
Fall 1986

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Recommended Citation

McGerry, John Francis C.M. and Slawson, Douglas C.M. (1986) "'God is Wonderful in All His Works": A Contemporary Account of Vincentian Activity in the District of Cape Girardeau, Missouri, 1828-1850," *Vincentian Heritage Journal*: Vol. 7 : Iss. 2 , Article 2.

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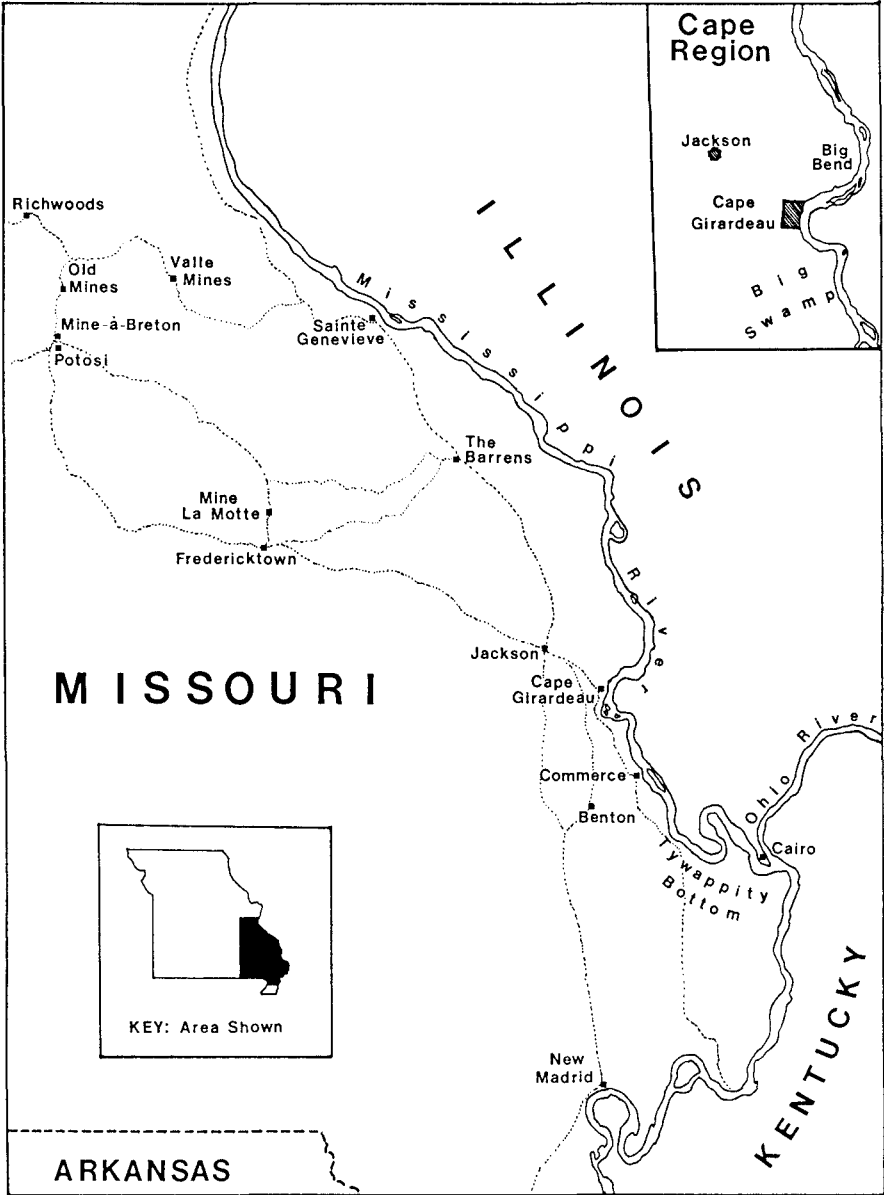
“God Is Wonderful In All His Works”: A Contemporary Account Of Vincentian Activity in the District of Cape Girardeau, Missouri, 1828-1850

*John Francis McGerry, C.M.
Edited and Annotated by Douglas Slawson, C.M.*

Introduction

If the Vincentian Fathers were not the only Catholic priests in southeast Missouri between 1818 and 1850, they were certainly the backbone of the Church and clergy there. In 1818 they established Saint Mary's Seminary at the Barrens in Perry County. Initially, the priests on the faculty served Catholics only in that locale. Soon, however, their ministry expanded and continued to spread. In 1822 Vincentians assumed pastoral care of the church at Sainte Genevieve. This parish and the seminary quickly became centers of a brisk mission activity. The priests at Saint Mary's reached out to Catholics at Mine la Motte (the original settlement in the Fredericktown area) and the twin mining camps of Potosi and Mine-à-Breton. The seminary soon entrusted these missions to the parish at Sainte Genevieve which set up new stations at Fredericktown and Old Mines. The mission at Old Mines itself became an independent foundation and Vincentians there cared for the faithful in Richwoods, Potosi, Mine-à-Breton, and Valle Mines. Meanwhile, the priests of the seminary had begun regular visitations to the pastorless church at New Madrid and, late in the 1820s, they spread the faith throughout Cape Girardeau County.¹

¹Bishop Joseph Rosati, C.M., "Recollections of the Establishment of the Congregation of the Mission in the United States of America, V," translated and annotated by Stafford Poole, C.M., *Vincentian Heritage* 5 (1984 no.



The following document, located in the DeAndreis-Rosati Memorial Archives of Saint Mary's Seminary, recounts the role played by Vincentians in the foundation of Catholicism in the region of Cape Girardeau. The manuscript, written on blue folio paper, covers forty-four leaves. Although it is unsigned, the authorship of John Francis McGerry, C.M. is certain for several reasons. First, the handwriting matches his. Second, when the author describes the arrival of McGerry and others at the novitiate in Cape, he uses the first person plural. None of these others was with McGerry at the Cape in 1861 when the narrative was composed, a date made certain by such asides in the text as: "Mr. Wm. Watson...remains a...Catholic yet. (August 24, 1861)." Finally, the author is well versed in McGerry's career. All of this indicates that McGerry was the writer.

McGerry was born in the vicinity of Emmitsburg, Maryland, in November 1793. As a teenager he entered nearby Mount Saint Mary's College where he spent ten years studying the classics and philosophy. In 1820 he entered Saint Mary's Seminary in Baltimore, Maryland, and was ordained a priest for that archdiocese four years later. Early assignments engaged him in parish work first in Frederick, Maryland, and later in Washington, D.C.² In 1828 McGerry became president of Mount Saint Mary's but his tenure was brief. Late in the following year he traveled to Rome, apparently on a fund raising mission for the college which

2):114, 117-18, 129; John Timon, C.M., *Barrens Memoir* (1861), 4-5, 9, DeAndreis-Rosati Memorial Archives (hereafter cited as DRMA), provincial papers; John Rybolt, C.M., "The Parish Apostolate: New Opportunities in the Local Church," in the forthcoming volume *American Vincentians: The Congregation of the Mission in the United States*, to be published by the Vincentian Studies Institute.

²Joseph William Ruane, S.S., *The Beginnings of the Society of St. Sulpice in the United States (1791-1829)* (Baltimore, 1935), 196.

was then deeply in debt. Upon his return McGerry became prefect of discipline at the Mount, a post he subsequently filled at Saint Mary's College in Baltimore.³ In 1839 he left the archdiocese and immediately went west to Saint Mary's Seminary at the Barrens where he stayed with the Vincentians for six months. He then decided to enter the Congregation of the Mission. "My last step," he later wrote to a friend, "was the best I ever took. I met kind friends in the West."⁴

McGerry's first assignment as a Vincentian was to Saint Mary's College at the Barrens where he served as prefect from 1841 until 1843 when the college was moved to the Cape. He remained at the new location until May of 1845 when he was transferred to Assumption Seminary on Bayou Lafourche near Plattenville, Louisiana, for what turned out to be a short stay. He taught there for eighteen months and then served as assistant pastor in Donaldsonville, Louisiana, until 1847. In the fall of that year he returned to Saint Vincent's College at the Cape and there he remained until his death in 1873.⁵

It is not surprising that McGerry, who at the time of writing had spent nearly seventeen years of his priesthood at the Cape, grew interested in the history of Catholicism in

³Mary Meline and Edward McSweeney, *The Story of the Mountain: Mount St. Mary's College and Seminary* (Emmitsburg, 1911), 200, 223, 229-30; Ruane, *Society of St. Sulpice*, 185; see below pages 283-284.

⁴Meline and McSweeney, *Story of the Mountain*, 451. The quotation appears in a letter dated 28 April 1847 and written from Donaldsonville, Louisiana, to John McCaffrey.

⁵*Ibid.*; John McGerry to Timon, 6 March 1844, Microfilm of the Vincentian Collection in the Archives of the University of Notre Dame (hereafter AUND), roll 3; see below page 276-284.

the area. He apparently considered the part played by Vincentians significant enough to warrant narration. In composing this account, McGerry used available material and his own recollections. The manuscript can be divided into three parts according to the sources. The first and largest part, comprising nearly half the narrative, follows events recounted in an untitled and unsigned document now catalogued in the seminary archives as "Pastoral Work of Vincentians at Jackson and Cape Girardeau, 1828-1838" (DRMA, II-C[MO]-9-D, oversize box 12). This document deals largely with Father John Timon's ministry in the Cape region. Alternately, McGerry quotes from, embellishes on, and paraphrases "Pastoral Work." The second part of his manuscript follows a source no longer extant. This section covers mainly the work of Fathers John Mary Odin and John Brands, and it treats in a special way of their work with non-Catholics and converts. The final part of McGerry's document is based on his own recollections. This portion begins with the transfer of the Vincentian novitiate from the Barrens to the Cape, but the main focus is on Saint Vincent's College where McGerry served for so many years.

The trustworthiness of both McGerry's sources and his account can be tested against independent reports. Many letters from this period have survived and serve as one touchstone. The parish registers at Saint Vincent de Paul church in Cape Girardeau offer another means of checking accuracy. Still another source is Timon's own recollections, known as the *Barrens Memoir*, which he wrote in 1861 — the same year that McGerry wrote "God Is Wonderful." These various documents will be used in the annotation of the text.

For an unknown reason, McGerry never completed his manuscript. It ends abruptly at July 1851. Had he finished the work, he may have edited the document himself. Its present condition, however, calls for rather liberal adjustments. In making these, the editor has striven for several

objectives: faithfulness to the original, clarity, consistency, and ease of reading. Except in the matter of verb tenses, McGerry's grammar remains untouched. Occasionally, he slipped from the past tense into the present. In these instances the editor has brought verbs into agreement with the rest of the manuscript. He has corrected misspellings but retained archaic forms. Because McGerry made indiscriminate and inconsistent use of capitalization, the editor has regularized this according to modern usage. For the sake of clarity and smoothness of reading, some punctuation has been deleted and some has been added. For the same reasons, the editor has added words to the text (these appear in brackets) and he has expanded McGerry's many abbreviations. He has also subdivided extended paragraphs and sentences. Leaders indicate either the omission of repeated words and phrases or the deletion of the author's editorial comments which interrupt the flow of the narrative.

The one exception to this last principle relates to the use of titles and proper names. At nearly every mention of a person, McGerry gave not only the individual's title but also his Christian and last names, often abbreviated to initials. For example, Timon appears first as Rev. John Timon and then several times in the same paragraph as Rev. J. Timon. Later in the document, he becomes simply Rev. J.T. The repetition of such formal address at every turn and frequently with multiple individuals makes for tedious and clumsy reading. In order to avoid this, the editor has applied to the text a modified form of modern usage. At the first mention of a person, his title and full name have been retained. Thereafter, the surname alone has been kept, sometimes with title (in order to preserve flavor) but often without. Leaders have not been used to indicate such omission of a title or first name.

Because McGerry never finished the manuscript, the last three paragraphs have been deleted. These had begun a new theme that went undeveloped and, for that reason, they left the reader hanging by a thread. The text, as presented below, concludes on a happy note with the restoration of Saint Vincent's College after the disastrous tornado of 1850. The last three paragraphs will be included in a final footnote.

