, Holy Father, to suffer other wounds and even death itself, if it is God's will. But I would not wish to be rash and put myself voluntarily in danger. The man who wounded me is a foreigner, who does not even know me personally. In my last visit to this city, without so much as seeing him, I did him a great act of mercy, so that he could not have any sort of resentment against me. The wickedness did not issue from his own heart, but was suggested to him by another. I know that in my Diocese there are many Herods and Herodias living in sin, and since I was playing the role of John, they would ask for my head. There are also some priests who are whitened sepulchers, like those of the Hebrews, and as the latter plotted to take Jesus' life, the former, too would plot to take mine, *quia non est discipulus supra magistrum* [cf. Mt 10:24, Lk 6:40, "For the disciple is not greater than his master"], and although they have failed in this attempt, they will try again until they succeed, for it is written, *Superbia eorum, qui te oderunt, ascendit semper* [Ps 74 (73):23, "For the pride of them that hate Thee ascendeth continually"]. In order to know God's will, then, I have recourse to Your Holiness, so that you may deign to indicate what I ought to do, whether to renounce my post and withdraw, or to continue until the sacrifice is consummated. *Loquere, Domine, quia audivi servus tuus* [1 Sm 3:9, "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth"].

I commend this plea to St. Peter Damian, whose feast Our Holy Mother Church celebrates today, that he may obtain for me the grace to know the Lord's will.

Given at Holguin, on the 23rd day of February of the year 1856.

### 173. [454] **To the Bishop of Urgell**

(EC I, 1181-1183)

#### **Introductory Note**

It seems that this letter was not sent directly to its addressee, perhaps for the reason hinted at its beginning, but rather that it was

enclosed in the envelope of another letter sent to D. Peter Naudó. We can gather as much from the following words that Naudó wrote to Caixal, which the latter transcribed at the bottom of the letter cited here: "I have foregone the pleasure of personally delivering to you on Sunday, June 1st, the following letter which I received this evening and have sent ahead to you, so that Your Excellency can answer it by the next post. Until the said Sunday, God willing, I remain Your Excellency's humble servant, Peter Naudó, Priest."

In the letter itself, Claret, after dispelling the groundless suspicions of Caixal, who in his previous letter had complained that Claret now held him in no account and had cast him out of his heart, the Saint goes on to deal with diverse affairs relating to: the case of Tort, whom Caixal had ordained a Subdeacon and Claret had expelled, the Religious Library, Lárraga's Moral Handbook, the professed Sisters, the letter to Pius IX on the wounds he received in Holguín, etc. As for the diabolic intervention in the assassination attempt, cf, Aut 585. His recovery has been nothing short of miraculous, and he is already working as hard as ever in the ministry.

### **Text**

J.M.J.

His Excellency  
City of Holguín, 8 March 1856

My Esteemed Brother:

I've just received your letter of December 14th, and am truly surprised that my letters have not come into your hands. It seems that God is allowing this so that our pains will match yours, that is, beyond any sort of comfort.

I do not know why you imagine that I hold you of no account and have cast you out of my heart, etc. Why are you telling me this? You still keep harping on that ordinand, but if you had observed the few letters that have reached you (among the many that I wrote you), you'd see that I don't mention or even hint at the matter.

I don't understand to whom refer when you talk of battling with bears and bulls. It seems you are referring to those at the Religious Library, since you go on to deal with them. But Mossèn Peter did not, as you suppose, talk to me about it.

It seems to me a very good idea, as you suggest, to insert Scavini's treatise on the virtues in Lárraga's book. It would also be good to reshape the paragraph dealing with a probable opinion, for I'm told that it was better in the first editions that came from the author's hands, than it is now. Kindly look into it and rephrase it the way that seems best to you.

As for the Sisters --or I should rather say the professed Nuns-- you must already know that they are quite content, since I obtained from His Holiness a Brief to that effect. His Holiness had already written me a letter that was very much to my satisfaction. Now I have written him to give him a notion of my wounds. The one on my cheek was seven and a half inches long and left both jaws exposed, the one on my right arm was two inches long. I lost about four and a half pints of blood from them both. It happened on February 1<sup>st</sup> at 8:30 in the evening after I had preached about Mary Most Holy. But at present I am recovered. On the 3rd of this month we already sang the Te Deum. I have been administering the Sacrament of Confirmation to 150 every day, and this coming week I will set out for the Capital in order to be able to celebrate the solemn rites of Holy Week.

The demon is in a great rage against me. I myself saw the would-be assassin and the devil in a black shape, spurring him on and holding the hand with which he struck me. Afterwards I was so happy and satisfied that I don't know how to explain it, still less can I find words to make you understand the spiritual joys that I have been experiencing during all these days of my healing, so much so, that I have hardly felt any pain at all. Blessed be God!

As the wound to my right hand has only recently formed a scar, I can't write at length, so as not to overtax it.

I am your most affectionate Servant and Chaplain, who kisses your hand.

He of Cuba

### **174. [455] To Don Paladio Currius**

(EC I, 1184-1186)

### **Introductory Note**

At the process for the beatification of Claret, Fr. Currius testified: "When Fr. Claret was preaching in Manzanillo in May or June of 1852, he predicted that great calamities were to befall the Island:

earthquakes, sicknesses, and another that he did not preach about in the pulpit, but later revealed to me. It would consist of a war in which Europeans, especially the Spaniards, would be hounded to death like rabbits in the woods." The Archbishop made the same prediction to Fr. Barjau, when the latter asked him what was troubling him, since he had noticed that his Prelate --contrary to his usual manner-- had been going around rather sad and crestfallen for nine or ten days. But there is no need to cite secondary sources in order to explain the third calamity, because the Saint himself wrote an earlier account of it to Fr. Sala in his letter of 4 November 1852 and a later one in his Autobiography, 528, 535. The burning of the hacienda of Altagracia is mentioned in Aut 586, where the Saint also mentions that he and his company pressed on to Santiago, where they arrived at nightfall a day later.

### **Text**

J.M.J.

To Fr. Paladio Currius  
Santiago, 15 March 1856.

My Dear Sir and Esteemed Friend:

By now you will have learned of what happened to me at 8:30 at night on February 1st after my Sermon on the Blessed Virgin. Without adverting to it I said and prophesied what was to happen to me that very night, and in truth, if I'm not dead, it is through a special providence of God and of the Blessed Virgin. Some time past, God gave me to know of the three chastisements that were to come: the first would be earthquakes, the second would be sicknesses, and the third... is drawing near. It will be terrible, and before it comes I hope that the Lord will take me away from here. I don't know whether this event will be the motive or pretext that the Lord will make use of in order to remove me from here, so that my eyes will not have to look upon such a misfortune. I have given an account to the Supreme Pontiff and humbly asked him to hint at what I should do: either to remain here until death or to resign. I could easily get the Government's consent to absent myself with the pretext of taking the waters in order to complete the healing of my wounds, etc.

The persecution has been awful. There I was in Holguín, in the middle of the street, when they wounded me, undaunted by the light or by the sight of the four priests and two bodyguards who accompanied me, and surrounded by all the authorities of the town, etc.,

etc.! After I left Holguín the persecution went on. The enemy believed that we were going to sleep at one country house, but we stayed at another, located an hour's ride before the other. At twelve thirty in the night, they set fire to that other house in which they believed I was staying. The whole house was reduced to ashes, while we were safe in the other. What a Providence!

We continued our journey and reached a hacienda called Frai-juan, and had to be on the watch all night, because we saw signs that a similar scene might be reproduced there. And so as not to be the cause of the burning of other houses that were charitable enough to receive us, we hastened to return to [Santiago] Cuba, where we are at present. If things go on this way, I don't know what how bad they will get. As I already told you, I have had recourse to the Supreme Pontiff, and I'll do as he tells me. I in turn tell you to set about rounding out all things pertaining to the Welfare House, so that if the S. Pontiff tells me to leave, it will all be left. You must keep silent about all I'm telling you.

Meanwhile, keep well and rely on your loving Servant and Chaplain, who kisses your hand.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba

To the Rev. Paladio Currius.

### 175. [1594] **To Cardinal Brunelli**

(EC III, 238-239)

#### **Introductory Note**

The Saint informs him of the attempt on his life at Holguín, and of the motives of its real plotters. He tells him he has written the Pope about leaving or staying in Cuba, and urges him to press the Pope for an answer.

#### **Text**

His Eminence, Cardinal Brunelli

Santiago, 19 March 1856

My Very Dear and Most Esteemed Sir:

By this time Your Eminence will have learned what happened to me in the city of Holguín while I was making the Pastoral Visit there. As I was leaving the church or temple I was dealt two wounds, one



on the face, the other on the arm. Forty days later I was feeling well enough to begin my forty league journey to Santiago, where my Palace or living quarters are.

