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The Eventful Life of Vicente de Paúl Andrade

BY
STAFFORD POOLE, C.M.

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century Mexico was rent by a bitter dispute over the historical nature of the apparitions of Guadalupe. There was a high cost in personal pain, ruined careers, and an often disedifying spectacle of churchmen in acrimonious disagreement. A key role in that controversy was played by Vicente de Paúl Andrade, who for seventeen years was a member of the Mexican province of the Congregation of the Mission. His life spanned a period of intellectual and religious turbulence both in the nation and in the Vincentian Community.

The Andrade Family and Vincentian Beginnings in Mexico

Andrade was born into a socially prominent family that had close connections with the Double Family of Saint Vincent de Paul. His father, Manuel Andrade y Pastor (1809-1848), was a celebrated physician and surgeon, and an uncle, José María Andrade, was a well known bibliographer and scholar. Manuel Andrade was born in Mexico City and graduated in 1831 from the National School of Surgery (*Escuela Nacional de Cirujía*), of which he was the last director in 1838. He was the first *catedático* (holder of a university chair) in surgery in the new *Establecimiento de Ciencias Médicas* in 1833. He also held the chairs of anatomy and operative medicine and was director of the Hospital de Jesús, a charitable institution founded by Fernando Cortés in the sixteenth century. He continued his medical studies in France for three years and to him is owed, together with the countess de la Cortina and two sisters, Faustina and Elena Fagoaga, the introduction of the Daughters of Charity into the hospitals of Mexico.¹ He died in the city of

¹ Vicente de Dios, *Historia de la familia vicentina en México, 1844-1894*, 2 vols. (Salamanca: Editorial CEME, 1993), 1: 53, 73.

Mexico of a malignant fever contracted while tending to the ill members of a general's family during the war with the United States.²

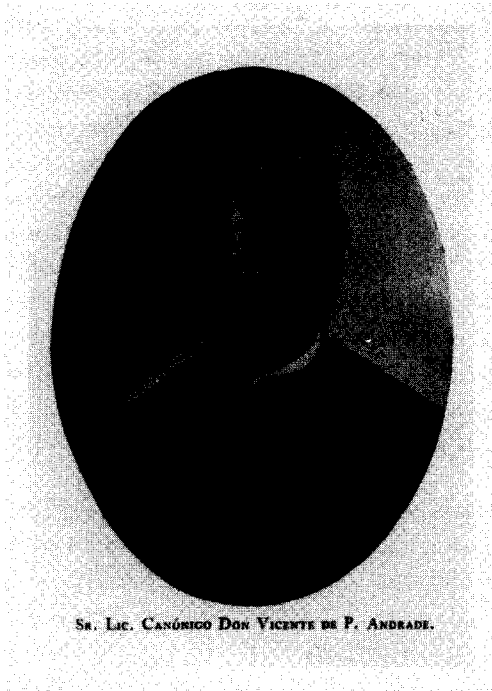
During his stay in France Andrade had come to know the Double Family of Saint Vincent de Paul, and he thought that they would meet the needs of Mexico, especially through the hospital work of the Daughters of Charity. Deeply devoted to Saint Vincent, he published a compendium of the saint's life and maxims, which he knew almost by heart, and he also sponsored the republication of a Spanish biography of the saint by Juan del Santísimo Sacramento, first published at Naples in 1701. He lobbied the archbishop of Mexico, Manuel Posada y Garduño, the president of Mexico, and various ministers to introduce the Daughters of Charity. After they were established, he undertook the establishment of the Saint Vincent de Paul Society, which he soon accomplished (December 1844).³

When the Daughters of Charity arrived in Mexico in 1844, they were accompanied by two Spanish Vincentians, Buenaventura Armengol and Ramón Sanz, as their chaplains and spiritual directors.⁴ Both made a favorable impression. The arrival of the Daughters and the two Vincentians was followed by calls for the Vincentian Community to come to Mexico. At a time when the older communities and orders seemed to be ineffective or in decline, the Mexican hierarchy was looking for younger, more fervent groups. Somewhat hyperbolically the bishop of Michoacán, Juan Cayetano Gómez de Portugal, later told one of the Vincentians, "The Congregation of the Mission has been called to Mexico to replace all the religious communities that have existed here up to now." Toward the end of 1844 the archbishop of Mexico wanted to establish a Vincentian house in his see. Early in 1845 Armengol asked the superior general, Jean-Baptiste Étienne, to send

² De Dios, *La familia vicentina*, 1: 72-73; *Diccionario Porrúa*, 106. Apparently De Dios believes the *Diccionario Porrúa* is mistaken in saying that he was tending to American soldiers.

³ De Dios, *La familia vicentina*, 1: 66.

⁴ Armengol had worked for some years in the United States. John Timon, the first American provincial, wrote of him that "with all his piety I have never been able to understand him in his trust in lay persons and in the financial ability with which he credits himself." Timon wrote this "as a warning for the good of the Congregation in Mexico." See *The American Vincentians: A Popular History of the Congregation of the Mission in the United States, 1815-1817*, ed. John E. Rybolt, C.M. (Brooklyn: New City Press, 1988), 112. At a later date he became provincial of the Spanish province and became involved in a dispute concerning the Daughters of Charity with the superior general, Jean-Baptiste Étienne, who expelled him from the Congregation.



Vicente de Paúl Andrade, C.M.
Courtesy of the author

six or seven Vincentians as soon as possible. He even talked about having some come from the United States.⁵

The bishops of Mexico were particularly interested in having the Vincentians work with priestly formation. The archbishop of Mexico wanted to give the community a seminary which was formerly the Jesuit novitiate. By the beginning of 1845 the bishop of Puebla was offering a church, a large house, and an endowment of 100,000 pesos.

The bishop of Querétaro was offering a seminary together with a retreat house, with an endowment of 50,000 pesos. In Silao the Vincentians were wanted for a retreat house and for instruction of ecclesiastics. It was, however, Doctor Andrade who took the concrete steps to legalize the Community in Mexico and who in a real sense was its founder. At the first ordinary meeting of the Saint Vincent de Paul Society in January 1845 a proposal was made to seek the legal establishment of the Congregation of the Mission in Mexico. It was decided

⁵ De Dios, *La familia vicentina*, 1: 66.

that a committee should be established for this purpose. On 9 February 1845 a formal petition was submitted to the Minister of Justice and Ecclesiastical Affairs, Mariano Riva Palacio, who twelve years later would be a defense attorney for the Emperor Maximilian. The language was flowery in the extreme. "In the establishment of these apostolic men religion will find worthy ministers of the gospel and the republic upholders of its fundamental laws, civilizers of its peoples and true fathers of the fatherland, who with the moral influence of their peaceful ministry and with the irresistible influence of their virtues, will heal the deep wounds that have been opened so often in our political dissensions."⁶ It also went on to detail the various works that the Vincentians would be involved in. After going through the various stages of the bureaucracy, the request was finally approved in September 1845.