McGerry's narrative has previously appeared in print. In 1921 Father E. Prunte, pastor at Saint Mary's church in Cape Girardeau, published about three-quarters of the document in an article entitled "The Beginning of Catholicity in Cape Girardeau, Missouri" (*Saint Louis Catholic Historical Review* 3 [January-April 1921]:57-75). A new edition seems warranted for several reasons. Prunte's version contains several misreadings of "God Is Wonderful." It also fails to identify many people, some of whom McGerry refers to only by initials. More importantly, the annotation of Prunte's text is not thorough and lets pass many errors in McGerry's document. Finally, the following edition presents "God Is Wonderful" in its entirety.⁶

THE TEXT

God Is Wonderful in All His Works

We have only to follow the workings of divine Providence and observe attentively all his wonderful ways and the manner in which he accomplishes and brings out his designs in his own time to be convinced of this. The establishment and progress of our holy religion at Cape Girardeau, State of Missouri, is a new proof that it is God alone who can and

⁶The editor wishes to pay a debt of thanks to Father John Rybolt who several years ago typed a transcription of "God Is Wonderful." Though not without errors (which have been corrected against the original), this transcription has made editorial work much easier than it would have been.

does turn everything to his greater honor and glory. Religious prejudice at Cape Girardeau was very bitter and the few Catholics who were at this place were so intimidated that they scarcely dared own themselves publicly as such. This place was the residence of the Spanish commandante,⁷ himself a Catholic. There are yet living in the vicinity several of the relatives and lineal descendants of the old commandante, but by intermarrying with Protestants they have all lost the faith and, as is always the case, they are the most bitter enemies of our holy religion. In the face of all this opposition our Lord had designs of mercy for this small but rising place. Let facts speak.⁸

In May 1828, the Reverend John Timon, a priest of the Congregation of the Mission whose motherhouse was established forty miles north of this place in Perry County, Missouri, was called by a man who as yet knew nothing of the Catholic religion and who was then under sentence of death at Jackson, the county seat of this place.⁹ The culprit was in chains in a cell of the prison. While reciting to the prisoner the Apostles Creed an outrageous attack was then

⁷Louis Lorimier served as commandant of the Cape Girardeau District from 1793 to 1803. He died in 1812 (Louis Houck, *A History of Missouri from the Earliest Explorations and Settlements until the Admission of the State into the Union*, 3 vols. [Chicago, 1908], 2:174-79).

⁸Here ends McGerry's introduction. With the next paragraph he begins his extended use of the manuscript "Pastoral Work." Although the latter takes up the story in May 1828, Timon had been active in Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties since the summer of 1827 (cf. the Baptismal Register at Saint Vincent de Paul parish [hereafter SVDP] in Cape Girardeau). Timon himself says that prior to May 1828 he had spoken on the Catholic religion at the courthouse in Jackson (*Barrens Memoir*, 11).

⁹The man was Pressly Morris who was tried at Jackson on change of venue from Scott County. During a public auction Morris had fought with a man who had insulted him. The fight ended when Morris stabbed his

and there made by a Baptist preacher on the Reverend Timon. Timon appealed to the publick in behalf of the prisoner and, stating that the poor man had a right to the service of any clergyman,...said that he was there at the request of the prisoner.¹⁰

In consequence of this attack and the appeal of Timon, a religious discussion and controversy was held at the courthouse in Jackson. The Honorable John D. Cook, judge of the circuit court, was appointed moderator. The Baptist preacher (Mister [Thomas Parish] Green)¹¹ took as his assistant and associate Mister Greer Davis, circuit attorney of the district. After three hours' animated discussion the preacher and his assistant were completely dumbfounded. Davis, the assistant, first left the place.¹² His principal soon

detractor who later died. Because of the provocation and passion involved, most people thought the death sentence was unwarranted (*Goodspeed's History of Southeast Missouri* [Cape Girardeau, 1935], 322-23).

¹⁰Timon says that he was refused admittance to the jail until the Baptist minister had gathered together a group of anti-Catholic bigots who were to accompany the priest into the cell. Once inside, Timon began to instruct the condemned man, whereupon the minister attacked the priest for teaching human precepts rather than divine. The preacher challenged Timon to debate religion the next day at the courthouse (*Barrens Memoir*, 9-11).

¹¹Thomas Parish Green ministered at the Bethel Baptist church near Jackson from 1818 until 1826. In 1820 he opened a school at Jackson and conducted it for a number of years (Robert Sidney Douglass, *A History of Southeast Missouri: A Narrative Account of Historical Progress, Its People and Its Principal Interests* [Cape Girardeau, 1961], 193 and 201). Timon says that Green was also the editor of the local paper (*Barrens Memoir*, 9). In this he confused Green with his second in the debate (Greer Davis) and he also misreclected the years when the latter managed the paper. In fact, at the time of the debate William Johnson owned the Jackson *Mercury* and he sold it to Davis in 1831 (Douglass, *Southeast Missouri*, 529). In 1829 and 1830 Green did publish a Baptist paper, *The Western Pioneer*, located at Rock Springs, Illinois (Houck, *History of Missouri*, 3:219).

¹²Davis, a life-long Methodist, later (1833-1836) sent two of his sons to Saint Mary's College at the Barrens (Account Book 83438 BSVC [A108],

followed and left the field to the Reverend Timon. The audience remained and Timon in a discourse on [*sic* for of] half an hour drew his conclusions to the entire satisfaction of the audience. This was the first triumph for the Catholics at Jackson.¹³ Could it have been followed up, great good would have been done. But labourers were wanting.

The same day a timid Catholic made his confession in a room of the tavern. A Protestant had three of his children baptized.¹⁴ The Protestants, who were previous to this at variance and disputing among themselves, made peace and united by the advice of their ministers to resist what they considered the common enemy.

Many were fully convinced of the truth of Catholicity. Mister Ralph Daugherty¹⁵ had listened to the controversy and noted its consequences; he was resolved for himself. Mister Henry Sanford, brother-in-law of Daugherty, being clerk of the circuit court, invited Timon or any of the priests,

DRMA, II-C[MO]-9-B-1, box 2; Account Book 83257 BSM [A88], *ibid.*, box 3; Douglass, *Southeast Missouri*, 157).

¹³Timon adds that, after exhorting his listeners to return to the Catholic fold, he went back to the prison. Morris had heard the results of the debate and asked Timon to baptize him (*Barrens Memoir*, 12). The priest obliged (Baptismal Register, n.d. May 1828, SVDP).

¹⁴Timon asserts that he heard the confessions of several people who previously were not known to be Catholics (*Barrens Memoir*, 12). Moreover, two Protestant families brought forward four children for baptism: the twin sons of George and Ann Fricke, and two daughters of Edward and Olivier McDermot (Baptismal Register, 25 May 1828, SVDP).

¹⁵Timon and the author of "Pastoral Work" spell the name "Dougherty." McGerry and the family itself spell the name as it appears in the text. Daugherty was one of the early merchants in Jackson (Houck, *History of Missouri*, 3:196-97).

when at Jackson, to make use of his house as their home. A few days after this the Reverend Timon without any opposition visited the poor prisoner whom he instructed and baptized, and the poor man was shortly after executed.¹⁶

From this time until 1832 little was done at the Cape. Some occasional visits were made to the family of Mister L. Bryne, a good Irish Catholic four miles southwest from the Cape. This was the only place mass was said in the vicinity for some years....¹⁷

Daugherty sent Mister [James] Murrain¹⁸ on the 24th September 1832 on express to the Barrens, Perry County, Missouri, to call the Reverend Timon, C.M., to baptize said Daugherty. This being near the time of the exhibitions and distribution of premiums at the college,¹⁹ Reverend John

¹⁶McGerry, in opposition to Timon (cf. note 13), places Morris' baptism here. Timon's sequence is to be preferred because the baptism in question appears in the register before those of the children baptized on the day of the debate (cf. note 14).

¹⁷The material in this paragraph does not appear in "Pastoral Work." The Baptismal Register (SVDP), however, supports the contention that little took place during this time. No baptisms were recorded between November 1828 and September 1832; one marriage was contracted in November 1831 (nuptials that took place in these early years were entered in the Baptismal Register). Timon indicates that by 1831 he had begun to make regular visits, not to the Byrne house, but to the Daugherty residence where he said Mass (*Barrens Memoir*, 13 and 28). In this he erred, for he incorrectly recalled that he had baptized Daugherty earlier than was the case (cf. note 21).

¹⁸McGerry spells this name "Marvain," but both the Baptismal Register (28 September 1832, SVDP) and "Pastoral Work" show the above spelling.

¹⁹In the nineteenth century, the college President invited parents and other interested persons to an event that included a display of student works, dramatic presentations, and similar things. During the festivities, the top students in each class were awarded prizes.

Baptist Tornatore, then superior, could not consent to the departure of Timon at that time.

The exhibition took place on the 26th September 1832. On the next day, [the] 27th, Timon started for the Cape, where he arrived at dusk, found Mister Murrain, his wife and three children residing in Daugherty's house, and was informed that Mister Daugherty was sick at his father's [Mister William Daugherty's] house, two miles below on the river. Timon took a small boat immediately and arrived at the elder Daugherty's and stayed there all night instructing [Ralph] Daugherty and family. Finding that Daugherty had been recently separated from his wife [Sarah], the next morning early Timon started to see Missis Daugherty who resided at her father's, Major [George] Bollinger's,²⁰ [house] to bring about, if possible, a reconciliation. Unable to accomplish his charitable design, Timon baptized here an infant child of Mister Daugherty, which was then with the mother, and returned next day to the Cape, distant twenty-two miles, and after due instruction baptized Ralph Daugherty and three of his children.²¹ The next day at the Cape in Daugherty's house he heard privately the confessions of the Murrain family [and] baptized a son of Miles Doyle, one of the first Catholic settlers there. Such was the prejudice of the place that he did not dare to say

²⁰George Frederick Bollinger, a native of North Carolina, migrated to the Cape Girardeau District in 1800. He was of Swiss-German descent and belonged to the German Reformed Church. He brought the first German Protestant preacher to the area. Bollinger served as state senator from 1828 through the 1830s (Douglass, *Southeast Missouri*, 79-80; Houck, *History of Missouri*, 2:188).

²¹McGerry's sequence is incorrect. The Baptismal Register (SVDP) indicates that Ralph was baptized on 28 September and his four children, including the one with the mother, were baptized on the 29th.

mass publicly, so that the first time the holy Sacrifice was offered at the Cape it was secretly and in the presence of only a few Catholics.²²

In the month of October 1832, Mister Daugherty took his three children, viz., two boys and a girl to the seminary at the Barrens. The boys were placed in the college and the girl at the sisters' school.²³ Before Daugherty could obtain the consent of his wife to this arrangement, he was forced to give a certificate in writing stating that Missis Daugherty, his wife, could at any time visit her children without molestation or any hindrance.²⁴ But the prejudices of the mother were too strong to bear this. In November Missis Daugherty came to the convent. She had some men stationed around as guards. She saw her children without any difficulty. She persuaded the boys to leave with her and she took the three home.

When the father heard of this he was furious. Reverend Timon kept him tranquil for some time by letters; but this state of things was too much for poor Daugherty. It preyed

²²In accord with this, Timon notes that prejudice was such that, when he paid visits to the Cape, he had to say Mass "very privately [at] 6 A.M." in the Daugherty house. At eleven in the morning he did, however, "preach for the great many protestants [*sic*] who flocked to hear him" (*Barrens Memoir*, 13).

²³In 1823 the Sisters of Loretto had come from Kentucky to Perry County where they founded Bethlehem Convent and a school for girls just a short distance down Sycamore Lane from the seminary (Rosati, "Recollections, V," 128-29).

²⁴Rather than a guarantee that Sarah Daugherty could visit her children, Ralph promised the seminary that he would not hold it responsible if the children were reclaimed by others of the family. "I...declare," wrote Daugherty, "that should any relations of the said children reclaim and retake any or all of them I will reclaim and call for the said children from the hands of said relations and by no means from the directors of these schools who will only be responsible for the children while in their peaceable possession" (Ralph Daugherty, 29 October 1832, DRMA, II-C[MO]-3, box 33).

on his mind to think that he could not have the management and education of his own children.²⁵ In the month of January 1833, his excited mind having brought on phrensy, he made an attack on the house of Major Bollinger, his father-in-law, at whose house the children were kept. In the affray Daugherty was wounded and taken prisoner and confined in the jail at Jackson. Mister Daugherty refused to have his wounds dressed or to hear to any reason. The only person that could have any control over the poor man, they said, was Father Timon. Consequently, Mister Evan Daugherty, the brother of the afflicted man, started to Perryville to see Timon. No sooner did the charitable missioner hear of the trouble of his friend and child in Christ, than he started for Jackson. On the 30th January he arrived and found Ralph Daugherty confined in the same cell with a man who was sentenced to death for murder. Reverend Mister Timon succeeded in calming Daugherty, and as soon as he had his wounds dressed and [had] procured comfort for Daugherty,

²⁵Daugherty had heard in early December that his wife had taken the children from the Barrens (Daugherty to Timon, 2 December 1832, DRMA, II-C[MO]-3, box 33). Later in the month, as will be seen below, Major Bollinger entered a suit against Daugherty for a large amount of money. Ralph's parents, William and Elizabeth Daugherty, were convinced that Bollinger and his daughter were out to ruin Ralph "both in property and mind" (Elizabeth Stephenson [writing for William and Elizabeth Daugherty] to Timon, 31 December 1832, AUND, roll 1). Ralph himself wrote a pathetic letter which revealed his mental disarray and pleaded for Timon's help. "I have at times," he declared, "ambitious views, I have thought that I was going through the military exercise as a general, at other times I walked like a sailor. These things are very unpleasant to me and I want the Church through you to interfere and stop it. I have thought at times that I was acting as a Priest and at other times as a Bishop....I have thought at times that there was anticipated a division of the Catholic Church. If there is I have no participation in it and will consider myself as belonging to the old Church and not to the new. I would not alter one Item of the Catholic faith or Church rules on my responsibility to be absolute monarch of the whole world" (Daugherty to same, 31 December 1832, *ibid.*).