Not content with what they had done, my enemies continued their persecution. During the first night when we were on our way, they set fire to the house in which they believed I was staying, but fortunately, I stayed elsewhere. We continued our journey, and on the second night they attempted to do the same.

There are two motives for this persecution, one political, the other moral. As for the first, they want to secede from Spanish rule, and though it is true that I never meddle in politics, they know that I am a great obstacle for their plans. The other motive is moral, namely the immorality of certain priests who would like to lead the life of libertines that they led before, and this is the greatest persecution that I am presently suffering.

I already wrote to the Holy Father, so that he could tell me what to do: whether to leave or to stay. I know full well that if I stay they will kill me, but that means nothing to me, so long as I know that I am doing God's will. Be so good, Your Eminence, as to speak to His Holiness, that he may tell me what to do. On this occasion I offer you my regards as your most attentive and constant servant, who kisses your hand.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba

### **176. [457] To Her Majesty the Queen**

(EC I, 1189-1190)

### **Introductory Note**

This letter is largely self explanatory. The allusion to the anniversary of the attempt on the Queen's life on the Feast of the Presentation in 1852 is explained in the Introductory Note to the Saint's letter to the Majordomo of the Palace in March of 1852, translated above. The present letter is signed in the Saint's own hand, but the body of it is written by another.

**Text**

Lady:

At eight-thirty on the night of February first of the present year, the day on which I began the third pastoral visit in the city of Holguín, as I was leaving the church where I had just explained to an innumerable concourse the grandeurs of Mary, Mother of God, I was treacherously assaulted by a poor wretch who, with razor in hand, inflicted two wounds on me: one, about six inches long, running from my left cheek to my chin, the other, two inches long, on the right wrist. This near-fatal event took place, with but a few hours' difference, on the anniversary of the horrible attempt committed against Your Majesty's sacred person four years ago. And I also owe it to a special Providence of the Lord that the aggressor, by twisting the direction of his blow, did not manage to take my life. Thanks be to God and to His Most Holy Mother and, on the human level, to the zeal and intelligence of the worthy doctors who tirelessly attended to me day and night, I am on the road to recovery. But as the wound to my wrist involved the tendons, it has left me in constant pain which, besides being very annoying, greatly hampers me in the fulfillment of my ministry. Hence, in order to rid myself of these pains, to strengthen my hand and obtain a sure and deep-rooted cure, I would find it most helpful to return to the Peninsula for a time, in order to take mineral baths in my native country, which is Catalonia, as I have been advised.

Trusting in Your Majesty's kindness and magnanimity, and not concealing from you the fact that, after the constant fatigues that I have unceasingly borne for more than five years in a climate so contrary to Europeans, during which I have traveled more than two thousand leagues throughout my Diocese in all directions, often across barren plains and wilderness, sometimes sleeping out of doors and exposed to all sorts of privations, a little rest is called for.

I humbly beg Your Majesty to grant me your Royal Leave to travel to the Peninsula for the reason given, namely to restore my health. May the Almighty guard the precious life of Your Majesty, for the good of Spaniards of both hemispheres.

Santiago, Cuba, the 26th of March, eighteen hundred and fifty six.

Lady,

I await Your Majesty's Royal Leave,  
Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba.

**177. [460] To Don Paladio Currius**

(EC I, 1194-1195)

**Introductory Note**

This letter is self explanatory. Claret tells Currius of the progress of his cure, which has been gradual, but costly. As the persecution against him and others connected with him continues, he has kept to his residence, so as not to expose himself to needless danger, although for him, like St. Paul, "To live is Christ...and to die is gain" (Phil 1:21). He has written again to the Pope and is waiting for an answer. Meanwhile he must live like "Athanasius contra mundum." Moreover, he doesn't want to spend any more money on the works at Puerto Príncipe, until he knows whether he will stay or leave. He asks Currius and Sanmarti to come to Santiago for the Spiritual Exercises of his household, during or after which they will be able to lay out possible plans for the immediate future. Fr. John M. Lozano has some keen insights into this Spring of 1856: "At just that time some of his collaborators were dispersing ... Subirana and Coca left in 1856...Adoain left for Guatemala....Lobo left to enter the Jesuits.... On June 19 [they] began their annual spiritual exercises. There was a sense of farewell about them...Barjau writes...that the archbishop told him: 'Perhaps this will be the last that we shall gather together in retreat; in another year we will probably be dispersed.'... On June 24...the Saint felt the symptoms of yellow fever, and had to interrupt the exercises" (Lozano, LSG, p. 250).

This is as good a place as any to point to a series of related steps in the process of Claret's eventual withdrawal from Cuba. On 2 September 1855, he had a mysterious call to a more universal apostolate (cf. AW, Aut Doc VIII, "Résumé of His Life," p. 31). The attempt on his life at Holguín took place on the evening of 1 February 1856. On 23 February 1856, he wrote to ask the Pope whether he should leave or remain in Cuba. On 26 March 1856 he informed the Queen of his wounds, suggesting that a temporary leave might help him recover. On 29 April 1856 he had a locution from the Blessed Virgin, telling him: "Anthony, withdraw" (SAW, "Lights and Graces," p. 304). He did not leave at once, preferring to wait for the Pope's dictum, which was written in May, but did not reach him until several months later, informing him that the Pope would rather have him stay. A most obedient son of the Church, he stayed, until events took a surprising turn in early 1857.

**Text**

J.M.J.

Rev. Paladio Currius  
Santiago, 3 April [1856]

My Very Dear Sir and Companion:

I have just received your letter of the 30th and am apprised of all that you tell me in it. In answer, I tell you: that my wounds are healing, the swelling in my cheek is disappearing, though slowly, and I have to avoid the open air since it irritates me and makes it swell up more. And this serves me as a pretext to remain withdrawn in my Residence, because the persecution is still going on and will not desist until it has achieved its object. But it matters little or nothing to me, because “*lucrum mori*” [cf. *Php* 1:21: “to die is gain”].

I wrote to the Supreme Pontiff from Holguín on 23 February and I have now repeated the letter in case the first has gone astray. I explain to him all that occurred and why, and how things are going, and I hope that he will tell me what I ought to do to fulfill God’s will, either to remain or resign. Meanwhile, I have to live like St. Athanasius. Just now I have no intention of spending more money than what I’ve sent you, because if I am allowed to resign, I’ll need it for the costs of the voyage and for the cure of my wounds, which have not been little, though the others have gladly done it. And if I have to remain here, there will always be time to spend more, and thus you must arrange things as seems best to you.

As for what has already been ordered, we’ll see how to pay for it with new money.

I would like you and Sanmartí to come for the retreat, so that we will be able to speak together personally and decide among us what is the best thing that ought to be done for the greater glory of God and the good of souls, which is the only aim of all my operations. And you can either return there or stay here, whichever you deem to be the will of God. Meanwhile commend me much to the Lord, that he may give us to understand what we ought to do.

Keep well and ask what you will of your affectionate Servant and Chaplain, who kisses your hand.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba.

**178. [466] To his Missionaries in Vic**

(EC I, 1205-1206)

**Introductory Note**

This is a fragment of a letter published by Fr. C. Fernández in HD, vol. I, p. 964. It was addressed to his brothers and sons, the Missionaries at La Mercè in Vic, and was sent from Santiago, 30 May 1856, thanking them for their letter to him. He asks them to help him to give great thanks to God for the “imponderable benefit” of shedding a little of his blood for the love of Him who shed all of His blood for him. Some years later, the Saint wrote: “I can’t describe the pleasure, delight and joy I felt in my soul on realizing that I had reached the long-desired goal of shedding my blood for the love of Jesus and Mary and of sealing the truths of the Gospel with the very blood of my veins. My Spirits soared at the thought that this was but a promise of what I might achieve in time -- to shed by blood completely, in the ultimate sacrifice of death. These wounds reminded me of the circumcision of Jesus; in time they might lead me to the incomparable good fortune of dying on the cross of some gallows, of some assassin’s dagger, or the like. This joy and delight lasted throughout the time I had to stay in bed and was itself a source of joy to all who came to visit me. It gradually left me as my wounds began to heal” (Aut 577-578). In the Apostolic Process of Vic, he is reported to have said to a group of admiringly envious seminarians: “When the blood was flowing from my wounds, it seemed to me that the heavens were opening” (sess. 197). In the Informative Process of Tarragona, his chaplain and confessor, Don Carmelo Sala, revealed that one day the Saint had confided to him that: “He had experienced so great a consolation both in soul and body that his whole being was, as it were, submerged in a bath of such soft sweetness that its penetrated his faculties and senses, and that only in heaven could a like delight be experienced. Hence, he added, even if it were only by way of a sweet tidbit, one could allow oneself to be stabbed often” (sess. 8).