Still lacking, however, was the approval of the archbishop of Mexico for the canonical establishment in the ecclesiastical province of Mexico. Unfortunately, Archbishop Posada y Garduño died on 30 April 1846, and his successor, Lázaro de la Garza Ballesteros, did not take possession of the see until 11 February 1851. The approbation was given the following 18 November.⁷ It is not clear when the superior general formally established the province of Mexico. The general council of 14 April 1846 named Armengol the first provincial superior.⁸

The formation of the clergy was a paramount work of the Vincentians in Mexico. In general this took place in three different kinds of institutions:

- (1) The major seminaries (*seminaries mayores*). These included complete theological formation, both academic and spiritual, and were administered by Vincentians who acted as directors. Between 1847 and 1944 the Congregation of the Mission directed nine such institutions in Mexico.

⁶ De Dios, *La familia vicentina*, 1: 67. As Father de Dios says, "It cannot be said that the literary style of the document is a model of Vincentian simplicity and humility" (*Ibid.*, 1: 68).

⁷ The document of ecclesiastical approbation is quoted in full (*Ibid.*, 1: 69-71).

⁸ *Ibid.*, 1: 84.

(2) Clerical seminaries (*seminarios clericales*). Their purpose was the immediate preparation of clerics for the reception of different orders. Hence the time spent in these was brief, between three months and a year. They were auxiliary to Tridentine seminaries and resembled the retreats for ordinands in the time of Saint Vincent de Paul. Between 1857 and 1883 the Vincentians directed three such seminaries in Mexico.

(3) Minor or collegiate seminaries (*seminaries menores, colegios-seminarios*). These were somewhat equivalent to American high schools and admitted both candidates for the priesthood and lay students to the courses in the humanities. Ordinarily these schools were under the administration of lay persons, while the Vincentians had charge of religious formation.

The Eventful Life of Father Andrade

Manuel Andrade's youngest son, Vicente de Paúl, was born on 23 February 1844 in Mexico City.⁹ His father entrusted the early education of his three sons to the colegio-seminario directed by the Vincentians in León. The young Vicente entered the Congregation of the Mission there on 12 November 1863 and took his vows 13 November 1865.¹⁰ According to the Mexican Historian Bravo Ugarte, he began teaching at the seminary of Jalapa prior to ordination, and it was there that he received orders up to diaconate in 1867. The records of the general curia, however, show him to have gone to Jalapa only after ordination to the priesthood.¹¹ Sent to Paris to complete his theological studies, he was ordained to the priesthood at the Vincentian motherhouse, 19 December 1868. After spending time on the parish missions in Mexico and Veracruz, he was sent to the seminary of Jalapa

⁹ Some sources give his full last name as Andrade Pau. See De Dios, *La familia vicentina*, 1: 589-90. His first name is often given as Vicente de Paula, although he himself always wrote it as Vicente de Paúl.

¹⁰ Bravo Ugarte, *Bio-Bibliografía*, 1: 35, says he entered on 8 November, De Dios on the 12th (*La familia vicentina*, 1: 589), as do the records in the general curia (*Curia Generalizia della Missione*, Rome, Dictionnaire du Personnel, troisième serie, 1851-1900).

¹¹ Bravo Ugarte, *Ibid.*

in 1869,¹² then the seminaries of Zacatecas in 1871,¹³ Jalapa again in 1874, Mexico City in 1875, Puebla (3 July 1876 - 23 April 1877), and the central house of San Lorenzo in Mexico City, as provincial treasurer and secretary to the provincial, in 1877. His family was well connected, and he had good social and cultural relations. Some blamed this for the fact that he tended to live outside the community.

A Province in Disarray

Under its first three provincials, Armengol (1846-1853), Sanz (1853-1861), and Juan Masnou (1863-1874), the province of Mexico prospered.¹⁴ Their successors, however, Agustín Torres (1874-1882) and Félix Mariscal (1882-1890), had to face major problems, some of them self-inflicted.¹⁵ The difficulties appeared during Torres' administration and peaked during Mariscal's. One difficulty was that the province had expanded too rapidly. There was not enough personnel to cover all the assignments, but there was also a reluctance by provincial authorities to retrench or suppress houses. The programs of formation were deficient, and many Vincentians were unprepared for their apostolates or even community life. Vicente de Dios believes that the fundamental problem of the province during the troubled years was the lack of good formation. This, however, was difficult during the anticlerical years 1867-1876. Even before Torres, the Mexican province was emancipating itself from Spain.¹⁶ In addition, tensions began to appear before the Spanish and Mexican members of the province.

Torres was accused of indiscriminate admissions to the Congregation, imprudently accepting new foundations, and favoritism toward persons, especially young ones, who had his confidence and to whom he gave positions beyond their age and qualifications. On 5 July 1878 Father Perfecto Amézquita, C.M., a Mexican by birth, criticized Torres for surrounding himself with young men who could not keep secrets or confidences. These caused Amézquita to side with the older, Spanish confreres.¹⁷ Torres counterattacked, saying that his critics, mainly

¹² According to the records of the general curia (*Curia Generalizia della Missione*, Rome, Dictionnaire du Personnel, troisième série 1851-1900; 1870), according to Bravo Ugarte (*Bio- Bibliografía*, 1: 36), and De Dios (*La familia vicentina*, 1: 589).

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Masnou had been pro-visitor of the American province in 1855-1856.

¹⁵ De Dios, *La familia vicentina*, 1: 202.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 1: 219.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 1: 220.

Spaniards, were motivated by reasons of nationality. De Dios thinks that he was correct about this but was wrong in thinking that some of his favorites, including Andrade and Antonio Icaza, were competent for the jobs given them. Torres had a great supporter in the archbishop of Mexico.¹⁸ And so the problem of nationalities became worse in the province. But some Mexicans were not anti-Spanish and vice versa. And sometimes other problems were viewed in terms of nationality.