Timon turned his attention to the unfortunate man who was to be executed the next day.²⁶

This poor fellow had come to the sad conclusion to die drunk. Reverend Timon commenced to talk to the prisoner, but found him so much under the influence of liquor that all advice was lost on him. He was not capable of being instructed. Timon had all the liquor removed from the jail and requested the jailer not to let any more enter the jail that night. The next morning before day, Timon sent to the sheriff and obtained the keys of the jail and entered the prison before any liquor could be brought to the culprit. This poor man now listened attentively to the instructions given by the holy priest. He was greatly moved. The light of hope and confidence in the mercy of God entered this soul. He professed his belief in Jesus Christ, was filled with sorrow for his past errors, [and] shed abundance of tears. Mister Timon continued with the poor man and baptized him about an hour before he was led to execution. Oh! the mercy of God to come to the help of this poor man in his very last hour!²⁷

²⁶The condemned man was Isaac Whiston, aged about sixty. He and his victim, John Daniel, had spent an evening drinking together at a tavern in Jackson. When the two left later that night, Whiston was carrying a gun. The next morning Daniel was found dead, killed by a bullet, about a mile out of town. Suspicion fell upon Whiston and he was convicted on circumstantial evidence (*Goodspeed's History*, 323).

²⁷Timon incorrectly sets this incident in 1831. According to his remembrance, the event had nothing to do with Daugherty. Timon recalled that late one evening he was returning to the Barrens after a pastoral visit to the Cape. He had heard that a murderer (Whiston) was to be hanged the next day at Jackson and so he stopped at the prison. As Timon began to instruct Whiston, who had been amply supplied with liquor, "the hardened criminal gradually softened before the truth." He promised the priest that he would drink no more "and [Timon] stationed some zealous friends around the prison to keep the fatal draft from him." The next morning Timon returned and continued the instructions, after which he baptized Whiston,

Reverend Timon now returned to Mister Daugherty and succeeded to calm him completely. He then went to Major Bollinger, effected a reconciliation between Bollinger and Daugherty, obtained Daugherty's release from prison and persuaded Daugherty to absent himself for a time from the scene of his troubles. Mister Daugherty consented and went to New Orleans,²⁸ where his health and mind was [sic] completely restored.

January 31st, 1833, the old Mister [William] Daugherty, father of Ralph, made his confession and was received into the Church. He became a fervent Catholic. Mister Timon was again called to the Cape on the 16th February 1833. On the next day he baptized the family of Mister Jeremiah Able,²⁹ the son-in-law of the old Mister Daugherty, and on the 18th [of the] same month [he] baptized at Jackson Pearl, [the] oldest son of Henry Sanford, Ralph Daugherty's brother-in-law.

Previous to Ralph Daugherty's going to New Orleans, Reverend Timon prevailed on Daugherty to give up the youngest child to the care of its mother. During Daugherty's

"whose tears during the ceremony proved how deeply his heart had been touched." Within a few hours "he was launched into eternity" (*Barrens Memoir*, 28-29). The accounts of both Timon and McGerry agree that Whiston was baptized the day of his execution. According to McGerry the baptism occurred on 31 January. This agrees with the Baptismal Register in SVDP, but the latter states that Whiston was executed the next day, 1 February. None of these dates harmonizes with "Pastoral Work" or *Goodspeed's History* (p. 323), both of which declare that Whiston was hanged on 30 January.

²⁸In fact, Daugherty went to Mexico and returned to the Cape via New Orleans (cf. Daugherty to Timon, 25 March 1833, DRMA, II-C[MO]-3, box 33).

²⁹Timon baptized the two Able children, Ralph and Mary (Baptismal Register, 17 February 1833, SVDP). The parents, as recounted below, were baptized later.

absence his father-in-law, Major Bollinger, pushed on a lawsuit against Daugherty for more than \$2000. Daugherty not appearing to defend the suit, judgment was given against him and all his property was levied upon.³⁰

March the 24th, 1833. Mister Henry Sanford, clerk of the circuit court and brother-in-law of Daugherty, came on express to the seminary of the Barrens and related to Timon all that Major Bollinger had done during Daugherty's absence, stating that he, Sanford, had offered to Bollinger all of Daugherty's property, on which he, Major Bollinger, had already levied, if he would give a receipt in full for all his claims against Daugherty. This Bollinger refused to do. Sanford here declared that he now saw plainly that Major Bollinger intended to have Daugherty's property sacrificed at sheriff sale [*sic*]; that at such sale for cash and with Bollinger's influence, the whole property could not in all probability bring more than \$1500; and that Bollinger would keep the execution open for the balance in order to persecute Daugherty and imprison him when he pleased. Sanford pressed the Reverend Mister Tornatore, then superior at the Barrens, to purchase the whole property, which he (Sanford) offered for the cost and suit, about \$2500, [live]stock and all on the farm. The gentlemen of the seminary hesitated, thinking it wrong to profit by the misfortune of Daugherty; they gave Sanford a promise that they would purchase the property if Mister Daugherty

³⁰As a matter of fact, Daugherty was involved in two suits, both of them entered the same day, 11 December 1832 (cf. note 25). Bollinger had sued Daugherty for \$1540 and Bollinger's attorney, acting as administrator of the Mary Frizel estate, had sued for an additional \$1030. The suits totaled \$2570. Because Daugherty, who was mentally disturbed at the time, had failed to appear in court, the judge awarded the petitions of both plaintiffs (George Bollinger v. Ralph Daugherty, Cape Girardeau Circuit Court, Record F, 281; Johnson Ramsey, administrator of Mary Frizel deceased, v. same, *ibid.*).

could do no better, but [they] advised Sanford to remove the lien on the property and that then, when Daugherty was free from force, they would purchase the property at a fair valuation. Sanford returned to Jackson to make arrangements.

On the 28th March Mister Sanford returned to the seminary in company with Mister Daugherty, who had lately returned from New Orleans. Daugherty was very anxious to dispose of his property and, being no longer forced by the suit of Major Bollinger, the gentlemen of the Seminary entered into arrangements with Misters Sanford and Daugherty and finally concluded to take the property or land alone for \$3200. The [live]stock made another separate contract; they were to be valued and paid for accordingly. Twenty-five hundred dollars were paid on the signing of the deed and by the arrangement of Mister Daugherty \$700 were to be retained by the seminary for the education, board and lodging of Daugherty's sons at Saint Mary's Seminary. The seminary took possession of the house and property in the city of Cape Girardeau.³¹ The father of Ralph Daugherty, having sold his farm, the gentlemen of the seminary agreed to permit old Mister Daugherty to live for a time on the farm, rent free.

³¹Regarding these incidents, Timon gives the following summary: "To save him [Ralph Daugherty] from losing his property under the unscrupulous persecution, it was necessary to purchase that property from him. It is the most beautiful property in the country. The Seminary [Saint Vincent's College], with its noble and spacious grounds; and the beautiful Church of St. Vincent stand on part of it." The Vincentians lacked sufficient money to buy the land and so Timon had to borrow \$2000 from a man at Potosi. After negotiating the loan, Timon went to Saint Louis to draw the cash out of the bank. While in the city, he saw Bishop Joseph Rosati, C.M., the former Superior of the Vincentians and then Bishop of the diocese. About this meeting Timon relates, "When the Rt. Rev. Bishop first saw Mr. Timon he showed anger at the purchase of which he had heard, but when he found

In April and May, Ralph Daugherty made frequent visits to the seminary, lodging for many days at a time. During this time Daugherty made his first communion and was confirmed.

June 23, Reverend Timon was called to Cape by Evan Daugherty to see his brother Ralph who was very ill. The good priest started immediately; [he] heard the confession of Ralph Daugherty and that [of] the old man Daugherty. Hearing that the widow Hannah Smith was alarmed on account of the cholera,³² Timon started across the swamp³³ nine miles to visit this good family; [he] consoled them and then returned by circuitous route to Jackson. It was dark when he arrived at Jackson. Here he was informed that the old man Daugherty was dead. Reverend Mister Timon, although he had ridden on horseback nearly all day, set out immediately for the Cape and arrived at the cabin on the swamp farm two miles below the Cape. [When he] arrived there after ten o'clock P.M., [he] found the old man

that the purchase money had been found without calling on him, he was much pleased" (*Barrens Memoir*, 13 and 24).

For \$3200 the Vincentians acquired five pieces of property: two town lots in Cape Girardeau, the Decatur lot (forty-five and a half acres) just outside of town, the swamp farm (179 acres) about a mile and a half below the site of the college, and another piece of farm land (158 acres) in Scott County (Deed of transfer, Daugherty to John B. Tornatore, 28 March 1833, DRMA, II-C[MO]-3, box 21). As the text states, Daugherty received \$2500 in cash and agreed "to leave undisturbed [for the education of his children]...the balance of seven hundred dollars and the amount of sale of some [live]stock and other articles" (Receipt from Daugherty, *ibid.*, box 33). Evidence indicates (see below) that the cost of the cattle was included in the \$700 education fund.

³²In 1833 a cholera epidemic swept through Cape Girardeau County and claimed the lives of 128 people (*Goodspeed's History*, 430; Douglass, *South-east Missouri*, 263).

³³The Big Swamp is a lowland that begins about a mile and a half below Cape Girardeau and stretches for several miles along the Mississippi river.

Daugherty a lifeless corpse, still in the same bed as which he had expired, his wife and family sleeping by and around the dead body. There being no other bed in the house, Timon, exhausted with fatigue, took some rest on the same bed with the cholera corpse. Early in the morning Missis [Elizabeth] Daugherty, the wife of Mister Daugherty, became a Catholic and made her first confession with great compunction and to the great edification of all present.³⁴ Mister Timon arranged everything for the decent interment of Daugherty, and on his return to Jackson visited and consoled many cholera patients.

Near Jackson, Timon administered the sacraments to old Missis Green who, to the great surprise of all, recovered. The daughter of this Missis Green, though yet a Protestant,

³⁴According to Timon's recollection, the death of the elder Daugherty and the conversion of his wife took place, not within the context of a sick call to Ralph, but when the priest was returning to the Barrens from New Madrid. Timon stopped at Cape to visit the aged Daugherty and he found the house filled with visitors, all of them Protestants. The two went into the garden where Daugherty received the Sacrament of Penance. Timon then continued on his way and arrived in Jackson at eight o'clock. There, a messenger caught up with him and urged him to return to Daugherty who had just been stricken with cholera. "Through the rain, which had begun to fall," recalled Timon, "the priest hastened to the cabin, in the wild forest, which he had left a few hours before...." Upon arrival, he found Daugherty dead in bed. Timon prayed and then gave an exhortation to all the visitors present. The widow Daugherty declared that she wished to become a Catholic. Timon gave her instructions on the spot and then asked the company to withdraw while she confessed her sins. The priest called the visitors back into the cabin and he conditionally baptized the woman. Timon described the rest of the evening as follows: "The forest was intensely dark, the rain had begun to fall in torrents, it was impossible for the priest to resume his journey, it was midnight. The convert kindly prepared a place for him to take his rest; the company had to sleep on the floor; the only bed in the house was occupied by the corpse. He was pushed up against the wall, a clean sheet spread near it, and the Missionary was invited to share the bed of the dead man. He did so, and slept soundly" (*Barrens Memoir*, 14-15). The Baptismal Register in SVDP has no record of the conditional baptism of Elizabeth Daugherty.

declared publickly to the neighbors that [her mother] had been cured by the sacrament of extreme unction. She declared that as soon as Mister Timon [had] finished the prayers, her mother had no more pain and recovered in a few hours her usual health.

On the 6th of July 1833, at the request of Mister Samuel Morton, Reverend Mister Timon raised and dressed an altar in the brick house in the rear of Missis Ellis' house,³⁵ where Morton then resided. In this place, Timon said mass (very few Catholics [were] present) and gave the holy communion to Missis Morton. This was the first time holy communion was given publickly at the Cape.

July 7th, 1833. Reverend Timon was busily occupied until late at night to arrange an old frame warehouse which stood near the river in front of our house, the former residence of the Spanish commandante. Having finished and decorated a near altar and seats for the congregation (the candlesticks and altar were presented by Mister Miles Doyle),³⁶ the next day, July 8th, Timon celebrated mass publickly and preached to a large congregation, mostly Protestants. He was heard with great respect and attention and, could Timon have remained here, or some priest speaking the English language fluently, all prejudice would soon have been removed; but for many years those stationed here were foreigners, very holy and zealous men, but not well understood. The old frame house served as chapel for some years. Mister Timon, before leaving, made arrangements to build a good log house at the farm in the swamp, lately purchased from Ralph Daugherty. The contract was

³⁵The text of "Pastoral Work" reads: "...in the brick house on the hill, back of Ellis'."

³⁶The text of "Pastoral Work" indicates that Doyle had donated only the candlesticks.

concluded with a Meyer [*sic*].³⁷ The same day Timon baptized Mister Jeremiah Able and wife.³⁸ The Reverend Mister Timon went every six weeks to preach at the Cape and say mass at the frame chapel.³⁹ He had the consolation to have always a large audience. Many children came to catechism and many were baptized.