**Text**

My Very Esteemed Brothers in the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary:

A very short time ago I received the letter you wrote me on 31 March. It has brought me great consolation and satisfaction; and I hope that all of you will help me to give God many thanks for the

imponderable benefit of shedding a little blood (5 libras) for love of Him who shed all of His for me, and thus being able to seal with my blood the truths of the Holy Gospel and of Mary Most Holy, of whom I so gladly preach.

Ah, dearest brothers! How sweet it is to shed one's blood for Jesus and for Mary. I can assure you that throughout this whole event I have suffered nothing, and have rejoiced much, very much. Only there in heaven can one rejoice more, for here on earth there can be no greater spiritual pleasure. I have become so greedy that I wish they would try it again and that the second blow would be more effective than the first..."

**179. [475] To D. Jerónimo M. Usera**

(EC I, 1228-1229)

**Introductory Note**

This letter illustrates the kinds of problems that can occur even among well-meaning people. Canon Jerome Usera, a brilliant and holy man (later a founder of a religious Institute, whose cause of Beatification has been introduced), had been elected Vicar General of Puerto Rico when Bishop Gil Esteves was recalled to Spain to be Bishop of Tarazona. Fr. Dionisio González de Mendoza, whom Claret had called to Santiago to replace Fr. Lobo (who was joining the Jesuits), challenged the validity of Usera's election, thus nullifying any acts that the latter might have sanctioned in Puerto Rico, putting the Church there in danger of schism. The liberal Spanish government, which wanted to have a hand in everything, remained upset, even after Claret had solved the problem by validating of all the acts that Usera had performed in the interim. As in so many other instances, John M. Lozano presents a marvelously succinct account of this whole very complicated affair in his LSG, pp. 229-230.

Note that the Saint had to deal with this thorny problem while he was still recovering from a bout of yellow fever, with symptoms of vomiting, chills and fever (cf. Introductory Note to the Letter of April 3, above).

He begins by asking the addressee to pay close attention to what Fr. Domingo Luis Carrión has to tell him on his part, so that the Diocese of Puerto Rico might be rid of problems of conscience as soon as possible and return to normal. He then tells him of the state of

his health and of the imminent departure of his Provisor, Don Juan Nepomuceno Lobo, who is going to join the Jesuits.

### **Text**

Don Jerónimo Mariano Usera  
Cuba, 29 June 1856

My very dear and esteemed Sir:

By now you will have received the letter I wrote to you in one of the last mailings. Today I feel it necessary to write you again by way of Fr. Benigno Luis Carrión, begging you to listen to and heed what he has to tell you in my name. I am aware of your good principles and thus I trust that, setting aside any other consideration, you will use all means in order to bring the Diocese out of the anomalous state in which it is.

The very requests that you addressed to His Holiness are a good proof of the fact that you are well disposed to submit to whatever His Holiness may decide. I expected no less of you. Thus, the steps that have been taken not only filled me with satisfaction, but have eased my exercise of authority to end anxieties, so that all may come back to regular order.

I have, thank God, just made it through a benign attack of the vomit [i.e., yellow fever], if the doctors are correct in their diagnosis of an attack of three or four days as the [yellow] fever. Today I am feeling very weak, perhaps as a consequence of my medical treatment, aside from the sickness itself. Nevertheless, I have not wanted to let another month pass, because I feel it my duty to do my best to solve the matter, which is of such great importance.

You already know that my Provisor will be leaving me soon, to a place for which he has received my consent, approving a resolve that I believe he has meditated on and besought the Lord about. How happy he is to be leaving public business and can now devote himself exclusively, under the easy yoke of obedience, to the exercise of the sacred ministry.

Keep well, commend me greatly to God our Lord, and rely on your most affectionate Servant and Chaplain, who kisses your hand.

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba

**180. [1604] To Father Stephen de Adoáin, O.F.M.Cap.**

(EC III, 253-255)

**Introductory Note**

For further details on Fr. Stephen de Adoáin, see Aut. 514, 516, 595, 598, 599. Fr. Adoáin was invested in the Capuchin habit in Centrínego on 28 November 1828 and took solemn vows on 28 November 1829. He was ordained by Bp. Severiano Andriani in the Church of the Augustinian Recollects in the Capital of Navarra. After the excommunication declared by the anticlerical Mendizábal, he went to Italy and presented himself in Rome to Fr. Alcaraz, who assigned him to the monastery of Senigaglia, in the Marches, which were then in the territory of the Papal States. When he left for the New World, five Spanish Provinces of the Capuchins had missions in Venezuela: Aragón had one in Cumana, Andalucía had one in the Plains of Caracas and Barinas, Valencia in Santa María, Catalonia in Trinidad and Guayana, and Navarra in Maracaibo, with a total of 200 Spanish Capuchins. As regards the difficulties that he met with in Havana, Fr. Adoáin himself writes in his Memoirs: "I kept on preaching as usual in the principal Churches of Havana, and I believe with the best results. But the devil, who never sleeps, raised a black storm against me. The ecclesiastical authorities sided with it, and in '51 I had to move on to Santiago, Cuba." The present letter is a testimonial reference to the exemplary character of Fr. Stephen, who died in the odor of sanctity.

**Text**

We, Don Anthony Mary Claret y Clará, by the grace of God and of the Holy Apostolic See Archbishop of Cuba, Primate of the Indies, Prelate Grand Cross of the American Order of Isabella the Catholic, Member of Her Majesty's Council, etc.

By the tenor of the present letter, let it be known that The Rev. Fray Stephen de Adoáin, a native of the Province of Navarra in Spain, in the year 1828 entered the Order of Capuchin Fathers of that Province, in which he made his Novitiate, professed, and while pursuing his studies there, was ordained a Priest on 22 December 1832.

In 1836, after finishing his studies in Philosophy and in Dogmatic and Moral Theology, was given a licence to preach throughout the Diocese by the Lord Bishop of Pamplona.



In 1839 he moved to Italy to join his brethren in the Convent of Senigaglia. The following year he received the license to confess and preach in that Kingdom, and was entrusted with preaching the Lenten Services in the towns of Montignano, Senigaglia and Vallone, a task he fulfilled satisfactorily and with great benefit to the faithful.

In 1842, by order of His Holiness Pope Gregory XVI, of happy memory, he was sent to the indigenous missions of the Republic of Venezuela in America, where he pursued his apostolic tasks with admirable zeal and constancy. And having retired to Caracas after some years in the mission, he was named Director and Chairman of Moral Theology in the Conciliar Seminary of that Capital.

From thence, in 1850, he went to the city of Havana, with a view to founding a Convent of his Order, but as he met with insuperable difficulties in carrying out that laudable aim, toward the end of March 1851 he presented himself to us, manifesting a most lively desire to take part in the missions that we had begun a month earlier in our Diocese. Recognizing his virtue and zeal for the good of souls, we admitted him into our company in May, since which time he has worked incessantly in the pulpit and confessional, traveling through the Diocese in all directions, sometimes with us and others with our companions, suffering privations and illnesses due to his continual work and the rigors of the climate in the torrid zone, gathering abundant fruit and serving to edify and give good example to his companions by his exemplary conduct and by the exceeding zeal he has always shown in the exercise of the mission.

Both in this Archdiocese and in the Diocese of Havana he has licenses to celebrate Mass, to preach and to hear the confessions of men and women as well as religious, and is neither excommunicated, suspended or interdicted.

In witness whereof we issue the present letter, signed in our own hand, sealed with our arms by the undersigned, our personal Secretary.

Given in Cuba, on 4 July, 1856.

By Order of His Excellency, my Lord Archbishop,  
Philip Rovira, Priest.

**181. [1605] To Don Eduardo Vélez de Paredes**

(EC III, 256-257)

**Introductory Note**

This letter was published in the “Echo of the Catholic World,” a religious periodical issued by Le Clere & Cie., printers to His Holiness and to the Archdiocese of Paris, in the issue of December 1865, p. 65: “Letter from His Excellency, the Lord Archbishop of Cuba, to the Director of this publication.” It is a reply to an earlier letter from the Director, asking the Archbishop to recommend his periodical to the clergy and faithful of his Archdiocese. Don Eduardo, a theologian, canonist and member of the examining board for primary education, states in the introduction to this letter in his publication: “With great delight, satisfaction and consolation, we are printing on the first page of this issue the welcome and honorable letter in Christ Jesus from that pious, heroic and holy apostle, the wise, zealous, exemplary and martyr-like Archbishop of Cuba. We have pressed it to our heart as the early Christians pressed the letters of the Apostles to their own hearts pulsing with love and faith. Now, as then, our motives are holy. Then, their motive was to spread the faith and remain firm in it to the point of martyrdom; now, in the middle of the 19th century, our motive is to kindle the fire of faith in the breasts that have, alas, allowed it to go out, and to prepare them even for martyrdom, should God, in his high judgments and infinite mercy, hold such an enviable and exalted lot in store for us.” This letter from the “Angel of the Church of Cuba” (as Don Eduardo repeatedly calls him in his article) was discovered by Fr. Federico Gutiérrez, CMF, who in 1987 sent a photocopy of it from Seville to Fr. Gil.