Torres thought about resigning as provincial for some time. On 20 November 1881, however, he was named bishop of Tabasco despite his personal reluctance. On 19 February 1882 he was consecrated at the collegiate church of Guadalupe, known as *La Colegiata*, by Archbishop Pelagio Labastida y Dávalos of Mexico City, Bishop Francisco Vereá of Puebla, and Bishop Ignacio Montes de Oca of Linares, three bishops who were very close to the Congregation of the Mission.¹⁹ Translated to Tulancingo 30 July 1885, he remained there until his death on 29 September 1889.

The administration of Mariscal was even more troubled. The accusations and discontent centered in part on the expansion of the province without the men to handle the new foundations, something that went back to Torres' administration. There were also complaints that the provincial administration was too harsh and too indifferent to individuals.²⁰ The superior general, Antoine Fiat, did not like Mariscal and was abrupt with him. All these problems appear to have been exacerbated by Mariscal's personality.

The province seemed actually on the point of disappearing.²¹ In 1888 one of its members, Carlos de Jesús Mejía, actually recommended to the superior general that it be suppressed.²² In February 1885 the superior general sent Father Mariano Maller, former provincial of the United States, to make a special visitation of the Mexican province. Maller's opinion was that the principal problem was the lack of adequate formation for the younger Vincentians.²³

On 21 April 1885 Mariscal and his council wrote a report on the state of the province in 1880, apparently for Maller. The circumstances

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 1: 203.

¹⁹ In the year 1746 the church at Guadalupe was given a chapter of canons, the first non-cathedral chapter in Mexican history. After that it was commonly called *La colegiata*. The head of the chapter had the title of abbot.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 1: 211.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 1: 225.

²² *Ibid.*, 1: 226-28.

²³ *Ibid.*, 1: 229.

surrounding this report are obscure. It blamed Torres for admitting individuals who were not suited to the Congregation and putting too much confidence in a number of young people, who abused the confidence by reading confidential correspondence and revealing secret matters. Some of those in the inner circle formed particular friendships and feigned illnesses. Torres could never be convinced that they were malingering. These young people, under pretext of zeal for souls, founded confraternities, circulated in society, and generally did not live a close community life. The report claimed that peace and regularity had now returned to the province. De Dios says that it is clear that the provincial and his council were defending themselves by attacking. Contrary to what they claimed, the province had not returned to peace and regularity.²⁴

Andrade and his superiors

The target of the Spanish party's hostility was Andrade and, to a lesser extent, Icaza. Torres had put great trust in both, and Andrade had been considered his right arm. As a result Mariscal was antagonistic toward both, and Andrade in particular became the focal point of this antagonism. Andrade's own erratic and rather undisciplined personality did not help matters.

Andrade had been a delegate to the general assembly of 1874-1875, which had elected the superior general (Reverend Eugène Boré). On his return he felt that he needed rest. With the superior general's permission he had lived, as he later wrote, *chez moi*.²⁵ In 1879 the hostility toward Andrade in the central house caused him to present Torres with two alternatives: either he could remain in the house with the hostile confreres or he could leave the Congregation. He also presented the possibility that he could live at home. The provincial council decided that he could live at home while waiting for a more formal approval from the superior general.²⁶ It is not clear if Andrade actually went home, or, if he did, how long he remained. Torres gave a long account in a letter to the superior general, 1 July 1880.²⁷

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 1: 123-224.

²⁵ The sequence is not clear; when did he actually begin to live alone? Was his reason for a need for rest central to the hostility in the central house?

²⁶ Archive, *Curia Generalizia della Missione*, file on former members: Andrade. The Council meeting took place on 12 April 1879.

²⁷ Archive, *Curia Generalizia della Missione*, file on former members: Andrade.

In April 1879 Andrade had returned from Patzcuaro where he had been sent to give a mission. He did not go to any of the houses in Mexico City but went *chez lui*. From there he wrote that he no longer wanted to live in the community because the other Vincentians were persecuting him and not giving him a moment's peace. He asked permission to stay with his family until the war [real or allegorical?] was over. Torres submitted the request of his council and since Andrade said that the alternative was to leave the community, it was decided to write to the superior general and while waiting for an answer to allow him to live at home. In November the superior general answered and granted the permission.

Torres and his consultors believed that the superior general had given only the permission requested. Torres now had to tell the superior general that there were two Vincentians who spoke ill of Andrade on every occasion. Despite that, he could still live in peace in one of the houses of the province if he had more love for his vocation than for his family. He came from a notable family and was well known in Mexico, many persons asked if he was still a Vincentian and were told that he had permission to live outside the community. In the past year he had been involved with the Ladies of Charity and in writing. He had written biographies of the bishops of Mexico from the beginning with the permission of the superior general, Reverend Eugène Boré.²⁸

That very morning Torres spoke with the archbishop. Under secrecy the archbishop told him that the new diocese of Tabasco was going to be carved out of Yucatan. Andrade had been commissioned by the bishop of Yucatan, Leandro Rodríguez de la Gala, to handle the details of the division. It came about on 26 May 1880, for which the bishop publicly thanked Andrade in a pastoral letter (30 December 1881).²⁹ Andrade was proposed to be the bishop of Yucatan or the first bishop of Tabasco, and a canonical inquiry was undertaken. Torres asked the archbishop of Mexico to prevent the appointment if at all possible. It seemed, however, to be an accomplished fact. Andrade's elevation to the bishopric of Tabasco was initially approved by the Consistorial Congregation, which then reversed itself and Torres was named instead.³⁰ He was consecrated at Guadalupe and was bishop

²⁸ Andrade had asked this permission in a letter to Boré, 15 June 1876, Archive, *Curia Generalizia della Missione*, file on former members: Andrade.

²⁹ Bravo Ugarte, *Bio-Bibliografía*, 36.

³⁰ Bravo Ugarte, *Diocesis y obispos*, 84.

of Tabasco from 1881 until 1885, when he was translated to Tulancingo. He was succeeded in Tabasco by his confrere, Perfecto Amézquita.