From this time the gentlemen of the seminary began to purchase lots in the Cape and land near it for fair prices. Poor Ralph Daugherty during the following winter became again deranged in his mind. Though the seminary had purchased all his [live]stock on the farm, the poor man claimed them again and, to avoid trouble and litigation, little by little the cattle were given up to Daugherty; and the \$700, left for the education of Daugherty's children, was reclaimed and drawn for by himself and his mother. This sum was paid again for peace sake [*sic*], for there was no obligation to pay it. Add[ed] to this, the seminary [gave] Daugherty more than another hundred dollars in different ways....⁴⁰

³⁷The text of "Pastoral Work" reads: "Mr. Timon makes arrangements with Mr. Myer to build a good log house on the swamp farm." In fact, neither this reading nor McGerry's is correct. William S. Able built the farmhouse (William S. Able to Timon, 19 January 1834, AUND, roll 1; Smoot Block to Timon and John Mary Odin, 19 February 1835, *ibid.*).

³⁸Jeremiah and Martha (Daugherty) Able were the brother-in-law and sister of Ralph Daugherty. Their two children had been baptized five months earlier (cf. note 29).

³⁹Timon says that his visits to the mission chapel took place at first every three months and later once a month. His stays, he noted, were quite successful "in dissipating the prejudices of the people (*Barrens Memoir*, 24-25).

⁴⁰In this paragraph McGerry is unfaithful to the text of "Pastoral Work." He indicates that Daugherty reclaimed the cattle which he had sold to the seminary. He further suggests that the seminary, as if it had already acquitted the debt, "paid again" to Daugherty the money in the \$700 education fund. "Pastoral Work," however, reads as follows: "Mr. Ralph Dougherty [*sic*] became more insane, he *refused* [italics added] the cattle, we

October 1835. Singular Coincidence

In October, Very Reverend John Baptist Tornatore went down very unexpectedly to the Cape, taking with him Reverend Timon. No priest was expected at this time. Shortly after their arrival, Mister William Watson called on

left them by little and little, he drew by himself or by Sanford or his mother for the \$700. We paid it though not obliged and allowed him about \$100 in different ways." Unlike McGerry's rendering, this indicates that the seminary tried to give the livestock back to Daugherty, something the situation may have demanded. Daugherty's father, who had been living on the swamp farm and no doubt had cared for the cattle, was now dead and the Vincentians had no one at the Cape to manage the livestock or see to its sale. The simplest solution would have been to return it to Daugherty.

With regard to the \$700, the terse statement in "Pastoral Work" is closer to the facts than McGerry. The Daugherty children had been prevented (probably by their mother and grandfather) from attending Saint Mary's College and so in October 1833 Ralph Daugherty wanted to draw on the education fund (Daugherty to Tornatore, 30 October 1833, DRMA, II-C[MO]-3, box 33). Because the original agreement had stipulated that the payment of this sum be made through education, Tornatore believed that the Vincentians were absolved of the debt. In view of Daugherty's circumstances, however, Tornatore offered to give him \$700 in annual installments over a five year period (Timon to Henry Sanford, 2 November 1833, *ibid.*). Within three years, rather than five, the seminary settled the account with Daugherty's agent, his mother (Itemized Receipt from Elizabeth Daugherty, 14 July 1836, *ibid.*). In 1838 Daugherty found himself penniless at Mine Shibolet, Missouri, and wrote to Timon, claiming that the Vincentians still owed him \$150 (Daugherty to Timon, 12 July 1838, AUND, roll 2). Timon informed him that his mother had the money but the priest was kind enough to send \$25 which Daugherty paid back through his parent (Ralph Daugherty to Elizabeth Daugherty, 21 July 1838, *ibid.*).

Vincentian difficulties with the Daugherty family did not end here. In 1872 George Frederick Daugherty, Ralph's oldest son, sued Saint Vincent's College for the property sold to the Vincentians by his father. George claimed that Tornatore and Timon had taken advantage of Ralph's insanity in order "to cheat, injure, and defraud" him and his heirs out of their rightful property "by fraud...religious fervor, fear, and divers other fraudulent practices." George also alleged that in 1833 the property was worth, not \$3200, but \$15,000. He claimed further that, even though the Vincentians had agreed to pay \$3200, no money ever changed hands (George F. Daugherty v. The President and Faculty of Saint Vincent's College, amended petition, 13 November 1872, DRMA, II-C[MO]-3, box 33). Daugherty lost the suit.

Timon, requesting him to visit his mother-in-law who was very ill, even dangerously ill. To the enquiries made by the priest Watson replied that neither he, his wife, his mother-in-law, nor any of the family were Catholics. The Reverend Father Timon started immediately to visit the sick person but [did] not take with him the holy oils or ritual. He found the sick chamber thronged with the children and grandchildren of the patient, all Protestants. After conversing with the sufferer for some time, instructing her and finding in her all the proper dispositions, for God had touched her heart and she professed a firm belief in Jesus Christ and firmly believed in all the holy truths explained to her, Mister Timon, seeing that there was no time to be lost as the person was in great danger,...left the room saying that he would soon return to administer to the good lady all the sacraments necessary for her present situation and to receive her into the Catholic Church.

As Timon left the room Missis William Watson, daughter of the sick woman, followed him and said, "Sir! there is something extraordinary in all this. My mother has never been in a Catholic church; she never but once heard a Catholic priest; she knows nothing of the Catholic doctrine; yet she has for months past been expressing a desire to become a Catholic; and she frequently requested those near her to send for a Catholic priest. Last night, in a dream or vision, she said a man, clothed like you now are, entered her room and gave her what I believe you call a crucifix to kiss; at the same time an interior voice said to her, 'Do what this person tells you, and you shall be saved.' She immediately begged of us to send to the seminary for a priest. But, not thinking [it] necessary and as it was very inconvenient, we declined and tried to put her off. But she could not be

pacified and was just repeating and urging the same request, when we were informed that you had arrived.”

Mister Timon hastened to procure all that was necessary for the administering of the sick. As soon as he entered the room of the patient, he presented the crucifix to her. All present were struck and observed with what fervor and emotion she embraced the crucifix. The instructions were made aloud for the benefit of the large company present. The old lady was baptized *sub conditione* [conditionally], her confession was heard, and in the course of the next day, at her earnest request, all the sacraments were administered to her. She died that night in peace and joy, edifying all around her by her patience and the great confidence she expressed in the mercy of her crucified saviour. Her name was Esther Bradly, widow of Solomon Thorn.⁴¹ The next

⁴¹Timon's account of Esther (Bradly) Thorn's deathbed conversion agrees in substance with McGerry's. The two, however, differ in some details. According to Timon, Tornatore was not at Cape. The latter had sent Timon there alone to conduct some business regarding the purchase of more land. The priest arrived at night and was called upon by Thorn's son-in-law who requested that he attend the dying woman. When Timon learned that Esther was not a Catholic, he thought, "as often before, [that] the dying protestant [*sic*] wanted him only to pray for her, [and so he] took neither vestions [*sic*] nor holy oils." He found the woman quite ill but very well disposed and he instructed her then and there. When Esther declared her determination to live and die in the Catholic Church, Timon left to get baptismal water and the holy oils. The daughter followed him and remarked, "Sir there is something extraordinary in all this. My mother has never been in the Catholic Church. Only once did she hear a Catholic sermon, yet she has thought for months, that she hears a voice saying almost continually to her "if you want to be saved you must become a Catholic." She often related this to us, and begged us to send for you, but we thought it only a childish freak of a wandering mind, and we refused. A few hours ago she thought that she had a vision of a man dressed like you, who gave her a crucifix to kiss, and, at

morning two of her married daughters brought their children to be baptized. It will be seen in the sequel that all the persons in the room at the time—ten or twelve persons—became Catholics.

April 9th, 1836. The first colony was sent from Saint Mary's Seminary to settle at the Cape. It consisted of Reverend John Mary Odin, Mister [John] Robert, a postulant, with Harry, his wife Minty, and their child Juliana.⁴² Under the charitable and zealous administration of Odin, the congregation began to assume a form at the Cape. The Protestants were impressed with love and respect for the holy priest. The name of Saint Vincent de Paul was given to the new and rising congregation.

When Reverend Mister Odin arrived at the Cape, the inhabitants generally manifested a great satisfaction on seeing a priest stationed among them. The number of Catholics was but small. The families then known as belonging to the Church were those of Nicholas B. Miles,

that instant, the same voice said, "Do what this priest tells you and you shall be saved." She started, told us the vision, and begged us to send for you, but we refused, it was a long journey, and it seemed a wild fancy; whilst we were debating the matter with her, a neighbour came in and said that you had just arrived: we determined to send for you.' " This story made Timon move all the faster. When he returned, he presented a crucifix to the dying woman who "pressed it with eager emotion to her lips." He conditionally baptized her, heard her confession, and gave her Viaticum and Extreme Unction. She died "in great peace and joy" a few hours after midnight. The priest then asked about Esther's former way of life and he was told that she had always been distinguished for charity to the poor and the sick. "It was this, no doubt," he concluded, "that drew down a special mercy on her last end" (*Barrens Memoir*, 25-26). The baptism of Thorn does not appear in the Baptismal Register (SVDP).

⁴²Harry, Minty, and Juliana were slaves. "Pastoral Work" makes no mention of Juliana. Timon, who was then Provincial of the American Province, led the little expedition to the Cape and there at Sunday Mass he introduced Odin to his new parishioners (*Barrens Memoir*, 32).

nine persons in number; Missis Wathen and her son-in-law, eight persons; Mister Morton⁴³ and two children (all the above recently immigrants from Maryland); Bernard Layton and family, five in number; James B. Hogan's family, seven in all; the widow Marvin, four in number, lately from Perry County; John Mattingly and family, four in number, lately from Kentucky; Miles Doyle, an old resident of this place, who left Ireland when young; John Roach, who had to fly from Ireland, being a United Irishman (this man's brother, a priest, was shot by the Orangemen; John was kneeling on his [own] coffin to be shot, when his reprieve came from the King); Mrs. Hannah Smith, eleven in [the] family, from Maryland; Jeremiah Able and his mother-in-law [Elizabeth Daugherty], converts, six in number at Jackson; Mrs. Sanford [sister of Ralph Daugherty] and three children; two daughters of Nathan Vanhorn who were converted and baptized at Bethlehem Convent whilst at school there; the widows [Ellen] Atwell and [Washington?] Green; John Cordelle, nineteen in [the] family, which makes altogether about eighty-seven Catholics at the Cape and environs, consisting of adults, children and servants.

Every Sunday the small frame chapel was crowded and frequently on great festivals it could not contain all who came from a great distance.⁴⁴ Those of different denominations composed the far greater number of the audience. They expressed a great desire to hear the word of God explained by the Catholic priest. So much so, that even when a

⁴³"Pastoral Work" reads "Mrs. Morton" rather than "Mr. Morton."

⁴⁴After only a few months at the Cape, Odin complained that "Our chapel is absolutely too small." He wanted to replace it with a Church but the contractor in Cape was fully occupied with other projects (Odin to Timon, 14 June 1836, AUND, roll 1).

Protestant preacher held [a] meeting in the schoolhouse, many preferred going to the Catholic chapel. They always acted with becoming decorum and listened most attentively to the explanations of holy tenets and ceremonies. Prejudices so deeply rooted in this place seemed to die away, gradually and even the most strict amongst the different sects declared publickly that it would be useless for them to attempt to erect a meetinghouse as the Catholics would soon draw all the population to their church.⁴⁵ However, two years later they built a Baptist meetinghouse which, by the way, has seldom had any regular minister, and this same meetinghouse has served for every kind of meeting (political speeches, and railroad meetings, etc.) and it is used by all sects indiscriminately. Reverend Odin was beloved by all and was welcome wherever he presented himself, and religion was sure to be the topic of conversation wherever he went.

Missis Ellen Atwell, an old lady from Maryland who had not seen a priest for thirty-three years, availed herself of the opportunity, made a general confession, received holy communion, and continued faithfully to approach the sacra-

⁴⁵This summary statement is bolder than the facts warrant. In 1834 the Reverend Thomas P. Green, the same minister who in 1828 had debated Timon at Jackson, gathered together a Baptist congregation at the Cape (Douglass, *Southeast Missouri*, 465). When Odin arrived in 1836, he reported that "The Anabaptists, thanks to the instructions of Mr. Green, have again taken courage and again they intend to build their meetinghouse (Odin to Timon, 14 June 1836, AUND, roll 1). In the summer of 1837 Odin, who was then at the Barrens, wrote to Timon in Paris, "At the Cape I do not know how things are managed but every marriage is celebrated before the baptist [*sic*] preacher. Knott, J. Wathen, [and] Mary Wheeler have given that great scandal" (same to same, 18 September 1837, *ibid.*, roll 2). In fact, between 22 March and 8 September 1837 no marriages took place at the Catholic chapel in Cape (Baptismal Register, SVDP).

ments until her death. The following year ⁴⁶ many attempts were made to induce her to abandon her religion and join some sect; but she remained firm and grateful to God, who had once more given her the chance and means to discharge her religious duties. Mister John Roach, the Irish refugee, had long resided in this neighborhood and, although he made open profession of the Catholic faith and was an able and warm defender of his faith, yet he had not approached the sacraments for more than forty years. [He] was moved by the good example [of Atwell], made a general confession, and became a fervent and exemplary member, frequently walking five miles fasting to hear mass and approach the sacraments. The Catholics in general were very fervent and regular in frequenting the sacraments.