**Text**

J.M.J.

Santiago, Cuba. 20 August 1856

Señor Don Eduardo Vélez de Paredes

My Dear Sir and Esteemed Friend:

With great satisfaction I have read your letter of June 30th, asking me to recommend the periodical *El Eco del mundo católico* to my clergy and faithful. I am happy to inform you that even before I received

your very welcome letter, that periodical was already well received in this episcopal residence and recommended by me. I hope that it will have an even greater circulation, if in time to come it abounds, as it has thus far, in Catholic concerns relating to the needs of the age.

The sentiments that animate you are the same ones that moved me in 1848 to start the *Librería Religiosa*, a prospectus of which I am enclosing, listing the works that have been printed. Many of them have had to be reprinted several times. I am telling you this that you may know that there is still a taste for good reading, and that you may be more and more encouraged in the enterprise you have planned and begun. Do not be discouraged by the obstacles that may arise, for there will always be obstacles to any good work. But we must bear in mind that when a work is good and its intention is upright, God our Lord will protect it, so that it will emerge victorious and triumphant. And I have no doubt that this will happen with the *Eco del mundo católico*, which you direct so worthily and wisely.

Keep well and be so good as to offer my regards to Messrs. Adrian Le Clere and his other companions and collaborators, and ask what you will of your loving servant and chaplain, who kisses your hand.

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba.

## 182. [483] To Father Francis Bofill

(EC I, 1252-1253)

### Introductory Note

This fragment of a letter was written from Santiago and dated 22 September 1856. It was published in HD, vol. I, p. 976. The "friend" to whom the letter is addressed is Fr. Francis Bofill, chaplain of the Magdalens in Barcelona, at whose house Mossèn Claret always stayed when he was passing through Barcelona (cf. the letter of 1 June 1849). The phrase "being cloudy," which the Saint underlined, is a humorous aside directed at Fr. Bofill's sister, Margaret, who was a sort of temperamental barometer. Whenever Claret entered their house, Claret used to ask playfully: "Well, Aunt Margaret: How's the weather today?" Continuing in this meteorological vein, the Saint alludes to the attempts on his life and the persecutions that he has undergone, and asks for prayers.

### Text

My Very Dear Sir and Esteemed Friend:

Ah, how many times I've thought of you and the nuns! How many horrible and dangerous days have passed! This indeed is a bit more than *being cloudy*: it's pouring down thunderbolts.

Kindly give my regards to the Magdalen Nuns. Tell them that they should pray now more than ever, because the dangers are not over yet, and more dreadful ones are yet to come. The present age is like the sea: though the tempest has calmed, it has still not run out of rain. It's still the same, and when the winds begin to blow and rage again, you'll see what happens. But they must not be terrified by this. Tell them to turn to Mary Immaculate, the Star of the Sea that God has given us to guide us through this tempestuous sea and lead us to the port of glory...

### 183. [495] To the Bishop of Urgell

(EC I, 1272-1274)

### Introductory Note

Though he congratulates Caixal on his return from exile, he insists that the most important thing is to know God's will and do it. In prayer, he has been given to know of hard times ahead, which he describes in terms of a storm. The apocalyptic sense of foreboding in this passage comes as no surprise. In 1856, in the brief "Résumé of His Life," one of his notes states: "Knowledge...Angel of the Apocalypse, September 2, 1855" (AW, p. 31; cf. J. M. Lozano, L.G., pp. 238-242). Many fair-weather Christians will fall away. But before these hard times come, there will be a short time in which much good can be done by way of prayer, preaching and printing good books. As usual, the Saint tends to think in scriptural terms. Seven days after he penned the body of the letter, he received another letter from Caixal, which he answers in the postscript. The "Provisor" is Fr. John Lobo, who left to enter the Jesuits (cf. Aut 591). The "missioners" are Frs. Manuel Subirana and Francis Coca (cf. Aut 593-594). The "plate" is that of the Certificate for the Academy of St. Michael, whose rules he drafted and whose emblem he drew during his recuperation at Holguín (cf. Aut 581).

### Text

His Excellency, the Most Rev. Bishop of Urgell

Santiago, 20 November 1856

My Very Dear Sir and Highly Esteemed Brother:

I have learned that God our Lord was pleased to allow your exile to be lifted. I give many thanks to God for it. As you know quite well, nothing happens by chance, but all things are ordered in measure, in number, and in weight [Wis 11:21]. The important thing is that we ask God to let us know his Most Holy Will, and then do it. I tell you frankly that there is no other entreaty that I repeat more often every day and night. And it seems to me that God has given me to understand what will take place in matters of Religion.

Now a season of fair weather is coming (it won't last long) when we can do something, or rather, when we ought to do our utmost to take advantage of it so as to confirm the few faithful as best we can; for days of great tribulations are coming and many who are presently reputed to be good will not persevere. The Church is like a pear tree laden with pears, but some very rough winds are coming, and almost all, except a faithful few, will fall. The reason is, that they have the worm of the threefold concupiscence in their heart. And those who do not have that worm are few, very few, and only they will persevere, so strong will be the winds of...

There are three things we must do:

- 1) Pray: pray ourselves and teach others to pray.
- 2) Preach: e.g., catechize, exhort, preach, and teach zealous clergy to do so, giving them suitable books and perhaps writing talks and sermons that they can recite. To this effect I am writing doctrinal talks and mission sermons for la Campiña, the suburbs and cities.

And thus we will do for the good, what Saul did for the wicked, namely, guarding the cloaks of those who were stoning St. Stephen [cf. Acts 7:58]. Thus, if we are unable to catechize or preach because they arrest or silence us, others will do so while we guard their cloaks. And we will lift up our hands to Heaven, praying like Moses, while our Joshuas are fighting on the field [cf. Ex 17:11-12].

- 3) We must have good books printed and reprinted. Do not let the Religious Library be lost. It is all well and good for them to print books of the size of the 2nd Series, but not to omit others: haec oportet facere, et illa non omittere ["it is fitting to do the former, yet not omit the latter" cf. Mt 23:23]. Because people read small-sized books. And finally, leaflets and fliers.

- Occupation of the Religious Library:
1. First Series
  2. Second Series
  3. Little Books
  4. Leaflets

I have learned that you and the Bishop of Vic, together with Rev. Naudó, Riu, Roig and Mesa are occupied with the Religious Library, and I have no doubt that the resolution and measures taken will have good results.

Tomorrow, God willing, I will celebrate Holy Mass and give Communion to the school girls. For the moment all is going well, thank God.

Keep well and ask what you will of your affectionate Servant and Brother, who kisses your hand,

He of Cuba.

PS: Today, the 27th, I just received your welcome letter of October 12th, in which you speak about three things:

1) About my leaving Cuba. Regarding this, I do not tell you that I either want to leave or to stay, but just to know and do God's will, which is why I wrote to the Pope. If I asked Her Majesty's permission to leave "ad tempus" it was on the advice of my friends, and being always ready for whatever His Holiness may dispose. My Provisor went to the Society, and the Missionaries to Guatemala.

2) I'm happy to say that the plate of [the Academy of] St. Michael turned out well; we'll have to see how that Academy is set up.

3) As for the [Religious] Library, I've already told you that my feelings on it are in keeping with what you told me.

### **184. [501] To Her Majesty the Queen**

(EC I, 1293-1295)

#### **Introductory Note**

Saint Anthony Mary Claret had close and warm ties with the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul in his years as an itinerant mission preacher in Vic, in all of Catalonia and in the Canary Islands. On 28 December 1850, when he embarked from Barcelona for Cuba, there were 18 Daughters of Charity aboard, all assigned to Havana, accompanied by their Director, Fr. Paul Planas, C.M. Claret continued his relationship with the Sisters later on, in his travels with

the Royal Family throughout Spain, so that there was hardly a House of their Institute that he did not visit or preach in.

It is interesting to note that this time the Saint achieved his just claims, although it was his immediate successor in the Archdiocese who saw these claims come to fruition, with the founding of four flourishing communities of the Daughters of Charity there.

