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## Frontier Missionary: Felix De Andreis, 1778-1820: Correspondence and Historical Writings

Felix de Andreis

John E. Rybolt, C.M.

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**Frontier Missionary. Felix De Andreis, C.M.**



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**3.**

**Frontier Missionary. Felix De Andreis, C.M.**  
**1778 - 1820**  
**Correspondence and Historical Writings**

**By**  
**John E. Rybolt, C.M.**

**Vincentian Studies Institute**  
**Chicago, Illinois**  
**2005**

*Edited by:* Nathaniel Michaud

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface .....	11
Introduction .....	13
Bibliography .....	19
List of Illustrations and Maps .....	29
Decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, 1918 .....	30

### I. CORRESPONDENCE

#### Before 1816

1. From François Brunet, between 1801 and 1803 .....	39
2. To Vincenzo De Andreis, 29 July 1812 .....	40
3. Preface to <i>Norme ed Avvisi</i> , 1814 (?) .....	45
4. To Vincenzo De Andreis, 6 July 1814 .....	47
5. To Vincenzo De Andreis, 15 May 1815 .....	49
6. Agreement with Bartolomeo Colucci, 8 October 1815 .....	53
7. To Carlo Domenico Sicardi, 29 December 1815 .....	55

#### 1816

8. To Giovanni Maurizio De Andreis, 4 January 1816 .....	57
9. To Carlo Domenico Sicardi, 1 February 1816 .....	59
10. To Dominique François Hanon, 10 February 1816 .....	63
11. To Carlo Saverio De Petris, 12 February 1816 .....	65
12. To Vincenzo De Andreis, 18 March 1816 .....	69
13. From Louis William Dubourg, 24 April 1816 .....	72
14. To Carlo Domenico Sicardi, 28 May 1816 .....	77
15. To Vincenzo De Andreis, 5 June 1816 .....	84
16. To Carlo Domenico Sicardi, 28 July 1816 .....	86
17. From Archbishop Leonard Neale, 29 July 1816 .....	89
18. To Françoise Victoire Fournier, August 1816 .....	90
19. Journal of the Voyage, 14 August 1816 .....	91
20. To Bartolomeo Colucci, 26 August 1816 .....	93
21. To Vincenzo De Andreis, 3 September 1816 .....	101
22. To Carlo Domenico Sicardi, 22 September 1816 .....	105
23. To Françoise Victoire Fournier, 27 September 1816 .....	111
24. To Joseph Harent, 27 September 1816 .....	112
25. To Simon Bruté, 5 October 1816 .....	115
26. From Simon Bruté, 15 October 1816 .....	118
27. To N., 20 (?) November 1816 .....	121
28(a). To Peter Dahmen, 29 November 1816 .....	124
28(b). To Peter Dahmen from Francis Xavier Dahmen .....	129
29. To Françoise Victoire Fournier, 2 December 1816 .....	132

**1817**

30. To Simon Bruté, January 1817 .....	134
31. To Carlo Domenico Sicardi, 5 January 1817 .....	135
32. To Simon Bruté, 23 April 1817 .....	145
33. To Carlo Domenico Sicardi, 20 May 1817 .....	149
34. To Simone Ugo, 20 May 1817 .....	155
35. To Simon Bruté, 1 July 1817 .....	159
36. To Archbishop Ambrose Marechal, 8 July 1817 .....	165
37. To Françoise Victoire Fournier, 20 July 1817 .....	166
38(a). To Paolino Martorelli, 24 August 1817 .....	170
38(b). Memorial on the Diocese of Bardstown, 1817 .....	173
39. Retreat Resolutions, September 1817 .....	176

**1818**

40. Report for Louis William Dubourg, 1818 .....	179
41. To Joseph Rosati, 8 January 1818 .....	181
42. To Joseph Rosati, 13 February 1818 .....	184
43. To Carlo Domenico Sicardi, 24 February 1818 .....	186
44. To Joseph Rosati, 26 February 1818 .....	194
45. To Joseph Rosati, 2 March 1818 .....	196
46. To Joseph Rosati, 2 April 1818 .....	198
47. To Joseph Rosati, 20 April 1818 .....	203
48. To Bartolomeo Colucci, 27 April 1818 .....	207
49. To Stephen Theodore Badin, May 1818 .....	214
50. To Joseph Rosati, 17 June 1818 .....	215
51. To Joseph Rosati, 26 June 1818 .....	220
52. To Joseph Rosati, 11 July 1818 .....	224
53. To Francesco Antonio Baccari, 3 September 1818 .....	227
54. To Joseph Rosati, 18 November 1818 .....	234
55. To Joseph Rosati, 23 November 1818 .....	235
56. To Joseph Rosati, 4 December 1818 .....	237
57. To Francesco Antonio Baccari, 7 December 1818 .....	242

**1819**

58. To Joseph Rosati, 9 January 1819 .....	250
59. To Francesco Antonio Baccari, 4 February 1819 .....	252
60. Lenten Regulations, 1819 .....	263
61. To Giovanni Craveri (?), 8 February 1819 .....	266
62. To Bartolomeo Colucci, 9 February 1819 .....	269
63. To Joseph Rosati, 17 March 1819 .....	273
64. To Joseph Rosati, 27 March 1819 .....	274
65. To Francesco Antonio Baccari, 26 April 1819 .....	278

66. To the Meeting at Monte Citorio, 21 June 1819 .....	284
67. From Andrew Ferrari, July 1819 .....	289
68. To Francesco Antonio Baccari, 7 July 1819 .....	292
69. From Joseph Bigeschi, 3 September 1819 .....	297
70(a). To Francesco Antonio Baccari, 23 September 1819 .....	300
70(b). Drawing and Description of the House at the Barrens .....	307
71. From Françoise Victoire Fournier, 24 November 1819 .....	308
72. To Carlo Saverio De Petris, 28 December 1819 .....	310

## **1820**

73. To Joseph Rosati (?), January 1820 .....	321
74. To Vincenzo De Andreis, 1 January 1820 .....	322
75. To Filippo Giriodi, 2 January 1820 .....	325
76. Giuseppe Giordana, 1 February 1820 .....	331
77. To Francesco Antonio Baccari, 4 February 1820 .....	336
78. From Joseph Tichitoli, 13 February 1820 .....	353
79. To Francis Xavier Dahmen and Andrew Ferrari, 27 March 1820 ....	356
80. To Françoise Victoire Fournier, 4 April 1820 .....	359
81. To Saint Philippine Duchesne, 26 June 1820 .....	360
82. To Joseph Rosati, July 1820 .....	361
83. To Octavie Berthold, 1 September 1820 .....	362
84. To Francesco Antonio Baccari, 4 September 1820 .....	364
85. To Joseph Rosati from Leo De Neckere, 7 October 1820 .....	368
86. To Francesco Antonio Baccari (?) from Bishop Dubourg, 19 October 1820 .....	370
87(a). To Vincenzo De Andreis from Joseph Rosati, 15 November 1820 .....	372
87(b). To the Priests of the Diocese of Louisiana from Charles De Lacroix, undated .....	378
87(c). Obituary, 18 November 1820 .....	380

## **II. HISTORICAL WRITINGS**

Important Notices, 1815-1820 .....	384
Itinerary. Italy, France, America, [December] 1819 .....	425

## **APPENDICES**

I. De Andreis, the Mission Preacher, 1806-1815 .....	458
II. Chronology of Felix De Andreis .....	483
III. Brief Biographies .....	489

<b>INDEX</b> .....	493
About the Author .....	505





## PREFACE

Cardinal Newman wrote somewhere that we are all links in the great chain of providence. He wrote, further, that we may never know exactly what providence expects of us but we can be sure that we will accomplish it if we are only faithful. Each of us is the beneficiary of the fidelity of those who have gone before us; our hope is that we will be as great a benefit to those who follow us.

In these pages you will gain insight into the life of a man who was faithful, whom many in his own time called a “saint.” The life of Reverend Felix De Andreis, C.M., is particularly pertinent to citizens of the Midwest, to Catholics in the many Midwestern dioceses, and to the Vincentian Fathers and Brothers, because for all of these individuals he was a part of their beginnings. He, along with many others, certainly helped to create who and what we are today. The Archdiocese of St. Louis, in particular, owes him a great debt of gratitude.

In reading the letters of De Andreis you will encounter a human being — not unlike ourselves — meeting the challenges to be holy and to be strong in the face of some extraordinarily difficult circumstances, not unlike our own. You will meet a man who was a friend to others, Bishop Joseph Rosati and Saint Rose Philippine Duchesne being among them. You will read of his longing for a home that he left for the sake of bringing the gospel to an alien land. You will read of his own deep commitment to holiness and of his commitment to the ideals of Saint Vincent de Paul, the founder of his religious community.

My hope is that, in the pages of this book, you will find a teacher — a man who can help each of us see what we can be for others, what fidelity to Jesus Christ looks like, and the ways in which our lives can be gifts to the people of tomorrow.

27 May 2002

Justin Rigali  
Archbishop of Philadelphia  
*(Former Archbishop of Saint Louis)*



## INTRODUCTION

Rose Philippine Duchesne, herself a canonized saint, called him a saint;<sup>1</sup> and Benedict Joseph Flaget, bishop of Bardstown, wondered whether he should pray for his soul or pray to him as a saint.<sup>2</sup> Even the Roman Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith offered its sympathy at his death and invited Bishop Dubourg to open a formal process for beatification if there are "*certa quaedam illius sanctitatis indicia*" ["some specific indications of his holiness"].<sup>3</sup> The object of their veneration was Andrew James Felix Bartholomew De Andreis, born and baptized on 12 December 1778, in Demonte, a small town of Savoy, now a part of Italy. He was the founding superior of the Congregation of the Mission, the Vincentians, in the United States.

Honored during his life for his piety and knowledge, De Andreis continued to receive recognition after his death in Saint Louis, Missouri, 15 October 1820. He remains largely unknown outside American Vincentian circles, yet his cause for beatification, and ultimately canonization, was introduced in Rome. The decree from the Holy See announcing this decision spells out the details of his life, and this collection of his correspondence and historical writings attempts to remedy ignorance about his work. It sheds light as well on his remarkable character and holy life, and presents a view of the Church in the nascent Midwestern United States.<sup>4</sup>

After moving to America, De Andreis spent three years in Saint Louis supervising and guiding the first American Vincentians until his death. In his time Saint Louis was a city built along the banks of the Mississippi River. A town of some 3000 persons, Saint Louis had four north-south streets, and about 18 east-west streets. The people lived mostly in rough wooden dwellings, although their wealthier

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<sup>1</sup> For example, in her letters to Mother Barat, L. 70, 1 December 1819, and to Mother Deshayes, L. 82, 29 August 1820, in Chantal Paisant, ed., *Les années pionnières* Paris: Cerf, 2001, 289, 321.

<sup>2</sup> Flaget mentioned his "simplicity, piety, fervor" in a letter of condolence to Rosati, from Bardstown, 6 November 1820; in SLAA, Flaget papers.

<sup>3</sup> Finbar Keneally, ed., *United States Documents in the Propaganda Fide Archives* (Washington: 1966), vol. 3, #15474, dated 1821.

<sup>4</sup> Apart from one posthumous portrait in Rome, reproduced in this volume, we know little or nothing about his appearance. Engravings of him were, however, distributed as early as 1825, and these form the basis of many other common illustrations (See Rosati to Philip Borgna, 5 November 1825; original in SLAA, Rosati papers; copy by Souvay, in DRMA, Rosati papers).

## *Introduction*

neighbors had brick or even stone houses.<sup>5</sup> At that time, this frontier town had some 40 stores, a post office, three banks, a land office, a brewery, two distilleries, and a steam flour mill.<sup>6</sup>

De Andreis' correspondence and historical writings, primarily the American ones, should be read against this frontier background. On a daily basis he saw trappers, traders, Indians, the descendants of African slaves, immigrants from the original English colonies as well as new arrivals from Europe. Although most did not have religion on their minds, his patient commitment to the Vincentian vision of the care of the poor and love of the clergy marked him as a saint in their midst.

Who were his correspondents? What importance did they have? Despite the precarious nature of mail delivery in the early nineteenth century, we have a great many of his letters to Joseph Rosati, his American confrere, and later first bishop of Saint Louis. There are also several reports to his superiors in Rome (Fathers Sicardi and Baccari). A special collection is his family correspondence with his father (one letter) and his brother. De Andreis wrote other letters to friends and colleagues in Europe and the United States. The few surviving letters written to him have been included here for the sake of completeness.

Rosati, the author of the first life of Felix De Andreis, remarked that "a collection of his letters would take up several volumes which would be fruitfully read."<sup>7</sup> Although many, if not most, of his letters have been lost, a great number remain from his American period. All his extant letters have been collected from many sources for the first time, their texts established, translated from Italian, French and Latin into a readable modern American English, and annotated to increase understanding and appreciation of their contents. Copies were collated

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<sup>5</sup> James Neal Primm, *Lion of the Valley*. St. Louis, Missouri, 2nd ed. (Boulder, Colo.: Pruett, 1990), 108.

<sup>6</sup> Saint Louis Planning Commission, *History of the Physical Growth of the City of Saint Louis* (Saint Louis, n.d., [about 1969]), 10.

<sup>7</sup> "Summarium super dubio," in Sacra Rituum Congregatione. *Sancti Ludovici, Beatificationis et Canonizationis Servi Dei Felicis de Andreis . . . Positio super introductione causae* (Rome: Guerra et Mirri, 1918), 103. Printed in the original language, this volume contains the "Life of De Andreis" considered to be the best and surest version of what Joseph Rosati wanted, since the Roman text was transcribed directly from his manuscript.

## *Introduction*

against originals or printed documents, where available. In some cases, early copies provided a better or clearer reading than the surviving originals, which had suffered damage over time. To render the originals readable, it was necessary to standardize. For example, biblical quotations are given in English translation; currency is cited in its original forms; and formal salutations and conclusions of the letters have been regularized.

One notable problem is that the writer was neither always consistent or coherent. He sometimes wrote at one sitting, but more usually completed a letter over a period of time. He was often sick, even confined to bed, and this led him to dictate his letters. His young secretary, Andrew Ferrari, occasionally had trouble keeping up with his superior and lost the train of his thought, with confusing results. These letters, however, have been kept as they are in their original form. Particularly in his later letters, his reflections on his condition and the American mission are frequently repeated. Other problems in transcription arose from the form of proper names. These have been kept in their original forms, except for those who lived in America. In that case, these names have been regularly put into English (Felix instead of Felice, for example). Archaic weights and measures, such as arpents and Roman miles, and obsolete currency (louis d'or, scudo, bajocco, paolo, piastre, etc.) have been left in their original forms. His use of titles of address have been smoothed out to correspond to modern usage, such as "Very reverend and dear Father" to translate the florid "*Molto Reverendo Signor, Patrone osservatissimo ed onoratissimo Padre.*" All Vincentians have been identified with first names and dates where possible.

Besides the letters, both from and to him, this volume prints associated documents. These are items which he referred to or joined to his correspondence, the principal one being his "Itinerary." This work, in turn, was based on his "Important Notices," also presented here. These letters and historical writings have been supplemented by accounts of his missions given while he was stationed in Rome. These accounts give a feel for his Vincentian missionary work, before he embarked on the Atlantic to reach the New World. The majority of these documents have never been translated into English or previously published.

## Introduction

Some of De Andreis' writings have not been included, particularly his spiritual writings and sermons. These are lengthy and less interesting and valuable for understanding his life in its historical context.

Sources for documenting De Andreis' life are given in the bibliography, the primary one being the life begun by Joseph Rosati.<sup>8</sup> While in Italy, some months before his death, Rosati entrusted the completion of his work to Giovanni Battista Semeria, one of a family with several Vincentian members.<sup>9</sup> Rosati's French work was completed and translated into Italian, and the bishop intended to have it published in June 1843, but his illness and subsequent death, 25 September 1843, delayed the project.<sup>10</sup> An expanded version—with chapters nine through twelve—was published in English by Francis Burlando, C.M., eighteen years later, in 1861. The author of the four additional chapters is unknown.

Contemporary with Rosati's work was the incomplete sketch written by Carlo Casoni, C.M., a Vincentian historian living in Rome. The basis for Casoni's work was letters and other reminiscences of De Andreis. A brief work, undated, is a series of notes on his life, sent to the Vincentian mother house in Paris, called the "Paris manuscript" here. Its author is unknown, but the work appears to incorporate many an eye-witness detail.<sup>11</sup> The most complete life is by Giuseppe Ricciardelli, C.M., the promoter of his cause for canonization. Further significant information is presented in the volume prepared for his canonization process, no longer actively pursued.

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<sup>8</sup> Rosati had already written at least two other historical accounts: a life of Andrew Ferrari, C.M., and his "Recollections of the founding of the Congregation of the Mission in the United States of America." Rosati's own diary shows that he wrote his life of Felix De Andreis between 1 and 10 July 1839 at the Barrens. Virtually the complete text has been published in the canonization volume.

<sup>9</sup> This man is said to have been an Oratorian, but a Giovanni Battista Semeria entered the Congregation of the Mission in 1834, and made his vows in 1836. He left the Congregation in 1853. Perhaps he joined the Oratorians afterwards.

<sup>10</sup> Rosati to Étienne, from Rome, 20 October 1842; in archives of the General Curia, American province papers, Rosati file. Rosati's original biography is in the same archives.

<sup>11</sup> To this can be added *Annales de la Congrégation de la Mission en Italie. Quatrième Époque De 1815 à 1874*, Archives de la Mission. This large register, arranged chronologically, presents information mainly in French about De Andreis, citing some of his letters. A few items of information are found nowhere else. The work was copied about 1880, perhaps from Casoni's manuscript life.

## *Introduction*

The main source for the De Andreis letters are: (1) the General Curia of the Congregation of the Mission, Rome; (2) the archives of the Roman province of the Congregation of the Mission, Rome; (3) the archives of the Turin province, Turin, Italy; (4) the archives of the archdiocese of St. Louis, Saint Louis, Missouri; (5) the archives of the Collegio Brignole-Sale Negroni, Genoa, Italy; (6) the De Andreis-Rosati Memorial Archives, DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois. In addition, individual letters were found in the archives of the archdiocese of Baltimore; the Sulpician archives, Baltimore; the archives of Propaganda Fide, Rome; the archives of the Congregation of the Mission, Paris; and the archives of the Eastern Province, Germantown, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Unfortunately, De Andreis's own letter book, which he kept as a record of his correspondence, has disappeared. Also, some of the original letters known only a few decades ago have disappeared and exist now only in copies. Much of the work of copying was done by the indefatigable Charles Leon Souvay, C.M., vice-postulator of De Andreis's cause and subsequently superior general.

Background information has come from several sources, as noted in the footnotes. The most important of these sources, however, have been the correspondence and historical writings of Joseph Rosati.

The editor wishes to acknowledge with gratitude the many persons who have assisted in the gathering and production of this work, an undertaking lasting nearly twenty years. Besides the archival sources mentioned above, information was received from the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints, Vatican City; the American Catholic Archives, University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Indiana; the archives of Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.; the archives of the Sisters of Charity, Cincinnati; the Sisters of Loretto, Nerinx, Kentucky; the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, Kentucky; the Daughters of Charity in Paris and Emmitsburg, Maryland; the Sisters of the Sacred Heart, Rome and Saint Louis, Missouri; the Sisters of La Réunion, Bordeaux and Guadalajara, Spain; the Sisters of Charity of Nevers, France; the archives of the archdioceses and dioceses of Albenga-Imperia, Baltimore, Belleville, Bordeaux, Boston, Charleston, Louisville, New Orleans, New York; the cathedral archives of Porto Maurizio, Italy; Saint Paul's Cathedral, Pittsburgh; the Jesuit archives in Rome and



*Introduction*

Saint Louis, Missouri, the Sulpician archives in Paris;<sup>12</sup> the Vincentian provincial archives in Naples; the Missouri Historical Society, Saint Louis, and the State Historical Society of Missouri, Columbia; the State Library of Indiana, Indianapolis; the Historical Society of West Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; the New York Historical Society, New York City; the Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, Maryland; and the Archives Départementales, Bordeaux.

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<sup>12</sup> The principal manuscript collection is E.M. Faillon, "Mémoires particulières pour servir à l'histoire religieuse de l'Amérique du Nord," 5 vols.

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**AAB:** Archives of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, Baltimore, Maryland.

**AMP:** Archives of the Mission, Paris.

**AUND:** Archives of the University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Indiana.

**BMHS:** *Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society.*

**DRMA:** De Andreis-Rosati Memorial Archives, formerly Saint Mary of the Barrens, Perryville, Missouri. Currently housed at the Richardson Library of DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois.

**RACHSP:** *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia.*

**SLCHR:** *Saint Louis Catholic Historical Review.*

**SLAA:** Saint Louis Archdiocesan Archives, Saint Louis, Missouri.

**VH:** *Vincentian Heritage.*

## List of Illustrations

Felix De Andreis .....	Inset Cover	Log Cabin, Shawneetown .....	211
Pulpit at Demonte .....	31	Cabin, Shawneetown .....	225
Map of Journey .....	38	Map, Southeastern Missouri .....	231
Parish Tower, Demonte .....	41	Pioneer Life .....	265
De Andreis Engraving .....	43	Cathedral, New Orleans .....	265
Monte Citorio .....	51	Louis William Dubourg .....	277
Map of Bordeaux .....	58	French Home, Sainte Genevieve	
Bust, Pope Pius VI .....	67	.....	283
Stained Glass, De Andreis .....	72	Etching, French Home .....	290
Carlo Domenico Sicardi .....	78	Halfway Tavern .....	291
Rectory, Baltimore .....	86	Letter, with Sketch .....	306
Leonard Neale .....	88	Detail, Sketch .....	306
Dubourg's Cathedral .....	90	Stained Glass, De Andreis .....	312
Period Map, Eastern U.S. ....	99	Excerpt of Original Letter .....	336
Period Home, Mercersburg .....	104	Signature, De Andreis .....	340
Earliest Engraving, De Andreis	107	Portrait, De Andreis .....	343
Inn, Cashtown .....	110	De Andreis Street, Rome .....	364
Joseph Rosati .....	114	Jarrot Home, Cahokia .....	377
Flatboat, Interior .....	121	Obituary .....	379
Ohio River .....	128	Tomb, De Andreis .....	381
Francesco Antonio Baccari .....	130	Corner Tavern, Baltimore .....	396
Flatboats on Missouri River .....	133	Boatmen on Missouri .....	413
Frontier Missionary, De Andreis		Log-built Church .....	415
.....	139	Mail Logo, Carriage .....	420
Simon Bruté .....	146	Chapel, Monte Cenisio .....	430
Log and Stone Home .....	151	Brick Home, Baltimore .....	437
St. Thomas, Kentucky .....	159	Bonnet Tavern, Bedford .....	447
Ambrose Marechal .....	164	Flatboat .....	449
Benedict Joseph Flaget .....	167	Brick Home, Shawneetown .....	452
De Andreis, Portrait .....	184	Mosaic, De Andreis .....	475
Excerpt of Letter .....	188	Bartolomeo Colucci .....	478
Log House, Dupo .....	193	Original Tomb, drawing .....	491
Donatien Olivier .....	200		

# DECREE OF THE SACRED CONGREGATION OF RITES, 1918

## INTRODUCTION

*The following decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites authorized the opening of the process leading to the eventual beatification and canonization of Felix De Andreis. Its importance lies in that it presents a succinct summary of his life and virtues, one arrived at after initial canonical investigations. In addition, it evaluates the importance of his life for the Church. Thus the decree can serve as a somewhat official version of his life and introduction to his writings.*

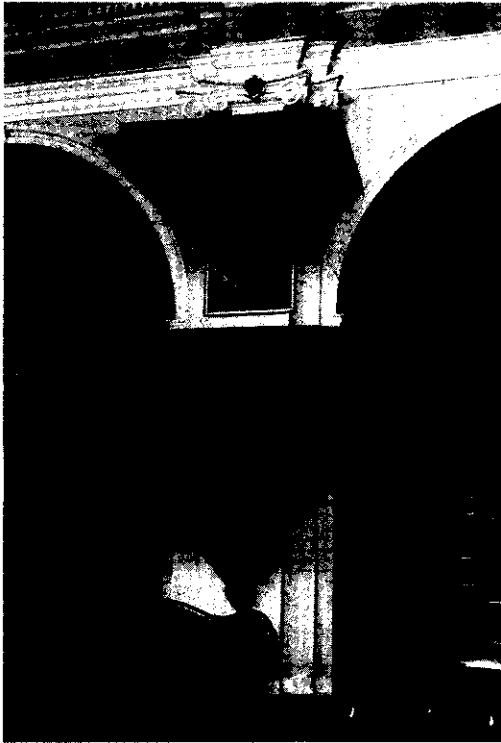
*The decree contains two sections. The first and longer section lays out the details of his life. The second reviews the canonical process up to the time of publication.*

## DECREE ON BEHALF OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT LOUIS CONCERNING THE BEATIFICATION AND CANONIZATION OF THE SERVANT OF GOD FELIX DE ANDREIS PRIEST AND FIRST SUPERIOR OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION IN AMERICA

Felix De Andreis was born in the town of Demonte, in the diocese of Cuneo, formerly the diocese of Turin, on 12 December 1778 of pious parents, and was baptized on the same day. At the age of eight he received the sacrament of confirmation. While still a boy, he once fell into a deep river, but with God's help he was miraculously saved unharmed. At age fifteen, he went to a college where he devoted himself to the study of liberal arts, especially poetry. At that time, he felt inclined to join the Congregation of the Mission, but when he expressed his intention and desire to the visitor of that community, he was prevented from following his desired purpose because of his diversified interests and his various courses of study. However, he was not discouraged nor did he stop trying to prepare for everything, and finally his desire came true. Dropping his inclination to the arts, he was first accepted for a year of probation, and then, in 1797, was admitted to the

*Decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites*

novitiate of the Congregation of the Mission at Mondovi. Having successfully completed the novitiate, he pursued his studies first in Turin and then in the college at Piacenza, where he completed them well. When he had fulfilled all the requirements, he received the sacred orders of subdiaconate, diaconate and priesthood, striving only for the glory of God, his own eternal salvation and the salvation of his neighbor.



The parish pulpit at Demonte.  
*Courtesy of the author*

After ordination, he laudably and fruitfully performed various functions, as ordered by his superiors, such as director, teacher and preacher. He was well versed in the languages and literature of Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French and Spanish; in addition, he diligently pursued the natural sciences of mathematics, geography, chemistry, pharmacy, medicine and music. But with particular diligence and piety he culti-

*Decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites*

vated and taught the theological sciences, together with canon law and sacred scripture with the commentaries of the Church Fathers and Doctors, using these subjects both in preaching and ministry, especially in seminaries, monasteries and other religious institutions. In his desire to preach Christ's word and to spread his faith among the pagans, he asked and with great joy obtained permission [for this], although the carrying out of such permission was deferred to a more suitable time. In the meantime, some other work was assigned him both in Piacenza and Rome.

In March 1806 the visitor of the Roman Province called Felix De Andreis to Rome and entrusted to him, besides the chair of dogmatic theology in the house of the Congregation next to the curia of Pope Innocent,<sup>1</sup> various other ministries of preaching and hearing confessions inside and outside the house for the benefit of the clergy and the laity, especially in colleges, religious institutions and families, and in the priestly Sodality of Saint Paul, into which he was received and made a member of its Council of Moderators.<sup>2</sup> Thus he gained the high esteem of Cardinal [Giulio Maria] di Somaglia, then vicar general of Rome, as well as that of the Holy Father, who judged him worthy of the episcopal dignity.

The most prominent members of both clergy and laity have testified privately and publicly how much this servant of God, professor of theology, teacher of the clerics of the Congregation of the Mission and of the students of the College of the Propagation of the Faith, and excellent preacher and missionary, had contributed to the renewal and preservation of the integrity of faith and morals in Rome during the hostile government when Pope Pius VII of holy memory lived in exile, as well as when freedom and peace were restored to the Church and to the sovereign pontiff.

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<sup>1</sup> Decree, 1918. Printed sheet, 28" x 17 1/2", Latin. Copy in the archives of the General Curia, Rome, De Andreis papers.

The "curia of Pope Innocent" refers to its location at Monte Citorio, where about 1697 Innocent XII had placed his administrative curia in an effort to centralize all pontifical tribunals.

<sup>2</sup> Little is known of De Andreis's participation in this organization. It differs from the "Adunanza della Porta" which met in the Monte Citorio house, and to which he wrote the long letter, number 66, published in this work.

*Decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites*

During the year 1815 Father Dubourg, named bishop of New Orleans in North America, came to Rome to pay due homage and obedience to the Apostolic See and to the Roman pontiff, and also to look for capable and worthy workers for his diocese. Received as a guest in the aforementioned house of the Mission he could easily see that the Congregation of the Mission should be fittingly and usefully established in his diocese, especially in the city of Saint Louis. Once certain difficulties that had arisen were overcome with God's help, and he had obtained the generous permission of the superiors, the Holy Father with his august presence expressed his best wishes and bestowed his blessing. Felix De Andreis and his chosen companions then departed for distant regions, while Bishop Dubourg rejoiced over the treasure he had acquired for himself and his diocese.

On the way, he [De Andreis] stopped for six months in Bordeaux, where he willingly and diligently performed the functions entrusted him by the diocesan archbishop in prisons and hospitals and with the Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent. Bishop Dubourg acknowledged him as the visitor of his Congregation<sup>3</sup> and conferred on him the title and office of vicar general of the diocese. He and his companions then traveled laboriously on sacred expeditions through the various regions of North America, sowing the good seed and gathering the fruits accordingly. The servant of God himself acknowledged in his writings that he and his companions, while staying at Saint Thomas near Bardstown with remarkable men like Bishop Flaget and Father David, a missionary, made their apprenticeship in learning languages, becoming acquainted with the country, experiencing the ministry and the functions that offered themselves to a missionary priest in public and private life. While he was engaged there in teaching theology and in the ministry, Felix was suddenly sent with his companions to the city of Saint Louis, where he was placed in charge of the parish of Sainte Genevieve.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> This title was only informal, but De Andreis exercised the functions of a visitor since he was so far removed from Rome. The first formal visitor was John Timon, who assumed that office in 1835.

<sup>4</sup> The decree confused the parish of Sainte Genevieve in the town of Sainte Genevieve, where De Andreis worked temporarily, with the cathedral in Saint Louis, where he lived regularly.



*Decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites*

After the example of the Divine Shepherd, who willingly became an example to the flock, he used to describe the purpose of his mission with the words: "He sent me to preach the gospel to the poor," and fulfilled this purpose with the proper intention, intense study and hard work. But that the Congregation of the Mission might acquire a permanent home according to the norms of law and spread through America, a novitiate was established on 3 December 1817 in Saint Louis by the consent and approval of Bishop Dubourg and under the name and patronage of Saint Francis Xavier. Felix De Andreis was appointed to this college and a neighboring school as administrator, rector and teacher.<sup>5</sup> Under his authority the novices and students always responded to the wise and paternal care of their teacher. The servant of God planned to extend the benefits of the mission also to peoples wild and barbarous in their language, nature and character. For that purpose he learned their native language and was always ready to receive them and help them in everything.

Physically weakened after so many labors, the man of God felt that the hour of his departure from this world was approaching, and quietly and peacefully awaited the blessed reward promised by the Lord God to a good and faithful servant. As one devoted to our Lord's incarnation and passion, as a loving son of the Virgin Mother of God, and as a faithful disciple and imitator of Saint Francis Xavier, Saint Francis de Sales and his father and lawgiver, Vincent de Paul, while his health was declining and his incurable disease was worsening daily, he most devoutly received the sacraments of the Church. After giving to the grief stricken who were present the testimony and proof of his faith and charity as well as his paternal blessing, he peacefully passed from this life on 15 October 1820. After solemn obsequies had been celebrated by the clergy and devoutly attended by a large crowd of laity and civil representatives, the body of the servant of God was borne to the seminary of the Barrens, and solemnly laid to rest near the altar of Saint Vincent, confessor, and founder of the Congregation of the Mission.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> The language of the decree confuses his being novice master ("administrator, rector"), and a professor of theology, for the clerics who taught in the Saint Louis academy.

<sup>6</sup> His burial near the altar of Saint Vincent took place some years later, once the Barrens church had been completed.

*Decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites*

In the meantime, the fame of the holiness which Felix De Andreis acquired during his lifetime and which shone forth even more after his death provided the reason for an inquiry about it by ordinary authority both in Rome and in the ecclesiastical Curia of Saint Louis. When the informative procedures had been completed and submitted to the Congregation of Sacred Rites, and the writings of the servant of God had been diligently examined as prescribed by law, nothing stood in the way to impede the further procedure. At the instance of Father Raffaele Ricciardelli, postulator general of the Congregation of the Mission, together with the whole Vincentian family, and considering the written requests of the eminent cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, several bishops and archbishops, as well as the superiors general of orders and congregations, and other prominent churchmen and civil dignitaries, the undersigned Cardinal Antonio Vico, bishop of Porto and Santa Rufina, substituting for His Eminence Cardinal Raphael Merry del Val, the Ponent of this cause, in an ordinary meeting of the Congregation of Sacred Rites, on the date mentioned below, proposed for discussion the following question: Whether a commission for the introduction of this cause should be appointed for the purpose under consideration. Their Eminences, the Fathers in charge of the protection of sacred rites, after the report of the same cardinal Proponent, heard and read the opinion of Father Doctor Angelo Mariani, Promoter General of the Faith. After diligently considering everything, they decided on the following answer: the commission for the introduction of the cause ought to be appointed, if His Holiness gives his approval. 24 July 1918.

After the undersigned cardinal prefect of the Congregation of Sacred Rites reported all these things to His Holiness Pope Benedict XV, His Holiness approved the rescript of the same Congregation and deigned to sign in his own hand the commission for the introduction of the cause of beatification and canonization of the servant of God Felix De Andreis, priest, and first superior of the Congregation of the Mission in America, on the twenty-fifth day of the same month and year.

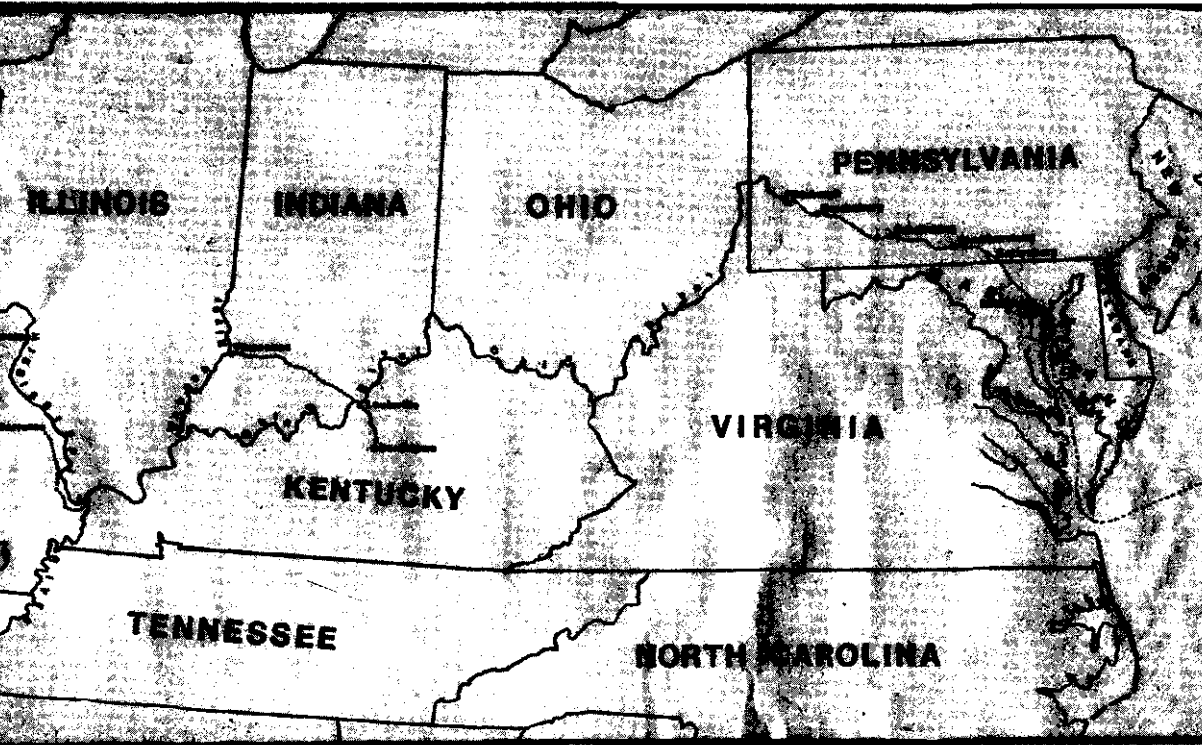
+ A. Cardinal Vico, bishop of Porto and Santa Rufina, prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Rites.

Alexander Verde, secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Rites.

[Seal]



**I**  
**CORRESPONDENCE**



This map depicts the overland journey taken by the first Vincentians from Baltimore to the Barrens. They navigated down the Ohio River to Louisville, and from there to the Mississippi.