Missis Sarah Erving, daughter of the aforesaid Missis Atwell, had been baptized in her infancy but had no recollection of having ever seen a priest. [She] came for instructions and, after due preparation, made her first communion. During her long illness which terminated her earthly career, [she] gave great edification by her lively faith, patience, [and] resignation to the will of God. Her holy death made a great impression on all who witnessed it.

The catechism was regularly taught every day, when some few children presented themselves. On Sunday the catechism was taught once for the white children and a second time for coloured persons, who manifested a great desire to be instructed and many became good Catholics. These attended in great numbers.

⁴⁶“Pastoral Work” joins this phrase to the previous sentence which reads thus: “...until her death the following year.” The Death Register (Liber Defunctorum, SVDP) offers no clarification because Atwell’s interment was not recorded.

Reverend Odin visited occasionally the few families scattered about the country—at Jackson, Moses Byrne's family across the Big Swamp, Doctor John Golden at Commerce, etc. The family of Moses Byrne have [since] all fallen off and have no religion. There were about twenty persons of different ages belonging to Protestant families baptized by Odin and many others [were] preparing when he was recalled to the seminary on 3rd November 1836. A few months before his departure, a few more Catholic families came to reside at the Cape, viz., Mister John Doyle whose wife was not a Catholic, Thomas B. English, George Boarman and some few others.

Odin was succeeded by the Reverend John Boullier and Reverend John Rosti; Brother Daniel Harrington accompanied them to take charge of the swamp farm.⁴⁷ John Hutchins and family, together with some work hands for the farm, arrived the same day that Odin left the Cape.⁴⁸ The number of Catholics began to increase. Boullier repaired the house and garden in a very neat manner. He conciliated to

⁴⁷Harrington, who was stationed at the Barrens, had inspected the Cape farm as early as August 1836. At that time, Odin wrote Timon that the brother was "very anxious to commence immediately to improve the farm of the swamp...it ought not to be delayed....There ought to be 5 or six hands at work there this fall and winter....A small force will do very little good" (Odin to Timon, 24 August 1836, AUND, roll 2). The farm needed much work because the land was still wooded and had to be cleared. Harrington did not leave the Barrens until December. On his way to the Cape, he made stops at Brazeau and Jackson in order to buy or rent slaves for farmhands. He found prices too high and so he arrived empty-handed (Daniel Harrington to same, 9 December 1836, *ibid.*).

⁴⁸McGerry spells the name "Hutcheson" but the above is correct (cf. Baptismal Register, 21 July 1839, SVDP). Hutchins had been working on the seminary farm at the Barrens (cf. Account Book 83257 [A89], DRMA, II-C[MO]-9-B-1, box 3). Because Harrington was trying to obtain slave farmhands in December (cf. note 47), a later date may be in order for the arrival of Hutchins and his companions.

himself the respect and esteem of all the inhabitants of the city and vicinity.⁴⁹

Reverend Boullier began to make preparations for the erection of [a] new Catholic church when he was called to the seminary at the Barrens.⁵⁰

February 2nd, 1837. During this year, 1837, the Cape was visited from time to time by Reverend Mister Timon as formerly. It was at one of these visits that Missis Sarah Watson, wife of William Watson, in consequence of what she had seen and heard at the death of her mother [Esther (Bradly) Thorn], as related above, applied to Timon, who was at the Cape on a visit of charity, to be received into the Catholic Church. Her request was granted. She was instructed, baptized by Timon that same day, and after some time she made her first communion.⁵¹ She has always per-

⁴⁹After two months at the Cape, Boullier sent Timon a none too glowing report. "I have here," he wrote, "my share of trouble. Mr. Rosti and Bourk [*sic*] are sick and I do believe make themselves a great deal more so than they are. The work both for the church and at the farm goes but slow" (John Boullier to Timon, 27 January 1837, AUND, roll 2).

⁵⁰Apparently, Boullier left the Cape in June 1837. On the twelfth of that month, he performed his last Baptism there (Baptismal Register, SVDP). Evidence suggests that he was transferred, not to the Barrens, but to Sainte Genevieve (Boullier to Timon, from Sainte Genevieve, 29 June 1837, AUND, roll 2; same to same, from Sainte Genevieve, 9 December 1837, *ibid.*). Boullier, however, maintained some sort of business contact with the house at the Cape and he returned there to perform a marriage in late December 1837 (Harrington to Timon, 18 November 1837, *ibid.*; Baptismal Register, 26 December 1837, SVDP).

Regarding the proposed Church at the Cape, John Brands, rather than Boullier, made the preparations for construction (John Brands to Timon, 22 March 1838, *ibid.*).

Here ends McGerry's use of "Pastoral Work."

⁵¹The date at the head of this paragraph suggests that the Baptism took place on that day. In fact, Sarah Watson was baptized on 19 February 1837 (Baptismal Register, SVDP). More than a year later she made her first

severed and remains a fervent Catholic. This family has been the constant friend of priests and was of great assistance to our missionaries in the commencement at the Cape. It was these good people who took care of the chapel and of the priests when sick. They still live near the church (September 23, 1861).

March 17th, 1838. Reverend John Brands was sent to the Cape to replace Boullier.⁵² The number of adults (viz., those who had made their first communion) was, at Cape Girardeau and vicinity, forty-three; of those who had not made their first communion about the same; in all about eighty-six persons.

April 2nd, 1838. Mary, the wife of Mister John Doyle, was baptized *sub conditione* [conditionally] and on the same day, Easter Sunday, she made her first communion.⁵³ April 29, 1838, the Right Reverend Joseph Rosati, bishop of Saint Louis, gave confirmation at the Cape to ten persons, among whom were three converts, viz., Missis Doyle, Missis William Watson, and Missis [Louise Ann] Garaghty. This was the first time confirmation was administered at the Cape. April 30th, 1838, Bishop Rosati laid and blessed the cornerstone of the new church, assisted by Timon, Brands, and Rosti. A very numerous assemblage of people of all denominations were in attendance and behaved with great respect and attention. The bishop preached a long sermon in

Communion with Mary Doyle on Palm Sunday, 8 April 1838 (Brands to Timon, 11 April 1838, AUND, roll 2; cf. note 53).

⁵²Boullier had left the Cape in June 1837 (cf. note 50). To judge by the Baptismal Register (SVDP), Rosti administered the parish until Brands arrived in February or March 1838.

⁵³Mary (Palmer) Doyle, a convert from Methodism, was baptized on Palm Sunday, 8 April 1838 (Baptismal Register, SVDP).

which he explained the meaning of the ceremonies used at the blessing and laying of [a] cornerstone. Mister Andrew Gibony (not a Catholic) gave the breadth of twenty feet of the two lots adjoining ours for the purpose of building the church thereon. On the same day the bishop baptized the wife of Miles Doyle and rehabilitated their marriage.

May 1st, Reverend Rosti left the Cape and a short time after the Reverend John Alabau was sent as companion to Brands, but [he] only remained until the feast of Saint Vincent, 19 July 1838.

May 29th, 1838. Reverend Brands crossed the Big Swamp to bury Moses Byrne. He found there a large number of people collected for the occasion. Before going to the burying ground, Brands explained the meaning of the [ceremonies] performed at the funeral and the doctrine of purgatory and prayers for the dead and, after having returned to the house, he gave an explanation of the principal points of the Catholic doctrine. This lasted about two hours. All were attentive and pleased. He here baptized the youngest son of Mister Byrne and two of his grandchildren.⁵⁴

The people of this neighborhood were opposed to the Protestants and [were] particularly displeased with the Methodist preachers who had been among them, and, being well pleased with what they had heard of the Catholic religion (this was the first time they had ever heard a Catholic priest), they requested Brands to return among

⁵⁴In addition to burying Moses Byrne and baptizing the three children, Brands reported that "Mrs. Byrne desires to be instructed with her family" (Brands to Timon, 31 March 1838, AUND, roll 2).

them and preach.⁵⁵ To this he agreed and promised to visit them from time to time.

August 29th. Mister Brands being across the swamp, he preached there for the third time and, hearing that a neighbor of Missis Byrne, named John Calhoun, was dangerously ill, and remembering that said gentleman had always listened to the instructions with great interest, and that he had even asked for books to instruct himself, Brands went to visit Calhoun and found him so well disposed and instructed by reading the book lent to him that, after some exhortations, he baptized the good man that same night, and next morning left the sick man very much comforted and resigned. He also baptized at this time a grandchild of Moses Byrne.⁵⁶

October 18th Father Brands baptized James Jones, who had instructed himself in the Catholic faith.⁵⁷ About a year after, this good man died in fine dispositions and gave great edification during his sickness — R.I.P.

October 22, 1838.⁵⁸ Our day school, named Saint Vincent's Male Academy, was opened with only a few scholars.⁵⁹ Mister Michael Flinn was the first teacher.

⁵⁵Brands himself noted that "the people there seem to be well disposed" (Brands to Timon, 31 March 1838, AUND, roll 2).

⁵⁶The child was baptized on 30 August 1838 (Baptismal Register, SVDP).

⁵⁷Jones, a convert from Methodism, was actually baptized on 8 October 1838 (Baptismal Register, SVDP).

⁵⁸The editor has rearranged the order of the following four paragraphs to bring them into proper time sequence. This and the following paragraph appear in the manuscript after those beginning "November 2nd" and "During this year."

⁵⁹Brands had tried to open the school on the previous Wednesday, 17 October, but no students came. Several reasons accounted for this. The

October 23rd. The Sisters of Loretto from Bethlehem Convent, Perry county, arrived at the Cape, seven in number with six boarders whom they brought with them. The sisters were lodged in our house where they remained until July of the next year. The priests removed to the small house on the opposite side of the street, which had been lately purchased from Mister Jones. In July the sisters removed to the house purchased for them from Mister John Doyle. The good sisters commenced their school in the new house with as little human prospects as we had commenced our school for boys. Many of the citizens were still very much prejudiced against us. John McLane, a Presbyterian preacher, did all in his power to oppose our schools, and for this purpose he opened a school for boys and girls. However, his preaching and teaching so much displeased the people that he lost all popularity and had, after some time, to give up his school and pulpit.⁶⁰ Both our schools increased gradually and were the cause of great good in the way of removing prejudice.

November 2nd, the Reverend Brands, at the request of John Doyle, paid a visit to the family of Mister Scarlet

weather was foul that day. Many students preferred to start school at the beginning of the week rather than midway through it. Some thought the tuition was too high. Others had registered at the rival school run by the Presbyterian minister, John McLane. The actual number of students who enrolled at the academy on 22 October is unknown but Brands had predicted that the school would "have few scholars at the beginning" (Brands to Timon, 19 October 1838, AUND, roll 2).

⁶⁰Brands reported that the anti-Catholic party in town, "the number of which [was] comparatively small," enjoyed some success in a drive to have children enroll at McLane's school. "I am happy to state," wrote Brands, "that, from what I have heard, this school will not lasten [sic] long, the teacher is not very populař..." (Brands to Timon, 19 October 1838, AUND, roll 2).

Glascoek. Two of his children were very ill. Glascoek permitted the children to be baptized. One of the children died in a short time and is now in bliss. The family of Mister Glascoek were strong Methodists, but since the death of their child they inclined to be Catholics.

During this year four marriages have been rehabilitated,⁶¹ and several children of Protestants have been baptized. The number of paschal communions at the church of Saint Vincent, Cape Girardeau, was thirty-five. Three of these were first communions.

At the station of Jackson, where mass was celebrated once a month, the number of those who had made their first communion was fourteen, [the number] of those who had not made it [was] eighteen, thirty-two [in all]. The number of adults and communicants at the station [in] Tywappity Bottom⁶² was fourteen, [the number] of non-communicants [was] thirteen, twenty-seven [in all]. Paschal communions in all the missions were fifty-one. During the year there had been five deaths in the three places, viz., three adults and two children.

1839

The number of adults in the congregation of Cape Girardeau at the commencement of this year was fifty-eight...many of these had not made their first communion.

⁶¹Church records indicate that three, not four, marriages were ratified (Baptismal Register, 23 April [two marriages] and 12 May 1838, SVDP). One of these couples, Joseph and Virginia Knott, may have been married originally by the Baptist minister (cf. note. 46).

⁶²Tywappity Bottom is an extensive lowland, lying along the Mississippi River and stretching from the Scott County hills on the north to the Saint James Bayou on the south. There was a settlement called Tywappity, situated near the river and about eleven miles below Commerce (Houck, *History of Missouri*, 2:162).

The number of communicants at Jackson was twelve; those who had not made their first communion [numbered] eighteen; paschal communions [totaled] nine. At Tywappity Bottom [there were] twenty-two communicants, four [of them] first communions. So that in the three places the paschal communions [numbered] seventy-five. The deaths at the three places were ten: two children, eight adults. [The number of marriages [was] five.