### **Text**

“Health and Welfare. - Section 2

By way of the Ministry of State,

The Most Rev. Archbishop of Santiago has set before Her Majesty the following exposition:”

Lady:

In the year 1850 I had the honor of visiting Your Majesty to take leave for this Archdiocese of Cuba, I petitioned Your Majesty’s Government for some Daughters of Charity to direct the hospitals of this Diocese of mine. How reasonable and well-founded my request was, is evidenced by the Royal Grant that Your Majesty deigned to dispatch on 27 November 1852, in which you ordered that the Daughters of Charity should be in charge of directing the hospitals of this Island. For my part, I have made all efforts possible in order to carry out your sovereign dispositions, which are ordered by those Royal Grants, and now, limiting myself to those relating to the Daughters of Charity, I hereby state that there is no measure or resource that I have not set in movement from that time until the present; yet I have achieved nothing in six years of begging. Several times I have addressed the immediate Director of the Daughters of Charity in Havana, not to mention my petitions to their principal Director in Madrid, and they have always answered with excuses. Finally, after laying my request before the Director, he has just, as I said, answered me for Madrid, on 5 November just past, that he could not send Sisters unless he were demanded to do so by a Royal Order.

Things being thus, I could do no less than to apply promptly, gladly and trustingly to Your Majesty a second time, assured that you will comfort me in this, since I well know the love and esteem in which you hold me. And thus I promise myself that Your Majesty will deign to give the opportune order that as soon as possible six Sisters will be sent to take charge of the Welfare Establishment of this city

of Santiago, Cuba, and later for the Military Hospital of this city and that of Charity.

Moreover, in the city of Puerto Principe there are four establishments that all need Sisters, namely, the Hospital of St. John of God, which is only for men, the Hospital of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, which is for women, the Military Hospital and, finally, the Welfare House that I am building from my own savings, in order to gather together and educate the many boys and girls who are nowadays wandering about, lost.

I am well aware, my Lady, that the Novitiate is short of Sisters, that foundations are being sought in many other places, and that all of the already founded places are asking for help to fill the vacancies caused by cholera. For these and other considerations that I am well aware of, I would not dare to be too demanding; because for now, I am only asking for six Sisters for the Welfare House of Santiago. Later, others can come until the establishments of this Department and Archdiocese are staffed, as those of the Department and Diocese of Havana already are. Thus both will be balanced, since the Royal Grants are addressed equally to the whole Island and apply to both Dioceses and Departments. Finally, the monastic goods of the Bethlehemites are assigned to the same object. It would be quite repugnant to Charity and Justice, if there were sixty Sisters in the Hospitals of Havana, while not even one could be obtained for the hospitals of Santiago, Cuba, after so many years of petitions and in the midst of all the labors in which we have been involved during these years.

Therefore I beg Your Majesty to give the order that, here and now, six Sisters come for the Welfare Establishment of Santiago, Cuba, and later for the other hospitals and establishments mentioned above.

I am hoping to receive this favor from the charitable heart of Your Royal Majesty.

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Santiago, Cuba.  
Santiago, Cuba, 24 December 1856.

### **185. [503] To Fr. Paladio Currius**

(EC I, 1299-1301)

## **Introductory Note**

In his letter of January 12th, Currius informed the Archbishop that he had gotten rid of the tile-making equipment they had at Puerto Principe, as previously agreed, and that he had talked with the



Curate of the east coast town of Nuevitas about the building of a new church. After inspecting the old and decaying church and disposing of the rather unsatisfactory building materials at hand, he brought the plans back to John Torrell, the foreman of works on the Welfare House at Puerto Príncipe, who estimated a budget for them. He also looked into the state of the Chapel or Church of the Christ of Good Voyages, and found that some of its backers were renegeing on their pledges for its construction.

The most intriguing part of the letter is the second paragraph. Despite this strong “presentiment,” soon to be fulfilled in a surprising way, the Saint is preparing to set out on another Pastoral Visitation of his Archdiocese. For a further insight, see the paragraph 2 of the Introductory Note on the Letter of 3 April 1856 to Currius.

### **Text**

J.M.J.

Don Paladio Currius, Priest  
Santiago, 20 January 1857

My Very Dear Sir and Companion:

I received your letter of the 12th and am apprised of its contents. I'm happy that you have gotten rid of the tile-works, and would have been even better pleased if you hadn't made commitments to give timber or anything else to anyone without my leave...

I don't know why, but I have a presentiment that I won't be staying very long on this Island. Hence, I would like you to pay for as much as you can, and make the place habitable. I don't intend to spend much on it just now, so save as much as you can... It will serve us quite well for something else that will be very much for the glory of God.

I see what you mean about the church at Nuevitas and I am happy with Torrell's budget. When work stops on the Welfare House, perhaps this Torrell could even work at building churches. Pons has already begun work on the one in Mayari, and when I go to Baracoa they will begin work on the one in Moa. The factories of Yara and Cauto are still going on, and Cobre and St. Lucia are being paid, and when the latter are paid off, we will begin in Nuevitas and San Miguel.

I see what you mean about the Santo Cristo, and have already written to Sanmartí that they should do what they think best. Perhaps, as soon as he is able, Torrell could do the same thing that he

did in order to leave it in the state I mentioned regarding the Welfare House. In that case they could do something nice with what they already have and with what I could also give from the funds, without any need to upset the neighbors. Tell this to Sanmarti.

This is all that I can think of for now. Ask what you please of your Servant, who kisses your hand,

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba

PS-- Keep planting all the trees you can on the farm.

### 186. [504] To the Brothers Dunigan

(EC I, 1302-1303)

#### Introductory Note

The letter that the Saint refers to was written in English and mailed from New York on 15 November 1856, which is cited in Fr. Jesús Bermejo's *Epistolario Pasivo de SAMC*, pp. 643-645. On its reverse, the Saint wrote this reply in his own hand. In the "Studium Claretianum" in Rome, we find a voluminous tome (1671 pp.) from his personal library, titled: "The Holy Bible translated from the Latin Vulgate... by the Rev. Geo. Leo Haydock. New York, Edward Dunigan and Brother, 1856." Its outer cover bears a dedicatory noted printed in gold, "To His Excellency the Most Reverend Anthony M. Claret, Archbishop of Santiago Cuba, Primate of the Indies, this work is offered in homage and in expression of their respect and veneration by the Publishers, E. Dunigan and Brother." Among the many American Bishops endorsing the edition was a fellow Catalan, Joseph Sadoc Alemany, the first Archbishop of San Francisco, California.

#### Text

Santiago, 24 January 1857.

Mr. E. Dunigan and Brother

Esteemed and Dear Sir:

I have received your thoughtful and kind letter, in which you tell me that you are sending me a copy of the Catholic Holy Bible with Commentaries, recently issued by you and your brother. It has just now arrived and I am holding the precious work in my hands. I am not surprised that has won the approval of the Holy Father and of the Archbishops and Bishops of the United States and of other place, because the work is indeed worthy of such approval. I hope that through

its being read, God Our Lord will be better known and loved, and that the faithful will find great advantage in its use. For that reason I will do all I can on my part to have it so used by the faithful.

The Lord will reward both of you for your great and useful work, for which I am much obliged to you.

I remain, both of you and of your brother, your most attentive servant and chaplain,

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba.

### **187. [507] To Don Dionisio González**

(EC I, 1306-1307)

#### **Introductory Note**

On February 18th, the Saint had written to the Archdiocesan Chapter informing them of his intention to set out for Baracoa on the 20th to continue his Pastoral Visitation and Mission, asking for their prayers and advising them that Don Dionisio González de Mendoza (who has succeeded Dr. Lobo in office after his departure for the Jesuits), would be in charge of the governance of the Archdiocese during his absence. In the present letter he formally names him Ecclesiastical Governor during his absence, subdelegating to him all the ordinary and extraordinary faculties he can and reminds him of the other faculties that the Holy See directly grants him should the See become vacant. In view of all the problems he had to face earlier in the case of Canon Usera (cf. letter of 29 June 1856 above), he most prudently avoids them by writing to both the Chapter and to Don Dionisio, spelling the matter out. One might be tempted to wonder whether the Saint's reference to "Sede vacante" simply reflects the former situation, or whether he knew of some special reason why his See might become vacant. But he seems not to have had any assurance of the sort (cf. paragraph 2 of the Introductory Note on the Letter of 3 April 1856 to Currius). His actions tell us that he had no knowledge of any change to come, since he threw himself into the visitation and mission of Baracoa from February 21 to March 8, returned by ship to Santiago on March 10, and began the mission there a few days later (cf. J.M. Lozano, *LSG*, pp. 251-252).

**Text**

Archbishopric of Santiago, Cuba.