*Collection of the Vincentian Studies Institute*

## BEFORE 1816

*The earliest letter, now disappeared, was an assignment to China. Felix treasured this document. His brother Vincenzo also treasured the letters he received from Felix, which speak of his love and reverence for his father and for the other members of his family. Felix commonly included brotherly exhortations to Vincenzo to take good spiritual care of himself, something he probably was not doing. Two documents have been included which are not strictly letters but, being dated, give good information about Felix's concerns: as a teacher (number 3), and as an author of a spiritual book (number 6). His letter to the vicar general in Rome begins the narrative of his missionary life in America.*

### 1. TO FELIX DE ANDREIS, C.M.<sup>1</sup>

(Between 1801 and 1803)

Be prepared to leave for the mission you desire so much. You are destined for China, and you and your companions will be able to see in these circumstances the designs of divine providence. To accomplish its purposes it makes use of truly unforeseen means.<sup>2</sup>

(François Brunet)<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> **Letter 1.** Cited in *Raffaele Ricciardelli, Vita del servo di Dio Felice de Andreis. Fondatore e primo superiore della Congregazione della Missione negli Stati Uniti d'America (Roma: Industria tipografica Romana, 1923), 17.*

<sup>2</sup> Rosati noted that a group of Russian Orthodox women in Saint Petersburg used to raise funds to support the travel of Catholic missionaries to China. For reasons unknown, the mission was called off. (Also see the complete version in Joseph Rosati, C.M., "Life of De Andreis," in the "Summarium super dubio," in *Sacra Rituum Congregatione. Sancti Ludovici. Beatificationis et Canonizationis Servi Dei Felicis de Andreis. Positio super introductione causae* (Rome: Guerra et Mirri, 1918), 99. (Hereinafter cited as Rosati, "Life," *Summarium*.) The original of Rosati's "Life of De Andreis" can be found in the Archives of the Postulator General of the Congregation of the Mission, Rome (De Andreis papers), 60 pages, in Rosati's own hand. The manuscript features two title pages: *Quelques souvenirs touchant la vie et les vertus de M' Felix De Andreis Prêtre de la Cong' de la Mission et 1<sup>er</sup> Supérieur de la Mission des Etats Unis d'Amérique mort à S' Louis*; and *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de la Vie de M' Félix De Andreis Visiteur de la Cong' de la Mission aux Etats Unis et Vicaire General du Diocèse de la N<sup>lle</sup> Orléans mort à S' Louis*. The second, less accurate, title was probably added later, as it refers to him as a Visitor.

*Correspondence before 1816***2. TO VINCENZO DE ANDREIS, DEMONTE<sup>4</sup>**

Rome  
29 July 1812

My dearest brother,

I still remember the promise I made you a year ago in my last letter, that I would give you timely notice of my departure from here to our native region.<sup>5</sup> I had, so to say, pen in hand ready to fulfill this promise. I had my traveling clothes ready and my trunk packed, and the time limit set for my departure in my passport, which I still have, was about to expire. Although I did not realize it, Providence, on which I rely completely, made use of a student of mine, a Chaldean from

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<sup>3</sup> François Brunet, French vicar general (12 February 1800 - 15 September 1806). No reference to Brunet's appointment of De Andreis has been found in Brunet's extant papers. De Andreis's name is given in letters from Brunet and others during that period, but nothing refers to his China assignment. Rosati, however, claims to have seen the letter. (Rosati, "Life," *Summarium*, 42.)

The reasons for not going to China are unclear, but seem to be that Felix was not French, and perhaps did not have the requisite skills to satisfy the emperor's wish for European scientists and mathematicians in his court (although De Andreis had studied mathematics at Piacenza). Brunet proposed three French Vincentians to Napoleon in February 1803, but their mission did not take place.

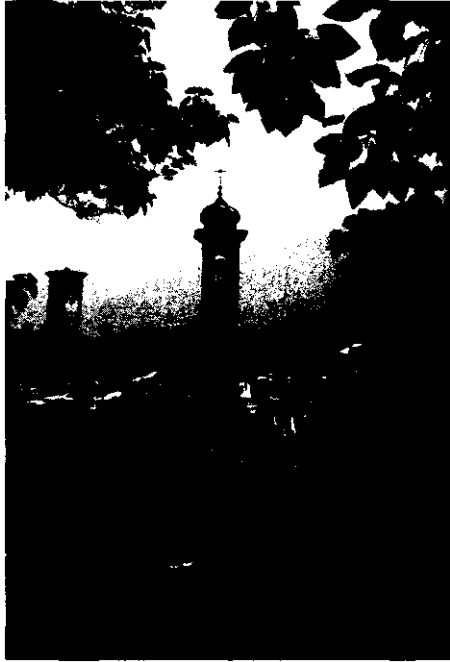
<sup>4</sup> Letter 2. *Autograph letter, Italian, four pages with address, in provincial archives, Turin, De Andreis papers; copy in the archives of the General Curia, Rome; De Andreis collection, Volume XVI. Cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 48-49, 105.*

Vincenzo was the half-brother of Felix, as he mentions in his Itinerary. From Vincenzo descended a numerous family.

<sup>5</sup> The reason for his departure was a decree from the Napoleonic government demanding the removal of foreigners to their native countries. Since De Andreis was a Piedmontese, he had to leave. He put off his departure since he was teaching the foreign students of Propaganda Fide, such as the Chaldean from Nineveh mentioned below, who otherwise would have had no place to live. (Rosati, "Life," *Summarium*, 49.)

*Correspondence before 1816*

Nineveh, to cause a delay until the end of the academic year.<sup>6</sup> There might even be some further delay. So, since my departure had been postponed, I thought I should just delay telling you of my coming as I had promised. Then this morning, quite unexpectedly, your dear letter of the 21st of this month was delivered to me. To my surprise, you informed me in it of your daring determination to undertake a trip to Rome in the near future. You can imagine how I felt at such news. It



The Parish Tower of Demonte.  
*Courtesy of the author*

delights me greatly to know that I will have the joy of embracing you here after nearly ten years without our seeing each other. I was

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<sup>6</sup> This student is identified as Isaias di Giacobbe (using the Italian form of his name), who entered Monte Citorio in 1805 and left, after ordination, 29 May 1815. "He behaved himself very well in all things. Always humble, meek, obedient, devout, and a young man of the highest expectations, who made great progress in studies, especially in theology." ("Catalogus in quo praeter Convictorum nomina, eorum etiam qualitates adnotantur," Register of Students at Monte Citorio, 1720-1870, Archives of the Roman Province, 3.5.11, 35.)



*Correspondence before 1816*

particularly delighted with the possibility of enjoying your company on your return home. This would bring me unspeakable relief and comfort on the journey.

Since you have asked for my advice about undertaking this journey, I must admit to being perplexed and doubtful. What should I tell you? On the one hand, God knows how much I want to see you and embrace you. But on the other hand, although I love you greatly, I would not want to deceive you and have you regret risking a journey like this on my account. I realize that the trip is long—by public coach it would take you about twenty days, and so it would be very expensive. Besides, it would take place amid very critical circumstances. Because of them I could not show you the hospitality that I would do at other times. You would not be able to see the beautiful sights of this city, but only its misery and desolation. The mule, which you are counting on to finance your trip, would fetch only a pitiful price, since business is depressed here. Because of the great miseries, sellers are many and buyers are few, such that what is worth twenty goes for five or six. To give you at least some sense of these miseries, I will tell you only that I found I had to get rid of my pocket watch to be able to help some very fine people reduced to extreme poverty and begging. My heart could not bear having anything superfluous while my neighbors lacked even the bare essentials. There is another strong reason that I cannot tell you, but you will understand it through this note, at least in general outline. It would at least delay your planned departure. Lastly, if you came to Rome you might not find me here if I had already left, and this would greatly disappoint us both. Yet in spite of all this I don't intend to dissuade you from making your journey. Since you are looking for my agreement, however, let us do this: we will place the question in our father's hands. He should examine these issues with his well-known prudence, and he will be able decide what is to be done. You should accept his opinion as if it were my own.

I am greatly astonished and surprised that, in the detailed description you make in your letter about our people at home, you did not mention our sister Margherita, and you leave me in doubt whether this happened through forgetfulness or through some news that I don't know about.

*Correspondence before 1816*



**M. FÉLIX DE ANDREIS**

Prêtre de la Congrégation des Missionnaires de S. Vincent de Paul  
Premier supérieur de cette Congrégation  
aux États-Unis  
et Vicaire général du diocèse de la Nouvelle-Orléans.

Engraving of Felix De Andreis.

*Courtesy of De Andreis-Rosati Memorial Archives*

Give my hearty regards to your brother-in-law, and my dear confrere [Filippo] Giriodi,<sup>7</sup> and tell him that I long to embrace him

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<sup>7</sup> Filippo Giriodi was born in Demonte, 26 August 1781. Following De Andreis by a similar path, he entered the Congregation of the Mission in Mondovi, 29 September 1797, but left because of the government decree, 8 February 1799. He re-entered 9 December 1799, and moved from Turin, 21 December 1799, to study philosophy in Piacenza. After his ordination, he returned to Piacenza in November 1815 to teach theology, where he became the superior there, 13 February 1824. He died in Piacenza, 28 November 1842. (See a biographical notice in *Annales de la Congrégation de la Mission* 110-111 [1945-1946]: 382-83.)

*Correspondence before 1816*

once again. Who knows, if you put off your trip to Rome somewhat, perhaps he might be able to come with you. But for now, no. To tell the truth, I cannot understand why those two religious you spoke to me about want to come to Rome, where all [religious] corporations have been suppressed and foreigners have been expelled, and are still being expelled. Once they reached here they would perhaps even regret making the trip.

Please give our father, in my name, the most tender and respectful marks of my filial love for him, and offer to all the rest of the family and relatives, friends and acquaintances my most heartfelt regards. Tell them that they have all been remembered to everyone here.

Nothing is more important to me than Religion. As much as I know how and can, I recommend it to you as a good brother and as your missionary brother. For the blind young people of our day, religion is not normally very much in fashion, nor, especially, is frequenting the sacraments. Oh, how many times have I been afflicted with this somber thought: although I keep saying that I employ all the means which my weakness allows to instruct, direct and save souls in every way, may it never be true that the soul of one of my family should perish! This thought has horrified me. For this reason I pray daily to God at holy mass for everyone individually. But my love for you makes me fear that, in an age as perverse as this, one of today's terrible maxims might attack and ruin you. Dear Vincenzo, everything ends, and does so quickly. Eternity never ends, and begins when we least expect it.

Consider this advice as brotherly love. It does not come from a bad impression of you, since I rejoice at believing well of you and of everyone. If you postpone your arrival in Rome to a better time, I will give you a book about religion that I want to have printed.<sup>8</sup> It will certainly please you, since, besides being instructive, you will find it curious, pleasant and delightful. The whole forms a general antidote

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<sup>8</sup> This book, by Henri Marie Dudon, was *Dio solo, ovvero la sacra lega proposta agli amanti di Dio da farsi in favore degl'interessi di quest'Essere Supremo* (Rome, 1667; another printing, 1807). The introduction to this Italian translation had caused it to be placed on the Index of Forbidden Books in 1688. De Andreis's involvement in publishing the 1807 edition, whether he translated it from the original or not, is unclear. He had profited spiritually from the book while he was a novice (Ricciardelli, 10). It caused some hesitation as to his orthodoxy at the time of his selection for the American mission. His translation of *Dio Solo* is found in the archives of the Roman Province, manuscript 14.3.15, but no printed copy seems to exist.

*Correspondence before 1816*

to the many poisonous booklets which have been spread about, and are still being spread to give illusions to the ignorant, to the negligent and the dissolute.

You want a response at least by the tenth or twelfth of this August, and I believe that you will have it.

The school bell is ringing now, and it obliges me to stop. Believe me that with all my heart I call myself

Your most affectionate brother

Felix,

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission.

P.S. Regards to Father [Filippo] Giriodi also from Father [Simone] Ugo.<sup>9</sup>

*Addressed:* To Mr. Vincenzo De Andreis, Coní [Cuneo] for Demonte.

*Postmark:* 116, Rome.

### 3. PREFACE TO *NORME ED AVVISI*<sup>10</sup>

(1814?)

In his bull establishing our Congregation, Pope Urban VIII of happy memory deigned to write a truly incomparable commendation of it. Something greater than this could not be imagined nor desired from the mouth of a Vicar of Christ. “[It is] an institute most acceptable to God, most useful to the Christian people, and truly necessary for God’s Church.” (12 January 1632) How important, therefore, is the

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<sup>9</sup> Simone Ugo, born 1780, succeeded Francesco Antonio Baccari as Visitor of the province of Rome.

<sup>10</sup> **Letter 3.** *Preface taken from the printed copy of the book. Italian.*

This booklet was printed only in 1887, after the clerical students of the Congregation of the Mission had used it in manuscript form for many years. It can, however, be dated to around 1814, when De Andreis was involved in the education of Vincentian students in Rome. *Norme ed Avvisi per formare ed eseguire le principali funzioni della Congregazione della Missione proposti ai suoi giovani studenti dal Signor Felice de Andreis, Sacerdote della medesima Congregazione. Con Appendice del Sig. Almeras, Sup. Generale, sul metodo nostro di predicare* (Turin: Giulio Speirani e Figli, 1887), 127. This volume is a printed copy of “Trattino Didascalico Pratico ossia Istruzione Concionatoria”; the original is in the archives of the Roman Province, (14.3.15), entitled “De Andreis, Parte II.”

*Correspondence before 1816*

responsibility of its members who have the good fortune to be called by God to such an institute, and especially of those young men who are beginning to prepare themselves to become trained in being able to preserve always that same spirit which would elicit such a commendation.

Should by some misadventure a disregard of their own duties or a lazy indifference toward the good outcome of its functions come to be introduced in its members then that commendation would soon turn into rejection and the institute would no longer be pleasing to God but displeasing. It would no longer be useful to the people, nor any longer be necessary to the Church. It would thus become harmful and deserving of being suppressed and abolished.

Woe to that person who would cause such a ruin! In various assemblies of our Congregation it has already been established and decreed that the houses of study to care for future workers should soon provide a method of education and truly virtuous training that they [the candidates] might succeed in serving the Congregation fruitfully.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> The author seems to be referring to the decrees of the 16th General Assembly, held in 1788. If so, the reason why the Congregation did not put the decrees into practice was the French Revolution. The text of the decree of session 14 reads:

The superior general proposed several matters to regulate better the method of studies followed in the houses of Saint Lazare, Lyons and Cahors. The assembly judged them to be of great importance. He proposed: (1) That in the seminaries for our men two years be given to the study of philosophy, of which the second should also be spent in the study of the physical sciences; (2) that three years be given to theological studies, and that the last six months should be given over to learning preaching by studying how to compose sermons and clerical conferences, and by learning other branches of knowledge which are necessary to form a Christian preacher; (3) that those who present themselves for examinations, to be held twice a year, should be prepared to answer questions put to them during the examination concerning one historical book of the Bible.

The assembly heartily approved the matters proposed by the superior general, especially the last two points. They are necessary to keep the word of God from growing stale in our mouths. Rather, it should grow in dignity in our apostolate and become efficacious to heal sinners. The assembly asked the same superior general to communicate immediately to our confreres other matters that he believes would improve the education for our apostolates.

(*Collectio Completa Decretorum Conventuum Generalium Congregationis Missionis* [Paris: Pillet et Dumoulin, 1882], no. 416, 146-47.)

*Correspondence before 1816*

For some reason, a decision of such importance has not yet had any result; and so candidates continue to be formed on their own, at random and without method. This is a disorder and occasions many other disorders for the candidates themselves, for the entire Community, and, in general, for all those who profit from our exertions.

To avoid this disorder in some way, and at the request of and moved by those who have the right to my instruction, I have determined to draw up this brief document to help our candidates, our Congregation and our dear Holy Mother Church. Amen.

F. De Andreis  
of the Congregation of the Mission

**4. TO VINCENZO DE ANDREIS, DEMONTE<sup>12</sup>**

Rome  
6 July 1814

My dearest brother,

Last evening I received your fine letter with the enclosed bill of exchange, for which I thank you. Please relay my deepest thanks to our father. I already assumed that our father would receive back from the restored government his former office from which the usurper had removed him.<sup>13</sup> But to my surprise and extreme displeasure I learned of the calumnious opposition and aggravation that he has just suffered by being replaced by a foreigner. For me this event is nothing else than one more proof of the detestable perversity of the world in which we live, a perversity that from now on truly makes the world intolerable for me. It makes me groan every day, exclaiming with the Psalmist: *Heu mihi quia incolatus meus prolongatus est! Habitavi cum habitantibus Cedar; multum incola fuit anima mea* [*“Woe is me that my dwelling has*

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<sup>12</sup> **Letter 4.** Autograph letter, Italian, three pages with address, in provincial archives, Turin, De Andreis papers; copy in the archives of the General Curia, Rome; De Andreis collection, Volume XVI. Cited in Ricciardelli, *Vita*, 49-50.

<sup>13</sup> Napoleon Bonaparte.

*Correspondence before 1816*

been prolonged, I have dwelt amid the inhabitants of Cedar; all too long has my soul been a dweller”].<sup>14</sup> So great is the pain that I experience internally that I believe the days of my pilgrimage on earth will be shortened. Meanwhile amid present hardships I have to be resigned to make my way to the life to come. Do not let yourself get too bothered by such misfortune, since Providence will certainly bring a greater good out of it for you.

By this time you have, I believe, learned of the contents of my last letter to your brother-in-law, which I wrote to him a few weeks ago.<sup>15</sup> I gave him the consoling advice to get ready to depart for Rome with the understanding that he would accompany you. On the one hand you can imagine my great pleasure in seeing you and embracing you again, but on the other, I see how expensive it is to travel here and back, and even to stay here. So check your finances and do what God inspires you to do in this matter. The rule has been made here in our house of not receiving laity, no matter whom, unless they are making the retreats.<sup>16</sup> But I could find you lodging in some clean private home instead of having you stay at an inn for such a long time, since whoever comes to Rome should stay for some length of time to be able to view at least the more essential sights. I regret that during September I will probably have to be away from Rome for some time for certain obligations I have already agreed to, provided my ever-increasing ailments do not stop me.<sup>17</sup> For the last five or six months a stomach problem has bothered me, it weakens my whole body. I have tried many medicines, but they produce only ephemeral and passing improvements. I think that God no longer wants to do anything else with my deeds and wants me quickly removed from the world. I assure you that, for me, this is something more to be desired than feared. I understand well enough the vanity and evil of the world. I have no illusions about this, and I do not foresee the time when it will cease. Yet in all things, may God’s will be done.

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<sup>14</sup> Ps 120:5-6 New American Bible: “Woe is me that I sojourn in Meshech, that I dwell amid the tents of Kedar! All too long have I dwelt (with those who hate peace).”

<sup>15</sup> Filippo Giriodi, C.M. The letter in question is not extant.

<sup>16</sup> Retreats for laity were a part of the mission of the house.

<sup>17</sup> Accounts are lacking of the missions that he might have preached in September 1814. Consequently, he probably had other obligations, such as retreats, clerical conferences, or attending to some local parish congregation.

*Correspondence before 1816*

You told me nothing about our father's health or about that of the others at home. I suppose this means that all are well, and I am delighted about that. Give my regards to everyone, as if I had listed them all by name; you know who should be mentioned. Continue to offer to our father those filial duties that I cannot offer in my absence. Extend my best wishes to all our relatives and acquaintances. Believe me, in all sincerity and cordial brotherly affection for you, that I have the pleasure of calling myself

Your very dear and affectionate brother,  
Felix,  
unworthy Priest of the Congregation of the Mission

*Addressed:* To the very illustrious Procurator Mr. Vincenzo De Andreis, Procurator, Cuneo for Demonte.

*Postmark:* Rome.

**5. TO VINCENZO DE ANDREIS, DEMONTE<sup>18</sup>**

Rome  
15 May 1815

My dear brother,

So that you might have no further reason to complain of my epistolary silence, I now feel inspired to satisfy this duty since I have a bit of free time. Also the news I received from you just yesterday moved me to write. I was coming up from the refectory with Mr. Giovanni Pinelli from Demonte, who is here in our house for a few weeks because of some problem. The news [in your letter] disturbed me for a moment, but I was doubly consoled: by the cure obtained, as well as by your wise and Christian behavior with the innocent poisoner. I already

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<sup>18</sup> **Letter 5.** *Autograph letter, Italian, three pages, with address, in the archives of the province of Turin, De Andreis papers.*



*Correspondence before 1816*

realized what had happened. May eternal thanks be given for this to the supreme giver of every good. He showers me, in particular, with his grace with both hands and so abundantly that, because I am so unworthy, I am embarrassed just to think about it.

The day before yesterday I returned here after a worrisome and tiring eight-day mission,<sup>19</sup> during which I took sick one evening. But I quickly improved, so much so that it has been many years since I have enjoyed such good health.

I wanted to send you some books that I had printed last year, but I have not had the opportunity. I will send you some when I get the chance.<sup>20</sup>

Political rumors have not, we might say, disturbed us nor frightened us, since we already foresaw that, in fact, it would be only an inert passing dark cloud. Consequently we shortly expect the return of our supreme pontiff and sovereign [Pius VII] to his see.<sup>21</sup> Because the former king of Naples, Joachim Murat,<sup>22</sup> occupied the marches of Ancona, Mr. Giovanni Pinelli was unable to avoid new problems by returning to his farm where he had his patrimony. Since he had to remain in Rome to see to the outcome of these affairs, he realized that he had nearly consumed the savings he brought with him from there. Consequently, he will not have enough to make the long 300-mile trip back home. Since you wish to act ethically with Pietro, his brother—please give him my best wishes—I warmly recommend that you convince him to provide Giovanni with some helpful financial assistance, thirty or forty scudi, while he either returns to his farm or finds some timely and reliable help somewhere else. I do not doubt for a moment that you would pledge your help and that [Pietro] would agree to meet his brother's pressing need. His conduct will make this very meritorious.

Mr. Giovanni has told me so many nice things about your son Giannino, my nephew whom I have never seen, that it nearly induced me to visit him. Please give him a hug for me but on the condition that

<sup>19</sup> There are no records of this mission.

<sup>20</sup> Probably *Dio Solo*, mentioned in Letter 2, 29 July 1812.

<sup>21</sup> Napoleon abdicated 22 June 1815; the papal government was able to return to Rome 7 June 1815, just before this letter.

<sup>22</sup> Murat was officially deposed 19 May 1815, just after this letter. He died 13 October 1815. His forces occupied the Marches of Ancona from 28 March to 7 May 1815, and was most likely the "passing dark cloud" referred to above.

*Correspondence before 1816*



LA MAISON DE MISSION DE ROME, DE MONTE-CITORIO

Monte Citorio, Rome, Italy.

*Courtesy of the author*

his mother not give him too many. Otherwise you might regret it with the passing of time. Remember what the Holy Spirit counsels in Ecclesiasticus 7:23: *Filii tibi sunt? Erudi illos, et curva illos a pueritia illorum* ["Do you have children? Teach them and mold them from their youth"],<sup>23</sup> and in another place: *qui parcat virga odit filium suum* ["He who spares the rod hates his son"].<sup>24</sup>

I would have written to our good father, but since you would have written back for him, I felt I should just write directly to you since he is used to this procedure. Please give him my respect and affection as best you can. The same for our good mother. She really deserves that title for the love she has always shown us. We could not have expected better if she had borne us.<sup>25</sup>

My regards to your wife, to dear brother Giuseppe and all his family, to our uncle and all our aunts, to our sister Margherita when you see her. Please give the same regards to all the good gentlemen of our region who remember me. I do not know if Giriodi your brother-in-law and my confrere has already left for Piacenza, as I have recently

<sup>23</sup> NAB: "If you have sons, chastise them; bend their necks from childhood."

<sup>24</sup> Prov 13:24 NAB: "He who spares his rod hates his son."

<sup>25</sup> De Andreis's mother died 3 March 1782, whereupon his father married a second, and then a third time, after his second wife died in childbirth. This third wife, Margherita Isaia, mentioned here, married Giovanni Maurizio De Andreis, 6 February 1791.

*Correspondence before 1816*

written him in the name of our vicar general.<sup>26</sup> If he has not done so yet, please urge him along, since the new superior, whom he knows well, Father [Carlo Saverio] De Petris, anxiously awaits him there. He has already complained in a letter that he has not arrived.

I constantly beg the Lord that if I do not have the good fortune of seeing my family again here on earth, he will give me the grace of rejoicing in their company forever in heaven. I am convinced of the vanity of this present life, *sic transeamus per bona temporalia, ut non ammittamus aeterna* ["... we may use the good things of this world only in passing, and not lose the treasures of heaven"]<sup>27</sup> and *inter mundanas varietates ibi nostra fixa sunt corda, ubi vera sunt gaudia* ["... that among the distractions of this world, our hearts might be fixed where true joys abide"].<sup>28</sup>

I would long to be able to impress on your heart and on the hearts of all of them there firm sentiments as a sign of that sincere, cordial and fraternal affection, with which I sign myself,

Your most loving brother

Felix,

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission

*Addressed:* To the Illustrious Mr. Vincenzo De Andreis, Secretary of the Council, Cuneo for Demonte.

*Postmark:* Rome.

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<sup>26</sup> Carlo Domenico Sicardi.

<sup>27</sup> From the collect of the third Sunday after Pentecost in the calendar of De Andreis's time.

<sup>28</sup> From the collect of the fourth Sunday of Paschaltide.

*Correspondence before 1816*

**6. AGREEMENT WITH BARTOLOMEO COLUCCI, C.M.,  
SUPERIOR, ROME<sup>29</sup>**

*Laus Deo, ac Beatae Virgini Mariae*  
[“Praise to God and to the Blessed Virgin Mary”]

I, the undersigned Felix De Andreis, about to depart Rome for the mission of America, ask Father Bartolomeo Colucci to kindly have the charity to be responsible for the matter of the book printed last year on the imitation of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, as follows.<sup>30</sup>

The printer for Propaganda, Signor Francesco Bourli , has most recently acknowledged having 700 copies of the book still unsold. They are to be sold for the published price of 20 bajocchi. This should produce the sum of 140 Roman scudi.<sup>31</sup> A certain number of copies can be sold by the bookseller on the left side of San Marcello, and by the other bookseller at Pasquino, located to the right of the bookstore of Signor Pietro Attini.

Father Colucci is free to reduce the published price somewhat to make it [the sale] successful.

Out of the income from the copies already sold, 42 scudi should be paid back to Father Maestro Alimenti to satisfy the loan he made for the printing with the stipulation that he would be reimbursed on the resulting sale of the copies.

From the remaining copies either for sale or for trade all the remaining income is to be spent for religious goods, or holy cards of Saint Vincent, of Blessed Mary, of the Crucifix, etc., and other devotions, rosaries, medals, etc., for the American mission.

<sup>29</sup> **Letter 6.** *Original document, Italian, three pages, in the files of the Roman province, Rome, Colucci papers, file 11.4.11.*

<sup>30</sup> *Dalla Imitazione della Ss. Vergine Maria, Madre di Dio, sul modello delle Imitazione di Cristo detta volgarmente l'a Kempis.* (Rome: Bourli , 1814). This volume was probably based on the work written by Alexandre Joseph Rouville (1716-1793 [?]), *Imitation de la tr s Sainte Vierge, sur le mod le de l'imitation de J sus-Christ ...* (Avignon, 1766), and many other editions. It was a large work, running 250 to 400 pages. No copy of this Italian translation is known to exist.

<sup>31</sup> A bajocco, a papal coin, was worth 1/10 of a scudo.

*Correspondence before 1816*

The undersigned intends, by this present document, to grant to Father Colucci every right, both personal and real, concerning this matter as indicated above.

Rome, 8 October 1815.

Felix De Andreis

Unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission

Direction for sending the religious goods mentioned above:

At Rome, go to Signor Giovanni Battista Agesso, Strada Papale, near Santa Maria in Monterone, number 38, third floor, in the building of Signor Reppetto, to send them to Marseilles to the Carsamiglia Brothers, business agents, for Father Giovanni Battista Acquaroni.<sup>32</sup>

[In Colucci's hand]

On the first of August 1825, there remained details about the accounts for the property of Father De Andreis described on the previous page, which he wanted me to administer. I made the request to Signor Francesco Bourlié, who gave me very exactly all the copies in his possession. Part of them have been used to pay 42 scudi to Father Maestro Alimenti, loaned by him for the printing; and 4 scudi to Signor Don Raffaello Umpierres by order of Father De Andreis; and the rest, according to the wish of the above-mentioned [De Andreis] have been exchanged for all sorts of various holy pictures, which at various times have been sent to America. These amounted to the sum of 99.4 scudi. [Total of] 145.4 scudi.

By God's grace I think that I have satisfied the commission, *non de bono et equo* ["not in every respect"] but otherwise well enough, for one who died so young, since I willingly put some of my own money into this.

[signed] Bartolomeo Colucci

Priest of the Congregation of the Mission

In San Silvestro on Monte Cavallo

*Notice on cover page:* Memorandum of Father De Andreis, and a clear account of the expenses and income, as the administrator of his copies.

*In another hand:* Received from Father Alimenti.

<sup>32</sup> Leonardo Carsamiglia was a cousin of Acquaroni.

*Correspondence before 1816*

**7. TO CARLO DOMENICO SICARDI, C.M.,  
VICAR GENERAL, ROME<sup>33</sup>**

Piacenza

29 December 1815

Since this is really my first bit of free time, I am now reporting to you about our trip, and, although it will be late, I offer you my humble wish for a happy new year. I thought that I would find my departure from Rome very bitter. Instead I discovered that it was very sweet, as if I had entered upon an ocean of perfume. I cannot thank the Lord enough for such a special grace, which is my destination [in America].

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<sup>33</sup> **Letter 7.** Copy, Italian, in the archives of the General Curia, Rome. De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part I, Section D, #1a, 5-6. Cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 215.

Carlo Domenico Sicardi (1729-1819) was elected fourth assistant to the superior general in 1788, but had to flee France at the Revolution. Later, because the superior general had died and no election was possible, the pope named Sicardi vicar general, with responsibilities for the Congregation outside of France (1804-1819). In his annual New Year's letter for 1816, Sicardi wrote the following to the members of the Congregation on the beginnings of the American mission:

Lastly, in all probability, full success is assured for the new foundation that will take place in New Orleans, a city in North America, in the province of the Two Floridas. Its bishop, Louis William Dubourg, was consecrated here in Rome a few weeks ago by His Eminence Cardinal Joseph Doria. [Dubourg] has been living with us. He has put great pressure not only on us but also on the Sovereign Pontiff himself, Pius VII, to have some priests of the Mission to direct his new seminary for the sake of the clergy and the people. This new foundation has been accepted, and the two parties have approved and ratified it. Three of our priests, Fathers Felix De Andreis, Joseph Rosati and John Baptist Acquaroni, have already left this house of Monte Citorio for Bordeaux, France. There, they will join several other secular priests and await Bishop Dubourg. He will leave our house in a week or ten days. When His Excellency arrives, they will all set sail for America. Father Felix De Andreis, whose piety, regularity, prudence, uprightness and knowledge are well known, has been named superior of this new establishment. Besides, he has been completely equipped with all the necessary powers to found and direct other houses of our Congregation in that country.

(*Recueil des principales circulaires des supérieurs généraux de la Congrégation de la Mission*. 3 Vols. (Paris: Georges Chamerot, 1877-1880), 2: 326; hereinafter cited as *Recueil*.)

*Correspondence before 1816*

We arrived just the day before yesterday at the college,<sup>34</sup> and I hope in the morning to be able to remove any difficulty and be able to add a brother to our group. He will probably be Brother [Martin] Blanka.

I have some worries since I have not received word of our companions who have set sail. If you ever have news of them, I would be very happy if you would send it to me in Turin. I hope to stay there for a few days, and to have someone there forward our mail.

I have had a few bouts of anxiety about our difficult journey, but a little rest has helped me to recover quickly.

Now about the packet supposed to be left in Parma, we stopped there for only a very short time [26 December], since I was completely taken up with mass and a meal. Because of the distance from the place and being unable to open the trunk, I have had to bring it along to Piacenza, from where it will be sent on to its destination. Please convey my most humble and respectful homage, with my sincerest thanks, to the visitor, Father [Marzio] Ceracchi, and to all the confreres there.<sup>35</sup>

Permit me to ask them *in visceribus Christi* ["in the affection of Christ"]<sup>36</sup> to recommend that God send me to my death before I ruin his work. To the regards from all of us to you I unite my poor sentiments with a heart full of the most cordial affection, esteem, gratitude and veneration for you,

Your most humble, respectful and devoted servant,  
Felix De Andreis,  
unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission.

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<sup>34</sup> The Collegio Alberoni, a seminary founded by Cardinal Giulio Alberoni (1664-1752), which he entrusted to the Congregation of the Mission. De Andreis had studied there and later became a member of the teaching staff.

<sup>35</sup> Ceracchi became visitor on 4 November 1814, following the death of his predecessor, Romualdo Ansaloni, 13 March 1814. Ansaloni had been one of Felix's professors at Piacenza.

<sup>36</sup> Phil 1:8.

## 1816

The year 1816 is marked by the progress of the pioneers from Bordeaux to Saint Thomas, Kentucky. Felix apologizes for not saying goodbye in person to his father. He reports on the positive attitude of the French, something many Italians found hard to believe. The details of departure, sailing, the storms at sea, the vow to Saint Vincent, and the landing at Baltimore figure in several letters. Once arrived in America, Felix is struck by the variety of Protestant groups, and senses in himself a desire to work among the Indians. In this year appears also the first letter, in excerpt, to Dubourg's sister, a staunch supporter of her brother's plans. The trip to Pittsburgh was difficult and depressing, while the ride down the Ohio lifted the missionaries' spirits. Everywhere the Vincentians experienced warm hospitality.

8. TO GIOVANNI MAURIZIO DE ANDREIS, DEMONTE<sup>37</sup>

Turin

4 [January] 1816

My Beloved Father,<sup>38</sup>

The consolation I experienced in embracing my brother Vincenzo<sup>39</sup> makes me regret that overwhelming circumstances will not allow me to fulfill the same duty toward the dearest person I have in this world, my dearest father, nor with anyone else in the family.<sup>40</sup> But I am letting my brother take my place to present my legitimate and justifiable excuses. Everything I could say you will hear from him, who, together with my other brother, Giuseppe, will fulfill my duties and show you my love and thanks, the sweetest fruits of filial piety.

I am leaving, clearly summoned by him whom I must obey, even before a father. He says: *qui diligit patrem suum etc. plusquam me non est me dignus* ["He who loves his father, etc., more than me is not worthy

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<sup>37</sup> Letter 8. Autograph letter, Italian, one page, in the archives of the province of Turin, De Andreis papers.

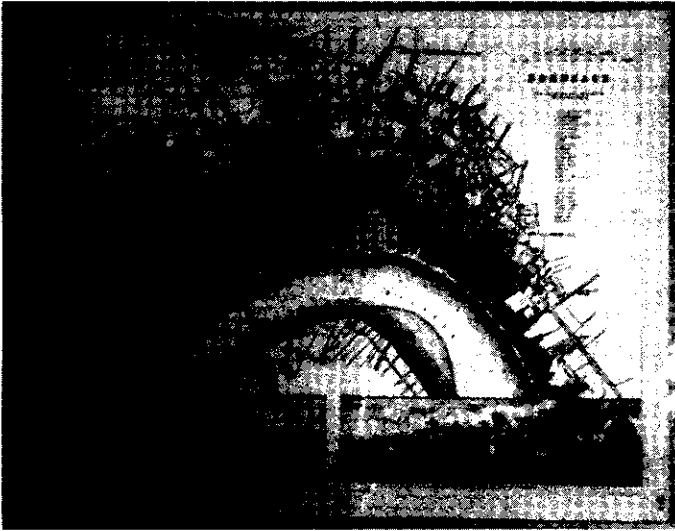
<sup>38</sup> In another hand: Gio[vanni] Morizio De Andreis, Notary in Demonte.

<sup>39</sup> In another hand: This Vincenzo, a lawyer and later senator, transferred his residence to Turin, and left descendants.

<sup>40</sup> More details on this visit appear in Letter 21, 3 September 1816, addressed to his brother.



*Correspondence 1816*



Period map of Bordeaux. Pictures on the bottom of the view of the city from the Quai de Chartons. Published by Baldwin and Cradock. Drawn by W.B. Clark.  
*Collection of the De Andreis-Rosati Memorial Archives*

of me”].<sup>41</sup> I hope that you will join me in making this sacrifice to God. He asks it of us and has the right to do so. In this way we thank him for having deigned to cast his loving glance on us for this great and magnificent work. It turns a thousand admiring eyes and excites so many zealous souls with holy envy. The enormous load burdening my shoulders would crush me without God’s special help. Please implore this for me and have my good friends implore it, too. My best and hurried greetings to the entire family, friends and acquaintances. I leave tomorrow. I will not stop sending my love.

Believe me that I will always be, and ever show you my tender, cordial and filial attention and respect,

Your affectionate and obedient son,

Felix,

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission

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<sup>41</sup> Luke 14:26 NAB: “If anyone comes to me without turning his back on his father . . . he cannot be my follower.”

*Correspondence 1816*

**9. TO CARLO DOMENICO SICARDI, C.M.,  
VICAR GENERAL, ROME<sup>42</sup>**

Bordeaux

1 February 1816

Very reverend and dear Father,

In this present letter I have the honor of reporting to you about our voyage, successfully completed on the thirtieth of January. We left behind in Toulouse our companions who had departed Rome two months before us, but who will arrive in Bordeaux five or six days after us because of the various trials which they had to suffer on the sea. I do not know how to express my consolation in having found them in Toulouse after the bitter sorrow I experienced at Montpellier. During our stay there we had very good reason to fear that they had drowned in a shipwreck,<sup>43</sup> and so made to God the sacrifice of having [—]<sup>44</sup>, but blessed be the Lord who *mortificat et vivificat, deducit ad inferos et reducit* ["(The Lord) puts to death and gives life; he casts down to the nether world; he raises up again"].<sup>45</sup> God wanted me to be detached from everything [—]. [—] the tailor had ever left the Company; I had [—] him [—] prosperous.