January 11th, 1839. Mister William Watson, son-in-law of Esther [Bradly] Thorn, above-mentioned, being very ill, desired to be received into the Church. Reverend Brands, after instructing him, heard his confession and baptized him *sub conditione* [conditionally]. He recovered and remains a fervent and exemplary Catholic yet (August 24, 1861).

February 3rd, 1839. Brands was called to the farm of Missis Hannah Smith where he instructed and baptized several persons of colour, some children and adults. Owing to the opposition of the parents and not to cause trouble to the children, some were baptized privately and remained Catholics until the age to act for themselves.⁶³

New church finished at Cape Girardeau

July 21st, 1839. Right [Reverend] Bishop Rosati of Saint Louis consecrated the new church, a neat stone building with cut stone front and a neat steeple....There were as yet no pews and only a few benches. There were more than five hundred persons assembled from every direction and of all denominations. Whilst the ceremonies were performed with closed doors, the Very Reverend John Timon addressed the large assembly in the open air on the meaning of the

⁶³Brands baptized three slaves: one adult named Ned and two children, one aged three years and the other fourteen months, all of them servants of Smith (Baptismal Register, 3 February 1839, SVDP). The visit to Smith occurred on a mission tour to Commerce and Tywappity Bottom.

ceremonies of the consecration and dedication of the church then proceeding in the interior of the church. He also preached an appropriate sermon during the mass in his own happy and eloquent manner. A handsome collection was then taken up, which would have been much greater had it been previously made known. Solemn vespers were sung in the evening and the benediction given with [the] Blessed Sacrament. Here again Timon preached....His discourse was on a moral subject and very moving. All were deeply impressed with the necessity of leading a holy and moral life. On this day Timon baptized the child of Mister John Morrison and a son of Miles Doyle. Mister John Hutchin's son was also baptized.⁶⁴

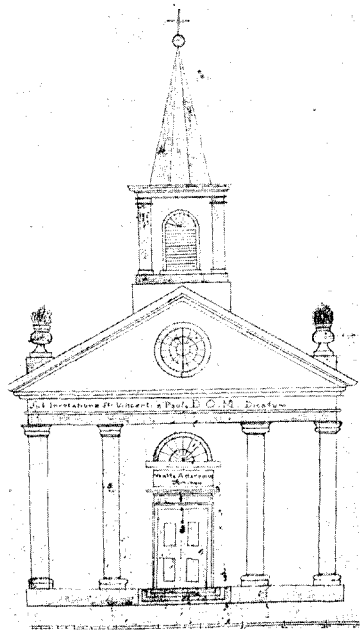
July 22nd, the bishop gave confirmation to six persons,⁶⁵ three of whom were converts. Mister William Watson on this same day made his first communion and was confirmed. On this same day Missis Catherine Massy, a daughter of Esther [Bradly] Thorn, being moved by the conversion of her mother and by the sermons of the preceding day, applied to be baptized but, as she was not sufficiently instructed, this was postponed. She prepared and after full instruction she was baptized some weeks later.⁶⁶

⁶⁴Timon baptized a son of Morrison and a daughter of Doyle. Brands supplied the ceremonies for Catherine Juliann Hutchins whom he had previously baptized on account of danger of death (Baptismal Register, 21 July 1839, SVDP).

⁶⁵Bishop Rosati says that he confirmed seven people (Diary, 22 July 1839, copy, DRMA, Rosati papers). Church records, however, list only six (Baptismal Register, 22 July 1839, SVDP).

⁶⁶Massy was baptized on 22 September 1839 (Baptismal Register, SVDP).

Architect's plan for the facade of Saint Vincent de Paul church at Cape Girardeau as it appears in a letter from John Timon to Jean-Baptiste Etienne, 26 May 1838 (courtesy of the Archives of the University of Notre Dame).



September 8th, the Reverend Brands visited a poor family living in one of the houses belonging to the Congregation [of the Mission]. They were in great misery. Some pious ladies visited this poor family and gave them clothes and food. The next day the mother, who had been well instructed whilst at the convent in Kentucky, was baptized with her two children.⁶⁷ The mother and infant died a few days after.

September 15th, 1839. Reverend Brands, by permission of the Very Reverend John Timon, blessed the chapel of Saint Francis of Sales⁶⁸ and the graveyard attached to it in

⁶⁷McGerry seems to suggest that the baptisms occurred on 9 September. In fact, Mary Ann Henkerson and her two daughters were baptized on 8 September 1839 (Baptismal Register, SVDP).

⁶⁸Brands had recommended to Timon that the church be dedicated to Saint Thomas because Thomas Tucker, one of the first settlers in that area, had virtually built it himself. The church was situated on farmland that the

Tywappity Bottom, Scott County, Missouri, about two hundred persons [were] present. They were all pleased with the two sermons preached by Brands on the occasion. Every time mass was said at that place the number of persons present was large and [all] were respectful and very attentive.

Reverend Mister Brands baptized Mary Jane Rourke, a boarder at the convent;⁶⁹ this was at the request of her father who was an Irishman living at Fort Adams, Missouri. William Byrne, son of Moses Byrne, residing across the Big Swamp, was very ill and, though a grown man, had not been baptized. Reverend Mister [John] Healy, in the absence of Brands, went and baptized Byrne.⁷⁰

November 10th 1839. Brands, having previously instructed the two elder daughters of Scarlet Glascock and his niece, baptized them and also the daughter of Doctor

Vincentians had purchased in 1833 from Ralph Daugherty (Brands to Timon, 3 September 1839, AUND, roll 2; Deed of Transfer, Daugherty to Tornatore, 28 March 1833, DRMA, II-C[MO]-3, box 21; List of Vincentian Landholdings, *ibid.*, box 5).

⁶⁹Rourke was baptized on 22 September 1839 (Baptismal Register, SVDP).

⁷⁰The baptism occurred on 21 October 1839 (Baptismal Register, SVDP). Healy was a secular priest who taught at the academy (Brands to Timon, 3 September 1839, AUND, roll 2; Thaddeus Amat to Jean-Baptiste Nozo, 1 July 1841, *ibid.*). In the spring of 1840 Brands reported to Timon that Healy was growing too familiar with a few families at the Cape. Brands also remarked that he had "heard some hints from others, that there is commencing some opposition party against Mr. [Michael] Collins [the assistant pastor] and me, though I expect it is nothing but talk" (Brands to Timon, 8 May 1840 *ibid.*). The situation became aggravated during the winter of 1841 and in spring Brands recommended that Healy be removed (same to same, 1 February 1841, *ibid.*; same to same, 16 April 1841, *ibid.*). Late in the summer Timon, who was Vicar General of the diocese, transferred Healy to the college^z at the Barrens (cf. James Burlando to same, 4 August 1841, *ibid.*).

Thomas Byrne.⁷¹ December 4th, 1839, the Reverend Brands, having heard that old Missis [Rebecca] Gibony was very ill, went to visit her and in the course of conversation found that she had been a very strict Methodist, but she was not satisfied in mind. Brands instructed her. He soon found that she had been reading our book and was a Catholic at heart. She expressed a desire to be baptized in the Catholic Church. The following day Brands baptized her *sub conditione* [conditionally], heard her confession, and gave her holy communion and extreme unction.⁷² She lived only a few days and was very patient and edified all by her holy death. She departed this life in the eightieth year of her age. December 12th Brands baptized two children of Andrew Gibony at the request of their mother.

Since the consecration of our church and now that we had service regularly and that the service was performed in every way conformable to the rites of the Church, prejudices were greatly removed. Many expressed a desire to become Catholics and conversions were very numerous; and our schools, notwithstanding the constant opposition, were gaining public estimation, and the number of scholars was daily increasing.⁷³

⁷¹The Byrne baptism does not appear in register. Following the entries for the Glascock children, the register holds the following incomplete entry: "On the tenth day of November eighteen hundred and thirty nine [*sic*] I the undersigned R.C. priest have baptized..." (Baptismal Register, SVDP).

⁷²McGerry's account suggests that Gibony was baptized on 5 December. In fact, she was baptized on 4 December 1839 (Baptismal Register, SVDP).

⁷³In September 1839 Brands reported that the Sisters of Loretto had eight boarders and a like number of day students. The Male Academy had nine students and five or six more who were out sick (Brands to Timon, 27 September 1839, AUND, roff 2). In the spring of 1840 Brands considered the fate of the academy sealed for want of a geography professor. One of the

1840

The number of communicants this year at Cape Girardeau was sixty-nine, [the number] of non-communicants [was] eighty-two. Communicants at Jackson [were] sixteen. At Tywappity Bottom [there were] twenty-five communicants. The number of first communions at the three places was nineteen. [The] number of Easter communions at Cape Girardeau [was] seventy-six, at Jackson eleven, at Tywappity Bottom thirty-seven, [a] total [of] 124. Wonderful increase in a few years.⁷⁴

Mister John Atwell, [his] wife, and child (converts) were all baptized by Mister Brands at their own request.⁷⁵ This good family had been long convinced of the truth of the Catholic religion but the edifying [death of] a relation obtained for them the grace to overcome all human respect, the great cause of many not acting up to their convictions. Many others were encouraged by this good example.

February 14th. Elizabeth Johnson, a daughter [of] John Curry Watson, notwithstanding her conviction of the truth, had always deferred being baptized; but, falling

students wished to pursue that subject but none of the teachers felt qualified to instruct him. "I am ashamed to tell him this," related Brands, "besides, it would be almost a death blow to our school, which has continually to struggle with opposition" (same to same, 23 April 1840, *ibid.*).

⁷⁴McGerry mentions only the parish at the Cape and the mission stations at Jackson and Tywappity Bottom. By September 1839, however, Brands had preached occasionally at Benton and in May of 1840 Collins had initiated regular visits to Cairo, Illinois (Brands to Timon, 3 September 1839, AUND, roll 2; same to same, 23 April 1840, *ibid.*). By the summer of 1841 the Catholics of Benton were prepared to build a chapel if the Vincentians would pay regular visits (Hector Figari to same, 13 July 1841, *ibid.*).

⁷⁵John and Elizabeth Atwell together with their daughter, Nancy Jane, were baptized on 16 February 1840 (Baptismal Register, SVDP). He was the son of Ellen Atwell (cf. page 257). Both John and Elizabeth died in the summer of 1841 (Liber Defunctorum, 26 August and 19 September 1841, SVDP).

dangerously sick, she sent for the priest and was baptized with her child.⁷⁶ A lady present wished to be baptized but, not being instructed, she was put off until the 8th of March. She was then baptized together with a son of Charles Thorn of Illinois.⁷⁷ Charles Thorn was a son of Esther Bradly [Thorn], mentioned before. He was also desirous to be baptized; also his half-sister, Missis Thompson.

April 5th, 1840. The Right Reverend Bishop Joseph Rosati arrived here accompanied by Reverend John Odin, on their way to New Madrid; and, as the bishop was to start shortly for Europe, Brands requested him to give confirmation at the Cape on their return trip from New Madrid. The 5th of April was appointed for this day.⁷⁸ Reverend Brands prepared all those whom he could collect together. On the appointed morning, eleven persons were present, six of whom were to make their first communion. But the bishop being detained on his way, they were disappointed for that day. All heard mass and went to communion and kept themselves in readiness for the arrival of the bishop.⁷⁹ The good bishop arrived during the night.

⁷⁶Elizabeth Johnson and her son, Theodore, were baptized on 24 February 1840 (Baptismal Register, SVDP).

⁷⁷The woman was Harrietta Hancock and the boy was Solomon Thorn (Baptismal Register, 8 March 1840, SVDP).

⁷⁸Rosati and Odin spent the night of 26-27 March 1840 at the Cape on their way to New Madrid and Cairo. It seems that the confirmation was set for 1 April (cf. note 79). They did not arrive back at the Cape, however, until three A.M. on 2 April and the confirmation took place at seven the same morning (Rosati, Diary, 26 March to 2 April 1840; Baptismal Register, 2 April 1840, SVDP).

⁷⁹Although in this paragraph McGerry twice observes that the Confirmation was set for 5 April, in the next paragraph he correctly notes that the first Communion took place on 1 April.

Word was sent immediately to all and they came early the next day to the church. The bishop, although much exhausted with fatigue, said mass, confirmed all, and gave them a very touching discourse. Among the eleven confirmed were six converts.

April 19th, 1840. Being Easter Sunday, we had twenty-two communions at early mass, the greatest number ever had at one time in this place. Among these were three converts who were not prepared to make their first communion on the first of April. April 3rd Reverend Mister Brands was called for by a sick woman in the Big Bend⁸⁰ who had never seen a Catholic priest and was totally ignorant of the Catholic religion. He instructed her and baptized herself and child.⁸¹

May 24th, Missis Massy, who could not be notified in time of the bishop's arrival, made her first communion with one other at the convent. June 14th, Missis Hancock, who was baptized the 8th of March but was until now deterred from complying with the duties of her religion by the persuasions of the enemies of our religion and [was] given up by the Catholics as a lost sheep,...overcame all these temptations and approached the holy table for the first time and was ever after a fervent and zealous Catholic.

July 8th. His Grace, Charles Augustus Mary Joseph de Forbin Janson, bishop of Nancy and Toul in France, who for political reasons, being a relative of Charles the X, had been exiled by Louis Philip of Orleans from his diocese and was now making a tour of the United States as missionary, arrived here at midnight accompanied by the Very

⁸⁰Big Bend is an area that lies in a curve of the Mississippi River just above Cape Girardeau.