Inasmuch as we must absent ourselves from this Capital in order to continue the Holy Pastoral Visit in some towns of this Diocese in fulfillment of the difficult task that Divine Providence has laid upon us, being fully satisfied of the virtues, business practice and zeal for the better service of God and usefulness of the Church that come together in you, Licenciante Don Dionisio González, Doctoral Canon of this Holy Metropolitan Church, and our Vicar General Provisor during the absence of Doctor John Nepomucene Lobo, we are appointing you Governor of the Archdiocese. Moreover, that you may better fulfill this new charge, we are subdelegating to you, over and above the faculties granted you by the Sacred Canons and recognized by the laws of the Realm as our Provisor and Vicar General, all of the ordinary faculties that were granted us by the Brief of His Holiness, our Most Holy Father Pius IX on 10 November 1850, except for those that require Episcopal Order or cannot be exercised without the use of holy oils. We likewise subdelegate to you the extraordinary faculties that were granted us by the Brief of 21 August 1853, marked with the letter A, which faculties you will use according to your conscience and charge. It is likewise understood that the Holy See, in virtue of our authorization and delegation, grants you, should the See become vacant and the need arise, the faculty to consecrate chalices, patens and portable altars, but with oils consecrated by us or by some other Lord Bishop.

God keep you, Sir, for many years.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba.

Cuba, February 19, 1857

To the Provisor and Vicar General of this Archdiocese,  
Licenciante Don Dionisio González

**188. [509] To the Authorities of the Island**

(EC I, 1309-1310)

**Introductory Note**

This letter, terse and peremptory as it is, must have come as a bombshell. Bear in mind that it came in the midst of the Saint's Lenten services, indeed, on Wednesday of Holy Week. In the first published biography of the Saint, Fr. Francisco de Asís Aguilar (later Bishop of Segorbe) offers the following interesting and insightful ac-

count: "After the sermon he gave on the 18th of the month indicated [March], the Archbishop went directly from St. Francis Church to his residence, accompanied, as usual, by his Canons, who remained in conversation with His Excellency for a while and then took their leave. Don Dionisio was also leaving the office with them, when Fr. Claret called him back and told him: 'Do me the favor of reading this note that they brought during the sermon, because I find it hard to read.' The note was from the Commandant of Santiago, Señor Vargas, and was accompanied by another from the Captain General, which said in substance: 'Her Majesty the Queen desires that Your Excellency go immediately to Madrid. --I believe that it will be to make you Archbishop of Toledo. Tomorrow I will give the order and have a boat put at your disposal.'

Through this note Fr. Claret had the first news of the death of Cardinal Bonel y Orbe, Archbishop of Toledo... The *belief* expressed in the Captain General's note was not altogether unfounded, but Claret did not know this at the time. Could it be, on the contrary, that he was going to be reprimanded for his efforts to improve the customs and laws of Cuba? This idea also passed through the thoughts of Fr. Claret and his household. Discoursing and conversing on these things, one of the clergy asked what other charges Cardinal Bonel y Orbe had performed, and on hearing that he had been Her Majesty's Confessor, he astutely remarked that if Fr. Claret was being called for some position of trust, it would probably be as confessor of the Queen or of the Royal Family. The situation that faced Claret was entirely new to him and contrary to the desires of his whole life... 'How should I answer the Queen's request,' he asked. 'Go to Madrid,' answered his director or counselor, 'for the requests of kings are like precepts, and not obeying them or heeding them could bring mischief upon the Church.' 'Enough, then,' he answered" (cf. F. de A. Aguilar, *Vida del Excmo. D. Antonio Maria Claret*, Madrid 1871, pp. 240-241). In the footnotes to these pages, Fr. Aguilar notes that the future Abp. of Toledo was Don Cirilo Alameda y Brea, and that a priest living in Madrid had written that "Her Majesty presented him [Claret] for Toledo, but the Government summoned Fr. Cirilo in all haste." Fr. Aguilar comments: "This proves, at least, that General Concha's presumption had occurred to many other persons, and also shows the high esteem in which His Excellency was held."

In the (Sunday) March 22 issue of newspaper "El Redactor," under "Local News Section," we read: "Today at two in the afternoon, our worthy and beloved Prelate, His Excellency Archbishop Anthony Mary Claret y Clará is due to embark and bid farewell to the tranquil

shores of Cuba, accompanied by his Secretary, Fr. Philip Rovira... The loss that we feel today is immense, irremediable. It is one of those blows dealt by the hand of fate that wounds people, perhaps so that they may understand the good that they had, but did not appreciate enough..."

### **Text**

To Their Excellencies, the Captain General of the Island,  
The Commander General of the Department,  
Military Governor, Major Lord Mayors,  
Commander of the Navy, of the Royal Corps of Engineers,  
Colonel of Artillery, Administrator of Public Properties,  
Dean of the College of Lawyers, of Scriveners,  
Dean of the Board of Commerce, Ordinary Mayors and  
Vicars Forane. 20 March 1857.  
Archdiocese of Santiago, Cuba

Your Excellency:

Seeing that I must absent myself from this Archdiocese and set out as soon as possible for city of Madrid, since that is the desire of Her Majesty the Queen (whom God preserve), according to a communication I received by yesterday's post, I have resolved to do so on the Steamship "Cuba" which sails from this port for Havana on the 22nd of this month. In my absence I leave my Provisor and Vicar General, Licenciado Dionisio González in charge of the Government of the Diocese.

I am sharing this with Your Excellency for your knowledge, asking you to be so good as to make it known for the same reason to the other authorities of the Island.

May God, etc.

Anthony Mary, Archbishop of Cuba.

### **189. [510] To the Metropolitan Chapter**

(EC I, 1311-1312)

### **Introductory Note**

This letter is largely self-explanatory. The Canons must have been shocked at the suddenness of the Archbishop's departure, especially in Holy Week (the letter was a week before Good Friday). The Saint did

not embark on “tomorrow” (the 21st), but on the day after (the 22nd), which was Passion Sunday. Remember that the Saint had received the famous “note” on March 18th.

Fr. Francisco de Asís Aguilar’s comments on this situation are enlightening: “He wanted to leave the following day [the 19th]. It cost his household dearly to detain him for four days, in order to outfit him with a new soutane and cape, which he absolutely needed, since he could not show up in Madrid wearing the torn and patched ones he had on, which he had worn to all points of the diocese, crossing gullies, climbing mountains and ‘searching for kindling wood to heat up the pottage in the midst of the forest’” (cf. Aguilar, *op. cit.*, pp. 241-242).

It was, of course, both prudent and necessary to inform the Chapter of Don Dionisio’s appointment (and also to add a reference to his absence through illness, since Don Dionisio was ill and had gone to the country to convalesce, leaving Fr. Paladio Currius in charge during his absence), but the Saint’s relationship with the Chapter was far more than merely official, as can be seen from their heartfelt reply to this letter. “...This Metropolitan Chapter has received Your Excellency’s dispatch with immense sorrow and bitterness of heart... We assure you that for nine days prayers will be offered after the conventual Mass, and that until we learn of Your Excellency’s arrival in the Peninsula, the prayer ‘pro navigantibus’ will be said at all Masses, so that the Almighty may deign to favor you with a prosperous voyage, as you hope, through the powerful mediation of the precious Star of the Sea, Mary Most Holy, our dear Mother, to whom this Corporation and each of its members will lift up the most fervent prayers, that she may be the guide who leads Your Excellency happily to the desired haven, as she has done on other occasions, when you received signal proofs of her patronage...”

### **Text**

With the help of God I will embark tomorrow for the [Iberian] Peninsula, to which Her Majesty the Queen (whom God preserve) has urgently summoned me. I therefore hope that Your Reverences will not fail to lift up your prayers to the Star of the Sea, that she will obtain for me from the Almighty a prompt and prosperous voyage.

Lest someone should be lacking to govern this Diocese during my absence, I have appointed, as Governor of the Archdiocese, my Provisor and Vicar General, Don Dionisio González, Doctoral Canon of this Holy Metropolitan Church, whom I grant all the faculties necessary for the overall exercise of ecclesiastical authority and jurisdiction, and the power to name some trustworthy person to substitute for him in case of illness or absence from this Archdiocese.

I am communicating this to you for your knowledge and for the consequent effects.

God keep Your Illustrious Company for many years.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba

Cuba, March 20, 1857

To the Venerable Dean and Chapter of this Holy Metropolitan Church

### 190. [512] To Don Dionisio González de Mendoza

(EC I, 1315-1316)

#### Introductory Note

In its issue of 22 March 1857, the newspaper *El Redactor* published the detailed route of the steamship “Cuba,” which was to have arrived in Havana on March 27th, but was a day late, for the reasons the Saint indicates here. The Saint has been so well received that he is moved to cite the Royal Prophet’s Psalm, *Non nobis*. He is so busy with visitors that he will have to write later. He greets his closest fellow workers (Anthony Barjau, Anthony Galdácano, Paladio Currius and Don José Manuel Díaz Hevia, the Chaplain of the Teaching Sisters in Santiago) and friends, not neglecting to send his best regards to the students at his Seminary of St. Basil in Santiago. Don Dionisio had stayed as a guest at the Marquesa de Rendón’s residence from November 1849 to March 1850, en route from Puerto Rico to Santiago. Mr. Sagarra, a Licentiate of Santiago, was a collaborator of the Saint. He dealt with the matter of bringing the Piarists to Santiago and handled the mailing of the letter to the Brothers Dunigan, translated above. Fr. Jesús Bermejo, in his *Epistolario Pasivo de SAMC*, cites a letter that Sagarra wrote to Claret on 3 February 1857 (pp. 679-680).