Also, my journey turned to my profit because of the problems we suffered from the unbelievably overwhelming cold in the mountains

<sup>42</sup> **Letter 9.** *Autograph letter, Italian, two pages,, in the archives of the General Curia, Rome. De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part I, Sect. D, #1b, 7-8. Cited in Joseph Rosati, Sketches of the Life of the Very Reverend Felix De Andreis, First Superior of the Congregation of the Mission in the United States, and Vicar-General of the Diocese of New Orleans; with a sketch of the Progress of the Catholic Religion in the United States, from the Beginning of the Present Century to the Year 1860. Trans. Francis Burlando, C.M. (Saint Louis, 1861), 67-68. Hereinafter Sketches of the Life. Also cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 226-27.*

The name of the recipient was added in another hand.

<sup>43</sup> The Rosati group avoided shipwreck by traveling overland from Marseilles to Toulouse, to avoid the high winds characteristic of the season. Brother Borawanski, however, stayed with the baggage on the ship. (Joseph Rosati, C.M., "Itineraire," 5 and 20 November 1815. The "Itineraire" was Rosati's diary, referred to on occasion by De Andreis. From a transcription of the original in Rome by Charles L. Souvay, copy in DRMA.)

<sup>44</sup> Ink stains and resulting holes in the original account for several illegible words.

<sup>45</sup> 1 Sam 2:6.

*Correspondence 1816*

of Savoy.<sup>46</sup> Because of it we had to have the horses unhitched, and we had to stay in the carriage all during a frightful storm that threatened to engulf us. Because of the storm we had to walk some distance on foot with the snow up to our knees; a little more snow would have buried us. After crossing the Dauphiné and Provence, Languedoc and Gascony we found no more snow and had a very lovely trip.

We have also experienced here the good-hearted French. There are many persons back there [in Italy] who are determined to believe that they [the French] act in all the abnormal ways that are found in an army. If they would come to these parts, they would be forced, to their shame, to revise their biases. I feel consoled that a most fruitful mission was conducted in Orleans and that from there the zealous missionaries traveled to another city to do the same. In Brittany, too, they are conducting very successful missions. The French are perfectly disposed to a spiritual regeneration. The terrible thing is that they lack priests. In the dioceses of Montpellier, Toulouse and Bordeaux, not to mention others, hundreds of parishes go without priests. O God, what desolation.

That very worthy and truly saintly prelate, the archbishop of Bordeaux,<sup>47</sup> deigned to receive me in his palace and at his table,<sup>48</sup> and he named me a prison chaplain. The others have been lodged here and there with pious persons, some with the Daughters of Charity. I met with three of the superiors of the Daughters today and they spoke enthusiastically about you. They are prepared to follow us to Louisiana, but I will deal with this with Father [Dominique-François] Hanon in Paris.<sup>49</sup> I have found at Saint Marcellin in Dauphiné Father [Gabriel] Boussan, at Carcassonne Father [Philippe-Clément] Eustache, at Toulouse Father [Jean] Compans and here at Bordeaux the well-known

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<sup>46</sup> The writer seems to be speaking of the supernatural merit that his sufferings gained for himself.

<sup>47</sup> Charles François d'Aviau du Bois de Sanzai, archbishop of Vienne (1789-1801), became the first archbishop of Bordeaux after the revolution (1802-1826).

<sup>48</sup> The Hôtel du Doyenné, since the revolutionary government had seized the traditional residence.

<sup>49</sup> Letter 10, 10 February 1816. Plans for sending Daughters of Charity to America date from at least 1811, but they were frustrated first by Napoleon and later by other unknown causes.

### *Correspondence 1816*

Father Vincent Wlechmans.<sup>50</sup> All of them oblige me to pay their respects to you and from first to last they send their cordial love to Father [Bartolomeo] Colucci, whom they knew in Bologna.

The affairs of the Congregation in France are moving along well since the decree for the reestablishment of the Congregation came out from the court.<sup>51</sup> Several confreres and some novices are now living with Father Hanon in Paris. People here have bad feelings about how the French vicar general lost some of his jurisdiction. I attended a meeting of notable clergy whom I thanked, but I responded: *je reconnois celui qui m'a envoy  de Rome* ["I recognize him who sent me from Rome"].<sup>52</sup> Then I had to quiet down the crowd by saying that this was only a provisional arrangement that, indeed, we would have had in case of another [vicar] general who was not French. I certainly do not know whether [Fran ois] Watel or [Nicolas] Pierron would have supported this.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> These were young Vincentians at the time of the Revolution. Boussan/Bossan took vows in 1779, and fled to Bologna about 1792; Eustache pronounced his vows in 1777, and fled to Spain in 1792; Compans took vows in 1766, and died 7 February 1835, at Toulouse; Wlechmans (whose name is spelled in several ways, such as Fleckmans, as it is here) fled to Italy 1792. He died 27 June 1831, at Bordeaux. Compans, whose history of the life of Christ (Paris, 1785; Ital. ed., Milan, 1812) was well respected, was, it should be noted, nearly elected vicar general at the assembly of 12 August 1816. Rosati recalled that Compans (spelled Compaing) had donated a large number of books for the American mission. (Joseph Rosati, C.M., "Recollections of the Establishment of the Congregation of the Mission in the United States of America," trans. Stafford Poole, C.M., *Vincentian Heritage* 1 [1980]: 87. Series appeared in *Vincentian Heritage* 1 (1980) through 5:2 (1984). [Hereinafter cited as "Recollections," *VH* followed by the volume and page number.]

<sup>51</sup> The congregation was reestablished by the decree of 7 Prairial, year XII of the republican calendar, or 27 May 1804. Napoleon, however, suppressed it a second time, 26 September 1809, and it was again reestablished 3 February 1816. It is to this decree, in all likelihood, that the writer is referring. Perhaps the decree became known unofficially, since the official date of reestablishment comes after the date of this letter.

<sup>52</sup> This statement would have outraged some French Vincentians, since De Andreis was clearly supporting the loss of jurisdiction suffered by the French vicar general in favor of the Italian one, who had sent him from Rome to America. Besides, he was leaving from France, and technically under the jurisdiction of the French vicar. To observe the formalities, however, he did write to Father Hanon a few days later, Letter 10, 10 February 1816.

<sup>53</sup> Nicolas Pierron (d. 1703) and Fran ois Watel (d. 1710) were previous superiors general. The following appears in another hand at the end of the letter: "Father De Andreis made a mistake; both were French." This seems to mean that De Andreis should have mentioned two Italian vicars, Benedetto Fenaja and Carlo Domenico Sicardi.

*Correspondence 1816*

Father [Giovanni] Craveri at Turin was very welcoming, even paying all the expenses of our lodging, which amounted to more than fifteen scudi.<sup>54</sup> He asked me to pay my respects when I would write [you], as I am now doing. I am very obliged to you for your recommendation made to Father [Giuseppe] Giordana. He has shown us all the courtesies you suggested, and forwarded to us from Turin the letters that had been sent there.

I am embarked on a great ship. I thank God for being with me there because I acknowledge him alone as its compass, rudder and pilot on that same ship. Yet I have a great need of prayers. Please pray for me. Recommend me warmly to our good confreres there so that, because of my sins and my pride, I might not ruin God's work, but might learn to humble myself well, and so become an apt instrument in God's hands to do whatever his admirable providence has determined. *Ut sive per vitam sive per mortem nomen Dei glorificetur* ["Whether through life or through death, may the name of God be glorified"].<sup>55</sup> In my weakness I beg every day in holy mass that the sovereign God might deign to bless your old age and preserve you for the good of the Congregation. I am ever mindful of the many obligations that I acknowledge in particular and which more than ever bind me to declare myself, with the most affectionate respect and veneration for you, your most humble, devoted and obedient servant,

Felix De Andreis,

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission

P.S. My regards to those *perinde ac si nominati essent* ["as if they have been listed by name"],<sup>56</sup> also in the name of all my companions who are safe and happy, as mentioned above.

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<sup>54</sup> Since there was no Vincentian house in Turin at the period, the missionaries had to find public lodgings.

<sup>55</sup> Cited loosely from Phil 1:20 NAB: "... I have full confidence that now as always Christ will be exalted through me, whether I live or die."

<sup>56</sup> A commonplace expression.

*Correspondence 1816*

**10. TO DOMINIQUE FRANÇOIS HANON, C.M.,  
VICAR GENERAL, PARIS<sup>57</sup>**

Bordeaux  
10 February 1816

Sir and Most Honored Father,

Taking advantage of the opportunity offered me by one of these good Sisters of Charity on her way to Paris, I have the honor of informing you of our arrival in Bordeaux. I also present you my humble respects together with those of our entire band of missionaries sent to found a seminary and give missions in Louisiana, according to the information that you have doubtless received from Father Sicardi. Since I am uncertain whether I will be able to go to Paris to offer you my respects in person before our departure, I am fulfilling that duty with this letter.

As Father Sicardi has made you aware of the purpose of our mission, you will perhaps have noticed a wish of mine, already expressed, as well as a hope. With your kind help, I would like to be able to find in France some handwritten copies of the particular rules for our domestic duties and for conducting our missions (except for those of the visitor, superior and the assistant, which my companions copied in Genoa). The pressure of our departure prevented us from copying them in Rome. Also, if it is possible, we would be extremely obliged to have some [copies of the liturgical] offices of our holy

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<sup>57</sup> **Letter 10.** *Autograph letter, French, three pages with address, in the archives of the Congregation of the Mission, Paris. De Andreis file.*

Dominique François Hanon (1757-1816), a seminary professor at the outbreak of the Revolution. On the death of the French vicar general, Placiard, Hanon was named vicar general for France. After nearly five years in prison, he resumed his office in 1814. King Louis XVIII granted the Congregation legal existence, 3 February 1816, but Hanon died of a stroke, 24 April 1816, shortly after receiving this letter.

*Correspondence 1816*

founder. You might be able to give them to Bishop Dubourg<sup>58</sup>, bishop of Louisiana, during his stay in Paris. This worthy prelate will perhaps speak with you again to obtain some of our sisters for a foundation in New Orleans. I would be delighted if this could happen. I join my wishes to his to enlist your support in this new project, if you believe it could contribute to the greater glory of God and to the salvation of those poor people. I have spoken about it with the good sisters in Bordeaux and several have offered themselves for this work and await only a mission from their superiors.

For the rest, the work in which I am engaged is such as would astonish and terrify the most zealous and the best prepared. What can be said when we see it confided to a weak young man without knowledge, experience or prudence, nor all the qualities required for apostolic men? There is only the maxim of Saint Vincent to reassure me when he says: It is a sign that God wishes to insert his holy hand when he places us in works surpassing our abilities.<sup>59</sup>

In this matter I ask the help of your prayers and the prayers of those whom you might employ in this *ut sublimitas sit virtutis Dei, et non ex nobis* ["that the glory be to the power of God and not to us"].<sup>60</sup> Father, I ask your pardon for the faults which I might have made in writing in a language foreign to me, but with which in the future I will have to familiarize myself.<sup>61</sup>

I am, with the most profound respect and veneration of you, Sir and Most Honored Father,  
 your very humble and obedient servant,  
 Felix De Andreis,  
 unworthy priest of the Mission

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<sup>58</sup> Louis William Valentine Dubourg (1766-1833). After his ordination in France on the eve of the Revolution, he was forced to flee to Baltimore, where he joined the Sulpicians in 1795. He was involved in Sulpician works in the United States and briefly in Cuba. He was appointed as administrator of the diocese of Louisiana in 1812, but refused to become its bishop until he recruited priests for his diocese, especially for a planned seminary. After securing the Vincentians under De Andreis, he continued until 1826 in the United States, when he returned to France. He was bishop of Montauban until 1833, and archbishop of Besançon for a month until his death.

<sup>59</sup> A generic citation, quoted from memory.

<sup>60</sup> 2 Cor 4:7 NAB: "... (to make it clear) that its surpassing power comes from God and not from us."

<sup>61</sup> French, although De Andreis grew up close to the border of French-speaking Savoy, and had studied the language in school.

*Correspondence 1816*

*Addressed:* To Father Dominique Hanon, priest, Vicar General of the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity, Paris.<sup>62</sup>

**11. TO CARLO SAVERIO DE PETRIS, C.M.,  
SUPERIOR, PIACENZA<sup>63</sup>**

Bordeaux  
12 February 1816

Very reverend and dear father:

When we happily reached this city on the thirtieth of last month, your very precious letter of the sixth from Turin reached me, along with its two enclosures. I thank you most humbly for them. I believe that by now our worthy prelate, Bishop Dubourg, will have already passed through Turin. Through his efforts, the matter of those two clerics<sup>64</sup> anxious to join our mission will be concluded. Your letter mentioned this to me. This matter cannot be concluded in his absence, since both eye and ear have to play their part. We need to hear and be heard since, without seeing them, I cannot determine anything without knowing their qualities and dispositions, and I must first discuss it with the bishop.

The archbishop of this city,<sup>65</sup> the fame of whose doctrine and holiness echoes throughout France, graciously received me in his own residence and at his table, and has appointed me a chaplain of the prisoners.

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<sup>62</sup> It was only 9 November 1817 that the Vincentians received their present mother house in Paris, at 95, rue de Sèvres. That event, among others, marked an important stage in the reconstitution of the Congregation after the Revolution.

<sup>63</sup> **Letter 11.** *Autograph letter, Italian, in the archives of the General Curia, Rome. Cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 215, 219, 226, 228-29.*

Carlo De Petris, C.M., was superior of the Collegio Alberoni, Piacenza, from 1815 to 1824, where De Andreis had attended the seminary and served on the faculty. His name is also spelled De Pietri.

<sup>64</sup> Presumably these two clerics at the Collegio Alberoni had shown some interest in joining the mission. Dubourg mentioned them in Letter 13, 24 April 1816. Neither joined De Andreis, but one later joined Dubourg.

<sup>65</sup> Charles François d'Aviau du Bois de Sanzai.



## Correspondence 1816

The bitter sorrow I experienced at Montpellier when I heard that our sea-going group<sup>66</sup> had certainly been shipwrecked caused me to offer up this great sacrifice. This, in turn, however, enhanced my consolation in Toulouse when I saw and embraced them there, safe and sound, happy and content. We will probably have them here tomorrow.

Forever blessed be God who *mortificat et vivificat* ["puts to death and gives life"].<sup>67</sup> Brother Blanca<sup>68</sup> is doing marvelously.

We are all housed here and there all over this large city, and we have to travel leagues to see each other. We are all well, however.

The Frenchman<sup>69</sup> went to Clermont, his home, and without him we now number eleven, and are expecting the arrival of the bishop. His sister<sup>70</sup> arrived here a few days ago from America, and in case the bishop has not yet passed by, please give him the news when he does so of the death of the archbishop of Baltimore,<sup>71</sup> and of the vocation of two seminarians, one in Montpellier and the other in Toulouse, who are very anxious to join us. In France, missions are achieving great results and the public press is mentioning one given very successfully in Orleans. The lack of priests is very sad, since many dioceses have hundreds of parishes without pastors. For this reason, we have been urged to stay in France, but *quomodo praedicabunt nisi mittantur* ["how will they preach unless they are sent"]?<sup>72</sup>

Our Congregation is developing well, but it is going very slowly. Many subjects have already joined Father Hanon in Paris.<sup>73</sup> He has already asked the viceroy of Holland. This man became a priest and, full of zeal, is assembling missionaries to found a new congregation. This priest is doing great good. *Quis det ut omnis Israel prophetet* ["Would that all Israel would prophesy"]?<sup>74</sup>

<sup>66</sup> They were Rosati, Acquaroni, Spezioli, Deys, Boboni, Borawanski and Pereira.

<sup>67</sup> 1 Sam 2:6.

<sup>68</sup> Blanka is the proper spelling. His name is variously spelled in De Andreis's letters and other early documents.

<sup>69</sup> Joseph Buzieres.

<sup>70</sup> Madame Françoise Victoire Fournier, 1763-1825, who continued to correspond with De Andreis, and with others in the same group after his death.

<sup>71</sup> John Carroll, who died 3 December 1815.

<sup>72</sup> Rom 10:15.

<sup>73</sup> The vicar general.

<sup>74</sup> Cited loosely from Num 11:29 NAB: "Would that the Lord might bestow his spirit on them all!"

*Correspondence 1816*

Many prejudiced Italians unjustly form judgments of the French nation as being very immoral, as a military people might be. If they would come to this country and travel from one province to another, they would certainly be forced in their shame to reconsider their judgment. We have found churches and sacraments frequented, and a heartiness, politeness and cleanliness not seen in Italy. The clergy are edifying and things are, in a word, quite different from what is depicted there [in Italy].



Bust of Pope Pius VI by Canova.  
*Courtesy of the author*

At Valence I saw the tomb of Pius VI of blessed memory.<sup>75</sup> Its bust and bas-reliefs in marble, and its beautiful inscription, are all

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<sup>75</sup> Pope Pius VI (1717-1799) died in Valence, where he had been brought as a prisoner of the French revolutionary government.

*Correspondence 1816*

worthy of being in Rome. Seeing it made me recall with displeasure the false report I had heard of it in Italy. Oh how difficult it is to get disentangled from all prejudices.

My cross grows daily in *altum, latum et profundum* ["in height, width and depth"], and threatens to crush me under its weight. The Lord perhaps is making a semblance of wanting to leave me to my weakness, but it is really in losing what is nothing that I find everything. *Cum infirmor, tunc potens sum; omnia possum in eo qui me confortat.* ["When I am weak, then am I strong."<sup>76</sup> "I can do all things in him who strengthens me."<sup>77</sup>] Enough!

Please present my humble respects to Fathers [Giovanni] Laura, [Brother Cristoforo] Rigo, [Perpetuo] Passeri, [Tomasso] Reviglio, Giriodi, [Giuseppe] Lusardi,<sup>78</sup> [Antonio] Rossi, [Antonio] De Bernardis, etc., etc., and above all, recommend me and have others recommend me to God, since my needs, as you can imagine, are very great.

Regards from Father Rosati<sup>79</sup>, from Brother Blanca, and from the whole troop, and believe me to be always full of the most loving respect and veneration of you,

your most humble and obedient servant

Felix De Andreis,

unworthy Priest of the Congregation of the Mission

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<sup>76</sup> 2 Cor 12:10.

<sup>77</sup> Phil 4:13.

<sup>78</sup> Giuseppe Lusardi died at Piacenza, 30 May 1815, age 31.

<sup>79</sup> Joseph Rosati (1789-1843), a friend and companion of De Andreis. Coadjutor bishop of New Orleans (comprising the entire Louisiana Purchase), with residence at the Barrens, 1824-1827; first bishop of Saint Louis, 1827-1843.

*Correspondence 1816***12. TO VINCENZO DE ANDREIS, DEMONTE<sup>80</sup>**

Bordeaux  
18 March 1816

My dearest brother,

Although I arrived in this city more than a month and a half ago,<sup>81</sup> I have not written you until now in the hope of also being able to give you at the same time a report of how our journey across the ocean is being planned. But since our bishop has not appeared yet, nor answered after I had written several times,<sup>82</sup> I decided to write you this letter to keep it from appearing that I had forgotten all about my relatives, whom God knows I love tenderly.

Our trip to Bordeaux from Aigue-belle, where I wrote you,<sup>83</sup> was very pleasant. Only at Montpellier did I have to suffer a great affliction. I had assumed that our sea convoy, which carried five confreres<sup>84</sup> and many trunks and cases containing the best I had, had been lost on the coasts of Provence. I was, however, compensated with the consolation I experienced in Toulouse of embracing our companions safe and sound, although they were exhausted by their awful trip.

On my arrival in Bordeaux, the archbishop, Charles d'Aviau du Bois de Sanzai, graciously welcomed me into his own palace and at his table, where I am still living. I am treated with such great politeness and concern that it embarrasses me. All our other companions, ten in number, are lodged all over in various private homes and religious houses. I daily await another three who are on the way.<sup>85</sup> The

<sup>80</sup> **Letter 12.** *Autograph letter, Italian, three pages with address, in the archives of the province of Turin, De Andreis papers; early copy in the archives of the General Curia, Rome, De Andreis collection, Volume XVI.*

<sup>81</sup> 30 January.

<sup>82</sup> The bishop's reply is Letter 13, Easter Sunday, 24 April 1816.

<sup>83</sup> This letter is not extant.

<sup>84</sup> They were Rosati, Acquaroni, Spezioli, Deys, Boboni, Borawanski, Pereira. Of these seven, two (Deys and Pereira) were not formally affiliated with the Congregation of the Mission.

<sup>85</sup> That is, Caretti, Ferrari and probably Tichitoli, who was accompanying the bishop.

*Correspondence 1816*

archbishop has appointed me a chaplain for the prisoners. On every feast I say mass for them and preach, and I have already been asked to hear their confessions. I have preached elsewhere, too, and I have various other requests.<sup>86</sup> I would not have imagined that I would have succeeded so easily in preaching in French. From now on, I will preach in French just as if it were in Italian. Another companion [Rosati], to whom I personally had taught a little French in Rome, began to preach a few days before me. We are all well, despite the Lent rigorously observed here by not eating meat.

I find myself quite consoled, although I sense that in America great blows are being prepared against us.<sup>87</sup> Those who do not have to go tremble for us, but I feel peaceful and full of courage and confidence that the Lord will smooth out all difficulties. Then should we have to lose our life, which is the most that can happen to us, how precious it will be to give our life for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. What could be greater than spending one's life in such a way? For this I am a Christian, an unworthy priest and a missionary. I need only one thing, prayer. Recommend me to God, you and all the good people there. I never think about money or clothing, and I don't want to think of them because God thinks of them for us. Here I do not need to ask for anything, but rather to refuse, so many are the gifts we receive from all sides.<sup>88</sup> I have been constrained to resolve firmly to refuse every invitation. If not, I would be out every day for dinner. Many people here in France have offered, either orally or in writing, to come with us. I do not know what will happen.

Give my regards meanwhile to our father, our brother, our mother, the sisters-in-law, aunts, uncle, etc., and all those you know. If what I

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<sup>86</sup> The Paris manuscript relates the following:

At Bordeaux, he used to say mass at the cathedral. When he arrived in the sacristy, he often found some priests who spoke to him and wanted to enter into conversation with him. He was content with simply saying hello, and then would say that he was going to celebrate mass and would not speak further. The others, who did not see this, did the same and followed his example and maintained a religious silence.

(*Notices VI, 1801-1847, AMP, 434. Hereinafter Notices VI.*)

<sup>87</sup> This was the opinion of Madame Fournier, recently arrived from Baltimore.

<sup>88</sup> He refers to the Common Rules of the Congregation of the Mission, Chapter 5, no. 4: "It should therefore try, as best it can, to see to it that the good practice of neither asking for, nor refusing, anything is always kept up among us."

*Correspondence 1816*

told you in Turin should happen through Angelo Bertola, there will be some agreement, and I will write again about it. If I do not have the leisure of writing you again before we embark, since I do not know precisely when that will be, I would like to ask that the agreement take place as soon as possible. If possible, I will write from America soon after Easter.<sup>89</sup>

Dear Vincenzo, wish me well, save your soul, and so I hope that we shall see one another again in paradise, the only good worthy of our heart.

I am in the love of Jesus Christ,  
your loving brother  
Felix,  
unworthy Priest of the Congregation of the Mission

*Addressed:* To Mr. Vincenzo De Andreis, Secretary of the Tribunal, Turin for Demonte.

*Postmark:* Bordeaux.

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<sup>89</sup> The writer did not arrive in Baltimore until 26 July.

*Correspondence 1816*

Stained glass portrait of De Andreis.  
*St. Mary's Seminary, Santa Barbara, California*

**13. TO FELIX DE ANDREIS, C.M., BORDEAUX<sup>90</sup>**

Lyons

The holy day of Easter<sup>91</sup>

I have received your two letters, my very dear and venerable superior. I will answer them briefly but as fully as my time allows.

I thank both you and my dear Father Rosati for the details you give me about our colony. Exhort them all to fervor and trust in Providence; we need them greatly. If [Caietano] Marliani thinks he could not stand the sea voyage, what shall we do with him? Tell him that I am letting him decide for himself. Perhaps he would do well to join the diocese of Bordeaux. I am worried about Father [Joseph]

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<sup>90</sup> **Letter 13.** *Autograph letter, French, four pages, in SLAA, Du Bourg papers.*

<sup>91</sup> 24 April 1816.

*Correspondence 1816*

Buzieres. He seems to me a little hotheaded. I feel quite satisfied with the advice you gave him to remain in Limoges until [he receives] a new order. Perhaps I could dissuade him from going to America.

As to Casto [Benito Gonzalez], there could be no question of holy orders for him until he has a sufficient amount of Latin and theology. I prefer that his zeal be restrained for two or three more years rather than expose him to the danger of making great mistakes whose results would be regrettable for religion. I am delighted with the acquisition of Fathers [Joseph] Caretti and [Andrew] Ferrari.<sup>92</sup> Tell them how anxious I am to meet them. I am also very glad about what you tell me of [Francis Xavier] Dahmen and [Léo] Deys. I think that you will do well to give them, as well as Casto, a separate class in theology. They will benefit from it more in every respect. You say nothing about holding frequent meetings of all these gentlemen in your house for religious exercises or ecclesiastical conferences. I am very anxious about that and I rely on your wisdom, my venerable brother, to use all appropriate means to maintain proper order, unity and fervor.

As to those who asked you to admit them as teachers, we shall see about this as well as about the candidates from Toulouse and Castres when I arrive. We will not be short of candidates in France. Lyons provided me with three or four excellent ones, Florence with the same number. For the rest, God is bestowing his blessing on the quest and even does miracles for the mission. Let us bless him and pray that I may be worthy to accomplish his designs. In Piacenza I have seen only two subdeacons that are willing to come.<sup>93</sup> I am thrilled that your

<sup>92</sup> For an account of his life by Joseph Rosati, see John E. Rybolt, C.M., trans. and ed., "A Life of Andrew Ferrari, C.M.," *Vincentian Heritage* 7:1 (1986): 27-66. Although John Baptist Acquaroni was also a native of Porto Maurizio, he was not directly involved in the recruitment of his fellow countrymen Caretti and Ferrari. A diocesan priest, Father Giuseppe Antonio Spinelli, had been on retreat at Genoa when Rosati and his band arrived. This priest mentioned the journey to Fathers Caretti and Ferrari on his return to Porto Maurizio. (See Rosati, "Itineraire," after 10 October 1815; also his "Recollections," *VH* 1, 76.) Caretti and Ferrari arrived in Bordeaux 21 March 1816.

<sup>93</sup> By papal permission, the American mission was free to recruit students from the seminary at Piacenza, even those who were already promised to other bishops. (Page ahead for the reference to De Andreis' receiving permission to take seminarians from the Collegio Alberoni in Piacenza, "Important Notices Concerning the Mission of Louisiana in North America, Section One: Rome to Bordeaux," in *Section II, Historical Writings*.)



*Correspondence 1816*

testimony concerning one of them agrees with that of his superiors. I will write to him to be on his way. I know nothing about the Father Dornig announced by good Father Dahmen. Examine him well, please, because I do not want anyone who is doubtful.

I see that you are all very anxious to be on your way. After we parted, however, I decided to leave no sooner than the beginning of October. Letters from New Orleans have advised me to do so, considering the summer heat and autumn fevers that plague the country and would endanger my little colony too much. Nevertheless, recent correspondence tells me of very sad things and most insidious intrigues of the "enemy" who controls the religious opinions in that city. They have completely changed my plans and may change your departure to a much earlier date. Let me explain.

You already know what I had to suffer in New Orleans from a certain religious, for a long time declared a schismatic.<sup>94</sup> Even after his apparent reconciliation he has always remained a violent enemy of authority, supported by a strong party of all the godless and libertines, and the ignorant people seduced by his clever intrigues. I had only a slender hope that he would respect the episcopal character, and if he would not, at least perhaps the people would. But that hope has vanished. Letters from my vicar general<sup>95</sup> and my good brother<sup>96</sup> inform me that the party has become even stronger and more active since my departure. They got the legislature to determine that the trustees would exercise an absolute power over the temporalities and the pastor would do so over the spiritualities of the Church, that is, the cathedral. My informants assure me that there would be no security for my person if I appeared in the city, and I can readily believe it. In this case it would be rash to try. The devil, as you see, is acting violently to thwart God's work. This will not surprise you, and we would be very cowardly servants were that to discourage us. But this is, instead, a motive for greater courage. God does not want us, however, to compromise his work by imprudence, and our good Master tells us:

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<sup>94</sup> Père Antoine de Sedella, O.F.M. Cap.

<sup>95</sup> Louis Sibourd, his vicar in New Orleans from 1815; De Andreis was his vicar in Saint Louis.

<sup>96</sup> Pierre-François Dubourg (b. 1767), the bishop's younger brother, lived in the New Orleans area.

## *Correspondence 1816*

*Cum persequentur vos in una civitate, fugite in aliam* ["When they persecute you in one town, flee to another"].<sup>97</sup>

This circumstance obliged me to give my fighting forces a direction that I had not considered before and which, after God had inspired me, filled me with confidence and peace. You know that, according to the art of war, when the army wants to occupy a state, they do not always waste time with besieging strongholds that could weaken the army and interfere at every step with the operation of the campaign. Following this strategy, I intend to leave New Orleans aside and attack my diocese at those points easiest to conquer. Thus, instead of fixing my residence and my establishments in lower Louisiana, I plan to go up to Saint Louis, at least temporarily.<sup>98</sup>

These regions of upper Louisiana are well disposed, still preserving the beautiful remains of former simplicity. They ardently want to have a bishop among them and they would be willing to make sacrifices to establish him there. Land and food there are very cheap, the air is pure and the youth are not swayed by the commerce and dissolution prevailing in the maritime cities. It is the center where the largest number of Indian nations and [other] peoples gather, etc. These are the many reasons that, even apart from the opposition offered by New Orleans, convinced me. Choosing Saint Louis as the episcopal residence is for the good of the diocese. I feel perfectly free to make this decision since, after all, I will not be leaving the diocese. Nonetheless, to be perfectly sure, I wrote to Rome to get the opinion of Propaganda. I would regard our mission as a rash venture, and our undertaking a failure, if this plan did not receive the sanction of the Holy See.

Therefore, our route will go by way of Baltimore, thence by land to the Ohio<sup>99</sup> on which we will descend and which will bring us very close to the place I have in mind.

If you and your group wish to precede me, I will perhaps soon have a beautiful opportunity to have you leave for Baltimore. The trip

<sup>97</sup> Matt 10:23.

<sup>98</sup> The inhabitants of the Barrens had written, as early as 1806, requesting "a Clergyman provided one can be obtain'd to reside among [us]. We will also furnish two hundred acres of land [for th]e benefit of the Church." (Inhabitants of the Barrens, 4 August 1806, to Stephen T. Badin, in AAB, 10-D-5.)

<sup>99</sup> Literally, the Beautiful River, the common French name at the period, based on the Indian word Ohio, which could be translated as "beautiful."

*Correspondence 1816*

would not cost you anything, which would be a considerable savings. Arriving at Baltimore toward the end of summer you could travel to the bishop of Kentucky where you would stop before winter. You would spend the winter learning English and doing missionary work in the country, and in the spring, the bishop [Flaget] himself would bring you to Saint Louis.<sup>100</sup> He is its administrator since I delegated him, and they hold him in exceptionally high regard there. As for me, I cannot hope to arrive there before the summer of next year, because I cannot embark before October, the great interests of my mission demanding my presence in Europe until then. If you agree with this plan, I would give you a sufficient sum so that you will nowhere be a burden but will be welcomed and helped both in Baltimore and in Kentucky. Reflect on this before I arrive. Write me even in Montpellier so that I will have time to make the needed arrangements to speed up the trip in question. You could talk about this with my sister<sup>101</sup> who knows the area and would help you to make up your mind.

I asked her to equip you as best she can, and to make available for this purpose a sum of 1000 francs, for which I ask you to accept the obligation among all of you of saying the 350 masses that I received here.

Toward the end of this week, I will go to Montpellier, but the stops that I have to make will make it impossible for me to arrive at Bordeaux before mid-May.

Goodbye, my very dear and venerable superior, have courage, and recommend me to God. I need his help greatly. I greet all the brothers *in osculo sancto* ["with a holy kiss"].<sup>102</sup>

+ L[ouis] Wil[liam]  
Bishop of Louisiana

Please have someone who can point out your mistakes check whatever you write in French. You make few of them, but they recur frequently.

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<sup>100</sup> Dubourg foresaw a stay of four to six months; the actual sojourn was about twenty-two months for everyone except De Andreis, Acquaroni, Caretti and Blanka.

<sup>101</sup> Madame Françoise Victoire Fournier.

<sup>102</sup> Rom 16:16.

*Correspondence 1816*

My humble regards to His Excellency, the archbishop. Please visit for me the people who are hosting our confreres to express my gratitude to them.

**14. TO CARLO DOMENICO SICARDI, C.M.,  
VICAR GENERAL, ROME<sup>103</sup>**

Bordeaux  
28 May 1816

Very reverend and dear father,

The day before yesterday I received your much-appreciated letter of 30 March. It consoled me greatly in the midst of the darkness in which we were because of the news from there. As you requested me in your letter, I presented your respects to our archbishop, who, since he regards you with special esteem, was most pleased to receive news from you. A few days ago<sup>104</sup> our Bishop Dubourg arrived. He is daily more esteemed and loved, more so than an earthly father could ever be, and he shows us [?] <sup>105</sup> greater attention. All the people of Bordeaux, especially the clergy, [have given us?] noteworthy gifts. The Sisters of Charity treat us so much like brothers that I would have to write a book to recount the benefits that we have received from them. Yesterday I attended the meeting called by their superiors, and I carried out your orders, which they accepted with great satisfaction.

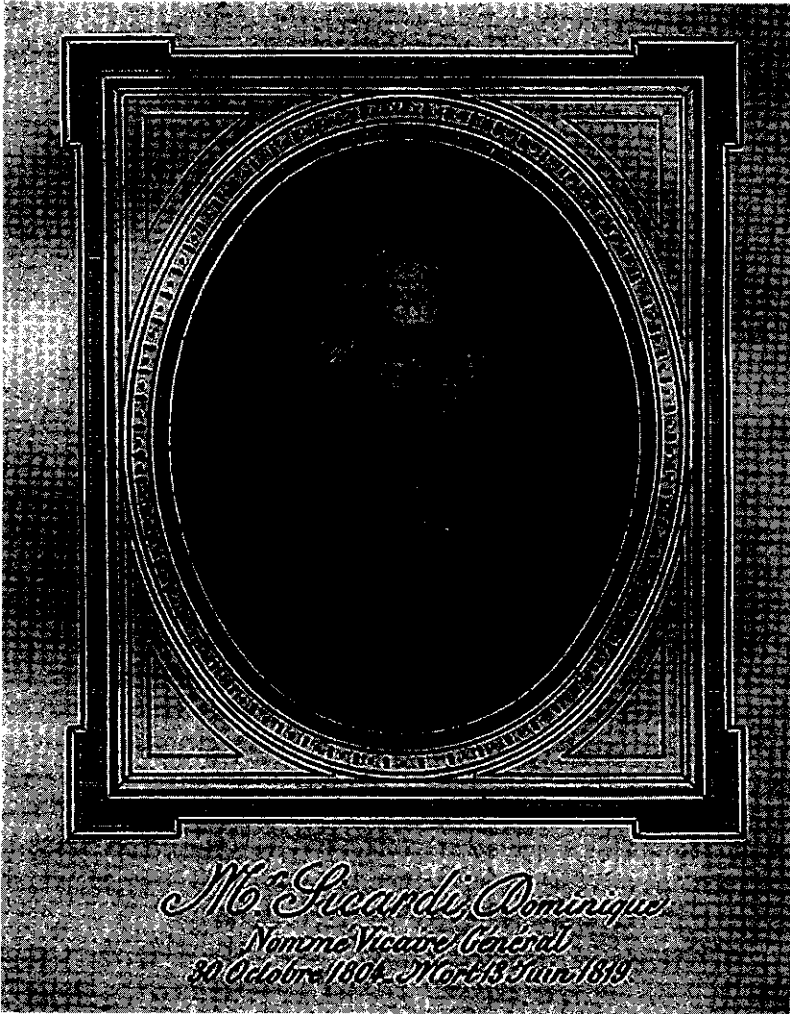
With open hands Providence truly bestows such blessings on our mission that I am amazed when I admit my unworthiness for such a precious undertaking. For just and prudent reasons Providence has changed the destination in our plan, and so instead of going to New

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<sup>103</sup> **Letter 14.** *Autograph letter, Italian, four pages with address, in the archives of the General Curia, Rome, De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part I, Sect. D, #2, 9-12. Cited in Sketches of the Life, 77-78. Cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 244, 245, 247.*

<sup>104</sup> 22 May.

<sup>105</sup> This letter is badly damaged in sections, and these illegible portions are enclosed with square brackets.