The crisis event was Andrade's appointment as pastor of the parish of San Cosme. In October 1880 the archbishop of Mexico urgently contacted the provincial and said that he wanted to appoint Andrade to San Cosme for reasons that he could not disclose. Though he considered these reasons to be valid, the archbishop wanted to consult with the provincial and his council. The council responded negatively (1) because it infringed on the provincial council's authority, and (2) because the superior general would have to be consulted. In case the appointment should be approved, Andrade would have to officially be a member of the house of Our Lady of Guadalupe, observe the rules, and give an account of the parish funds.³¹

In April of the following year the council voted to ask the superior general to recall Andrade to community life and end the scandal of his living in his own house.³² It is not clear if the superior general did so, though Andrade was still living in his own house the following November when the council resolved that he should decide whether to live in the community or leave it.³³ The archbishop was also involved in the case, supposedly telling the provincial that Andrade did not have a vocation but that he, the archbishop, would handle the case.³⁴

In August 1882, with Mariscal as the new provincial, there was still no resolution to the matter. He told his council that Andrade still considered himself a member of the Congregation despite the evidence to the contrary. The council decided that Andrade should be excluded from the forthcoming provincial assembly for fear that he might disrupt it and because he continued to live outside the community, he had no spirit, and he already had a dispensation from vows from the pope. This last claim is confusing, since there is no other documentary proof of it. The council believed that the superior general should write

³¹ Provincial Council meeting 24 October 1880, Archive, *Curia Generalizia della Missione*, file on former members: Andrade.

³² Meeting of 18 April 1881, Archive, *Curia Generalizia della Missione*, file on former members: Andrade; *Conseils* 4: 4, septembre 1878 - 28 mai 1888, meeting of 17 May 1881, 128.

³³ Meeting of 22 November 1881, Archive, *Curia Generalizia della Missione*, file on former members: Andrade.

³⁴ Provincial Council meeting, 2 December 1881, Archive, *Curia Generalizia della Missione*, file on former members: Andrade.

him categorically that he was out of the community.³⁵ It seems that there was a dispensation from Andrade's vows, though he had not yet received it.³⁶ The superior general had written to the archbishop, informing him of the reasons for the dismissal. However, the dispensation was not to be given to Andrade until after Bishop Torres had returned to his diocese.³⁷

In a letter to the superior general 16 October 1882, Andrade related how he had become pastor of San Cosme.³⁸ He began by expressing his surprise that the superior general had removed him from the personnel catalogue and dropped him from the community. Andrade had asked Mariscal the reason for this and was told that it was because he did not leave the parish. Andrade voiced his suspicion that the letters he sent to the superior general through the provincial were not forwarded, and so he was now writing directly. He had been a delegate to the previous general assembly, which had elected the superior general. On his return he felt that he needed rest. With the superior general's permission he had lived *chez moi*. At that time the archbishop of Mexico wanted to give San Cosme to a Vincentian. Without telling Andrade he consulted Torres and his council and with their approbation appointed Andrade pastor, despite his reluctance. Torres promised to give him a lay brother but never did. The parish was near the Vincentians at the college, whom he saw on a regular basis. He had sought repeatedly to resign from the parish. However, since he was in the process of repairing the church, which was in a deplorable state, the archbishop asked him to finish the work. He went into debt to do this, with the hope of repaying it as soon as possible. In May of this year he finished the repairs and again asked the archbishop to accept his resignation. The archbishop answered that he had another church in the same parish to repair (a chapel at Chapultepec). Andrade informed Mariscal of this. Mariscal did not approve, and Andrade was content to write the superior general what had happened.

³⁵ Provincial Council meeting, 6 August 1882, Archive, *Curia Generalizia della Missione*, file on former members, Andrade.

³⁶ According to the records of the general curia, Andrade was dispensed on 17 September 1882, *Curia Generalizia della Missione*, Rome, Dictionnaire du Personnel, troisième série, 1851-1900.

³⁷ Provincial Council meeting, 3 October 1882, Archive, *Curia Generalizia della Missione*, file on former members: Andrade.

³⁸ Andrade to superior general, 16 October 1882, Archive, *Curia Generalizia della Missione*, file on former members: Andrade; *Conseils* 4: 4, septembre - 28 mai 1888, meeting of 13 November 1882, 223.

Then two weeks later he received the news of the *Dimittimus*. He had never asked for it. He knew of no reason in conscience for giving up the vows. If Mariscal removed him from the community, it would be on Mariscal's conscience. What he wanted from the superior general was the same permission that had been given to Perfecto Amézquita when he was pastor at Guanajuato.

As it turned out Andrade's dismissal had been suspended for a year. In December 1882 the superior general wrote to Mariscal and ordered him to report on the reasons why both Andrade and his friend Antonio Icaza did not want to leave the Congregation. He also directed that both be given copies of his letters.³⁹ It is possible that Fiat was suspicious of Mariscal and his motivation.

Most of the difficulties for Andrade at this point centered around his continuing to be pastor of San Cosme. On 16 November 1882 the superior general had given him the deadline of 16 January 1883 to give up the parish.⁴⁰ However, he still needed time to pay off the parish's debt. Mariscal, said Andrade, was eager for the deadline to come so that he could dismiss Andrade.⁴¹ Apparently the deadline passed without effect. On 12 March 1883 the superior general's council authorized Andrade to finish paying the parish debt and then reenter the community.⁴² On 20 March the superior general wrote to Andrade that he should have been consulted before Andrade accepted the parish. Andrade responded on 16 May, saying that the letter had caused him great pain and that he had accepted the parish only after the archbishop told him that he had the permission of the provincial (Torres) and his council, something that he had already told the superior general. He had accepted it only with the archbishop's assurance that the permission had been given. He said that he regretted his lack of contact with his Vincentian confreres at the central house and not being considered part of the community, which he had never had any intention of leaving. He claimed to have been forced out of the house by the attitude of

³⁹ Provincial Council meeting, 18 December 1882, Archive, *Curia Generalizia della Missione*, file on former members: Andrade.

⁴⁰ Andrade referred later to a letter of 13 November 1882, in which the superior general said "Vous m'ouvrez les portes de la Petite Compagnie." Andrade to superior general, 30 January 1883, Archive, *Curia Generalizia della Missione*, file on former members: Andrade.

⁴¹ Andrade to superior general, 26 September 1883, Archive, *Curia Generalizia della Missione*, file on former members: Andrade.

⁴² Archive, *Curia Generalizia della Missione*, Conseils 4: 4, septembre 1878 - 4 mai 1888, meeting of 12 March 1883, 245.