⁸¹The two were Catherine^z Reinhart and her son, Benjamin (Baptismal Register, 19 April 1840, SVDP).

Reverend Timon. His main object was to see this place and to start from this place by the first steamer for Saint Louis, as he was to give confirmation on the following Sunday at Carondelet, Missouri. But as some persons had been disappointed by the sudden arrival of Bishop Rosati and were not ready then for confirmation, Bishop Forbin Janson consented to remain and to give confirmation at this place. After a few hours rest, he celebrated mass for those to be confirmed and gave them a very touching instruction in French, which Reverend Mister Brands interpreted in English. The good bishop gave benediction with the Blessed Sacrament in the evening. [On] July 17th, those who had been confirmed went to holy communion.⁸² They were eight in all and all converts. Elizabeth Jane Johnson and Henry Pinkley made their first communion. The good bishop paid several visits and edified by his amiable and zealous manner all those with whom he conversed. His description of the Holy Land and the holy places at and around Jerusalem, which he had lately visited, made a very great impression on all, hearing these things from an eyewitness of all he related. Janson started the next day for Saint Louis.

August 28th. Missis Jane Glascock, the wife of Scarlet Glascock, after full instruction was baptized *sub conditione* [conditionally] and made her first communion. Our holy religion made great progress under the zealous Mister Brands who was very much esteemed in this place. During the month of May 1841 Brands was sent to Sainte Genevieve where obedience called him. The cause of this change was to make place for the novitiate of the Lazarists [Vincentians] in this country.

⁸²The confirmation itself took place on 17 July 1840 (Baptismal Register, SVDP).

April 20th 1841. It would seem that our Lord had in his goodness great designs for Cape Girardeau. All was arranged to remove the novitiate from the Barrens to the Cape. On the 20th May 1841 early in the morning, all was prepared after mass and an early breakfast. The baggage waggons were started and Reverend Mister [Joseph] Paquin, superior of [the] seminary at [the] Barrens, Reverend Thaddeus Amat as master of novices, with Reverend John Francis McGerry and Mister John Larkin as novices and three lay brother novices⁸³ set out on horseback. All arrived safe at the Cape the same day. We found Very Reverend Timon on the spot ready to receive us with Reverends Brands and [Michael] Collins. All was soon arranged [and] a chapel [was] prepared upstairs in the old house near the church.

In a few days after our arrival here, we were joined by Reverend Mister [Anthony] Andrieux⁸⁴ and Mister Patrick Morrison, novices from the seminary of [Bayou] Lafourche, Parish of Assumption, Louisiana. There were now two priests, two students, and three brothers in the novitiate. At this same date last year, McGerry was alone in the novitiate. Since this date, the number has been always on the increase. All the exercises of the novitiate were most exactly followed.⁸⁵ Reverend Hector Figari was superior of

⁸³Amat says that there were only four novices: McGerry, Larkin, and two brothers, one of whom had already completed his novitiate but would not take vows because he wanted to make a European voyage (Amat to Nozo, 27 May 1841, AUND, roll 3).

⁸⁴McGerry spells the name "Andrie" but the above is correct.

⁸⁵The American notion of what constituted exact observance of the rules differed markedly from the European standard. In June 1841 Thomas Burke visited the novitiate and reported to Timon that "the novices are as well

the house from this time. The ceremonies of the church were performed with greater solemnity and the service was well attended. In the year 1842 the same house was destined to be a preparatory seminary for those who had a desire to embrace the ecclesiastical state. Reverend Mister [Michael] Domenec was made superior of this institution and Reverend James Rolando master of novices.

The day school and the preparatory seminary were prospering. During this year it was decided [to] build a college for seculars at Cape Girardeau and then remove the novitiate and little seminary to the Barrens. The bricks were prepared during this [year] and timber for the new college.

In the spring of 1843, as early as the frost would permit, the stone foundation was commenced. The basement story [was] eight and a half [feet] in the clear, and the walls [were] four feet solid masonry and cut marble front, one hundred feet long by fifty wide, three stories above the basement. This building was carried on without any interruption. [It] was roofed in November 1843 and in May 1844 the college was nearly finished. But as Figari had [fore]-told in March,

pleased and as regular as they are in any house in Europe....Mr. Larkin has told me that he would rather live under the regular discipline of Mr. Amat at the Cape on one meal a day, than feast in the Barrens as he was" (Thomas Burke to Timon, 26 June 1841, AUND, roll 3). Amat, a Spaniard who was only two and a half years in this country, saw things quite otherwise. He thought that American Vincentians were "inclined to give a little too much dissipation to the novices, saying that the circumstances of the country demand it so." He, however, was "inclined to believe everything to the contrary because the dangers [in America were] too great" (Amat to Nozo, 27 May 1841, *ibid.*). He complained twice to the Superior General about how difficult it was to induce the novices to a spirit of regularity (*ibid.*; same to same, 1 July 1841, *ibid.*). In August 1841 Amat asked Timon either to appoint a new Novice Master or to take effective measures to remedy the situation "because...the observance of the Rules instead of going forward does nothing but get worse and worse" (same to Timon, 2 August 1841, *ibid.*).

when he was in Louisiana, that the college would remove to the Cape in May, the groceries for the year were landed at the Cape. Consequently, it was resolved by Figari to set out for the Cape and take possession of the new college. The refectory was not floored or plastered, no doors [were] made, no benches or desks [were] prepared, [and there was] not a bed or a bedstead in the house. The order [to] pack up was given. A large number of waggons [was] engaged. Beads, books, clothes, etc., etc., were soon in boxes and on Monday⁸⁶ morning at three A.M. the line of march commenced. Figari started at the head. The collegians (to the number of seventy-five), in waggons, followed. Then [came] the professors, and the prefect, Reverend McGerry, on horseback, brought up the rear.⁸⁷

All started in great glee, the band playing lively airs as we passed through Perryville. During the morning all went on very cheerfully. At twelve-thirty all halted [at] a creek

⁸⁶The date was 13 May 1844 (McGerry to Timon, 9 June 1844, AUND, roll 3).

⁸⁷McGerry was an unwilling partner in this move. He had spent more than a year with Figari at the college in the Barrens and their relationship had become strained. McGerry felt that his Superior, who had been busy with preparations at the Cape, had neglected his responsibility at home. The prefect felt unsupported and beset by the difficulties of running the college practically by himself. Three weeks before the move to Cape, McGerry complained to Timon, "...for the past week I have been left alone in the college. No assistant prefect and the one I have is as good as none. The 1st prefect has to do all....No Superior for three months or one that was of no use as far as concerned the College. I dread to go to the Cape with Mr. F[igari]. for Sup[er]io[r]. [H]e has made himself so many enemies there and still more here that I fear the result....Mr. F. has no confidence in me and I have less in him so that it prevents us from doing good together." McGerry asked to be transferred to Texas where he could work with Bishop Odin and Father Paquin (McGerry to Timon, 22 April 1844, AUND, roll 3).

about half way⁸⁸ where we had an abundant dinner of cold ham and cold roast beef. All did justice to the dinner. Reverend Figari and a good number set off early, leaving the prefect to see to the provisions and to bring up the rear. Some began to lag behind and lost their waggons. This caused the last waggons to be crowded and overloaded. Consequently, our march was retarded and, when about two miles from the Cape, we were caught by a thunderstorm. The rain fell in torrents. We were all drenched to the skin. It became so dark that the drivers could no longer see the road. They were forced to take the horses from the waggons and the collegians had to proceed on foot about a mile, when we came to a poor log house where we took shelter. But as our provisions were still behind, we had to content ourselves by making a large fire in the cabin and dry ourselves by the fire. All were cheerful and made the best of our position for the night. As soon as they were dried all, from fatigue, were soon sound asleep on the floor. The horses were better off, for they had a good barn to protect them from the storm.

Early next morning we were moving by time [*sic* for *betimes*] and all in good spirit. Some thirty-five in all set off for the Cape where they arrived, dirty and fatigued, for breakfast which was provided for them by Reverend Figari at the house of the novitiate near the church. During the day, mattresses were arranged on the floor in the spacious dormitories of the new college. The iron bedsteads from Pittsburgh did [not] arrive for more than a week. The priests' rooms were not furnished; they had to sleep for some nights on pallets on the floor. The doors were not as yet made for the rooms, but after some weeks all was in order. The

⁸⁸Probably either Hughes or Buckeye Creek near present day Shawneetown.

classes commenced on the Friday after our arrival. Desks were made rapidly and chairs [were] procured for each student.⁸⁹

The number of scholars increased every day.⁹⁰ All was going on prosperously. This was a season of continual rain. The river began to rise rapidly in June and continued rising until the first of July.⁹¹ Such an overflow of the Mississippi had never been seen. It passed the banks and overflowed all the lowlands. The water was from eight to ten feet [deep] all over the Big Swamp. In front of the college the river was eight miles wide and to ten feet deep. The college, being [on] high ground, had nothing to fear.

Our college farm in the swamp was all under water for more than three weeks. All the fine crop of corn and potatoes [was] lost; the fences all [were] swept away; many hogs [were] lost and some horn[ed] cattle. When the water

⁸⁹McGerry informed Timon that, because of the lack of preparations at the Cape, there was at first great discontent among the students. By early June living conditions had improved and the grumbling began to subside. One basic need, however, was yet unfulfilled. The "*necessaries*" (outhouses) were still under construction and would not be completed until late in the month. Complaints about Figari continued. McGerry reported that the latter not only acted as President but he also interfered in the business of the prefect and treasurer, much to the confusion of all beneath him (McGerry to Timon, 9 June 1844, AUND, roll 3). Anthony Verrina, McGerry's assistant prefect, also expressed discontent with Figari's meddling in disciplinary matters (Anthony Verrina to same, 9 June 1844, *ibid.*).

⁹⁰This does not seem to have been the case. McGerry states above that seventy-five collegians made the trip from the Barrens but within a month he informed Timon that there were only sixty-three students at the Cape (McGerry to Timon, 9 June 1844, AUND, roll 3).

⁹¹In fact, by early June McGerry had reported that the river was "now beginning to return within its banks" (McGerry to Timon, 9 June 1844, AUND, roll 3).

subsided, it was too late to sow anything for this season. All that could be done was to repair the fencing around some fields and sow wheat and grass for the next year. This was done.

Now comes the worst, the consequences of the overflow. The bad effluvia from the deposit left by the overflow caused great sickness. There were at one time after the vacation in September more than forty persons sick with chills and fever or bilious fever. For some weeks there were not five persons in the house well enough to nurse the sick. The prefect, Reverend McGerry, and Brother [Pius] Borgese were the only persons not sick.⁹² Good Mister Figari had the chills every day and as soon as the fever abated he was busy assisting to comfort the sick.⁹³ Two physicians were in constant attendance. Happily we had no deaths. As the cold weather set in the sickness abated, but this had for some time a bad effect abroad. However, in time it was found that the Cape was more healthy than many other places in the Valley of the Mississippi, and far more healthy immediately on the bank of the river than at some distance from it. The students were pleased with the location and the boys from

⁹²Actually, the prefect did succumb. In September Thomas Burke told Timon "...we are all in a very bad fix, every priest in the house is sick with the exception of Mr. Cercos and Stewart...Mr. McGerry was taken very suddenly with a kind of colera [*sic*] morbus accompanied with severe vomiting [*sic*]. He is now better" (Burke to Timon, 7 September 1844, AUND, roll 3). McGerry fell ill again in late October or early November. Amat reported, "Mr. McGerry has been and is still very sick, and according to all probability, he will be sick for long time [*sic*], and will want longer time to recover" (Amat to same, 4 November 1844, *ibid.*, roll 4). McGerry's illness lasted through November (same to same, 21 November 1844, *ibid.*).

⁹³Figari was absent when the epidemic struck. When Burke told Timon of the sad condition of the house, he also asked the Provincial to inform Figari about the plight of his confreres at the Cape (Burke to Timon, 7 September 1844, AUND, roll 3).

the South were willing to come to the Cape. As the country around was not much settled, this left plenty of game which afforded them fine amusement on days of recreation.

In the month of October 1844 Figari resigned the presidency of the college and Reverend Thaddeus Amat was appointed president and superior.⁹⁴ Reverend Mister Francis Barbier [was made] his assistant. All was going on well. [There were] not more than forty boys, but the health was good. [There were] some few cases of chills. In November Barbier resigned the office of assistant and McGerry was named in his stead.⁹⁵ The college went on quietly during the fall and winter of 1844.⁹⁶ Some more boys came from the South.

Reverend Mister James Richini, a young and very talented priest who had been formerly a member of the bar in Genoa, Italy, had just finished his novitiate and was sent to Saint Vincent's College, but he was too austere to himself. He took the winter fever (or pleurisy) and in four days was a

⁹⁴Amat actually became Superior of the house in September (cf. Amat to Timon, 28 September 1844, AUND, roll 3).