*Correspondence 1816*

Portrait of Carlo Domenico Sicardi.  
Collection of the De Andreis-Rosati Memorial Archives

*Correspondence 1816*

Orleans, the capital of lower Louisiana, [we are going (?) 500] leagues farther north to Saint Louis, capital of upper Louisiana.<sup>106</sup> Because of this we have had to apply ourselves seriously to learning English, and we will have to make our way through Philadelphia or Baltimore, and from there travel 800 leagues through a land of forests with their insects, wolves, bears, tigers, rattlesnakes and Indians, worse sometimes than wild beasts. We will have to sleep at the foot of trees, and light great fires all around us to keep away disturbances.<sup>107</sup>

I regret that we have to change our attire and dress in the English fashion, but this will continue only *usque donec* ["for a while"]. Four of the priests who departed Rome have left us,<sup>108</sup> but three others joined us. They repay us somewhat for the high cost of their [the others'] desertion.<sup>109</sup>

This morning the bishop and the American captain are supposed to sign the agreement for our imminent departure. We will form an advance guard for about twelve others, and we will go to stay in Kentucky to await the bishop there. He will not leave until October, and will join us next spring. This change of destination has caused me to set aside for now the thought of the Daughters of Charity, for [obvious?] reasons, which exclude them from the area where we are going.<sup>110</sup> For the rest, this blow can already produce results. Our new destination has many advantages over New Orleans, since the weather

<sup>106</sup> Dubourg's original intention was to place the seminary on property made available to him at Bayou Lafourche in French-speaking Louisiana. He kept alive this hope, and the Ecclesiastical Seminary of Saint Vincent of Paul opened there in 1838. (See John E. Rybolt, C.M., "Vincentian Seminaries in Louisiana [1]," *Vincentian Heritage* 15:2 [1994]: 163-90.)

<sup>107</sup> This anxious forecast does not seem to have come true, as a reading of later letters and travel diaries shows.

<sup>108</sup> That is, Joseph Pereira (who left at Genoa), Joseph Buzieres (who left at Valence to go to Clermont), and Fathers Marliani and Spezioli who left at Bordeaux over the issue of having to learn English; the latter returned to his diocese. In addition, Brother Antonio Boboni also left them at Genoa. Despite these difficulties, at least Marliani remained in contact with the American missionaries through Madame Fournier, the bishop's sister (Fournier to Rosati, from Bordeaux, 27 October 1821, in SLAA, Dubourg files, RG I B 4.3).

<sup>109</sup> Joseph Caretti, Andrew Ferrari, and Joseph Tichitoli, who came with the bishop.

<sup>110</sup> These probably included the lack of resources to support them in the work of teaching and care of the sick poor.

*Correspondence 1816*

there is good, its customs simple, and it is unaffected by the winds from Europe. It has a central location where all the Indian nations come to make their headquarters, and there are many means to facilitate our foundation. Yet there are some disadvantages. The great difficulty is receiving news from or sending it to Europe. The agreement has been signed, and we are going to leave in a few days, as I understand.

I have received two other French novice brothers<sup>111</sup> and two other clerics who requested admission into our Congregation.<sup>112</sup> They are still waiting, and we will see about it later with the bishop. Father [Giuseppe] Martini has already written me twice from Isolabuona, his native place, and is anxious to join our mission.<sup>113</sup> Making use of the faculties which you had the kindness to grant me, I have associated him with us and freed him from the chains which currently [bind him?]. He will see about joining us.

I am in a continual st[ate of content]ment as I admire how divine providence, through inex[pliable and] stupendous ways, has brought me to the peak of my desires, [and?] which it itself deigned to inspire in me and which it nurtured more every day in my heart. To accomplish this, it has been guiding me by the hand for many years without my ever realizing it. For all this I think that we are all quite resolved to wish to be good missionaries, and not to seek anything more in this life than God and souls.

In this period of our stay in Bordeaux, time has not been wasted. We spend it in the ministry and in the business of the Mission, which gives more satisfaction than I would have believed. But, to keep convincing us even more that this is all his work, the Lord has us find everywhere, as we normally say, *la papa fatta* ["everything done and ready"]. Please help me thank God and I beg you insistently to recommended us to the prayers of our good confreres, that the Lord have us find the ocean for a grave if we carry out badly his merciful designs toward us. By the time this letter reaches your hands, if we are

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<sup>111</sup> Medard Delatre and John Flegifont. Medard came to know Francis Borawanski at the minor seminary, where the latter was lodged. (Rosati, "Itineraire," 7-8 February 1816.)

<sup>112</sup> Probably Joseph Caretti and Andrew Ferrari.

<sup>113</sup> Martini (1779-1835) joined the Congregation in 1804, and took his vows two years later. His "chains" probably refers to his responsibilities to his Vincentian province.

*Correspondence 1816*

not food for the fish we will have already landed on the shores of America. We all enjoy good health, but the writer has the most miserable health of all the rest. Without being deprived of his cross, he carries it well enough to be able to join work to his suffering. This is the most enviable state in the eyes of faith.

We hope to establish our rule in ever-greater rigor along with all our practices and usages in the seminary which we are going to open. We will not lack subjects well tested and well resolved to be holy and sanctified through spiritual exercises, since *Spiritus est qui vivificat, caro non prodest quidquam, et qui gloriatur in Domino gloriatur* ["it is the Spirit who gives life, the flesh is useless,"<sup>114</sup> and, "let him who boasts, boast in the Lord"<sup>115</sup>], etc.

Father Rosati is complaining about Father Pe[—], who does not take care to answer his letters and requests for help, [—] most devoted to your goodness, he will thank you for the good news you give us of the houses there, [—] and of the rest of the Congregation, and how we can continue to have [—], when for these consoling pieces of news our address will be "Bordeaux, at Madame [Françoise Victoire] Fournier, rue de l'église à St. Seurin, no. 7"<sup>116</sup> (she is Bishop Dubourg's sister), for Baltimore at the seminary, for Saint Louis." It moves me to see the dedication with which this worthy sister of the bishop intends to provide for our convoy, [—], she herself is the sail, and to think about everything as a most devoted mother would.<sup>117</sup>

The bishop has booked the whole ship for us, and spent 7500 francs on it, and as much again for the baggage. He has even furnished a chapel for us to sing mass on feast days. Thus we will observe the feast of Saint Vincent in mid-ocean since we have a good cleric who knows how to play the organ marvelously.<sup>118</sup> We confide in God to begin our conquests by gaining our Protestant captain for the Church. I recommend this matter to the prayers [of the com]munity and I hope that Father Ceracchi will also deign to do the same [charity?].

<sup>114</sup> John 6:63.

<sup>115</sup> 1 Cor 1:31.

<sup>116</sup> This house, still standing, now bears the street address of rue Georges Mandel.

<sup>117</sup> Rosati lavished praise on her work in his "Recollections," *VH* 1, 88.

<sup>118</sup> Probably Leo Deys, who, in later years, was placed in charge of the music at the Saint Louis cathedral (Deys to Rosati, from Saint Louis, 3 December 1818; in SLAA, Deys file).



*Correspondence 1816*

[A sect is?] starting up here. It is in France through [information received?] from Father Hanon, who had written a very polite letter to me [concerning?] this problem.<sup>119</sup> The sect of the Illuminati is advancing and making great progress in your kingdom [—] among the clergy but in only one diocese, where they are not very numerous. They total about fifty thousand.

They are making demands about this against the bishops, and they call themselves *la petite Église* ["the little church"]. They number 700 [priests among?] the non-concordatists, who did not want to recognize the concordat of the pope with Napoleon.<sup>120</sup> I will not be sorry to have the time to hide myself in America since I will no longer smell the stench or odor of Europe. *Melius est enim mori quam videre mala gentis nostrae* ["For it is better to die than to see the wickedness of our people"].<sup>121</sup>

I have selected Father Rosati as my assistant, the master of novices,<sup>122</sup> and the professor, for now, of philosophy; Father Acquaroni as treasurer, and prefect of the sacristy and of health. This business is so great and involved that I lose my head in the multitude of details that I have to think about and solve. One has to be quite cold blooded. I now see the reason for many things that happened to me in years past. It was a little novitiate that the Lord had me make for the more important things I would have to undergo later on. May he be forever blessed. How beautiful are the designs of Providence.

The day of our departure has at last been determined. We will set sail on Saturday the eighth or at the latest on the ninth of June.<sup>123</sup> But I find myself responsible for a heavy load of duties. Tomorrow I begin the retreat at the major seminary. It is true that I will have already preached up to now some thirty times in various places. But it is quite

<sup>119</sup> This letter is not extant.

<sup>120</sup> This group began with bishops deposed by order of Pius VII to reassert his authority over the Church in France after the Revolution. They refused to accept his authority at first, but gradually gave their obedience.

<sup>121</sup> 1 Mac 3:59 NAB: "It is better for us to die in battle than to witness the ruin of our nation and our sanctuary."

<sup>122</sup> De Andreis later became the director of the internal seminary, or novice master. This change reflects the difficulty in deciding in advance where to open the internal seminary (novitiate) and the (external) seminary. (See Letter 41, 8 January 1818.)

<sup>123</sup> Their departure was delayed to 12 June.

*Correspondence 1816*

another matter to give in French a series of talks in a row without having anything written, and without the time to write since the date was decided only today. But since the Lord will help me, I do not lack the possibility of being freed.

Please present our humble respects to the two community houses [in Rome] and to recommend us to their prayers, that the dear wish which you gave me at the end of your most appreciated letter will come true, that is, that Saint Vincent will ever stand by me, that I will never stray one step from his maxims and from his spirit. *Fiat, fiat* ["Let it be, let it be"].<sup>124</sup>

And with the deepest respect and veneration due to the one who stands in the person of this great saint, I am your most humble, devoted, and obedient servant,

Felix De Andreis

Unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission

*Addressed:* To Monsieur Charles Dominique Sicardi, Priest and vicar general of the Congregation of the Mission, Monte Citorio, Rome.

*Postmark:* Bordeaux; 21 June [*in Italian*].

*In another hand:* Bordeaux. Written 28 May. Received 24 June. Answered [blank].

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<sup>124</sup> Ps 88:53, and other passages.

*Correspondence 1816***15. TO VINCENZO DE ANDREIS, DEMONTE<sup>125</sup>**

Bordeaux  
5 June 1816

My dearest brother,

We are just about to embark on an American ship, already chartered to Baltimore for 7500 francs, with the same amount for the luggage. From there we will have to travel 800 leagues by land among wild beasts and Indians. Our apostolic band of thirteen members forms the vanguard. Two of them, whom you met in Turin, will stay in Europe.<sup>126</sup> We have to dress in the English fashion, at least on the voyage. I am at the peak of happiness. The archbishop, my host, received me with an indescribable politeness, as did our good Sisters of Charity, the sisters of our missionaries. They have treated me better, and still do, than a mother would. I would need a book to explain it all. I have continued to preach and hear confessions.<sup>127</sup> Despite all the delicacies that I have now tasted but never experienced before in my entire life, my stomach still feels the effects of great weakness. The doctors make me hope in the advantages of a sea voyage. God is the lord of health. If he wants it, he will grant it to me; if not, I do not want it either.

I have written you twice before<sup>128</sup> without receiving a reply. Nevertheless, I do not believe I should leave Europe without fulfilling this filial and brotherly duty to you, and through you to our father and all the family. If you want to write, you can address your letter to Monseigneur Dubourg, Évêque de la Louisiane, chez M. Caseau, St. Seurin, rue de l'Église, no. 7. In company with other missionaries still

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<sup>125</sup> **Letter 15.** *Autograph letter, Italian, two pages, with address, in provincial archives, Turin, De Andreis papers; copy in the archives of the General Curia, Rome; De Andreis collection, Volume XVI. Cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 248-50.*

<sup>126</sup> Probably the Italians, Marliani and Spezioli. The others who abandoned the mission either left before reaching Turin, or traveled with Rosati, thus bypassing Turin.

<sup>127</sup> The notebook containing his sermons preached in Bordeaux is in DRMA, De Andreis, I-A-10, Box 4.

<sup>128</sup> One of these may be Letter 12, 18 March 1816; the other one may not be extant.

*Correspondence 1816*

to arrive, he will leave in October to join us next spring on the banks of the Mississippi.<sup>129</sup> I have a great weight on my shoulders, but God, who put it there, will help me bear it.

My dear brother, let us save our souls so as to be able to meet in paradise. This world is a dream: to dream, whether in Piedmont, in France or in America is all the same, since we are assured of eternity. I have written in haste since you could not believe the things I have to do. Give my fondest greetings to our father and to our entire family, relatives and friends as if they were all listed here individually. I thank you once again from the bottom of my heart for your love and attention. Be assured that although Providence takes me far away in body, my heart is all tenderness and love for our whole dear family. Its memory will never fade, and I cannot disguise the pain I experience on reflecting that this choice of mine, which shows all the most genuine proofs of coming from God, might have caused or still causes some bitterness at home, and is the reason for your not having answered me. The Lord reads my heart and my conscience, and he knows how much I love my relatives, and how not a day goes by without my recommending everyone to God, naming them one after another at the holy altar. He knows how much I am ready to be sacrificed for them. But I will say freely that, more than relatives and even myself, I love my God and his most holy will. Wish me well and believe me,

your dear brother,  
Felix,  
unworthy Priest of the Mission

*Addressed:* To Mr. Vincenzo De Andreis, Notary and Secretary, Turin for Demonte.

*Postmark:* Bordeaux.

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<sup>129</sup> That is, in Bardstown, closer to the Ohio than to the Mississippi.

*Correspondence 1816*

The cathedral rectory in Baltimore.

*Courtesy of the author*

**16. TO CARLO DOMENICO SICARDI, C.M.,  
VICAR GENERAL, ROME<sup>130</sup>**

From North America  
Baltimore  
28 July 1816

Very reverend Father,

On the octave of Saint Vincent's feast [26 July], we happily arrived on the shores of America after forty-three days of uncomfortable sailing, during which the writer suffered less than the others. These good Sulpicians here have received us as if we were angels from paradise.<sup>131</sup> *Maria et montes* ["The seas and mountains"], which seemed so terrible, are disappearing little by little as we forge ahead. The rest of the trip that we have to make to Saint Louis is being easily arranged here. [After

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<sup>130</sup> Letter 16. Autograph letter, Italian, two pages with address, in the archives of the General Curia, Rome, De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part I, Sect. D, #3, 13-14. Cited in *Sketches of the Life*, 90-91, 92-95. Cited in Ricciardelli, *Vita*, 265-66, 385.

<sup>131</sup> Bruté informed Jean Cheverus, bishop of Boston, who responded to the news: "The arrival of the holy missionaries for Louisiana is a very important event. There, and in Kentucky, we can hope for good beginnings." (Cited in Annabelle Melville, *Jean Lefebvre de Cheverus. 1768-1836* [Milwaukee: Bruce, 1958], 196.)

*Correspondence 1816*

resting a month]<sup>132</sup> we will leave, if God wishes. [To my] great [delight this] morning I sang mass in this seminary church with a great [concourse of persons], many of whom received communion. In this city about a dozen sects conduct public worship, but the Catholics are the most numerous, the wealthiest and the most powerful. In these lands religion grows before your very eyes. [I was both] amazed and at the same time consoled by the fervor of [Catholics] and by the good disposition of non-Catholics to return to the bosom of holy mother Church. We hope to find a similar disposition even among the Indians.

We are all well despite our extraordinary fatigue and the novelty of life here. Things that would have bothered me terribly in Rome make only a fleeting impression on me here. Providence has so disposed it that, despite my having been a burden and a constant disturbance over there to my good confreres of the Company, I am destined to be buried among the Indians. I am unworthy of the Company because of my pride and self-love. It is more than gigantic, and even now does not let me succeed in overcoming it perfectly despite all I do. With all my heart I want to live and die here completely oblivious of all creatures. For nothing else remains for me to desire now in this world but death, so much dearer to me because it is more difficult. The Lord has let me discover a profound peace amid the not indifferent trials that my responsibility entails. I do not know when I will be able to have the good fortune of corresponding with you again, but it is not as hard as I had imagined, since we have mail and deliveries just as I had described to you before leaving Bordeaux.

I recommend myself to your prayers and to those of the Community. Regards from all to all, and I am with the deepest esteem and veneration of you, very reverend [Father],

your most humble and obedient servant,

Felix De Andreis,

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission

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<sup>132</sup> Several ink stains make the text illegible in parts. The illegible sections are marked with square brackets. Some material has been inserted from the Rosati/Burlando *Sketches of the Life*, which probably made use of the same letter or an early copy before the original was damaged.

*Correspondence 1816*



Portrait of Archbishop Leonard Neale.  
*Collection of the De Andreis-Rosati Memorial Archives*

*Addressed:* To Father Sicardi, Vicar General of the Congregation of the Mission, Rome, Monte Citorio.

*In another hand:* North America, written 28 July, received 8 October.

*Correspondence 1816*

**17. TO FELIX DE ANDREIS, C.M., BALTIMORE<sup>133</sup>**

Georgetown  
29 July 1816

Dear Father:

To my great joy I have learned of your happy arrival in Baltimore. My joy would have been even more complete if I had had the pleasure of greeting you in person.

I grant you, with true satisfaction, the powers you are requesting for yourself and your brothers, for you to be able to administer the holy sacraments among yourselves during the entire time that you reside in my diocese, that is, until revoked.

I grant you as well my paternal blessing, and am, with sentiments of esteem and veneration for you, Father,  
your humble and obedient servant in Jesus Christ,  
+ Leonard [Neale], arch[bishop] of Baltimore

*Addressed:* To Father Felix de Andreis, worthy priest of the Congregation etc., of Saint Vincent de Paul, at Saint Mary's Seminary, Baltimore.

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<sup>133</sup> **Letter 17.** *Autograph letter, French, one page with address, in Saint Louis Archdiocesan Archives, Archbishop Neale file.*



*Correspondence 1816*

Dubourg's Cathedral and residence, St. Louis. This is the pre-Dubourg structure, already standing when he arrived. He built another, which De Andreis dedicated.  
*Collection of the De Andreis-Rošati Memorial Archives*

**18. TO FRANÇOISE VICTOIRE FOURNIER,<sup>134</sup> BORDEAUX<sup>135</sup>**

Baltimore  
 August 1816

Most esteemed lady:

We received the letter from Bishop Flaget who determined our

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<sup>134</sup> **Letter 18.** *Copy, French, from a copy of "Journal de la Société du Sacré-Coeur," in the archives of the General Curia, Rome, Duchesne papers, 31.*

The addressee was the sister of Bishop Dubourg, actively involved in supporting the missionaries priests, seminarians and sisters sent to Louisiana.

<sup>135</sup> This letter may be confidently attributed to De Andreis because of its style and content, and from succeeding letters, although it is identified only as "from a missionary" in the manuscript.

## *Correspondence 1816*

route. He wrote to Pittsburgh and to Louisville that we might be well received. He will come himself to meet us.<sup>136</sup> He said that we should thank God for having inspired in Bishop Dubourg<sup>137</sup> the thought of being established in Saint Louis. He added that the people would be proud of having so worthy a bishop.

He assured us that at Louisville we would find people to guide us to the place of our residence. He consoled us while announcing some new sufferings. Blessed be God; what a pleasure to suffer for so good a Master.

A little while ago a Negro woman died here; she was 136 years old.

I am, with respect, ....

### 19. JOURNAL OF THE VOYAGE<sup>138</sup>

Baltimore

14 August 1816

12 June Departure from Bordeaux on a sloop to join the ship at Pauillac. Dinner at Bec d'Ambès.

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<sup>136</sup> Flaget wrote a complaining letter to the bishop of Quebec, Joseph Octave Plessis, "that I must put aside everything in order to meet them and accompany them to their destination.... What am I to do in such a maze of difficulties?" In a postscript, he added: "About the beginning of October I hope to have an interview at Louisville, on the Ohio river, with Mgr. Du Bourg's vicar general, whose name is De Andreis; he is an Italian Lazarist and a man of extensive knowledge and rare piety. As he lived in Rome his conversation will be interesting. I shall tell you about it." (Lindsay Lionel Saint George, "The Archives of the Archbishopric of Quebec; [Part I] Correspondence Between Bishop Plessis of Quebec, Canada and Bishop Flaget of Bardstown, Ky. 1811-1833," *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia* 18 [1907]: 27-29.)

<sup>137</sup> Madame Fournier's brother.

<sup>138</sup> **Letter 19.** Copy, French, from the "*Journal de la Société du Sacré-Coeur... de 1810 à 1840.*" Copy in the archives of the General Curia, Rome.

The manuscript attributes this summary journal to De Andreis, although he is mentioned in the third person. Although it contains details not found elsewhere, some dates, if copied correctly in the first place, differ from De Andreis's or Rosati's own travel diaries. This little journal probably came from Madame Fournier, who furnished other letters to Sacré-Coeur, and may have formed part of Letter 18, August 1816. Information for the notes has come from other accounts of the journey. She may have recopied it, placing De Andreis's name in third person.

*Correspondence 1816*

- 13 Father De Andreis and another missionary<sup>139</sup> say mass at Pauillac; the others receive communion.
- 14 At 8:00, we are on the sea.
- 15 No mass, no office, because of seasickness.
- 16 Two<sup>140</sup> celebrated mass; Father De Andreis gave the sermon; we were within sight of the coasts of Spain, and were making seven miles an hour.
- 23 Father De Andreis gave the sermon after mass; in the evening, vespers and blessing with the cross.
- 24 Sung mass for [the feast of] Saint John [the Baptist]; other low masses; meeting with a ship; view of the Azores.
- 28 Contrary wind. A school of dolphins surrounded the ship for an hour.
- 29 Mass, sung vespers; meeting two English ships.
- 1 July We are half-way.
- [4] Several rifle shots to celebrate the independence of the United States.
- 5 Favorable wind; we see some kinds of wild grapes borne by the Mexican current.
- 11 Rain. We could not say mass. Because of the rolling of the ship, everything fell: chairs, bottles, the ladder.<sup>141</sup>
- 12 Storm; instead of mass we prayed for good weather.
- 13 Terrible storm.
- 18 Vow to obtain a happy result of the voyage.
- 19 Celebration of the feast of Saint Vincent de Paul; several masses, one sung.
- 22 Thirteen miles off the coast, we sounded and found 12 fathoms of depth; at 11 o'clock we entered the bay.
- 23 After mass, Father De Andreis had the Te Deum sung.
- 24 Three<sup>142</sup> said mass; contrary wind.
- 26 Likewise [contrary wind]. We set foot on land at 11, and at noon were at the seminary, where the missionaries were well received.

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<sup>139</sup> Acquaroni.

<sup>140</sup> De Andreis and Acquaroni.

<sup>141</sup> They probably endured a hurricane, since they traveled in the hurricane season.

<sup>142</sup> De Andreis, Rosati, Caretti.

*Correspondence 1816***20. TO BARTOLOMEO COLUCCI, C.M., SUPERIOR, ROME<sup>143</sup>**

Baltimore

26 August 1816

Very reverend and dear father,

Before setting out for the interior of this vast continent, several important matters for you to handle later suggest, or rather oblige me to write you, although I am very busy. This report deals with our past, present and future as much as it might be guessed at, humanly speaking. The part that you took in this precious mission from the beginning set it on the right path. You watched over it with your true and genuine interest, and since we have been formed by you, we are now able to continue to cooperate in the good you have done, even though we are far apart.

From the time I left Rome to the present day, my esteem and affection for this enviable vocation has continued to grow. It still keeps growing greatly, as does my embarrassment in admitting my great unworthiness of it. Since in other letters which should have reached you by now, I have already given enough detail about what happened to us up to our leaving Bordeaux, I will begin there.

On 12 June we set sail at last, thirteen of us: five Italian priests, (that is, besides the three of us),<sup>144</sup> two other Genoese,<sup>145</sup> four clerics, and four brothers, three of whom are postulants, with eighty pieces of baggage, consisting of chests and trunks, besides many valises, boxes, baskets, etc. For our first days, we were all sick, but we quickly improved except for Father Rosati, a Spanish cleric,<sup>146</sup> and the two

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<sup>143</sup> **Letter 20.** Copy, Italian, in the archives of the General Curia, Rome, *De Andreis* collection, Volume I, Part I, Section D, #4, 14-18; copy in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Vittorio Emmanuele II, Rome. Fondo Gesuitico, No. 1363 o 3492 (no. 1); another copy in the archives of Propaganda Fide, Rome. *Scritture Riferite nei Congressi. America Centrale. Dal Canada all'Istmo di Panama. Codice 3. Dal 1791 a t[ut]to il 1817. Folios 494-95.*

<sup>144</sup> De Andreis, Rosati, Acquaroni.

<sup>145</sup> Andrew Ferrari and Joseph Caretti were not natives of the city of Genoa, but citizens of the (former) state of Genoa, which had united with the kingdom of Sardinia 7 January 1815.

<sup>146</sup> Casto Benito Gonzalez.

*Correspondence 1816*

French postulants,<sup>147</sup> who suffered greatly until the end of the voyage. This did not keep us from celebrating one, two, three or four masses nearly every day. We chanted mass and vespers on the feast days, to the great satisfaction of the Protestant captain. He showed the most beautiful disposition to convert, yet despite all our efforts and prayers, *nondum venit hora ejus* ["his hour has not yet come"].<sup>148</sup> On the feast of Saint Vincent in particular, we celebrated with the greatest possible solemnity and adorned the chapel with cloths, veils, mirrors, relics, Agnus Deis, ribbons, etc.

We also experienced several days and nights of storms and contrary winds. One night in particular, it seemed that we were about to be wrecked because of the violent blows from mountains of water crashing against the ship. There was lightning and thunder; sailors were screaming, and water kept pouring into our rooms, even over our beds. Father Rosati, among others, admitted that he considered the prayers said for a great part of the night as useful only to prepare himself for death. Consequently, by common consent, we made a vow to Saint Vincent to obtain a favorable wind and a safe arrival at our destination.<sup>149</sup> In fact on the seventh day of the octave [of the feast] we came into Chesapeake Bay, and the next morning we found ourselves

<sup>147</sup> Medard de Lattre, John Flegifont.

<sup>148</sup> See John 2:4.

<sup>149</sup> His feast, 19 July. The text of this vow, found in both Italian and French in various original sources, is here cited from the first English life of Felix De Andreis:

We, the undersigned missionaries of Louisiana, amid the perils which surround us, being firmly convinced of the influence and special favor which thou, O glorious and illustrious hero of Christian Charity, St. Vincent of Paul, dost enjoy, before the throne of the Divine Majesty; on this day, dedicated by the Church to the celebration of thy glorious triumph, prostrate at thy feet, implore thee by the zeal which inflamed thy heart for the glory of God, the salvation of souls, and the welfare of those who consecrate their lives to promote these ends, to accept the vow we joyfully offer thee, and by which we bind ourselves to celebrate, in the best possible manner, the day of thy happy death, on the 27th of September, 1816, to prepare for it by a novena, and a fast on the eve; in the hope that thou wilt obtain for us a favorable wind, and a safe termination of our voyage; together with an increase of that apostolic spirit, which was so conspicuous in the whole course of thy holy life. Amen.

(*Sketches of the Life*, 86.) This vow, however, is elsewhere associated more with the contrary winds preventing their advance, than with the hurricane they experienced.

## *Correspondence 1816*

in sight of the majestic port of Baltimore. We disembarked two hours before noon, which corresponds to 4 P.M. in Rome. We had to cross the whole city, a distance of three or four miles. We admired the various shapes of its buildings, its streets, etc., and especially noted that the majority of the people were black. We arrived at the Sulpician seminary, but they knew nothing about our arrival.<sup>150</sup>

Nevertheless they received us with a charity and kindness which could not have been better had it come from our own dear confreres. Not content with graciously lodging us, they put themselves to great trouble in our regard, and even gave us hundreds of scudi. That same day, if I am not mistaken, I paid a visit to the vicar general<sup>151</sup> to ask for faculties. He granted them to me with great transports of joy, and graciously wanted to lodge two of us in his own house, since another zealous pastor had invited two others, a great marvel.<sup>152</sup> I wrote to the archbishop [Leonard Neale], who lives a day's trip away,<sup>153</sup> to inform him of our arrival. He answered with a very polite letter confirming the faculties.<sup>154</sup> The vicar general of Philadelphia came to find me.<sup>155</sup> He brought a letter from the provincial of the Jesuits, Father [John Anthony] Grassi, a Lombard.<sup>156</sup> This latter is the president of the college

<sup>150</sup> This observation is confirmed by the "Minutes of Faculty Meetings of Saint Mary's Seminary, Baltimore," manuscript in Sulpician Archives, Baltimore, 2 October 1816. "For fear of being caught unprepared, like the first time, we resolved to make a decision beforehand . . ." The seminary was then located on Paca Street in Baltimore.

<sup>151</sup> Enoch Fenwick, S.J.

<sup>152</sup> At Fell's Point; the pastor was John Baptist Moranvillé. His nephew, also John Baptist Moranvillé, born in Amiens, came west with Dubourg to the Barrens in 1817. Ricciardelli (*Vita*, 251) mistakenly lists him as one of the original band, probably confusing him with Francis Borawanski. The younger Moranvillé later married and his descendants still live in the Perryville area. (Timothy J. O'Rourke, *Maryland Catholics on the Frontier. The Missouri and Texas Settlements* [Parsons, Kans.: Brefney Press, 1973], 753.)

<sup>153</sup> In Georgetown.

<sup>154</sup> Letter 17, 29 July 1816.

<sup>155</sup> Henry Campbell.

<sup>156</sup> John Anthony Grassi, S.J., 1775-1849, mistakenly called the provincial (or vicar general, in Letter 31, 5 January 1817), was anxious to meet the Vincentians. He wrote to Simon Bruté, the Sulpician superior: "Dear Mr. Bruté, you will say a thousand things to these R.R. [Reverend] Gentlemen; if any of them come to see me, I will try to come and see them in Baltimore before they shall start for Louisiana." (Grassi to Bruté, from Georgetown, 31 July 1816; in "Letters of John Grassi, S.J., to Simon Bruté de Rémur, 1812-1832," ed. by Thomas A. O'Connor, *Mid-America* 15 [4, new series] [April 1933]: 256.)

*Correspondence 1816*

and large novitiate at Georgetown. The vicar general asked me to undertake various missions in Pennsylvania while we are here, awaiting an answer from the bishop of Kentucky.<sup>157</sup> I wrote the bishop as soon as we arrived, to get the directions necessary for the rest of our trip. We greatly regretted that we were unable to offer ourselves, since we did not yet know enough English or German, the only languages understood in that region. We are struggling, therefore, to learn the first language; Father Rosati is doing marvelously. I read it, understand it and also write it, but the pronunciation, especially that used by the Americans, is so difficult that without God's special help, which I firmly hope for, it will take several years to develop. The fourteen different vowel sounds and the consonants cripple the tongue, teeth and lips to pronounce. Success comes only with great difficulty, since nothing is understood unless it is correctly pronounced.

Every feast day we sing mass in various places. Last Sunday I sang mass at the cathedral. We sweat horribly, in a way unheard of in Europe. There are four beautiful Catholic churches in the city, but the main churches belong to the Protestants, of which there are some forty different sects. Yet they are very well disposed toward Catholicism, and with more priests, the true faith would quickly predominate. Catholic priests are more esteemed than the ministers of other sects, and many conversions take place daily even among the ministers themselves, three of whom in New York recently became converts. Their conversion made a great impression through the whole United States. The thing that afflicts me the most is to see how much good could be done if there were more Missionaries, and how much is being lost by not having them. This is a country now being formed, and year after year cities, towns and villages are being founded. Their first thought is of having a church, no matter of what sect, since they are mistakenly convinced that all are equally good, and so the church belongs to *primi occupantis* ["the one who gets there first"]. If a Catholic priest comes, they will be Catholics, otherwise they give themselves to whomever arrives first. The other day I learned that one of these so-called congregations was looking for a priest, but being unable to find one, a Protestant minister went there. My God, what damage, what results!

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<sup>157</sup> Benedict Joseph Flaget, S.S.

*Correspondence 1816*

Perhaps some zealous person over there [in Rome] might take on himself the responsibility of presenting this situation to the Holy Father and the cardinals, and insisting vigorously on not losing such a great opportunity of protecting the Church from the losses which took place in Europe at the time of the conquest of America.<sup>158</sup> Here, the world and the Church are in a lovely childhood, while in Europe they are becoming decrepit. In the Americans is found a character that is open, candid, honest and respectful of the truth. The only thing needed is to have them recognize it. On the other hand among the other sects are the Methodists. These incredible fanatics roam around continuously like madmen and assemble for public missions. They also preach enthusiastically, and it is frightening to experience the cries and shouts which move their audience, and the diabolical fervor aroused in their meetings. These are a kind of spiritual retreat held in the country, where five, eight or ten thousand people assemble from all over. The government does not interfere in matters of religion, and so I am frustrated at not being able to preach. If I knew the language well enough, I would like to set up a platform myself. The people there are ignorant, and of the lowest condition; tailors, shoemakers and so on, but they have a vivid imagination, and are great speakers, with a voice like a bull, and a chest like an elephant, and all the rest. Oh, if we could only have a Father Colucci to preach here in English as you preach over there in Tuscan. What a fine blow could be struck!

This would be the real counterblow, sending missionaries while the land is virgin, and religion extends visibly to the population through the immense reaches of these presently empty regions. The Indians are daily reduced to nothing by the wars that have exterminated entire nations. The famous Hurons, Iroquois, Illini and others exist no more. Other nations have been reduced to a few hundred persons, just because the civilized population is growing. They either become civilized and they merge with other nations, or else they wipe one another out in their senseless raids. Hence the primary objective of these missions is first to found the Congregation. I do not know how someone with any zeal for the glory of God, the salvation of souls and the spread of the Church, would not be sensibly and profoundly moved to the core of

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<sup>158</sup> That is, from the Reformation.



*Correspondence 1816*

their being by a work where so much is at stake.

I recommend myself to your charity. May it set a fire everywhere, and electrify the zeal of someone to come to our help. On our arrival on these shores, the public press<sup>159</sup> spoke of us, and an alarm spread among Protestants. They would say: Look, the Pope is sending missionaries, and soon the entire United States will become religious. Indeed, the opportunity could not be finer, but our field is not this one. We have another 800 miles to go to reach the region, with the burden of whose salvation we are heavily laden. Though most unworthy, I have been appointed vicar general of Louisiana to take a part in pastoral care. This charge has also been given to Father Rosati, so that he might use it after my death, should this happen, but I do not certainly believe I am close to death because I feel my strength growing daily, despite the lack of wine, which seems indispensable to my stomach.<sup>160</sup> But Providence supplies all.

I finally received an answer from the bishop of Kentucky [Benedict Joseph Flaget], and he fills us with the most lovely hope.<sup>161</sup> The people of Louisiana are waiting for us with open arms and will probably come to get us at Louisville,<sup>162</sup> where we will disembark from the Ohio, which we have to do to reach their renowned bishop. This bishop has laid the foundations of his cathedral in Bardstown, and even Protestants have pledged to contribute to the expenses of the building.<sup>163</sup> A few years ago only one family had moved into all of Kentucky, but now

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<sup>159</sup> Efforts to locate these reports have been unsuccessful.

<sup>160</sup> The original document given to Rosati concludes: "This document will be valid only in the case of the death or disability of Father Felix De Andreis, vicar general." It is dated Bordeaux, 6 June 1816. The original is in the Rosati papers, SLAA.

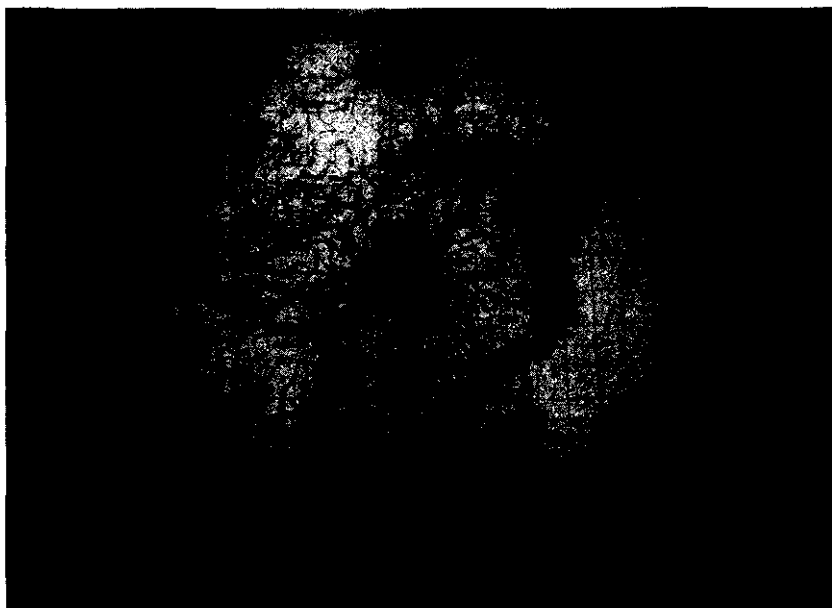
<sup>161</sup> The diary of Jean Marie Tessier, S.S., confirms De Andreis's information in his entry for 24 August: "The Lazarists and other people sent by M. Dubourg for his diocese in Louisiana, and who have been here since July 24 [*sic*, for July 26], just received a favorable reply from Bishop Flaget, and will soon leave." ("Notes written down daily in the Baltimore Seminary. From December 1, 1814 to March 17, 1817." Manuscript diary in the Sulpician Archives, Baltimore.)