Mariscal and his associates. When Torres was provincial, his relations with them were excellent. Everything changed with Mariscal, who did not send him a circular of his appointment as he had done with all other members of the province.

When Mariscal made a brief visit to the clerical college of San Cosme near the parish, Andrade went to see him to ask for renewal of the permissions that Torres had given him. Mariscal answered that he had no jurisdiction over him since he did not live in community. If that were true, countered Andrade, why did Torres give those permissions? Mariscal answered that even if Torres gave such permissions, he could not, and Andrade would have to turn to the superior general. Andrade took this to mean that he was no longer considered a member of the province, an assumption reinforced by the failure of other members of the province to visit him. Even Torres no longer came to see him, even when he visited the college of San Cosme, something that Andrade blamed on Mariscal. It was the provincial who removed him from the community, said Andrade, not he.⁴³

In August or September of 1883 the provincial council asked the superior general and his council that Andrade be dismissed. Instead, the Parisian authorities gave him a delay of one year.⁴⁴ On 26 September 1883 Andrade asked the superior general for an open-ended permission to remain in the parish.⁴⁵

Andrade went on to become pastor of San Miguel in 1883, then of the *sagrario metropolitano* in 1885 and a canon of the collegiate chapter of Guadalupe in 1887.⁴⁶

The Guadalupan Controversy

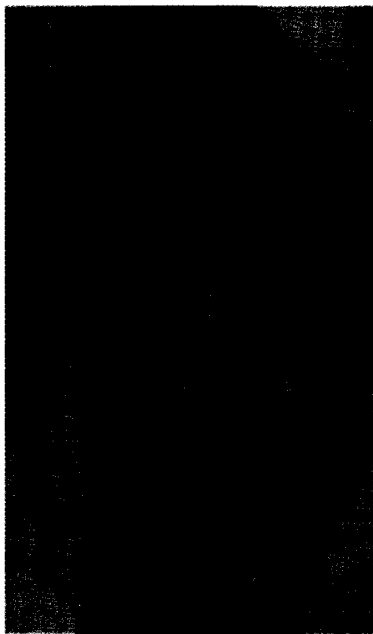
The debate over the historical authenticity of the Guadalupan apparitions was not just a nineteenth century development. From the time that the story was first made known in 1648, objections were raised against it, at least implicitly, because of the lack of authentic documen-

⁴³ Andrade to superior general, 16 May 1883, Archive, *Curia Generalizia della Missione*, file on former members: Andrade.

⁴⁴ Archive, *Curia Generalizia della Missione*, *Conseils* 4: 4, septembre 1878 - 28 mai 1888, meeting of 4 September 1883, 280.

⁴⁵ Archive, *Curia Generalizia della Missione*, *Conseils* 4: 4, septembre 1878 - 28 mai 1888, meeting of 17 June 1883, 261.

⁴⁶ The *sagrario* was a small church attached to the cathedral, in which the ordinary services of the parish, such as weddings and funerals, were carried out.



The popular image of Our Lady of Guadalupe.
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tation.⁴⁷ The reality of the apparition legend was first publicly impugned by the Spanish priest Juan Bautista Muñoz in his *Memoria*, an address to the Royal Academy of history in 1794. That address and the letters three years later of the Dominican friar, Servando Teresa de Mier, an impassioned Mexican patriot, laid down the basic line of antiapparitionist argumentation.⁴⁸ Mier was an early Mexican Nationalist who had some confused and bizarre concepts about the place of Guadalupe in the nation's history.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ For a description of the controversy, see Stafford Poole, C.M., *Our Lady of Guadalupe: The origins and Sources of a Mexican National Symbol, 1531-1797* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press), throughout.

⁴⁸ Juan Bautista Muñoz, "Memoria sobre las apariciones y el culto de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe (1794)," in *Testimonios históricos guadalupanos*, ed. Ernesto de la Torre Villar and Ramiro Navarro de Anda (México City: Fondo de la Cultura Económica, 1982), 689-701; Fray Servando Teresa de Mier, "Cartas hel Doctor Fray Servando Teresa de Mier al cronista de Indias Doctor D. Juan Bautista Muñoz, sobre la tradición de ntra. sra. de Guadalupe de México, escritas desde Burgos, año de 1797," *ibid.*, 757-861. See also Benjamin Keen, *The Aztec image in western thought* (London: Rutgers University Press, 1990), 304-05, 317-18.

⁴⁹ Poole, *Our Lady of Guadalupe*, 207-09.

The Opening Salvo

The controversy can be said to have begun with the publication in 1875 of Mier's guadalupan sermon, one of the more bizarre episodes in colonial Mexican history. The publication of this sermon was probably the work of Vicente de Paúl Andrade, still a Vincentian but already involved in the dispute. He was a convinced antiapparitionist and for the rest of the century worked strongly against the guadalupan cause.⁵⁰

It was Joaquín García Icazbalceta (1825-1894), one of the foremost historians in the history of Mexico, who launched the most devastating attack on the authenticity of the Guadalupe apparitions.⁵¹ García Icazbalceta was a devout and conservative Catholic who served for many years as the president of the Saint Vincent de Paul Society in Mexico.⁵² In 1883 José María Antonino González, a canon of the collegiate church of Guadalupe, sought the approval of Archbishop Labastida y Dávalos to publish a book he had written, titled *Santa María de Guadalupe Patrona de los mexicanos*. Though the title made it sound like a devotional work, it was actually a defense of the apparitions against critics. The archbishop sent the manuscript to García Icazbalceta for evaluation. The latter promptly returned it, saying that he was neither a theologian nor canonist. The archbishop responded that he was not seeking his opinion in either of those capacities but as an expert in Mexican history, and that "he was asking him as friend and commanding him as prelate."⁵³ Reluctantly García Icazbalceta yielded and the result was the famous letter of October 1883, a landmark in the history of the Guadalupe devotion.

In the letter he made no reference to the manuscript but rather examined in detail the historical questions attached to the Guadalupe tradition. "In my youth I believed, like all Mexicans, in the truth of the miracle; I do not remember where my doubts came from and in order

⁵⁰ What house was he in? Apparently the seminary in Zacatecas. According to the records in the *Curia Generalizia* he was either in the seminary of Jalapa or in Mexico City. According to De Dios, he would have been in Zacatecas (*La familia vicentina*, 1: 589). Bravo Ugarte does not give any data for that time frame.