**Text**

J.M.J.

Señor Don Dionisio González  
Havana, 29 March 1857

My Very Dear Sir and Friend:

Yesterday, before noon, we arrived here without the least incident. We were delayed in the port of Nuevitas because of heavy rains, and because the fog was so thick that we could not see our way, the Captain thought it better to wait a day longer, so as not to expose ourselves to an accident.

In this city all of the authorities have received me and visited me with the greatest proofs of veneration and esteem, so that I must say with the Prophet; *Non nobis, non nobis, Domine, sed nomini tuo da gloriam* [Ps 115:1: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory"].

Be so good as to tell all this to my Companions and Frs. Anthony Barjau, Galdácano, Currius, Díaz and other friends, since in another post I will write at greater length. Today is a very busy day, since all the authorities are coming to visit.

Regards to all and ask what you will of your Servant, who kisses your hand.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba

[PS] The Marquesa de Rendón has sent me a card. I have seen Mr. Sagarra. Many best wishes to all the Collegians and other students of the College or seminary of St. Basil.

**191. [513] To Fr. Paladio Currius**

(EC I, 1317-1318)

**Introductory Note**

The Saint informs Currius of the expected date of his departure for Spain. During his stay in Havana, he has not only been receiving many visitors, but has himself been ransoming the time by visiting many schools, charitable establishments and convents in and around Havana, especially those of the Daughters of Charity, who ran the Hospitals of Havana and nearby Guanabacoa, the Royal House of Welfare and Maternity, and two schools for girls. He also had close ties with the Jesuit and Piarist communities in the Capital. He has

made what provisions he could for his long cherished but soon to be abandoned project of the Welfare House at Puerto Príncipe, where he talked with the nearby pastors, Frs. Sansolí and Miró, as well as with his trusted companion Sanmartí and the foreman Torrell. The “two Father Anthonies” are, of course, Frs. Barjau and Galdácano, mentioned at the end of the first paragraph. As mentioned in the Introductory Note to the preceding letter, Fr. Diaz was Chaplain to the Teaching Sisters in Santiago.

### **Text**

J.M.J.

To the Rev. D. Paladio Currius, Priest  
Havana, 31 March 1857

My Very Dear Sir:

Don Dionisio will already have told you how we arrived here on Saturday without incident, thank God, and are awaiting the Mail from the Peninsula in order to see what news it brings. The Captain General is of the opinion that we'll be leaving for Cádiz on the 12th. Tell this to Don Dionisio and to Frs. Barjau and Galdácano, should something occur to them.

In this city I am spending my time receiving visits and visiting Welfare establishments and convents, giving a spiritual talk in each of them.

When I passed through Nuevitas, Frs. Sanmartí, Sansolí, Miró, etc., came to see me, and also Torrell. We spoke at length on the House of Puerto Príncipe and, in view of all that had yet to be spent on it and also of the fact that since it is entirely of lime and brick, it will not deteriorate and can stand a spell of rain and heat and may even solidify more, we resolved to suspend expenses on it and see what can be done with it later. I take it that as usual Torrell or Sanmartí will have written you.

We are all well. Be so kind as to give my regards to Don Dionisio, to the two Father Anthonies, Díaz and others, and to the Nuns, and ask what you will of your devoted Servant and Chaplain, who kisses your hand.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba

**192. [514] To the Minister of Overseas Affairs**

(EC I, 1319-1321)

**Introductory Note**

As ever, the Saint is concerned with the formation of the Cuban clergy. Since his own householders in charge of St. Basil's Seminary must soon be leaving, he wants to put the Jesuit Fathers in charge, because the Vincentians, who were supposed to do so, have thus far been unable to fulfill their charge for lack of personnel. Always practical, the Saint proposes to pay for the seminary education of native sons of Cuba, both in Santiago and Havana, through scholarships set up in Spain, giving them preferential treatment.

**Text**

Your Excellency:

Since I must go to the Peninsula as Her Majesty the Queen (whom God preserve) has seen fit to ask, in order to comply more promptly with her sovereign disposition I am taking with me only my Secretary and a servant, meanwhile leaving the other Priests of my household in their respective assignments. Two of them are assigned to the Seminary College of St. Basil, one as Director, the other as Professor of Sacred Theology. As both of them are the very bulwark of that most useful establishment, there is an urgent need to attend to their replacement. Offhand, I see no other means to fill the vacancy caused by the absence of these members of my household who must soon be leaving, than to send two or more Fathers of the Society [of Jesus] to take charge of that Seminary, since it has thus far not been possible to entrust its care to the Vincentian Fathers, as stated in the Royal Writ of 1852, nor does there appear to be any hope of doing so in the near future.

Perhaps this urgent situation will be the very thing to pave the way for the fulfillment of the desires that both I and my brother Bishop of Havana have entertained, namely, that the Fathers of the Society should take charge of our respective Seminaries: first in that of Santiago which, as pointed out, is in more urgent need, and then in that of Havana. And we are quite sure that these Fathers will instil in the clerics not only science and virtue, but also the true ecclesiastical spirit, the lack of which is so deeply felt in this Island of Cuba.

And in order that our thought in this respect should reach its perfect fulfillment, we consider it necessary to create on the Peninsula

eight scholarships for the Archdiocese of Santiago and twelve for the Diocese of Havana, drawing on the funds of the respective Colleges to pay for the expenses of travel and maintenance of the students sent, with the understanding that they be sons of the Island, proceeding from the Seminaries of this Island, with a decided vocation to the ecclesiastical state. Moreover they should be sons of the Country, called by God to the ecclesiastical career, who are men of learning, virtue and love for the National Capital. Only such as these will do, otherwise they will not fulfill our aim, which is to establish scholarships on the Peninsula that will provide them with all the compensation they need to perfect themselves, preferring them to others of equal circumstances and even showing them further special considerations.

Through these measures, I have no doubt that within a few years the Clergy of this Island will be wise and virtuous, and will have those other qualities that it lacks at present.

God keep Your Excellency for many years.

Havana, 2 April 1857.

To His Excellency the Minister of State in charge of Overseas Affairs.

### **193. [515] To Fr. Anthony Barjau**

(EC I, 1322-1324)

#### **Introductory Note**

After giving the estimated time of his departure from Havana, the Saint mentions the same concern as he did in the preceding letter, namely, arrangements for the future of St. Basil's Seminary, where he wants the Jesuits to take charge. He merely brushes over the great amount of preaching he did during his 14-day stay in Havana. The press commented on his preaching to packed churches with crowds overflowing into adjacent streets and squares, on people vying to have him hear their confessions and trying to get him to autograph holy cards, etc. His secretary, Fr. Rovira, later wrote to Don Dionisio: "Friend, the 14 days we spent in Havana were so busy that on most of them we had to recite our prayers at 11 o'clock at night and upwards of that, and even so, we left many people who sought an audience the following day. Now it can be seen that the Lord Archbishop is so good that he can't say 'no' to anybody; moreover, he is venerated as a saint... Pious people follow him like flies after honey."

**Text**

J.M.J.

To the Rev. Anthony Barjau  
Havana, 5 April 1857

My Very Dear Sir and Companion:

On the 12th, God willing, we will leave for the Peninsula, and as soon as I reach there I will write to you. Meanwhile, do me the favor of remaining in your present posts and assignments. I have spoken at length with the Lord Captain General and also with Fr. Munart [S.J.], and we have resolved that eight scholarships should be set up on the Peninsula for the Students of the Seminary who want to go there to finish their studies and afterwards return to their country. To that effect their voyage coming and going will be paid for and they will receive all considerations, etc.

We have also agreed that the Fathers of the Society should take over the direction of the Seminary when you retire. Therefore, when I arrive in Madrid I will tell the [Jesuit] Fr. Provincial to hasten to send at least two Fathers, and in case they are delayed in coming, you should not leave without first speaking with Fr. Munart, the Rector of this College in Havana, so that he may send two Fathers from the same College in order to take care of St. Basil's Seminary.

Here, I have visited all the Welfare Establishments and Convents. I have preached to all the Daughters of Charity and to all Nuns in Convents, and have also preached on the Sorrows of Mary and on the Heart of Mary.

Now, coming to Fr. Galdácano. I would like him to come along, too. Perhaps we may be able to set up some residence or Mission-house or he could accompany me on Missions and visits, etc. Will Father come? Get him to do so, for you know how much I like him.