<sup>162</sup> This did not happen. Their coming was known and they were awaited, as is seen from a letter dated 15 September 1816, written by John Baptist David at Saint Thomas, to Antoine Duclaux, superior of Saint Sulpice in Paris. (Sulpician Archives, Paris, David papers.)

<sup>163</sup> Flaget announced to his correspondent, Bishop Plessis of Quebec, that Protestants "subscribed, almost entirely among themselves, nearly ten thousand dollars . . ." Flaget hoped that Plessis could help him raise some of the rest. (Saint George, "The Archives of the Archbishopric of Quebec," RACHSP 18 [1907]: 23-24.)

*Correspondence 1816*

there are more than 400,000 inhabitants. In this way these regions are becoming formed. Here, it seems like the era after the [biblical] flood. Everywhere one sees the arts beginning to flower, as well as institutions and all human activities. Only for the ecclesiastical state is there lacking any real hope to be able to form any students from the region, because they do not yet have a sufficient understanding of Religion. Commerce, like marriage, is necessary for the population, but like rushing rivers, it sweeps along the youth, and renders the work done to form ministers of the sanctuary nearly useless. For this reason Europe has to provide these helps so that Religion might have deeper roots. But Providence is performing miracles for us. It does not exempt us totally from the cross, which should be the treasure of apostolic men. God be blessed, who has accustomed me for a time to this milk, and has so many times forced me to say with the Psalmist, *secundum multitudinem dolorum meorum in corde meo consolationes tuae laetificaverunt animam meam* ["According to the multitude of my sorrows in my heart, your



Period map. *Carte des Etats du Centre, de L'Ouest et du Sud des Etats-Unis* (1804).  
Map of the middle, west and southern states of the United States. Name and date  
penciled in, "Michaux, 1804." Original.

*Collection of the De Andreis-Rosati Memorial Archives*

*Correspondence 1816*

consolations have rejoiced my soul"].<sup>164</sup> Last week, to our general satisfaction we had our retreat, which we had not been able to have in October. And now, Father Rosati and I are giving it to the clerics, etc. As far as I can tell, we are all quite resolved to become saints, not sparing ourselves in sanctifying others as much as we can, except for myself, who will never turn away from my pride and self-love. But I am consoled enough by seeing that God does for me what I do not do. God is so good that instead of abandoning me as my ingratitude and inflexible obstinacy deserve, he leads me by the hand. I can only say: *Ut jumentum factus sum apud te* ["I have become like a beast of burden before you"].<sup>165</sup> Please help me to thank him and present all our requests to our superiors and to all our priests and brothers over there to help us with their prayers and with the consolation of news about them. We are all well. May it please the Lord that we see one another again in that beautiful paradise which is the only thing left for us to desire. I am, with the deepest respect and attachment to you,

your most humble and devoted servant

Felix De Andreis

unworthy Priest of the Congregation of the Mission

P.S. If it would not be running the risk of being indiscreet, I would fill up another sheet with more details to show you the evidence of the hand of Providence. It renders most sweet the life of continual dying to which we are going to devote ourselves. Woe to us if all our delights are not laid only on the cross of Jesus Christ; *miserabiliores essemus omnibus hominibus* ["we would be the most to be pitied of all men"].<sup>166</sup> Many things which have happened to us here below are meant to be known only at the end, *quando manifesta sunt abscondita cordis nostri* ["when the secrets of our hearts will be revealed"].<sup>167</sup> This world is such a nothing that it matters little if someone knows or doesn't know of our deeds, or whether that person thinks well or ill of us. O God! God alone and nothing more! Believe me, in his love, and in that of holy Mary, your most cordial, etc., as above.

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<sup>164</sup> Ps 94:19 NAB: "When cares abound within me, your comfort gladdens my soul."

<sup>165</sup> Ps 73:22.

<sup>166</sup> 1 Cor 15:19.

<sup>167</sup> See 1 Cor 14:25.

*Correspondence 1816***21. TO VINCENZO DE ANDREIS, DEMONTE<sup>168</sup>**

From North America  
 Baltimore  
 3 September 1816

My dearest brother,

Before setting out on the 800 dreadful miles remaining before I reach my destination, I decided to give you this brief report. I hope it will help you realize that the distance of about 3000 miles of sea that now separates me from Europe cannot make me forget my very dear family. Sometimes I seem to be able to hear you complaining: "See what a good brother he is! I went to meet him in Turin before his departure for such distant lands to bring him home to visit his family. Not only did he refuse to come, but during my different visits, far from inviting me out to a meal, he did not even offer me a glass of wine during dinner. Neither did he even think of giving me the four rosaries he should have, as a gift to the family." But if you would stop to consider my circumstances carefully, you yourself would become my advocate and spokesman. Going home was ruled out because of the large group of companions whom I was responsible for, and I absolutely could not leave them. Besides, in such circumstances it would have been doubly hard for me and the family, and a temptation to betray my honor and my conscience, both so clearly tempted. Being the superior and incurring expenses on the account of the Mission was the reason why I did not invite you, for example. Otherwise during similar visits I would have had to invite also the relatives of my other missionary confreres. This would have been both expensive and unjust. Concerning the money, if you only knew the great many plans that took my time in Rome in those days as we prepared to leave, when I did not even know where I would go, I am sure that you would have shared this with everyone and will present my excuses to whoever

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<sup>168</sup> **Letter 21.** *Autograph letter, Italian, four pages with address, in provincial archives, Turin, De Andreis papers; copy in the archives of the General Curia, Rome; De Andreis collection, Volume XVI. Cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 270-73.*

*Correspondence 1816*

might complain about my actions. If they still want to complain, I will say with Saint Paul, *Mihi autem pro minimo est ut a vobis iudicer... qui iudicat me Dominus est* ["It matters little to me whether I be judged by you... The Lord is the one to judge me"].<sup>169</sup>

Now let me tell you about our trip, etc. We left on 12 June from Bordeaux on an American brig. Thirteen of us made the great crossing of the Atlantic Ocean in 44 days. I am the only one who did not vomit. I said mass almost every day, and I was able to serve the others in their sickness, although they were healthier than I.

We had terrible storms, especially on some nights. Amid great fury and noise, the sea cast mountains of water from all sides against the ship. It seemed at every instant about to break into a thousand pieces. Water rushed in everywhere, over our beds, trunks, seats, chests, jugs, etc., everything thrown back and forth by the wind. We kept praying, and even the captain, although a heretic, kept urging us to pray. Yet it seemed that our prayers did no other good than to prepare us for death. The situation seemed so desperate that we made a vow to Saint Vincent, and so we arrived at our desired port on the octave of this saint's feast.

We landed without knowing anyone, without understanding the language, since everyone speaks English (how fortunate that Providence had disposed things for me to learn it in large measure in Rome from an Irish student of mine).<sup>170</sup> With an ardent longing we let ourselves roam the magnificent and broad streets of this large city. We looked at the people, almost all blacks; the houses and mansions are built of very bright red bricks. On almost every street is a pump to draw water. In this country, they drink it like wine. They have no wine here except for what comes from Europe; they pay one louis per bottle, what we call a pint in Piedmont. At length we arrived at the seminary, directed by French priests. I introduced myself with letters of recommendation and we were received with open arms just like

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<sup>169</sup> 1 Cor 4:3-4.

<sup>170</sup> This was probably Henry Young, who entered Monte Citorio, 22 March 1806, at age 19, and left 17 October 1814, after his ordination to the priesthood. He was the only Irish student there for more than a brief period. ("Catalogus in quo praeter Convictorum nomina, eorum etiam qualitates adnotantur," Register of students at Monte Citorio, 1720-1870, Archives of the Roman Province, 3.5.11, 34.)

*Correspondence 1816*

brothers. We have been here for more than a month, maintained in every way, and showered with gifts of clothing and money.

One of these good priests<sup>171</sup> twice gave me 100 scudi, and several other items. The archbishop, the vicar general, and the other priests and the Jesuits here gave us a wonderful welcome, had us sing mass in various places, and wanted to have us preach, but we are not ready with the language. My heart weeps when I see that the most beautiful churches and most lovely bells are in the hands of heretics. There are some here from all the sects, some forty different ones. Yet they respect Catholic priests greatly, are well disposed for conversion, and are being converted daily. The bad thing is that we are very few priests in proportion to the need.

Everything here is extremely expensive. The people are quite good, and manners and religion flourish even more than in Europe. The heretics observe feast-days with scrupulous exactness, all the shops are closed, and the churches are full of people. If you came to this country, and on a feast-day needed to have a horse shod, you would not find a blacksmith, even a Protestant one, to do it for all the gold in the world. Shame on our Catholic lands!

Well, I am very happy that I came to this country rather than elsewhere, since I see the great good to be done. Of course, there is much to suffer, but the Lord spreads about his sweet consolation on the sufferings encountered for his glory and for the salvation of souls, and the sufferings become sweeter than could ever be believed. You can imagine my situation with the burden on my shoulders. They are a family of twelve persons to be maintained in a foreign country with Providence as our only help. All sorts of things are yet to come, with persons of different temperaments from so many different nations, and the whole thing is to fall to me. And yet I have never been so happy. Besides, I have another and larger family, which numbers one million and more. They are all the souls of the largest diocese in the world, Louisiana, larger than all of Europe. Although unworthy, I have become the vicar general, and I will be responsible for them before the judgment seat of God. Does it seem to you that, even though it depended on me, I should prefer raising four nephews, which is a father's obligation, to such a huge harvest, to which Providence has destined me *ab aeterno*

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<sup>171</sup> Simon Bruté, S.S.

*Correspondence 1816*

Period home. Mercersburg, Pennsylvania.  
*Courtesy of the author*

["from all eternity"]? We have to learn to see beyond the tip of our noses to put things into perspective. If people set their boundaries so close that they never left the limits of their native land or their family, the world would still be in its infancy.

I am well, and wish the same for our father, for you and for the whole household. Please embrace them all dearly in my name, extending my regards besides to relatives, friends and acquaintances, those outside our home. This world is only a stage, this life is only a dream. One should not be attached to it. Paradise is the place of our eternal sojourn, if we will have learned how to profit from the present life to arrive there.<sup>172</sup> These are the only gifts that I would like bestowed on you and on all my relatives, since these sentiments are like the precious seed of true happiness. I wish it for you with all my heart, and I hope to share it with all of you in our true heavenly homeland,

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<sup>172</sup> Underscored in the original.

*Correspondence 1816*

where as many go from Europe as from America. Give my personal regards to everyone and have them say a Hail Mary for me, since most holy Mary assists us in the great trial. It is written about her: *Gaude, Maria Virgo, cunctas haereses sola interemisti in universo mundo* ["Rejoice O Virgin Mary, you alone have put an end to all heresies in the whole world"].<sup>173</sup>

Be devoted to her yourself, and one day you will be happy. In the meantime, believe me, with a true brother's heart and spirit, your most affectionate

Felix,

unworthy Priest of the Congregation of the Mission

*Addressed:* To Mr. Vincent De Andreis, Secretary of the Tribunal, Turin, for Demonte.

*(Other dates in another hand)*

*Postmark:* Bordeaux.

**22. TO CARLO DOMENICO SICARDI, C.M.,  
VICAR GENERAL, ROME<sup>174</sup>**

Pittsburgh in Western Pennsylvania  
*In another hand:* 22 September 1816

Sensing that you and our dear confreres will be happy to have periodic reports about our long and disaster-plagued travels, I turn with pen in hand at this our third stopping place,<sup>175</sup> with my spirit

<sup>173</sup> Cited from the Tract for feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

<sup>174</sup> **Letter 22.** *Autograph letter, Italian, two pages, in the archives of the General Curia, Rome; De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part I, Section D, #5, 19-20; copy in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Vittorio Emmanuele II, Rome. Fondo Gesuitico, No. 1363 o 3492 (no. 2); copy in the archives of Propaganda Fide, Scritture Riferite nei Congressi. Cod. 3. America Centrale dal Canada all'Istmo di Panama. Dal 1791 a [ut]to il 1817. Fol. 498-99. Italian. Cited in, Sketches of the Life, 95-98. Cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 286-88.*

<sup>175</sup> After Bordeaux and Baltimore.



*Correspondence 1816*

directed to our ever-dear Rome. It becomes even dearer the farther we are separated from it in these lands where Catholicism has hardly made a mark.

We departed in two groups from Baltimore.<sup>176</sup> The one group took nineteen days,<sup>177</sup> and the others took ten.<sup>178</sup> partly on foot and partly in bad coaches, at huge expense and inconvenience. We crossed the rough mountains of Pennsylvania,<sup>179</sup> about 300 miles wide, and we never once found a Catholic church on the road, and could therefore neither celebrate nor hear mass. It was even unhappier for us when we arrived in this city so famous for commerce, only to find that we did not have the means to be able to have this consolation. The reason was that among 10,000 inhabitants, the Catholics barely number 300 and, for the most part, are poor. They have a small church bereft of everything, and the pastor, whose parish is the size of ten dioceses, is always away traveling to visit his parishioners. He had taken the chalice with him and so our devotion, no less than that of these good Catholics, was frustrated.<sup>180</sup> They quickly showed themselves very anxious to

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<sup>176</sup> A letter sent to France from Baltimore reported on their stay in that city:

On 28 July, we saw twelve missionaries arrive here whom Bishop Dubourg had sent before him into his diocese. They stayed more than a month, and have edified all the Catholics. Their superior, Father Andreis [*sic*] will certainly be a very fine missionary. Many of these men are sons of Saint Vincent de Paul. May this saint be able to bless their work as it begins! They left on 10 September for Louisiana, and will travel through Pittsburgh and Kentucky. We await impatiently the arrival of their bishop.

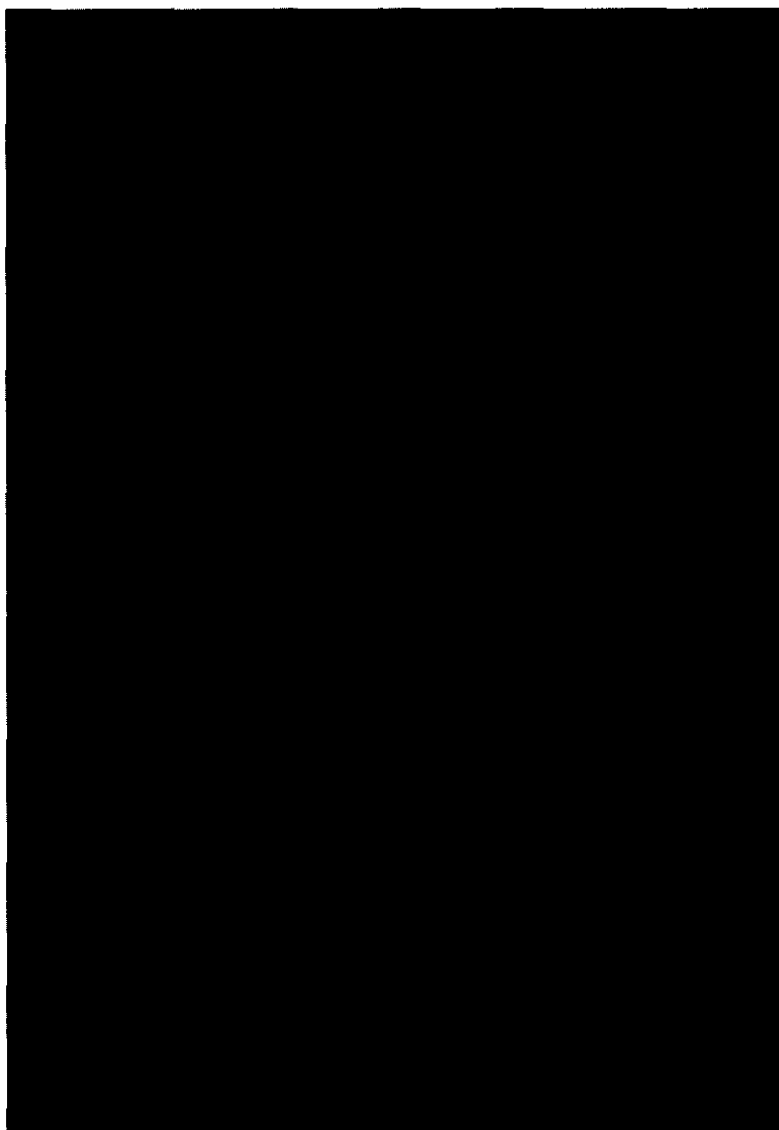
(*Ami de la Religion* 11:267 [1 March 1817]: 86. Neither writer nor recipient is identified.)

<sup>177</sup> Blanka, Delatre, Borawanski, and Dahmen. The Tessier diary records the following for 3 September: "Of those whom M. Dubourg sent, three brothers and one in Minor Orders left; they are going with the wagons which are on the way to Pittsburgh."

<sup>178</sup> That is, De Andreis, Rosati, Acquaroni, Caretti, Ferrari, Deys, Tichitoli, Gonzalez. The Tessier diary records, for 10 September: "The Lazarists and the others with them left this morning for Pittsburgh by public stage. By them I wrote to Bishop Flaget, M. David, M. Chabrat, and to M. O'Brien, the pastor of Pittsburgh."

<sup>179</sup> Bishop Dubourg, arrived at Pittsburgh, exclaimed in opening a letter to Simon Bruté: "What a road! What precipices! What a shaking we got! My dear friend, I do not think that I have ever in my life experienced such fatigue." (13 November 1817, from Pittsburgh, copy in DRMA, Dubourg letters.) Rosati noted that they had broken three of their carriages along the way. (Joseph Rosati to Nicola Rosati, 25 October 1816, from Pittsburgh, copy in DRMA, Rosati letters.)

<sup>180</sup> The chalice and paten they had used on the trip were in the baggage that had not yet arrived. (Rosati, "Itineraire," 21 September.)

*Correspondence 1816*

Portrait of De Andreis.

Copy of the earliest known engraving of Felix De Andreis.

*Collection of the De Andreis-Rosati Memorial Archives*

*Correspondence 1816*

have us say mass. At last a tin chalice was found but it had no base, and the paten was missing. Last evening, as I was walking with a confrere before going to sleep, I unexpectedly found the paten in the house of a Catholic family, and quickly sent my companion to bring the consoling news to the other confreres and to the heads of the Catholic families. They spread the news to all the houses, and this morning we celebrated our five masses,<sup>181</sup> including a sung mass. The others received communion, and this evening we sang vespers. Afterward a good Catholic invited us to dinner tomorrow. We attribute this grace to the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose feast of the Sorrows we kept today. May she be forever blessed.<sup>182</sup>

I have been requested insistently to preach and hear confessions, but my English is not yet good enough to let me agree to so much. Only seven or eight persons understand French. We still await our cumbersome baggage before descending the Ohio to Louisville in Kentucky. The boat has already been arranged.<sup>183</sup> Everything here is very expensive. A cart to carry our baggage for thirty-five miles cost twenty scudi. A little ferry to cross a small river, three scudi. An ordinary portfolio, which costs two paoli in Rome, they want five scudi for here, and so forth. There is no coinage here. It is all paper certificates that are hard to use in different places in the United States. But Providence confounds us with its special assistance by distracting us while it causes to fall into our hands, without our seeking it, very considerable help, up to 300 scudi each time. We need nothing less in very expensive areas to provide food, clothing and travel expenses for twelve persons. We are all doing wonderfully well, despite the fatigue and the regular lack of wine, soup, etc., despite the sweat, which freezes on us, since here, so to speak, they have the four seasons of the year each day. In the morning we shiver with cold, and a few hours later we are overcome with the heat, and everyone gets covered with sweat.

On our arrival here, we had to look for a hotel. When we saw that it was costing us two scudi each per day, we stayed with a poor Catholic

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<sup>181</sup> The priests were De Andreis, Rosati, Acquaroni, Caretti, and Ferrari.

<sup>182</sup> The sacramental records of Saint Patrick's Church indicate that Reverend W.F.X. O'Brien had performed baptisms on 15, 17, 21 September. However, since there is no indication where he celebrated them, he must have been elsewhere.

<sup>183</sup> They were delayed first by the missing luggage, and then by low water levels on the river.

*Correspondence 1816*

family, but we were very crowded there. Yet we were all happy and content in the Lord, conversing among ourselves like good brothers and encouraging each other to unite our sufferings to those endured by the son of God for the salvation of souls. According to the custom of the Congregation, we always hold meditations, spiritual reading, the examens, conferences, etc. and it all moves along with an admirable harmony.

If you are anxious to know the names of all our colleagues, besides us three<sup>184</sup> there are two other priests, from Porto Maurizio, Canon Caretti and Father Andrew Ferrari, young men about 26 years old; four clerics, on whom the bishop conferred minor orders in Bordeaux: Messrs. Deys, a Fleming well known there [in Rome]; Casto Gonzales, a Spaniard;<sup>185</sup> Xavier Dahmen, a German; Joseph Tichitoli, a Milanese; three brothers: Martin Blanka, Francis Borawanski,<sup>186</sup> and Medard Delatre, a French [postulant?]. I would like to be able to give a clearer account, but I have to finish, to give the letter to a bearer about to leave for Baltimore.

After receiving good news about our confreres in Lisbon from an English priest arriving from there, I wrote<sup>187</sup> to the superior of that house, asking him to send us manuscript copies of our rule of life, something we were unable to get in France.

Everyone here joins me in honoring your entire house, and that of Monte Cavallo,<sup>188</sup> and we recommend ourselves warmly to your prayers. We will see one another again in paradise. To reach there I have been unable to find a better way than this one, being, fortunately, in need of stripping ourselves of our very selves, etc. *Felix necessitas*

<sup>184</sup> De Andreis, Rosati, Acquaroni.

<sup>185</sup> This difficult and unbalanced young man was not a Vincentian, although he had expressed a wish to join the Congregation. (Details are in Rosati's "Recollections," *VH* 4:2, 126-28; together with his "Catalogus Parochiarum et Missionum Diocesis S. Ludovici, Anno 1816," DRMA, Rosati papers, 47-48; also his "Catalogus alumnorum Seminarii S. Mariae..." DRMA, II C[MO]-9-A-5, 3.) Flaget mentioned Casto in his "Journal," 16 October 1820, speaking of unspecified "scandals."

<sup>186</sup> It is difficult to be certain about his name, since two similar names exist in Polish: Borowacki and Borawanski. The latter has been chosen for consistency, despite the many ways his name appears in these letters and in other sources.

<sup>187</sup> This letter does not exist, since the archives of the province were destroyed in 1830.

<sup>188</sup> Another name for San Silvestro, a major Vincentian house in Rome.

*Correspondence 1816*

Period inn. Cashtown, Pennsylvania.  
*Courtesy of the author*

*quae ad meliora compellit* ["Happy the need which compels one to greater things"].<sup>189</sup>

I am, with profound respect and veneration for you,  
 your most humble and obedient servant  
 Felix De Andreis,  
 unworthy Priest of the Congregation of the Mission

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<sup>189</sup> The original citation is *Felix est necessitas quae in meliora compellit*; Augustine, epistle 127, PL 33, 487, 8.

*Correspondence 1816*

**23. TO FRANÇOISE VICTOIRE FOURNIER, BORDEAUX<sup>190</sup>**

Pittsburgh  
27 September 1816

Madame,

I wrote you from Baltimore,<sup>191</sup> and also wrote to our beloved shepherd [Bishop Dubourg] .... Our trip since then was made partly by stage, partly on foot or in wagons. The constant rains, the swollen rivers and the abominable roads made it very difficult. This forced us to stop and to multiply our expenses.

The flat-boat for our trip on the Ohio has already been arranged  
....<sup>192</sup>

The Catholic people of Pittsburgh wrote a very obliging letter [of introduction] for us. We had hardly arrived here when they wanted us to say mass. I am struggling hard to hear confessions and preach in English. If we still remain here, I will try to make use of the poor sermons I have already prepared, etc.

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<sup>190</sup> **Letter 23.** *Extracts, French, from a copy from "Journal de la Société du Sacré-Coeur," in the Archives of the General Curia, Rome; Duchesne file, 31-32.*

<sup>191</sup> See Letter 18, August 1816.

<sup>192</sup> The men had earlier thought of a steamboat journey down the Ohio. (Rosati to Nervi, from Baltimore, 29 July 1816, in Collegio Brignole-Sale, Genoa, Rosati papers; copy in DRMA. Also, Rosati, "Recollections," *VH* 2, 46.) Lack of funds changed their plans, since steamboats were both scarce and expensive. The charge for the group and baggage would have been \$2000. (Rosati, "Life," *Summarium*, 80.)

*Correspondence 1816***24. TO JOSEPH HARENT, S.S., PRIEST, BALTIMORE<sup>193</sup>**

Pittsburgh  
27 September 1816

Dear Father,

Yesterday evening we received the package of letters that you were good enough to send us. They brought us great consolation because of the news from Europe that they contained about Bishop Dubourg and our confreres. Also they succeeded in preparing our spirits to celebrate today with greater spiritual joy the anniversary of the happy passing of our father, Saint Vincent de Paul. They prepared us to celebrate the very important memory, for us, of the conclusion of the establishment of our mission that took place in Rome this same day. We also sang vespers yesterday evening and a high mass this morning. This evening we will finally conclude the feast with second vespers. To give us the bare necessities for the feast, Providence also caused to arrive yesterday the last two wagons to depart. We are still looking for the other wagon taken away from our four confreres who went with it.<sup>194</sup> I don't know why.

The flatboat is ready to leave for Louisville. I regret not having seen Father O'Brien.<sup>195</sup> Mr. Beelen has been very busy on our behalf. He placed us with some Catholic people, arranged for a boat and took charge of getting us the necessary provisions. The Catholic people of Pittsburgh showed us great charity. They put a carriage at our disposal here, and for our journey they wrote a letter for us in the name of all the Catholics, with very obliging offers of assistance and service. We responded by simply thanking them and recommending ourselves to their prayers.

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<sup>193</sup> **Letter 24.** *Autograph letter, French, two pages, with address, in Sulpician Archives, Baltimore, Maryland, document 2-A-1.*

Joseph Harent (1755-1818), a Sulpician, was at the time treasurer of Saint Mary's Seminary in Baltimore.

<sup>194</sup> Blanka, Delatre, Borawanski, Dahmen.

<sup>195</sup> The pastor arrived on 3 October.

*Correspondence 1816*

I received several pressing requests to preach and hear confessions. I wrote for permission to do so, and I also worked to prepare a sermon in English, and if we do not leave before Sunday, I will perhaps try to give it. Everyone is in good health, despite the fatigues of traveling the very bad road, and the difficulties that we found ourselves in, as I have already described in two letters to Father Bruté.<sup>196</sup> Your worthy letter enclosed one from Madame Fournier, Bishop Dubourg's sister. In it she asked me to present her compliments to you as well as to Fathers Tessier, Babad, Bruté, [James] Joubert, Mr. [Louis de] Chevigné and [Edward] Dampoux. To these I also add my own best wishes and those of our band. Our thanks to the college and to the seminary at Baltimore will never be erased. I also add the same good wishes and thanks to Fathers Marechal, Vepres and Mr. Cooper, and to Mrs. St. Martin, especially also to Fathers Fenwick and Moranvillé. Oh, how wonderful it is to see people from such different nations helping each other, and assisting one another as good brethren before their common Father and Master for whose love and glory each one tries to act. I am anxious to see Bishop Flaget. I just learned now that the last wagon arrived empty, since it had to leave our baggage beside the road. We will see what we can do.

I am, Father, with the assurance of the deepest respect and veneration,

Your humble servant,

Felix De Andreis,

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission.

*Addressed [in English]:* Rt. Rev. D. [Father] Harent, to the St. Mary's College, Baltimore (Maryland).

*Postmark:* Pittsburgh, 28 SPT [September].

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<sup>196</sup> These letters, as well as that from Madame Fournier, are no longer extant.



*Correspondence 1816*



Portrait of Joseph Rosati, C.M.  
*Collegio Leoniano, Rome, Italy*

*Correspondence 1816***25. TO SIMON BRUTÉ, S.S., PRIEST, BALTIMORE<sup>197</sup>**

Pittsburgh  
5 October 1816

With great pleasure I received from Mr. [Anthony] Beelen<sup>198</sup> your very welcome letter. It was a reason for consolation given our present circumstances. A loving Providence has been pleased to discipline us here, since for three weeks we have stayed here without being able to leave. The water has been too low and we have not found out how long we will have to wait. I say this just as a simple account of our condition. For the rest I would do an injustice to God's goodness after so many proofs he has given us, and which he does not cease giving us, of the care that he deigns to take of us, although (I am speaking of myself) we are so unworthy and ungrateful.

I thank you sincerely for the good advice which you kindly gave us, and I assure you that this is not carrying water to the well, but on the contrary, you have given water to the thirsty. I am very aware of the happy efforts of your zeal for the 130 ecus; the money has been found and it could not be better used since it is indispensable for paying the expenses of our delayed journey. As a result, I would be doubly obliged to you if you could send us the money, although for the moment we have no purchases to make. If we have already left, Mr. Beelen will handle what has to be done. I omit repeating here what I have already noted in three of my letters, two addressed to you,<sup>199</sup> and the other to Father [Joseph] Harent.<sup>200</sup> I am angry that in the pressure with which

<sup>197</sup> Letter 25. Copy, French, in SLAA, *De Andreis papers*.

Simon Bruté de Rémur (1779-1839) came to America in 1810. He was superior of the Baltimore seminary (1815-1818), and was first bishop of Vincennes, Indiana (1834-1839). For Bruté's answer, see Letter 26, 15 October 1816.

<sup>198</sup> Born in Belgium, Anthony C. Beelen, was the son of Francis, baron De Belen Barthoff, a Belgian diplomat. Beelen came to Pittsburgh in 1794, became a businessman and merchant, and developed glass and ironworks. He was the principal Vincentian contact in Pittsburgh.

<sup>199</sup> These letters do not appear to be extant.

<sup>200</sup> Letter 24, 27 September 1816.

*Correspondence 1816*

I wrote those few words at Stoystown, I did not think to tell you how happy we were, and how edified by the very useful company given us by the friendly Mr. Ross.<sup>201</sup> We regret losing him, as you should now know, but we are happy that he was spared the pains that he would have had to undergo with us; and, even more than us, for the long journey he still has to make to reach New Orleans.<sup>202</sup> All of us together ask you to extend our compliments to him and our thanks. I hope you will kindly do the same for Father Grassi and for Father [John] Sinnot for the same assistance. We have also received the packet of letters sent by Father Harent.

Concerning the matter of the stage, we had in compensation about 11, eleven, dollars. And I agree very readily with you to hold us to it without looking for anything further. I have been often touched by what Saint John Chrysostom said about the place in the Gospel where our divine Savior sends out the apostles and says to them: *mitto vos sicut oves in mediis luporum, quandiu oves fuerimus, vincimus: etiamsi mille circumstant lupi superamus, et victores sumus: quod si lupi fuerimus vincimur. Tunc enim a nobis Pastoris auxilium recedit, qui non lupos, sed oves pascit* ["I send you forth like sheep in the midst of wolves. Although we may be sheep, we are victorious. Even though a thousand wolves surround us, we will overcome and be the victors. If we were wolves, we would be overcome, for then the shepherd's help would leave us, since he pastures sheep, not wolves"].<sup>203</sup> May our good and gracious God never let us be far from these sentiments.

Yesterday we had the happiness of seeing for the first time Father [William F.X.] O'Brien, and we found him just as he had been described

<sup>201</sup> This seminarian accompanied the group for a portion of the journey. He is probably the same as Rodolphe Rousseau, known from seminary records. He probably anglicized his name to Ross, a common occurrence. R. Ross is listed as a seminarian of Baltimore in a letter from Bruté to Antoine Garnier, his Sulpician superior in Paris (Bruté to Garnier, from Baltimore, 17 December 1815; in Sulpician Archives, Paris, Bruté papers). Rosati mistakenly noted that he was returning to New Orleans after finishing his studies in Baltimore. (Rosati, "Itinéraire," 10 September 1816.)

<sup>202</sup> The Tessier diary records the following for 27 September: "Young Ross, who had left with the Lazarists, has returned, after accompanying them as far as Pittsburgh."

<sup>203</sup> John Chrysostom, Homily 33 (34) on the Gospel "Ecce ego mitto vos," PG 31:389, with some omissions.

*Correspondence 1816*

for us: a very accomplished man and a worthy priest.<sup>204</sup> I hope he will have a co-worker, not only to support him, but also to help him do even better what is to be done. One man alone cannot do what he ought. One would soon see the number of Catholics grow.

Our great duty here is to learn English, but the climate of this region, being very humid and always covered with fog, keeps almost all of us somewhat indisposed. For the rest we are all shut up here in a tiny hole where it is almost impossible to move. But this is nothing. We are not worthy of experiencing the labors of truly apostolic men. Your prayers, Father, will let us merit them. I see very clearly that the only thing worthy of esteem in this life is to suffer all we can for the glory and the cause of God, our good master.

Please extend my most humble respects and sentiments of thanks to Fathers [Jean Marie] Tessier, Harent, [Ambrose] Marechal, [Enoch] Fenwick, [Peter] Babad, [John] Moranvillé, [Francis] Vepres; to Messrs. [Louis de] Chevigné,<sup>205</sup> [Samuel] Cooper, [John Joseph] Holland and [Michael] Doyle, and to all the other members of the seminary and of the college, also in the name of all our group. But as I charge you with giving our thanks to all these gentlemen, to whom we have so many obligations, what should I not do to tell you how much we have to give our thanks to you. I know well that your views greatly surpass demanding human thanks. Therefore add to the other benefits that of recommending us very insistently once more to the good God, that he might grant us the grace of profiting from your advice, and of corresponding well to our vocation.

I am, in the love of Jesus Christ, very sincerely, your very humble servant,

Felix De Andreis

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission

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<sup>204</sup> O'Brien (or O'Bryan), a native of Maryland, made his studies in Baltimore, and was ordained in 1808. He died at the seminary in Baltimore, 1 November 1832. As Rosati mentions that O'Brien had arrived on 3 October, it is likely that De Andreis either made a mistake, or began this letter earlier and dated it when he completed it. (Rosati, "Itineraire," 4 October 1816.)

<sup>205</sup> Louis de Chevigné was a layman on the faculty, which he joined in 1802.

*Correspondence 1816*

**26. TO FELIX DE ANDREIS, C.M., PITTSBURGH<sup>206</sup>**

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J[esus].M[ary].J[oseph].  
Eternity

Baltimore  
15 October 1816

Father, the day before yesterday I received the very edifying letter that you kindly wrote us, dated 5 October.<sup>207</sup> I would rather not say that I hope that this will find you still in Pittsburgh, and I would rather be obliged to have it follow you to Bardstown. [Leave it] To Providence! I am sending it to Mr. Beelen, by means of Mr. [Luke] Tiernan,<sup>208</sup> to whom I am giving 170 dollars from Baltimore. This is to be sent to you and will be, I think, of some help to you. This is 100 dollars from Father [Dennys] Carroll, 30 from Father Grassi, and 40 from another worthy friend, Mr. Tuite, from Queenstown, Talbot County on the eastern shore of our Chesapeake. He is a good Catholic, and I recommend him to your prayers. I have no doubt that when Bishop Dubourg arrives [here], he will find more abundant help. Bishop Flaget wrote me that you will also secure funds in Upper Louisiana. Let us hope, Father, that the great [saying] *Deus providebit* ["God will provide"]<sup>209</sup> will once again this time not be wanting for the missionaries who, like Abraham, have left their country and walk in God's presence in the land that he is showing them. There they will possess as soon as they arrive only ... their souls in peace ... *in patientia* ["in patience (you will possess your souls)"].<sup>210</sup>

We bless his goodness a thousand times to see in your dear letter how much he is pleased to support all of you with his grace, amid very

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<sup>206</sup> **Letter 26.** Autograph letter, French, three pages with address, in SLAA, Rosati papers.

<sup>207</sup> See the previous letter.

<sup>208</sup> Luke Tiernan (1757-1839) was an importer and shipping merchant of Baltimore, arriving there in 1795. He was a benefactor of Catholic and Irish causes. (*Biographical Cyclopedia of Representative Men of Maryland and District of Columbia* [Baltimore: National Biographical Publishing Co., 1879], 497.)

<sup>209</sup> Gen 22:8.

<sup>210</sup> Luke 21:19.

*Correspondence 1816*

considerable trials, as you begin. This is especially true since some of your men are so young and frail that my heart easily enters into theirs to experience all that nature suffers. Nevertheless, I cannot unite myself to any of these loving and fervent hearts without sensing at the same time how much consolations abound the more amid tribulation. *Propter inhabitantem spiritum* ["because of the spirit dwelling in (them)"]<sup>211</sup> I hear with delight in [your letter] the inexpressible groanings of the spirit, who cries out with them this tender *Abba, Pater* ["Father"]<sup>212</sup> with a delicious abandonment, *quoniam sic placitur ante te* ["for so it was pleasing before you"]<sup>213</sup> God takes delight in the sufferings of his servants! This delight comes from his divine love, because it can thus prepare for them the eternal crowns that are even richer. This fills me with joy in your sufferings, instead of making me complain to you with any of those very weak expressions, which the friends of the world would prefer to let themselves give us on reading such a touching letter, despite your extreme reserve on the subject of the trials whose complete extent I cannot fathom.