⁵¹ Some of this information is taken from Jesús Gallardo y Villa, *Don Joaquín García Icazbalceta: Biografía y bibliografía. Primera parte: biografía* (no place or date given).

⁵² His son, Luis García Pimentel, wrote a history of the Daughters of Charity in México, which was never published (De Dios, *La familia vicentina*, 1: 54).

⁵³ Juan B. Iguíniz, *Disquisiciones bibliográficas: autores, libros, bibliotecas, artes gráficas* (México: El Colegio de México, 1943), 196, quoting José María Vigil.

to remove them I went to the apologies; these turned my doubts into the certainty that the event was false."⁵⁴ The letter was not, nor was it intended to be, a scientific historical treatise, but rather a summary of the principal difficulties in the apparition tradition, especially the silence of so many chroniclers and churchmen. It contains quotations without citations and a number of minor errors. Although much has been made of these by apparitionist critics, the bulk of García Icazbalceta's arguments remained valid to the present time. Apparently Labastida y Dávalos kept his promise not to divulge the letter, but García Icazbalceta himself showed it to friends, including some of Mexico's foremost scholars.

At about the same time there were two other developments that were to play important roles in the burgeoning controversy: a revival of a plan first proposed in the eighteenth century by the Italian scholar Lorenzo Botturini Benaduci to have a solemn coronation of the image and a move to have Rome approve a new proper mass and office for the feast. The two became closely enmeshed because Roman approval was considered to be a major proof of the validity of the devotion and even of the historical veracity of the apparitions. It was the request for a new mass and office that occasioned the first publication in garbled form of García Icazbalceta's letter. This publication was the work of Vicente de Paúl Andrade.

In 1887 Andrade, who in that year was named a canon of the collegiate church of Guadalupe by Archbishop Próspero María Alarcón y Sánchez de la Borquera, was living in the same apartment building as the noted Mexican historian Francisco del Paso y Troncoso, who at that time had García Icazbalceta's letter in his possession. Despite Andrade's requests, Paso y Troncoso refused to let him see it because of a promise he had made to García Icazbalceta. Taking advantage of one of Paso y Troncoso's absences, Andrade slipped into his study and went through his papers. He finally found the letter by turning over a work table and extracting it from a drawer. He then copied the letter rapidly and returned it to its hiding place. Not unnaturally, the copy contained both errors and omissions. Together with his friend, Antonio Icaza, who had also left the Vincentian Community and was pastor of the parish of Santa Catarina de México, Andrade made a Latin translation, changing the format from that of a letter to that of a treatise, expung-

⁵⁴ García Icazbalceta, *Carta Acerca del Origen de la Imagen de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de México* (México City, 1896), 70.

ing some paragraphs, changing others. This translation was published in Mexico City in 1888 under the title *De B. M. V. Apparitione in México sub titulo de Guadalupe exquisitio historica*. This work did not mention García Icazbalceta by name or credit him with being the author.

The Latin was criticized as being slovenly and ungrammatical. The reason for publishing the work in Latin was to influence Rome against the granting of a new office and mass. In fact Andrade sent copies of the work to all the members of the Congregation of Rites. He also sent copies to numerous others, including Cardinal Rampolla (Vatican Secretary of State), Remi Siméon (author of a noted Nahuatl-French dictionary), Father Icaza, Archbishop Alarcón, and the historian Genaro García. It should be noted that it was not published with a view to distribution to the general public. This was part of a major push by the antiapparitionists against Roman approval of a new mass and office. Together with other objections sent to Rome by antiapparitionists, the *Exquisitio* succeeded in delaying approval. In 1892 the Mexican consul in Rome reported that the Congregation of Rites had been obliged to consider some anonymous writings that had been sent to it.⁵⁵ Francisco Plancarte Navarrete, great-nephew of former Archbishop Labastida y Dávalos, who was acting as agent before the Holy See for the approval, wrote to Archbishop Alarcón that "Your Excellency cannot guess the evil that has been done by the anonymous Latin writing that the opponents of the apparition sent her. Since it is written with a certain critical and learned apparatus, and on the other hand they are completely ignorant here of the fundamentals of the apparition, the bad seed fell on virgin soil, germinated, and is growing, and if God does not provide a remedy, it will suffocate the good."⁵⁶

The death of Archbishop Labastida y Dávalos in 1892 was a setback to the request for a new office and coronation, and it was necessary to undertake a new effort in the following year. The three archbishops of Mexico in the name of all the bishops of the republic requested Rome to grant a new mass and office (12 February 1892). The antiapparitionists in turn sent a special representative to Rome to work against it.⁵⁷ The promoter of the faith for the Congregation of Rites

⁵⁵ Enrique Angelini to Antonio Plancarte Labastida, 7 March 1892, in Francisco Plancarte, *Antonio Plancarte y Labastida, Abad de Santa María de Guadalupe* (México City: 1914), quoted in Iguíniz, *Disquisiciones*, 208.

⁵⁶ Coleccion Teixidor, quoted, *ibid*.

⁵⁷ Cuevas said that he would not give the name of the representative because the man later regretted his role in the campaign (*Album*, 258).

raised a series of objections, all based on the *Exquisitio historica*. Eventually, however, Rome granted approval (6 March 1894).

The Montúfar-Bustamante Interrogatory

Another step in the campaign was the publication of the Montúfar-Bustamante interrogatory of 1556 in that same year of 1888.⁵⁸ The inquiry had been the result of a sermon given by the archbishop of Mexico, Alonso de Montúfar, on 6 September 1556, in which he praised the devotion to Guadalupe and spoke of the miracles performed at the sanctuary. Two days later the Franciscan provincial of Mexico, Francisco de Bustamante, delivered an angry rebuttal to the archbishop, condemning the devotion at Guadalupe as neo-idolatry and claiming that the image had been painted by an Indian. On 9 September the archbishop initiated an investigation of Bustamante's sermon, in the course of which many witnesses gave testimony, but without once mentioning the story of the apparitions. Nothing came of the investigation, and the papers went into the limbo of the archdiocesan archives until they were rediscovered in 1846.