Regards to all the Fathers and Seminarians, and ask what you will of your Servant and Chaplain, who kisses your hand,

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba

To the Rev. Anthony Barjau, Priest and Director of the Seminary

**194. [516] To the Captain General of Cuba**

(EC I, 1325-1326)

**Introductory Note**

The Saint compliments the Captain General on the plan he has adopted to establish a normal school in each of the three Departments of the Island, in order to train suitably prepared and recognized teachers. He hopes that after consolidating their position in Havana, the Jesuits will soon spread so as to be able to found other schools in different parts of the Island.

**Text**

Archdiocese of Santiago, Cuba.

Your Excellency:

Having read at length all the items in your attentive letter of the 30th last, in which you ask for my opinion, I must tell Your Excellency that I was quite satisfied, and that I doubt not that it will have the happiest results. In particular, I would say that I find the measure of setting up a normal school in each Department to train suitable teachers to be both wise and even necessary, for the reasons you have indicated, and I, with six years experience of visiting these schools, have experienced how fit it is. And it seems to me that one of them should be set up in the city of Santiago, the Capital of my Department, as a point from which the Professors of that Department can go forth both equipped and approved.

As for the other item, I am of the opinion that the Fathers of the Pious Schools should open an elementary school in Puerto Príncipe, and then in time, another in [Santiago] Cuba and yet another in Bayamo.

As for the Fathers of the Company [of Jesus], it seems to me that they ought first to train to their satisfaction all the individuals needed for the College of Havana; then, as soon as their ranks grow, they should take charge of the Conciliar Seminaries, especially that of [Santiago] Cuba, and thus they will form the good clergy who are so needed on this Island. Finally, as the Company grows in numbers, they could establish a school of secondary education in Puerto Príncipe and in some other spot in the Diocese of Havana.

This seems to me to be the most feasible and prudent plan, which I have the honor of sharing with Your Excellency in response to your aforesaid letter.

God keep Your Excellency for many years.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba

Havana, 6 April 1857

To his Excellency the Governor and Captain General

**195. [517] To Don Dionisio G. de Mendoza**

(EC I, 1327-1328)

**Introductory Note**

On 12 April 1857, at three in the afternoon, Claret boarded the man-of-war "Pizarro," with a crew of 200 men who were, in the Saint's own words, "very docile and devout in their religious practices" (cf. the Introductory Note to the Letter of 27 May 1857 to Fr. John N. Lobo, S.J.). The civil authorities showed the Archbishop every consideration, including salutes and salvos from the frigate "Capitana del Puerto." The letter kindly takes into account the feelings of the Saint's household members who may want to leave earlier than arranged, and deals with a few matters of last-minute business.

**Text**

J.M.J.

D. Dionisio González

Havana, 6 April 1857

My Dear Sir and Esteemed Friend:

God willing, we will depart on the evening of the 12th on the man-of-war "Pizarro." On arriving in Madrid I will write. Encourage one another. I would like all the members of my household to wait until my arrival there. If any of my household wants to leave before that, let him go, for I do not wish to sadden anyone. As for the others who are there, I leave it up to your prudence.

I am enclosing the minutes of the dispatches we have resolved upon among the authorities. I am sending them to you to file them in the Secretariat.

If Fr. Barjau wants to leave before the Jesuits arrive, perhaps Fr. Agapito Silva could take over the direction of the Seminary.

In time, Don Rafael Fajardo, the Curate of Las Tunas, might go to Bayamo. For some time he has had permission to go to Bayamo or Puerto Príncipe, but neither now nor earlier, did I choose to give him permission to stay in Las Tunas, for various reasons that are not unknown to you.

Be so good as to arrange with Fr. Currius to terminate the accounts of the [Episcopal] Residence and College.

Keep well and ask what you will of your loving Servant and Chaplain, who kisses your hand.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba.

### **196. [519] To Don Dionisio G. de Mendoza**

(EC I, 1327-1328)

#### **Introductory Note**

This brief note is included here because it is the last letter that the Saint would write from the New World. On 7 June 1857, Fr. Rovira wrote a more dramatic account to Don Dionisio: "We spent April 13th, 14th, 15th and 16th at Cay Sal, because the boat was shipping water. In fine, God chose to save us miraculously. As if that weren't enough, we had barely managed to seal the machine pump through which the water was entering, when the boat began listing, making us all believe that the power surge had caused the machine to crack. We finally got under way after an hour of hard work and jettisoning half of the coal supply into the sea... On the 25th we reached the Bermuda Islands, after facing a heavy enough sea. There we took on more coal and headed on for the Terceras [= the Azores]."

#### **Text**

J.M.J.

Don Dionisio González  
The Bermudas, 23 April 1857

My Dear Sir and Esteemed Friend:

You must already know that we left Havana on the 12th, but on the 14th we had to stop over on the sandbanks of Cay Sal, because a good deal of water was entering the boat through an engine pump, which had to be repaired. We continued our voyage and have arrived without incident here in the Bermudas to take on coal, after which, God willing, we will resume our voyage. I am telling you this to ease



your mind. I hope you'll be so good as to tell this to the householders and friends, so that they may know of it and commend us to God and the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Keep well and ask what you will of your loving Servant and Chaplain, who kisses your hand.

Anthony Mary, Abp. of Cuba.

**PROJECT FOR SELECTED LETTERS FROM THE  
CORRESPONDENCE OF SAINT ANTHONY MARY CLARET**

1-37, 39, 46, 49, 52, 53, 54, 58, 63, 66, 70, 73, 74, 76, 78, 79, 80, 81,  
82, 1474, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 94, 95, 98, 99.

[= 69 letters]

100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 109, 113, 115, 117, 118, 120, 121,  
122, 123, 126, 129, 135, 141, 142, 145/145a, 1481, 147, 148,  
149, 150, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 1488, 160, 162, 164, 165,  
1489, 169, 171, 178, 188, 196, 198, 199.

[= 44 letters]

200, 201, 208, 209, 1491, 211, 215, 216, 222, 224, 231, 234, 238,  
240, 242, 243, 1505, 247, 248, 1507, 264, 270, 1516, 271,  
280/1519, 286, 288, 294.

[= 28 letters]

316, 325, 330, 331, 332, 333, 339, 340, 345, 347, 353, 356, 357,  
361, 362, 380, 381, 1568, 392, 399.

[= 20 letters]

400, 403, 422, 424, 342, 436, 439, 443, 444, 449, 451/1592, 454,  
455, 1594, 457, 460, 466, 475, 1604, 1605, 483, 495.

[= 22 letters]

501, 503, 504, 507, 509, 510, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 519.

[ = 13 letters]

69 + 44 + 28 + 20 + 22 + 13 = a total of 196 letters from January 1832  
to April 1857.

NOTE: The letters selected here correspond to the numeration given them by Fr. José María Gil, CMF, in the three volumes of “Epistolario Claretiano” (EC).

**The principal criteria followed in the selection are as follows:**

- letters with greater and better spiritual content
- those which best reflect the missionary life of Claret
- those which have greater contemporary relevance from an historical point of view
- those which throw light on relationships between the Founder and the Congregation of Missionaries and with the Claretian Missionary Sisters.

The following are the letters provisionally selected by Fr. Jesús Bermejo, CMF (some will be represented only by fragments, in letters that are too long, but have some very good paragraphs). I have added several more, especially from the earliest period. They will be noted below in italics.

### Numbers:

- **[1-99] 1836-1849** [1 thru 37, 78-91, done in toto = 69]  
1-39, 46, 49, 52, 53, 54, 58, 63, 66, 70, 73, 74, 76, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85-86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 94, 95 (n. 1475 is better), 98, 99.
- **[100-199] 1849-1851** [done and more = 39]  
*100*, 101/1476, 102, 103, 104, 105, 109/1479, 113, 115, 117, 120, *121*, 122, 123, 126, 129, 135, 141, 142, 145-145/A, 147, 148, 149, 150, 155, *156-160*, 162, 164, 165, 169, 171, 188, 196, 198, 199.
- **[200-299] 1851-1853** [done and more = 24]  
200, 201, 208, 209, 211, 215, 216, 222, 224, 231, 234, 238, 240, *242*, 243, 247, 248, 264, 270, 271, 280, 286, 288, 294.
- **[300-399] 1853-1855** [done - 19]  
316, 325, 330, 331, 332, 333, 339, 340, 345, 347, 353, 356, 357, 351, 362, 380, 381, 392, 399.
- **[400-499] 1855-1857** [done = 14]  
424, 432, 436, 439, 444, 451 (Latin: EC III, pp.230-35), 454, 455, 457, 460, 466 (III, pp. 248-49), 475, 483, 495 (fragm).
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