Let us hope, let us hope in good things from the Lord afterwards. Too happy [for us], after all, if he is having us suffer here at the beginning for the profit of souls and for the future of the churches here. Too happy [for us] if the blood of martyrs flows no longer, but hatred and misery and tribulations of all kinds are at least the better part for his confessors. If they make the desert bloom, they first have to manure it. *Pinguescent speciosa deserti* ["let the beauties of the desert bloom"]<sup>214</sup> Oh, this is enough. My God alone. *Fiat, fiat* ["Let it be, let it be"]<sup>215</sup> *Pinguescant speciosa deserti!*

Dear Father Andreis [*sic*], I am speaking here contentedly from a beautiful elegant room, while all of you are crammed into your place and are sick, but finally, it is not I who am speaking to your hearts when I send you the words that reading letters like yours inspire in me. It is the divine master himself, so full of love for souls, whom he sees more than ever converted by his blood and [now] participating in

<sup>211</sup> Rom 8:11.

<sup>212</sup> Rom 8:15, and elsewhere.

<sup>213</sup> Cited loosely from either Matt 11:26 or Luke 10:21.

<sup>214</sup> Ps 65:13.

<sup>215</sup> Ps 41:14, and elsewhere.

*Correspondence 1816*

his chalice. He speaks to these dear souls, and pours out his sweetest peace upon them in their pains.

I have received news of the worthy archbishop of Bordeaux. He was awaiting in October the departure of Bishop Dubourg with twenty other of his missionaries who were supposed to embark at that time, but he gave no assurance of this, and I myself am at some pains to believe that he is ready. I would prefer to take advantage, up to the last moment, of the charity of our Europe to make the best possible provision for this country. I have certainly had all the letters sent off.

All our gentlemen are extremely aware of your good remembrance [of them]. Please remember us in the prayers of each of your venerable gentlemen and worthy priests. I would recall all these hearts already so dear to the Church here, and so dear to our hearts. At least I would ask you to remember me very specially still to Fathers Rosati, Acquaroni, Caretti and Ferrari; these last two are the youngest and most frail, especially Father Caretti. May the Lord be abundantly their strength. Messrs. Tiquitoly [Tichitoli], Deys, Gonzalez—could I forget even one of them?

*For cor meum et anima mea in Jesu et Maria* ["my heart and my soul (are) in Jesus and Mary"],

S[imon] Bruté

Please present my regards to good Father O'Brien.

*Addressed:* The Revd. Fr. Andreis, Vicar General of Louisiana, Care of Mr. A. Beelen, Pitzburgh [sic].

*Correspondence 1816*



Interior of a flatboat.  
*Public Domain*  
 27. TO N.<sup>216</sup>

Louisville  
 20 (?) November 1816

*[A missionary who left France for Louisiana with several other priests, reports in a letter, sent from Louisville, about his trip from Pittsburgh.]*

We left Pittsburgh on 27 October. During our stay we had received touching signs of affection from many Catholics and even from some Protestants. One of these latter provided us with beer for our stay and for our trip.<sup>217</sup> We sang high mass every Sunday in Pittsburgh with the deacon and subdeacon, and we sang vespers, too, with much solemnity. These ceremonies had never been witnessed before in this town, and everyone was struck by them, since mass had been celebrated

<sup>216</sup> **Letter 27.** *Printed letter, French, but original language is not given, in Annales de la Propagation de la Foi, vol. 1:1 (1837): 36-39; republished (1842): 42-44.*

It is uncertain whether De Andreis wrote this letter, since its writer is not identified, although the dates of his stay in Louisville tally with the date of the letter. If not, the author might have been Tichitoli, one of those who met the local citizens on the riverbank.

<sup>217</sup> Rosati identifies him as [Colonel James F.] O'Hara, a Presbyterian. (Rosati, "Itineraire," 23-24 October 1816.)



*Correspondence 1816*

scarcely every other Sunday. The parishes, called congregations in this country, are of such a great size that the pastor is obliged to say mass by rotation in different locations. As a result, the church was always filled not only with Catholics but also Protestants.

It was hard for them to see us go, and a large number of Catholics went with us to the boat. Several were weeping, and did not leave the bank of the river until they lost us from sight. Among them was a Protestant woman who had held several discussions with one of our confreres. She worked hard at becoming instructed, and had decided to make a solemn abjuration.<sup>218</sup> In general, the character of the Americans is very good, and in the areas where we traveled they show a great attachment to religion. We should try to come here often, or establish missions in these towns that are being born and which are daily growing so quickly. For the most part, these towns have neither churches nor Protestant ministers, and we could easily attract many people to the Catholic religion.

We left Pittsburgh on a flat boat. We made a partition with our boxes, and closed it up with a door, such that we had a kind of room where we set up our beds for the night. We arranged an altar in the morning to say mass, and for the rest of the day it became a kitchen. Wind and rain came in easily, and despite all our efforts to protect ourselves from their assaults, our aggressors got the upper hand. For the rest, despite these little inconveniences, we were always quite well.<sup>219</sup> Every day after the hour of prayer, we said mass, each priest in his turn. On Sundays and feast days, the five of us priests said mass, and then we would sing high mass and vespers. Divided between prayer

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<sup>218</sup> That is, to become a Catholic by renouncing her former religion.

<sup>219</sup> This contradicts the information given about F. X. Dahmen in the following letter.

*Correspondence 1816*

and study, our time passed quite quickly, and the Lord preserved us against the dangers of this long trip.<sup>220</sup>

Some leagues after we passed Marietta, a very touching thing happened to us. A gentleman on the bank near his home saw some of our men taking a walk along the bank where they had disembarked.<sup>221</sup> He came up to them, and after having a pleasant conversation, invited them to his home. When he learned that we were priests, he began with great emotion to speak about religion, and during the conversation we saw that tears often ran down his cheeks and those of members of his family. At last, he admitted that he professed no religion, but that he had decided he would never embrace any other than the Catholic faith. He wanted to have one of our men remain with him to instruct him and his family, and all the people of the area. He would be happy, he said, to be able to contribute with his considerable fortune to the instruction of his compatriots. We were very sorry not to be able to stop longer, but we were not the captains of the boat, and none of us knew enough English to remain. We had to bid him farewell, but we left him some English books for his instruction. He and one of his friends went with us to the boat, embraced us, and besought us to get some of our companions to come and stay with him.<sup>222</sup>

In all the places where our boat stopped we would disembark, and everywhere we found reason to lament the state of religion in these lands. From Pittsburgh to Louisville, a distance of 700 miles (200 leagues),<sup>223</sup> there is no priest, although there are many Catholics as

<sup>220</sup> Joseph Rosati described the flat boat to his brother Nicola on the eve of his departure:

The boat in which I am going to travel with my companions is like Noah's Ark. It is no higher than a man, such that you can hardly stand upright . . . There is a partition, and by means of this we have only two-thirds of it for our room, which gets light from a little window. In this room is the chimney, which will have a fire for cooking and warming us, and all our trunks and our other things. On top of these we will lay out our mattress to sleep.

Joseph Rosati to Nicola Rosati, Sora; from Pittsburgh, 25 October 1816. (Copy in DRMA, Rosati papers.)

<sup>221</sup> Rosati tells the story in more detail, adding that the men involved were Casto, Tichitoli and Brother Blanka. (Rosati, "Itineraire," 3 November 1816.)

<sup>222</sup> See also Rosati's "Life," *Summarium*, 82-83.

<sup>223</sup> The league, a variable measure, is normally reckoned as equaling between 2.4 and 4.6 miles.

*Correspondence 1816*

well as many Protestants very ready to become Catholics. There is no church, although there are magnificent buildings for Presbyterians, Episcopalians and Methodists. In many places we had offers to stay, and people begged us tearfully to leave them one of our men to instruct them. We gave them hope that God would protect their good resolutions.

**28(a). TO PETER DAHMEN, PRIEST, ROME<sup>224</sup>**

Bardstown, Kentucky  
29 November 1816

To my surprise, on arriving at this bishop's residence in the midst of an immense desert,<sup>225</sup> I found your very welcome letter of last 12 June, with various other letters that arrived from Bordeaux. In your letter you kindly gave me information that I did not know of, or to say it better, it mentioned matters to me of which I was completely ignorant, since Bishop Dubourg had not told me anything about them. Yet, I cannot tell you anything by letter since here I am in the middle of North America, and I absolutely do not know where he is now, since all the information I have of him is very old. All I can do is to tell him about them when I see him but I know already that he will be very late and it will be inopportune.

I am taking advantage of this occasion to thank you for the efforts which you have taken on behalf of our mission, and I congratulate you about your brother, whose wonderful behavior endears him to the whole group. On the most recent trip which we made together, on the

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<sup>224</sup> **Letter 28(a).** *Copy, Italian, in the archives of the General Curia, Rome, De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part I, Sect. D, #6, 21-24; copy in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Vittorio Emmanuele II, Rome. Fondo Gesuitico, No. 1363 o 3492 (No. 3); copy in Propaganda Fide, Congressi ... Cod. 3, Fol. 609-10. (Several other early complete and partial copies of this letter exist, in both Italian and French.) Cited in Rosati/Burlando, Sketches of the Life, 115-19. Letter 28(b).* *Copy, Italian, in DRMA, De Andreis file, Box 1, folder F, from a copy (or original?) in the archives of Propaganda Fide; copy in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Vittorio Emmanuele II, Rome. Fondo Gesuitico, No. 1363 o 3492 (no. 4).*

Peter Dahmen was a brother of Francis Xavier Dahmen, C.M.

<sup>225</sup> That is, a place with a small population.

*Correspondence 1816*

Ohio River from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to Louisville, Kentucky, a distance of more than 200 miles<sup>226</sup> covered in twenty-three days, he was a little bothered by some external bleeding, and he had to remain in bed for two weeks. But now he is well and will be even better soon. We had agreed with the bishop of Bardstown to place our young men temporarily in his seminary, until our seminary in Louisiana is built. Your brother, consequently, will remain here in the midst of the holiness that this place inspires in all its inhabitants. As a result I am waiting here until next week for him and all the rest of the group.<sup>227</sup>

It is wonderful to see how Providence visibly watches over us. It makes it easy for us to find everything, and keeps us all in good health despite the fatigues of the journeys, sleeping badly in cabins open to the weather, to the cold, with water on every side, and eating even worse.<sup>228</sup> It is a great feast when we find potatoes and badly cooked corn bread with a little cold water which is not always good, since the difficulty of having a few drops of wine keeps us very often from the consolation of being able to celebrate mass. In comparison with ours, a very frugal life led over there seems to me like a gourmet life. But that is how they live here, and it is very difficult for a European to match the austerity of the Americans. Here, although we suppose we are leading a very penitential life, to those with whom we deal it still seems to be too delicate. But we suffer all this willingly in view of the great good we hope to do, and of the great dispositions to make it grow abundantly which we see happening wherever we go in this virgin land.

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<sup>226</sup> A mistake for 200 leagues, mentioned in the previous letter.

<sup>227</sup> The others remained in Louisville, as De Andreis and Casto had left for Saint Thomas on 22 November to make provision for them. Casto made the two-day trip back with the seminary treasurer, James Derigaud, bringing horses for the others. Flaget arrived at Saint Thomas, after some missionary visits, only on 26 November. (Rosati, "Itineraire," 26 and 29 November 1816.)

<sup>228</sup> A nearly contemporary letter from Bishop Flaget to a friend describes life at Saint Thomas under Father David, the superior. The community rose at 4:30 A.M. in the summer, spent three-quarters of an hour of meditation, followed by mass and study to 7:30. Breakfast consisted of a cup of milk and cornbread. Classes continued until noon. After the meal, eaten in silence with public reading, there followed three and a half hours of fieldwork. Classes, reading and prayers occupied their time until supper, which normally consisted of a glass of sassafras tea, butter, two tablespoons of potatoes (dried and then boiled) and cornbread. (*Ami de la Religion* 6:139 [9 December 1815]: 127.)

*Correspondence 1816*

The seeds of unbelief and irreligion have not penetrated here. Each one loves his own faith, whether true or false. It is true that the Catholics are very few and that magnificent temples are built by Quakers, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Methodists and the Protestants of a thousand different sects that keep multiplying daily. This happens because of a dearth of missionaries. The Protestants themselves respect and welcome Catholic priests beautifully, even more than they do their own ministers. We ourselves have experienced this. In more and more places there has been a kind of violence to collect the harvest that is already white.<sup>229</sup> An entire heretic family, after hearing only two words of exhortation, knelt down and tearfully begged us to remain at least a while with them to instruct them and others were moved to renounce [their heresy].<sup>230</sup> It makes one very compassionate to see the great extent of the region where there are cities and villages with many Catholic families who never see a priest. The same is true when we see a Catholic area without a pastor, since no priest can be had, which then calls a minister and they all become Protestants. O God, what desolation! with so many priests living in idleness in Italy and in Rome itself. Here they would do an immense good by simply saying mass, teaching catechism with a book in hand, and baptizing. Unfortunately, among the other things introduced among the heretics, there is such a great negligence in baptizing that many adults remain unbaptized, and a huge number of infants die without baptism. Any miserable priest with a little zeal and good will, anywhere he stayed, would surely be able in a short time to found a parish of good Catholics.

I am not saying anything about the Indians who also show favorable dispositions. They earnestly wish to have some "Fathers of Prayer" (which is what they call missionaries) to teach them to raise their spirit to the Master of the Universe. Such are the emphatic expressions of their speech. For them the greatest austerities are pastimes. They regard going three or four days without food as nothing. They pass a rope between the muscles and the skin from one side to the other, and by attaching to the rope a tree trunk, they drag it up a wooded hill. That person is more pleasing to God who, according to them, can drag it farthest without tearing the skin. On other occasions

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<sup>229</sup> A reference to Matt 11:12 and John 4:35.

<sup>230</sup> Near Marietta, Ohio.

## Correspondence 1816

they likewise run a rope between the muscles and skin of their chest, and they hang themselves from a tree, and to please the Supreme Being they stay there until their skin is torn. What would they not be capable of if they were cultivated? Many of them have preserved through tradition the message of the Gospel received from their ancestors through the ministry of the Jesuit Fathers, and they still practice various exercises.<sup>231</sup> When they can hear holy mass, they willingly do so. A missionary who would consecrate himself to cultivating them would have a lot to suffer, given their ferocity, their arrogance and their natural instability. But with time and patience he could do much. The extreme lack of missionaries, which is far from meeting the needs of the Catholics and the heretics, means that we cannot think about the Indians.<sup>232</sup>

If some pious, zealous and rich person over there would decide to make a considerable sacrifice of hundreds of thousands of scudi (no less than that is required) to found here a college for missionaries with all the accouterments such as are there in Europe, to be able to maintain thirty or so workers to go here and there all over the United States, I am sure that in a few years the Catholic religion would flourish even better than in Italy, since here corruption does not predominate. The big evil here is self-interest, since commerce is the soul of the country. Missionaries here would have to be pure spirits, without bodily needs to meet. Here more than ever the teaching of Saint Philip [Neri] is true: Whoever wants souls should leave his purse behind. For this same reason at least during these beginnings, little hope exists of forming many American workers. Indeed, commerce certainly sweeps away all the youth and drags them along like a torrent, so much so that after learning in a seminary what they need for commerce, a large

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<sup>231</sup> Jesuits exercised the ministry in French Louisiana until their suppression in 1763. (Charles J. Balesi, *The Time of the French in the Heart of North America. 1673-1818* [Chicago: Alliance Française, 1992].)

<sup>232</sup> "There are also, in this Diocess [*sic*], some remnants of Indian tribes professing the Catholic faith; the same having been carried among them by the Jesuits before their suppression. Amongst these children of the forest, who evince a great attachment to this Holy faith, is the tribe surnamed the Wolf. They are occasionally attended by one or other of the Missionaries of Kentucky." (*The Laitie's Directory to the Church Service for the Year of our Lord M,DCCC,XXII*. [New York: William H. Creagh, 1822], 109; listing for the "Bishopric of Bardstown.")

*Correspondence 1816*

PL. XXI.

GALDO.  
ILLINOIS.

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A flatboat on the Ohio River. Early nineteenth century.  
*Collection of the De Andreis-Rosati Memorial Archives*

majority of them abandon the ecclesiastical state and go to be engulfed in the torrent.

Please excuse this outpouring of mine as I lay these issues on your heart. I hope they will find ground that I do not doubt will be most disposed to work for the glory of our good God, and for the salvation of souls redeemed at the price of the divine blood, and will not be in vain. I write in haste and in a language that I am already beginning to forget, since I have forbidden it to our entire group to be able to practice well the other required languages, the study of which now forms our main occupation. So, please pardon my lack of exactness, which you will be able to notice. Please recommend me to God as much as you can and have others do so. If I am not too bothersome, I would also like to ask you when you see some of my missionary confreres at Monte Citorio and at San Silvestro to share this news.<sup>233</sup> Assure them all that we are very well. We grow happier each day, and are thankful to God

<sup>233</sup> This remark is possibly the source of the many copies of this letter in existence.

*Correspondence 1816*

for having called us to this wonderful mission. Tell them that we carry in our hearts especially all our dear confreres in Rome from whom we are separated only in body, and that we wish them every kind of spiritual and temporal blessing.

Our establishment is morally certain. We would have been immediately able to go directly to Saint Louis where we are awaited, but for various reasons I decided to defer our travel there until next spring when Bishop Dubourg arrives. Meanwhile we will wait here all winter to perfect ourselves in the languages and to conform ourselves better to the style of the country, a point of extreme importance if we are to accomplish any good.

It is already time to stop. Pardon me and believe me to be in the love of Jesus Christ, and full of deep esteem and veneration,  
 your most humble, devoted and obedient servant,  
 Felix De Andreis  
 unworthy missionary to Louisiana

*In another hand:* Arrived in Rome about the middle of July 1817.

**28(b). TO PETER DAHMEN, PRIEST, ROME<sup>234</sup>**

My very dear brother,

You will find here<sup>235</sup> more news than I was able to tell you in my last letter from Pittsburgh, where we left on 27 October. I could also add a thousand items of news which are heard everywhere here, and which take place between the Catholics and the ministers of the various sects. Because of their mad calumnies, with which they try to falsify our religion, and because of the lies they preach, they are often reproved openly by Catholics, as well as by their own followers. Their ministers are shoemakers, builders, etc.

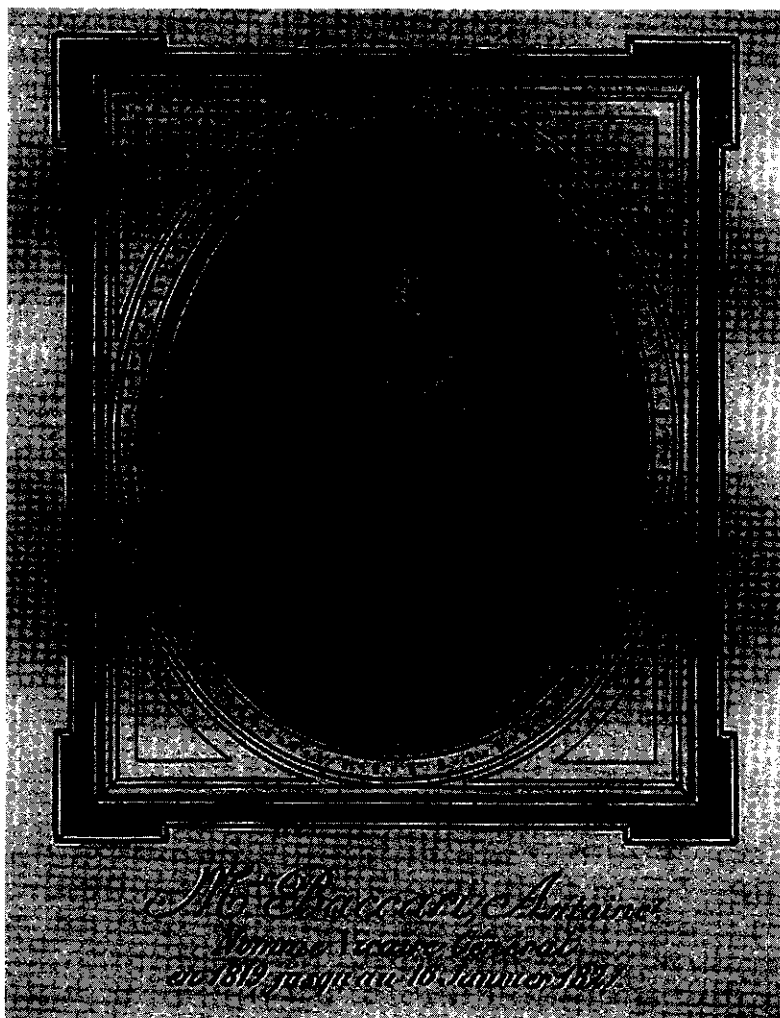
As to my illness that Father De Andreis mentions here (by the way, he gave me permission to read the letter) it causes only a little upset,

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<sup>234</sup> The following letter was attached to the above by Francis Xavier Dahmen.

<sup>235</sup> In De Andreis's letter.



*Correspondence 1816*

Portrait of Francesco Antonio Baccari.  
*Collection of the De Andreis-Rosati Memorial Archives*

*Correspondence 1816*

and only a few pains, but no injuries. On our arrival in Louisville on 19 October [November], I was again as good as new.

My dear brother, every day in which we have nothing to suffer is, as it were, lost to us.... *Dat cuncta coelum prospera* ["Heaven bestows all good gifts"]... What more should I write now? Ah, I know nothing, but my heart is full. Dear brother, how could I sufficiently thank you for all the instructions that you gave me, for the many prayers which you and our dear mother sent to heaven to preserve my life? (It often hung by a thread.) Meanwhile, I live in the sure hope of one day seeing my redeemer, Jesus Christ. I could long for nothing better.

If perhaps you are inclined to join me, certainly there is no other place where there is so much to do and so many opportunities to acquire eternal crowns. Write me first if you have some difficulties, and if I could help, I would certainly not neglect doing so. I would willingly give you some information about America, but I don't know about what. This is like what happened in Rome when I was there. Almost every idea left me first, and then I had little to write. For this reason, ask me what you want, and I will let you know what I can about it.

I am perfectly content and healthy. I will begin my theology [class] here with the other three.<sup>236</sup> Father De Andreis will be our teacher. I have not yet seen the bishop of Kentucky since he is away, but he will return soon. The seminary where we are is three miles from Bardstown, and it is called Saint Thomas.<sup>237</sup>

Be healthy. The evening is coming on and I can't see any more. Write me a lot of news, and tell me about our dear mother too. I look forward to your answer soon.

Your unworthy brother,  
Francis Xavier.

<sup>236</sup> Gonzalez, Deys and Tichitoli.

<sup>237</sup> Dahmen enjoyed a good reputation, as David testified concerning his English class: "M. Dahmen, who is truly the flower of this young band in every respect, will give his [practice sermon] next Saturday. It is in him that I have found the fewest faults to correct, both in style and in language. He is full of good sense, justice and solidity in his thoughts." (David to Bruté, Saint Thomas, 7 May 1817; AUND, David letter book, 9-11.)

*Correspondence 1816***29. TO FRANÇOISE VICTOIRE FOURNIER, BORDEAUX<sup>238</sup>**

Bardstown  
2 December 1816

I will recount the events of our trip from Pittsburgh. After having to wait a month and a half for the waters of the Ohio river to rise, we departed on 27 October. We left on a flatboat, where we were like sardines in a barrel.<sup>239</sup> Nonetheless we tried to observe our rule and used all our time at the required hours for prayer, masses, study and discussions.<sup>240</sup> Sailing down the Ohio is not as awful as people had told us in Bordeaux. On the contrary, it is delightful in good weather. We disembarked in several places where the boat stopped, and everywhere we found something to disturb us concerning religion. Along the entire route from Pittsburgh to Louisville, extending seven or eight [hundred] miles, there are many Catholics as well as Protestants well disposed to become Catholics, but there are no priests, no churches. There are, however, magnificent temples for Lutherans, for Episcopalians, and in several places people invited us to stay. At Marietta, in particular, a main family of the town, composed of people who had to choose their religion—quite an ordinary occurrence in this country—fell to their knees to beg us to remain, at least some of us. We could only give them some instruction books and some hope that the good Lord would crown their dispositions with success.

After 23 days of sailing, and having used up all our supplies, we arrived in Louisville where Bishop Flaget had waited for us for several

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<sup>238</sup> **Letter 29.** Extract from a letter, French, reproduced in a copy of "*Journal de la Société du Sacré-Coeur*," in the General Archives of the Society of the Sacred Heart, Rome, C-VII, 2 c, Box 6, 3.

<sup>239</sup> Actually, one of three flatboats lashed together, carrying the Vincentians as well as cargo. (Rosati, "Recollections," VH 2, 46; "Life," *Summarium*, 290-91.) The captain regularly delivered his cargo along the way. From Cincinnati, because of delays, the missionaries continued alone with one pilot and one rower. (Rosati, "Itineraire," 12 November 1816.)

<sup>240</sup> Rosati detailed their schedule in his "Recollections," VH 2, 47.

*Correspondence 1816*

days.<sup>241</sup> I was supposed to have joined him, but he had left, since, complete bishop that he is, he cannot give up caring for several parishes like a pastor. These parishes are quite remote, and they oblige him, in his words, to become one with his horse. I finally had the consolation of seeing him. I found in him a bishop, an apostle, a saint and a scholar. But he is still the happiest and most loving man in the world, such as one has to be to do any good in this country ....

I arranged with him that we would all remain here in Kentucky until the bishop [Dubourg] arrives.



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**MOUTH OF THE MISSOURI RIVER.**  
 FROM ILLINOIS.

Flatboats on the Missouri River, typical of river travel in the early nineteenth century.  
*Collection of the De Andreis-Rosati Memorial Archives*

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<sup>241</sup> Bishop Flaget and Father Chabrat had gone to Louisville on 10 October to await the missionaries. After a brief wait, they departed on 14 or 15 October, leaving instructions with Mr. Mudd and others. (See David to Bruté, Saint Thomas Seminary, 15 October 1816; AUND, David letter book, 7, 8, 8a; Flaget "Journal," 10-15 October.)

## 1817

*Only eleven letters remain from 1817, but they show Felix happy and blissful amid the poverty of life at Saint Thomas, Kentucky. He writes his first English letter (number 30) and reports that he has begun to preach and hear confessions in that language. His preoccupation with a future mission among the native Americans is evident. Felix and the other missionaries spend their time studying and putting up with the hard frontier life he describes. The cold of winter and rough food are hard on his frail health. He runs up against the realities of living as a Catholic among Protestants. The results of his fundraising efforts for Bishop Flaget are unknown (number 38). His retreat resolutions, never meant to be published, show his concern to let his words match his deeds (number 39).*

**30. TO SIMON BRUTÉ, S.S., PRIEST, BALTIMORE<sup>242</sup>**

(Saint Thomas)

(January 1817)

... therefore all my endeavours are always employed in order to cut off from my heart as much it is possible all earthly wishes and desires, retaining but one desire that is for God alone, in order to know him evermore, and to love him, and to worship him, as yet to spread his happy knowledge, love, and worship, if it be possible, to whole the world. On the rest I am sorry, because we have too much deal of effects and baggages.<sup>243</sup> I esteem much more poverty so much recommended by our Saviour to his Apostles, than all riches of the world. There I pray you to employ your burning charity to obtain us from the God's mercy that we may die entirely to ourselves, and to all our passions,

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<sup>242</sup> **Letter 30.** *Fragment of an autographed letter, English, one page, written on the back of a subsequent letter written by Bishop Simon Bruté of Vincennes, in the archives of the Eastern Province, Germantown, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Bruté letter was addressed to John Baptist Tornatore, Perryville, Missouri, from Vincennes, 6 March 1835. This letter is reproduced as written, the pronounced grammatical difficulties reflecting a man learning the English language.*

Based on remarks in the text, the letter is tentatively dated to Saint Thomas, January 1817.

<sup>243</sup> A letter of David's, superior of the seminary, mentioned that "the enormous amount of baggage of those gentlemen who are on their way will cost quite a lot." David to Bruté, Saint Thomas Seminary, 13 September 1816; in AUND; David letter book, 5-6.

*Correspondence 1817*

and earthly affections in order to live only to the love of our most amiable, and sweet Redeemer, that we may conquer to His love a great deal of souls working without weariness in his vineyard until death ready, if it would be necessary, to spread all our blood for his sake. These are only the things which I seek after to, leading all the rest in the hand of him who said: your Father knoweth what you have need of. Seek ye therefore first the kingdom of God, and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you. Be not solicitous for to-morrow for the tomorrow will be solicitous for itself. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. In fine I beg pardon, if I dare to write in a tongue of which I have so little practise and consequently I expose myself to perform it with many faults. Let it be for your amusement and my exercise. I am penetrated with a deep esteem and respect for your person, and by an heart full of gratitude, and attachment in the love of our Lord. J[esus] C[hrist], and of his blessed Mother I am and be always  
Your most humbly and obligd Servant  
F. De Andreis, Miss[ionary].

**31. TO CARLO DOMENICO SICARDI, C.M.,  
VICAR GENERAL, ROME<sup>244</sup>**

Bardstown, Kentucky  
5 January 1817

Very Reverend Sir, Very Dear Father,

I very willingly set myself to the task of fulfilling my duty of reporting to you about the state in which the Congregation in these

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<sup>244</sup> **Letter 31.** *Autograph letter, Italian, four pages, in the archives of the General Curia, Rome; De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part I, Sect. D, #7, 25-28; copy in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Vittorio Emmanuele II, Rome. Fondo Gesuitico, No. 1363 o 3492 (no. 11). Cited in Rosati/Burlando, Sketches of the Life, 120-26. Cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 309-16, 385, 480.*

In his New Year's letter for 1817, Sicardi reported to his confreres about the American mission as follows:

I cannot pass over in silence our new foundation in Louisiana, in the southern part of North America. This establishment was made

*Correspondence 1817*

parts finds itself. In our present situation, I see myself having the responsibility to give a more extended report, because we are now, so to speak, nearly at destination. Saint Louis is only some 300 miles from here, and we can go there in eight days on horseback without having to go up the Mississippi.<sup>245</sup>

One would have to be blind to the *non plus ultra* ["no more besides"] not to perceive clearly God's hand in all this. It moves us forward, it arranges attitudes and hearts in our favor. It opens up the way for us, keeps danger away, provides abundantly for all our needs with unexpected help in a place where, according to the English custom, everything is very expensive. It makes us find everywhere a better welcome than we would have been able to expect even from our confreres in Europe or our own families. The expenses were very great: the journey, clothing and food for twelve young men with good appetites. I can assure you, however, that up to now, I have not thought any longer of what we had imagined at Monte Citorio. The Lord has always put us in the midst of abundance without our thinking of it. Yet we are always disposed to suffer poverty, the beloved treasure of apostles. We certainly suffered much in the difficult and uncomfortable trip down the Ohio in a boat that looked like a cabin. The water managed to find its way even into our beds, and in the space of a few feet everything else was piled together: chests, trunks, along with kitchen, dining room, church, sacristy, bedroom, and everything else, for about a month. Yet we disembarked successfully at Louisville, after having made about 700 miles and more by water. We found there a

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last year at the request of Bishop Dubourg. One of our priests, Father Felix De Andreis, is the superior. He left here, in possession of all the needed powers for his whole life, with two other confreres: Fathers Joseph Rosati and John Baptist Acquaroni. They left Bordeaux for America. After a very long and difficult journey, they arrived at a city [Baltimore] where they found eight or nine [Protestant] heretical sects. Catholics, however, are in the majority and are the most esteemed. That is why they were well received, and Father Felix De Andreis was able to celebrate mass there. Then, our three confreres and other priests, seminarians and lay brothers, numbering eleven [thirteen] persons, began their trip for Louisiana, their destination. We do not know yet if they have arrived there.

(*Recueil*, 2:336.)

<sup>245</sup> That is, by going overland, and not down the Ohio and up the Mississippi, a trip of about 600 miles.

*Correspondence 1817*

courteous welcome at the home of a good Catholic man<sup>246</sup> sent by the amiable Bishop Flaget, bishop of Bardstown.

After a few days,<sup>247</sup> I left Louisville according to the bishop's directions, and arrived here, the bishop's residence, to discuss with him whether he thought it apropos for us to continue our trip to Saint Louis, or to remain here in Kentucky, since our trip would be dangerous so late in the season. Propaganda had placed Bishop Flaget in charge as the administrator of this part of the diocese of Louisiana in the absence of Bishop Dubourg. He agreed with me that for several reasons the wiser plan was to remain here until Bishop Dubourg arrives, so that we could all make a formal and solemn entry together. I relayed this to our companions, and they all rode across this immense forest and came to where we are. We will all remain here for a while to rest our bodies and spirits, and to learn English as we ought. For this, Providence has had us find a good teacher,<sup>248</sup> and I hope that after a few weeks we will be ready to start preaching.

We are here in a seminary somewhat like a Carthusian or Trappist monastery in log cabins in the middle of the woods. The bishop runs the seminary, although he is always on the road here and there to visit the various Catholic settlements. Missionaries spend entire days here on horseback, going 90 or 100 miles, something which would seem almost unbelievable over there. I am responsible for teaching a class in moral theology to seven young men, four of whom are members of our company.<sup>249</sup> I do not know if there is any country in the world where the Gospel saying applies better than here: *Messis quidem multa, operarii autem pauci* ["The harvest is indeed great, but the laborers are few"].<sup>250</sup> The poor missionaries are always occupied beyond their

<sup>246</sup> Mr. Modde [or Mudd], according to Rosati's account; or, more likely, a Mr. Tarascon, who lived two miles from the town. Mudd had received the bishop's letter to transmit to the missionaries. (Rosati, "Itineraire," 19 November 1816; also, Ricciardelli, *Vita*, 300.)

<sup>247</sup> In his "Itinerary," he says that he remained two days, that is, the 20th and 21st of November. He arrived on the 19th and left on the 22nd, after their goods had been unloaded.

<sup>248</sup> John Baptist David.

<sup>249</sup> That is, postulants, since he says below that there were only four members in the strict sense. He did not specify which language he taught in, but it must have been French.

<sup>250</sup> Matt 9:37.



*Correspondence 1817*

capabilities, always on horseback traveling through the immense woods to assist the various Catholic settlements scattered all over. They have no time to work on the conversion of the heretics who are so well disposed and eager to hear our preaching, and hence be easily converted.

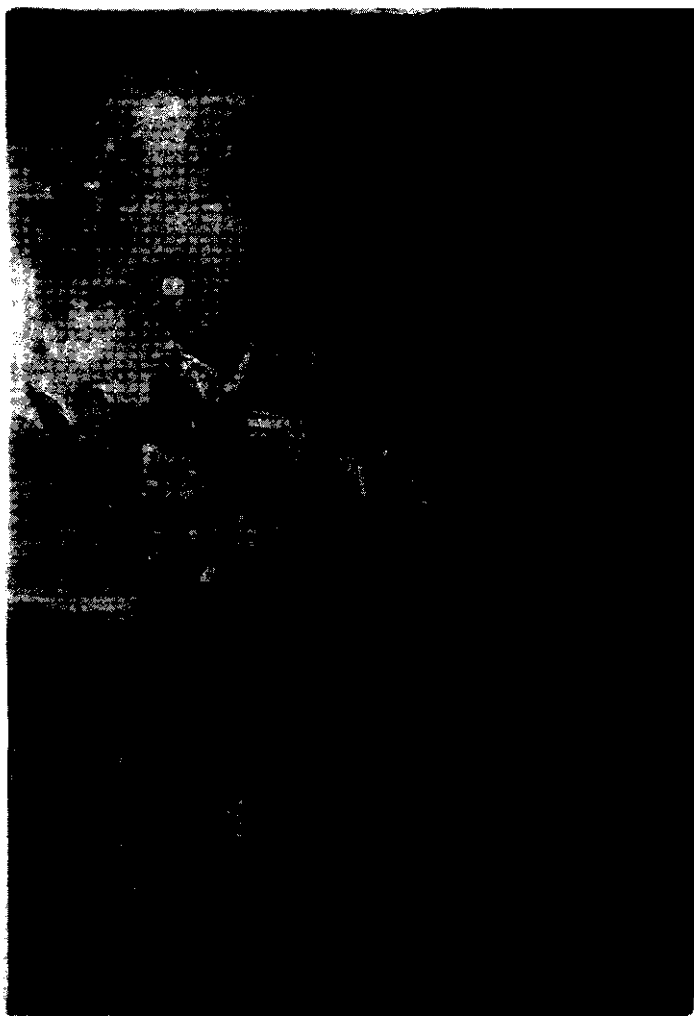
Not far from the seminary we have a monastery of Daughters of Charity, established by a zealous pastor. They follow the rules of Saint Vincent, although adapted to the country.<sup>251</sup> They have changed some things in the habit and in the rule, and they make perpetual vows. Here we cannot appear in public except in secular clothes, a cravat and a round hat. We wear the cassock only at home, since it has been observed that some people came from distances to see, as they said, a Roman priest dressed like a woman.

Up to now only four of us make up the Congregation.<sup>252</sup> Brother Blanka is doing well, although he suffers a lot, since with the help of only two postulants,<sup>253</sup> he is the only one to supply everything for the entire service of the Congregation. It is no small task for him to take care of our belongings, and this is hindered by a thousand problems of transport, arrangements and other similar things. Consequently he greatly needs help. Father Acquaroni does the procurator's job as best he can, and he supplies for the openness and frankness missing in Father

<sup>251</sup> The Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, founded in the United States in 1812. Their first house was located on the Saint Thomas grounds. The writer refers to Bishop Flaget. (See letter 37.)

<sup>252</sup> That is, four members with vows: De Andreis, Rosati, Acquaroni and Brother Blanka.