Word of its existence reached García Icazbalceta and his friend, José María Andrade, Father Andrade's uncle. García Icazbalceta borrowed it from the archbishop. It eventually came into the hands of Vicente de Paúl Andrade, who arranged for its publication. The title page said that it was printed in Madrid, but it was actually printed in Mexico City by the press of Albino Feria. The cost of the printing was subsidized by Andrade. The text was preceded by a letter of the noted bibliographer José María Agreda y Sánchez giving the recent history of it, and followed by notes an *aditamentos*, strongly antiapparitionist in tone, that were probably the work of Francisco del Paso y Troncoso and that show a dependency on García Icazbalceta.⁵⁹ The book caused such a furor that it came to be known as the *libro de sensación*.

⁵⁸ *Información que el arzobispo de México D. Fray Alonso de Montúfar mandó practicar con motivo de un sermón que en la fiesta de la Navidad de Nuestra Señora (8 de septiembre de 1556) predicó en la capilla de San José de Naturales del Convento de San Francisco de México su Provincial Fray Francisco de Bustamante, acerca de la devoción y culto de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* (Madrid: Imprenta de la Guirnalda, 1888); on this interrogatory, see Poole, *Our Lady of Guadalupe*, 58-64.

⁵⁹ Edmundo O'Gorman, *Destierro de sombras: luz en el origen de la imagen y culto de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe del Tepeyac* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1986), 265-71. Surprisingly, the editors of *Testimonios históricos guadalupanos* have included the *aditamentos* after the text in their publication, 72-99, and the notes, 99-141.

The Coronation

In 1886 Antonio Plancarte, the nephew of former Archbishop Labastida y Dávalos and his nephew, Francisco Plancarte Navarrete, arranged the coronation of the image of Our Lady of Hope in Jacona, where Antonio Plancarte was pastor. At that time the uncle-archbishop called the coronation a "rehearsal" for the coronation of the image of Guadalupe, an idea that quickly gained widespread acceptance.⁶⁰ After some consultation the three archbishops of Mexico, Michoacan, and Guadalajara, sent the request to Rome (24 September), since such coronations required Vatican approval. The original intention was that it should correspond with the golden anniversary of Pope Leo XIII's ordination to the priesthood, December 1887. The pope gave his approval in a brief dated 8 February 1887, but unavoidable obstacles delayed the coronation until 1895.

In the enthusiasm over the coronation a decision was made to refurbish the collegiate church. Archbishop Labastida y Dávalos put his nephew, Antonio Plancarte, in charge of collecting money for the project and overseeing it. The original intention was to have the work done by the time of the coronation (December 1887). The necessary work turned out to be more extensive than originally planned, and, in fact, it turned into a major reconstruction project. The undertaking encountered opposition, both on theological grounds (why crown an image that had been crowned by God himself?) and practical ones (the great expense involved). Three members of the chapter of the collegiate church of Guadalupe, who were opponents of the proposed coronation and claimed to be acting on behalf of all the *cabildo*, enlisted the help of the newspaper *El Nacional*, a paper of Catholic sympathies. An article that appeared on 23 January 1887 accused Plancarte of manipulating his aged uncle into the coronation, and of planning a restructuring of the church that would destroy its original character. The archbishop immediately issued a denial of the allegations. It seems certain that Andrade was one of the opposing canons.

The Height of the Storm

In the meantime the controversy continued unabated. Although a work written in slovenly Latin was hardly destined to have wide circulation, the *Exquisitio historica* engendered rebuttals. The first was by Fortino Hipólito Vera, a canon of the collegiate church of Guadalupe

⁶⁰ Plancarte to Victoriano Agüeros, from Tacuba, 18 July 1886, reproduced in Lauro López Beltrán, *Album guadalupano*, 196.

and later the first bishop of Cuernavaca (1894-1898).⁶¹ A dedicated apparitionist, he wrote a massive volume called *Contestación histórico-crítica en defensa de la maravillosa Aparición de la Santísima Virgen de Guadalupe al anónimo intitulado: Exquisitio historica y a otro anónimo también que se dice Libro de sensación*, in which he included his own Spanish translation of the *Exquisitio*. In 1892 García Icazbalceta commented, "I do not know the latest book of Father Vera except from the outside: certainly its size is frightening."⁶² By that time, of course, the eminent historian was aware that the *Exquisitio* was a translation of his letter, though he consistently denied knowledge of the Latin work. In 1892 he wrote that he found nothing new in Vera's work, which he said had some strong passages, and then added "The best that both sides could do is to be quiet, since such a polemic can lead to no good."⁶³

Andrade kept up his antiguadalupan campaign. He extracted Vera's Spanish translation of the *Exquisitio* from the *Contestación* and published it in 1893 under the title, *Exquisitio historica: anónimo escrito en latín sobre la Aparición de la B. V. M. de Guadalupe*. As an additional riposte, the title page stated that it was "translated by Fortino Hipólito Vera." Though the real publisher was again Albino Feria, the name was given as Talonia, the maiden name of Vera's mother. Vera, needless to say, was not pleased by this rather crude joke, which seemed to make him the author of the book. Vera wrote a protest against this fraudulent use of his translation that was published in *El Tiempo* (1 January 1894) and other Catholic newspapers in Mexico. "I feel obliged to declare publicly and solemnly that it is as false as it can be that I am the author of that pamphlet. I protest against the calumny, all the more so because, on the contrary, I have written a refutation of the aforesaid anonymous work."⁶⁴ Two years later, at the time when the image was to be crowned, another edition of the Spanish translation of the *Exquisitio* was published by a Protestant group, the Alianza Evangélica. The use of the anti-apparitionist arguments by non-Catholics and anti-clericals would continue to be a source of great irritation to Mexican Catholics.

⁶¹ He had been a canon of *la Colegiata*; was consecrated at Guadalupe; was succeeded in Cuernavaca by Plancarte Navarette.

⁶² García Icazbalceta to Nicolás León, 13 July 1892, in *Correspondencia de Nicolás León con Joaquín García Icazbalceta*, ed. Ignacio Bernal (México City: 1982), 282.

⁶³ García Icazbalceta to León, 5 October 1892, *ibid.*, 288.

⁶⁴ Quoted in Iguíniz, *Disquisiciones*, 211.