⁹⁵In October Amat had informed Timon that the confreres were disturbed at Barbier's appointment as Assistant Superior. Many felt that he had contributed to the trouble during Figari's superiorship. For that, Timon had unwittingly rewarded him and, in effect, punished those who had suffered to maintain peace in the house (Amat to Timon, 25 October 1844, AUND, roll 4).

⁹⁶In this otherwise quiet winter, the college suffered near catastrophe. Fire struck in late December and Amat considered it providential that the building was not destroyed. A heavy rainfall the night before had filled the cistern with just enough water to quench the flames before they reached the roof. In the evening, water for supper had to be brought from the river. Damages were assessed at under \$100 (Amat to Timon, 27 December 1844, AUND, roll 4).

corpse.⁹⁷ The Reverend Jerome Cercos marked the place for his grave, the first opened at Saint Vincent's College. He was buried by Cercos and McGerry at three of P.M. on Good Friday 1845.⁹⁸ Reverend Cercos went through all the ceremonies of the office on Holy Saturday. [He] took sick at the altar on Easter Sunday and on the Wednesday after he was placed in the grave by the side of Richini by the Reverend McGerry, Amat being absent at Saint Louis.⁹⁹ McGerry took the winter fever next day and was at the point of death but, having a robust constitution, he recovered contrary to all expectations.¹⁰⁰

In May 1845 Reverend McGerry was sent to the seminary of [Bayou] LaFourche, Louisiana, and Reverends Michael Collins and John O'Reiley were recalled to the college. The college was now languishing. In the fall of 1845 Reverend Mister [Anthony] Penco was called to the college and

⁹⁷Writing shortly after the event, McGerry said that Richini had been ill for eight days (McGerry to Timon, 29 March 1845, AUND, roll 4). Amat reported that the illness had lasted ten to twelve days. Richini died on Holy Thursday, 20 March 1845 (Amat to same, 23 April 1845, *ibid.*).

⁹⁸This must mean that Cercos and McGerry actually dug the grave, because Amat conducted the obsequy (Liber Defunctorum, 21 March 1845, SVDP).

⁹⁹In fact, Cercos died at two A.M. on Friday, 28 March 1845. McGerry buried him on Saturday (McGerry to Timon, 29 March 1845, AUND, roll 4; Liber Defunctorum, 29 March 1845, SVDP).

¹⁰⁰McGerry may have compressed the facts in this last statement because on 31 March 1845, two days after the burial of Cercos, McGerry complained only of a headache and of feeling unwell. At the time, he was almost singlehandedly running the college and tending to the sick, hardly the activity of one on the point of death (McGerry to Timon, 31 March 1845, AUND, roll 4).

replaced Amat,¹⁰¹ who went to the Barrens as superior of that house. Reverend [John] Peter Chandy was called from [Saint Thomas Seminary in] Kentucky to take the office of procurator or treasurer of Saint Vincent's College. The number of students began to increase. During the years 1845 and 1846 everything went on quietly: nothing particular[ly] worthy of remark.¹⁰² The number of students [was] still on the increase.

In the fall of 1847 Reverend Mister Timon was named bishop of Buffalo, State of New York. He accepted and, previous to his leaving the office of visitor, he recalled McGerry to the college to take his old post of prefect of discipline which he has filled now for fifteen years at Mount Saint Mary's [in] Emmitsburg, Saint Mary's College [in] Baltimore, at [the] Barrens [in] Perry County, and at Cape Girardeau until September of 1852—in all twenty years of prefectship. In October 1847 McGerry arrived at the college. Penco [was] still president; Chandy [was] procurator; and O'Reiley [was] secretary of the board. The college was now on the increase (the health good and the collegians all in

¹⁰¹Shortly after arriving at the Cape, Penco wrote to the Superior General that he had found "a community that was more like a corpse in the process of decay than a body animated by the same spirit" (Anthony Penco to Jean-Baptiste Etienne, 23 November 1845, DRMA, Penco papers, vol. 1).

¹⁰²This summary statement is misleading. McGerry was in Louisiana and was unaware that Chandy had discovered \$14,000 to \$15,000 in unrecorded debts. (Penco to James Burlando, 17 February 1846, AUND, roll 4). The faculty was again torn by dissension and division. Penco pleaded with Timon, "I hope you will have some efficient remedy in store for checking such an inveterated [*sic*] cancer, which corrodes this community; half measures seem to be useless....All we want now is peace among ourselves and some help in money" (same to Timon, 24 March 1846, *ibid.*). The financial crisis dragged on for some time but Timon, through a personal visit and a stern warning, had brought a fragile truce to the house (same to same, 10 June 1846, *ibid.*). By September, however, internal strife was again in full swing (same to same, 21 September 1846, *ibid.*).

good dispositions) and everything was going harmoniously. We thought we had passed our time of trial, but not so. It would seem that we were to be something great at this place, if trials and afflictions are the proof of heaven's favor. On the night of 4th February 1848 we had a terrible disaster.

The steamboat *Sea Bird* had been tied up in front of the college some days past, prevented by the ice from proceeding to Saint Louis. She took fire on the 4th of February, having on board 1500 kegs of powder. About midnight the captain made the fact known at the college of the quantity of powder. The students had time to quit the college and to go about two miles into the country. The explosion was terrific. Every door and window in the college was dashed to pieces. The roof [was] raised some inches and then settled nearly in its former place. The plastering on all the rooms of the college was broken and thrown down. The college appeared [to] be a complete wreck. Happily the weather on the 5th [of] February was very fine. The windows were closed with linen blankets, and on the 7th classes went on as usual. There was no glass in the Cape. We had to send to Saint Louis. All was soon glazed. Carpenters soon repaired the broken doors. The plastering could not be repaired before summer. By July the house was all as good as new. The walls were so solid that the shock had not the least effect on them.

There was nothing remarkable. The year [was] closed in July by a fine exhibition and distribution of premiums. The greater number of collegians returned to their families to spend the time of vacations. Those who remained to spend the vacation at college were sent in company with the first prefect about twenty miles from the college where they camped in the woods for three weeks to hunt and fish. They enjoyed themselves very much, found plenty of game, and returned to the college in good health.

September 1848. Reverend Penco [was] still president. The classes were continued much as last session, [and] the number of students [was] about the same as last year. Reverend Mister [Mariano] Maller was appointed visitor of the Congregation in place of Timon and [he was also] made president of the board of Saint Vincent's College. A large frame house was built for [a combination] tailor shop and clothes and trunk room. The building for [the] tailor shop, clothes, and trunk room was not built until 1849, September. An accident occurred at the roofing of this house. The scaffolding gave way and seven persons fell from the eve of the roof about thirty feet. Three were very much injured by the fall. Brother [Edward] Corry never recovered from his injuries; he lingered for about a year [and] then died. The others lingered for some months but recovered.

During the years 1849 and 1850 all went on prosperously in the college. During this year there were several conversions among the collegians. Reverend Mister Penco was very much beloved by the collegians and had a very happy turn to bring the students to practice their religious duties. We decided during this year to employ no more externs as professors. Experience proved that their influence was injurious to the discipline and good morals of the collegians.¹⁰³ During the years 1849 and 1850 there was nothing new.

¹⁰³As early as 1841 the college President had urged that only Vincentians serve on the faculty. This advice was several times repeated (Figari to Timon, 25 November 1841, AUND, roll 3; Amat to same, 2 January 1845, *ibid.*, roll 4; McGerry to same, 31 March 1845, *ibid.*). McGerry was the only one to offer explanation. In a letter of complaint to the Provincial, he wrote, "Another cause of our misery, is to have any employed in the college except our own [the externs] are always blaming what is done here and praising what they have seen else where [*sic*]" (McGerry to same, 31 March 1845, *ibid.*).

Everything went on in the usual routine of college life. Maller [was] still visitor and Penco [was] still president of [the] college. The number of students [was] about the same as last year. During this scholastic year Reverend Richard Hennessy from Texas came to Saint Vincent's College and was employed in the college. He taught the class of English rhetoric. There was question of changing Penco from the presidency of the college. The board wrote to the visitor exposing the injury it would be to the college to remove Penco at the present time. All went on well to the end of the year. [The] college [was] very prosperous.

The scholastic year of 1850 and 1851 commenced with great prospects, [a] full school, and the students all in very good dispositions. Reverend Anthony Penco was still president. Reverend Hennessy [was a] professor and Reverend James Knowd taught the classes of mathematics and natural philosophy. All was going on prosperously. The new house, finished and occupied during the last year, gave us ample room in the college. The pond south of the college was finished and the water [was] let in during October. This afforded the students fine amusement during the winter to skate and in summer a place for swimming and fishing, and besides the wild ducks made this a stopping place on their way south. During the first month after the water was let into the pond, the collegians killed over one hundred wild ducks on the pond. During the months of October and November, up to the ever to be remembered 27th November 1850.¹⁰⁴

The Hurricane of the 27th November 1850

On the 27th November 1850 at three o'clock of P.M. a most violent and destructive hurricane¹⁰⁵ passed over the city of

¹⁰⁴The sentence appears thus in the original.

¹⁰⁵What McGerry calls a hurricane was probably a tornado.

Cape Girardeau. The course of the storm was from the southwest to northeast. This storm was threatening for some hours. The day was very sultry and heavy dark clouds, flying in great confusion, portended something dreadful. The heavens seemed in great confusion and we were all expecting to see torrents of rain fall. We heard the roaring of the winds for more than an hour. When it came all was confusion and terror. It carried everything before it. Trees, fences, houses, everything was swept away from the face of the earth.

The roof of Saint Vincent's College was carried away and not a particle of it ever found. The walls of the southwest corner [were] thrown down to the second story, the gable ends [were] carried away, and all the chimneys [were] thrown down. The brick bake-house [was] in ruins. The large new two story frame house (used as tailor and shoemaker shop, trunk and clothes room) [was] razed to the ground. Two men who were in the garret of this house were blown more than fifty yards. One was not hurt, the other had his leg broken. There were four brothers caught under the floor of the second story, but happily the trunks and some large boxes saved them from being crushed to death. It was with difficulty that they were removed from the ruins, without any serious injury. They were sorely pressed and bruised. Not one in the college was injured in the least. Old Henry, a servant of the college (a coloured man), was found dead in the garden, being struck by a beam in the fall of the brick quarters for the negroes. His wife and daughter were in the same room but not hurt. Two only of the collegians who were outside the college at the time were hurt. These were severely bruised and were covered with wounds from being carried and rolled by the wind along with the ruins of houses and fences. They were found buried in the ruins of [the] Methodist meetinghouse which was on the opposite side of the street from the college. The Methodist meetinghouse,

near the corner of Spanish and [Morgan Oak]¹⁰⁶ streets, [was] swept from the face of the earth [with] scarcely a vestige of it left. Our fine stone church had the roof and steeple carried away and not a vestige of it found. The walls [were] down nearly to the ground. The two large frame houses near the church [were] in ruins. The fine painting of our saviour in the Garden of Olives was never found. The collegians and priests passed the night in the college yard. The night was cold and rainy.

It was resolved to send the collegians to their families. Consequently, the boys from Saint Louis started at ten o'clock, 28 November 1850, by steamboat in company with Reverend Hennessy. Those from the South started at four o'clock [the] same day on board [the] steamer *Alton*. These were fifty-two in number [and] accompanied by the prefects McGerry and Verrina. The convent near the college was entirely destroyed and a great portion of the houses in town [was] more or less injured. The students all arrived safe at their respective homes.

As soon as the students were disposed of the Reverend Misters Penco, Knowd, and Chandy had the ruins examined by a mason and soon decided to repair the college. The weather being fine, the work was commenced immediately and by the first of January 1851 the walls of the college were repaired and under roof. All the outhouses were replaced and on the 28th of March McGerry returned from Louisiana with thirty boys. Hennessy had returned the day previous with some boys from Saint Louis.

On the 31st March 1851 studies and classes recommenced with thirty-three boys and prospects for [a] larger number

¹⁰⁶McGerry has left blank ^z this street name. Based on the previous sentence, it was probably the present day Morgan Oak Street.

very soon. Penco was still the president. The college was more solid and substantial than before the storm. The bake-house, wash-house, [and] quarters for the servants were all rebuilt in brick. Chandy was very active and soon after the return of the students [he] had all the fences around the play grounds and garden replaced. Everything began to look cheering. The year went on well and closed with [an] exhibition and premiums as usual.¹⁰⁷



Everything that God gives us, or takes from us, always turns to our advantage since such is His good pleasure; it is our duty to conform to this holy Will of God, in which all our perfection and all our happiness should consist.

St. Vincent de Paul

¹⁰⁷The final three paragraphs are as follows:

1851 July. The river passed over its banks and all our swamp farm was inundated. A fine crop of wheat [was] lost and sixty acres of fine growing corn [were] destroyed. The fences [were] very much impaired [and] many rails [were] lost. The water was only ten feet less than the great flood of 1844.

We lost many fine hogs and some horned cattle, so that our poor college had suffered that year by wind and water.

Notwithstanding all these losses, it was resolved in council to rebuild the church and the workmen who had been hired for the year to work the farm were employed to clear away the ruins of the old stone church and on the same spot to rebuild a new church. The work went on rapidly and all was soon cleared and a large and deep foundation [was] dug out.