<sup>253</sup> Borawanski and either Deys or Philip J. Hosten (sometimes spelled Kosten, Austin or Horstman), one of Dubourg's recruits from the diocese of Ghent, Belgium. Rosati alone mentions his name as a candidate in Rosati to Nervi, from Saint Thomas, 26 December 1817 (original in Collegio Brignole-Sale, Genoa; copy in DRMA, Rosati papers), although one letter from him betrays significant indecision regarding which diocese or religious community to enter (Hosten to Rosati, from Saint Rose, Ky., 25 May 1817; SLAA, Hosten file). Hosten returned to Kentucky from the Barrens, was ordained in September 1820, and died two years later from typhoid or yellow fever.

*Correspondence 1817*

De Andreis the frontier missionary, as depicted among the native Americans.  
*Formerly in the Vincentian house at Casale Monferrato, present location unknown.*  
*Photograph in papers of Postulator General, Congregation of the Mission, Rome Italy.*

*Correspondence 1817*

Rosati and myself.<sup>254</sup> Father Rosati is making rapid progress in the language, and promises to do immense good with his zeal, health and other good qualities. Miserably unworthy of my post of vicar general, I hope to pay to divine justice, with my fatigues and sufferings until death, some of the manifold debt which I owe it. We have here only fresh water to drink, a little coffee in the morning, and some tea in the evening, with cornbread. My stomach struggles to adapt, but I never cease crying out: *Felix necessitas quae nos ad meliora compellit* ["Happy the need which forces us to better things"].<sup>255</sup>

We celebrated Christmas with great solemnity according to the *Pontificale*,<sup>256</sup> something so extraordinary here that it attracted a large crowd. The only Sulpician,<sup>257</sup> who has the entire responsibility of the seminary, with about forty young men,<sup>258</sup> preached a fine public sermon when we arrived, and he demonstrated quite well the truth of the Roman Church by our arrival.<sup>259</sup>

To my special satisfaction I see clearly that the Lord wants me to use mercy, since he never stops sending me great humiliations and crosses to check my self-love and restrain it from breaking out. Please help me and have others help me thank him, because I admit frankly that I have not known more precious graces than these joys of paradise.

Here, approaching our destination and seeing how things are, I am assured, according to the bishop's information, of establishing our seminary and finding candidates who will seek to become members of our Congregation. As a result, it will be easy to have more establishments elsewhere. We already have the example of the

<sup>254</sup> Acquaroni also had to pay Bishop Flaget for the expenses of the group at Saint Thomas. The bishop noted in his diary dated 15 January 1817: "Father Aquaron [*sic*] paid me \$500. It came right on time. God be forever blessed." ("Notes Mgr. Flaget," in seven numbered notebooks, copies of Flaget's original diary sent to François Amédée Desgeorge [1804-1887], a Flaget biographer in Lyons. Archives de la Maison des Chartreux, Lyons, boîte 38 bis.) They cover the period from 1 January 1816 through 1 April 1821.

<sup>255</sup> Cited from Augustine, Ep. 127, PL 33, 487, 8.

<sup>256</sup> The ritual for bishops, followed by Bishop Flaget, since he had sufficient personnel to carry out the full ceremonies.

<sup>257</sup> John Baptist David.

<sup>258</sup> One text has "20," which may reflect only the diocesan students, minus the Vincentian group.

<sup>259</sup> That is, their arrival showed that the Roman Church was the true Church. This idea is explained more fully below.

*Correspondence 1817*

Dominicans and the Jesuits who are well established in several places. I have had a conversation with Father [Edward Dominic] Fenwick, superior of the Dominicans, and I have had some correspondence with good Father Grassi, an Italian, and vicar general of the Jesuits, a man about my age, but with excellent gifts. He does marvels in this country, and I am greatly indebted to him also for a large subsidy that he gave, together with many marvelous proofs [of his goodwill]. I regret that I have not been able to talk with him, since the plans I made for this have been frustrated on both sides for some reason.

I sense in myself a strong desire to consecrate myself particularly to the conversion of the Indians on the other side of the Mississippi, since on this side hardly any remain. The Mississippi serves<sup>260</sup> as the border of the United States, and separates it from the immense desert that stretches to the Pacific Ocean.<sup>261</sup> It flows past Saint Louis, making it the center of all those Indian nations. The light of the Gospel has never yet penetrated among them, yet they seem ready to receive it. So my intention has been, once our seminary takes good shape, to leave Father Rosati at its head, and then take the proper measures to translate the catechism into the Indian language with the help of those Indians who from time to time come to Saint Louis. After that, with the help of various inhabitants of the city having a good knowledge of the language, I will start out, *in nomine Domini* ["in the name of the Lord"],<sup>262</sup> along the Mississippi and the Missouri and will start to evangelize these poor people. With the help of practical persons who have brought to light all the difficulties and the means to overcome them, and with God's help, this already seems easy to me, as if I could even now see the results. I will have much to suffer, but I do not dwell on this, nor do I want to think about it. I am already too much occupied with myself, and I am embarrassed to be that way, and besides I no longer want to be occupied with anything other than God and the affairs of his glory. I see clearly that God is thinking of me, and I would be a sinner if I did not confide myself to him, following only the guidance

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<sup>260</sup> That is, "served," since the boundary of the nation moved westward with the Louisiana Purchase in 1803.

<sup>261</sup> In the terminology of the time, the area between the Mississippi and the west coast was regarded as a desert, that is, inhospitable and uninhabited.

<sup>262</sup> Matt 21:9.

*Correspondence 1817*

of his spirit. To tell the truth, the Indians are barbaric, fierce, inconstant and haughty. They habitually lead a very austere life, even spending whole days without eating anything, and then, when they go hunting a buffalo or deer, they hardly let it see the fire. They eat it right away almost raw. This is how they live: they go about almost naked, and they cruelly chastise their bodies to please the creator. The elderly, the women and the children remain with the tents, but the others are nearly always on the hunt for wild game and for the skins that they work beautifully, as I have seen. They do business with the Americans to get provisions: vermilion to paint their faces, silver pendants for nose and ears, and above all, the alcoholic drinks of which they are very fond. This forms one of the main difficulties for the missionaries who devote themselves to working with them.

This holy bishop and, in general, all good people regard our arrival as the sign that the time of mercy has arrived for these regions. I sense myself irresistibly drawn in the same way. But the works of God, according to the saying of Saint Vincent, have their own beginnings, their progress, and their end,<sup>263</sup> and we have to follow Providence step by step, without interrupting it, anticipating it or abandoning it. Please recommend us to God that we might be always faithful to this maxim.

This morning a priest came to ask me to give him the faculty of blessing rosaries, a devotion which is in great fashion here. I had to tell him that I could bless them myself, but that I could not grant the faculty to others. I promised him to write to Rome where it would be possible either to obtain this faculty of being able to subdelegate for some determined number, or at least on the other hand to obtain for this priest (Father [James] Derigaud)<sup>264</sup> the broadest possible faculty he wishes. I will be much obliged to you.

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<sup>263</sup> A commonplace expression from Saint Vincent. "The works of God," etc., is found in letter 2646, to Sister Avoie Vigneron, 24 August 1658; and in an undated letter to Louise de Marillac, cited by Collet (see *Mission et Charité*, 19-20 [Janvier-juin 1970]: 171).

<sup>264</sup> Bishop Flaget ordained James Derigaud, 21 December 1816, at Saint Thomas during a lengthy ceremony which included baptism, confirmation, clerical tonsure, and all minor and major orders. A brief account of his life appears in Marin J. Spalding, *Sketches of the Life, Times and Character of the Right Reverend Benedict Joseph Flaget, First Bishop of Louisville* (Louisville: Webb and Levering, 1852), 262-64. (Flaget, "Journal," 21 December 1816.)

*Correspondence 1817*

Half the people of Saint Louis speak French, and the rest English. We have to do our [sermon] writing in two columns, one French and the other English. This is our current occupation. Meanwhile, I am beginning to realize that I am gradually losing the use of Italian, since I have been obliged to forbid it completely to gain fluency in the other two languages. They are absolutely necessary.

The various different events to which our situation has exposed us, and is exposing us, have not for one instant been able to give birth in my heart to any regret for coming to this country. Rather, my contentment increases daily, and does not let me desire anything except death by being consumed. The world has vanished from our sight. We all consider ourselves as sacrificial victims for God's glory and the salvation of these poor souls, and not even one thinks of returning to Europe.

Father Rosati has composed a diary of our entire long journey.<sup>265</sup> In it are found some features that I would not call miraculous but which are of a very special providence. For at least one example, we tried to hire a ship at Bordeaux for our transport. I do not know why, but we did not conclude an agreement with a ship that left for Baltimore two weeks before we did. When we had arrived in America we found out that that ship had perished. Had we embarked on it, we would all be food for the whales. We received much help even from Protestants. All the Catholics of the city of Pittsburgh, beyond the great hospitality shown us, taxed themselves to take up a collection for us, something we did not anticipate. They gathered more than 100 scudi, although the Catholics there are just a few, and are not rich. In general we observe feast days by abstaining from servile work, but the Protestants do so with such care as to put our European Catholics to shame. My good host in Pittsburgh intended to move to Rome with his family. He requested a letter of recommendation from me for his direction, so I gave him one addressed to Father [Francesco] Alessi.

For the rest, we are always mindful of our dear confreres in Italy. We have performed the usual suffrages for Fathers [Pietro Paolo] Blasini, [Vincenzo] Petrarca and [Giuseppe] Lusardi, whose deaths Fathers Ceracchi and De Petris communicated to us. We would long to have

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<sup>265</sup> This unpublished diary formed part of the source material used by Rosati in composing his "Recollections," *VH* 1 through 5:2.

*Correspondence 1817*

already begun this work of God, *prout est vere opus Dei* ["as it is truly the work of God"],<sup>266</sup> and not with the all too human worries, and never wishing to leave the tiny confines of their particular viewpoints. The Congregation exists for the Church and not the Church for the Congregation. On the contrary I thank God that I have learned, to my cost, to say *mihi autem pro minimo est, etc., qui autem iudicat me, Dominus est* ["It matters little to me whether, etc., the Lord is the one to judge me"].<sup>267</sup>

Our most respectful and cordial greetings to all; we count greatly on your prayers. After Easter Father Rosati will travel 300 miles away with another priest, a Sulpician,<sup>268</sup> to give the first mission. They will also have there the opportunity to deal with Indians. Excuse the length of this letter. I believe that it would not be worth the expense of writing from such a distance and not filling the paper. I have an opportunity now of sending this to New Orleans, and I do not know when another one will arise. If you want to console us with news about you and the Congregation, you only have to send the letter to Father Bruté, President of the College of Saint Mary, Baltimore, for Saint Louis; or even better yet, for Bardstown, Kentucky.

I am with the most profound respect and veneration for you,  
 your most humble and obedient servant,  
 Felix De Andreis,  
 unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission.

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<sup>266</sup> See John 6:29.

<sup>267</sup> 1 Cor 4:3-4.

<sup>268</sup> Guy Ignatius Chabrat.

*Correspondence 1817***32. TO SIMON BRUTÉ, S.S., PRIEST, BALTIMORE<sup>269</sup>**

Saint Thomas Seminary  
23 April 1817

According to my calculation, the time is approaching for our very worthy pastor, Bishop Dubourg, to arrive on this continent. Although I never forget it, I always remind myself of the thousand benefits that I have received, and am continuing to receive, from your gracious charity either to me or to our entire group since we left Baltimore. I think I will never find a better person to ask to take charge of my needs and those of our group in this circumstance of the landing of our "hierarch." Consequently, I ask you to do so. The attached letter<sup>270</sup> destined to await them will supply all the rest of the information. Despite the difficulty I am still finding in the language, I have begun to devote myself to the ministry of preaching and hearing confession.<sup>271</sup> Father

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<sup>269</sup> **Letter 32.** Copy, French, in SLAA, *De Andreis papers*. Location of the original is unknown.

<sup>270</sup> This letter is not extant.

<sup>271</sup> The Paris manuscript recalls the following incident:

While he was still in Kentucky at the Seminary of Saint Thomas, where [he had] to preach on Sundays in English, he found there a very great occasion of humbling himself fearlessly in the sight of the faithful, because he used to preach only in the presence of clerics. He would go up to the altar with his notebook, and since he was nearsighted he kept his notebook for the entire time of his discourses almost glued to his face, with his notebook in one hand and with the other making gestures in a very unusual fashion.

(*Notices VI, 1801-1847, AMP, 438.*)



*Correspondence 1817*

Rosati is doing the same<sup>272</sup> and he has even preceded me.<sup>273</sup> He left with Father [Guy Ignatius] Chabrat to go to Post Vincennes to preach a mission there. The other priests are working ceaselessly to get ready. The clerics, along with the other seminarians, are writing out the seminary rule, and the brothers are always employed in working according to their profession. They are all awaiting the moment that will give the signal to set [forth (?)]<sup>274</sup> to hurry to our destination.

The obligations we have contracted, and which we continue to contract, with the tireless Father [John Baptist] David are numberless. A happy set of circumstances has combined to make our stay here very pleasant and fruitful. I hope that, since this is nearly the center of North America, it might be for us the center of the land where the European grain could completely decay, to be able, therefore, to produce an abundant crop, *nisi granum frumenti cadens in terram mortuum fuerit* ["unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies"].<sup>275</sup>

To tell the truth, our health is a little weak, but may it please God that *licet is qui foris est noster homo corrumpatur, tamen is qui intus est renovetur de die in diem* ["even though our body is being destroyed, yet our inner being is renewed each day"].<sup>276</sup> This is our great goal; all the rest is only extrinsic and subordinate to it. I am charmed by your letters, whether direct or indirect. The spirit and the warmth [—]<sup>277</sup> more at leisure than in conversation. I would be [happy] to get them more

<sup>272</sup> Rosati's diary records that he preached for the first time in English on Quinquagesima Sunday, 2 March 1817, at Saint Thomas. (Rosati diary, copy in DRMA.) Rosati reported that Father David had given them nine classes a week in English, and that on 3 March, the day after his first English sermon, he departed for Vincennes. (Rosati to Nervi, from Bardstown, 8 June 1817; original in Collegio Brignole-Sale, Genoa.)

<sup>273</sup> In the same letter of 8 June 1817, Rosati recorded that:

He [De Andreis] gives classes in theology, preaches on Sundays and hears confessions in English. The Lord is bestowing special blessings on his labors, and his sermons are very fruitful. He enjoys the esteem and the veneration of all. Certainly he deserves it, and I cannot believe the progress I have seen in the health of this most worthy son of Saint Vincent.

(Rosati to Nervi, *ibid.*) De Andreis, however, had already studied English before leaving Europe. (Rosati, "Life," *Summarium*, 88.)

<sup>274</sup> Blank in copy.

<sup>275</sup> John 12:24.

<sup>276</sup> 2 Cor 4:16.

<sup>277</sup> Several blanks occur in the next few lines. Some have been filled in conjecturally.

*Correspondence 1817*



RIGHT REV. S. G. BRUTÉ.

FIRST BISHOP OF VINCENNES INDIANA.

The Reverend Simon Bruté, C.M.  
*Collection of the De Andreis-Rosati Memorial Archives*

often, but postal expenses [keep] me from doing so.<sup>278</sup> It is enough for me to have a [remembrance] in your prayers and sacrifices. For the rest, I am content [to be able] to find in them what is called by certain fathers the [*unio spirituum*] ["union of spirits"]. Alas! When will we be placed there forever, without interruption and without turning away?

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<sup>278</sup> In those days, the addressee had to pay the expenses of postage.

*Correspondence 1817*

But there are souls to save and the blind to enlighten, the hardened to arouse, precious pearls bought by the blood of a God to cleanse from the dust, the mud and the rust, to make them worthy of being placed in the firmament. *Et gemma, deterso luto, nitore vincit sydera* ["and the jewel, cleansed of dirt, outshines the stars in splendor"].<sup>279</sup> This is a work worthy of better hands than mine, since I am beginning to find in myself an abyss of darkness, weakness and evil which should be repaired beforehand. *Et qui sibi nequam est cui bonus erit? Et qui domui suae praeesse nescit quomodo ecclesiae Dei diligentiam habebit? Ab immundo quis mundabitur?* ["And to whom will he be good if he is not good to himself?"<sup>280</sup> "And if he who does not know how to manage his own household, how will he be diligent for the Church of God?"<sup>281</sup> "Who will be cleansed from what is unclean?"<sup>282</sup> I well know that he can do so in an instant. He is the *Promissum Patris* ["the one promised by the Father"],<sup>283</sup> whose wonders will occupy our spirits and our hearts in these days, which we are approaching.<sup>284</sup> I am speaking in this way to engage you more and more in our groans to obtain this grace from him [God] for me and for all those who need it... *ut exposita necessitate conjungas orationem* ["that when our need is made known, you would add your prayers"].

Everyone here asks me to send you their compliments. Please add mine to all those I have at other times named as if they were named here in a list.

In the love of our good Master, with sentiments of profound respect and veneration, I am, Father,  
 your very humble servant,  
 Felix De Andreis,  
 unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission.

<sup>279</sup> From the hymn for Lauds, of Saint Mary Magdalene, "Summi parentis Unice," 22 July.

<sup>280</sup> Sir 14:5 NAB: "To whom will he be generous who is stingy with himself ...?"

<sup>281</sup> 1 Tim 3:5.

<sup>282</sup> Sir 34:4 NAB: "Can the unclean produce the clean?"

<sup>283</sup> Luke 24:49.

<sup>284</sup> Pentecost, 25 May.

*Correspondence 1817*

**33. TO CARLO DOMENICO SICARDI, C.M.,  
VICAR GENERAL, ROME<sup>285</sup>**

Bardstown, Kentucky  
20 May 1817

Very Reverend and Dear Father:

I am taking advantage of the opportunity that the worthy [John Anthony Grassi] vicar general of the Jesuit Fathers in America is offering me of bringing this letter to the heart of the Catholic world.<sup>286</sup> I acknowledge my special debt to him, although I have not had the honor of knowing him other than by letter. If you are so kind as to answer my letter, you could have your answer come back through this same priest to me. These opportunities are so rare that I cannot let them escape me.

The change of climate and food, and the other vicissitudes of living caused me no little suffering this past winter. The cold was so extreme that once it even made me collapse nearly lifeless at the altar, since little by little the cold crept in to freeze the blood in my heart; it took a lot to bring me around. I am well now, and since the beginning of Lent I have begun preaching and hearing confession in English. Father Rosati, too, is preaching and hearing confession, and the other three

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<sup>285</sup> **Letter 33.** *Autograph letter, Italian, four pages with address, in the archives of the General Curia, Rome; De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part I, Sect. D, #8, pp. 29-31; one copy in De Andreis collection, Volume XVIII, incorrectly dated 29 November 1816; copy in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Vittorio Emmanuele II, Rome. Fondo Gesuitico, No. 1363 o 3492 (no. 5); copy in the archives of Propaganda Fide, "Scritture riferite nei Congressi. America Centrale, dal Canada all'Istmo di Panama, dal 1791 a tutto il 1817." Codice 3, fol. 437-38. Cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 316-21, 421, 480-81.*

<sup>286</sup> Grassi traveled to his Italian homeland by the end of September 1817, returning to the United States two years later. He had been president of Georgetown College from 1812 to 1817. Biographical information and the text of his account of the reestablishment of the Jesuits in the United States is found in Arthur J. Arriero, "The Memoirs of Father John Anthony Grassi, S.J.," *Historical Records and Studies* 47 (1959): 196-233; a brief notice on him is also found in *American Catholic Historical Researches* 8:3 (July 1891): 111-12.

*Correspondence 1817*

priests are getting ready for this.<sup>287</sup> After Easter Father Rosati left with a Sulpician missionary<sup>288</sup> for a mission in a poor place inhabited by immigrants from France, Post Vincennes. They see a priest's face there only every six months. I am awaiting his return in the next few days.<sup>289</sup>

A missionary's life here is quite hard.<sup>290</sup> He has to spend every moment on horseback to ride all around these immense forests to care for the congregations and visit the sick. It takes thirty or forty miles to visit a sick person. The "congregations" are what parishes are called here. The churches are really like caves made of by large tree trunks

<sup>287</sup> That is, Acquaroni, Caretti and Ferrari. David reported as follows:

I hope that M. Ferrari will soon be able to preach, and M. Caretti as well. I am now correcting a sermon of the latter, in which I am astonished to find so few mistakes in grammar. As for M. Acquaroni, he is far behind, because he lost the first month of the English class, and it has been impossible for him to begin it again. Besides he is less disposed both as to voice and memory. Nevertheless, he will succeed by dint of labor.

(David to Bruté, [Saint Thomas, 7 May 1817?], AUND, David letter book, 9-11.) Because of crowded conditions, Acquaroni had to live temporarily some five miles from Saint Thomas with a Catholic family.

<sup>288</sup> Guy Ignatius Chabrat. At least one letter survives from Chabrat to a tavern keeper, Colonel H. Lasselle (or LaSelle), in Vincennes. In it, Chabrat shows that he continued to visit the town and to have good relations with its Catholic inhabitants. (Chabrat to Lasselle, 29 April 1818; original in Indiana State Library; copy in DRMA, Acquaroni papers.) In 1834, Chabrat became coadjutor bishop of Bardstown.

<sup>289</sup> David referred to Rosati's preaching and mission work:

M. Rosati went also to preach in one of the congregations. He preached twice at the Seminary, and finally he accompanied M. Chabrat to the post of Vincennes, where he is now. Before leaving, he helped him to hear confessions at Saint Michael [Fairfield] and Louisville.

(David to Bruté, [Saint Thomas, 7 May 1817?], in AUND, David letter book, 9-11.) Rosati's own memoirs record that he preached on 27 April and gave his last sermon one month later, 26 May. (Rosati diary, copy in DRMA.)

<sup>290</sup> David reported on De Andreis's missionary work as follows:

Father De Andreis left on Holy Saturday to go to celebrate in the congregations that the bishop takes care of. He preached there and caused his listeners to break out in tears. Later, he continued to give a mission in the chapel of Saint Joseph near Bardstown. He preaches there every two weeks, hears confessions, goes to visit the sick, baptizes. He is going to preach here next Sunday.

(David to Bruté, from Bardstown, 7 May 1815 [1817]; French, original in AUND, II-3-n. Flage't's diary reports a similar event, and adds: "Father De Andreis assures me that he has understood the confessions as if the people had spoken to him in Italian." 8 April 1817.)

*Correspondence 1817*

Period log and stone home. De Andreis must have passed it. Pennsylvania.  
*Courtesy of the author*

laid one on top of the other, with the gaps plugged up by mud. The majority of houses are built in this fashion, but wind and rain get in everywhere. The churches of this region are all the same: no pictures, no ornaments, just a poor wooden altar. They are scattered all over in the woods. On feast days the Catholics gather, and often heretics too, from an area of ten, fifteen and more miles. They all come by horse, and it is quite a sight to see the entire woods all around filled with horses, and to hear the sound of the neighing, just like a cavalry regiment. Confessions are heard until noon, and then mass is said or sung. We preach or give a homily, and then usually we have several baptisms to perform and the sick to visit. At the end, exhausted by the fast, the fatigues, the travel, the sun, we then have to beg a meal somewhere. This means roast meat with a little bit of cornbread and water, no wine, no vinegar or oil, no soup, etc. Sometimes we say several masses a day and preach in many different places, since the people here live widely separated, each one farming his own lands. There are no cities or villages, and, really, there are no farmers or servants. Black slaves, of whom there is a great number, do everything.

The other evening, I was called to assist a sick man about twenty miles away. I found myself alone at night in the middle of the woods,

*Correspondence 1817*

without a guide and without a horse, since the guide went aside for some need, and his horse took off in the woods. The guide had to struggle to get it back. I say this as an example of similar events that happen here to the missionaries each day. But we are consoled by the good that is being done and by our hope.

Last week, I was called to visit a poor sick woman who had only a tiny cabin to house all her family. They could not put me up, nor take care of my horse, but a rich Protestant who lived a quarter of a mile away came in person to offer me lodging in his house. I found it full of people, and they proposed some points of controversy. The gentleman seemed very satisfied with the solution given to his objections, and promised me with great certitude that he would become a Catholic.<sup>291</sup> This is the way the Protestants in general respect priests, and they make it a point of honor to treat them with all kindness and generosity. But the priests are too few to go around. They cannot even come to visit the Catholics. How many sick people die without a priest and, without a priest, are buried! How many congregations [go] months at a time and spend the great feasts of the year without mass, in a word without a priest! In this diocese of Kentucky, Tennessee and Ohio, states with a size equal to half of Europe, there are scarcely twelve priests, including the bishop. He is always on horseback going all over like the youngest missionary, all alone, without any distinction, to say nothing of taking for himself the most difficult and painful part of the ministry.

The Sulpicians are doing great good. We are very obliged to them for the charitable attention that we received at Montpellier, Toulouse,

<sup>291</sup> David reported more fully on the same event:

Father De Andreis has greatly shaken a Protestant gentleman, to whose home he was led to spend the night after having visited a sick woman in the neighborhood. The man was so happy with his conversation that he invited him to come back again. The invitation was repeated several days after another visit to a sick person quite nearby. At length he did come back and he was hopeful about this second visit, and about a letter that reached him later. He hopes also, relying on the help of the Most Holy Virgin, whose image he left in this house, that the whole family would become converts. This gentleman asked him several times whether he was going to return to Italy. The gentleman admired that he had left his homeland forever for the sole purpose of winning souls. He told his companion, Mr. Tichitoli, *it is truly a holy man.*

(David to Bruté, from Bardstown, 9 June 1817; French; original in AUND, II-3-n.)

*Correspondence 1817*

Bordeaux and Baltimore, and in this seminary as well. They are all men full of religion, piety and zeal. They are tireless and fervent, and very attached to our holy faith and to untainted doctrine. The Dominicans, too, do much good here. I have had the honor of knowing personally their founder in this area, Father Fenwick,<sup>292</sup> as well as various other American members. I have no doubt and am certain that we, too, will find members once we have begun our establishment. We also expect our bishop this summer, and we will go with him to our destination. Thanks be to God, I experience the truth of what Saint Vincent says in his conferences, that we are well lodged under the banner of Providence.<sup>293</sup> To think of nothing and to lack nothing is our condition. On the one hand I know that I am not good enough to do anything as a superior, but on the other I see that everything is going along marvelously, and I could not expect anything better if I placed my trust somewhere else. As it is God who does everything, I have no other wishes than to annihilate myself in his presence, to act, to speak, to let go, to run, to stop and blindly to follow his most holy will in all things and for all things until death. From now on, this is the only goal I have in view.

I have written you several times,<sup>294</sup> and I have given you news about everything that concerns *Notre Bande* ["our group"]. For six months I have been giving a class in moral theology in this seminary, and I have ten students, four of whom belong to our colony, and the others to Kentucky. Father Rosati promises great things. I can see that God has called him to this mission to carry out great designs. He has a very robust health, and he has done marvels in the English language, beginning to preach even before I did. I should humble myself at his feet, as I am happy to do. I see that the Lord is granting him the lights and graces that he justly denies me because of my sins, my ingratitude and my insuperable pride. I believe that I must beg you with all

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<sup>292</sup> Edward Dominic Fenwick, O.P., (1768-1832), first bishop of Cincinnati.

<sup>293</sup> A generic citation, quoted from memory. Probably another version of "He who lodges under the banner of confidence in God will ever be favored by His special protection." (Conference 24, in Pierre Coste, ed., *Saint Vincent de Paul, Correspondance, Entretiens, Documents*, 14 vols. [Paris: Librairie Lecoffre J. Gabalda, 1920-26], 11:39. Hereinafter CED, followed by volume and page number.)

<sup>294</sup> The extant letters are 29 December 1815; 1 February, 28 May, 28 July, 22 September 1816; and 5 January 1817.



*Correspondence 1817*

sincerity for many reasons, which I do not have room to explain here, to please transfer the duty of superior onto him. This will, I hope, find general approval, and will redound to the greater good of the Congregation and our mission. I have written the same to Bishop Dubourg regarding the responsibility of vicar general. My pride needs a superior, and my insights are too restricted to guide a ship like this one. I will continue the duty without stint as long as I have breath, and will tire myself under obedience. I can assure you that I see nothing more in this world capable of making me relent, and so life for me is a burden, and I long only for death. I should tremble for myself, but I hope in God's infinite mercy.

We all recommend ourselves to your prayers and to those of the Congregation.

I am your reverence's most humble, devoted and obedient servant, with the deepest respect and veneration,

Felix De Andreis,

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission.

*Addressed:* To Reverend Father Carlo Domenico Sicardi, Priest, and Vicar General of the Congregation of the Mission, Monte Citorio, Rome.

*In another hand:* Received in Rome 5 September 1817.

34. TO SIMONE UGO, C.M., PRIEST, ROME<sup>295</sup>

Bardstown, Kentucky

20 May 1817

Most esteemed and dear father,

On the occasion provided me by the return to Rome of the worthy Father Grassi, vicar general of the American Jesuits, I am happy to take a moment to communicate sincerely with you, whose company has often been so happy for me. Recently, for my spiritual reading, I have been reading a wonderful little work of Henri-Marie Boudon, *Les Saintes Voyes de la Croix*, and I recalled the impression which you told me you had received from reading another work by the same author, *La vie cachée*, and I resolved to scribble these few lines.<sup>296</sup>

Father Sicardi—I don't know if he is still living<sup>297</sup>—is the one who ought to inform you about our situation. I have never passed happier days in my life. God's ways are marvelous, the world is nothing, God is all, men are simply abysses of darkness, weakness and evil, I more than any other. I say this sincerely since I experience it, I feel it, I see it, I more than any other. But, on the other hand, God is an abyss of light, power and holiness. Hence, *mihi adhaerere Deo bonum est* ["for me to cling to God is good"],<sup>298</sup> but here there are still woes, since I call woes only that which threatens to separate us from God. Among other things, I would beg you to give me your thoughts about a situation that is

<sup>295</sup> Letter 34. Copy, Italian, in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Vittorio Emmanuele II, Rome. Fondo Gesuitico, No. 1363 o 3492 (no. 6); copy in the archives of Propaganda Fide, Rome; *Scritture Riferite nei Congressi. America Centrale. Dal Canada all'Istmo di Panama, Codice 3, Dal. 1791 a [ut]to il 1817. Fol. 572-73.*

<sup>296</sup> Boudon (1624-1702) was a writer of numerous popular religious books, often reprinted and translated. *Les Saintes Voies de la Croix, où il est traité de plusieurs peines intérieures et extérieures, et des moyens d'en faire un bon usage*, was reprinted in Toulouse, 1819, and may be the edition which De Andreis used; *La vie cachée avec Jésus en Dieu* is the title of the second work.

<sup>297</sup> He died 13 June 1819, at about age 90.

<sup>298</sup> Ps 73:28.

*Correspondence 1817*

common here, and to secure an authentic response *ab alto* ["from on high"] to guide me and those who depend on me.<sup>299</sup>

Here loans of money are very commonly made at six percent interest, according to the general laws of the United States. The universal opinion among the clergy is that this is licit, since this is a democratic government. The laws are made by the people, and with such law *censetur populus, et singuli de populo cessisse juri suo* ["the people judge, and each individual among the people is presumed to have abdicated his right"] for the good of commerce, and thus *volenti, et consentienti non fit injuria* ["no injury is done to one who wills and (another who) consents"]. Consequently [the lender] *in tuta conscientia percipere* ["may with a safe conscience take (the interest)"] since the money comes not *vi mutui* ["by reason of a loan"], but *vi consensus, et cessionis universalis* ["by reason of consent, and general agreement"]. Father Rosati agrees with this, but along with my other companions I disagree, and share with my students a different opinion. It seems to us that at least it is conceptual usury, and that the agreement of a people cannot legitimize what has been condemned by natural and divine *jus* ["law"]. Besides, theologians presume this implied agreement, but the people for the most part are Protestants, and they do not scruple to make loans to people in the business of money, and they do not pay a bit of attention to any [presumptive] agreement, deeming it unnecessary. I would like to be convinced of the error in my reasoning to abandon an opinion that could be a source for great worries for me in practice.<sup>300</sup>

In the second place, since the Catholics here live in the midst of heretics, it is nearly impossible because of the great liberty in this sort of government to keep Catholics from having and reading books written by heretics, and especially the Bible translations which are always being

<sup>299</sup> Flaget noted in his "Journal," 10 January 1817, that he had three theological questions to ask De Andreis: legal interest, mixed marriages, and dispensation of consanguinity. He concluded: "This fine man is very meticulous and has a excessively good opinion of me."

<sup>300</sup> The question of usury, or interest on money, is one of the oldest questions in Christian theology, with opinions varying from its being forbidden always, to being forbidden in certain circumstances. De Andreis is stating clearly the issue on whether civil law could recognize a certain amount. The question is not treated in the 1983 Code of Canon Law.

*Correspondence 1817*

reprinted with amazing zeal. They distribute copies everywhere, and they hand them out freely to anyone who wants some—and even to people who do not want them—in English for the English, in French for the French, and in Spanish for the Spanish. Our missionaries resist as best they can, but the great calumny of the heretics against the Roman Church is constantly increasing, namely, that the pope, the bishops and the priests hide the Bible from the people to keep them in ignorance, and to keep the people in servitude to their prejudices.

It seems to me that it is right to temper ecclesiastical laws here and to have some *epikeia*,<sup>301</sup> because, through their constant contact with heretics, the Catholics here are better informed about all the points of controversy than are the priests in Italy. There are women here who challenge the ministers to dispute, and who best them at it. In matters of religion, Catholics have an absolute advantage over all the sects. I am amazed at finding in these regions such a large number of books of controversy, which succinctly, clearly, triumphantly and in great detail refute all the heresies and calumnies of the heterodox. These books are in everyone's hands. Protestants vie with Catholics to show their esteem for Catholic priests. They respect them and venerate them even more than they do their own ministers. In Pittsburgh we officiated in the Roman style, and all the people ran to the Catholic church, even though it was uncomfortable and on the edge of town. The large Protestant churches stood empty, and the ministers preached to the walls. We received so much courtesy from Protestants that you could write a book about it. Many times they spoke of us in the public papers in the most obliging manner, and even telling a little white lie, out of the goodness of their heart, supposing something to be true which was not so.<sup>302</sup> The American is by character frank, honest, taciturn, not given to compliments, and extremely serious. They lead a hard and laborious life, they eat little and badly. The big passion here is business. Refinements in the use of steam and gas power lead to very amazing

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<sup>301</sup> A Greek term, meaning literally "reasonableness." It is used in theology to refer to a restrictive interpretation of positive law based on the benign will of the legislator, who would certainly not have wanted to bind his subjects in certain circumstances.

<sup>302</sup> Research into the newspapers of the time has failed to uncover any references to the missionaries.

*Correspondence 1817*

things: to inventions of laborsaving devices and to supply for the defects of the climate.

But my time flies, and other duties call. All send greetings and say hello to everyone. Father Colucci could act in place of Father Grassi and for a certain Mr. Cooper who is supposed to go there too, and soon, and he could send us some holy cards that are so much desired here.<sup>303</sup>

Dear Father Ugo, pray for us, and have others pray because the need is so great. I am, nevertheless, full of the most sincere esteem and veneration for you.

Your most humble and devoted servant,  
Felix De Andreis,  
unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission

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<sup>303</sup> Samuel Sutherland Cooper (1769-1843), a convert, traveled to Italy on 19 June 1817, returning at the end of July, still a seminarian. He was ordained 15 August 1818, and made pastor at Emmitsburg, Maryland.

*Correspondence 1817*

Log cabin and church at St. Thomas, Kentucky.  
*Courtesy of the author*

### 35. TO SIMON BRUTÉ, S.S., PRIEST, BALTIMORE<sup>304</sup>

Saint Thomas  
 1 July 1817

Your letter made our whole band rejoice with the news that you sent that our worthy pastor would soon arrive. We are anxious to see him and under his auspices to begin the work for which Providence has brought us to these lands. I would have liked to discover his intentions about our destination, to see whether he would have preferred us to wait here or in Saint Louis. But since we had no precise order about this from his mouth, I thought it best to rely completely on Bishop Flaget's advice. From the beginning he judged it more convenient, for several reasons, for us to remain here. Besides, I well recall that in the letter he [Dubourg] wrote me before arriving in Bordeaux, in which he announced to me this new destination, Baltimore instead of New Orleans, he said to me directly: "You should [travel]"<sup>305</sup>

<sup>304</sup> **Letter 35.** *Copy, French, in SLAA, De Andreis papers.*

<sup>305</sup> Blank in copy.

*Correspondence 1817*

to Kentucky and spend the winter, and there you can learn English. In the spring Bishop Flaget will bring you himself into Upper Louisiana."<sup>306</sup> Also, in the letter which he gave to me for Bishop Flaget, you can read as follows: "It will be desirable that you bring them to Saint Louis and the surrounding country as soon as you have made plans for the establishment, etc.", but this was never done. I have often spoken about this with the bishop [Flaget], taking his advice about whether I should write or take some steps. He always answered that my conscience was clear, and that it would be better to wait for Bishop Dubourg. I write this since in the last letter that our good bishop wrote from Paris to Bishop Flaget, he expressed his great astonishment on discovering that we are here in Kentucky. I would never try to justify myself, and if I have done wrong I will admit my fault at his feet. But I can only present the motives that led me to resolve to wait here, as I am obliged to inform him.