García Icazbalceta eventually learned the whole story of how the Latin translation of his letter and the Spanish translation of the Latin translation had come into being. He wrote to León, "The *Exquisitio* is brief but substantial; there are small new points. I would not have known it except for the refutation [by Vera]. You can see the evil of the books of controversy: they make known attacks that are unknown and that the refutation does not undo."⁶⁵ It is said that he made inquiries among those to whom he had lent the letter or copies of it, but all protested, truthfully, that they had kept it confidential. He is said to have guessed the truth when he remembered that Andrade and Paso y Troncoso lived in the same building, and to have extracted the truth from Andrade.

Agreda y Sánchez urged García Icazbalceta to publish the original, saying that it was better that it be known in its integral form rather than in a partial state. He refused, foreseeing the obloquy that would be his – he is supposed to have said that he did not have the vocation to be a martyr. After García Icazbalceta's death on 27 November 1894, Agreda y Sánchez renewed his efforts to have it published. The letter was finally published in 1896 by the press of the Museo Nacional. It appeared in an edition of 500 copies, with no indication of its provenance, under the title *Carta acerca del origen de la Imagen de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de México, escrita por D. Joaquín García Icazbalceta al Ilmo. Sr. Arzobispo D. Pelagio Antonio de Labastida y Dávalos*. It was the first time that García Icazbalceta's name had been publicly affixed to the letter, though some apparitionists remained convinced that the letter was a forgery.

On 29 July 1896 the cabildo of Guadalupe sent Archbishop Alarcón a protest against certain antiguadalupan writings that had appeared in the newspaper *El Universal*. The canons began by pointing out their obligation to defend a tradition "both consoling and well founded" and believed themselves wounded by the article.⁶⁶ Specifically, they protested the publication of a letter "that is said to be from señor García Icazbalceta" and which was published only for the purpose of scandalizing those who read it. . . . We believe that in religious matters no Catholic will give greater credit to the letter in *El Universal* than to the voice of the Sovereign Pontiff."⁶⁷ When the protest was published *El Universal* expressed surprise that the first signature on the protest was

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 217.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

that of Vicente de Paúl Andrade. The surprise was understandable, as it is difficult to understand what his motive was.

The ceremony of coronation took place on 12 December 1895, at eight o'clock in the morning. After the blessing of the crowns the archbishop sat on a faldstool before the main altar, while Antonio Plancarte knelt before him and recited an oath taken by all the members of the collegiate chapter. "From this day forward we will make no attempt in any way by word, writing, or deed, against the apparition of the Blessed Virgin on the hill of Tepeyac and with all our strength we will seek to preserve this same crown on the brow of the same Venerable Image."⁶⁸ After that each of the canons swore acceptance of the oath with his right hand on the gospels. There is no specific reference to Andrade's having taken the oath, but it would have been extraordinary, especially in light of the fact that in 1908 he would publish a book against the apparitions.

In March 1895, as a means of rewarding Plancarte for his part in the coronation, the archbishops of Oaxaca and Durango and then the bishops of Querétaro, Zacatecas, León, Tulancingo, Chihuahua, Cuernavaca, and Tehuantepec wrote to Archbishop Alarcón asking him to request the Holy See to name Plancarte abbot of Guadalupe and a bishop. Plancarte himself maintained that in addition to the restoration of the church at Guadalupe, the principal reason was that he had been the object of attack by the liberal and anticatholic press for eight years.⁶⁹ He claimed that he had tried to resist the honors but that others had convinced him that it would be for the honor and glory of God.

Alarcón did as requested and sent the petition together with a laudatory letter of support. In an audience of 25 June 1895 Leo XIII named Plancarte abbot of Guadalupe and titular bishop of Constancia.⁷⁰ Plancarte was never to become a bishop. He had begun his episcopal ordination retreat on 2 October 1895 when a cablegram from Rome suspended his appointment. This turn of events sent shock waves through the Mexican Church. Not without reason Plancarte blamed this on his enemies. In Rome confidential information, principally from

⁶⁸ López Beltrán, *Album*, 210.

⁶⁹ Plancarte to Averardi, 3 March 1896, Archivio Segreto Vaticano. Visita Apostolica nel Messico di Nicola Averardi (1896-1900). Busta 1. Istruzioni. Posizione 2a, fascicolo 10. Affari speciali. Antonio Plancarte, ff. 15r-16r.

⁷⁰ Archivio Segreto Vaticano. Visita Apostolica nel Messico di Nicola Averardi (1896-1900). Busta 1. Istruzioni. Posizione 2a, fascicolo 10. Affari speciali. Antonio Plancarte. F. 4r. López Beltrán, *Album*, 222, gives the date as 27.

Bishop Cázares of Zamora, had been received that was unfavorable to Plancarte with regard to his time in that diocese. Though the bishops of Mexico supported Plancarte, Cázares prevailed. Matters remained unchanged until Plancarte's death on 25 April 1898 at the age of fifty-seven. With the passing of the principal players, the controversy subsided.

In his later life Vicente de Paúl Andrade devoted himself to historical and bibliographical studies, of which the most important was the monumental *Ensayo bibliográfico mexicano del siglo xvii*.⁷¹ He continued his campaign against Guadalupe in *Estudio histórico sobre la leyenda guadalupana* (México City: 1908).⁷² His brilliant but volatile personality, together with his antiapparitionist stance, kept him from advancing further in his ecclesiastical career. He died at the Hospital de Jesús, the hospital in which his father had served, on 17 August 1915, just as Mexico was being plunged into a long and bloody civil war.⁷³ In his will Andrade left a house to the Vincentian Community "in order to demonstrate my devotion and gratitude to the said Congregation, to which I owed my intellectual and spiritual education and to which I belonged for seventeen years."⁷⁴

⁷¹ Mexico City: 1900.

⁷² In *Testimonios históricos guadalupanos*, 1287-1337.

⁷³ For this data, see Emeterio Valverde Tellez, ob. de León, "Bio-bibliografía Eclesiástica Mexicana, 1821-1943," 3 vols., vol. 3, Sacerdotes, 35-41. Iguiniz seems to indicate that Andrade died at the Vincentian Motherhouse in Paris (Juan B. Iguiniz, "Canonigo Don Vicente de P. Andrade," *Disquisiciones*, 92). This is not true.

⁷⁴ De Dios, *La familia vicentina*, 1: 590.

Our Lord will see to the matter, especially if you are happy at the foot of the Cross where you are at present and which is the best place in this world you could be. So be happy there, Mademoiselle, and fear nothing....

*(Saint Vincent de Paul,
letter 103, To Saint Louise, Early 1630's)*