1. I had heard that in Saint Louis there was no priest, no church, nor even a house for us, not to speak of any basis for an agreement to establish the seminary, the main reason for our mission. Quite the contrary, the obstacles among the inhabitants were such that we would have to handle the matter with great skill and delicacy. Great experience was needed for this, as well as knowledge of the customs of the region, since imprudent zeal could cause needless regrets.

2. It is very reasonable and even indispensable to allow newly-arrived foreign missionaries some considerable time to learn the languages, so as not to offer any basis for ridicule to people already disposed against them and against religion. Consequently I thought it necessary to take advantage of the special opportunity that this seminary offered us of learning English, practicing our French and preparing for the pulpit by translating our writings from Italian or by composing some new sermons in both languages.

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<sup>306</sup> Letter 13, 24 April 1816, has the following instructions: "Arriving at Baltimore toward the end of summer you could travel to the bishop of Kentucky where you would stop before winter. You would spend the winter learning English and doing missionary work in the country, and in the spring, the bishop [Flaget] himself would bring you to Saint Louis."

*Correspondence 1817*

Therefore, our stay here has not been useless. We have tried to do what we could. We exercised our ministry, held classes in theology,<sup>307</sup> made an apprenticeship in running a seminary by practicing ceremonies, plain-chant, etc.<sup>308</sup> We also gave our bodies, which are not even yet perfectly acclimated, a needed rest, without which they would have refused the functions of the mind. No one is in perfect health, and several, especially Messrs. Caretti, Dahmen, Tichitoli, Casto, Brother Blanka, and myself, are quite weak, since our stomachs cannot yet deal with the food of the region, but they will become accustomed by and

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<sup>307</sup> The Paris manuscript notes in this connection:

When he was in Kentucky at the Seminary of Saint Thomas, the seminarians had a young professor [David] filled with knowledge and talent. Bishop Flaget gave him other duties and had him replaced by Father De Andreis. The seminarians were full of admiration for their professor, and it was painful for them to see him leave; and their pain was even greater when they saw him replaced by this little man who looked so ignorant. "What are we going to do?" they said. "Is this man capable of teaching us like this other man did who has now gone?" With the very first class, they soon changed their talk. Knowledge in the mouth gives not only light, but also heat. It did not only breathe forth the spirit, but also lifted up the soul and embraced it. A class with Father De Andreis did not resemble a sermon, but he spoke with firmness and result. Nothing could relate the sublimity and the fire of his speech when he developed the dogmas of the faith, the riches of God to be drawn from his breast in order to manifest them to us, the flow of graces which came from the abundance of the holy humanity of Our Savior, as he caused his students to understand the marvels which were expressed by Our Savior in these words, "You are my friends because everything which I learned from my father, I have manifested to you."

(*Notices VI*, 442-44.)

<sup>308</sup> David announced that "Father De Andreis has joined my theology class with his," in a letter dated Saint Thomas Seminary, 9 June 1817. (AUND, David letter book, 12-14.)



*Correspondence 1817*

by.<sup>309</sup> If you would please present these reasons to the bishop [Dubourg] when he arrives, I hope that they will cause his astonishment in this matter to cease.

I think that it will be apropos especially for the running of the seminary to have a copy or two of the excellent dictionary by Dufief, since Boyer's, which we have, is quite imperfect, and in general we do not have English books or school texts and rituals in English.<sup>310</sup>

I am very sorry that the letter confided to Mister Cooper for Father Sicardi, written in the supposition that it would be confided to the care of Father Grassi, said nothing about its bearer, whose journey was described in your letter as in a dubious and even distant future. But if before his departure another letter from Father Rosati arrives for him, that will supply for the mistake in the other. And in case it arrives here after his departure, please have it sent to him however you can by putting it in the small envelope. Mister Cooper could speak to my confreres in Rome about the books that you mentioned to me, provided the memorial is presented to the Cardinal Prefect in proper form. They [the confreres] will smooth out the way for him. Any steps which I might take here would have no effect; everything that I could do I have put in the letter. Father Ferrari is in some distress, doubting whether it arrived for you and whether you had been kind enough to forward to Europe a letter that he sent you four months ago when the opportunity presented itself.

I am quite embarrassed at causing you so much trouble and distress, and it would be but poor thanks on my part if I could help you to get

<sup>309</sup> Rosati described their normal life to his brother Nicola in the following terms:

"They never use soup; the French never omit having soup for their lunches. In all the houses they go to table three times a day, and the Americans always have meat for these three meals, usually salt pork which they call bacon, which they eat with some boiled potatoes, without any seasoning. Bread is ordinarily made from corn." He describes whiskey, its making and influences, and concludes: "The missionaries normally abstain from any kind of liquor."

(Joseph Rosati to Nicola Rosati, from Bardstown, August 1818; copy in DRMA, Rosati papers; also, Rosati, "Life," *Summarium*, 87.)

<sup>310</sup> Nicolas Gouin Dufief, *Dictionnaire nouveau et universel des langues française et anglaise*... 3 vols. (Philadelphia: Palmer, 1810). Abel Boyer, *Le dictionnaire royal, françois-anglois et anglois-françois* (London: Rivington, 1816). (There were many other previous and subsequent editions.)

## Correspondence 1817

the books in question. But I know Rome, and my credit is not good enough there to act at a distance, especially from such a distance. And besides I know that your views aspire *ad meliorem et manentem substantiam* ["to the greater and abiding substance"].<sup>311</sup> Nevertheless, *tentare non nocet* ["there is no harm in trying"].

Although wicked, I nevertheless do not like someone to be deceived about me, thinking me to be what I am not. No, I thank you sincerely, but I am not a good preacher nor a good director, nor a scholar, nor a saint. I am quite angry that a hypocrisy that I cannot perceive myself should become an object of belief, and that there might be something special about me. I was very happy to be able to be removed from such a situation on leaving Rome and Europe. I would not like to become engaged in the same unhappiness in America. *Ego vir videns paupertatem meam* ["I am a man aware of my poverty"],<sup>312</sup> poor in lights, poor in virtue, poor in everything, and there exists only *qui eligit pauperes in hoc mundo ... qui contemptibilia mundi*, etc. ["he who chooses the poor in this world,"<sup>313</sup> "who (chooses) the contemptible things of the world," etc.<sup>314</sup>] who could impart any value to someone so blameworthy and such a shabby instrument, worthless in himself. And so I beg your pardon, and ask you please to refashion the good opinion that your charity suggested in view of these proofs of the honest truth, *in veritate sua humiliavit me* ["in his truth he has humbled me"].<sup>315</sup>

I thank you from my heart for all your acts of friendship and for your good graces. I pray the good Master to reward you for them. Our men join their wishes to mine in the same sentiment of thanks. I ask you also to convey our sentiments to the gentlemen of the seminary and the college, and others *quibus de jure* ["to whom we rightly (owe thanks)"]. I am, in the love of him *in quo vivimus, movemur et sumus*

<sup>311</sup> Heb 10:34 NAB: "(You even joined in the sufferings of those who were in prison and joyfully assented to the confiscation of your goods, knowing that you had) better and more permanent possessions."

<sup>312</sup> Lam 3:1 NAB: "I am a man who knows affliction."

<sup>313</sup> See James 2:5.

<sup>314</sup> 1 Cor 1:28.

<sup>315</sup> See Ps 142:3 NAB: "... he has crushed my life to the ground."

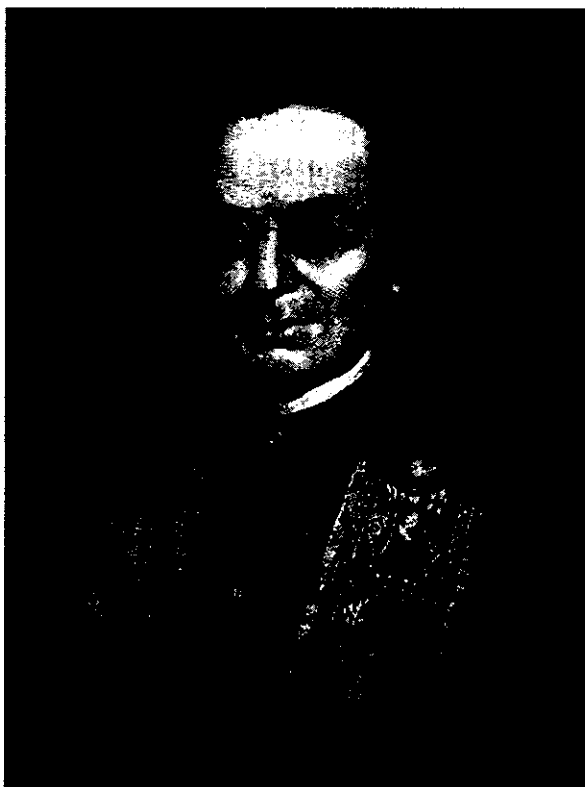
*Correspondence 1817*

["in whom we live, move and have our being"],<sup>316</sup> with the most profound respect,

your most humble servant,

Felix De Andreis,

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission



Portrait of Ambrose Marechal.  
*Collection of the De Andreis-Rosati Memorial Archives*

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<sup>316</sup> Acts 17:28.

*Correspondence 1817***36. TO ARCHBISHOP AMBROSE MARECHAL, S.S.,  
BALTIMORE<sup>317</sup>**

Saint Thomas  
8 July 1817

The terrible news that you deigned to communicate to me seized us immediately with regret and sadness.<sup>318</sup> Yet it turned into joy when we learned how Providence is going to fill the vacant dignity and thus repair the damage done to the poor American church through the loss that it has just suffered. The very fear that you acknowledge is the best way to make you less fearful. We hasten in advance to congratulate the entire ecclesiastical province, and him who will preside over it, on the happy outcome of such a choice. At the same time we address our poor prayers to the Eternal that he would deign to cast his merciful eye on this entire nascent church.

You began by granting us a sign of the zeal inspired by your new dignity when you asked us for missionaries. I would be very happy to be able to respond quickly to your zeal, and I am not without the hope of one day being in a position to do so. At this moment, however, especially without informing my superior about this matter, you can see that it is impossible. When Father David found out about your request, it threw him into a fit of anger, and he claimed his rights. He thought that, after having worked so hard to have us learn English, he should have these rights in preference to anyone else. But *uxorem duximus* ["we have married a wife"]:<sup>319</sup> this is the issue. Providence has destined us for Louisiana. Louisiana claims us *stricto jure* ["in strict justice"]. Along the Mississippi Catholics are spread out over 900 miles without priests. Do you think that our group is large enough to supply such needs? We are too few even to run the seminary, which is our main purpose and the reason why the pope assigned us this mission. Besides, Bishop Dubourg is just about to appear with another group. I

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<sup>317</sup> **Letter 36.** Autograph letter, French, one page, in AAB, Marechal papers, 13.C.2. Marechal (1764-1828) was archbishop of Baltimore, 1817-1828.

<sup>318</sup> De Andreis referred to the news of the death of Archbishop Leonard Neale of Baltimore, who died 18 June 1817.

<sup>319</sup> See Luke 14:20.

*Correspondence 1817*

believe that you could negotiate the matter with him personally with greater success. I am very sorry that I cannot on this occasion prove my gratitude by agreeing to your holy plans. I hope that Providence will not fail to bring me someone else for them. I rejoice at least that our entire band and I have had this opportunity to present you our congratulations and thanks, with sentiments of the most profound respect, esteem and veneration. In this, I am, bishop,

your very humble and obedient servant

Felix De Andreis,

unworthy priest of the Mission

**37. TO FRANÇOISE VICTOIRE FOURNIER, BORDEAUX<sup>320</sup>**

Bardstown

20 July 1817

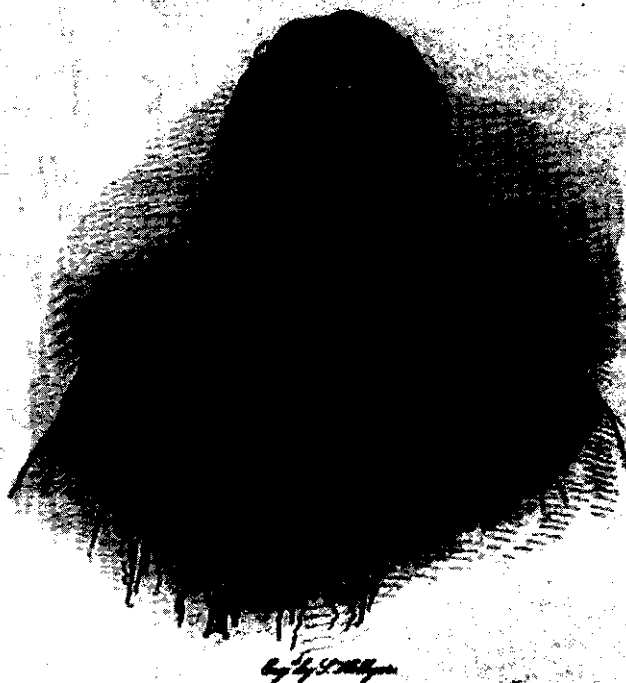
We stopped here in Kentucky to wait for the bishop [Dubourg] and to pounce upon the twelve apostles of Satan who are trying to disturb our spirits.<sup>321</sup> Up to now, only Father Rosati and I can exercise the ministry. The others are preparing slowly, and that is why it would be imprudent to leave the others and go to Saint Louis without having a house, or any friends, or a priest, or church, or any means to become established. On the contrary, this proves that conditions are not right to receive us. I have absolutely no doubt that all this will vanish when the bishop arrives.

The feast of Corpus Christi offered the opportunity for a completely new ceremony in these parts. The procession with the blessed sacrament attracted a crowd of persons, even Protestants. They observed our regulations politely, as they had been instructed, and they

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<sup>320</sup> **Letter 37.** *Extracts, French, from a letter in the "Journal de la Société du Sacré-Coeur," copy in the General Archives of the Society of the Sacred Heart, Rome, C-VII 2 c), Box 6, 4. The letter had been copied by (Saint) Philippine Duchesne, by order of Mother (Saint) Madeleine Sophie Barat.*

<sup>321</sup> A reference to the sins and vices in the lives of those when the missionaries were being sent.

*Correspondence 1817*

**RT. REV. BENEDICT JOSEPH FLAGET.**

**BISHOP OF BARDSTOWN AND LOUISVILLE.**

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Portrait of Benedict Joseph Flaget.  
*Collection of the De Andreis-Rosati Memorial Archives*

*Correspondence 1817*

held their hats in their hands. We arranged a repository in the woods worthy of the simple first centuries of the Church. The girls residing with the Sisters of Charity carried the banner of the blessed sacrament, and other girls followed, all dressed in white. Then came the sisters, singing English canticles. Then followed the seminary, the clergy and the bishop, all singing hymns. A large crowd of people, attending with the greatest respect, completed the procession.<sup>322</sup> The same ceremony was repeated in another parish or congregation, the first in Kentucky.<sup>323</sup> On Sundays and feast days, I sometimes go to one or other to preach, hear confessions or baptize.<sup>324</sup> There is great good to be done everywhere, but the dearth of clergy is severely restricting the work of God.

Father Rosati went much farther, to Post Vincennes, a French colony, and, with Father Chabrat, did much good.<sup>325</sup> The most remarkable thing was that they baptized an Indian, the brother of a king. They met him one day as they were walking along, and with the aid of an interpreter introduced themselves to him as two priests. The Indian showed his respect and told them that he knew that Catholic priests were the "friends of the great spirit," who had "left them his papers," and that they "knew" what was to be done to please Him. As for me,

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<sup>322</sup> David also reported on this same event:

We erected a beautiful repository on a small mound in the center of the majestic woods, which formed a perfect arch of branches of pines; the place is about a quarter mile from the church. We made a nice aisle with leaves of trees spread on it . . . . We heard [the bishop] from all sides, and God gave him the grace to speak on that day more distinctly and correctly than he is in the habit of doing.

(David to Bruté, from Saint Thomas Seminary, 9 June 1817; AUND, David letter book, 12-14.)

<sup>323</sup> Holy Cross, founded in 1785.

<sup>324</sup> A note by the copyist, Philippine Duchesne, adds: "People attribute to Father [De] Andreis the gift of tongues, since in the one or two months that he, an Italian, had been in Bordeaux, he was preaching in French; and the same for English in America. (These were notes from Mother Duchesne, who copied the documents, from pages 34 to 38, to send them to Mother Barat.)"

<sup>325</sup> Rosati reports substantially the same events in his letter to Gaetano Nervi, from Bardstown, 8 June 1817. (Original in archives of Collegio Brignole-Sale, Genoa; copy in DRMA, Rosati papers.) He added, in his "Recollections," that another success was a vocation to the priesthood, Simon Petit La Lumiere, who returned with them to Saint Thomas and was later ordained. (Rosati, "Recollections," *VH* 4:2, 135-36.)

*Correspondence 1817*

he said, every day I thank the great spirit (God) for having preserved me, and I beg him to continue to give me his help.

A few days after, this man fell sick and sent for one of the priests. Father Rosati went to him. Speaking still through an interpreter, the Indian told him that he was going to die, that nothing on earth attracted him, and that he wanted nothing else than to go and see the great spirit. He well knew that, in the state he was in, he could never arrive there, and so he begged him [Rosati] to tell him what he should do. Father Rosati instructed him, baptized him, and made him the happiest man in the world. He kept addressing himself to God, and repeated over and over *mon Dieu* ["my God"], the only French words which he had remembered. Two days later he died like a "blessed." The Catholics celebrated a solemn funeral for him.

The children of the deceased were very happy, and promised to become Catholics. These are the first fruits of the abundant harvest that we can rightly expect beyond Saint Louis in those immense territories extending from the Mississippi all the way to the Pacific Ocean. Indians inhabit all of them, and the light of faith has not been brought to them. This is a delicious morsel for a priest with even a little zeal.

In the United States there are several prosperous religious houses. The Sisters of Charity have succeeded very well a few miles from Baltimore. Bishop Dubourg established them.<sup>326</sup> The sisters [of Charity] in [Nazareth,] Kentucky were founded by Bishop Flaget.<sup>327</sup> The Carmelites<sup>328</sup> always have a full house, and the Visitandines of Georgetown, the same city as Washington, separated only by a river, have thirty members, though they have been established for only two years. The Ursulines of New Orleans regularly have seventy boarders, and since they cannot keep up with demand, they have been happy to have two boarding houses built for seculars, one of them with ninety boarders.

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<sup>326</sup> The bishop played a role in their foundation, but was not the founder as this letter implies.

<sup>327</sup> The sisters look to John Baptist David as their founder, with Mother Catherine Spalding.

<sup>328</sup> Port Tobacco, Maryland.



*Correspondence 1817*

I think that a person brought up at La Reunion established them.<sup>329</sup>

It will not be the same in the north, where you do not run across islands and other towns.

**38(a). TO PAOLINO MARTORELLI, PRIEST, ROME<sup>330</sup>**

Bardstown, Kentucky, U.S.A.

24 August 1817

Very Reverend Monsignor:

When I had the honor of knowing you in Rome, especially in our house of Monte Citorio, I conceived favorable impressions of your piety and singular zeal. In my present circumstance these move me to furnish you a noteworthy opportunity of recalling the great obligations which I admit having to the worthy prelate<sup>331</sup> in whom I am interested, and in whose seminary I have been enjoying, with the other twelve members of our band, a courteous hospitality for about the past ten months. I also especially enjoy the intrinsic merit concerning the outcome of the Memorial, and these circumstances move me to become involved. I am enclosing the appeal in this letter, which I send to you translated into Italian.<sup>332</sup> Please have it copied as a Memorial, and present it in

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<sup>329</sup> La Réunion, the popular name of a community of French sisters, founded as "Dames de la réunion au Sacré-Coeur de Jésus" in 1799 by Vincent Wlechemans, a Vincentian, and Marie-Eulalie Fatin. Wlechemans, who befriended De Andreis during his stay in Bordeaux, received a dispensation from his vows in the Congregation in 1819. He died in 1831. The sisters are now known as the "Réparatrices du Sacré-Coeur de Jésus."

<sup>330</sup> **Letter 38(a).** Autograph letter, Italian, four pages with address, in the archives of the General Curia, Rome; De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part I, Sect. D, #9, 37-40; copy in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Vittorio Emmanuele II, Rome. Fondo Gesuitico, No. 1363 or 3492, no. 9. Cited in Rosati/Burlando, *Sketches of the Life*, 126-29. **Letter 38(b).** Copy, Italian, in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Vittorio Emmanuele II, Rome. Fondo Gesuitico, No. 1363 or 3492 (no. 9).

Monsignor Paolo (Paolino) Martorelli was a canon of Saint John Lateran, and apparently exercised some responsibilities in the Roman curia.

<sup>331</sup> Bishop Flaget.

<sup>332</sup> This probably means that De Andreis translated the work into Italian himself, and he may have aided in composing it.

*Correspondence 1817*

the name of the bishop to His Eminence [Lorenzo Litta] the cardinal prefect of Propaganda. The last paragraph could be removed from it when he will try to have it printed in the form of an appeal. Please excuse the liberty I am taking, and be persuaded that the work is worthy of the full zeal of a priest who loves God and the Church sincerely.

I am writing at the same time and for the same purpose to Father [Francesco] Alessi, our confrere who is well known to you.<sup>333</sup> I am asking him to join in completing and bringing to a good end the entire matter treated in the enclosed paper. Rome, as the Mother Church, has always sent out missionaries to the most distant peoples, and through them has established the faith with opportune aid, and sustains and propagates it there. By means of such examples Rome furnishes to missionaries the means of shutting the mouth of the enemies of the Roman Church. They calumniate her unceasingly and also pass her off among peoples they have seduced as if she were a ravenous Charybdis<sup>334</sup> which swallows up everything, and which, under the pretext of religion, seeks only her own interests. Thus, when they come to know of your liberality in favor of the young Churches they will be forced, in spite of themselves, to reconsider their judgment.

It would be difficult and tedious to recount here completely the state of the Church in America, since people over there have no idea of this country. They should realize the extent of a very vast and boundless country covered with thickets and woods. To clear it and cultivate it, each one has his land. The dwellings are scattered around haphazardly, since only rarely are there cities and towns. Because of the small number of priests, and to avoid problems, the churches are located in a field surrounded by woods. On feast days men and women of every age and condition come on horseback. They come from ten or fifteen miles away to hear mass, to listen to the word of God and receive the holy sacraments. To receive communion they must, despite the tiring round trip, remain fasting until evening when they return home. These churches are usually like the other houses, log cabins, made of tree trunks (which are not lacking here), joined together with mud where the wind, the cold, the heat and the rain can take advantage of the situation. These cabins are so bereft of any decoration that it is surprising to learn the use to which they are destined. Although these

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<sup>333</sup> This letter is not extant.

<sup>334</sup> A whirlpool famous in antiquity for devouring ships.

*Correspondence 1817*

churches are quite rare and few in number compared with the population, priests are rarer still. Each one has charge of four, five or six of these parishes, called congregations here, and consequently the same priest says several masses on the same day. In various places, many congregations spend months without a priest.

The distance between these places keeps the missionary here always on horseback to run hither and yon preaching and assisting the sick. They travel thirty, forty, fifty, even ninety miles, in one day. These are ordinary trips for him, and a more tiring life is hard to find. Today he is here, but tomorrow, no one knows where he will be. His bed, food and needs depend on the hospitality of the inhabitants, which, thanks be to God, they offer freely to priests; even heretics themselves do so. Nevertheless, the best gift that can be given is only a little badly cooked cornbread, hard salted pork, potatoes and water. This is the refreshment that the mendicant missionary finds after having made a long trip, heard confessions the whole morning long until 1 or 2 P.M., sung or recited mass, preached, baptized, etc. Many times he is still fasting at 5 P.M.

But blessed be the Lord, who causes us to find amid such fatigues the most exquisite consolations, both exterior and interior. These would be greater should there be more aid to help these poor souls. Really, in what greater way could a person use his talent, his money, his goods, whether lay Christian or priest, than to cooperate in this precious work? For lack of aid, we can only succeed in helping the Catholics, as we must, but without trying to convert heretics and infidels, who otherwise are marvelously disposed. How many heretical ministers could be converted if they, as well as the family which now depends on the unhappy minister, could be given a means to live! Who would not be moved to compassion for such souls!

For someone who has seen Rome and then finds himself in these regions, it is a great affliction. I recommend myself to your prayers that they might obtain for me the grace of dying with my weapons in my hands. I have no remaining comfort in this world apart from this alone. I beseech you as best I know how and can that you take the matter to heart. Although it is a bother and troublesome, it is so worthy of your zeal. Also, I have no need of suggesting that you make use of the zeal of those good priests whom the Lord will deign to inspire with efficacious sentiments of interest in the spiritual good of this vast

*Correspondence 1817*

country. We are awaiting Bishop Dubourg. He is to arrive soon with 28 more missionaries so that together we can all enter Louisiana, our destination. That area borders Kentucky, where matters of religion are nearly on the same footing, but with more obstacles. I am happy that our stay here has helped us practice the languages and customs of the country. We have made our novitiate in the ministry here, and we will do better when we have to act *ex professo* ["on our own"].

For a correct address when you want to send a letter to America, you can address it either to the firm of Carsamiglia in Marseilles, or to Mr. Caseau, a businessman in Bordeaux. They will be responsible for handling whatever refers to us.

Lastly, I am in the love of Our Lord Jesus Christ, with the most profound respect and veneration for you,

Your humble, devoted and most obedient servant,

Felix De Andreis,

unworthy priest of the Mission.

*Addressed:* To Monsignor Paolino Martorelli, Canon of the Basilica of Saint John Lateran, Rome.

**38(b). MEMORIAL ON THE DIOCESE OF BARDSTOWN, 1817**

The bishop of Bardstown, Kentucky, in the United States of America has been able, with great consolation, to count on the contributions that the charity of the faithful in Rome and other parts of Italy has offered to the bishop of New Orleans for his enormous diocese. It is quite without resources for the establishments needed to propagate our holy religion. The bishop of Bardstown has thought that he could have recourse to the same charity for his diocese, which is no less vast and no less deprived of resources. Up to now he has had no other help than divine providence. It has furnished him the means to begin a seminary composed at present of fifteen members, among whom are one priest, one deacon, two subdeacons, two in minor orders, five tonsured clerics, and four lay students. Three of these latter will be very shortly admitted to first tonsure.

These men are today lodged in a poor log cabin, but at last a small seminary is about to be completed. It will be able to hold about 20,

*Correspondence 1817*

with one or two exceptions. For their room and board the seminarians will be able to contribute the small sum of 50 scudi a year, with the rest coming from [the bishop]. The resources that Providence has helped him to find in the charity of some friends and in mass stipends sent to him are nearly exhausted. Yet he confides in God's goodness to open for him some other source that will let him continue the work so happily begun.

The bishop also has established in Kentucky two communities of young women for the education of the youth of their sex. One is under the rule prescribed for them by Father [Charles] Nerinckx.<sup>335</sup> He is a Flemish priest just recently returned from Rome, where his establishment was approved. The others are Daughters of Charity under the rule of Saint Vincent de Paul adapted to their work. These latter have no other means of support than their own work and the very small tuition paid by their students. For a home they have a narrow and uncomfortable hut. There are fifteen Sisters, of whom four are novices.

The generosity of the people of Bardstown, Catholics as well as Protestants, has enabled the bishop of Kentucky to undertake the building of a cathedral 125 feet long, 60 feet wide. The subscription [for this] was truly great, but they have begun to run into difficulties, and it will probably take a long time to complete the building. Once completed, it will be necessary to build next to it an episcopal residence and a seminary for the bishop to have a respectable clergy with him. The more advanced students will be moved there from the present seminary. That will then become a minor seminary for young boys receiving their primary ecclesiastical education.

The bishop of Bardstown is counting on the generosity of good persons principally for the cathedral and seminary. He hopes they will contribute generously as best they can. They will thus be able to take part in the precious results which will doubtless result. They will be contributing to the formation of a seedbed of American missionaries. Later on, these priests will actively be able to help the many thousands of Catholics scattered here and there in the states of Kentucky,

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<sup>335</sup> Charles Nerinckx (1761-1824), founder of the Sisters of Loretto. He visited Flaget and the Vincentians on 8 September 1817. (Camillus Paul Maes, *The Life of Rev. Charles Nerinckx* [Cincinnati: R. Clarke, 1880], 366-67.)

*Correspondence 1817*

Tennessee, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois. These states are truly deprived of every spiritual help. Some of them are reduced to not seeing a priest more than once or twice a year. Contributors will also take part in the conversion of a large number of heretics. They are heretics only materially, since they live in ignorance. They would soon cease being heretics if they had zealous missionaries coming to instruct them and opening for them the way of salvation. Contributors will also have a part in the destruction or at least the weakening of the many sects that are multiplying everywhere. These are taking root only because of the lack of preachers of the Gospel.

The bishop would then plan, were it possible, to found a community of men dedicated to the education of young boys. They would not only be able to learn how to read, write and count, but also [would learn] agriculture and other useful crafts. The primary purpose of such an institution would be to guard young men from the corruption of bad the examples that cause so much damage among the youth of these lands of liberty. They will have them learn Christian doctrine and make their first communion, for which it would otherwise be difficult to prepare them. They will give them a taste for piety, and they will lay in their hearts the foundations of a truly Christian life. From them will come the confraternities of their respective parishes, which will then become the support of religion and a good life.

How many spiritual benefits would result from similar establishments! How many blind would be enlightened! How many sinners converted! How many souls preserved from the world's corruption! How many in error consecrated to virtue! How many elect sent off to heaven! What an abundant harvest! What merit before God for those who would have contributed with their charitable gifts!

Although the great need is money, the bishop of Kentucky would gladly be able to handle any serviceable items, particularly for the benefit and the adornment of the church, such as books of theology or of the Fathers of the Church, Latin bibles, missals, vestments or vestment cloth, chalices, ciboria, monstrances, holy water vessels, processional crosses, altar candlesticks, etc. The priests [there] could easily contribute to the good work by celebrating for the intention [of the donors] a certain number of masses, and sending the bishop the stipends from these for his use. In the course of the years 1818 and 1819 they could contribute up to two thousand. The certificate of

*Correspondence 1817*

celebration of these masses could be sent to them as quickly as possible.

The bishop also takes the liberty of addressing this memorial to His Eminence, the cardinal prefect of Propaganda Fide. He humbly asks him to deign to have it approved by His Holiness, who takes such a great interest in the new dioceses erected in the United States. The cardinal is asked to support with his authority the entire affair, and to have this memorial printed and distributed around Rome and in other parts of Italy. From those persons whom His Eminence judges proper to interest in this activity, he is asked to receive contributions, and to have them sent to a safe place, from where they will eventually be sent to America. The bishop hopes that the zealous person responsible for presenting this paper<sup>336</sup> will also become involved, and will follow the decisions of His Eminence.

The diocese of Kentucky will be indebted to His Eminence's zeal for all the inestimable advantages that will happily result. The bishop and his priests and people will not cease offering their prayers to heaven for His Eminence's prosperity, and for that of all those who have, because of him, opened up their hearts and their wallets on behalf of the good work proposed to them.

Benedict Joseph,  
Bishop of Bardstown

**39. RETREAT RESOLUTIONS, 1817<sup>337</sup>**

Resolutions of the Spiritual retirement made at the St. Thomas's Seminary to Bardstown in Kentucky in September of 1817.<sup>338</sup>

1. I find still in myself a great deal of self-sufficiency and a hidden and secret fondness to appear, and to be esteemed a genius, a man of wit,

<sup>336</sup> Probably John Anthony Grassi, S.J.

<sup>337</sup> **Letter 39.** Original document, English, French, Italian, two pages, in the Archives of the General Curia, Rome; De Andreis collection, Volume VIII, "*Sentimens d'humilité...*", unpagéd. (Although not a letter, this document is placed here to illuminate the writer's thoughts at this period. It is one of the few datable texts from his volumes of sermons and lecture notes.)

The text is in English unless noted otherwise.

<sup>338</sup> David noted that "We have just finished our retreat . . . . Our holy guests have made their retreat at the same time as we, but they have given up hope of following their rules and keeping perpetual silence." (David to Bruté, from Saint Thomas Seminary, 29 September, 3 October 1817; AUND, David letter book, 17-18.)

*Correspondence 1817*

and reputation; which is the chiefest hindrance to my spiritual progress, and total union with God.

2. The ground of this bad disposition is the remembrance of the reputation, and of deeds of Rome, and of the news of them, which I know have come to this country, with a great expectation of wonderful things from my ministry.

3. But indeed I was nothing at Rome, and I am nothing here; God only who has been pleased to operate something at Rome by any means can operate the same, and also much more here, provided I will be truly humble, and simple, as never to attribute any thing to me, except sin.

4. I am therefore in a great need of studying well the Christian and evangelical childhood in this retreat consisting in a great innocence, simplicity, humility, charity and meekness.

5. For this reason I must be persuaded that whensoever a man arrogate to himself what God has not given him he becomes an hypocrite; and as we cannot know precisely what is God's pleasure upon us, we must always place ourselves in the last place, despising most sincerely ourselves in all things, and never attributing any thing to ourselves unless it may be said to us: *ascende superius* ["go up higher"]<sup>339</sup> giving then to God all glory.

6. Thus I will think on myself always as a poor wretch, idiot, sinner, profligate, and useless, and unprofitable servant, and undeserving minister, who only deserves confusion, shame, and reproach, never going out of this low esteem of myself for whatever prosperous or flattering event may happen.

7. To behave with generosity without listening so much to the delicacy, and softness of thy self-love either as to the health, or as to the esteem, or also as to the spiritual things relying entirely, and confidently in the providence.

8. [*Italian*] As much health, esteem and holiness as God wishes, and nothing else. In whatever lofty situation you find yourself placed, [take] joy in the reflection that such is the [will of the] Divine Benefactor for your betterment, and [then] remain at peace.

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<sup>339</sup> Luke 14:10.



*Correspondence 1817*

9. [French] Under the pretext and ruse of protecting one's own health, the demons entrap many. They know that the more we treat ourselves with delicacy, and the more we are subject to bodily illness, then the reflections which we make about the amount, etc., of the same inconveniences cause souls to be concerned with these pretexts, and prevent their entire abandonment to God.

*Tempus Faciendi, Domine* ["This the time to act, O Lord"].<sup>340</sup>

10. [French] For so many years I have only written and talked; now should be the time to act in good faith. To be a saint, I need only one thing: deeds....

[Italian] Deeds, deeds, and not words. *Probatio dilectionis exhibitio est operis* ["The proof of love is an evident deed"].<sup>341</sup>

[French] My misfortune in the past has been the lack of opportunities to execute good resolutions. Finally the time and the opportunity have arrived. Let us now see if my deeds will correspond to my affections. If not, there will be reason to conclude that all your fervor has resulted only in hypocrisy, all your holiness has been only superficial by means of which, after being deceived yourself, you have deceived many others about yourself. So, now, the time to prove things is here. Heaven, earth, men, have the right to expect from you effects proportionate to the preceding resolutions. *Usquequo pueri diligitis infantiam* ["How long, children, will you love your childhood"]?<sup>342</sup> At the age of almost forty, is it still right to be toying with so many weaknesses and such childishness? What delicacy! What shame! What a small spirit! *Dixi, nunc coepi in Deo meo transgrediar murum. Omnia possum in eo qui me confortat* ["I said, now I begin, with the help of my God, to leap over a wall,<sup>343</sup> I can do all things in him who strengthens me"].<sup>344</sup> At last we are going to leave for Saint Louis in two days.<sup>345</sup>

<sup>340</sup> Ps 119:126.

<sup>341</sup> Gregory the Great, Homily 30 on the Gospel "Si quis diligit me," PL 76:1220.

<sup>342</sup> Prov 1:22 NAB: "How long, you simple ones, will you love inanity ... ?"

<sup>343</sup> Ps 18:30.

<sup>344</sup> Phil 4:13.

<sup>345</sup> David and Flaget date the departure of the group as 2 October; consequently this paragraph must have been written about 29 September. The members were Bishop Flaget, Fathers De Andreis and Rosati, and Brother Blanka. (Same to same, *ibid.*)

## Correspondence 1818

## 1818

*Felix's arrival in Sainte Genevieve and Saint Louis introduced him to the life of a parish priest, an experience entirely new for him. He continues during 1818 to refine his ideas about Indians, beginning with urgent study of an Indian language. His stomach problems keep him from accomplishing many of his dreams, but he works to develop his pastoral outreach, especially to black slaves. With more experience, he recognizes Dubourg's difficult character but still appreciates his virtues. John Baptist Acquaroni, his fellow pioneer, presents problems, but the arrival of Joseph Rosati and the others at the Barrens, plus the opening of the internal seminary (novitiate) in Saint Louis, marks a new stage in the completion of the bishop's plans.*

40. REPORT FOR BISHOP DUBOURG (1818)<sup>346</sup>

*Part of the Diocese in Upper Louisiana in 1817.*

*Table of Parishes or congregations established or which could be established.*

Number <sup>347</sup>	Names of the districts	Their location	Number of Catholic Families
	Saint Louis	at 39° latitude	about 125
	Florissant or	15 miles northwest	
	Saint Ferdinand	of Saint Louis	about 56
	Carondelet or Videpoche	6 miles to the southwest	about 55
	Cote sans Dessein	140 miles to the west	about 30
	Saint Charles	20 miles to the west	about 40
	Portage des Sioux	27 miles northwest	about 65
	Sainte Genevieve	60 miles to the southeast	about 140
	New Bourbon		
	The Barrens	81 miles southwest	about 80
	Mine a Breton	70 miles to the southwest	about 12
	Mine Lamotte	55 miles to the southwest	about 12
	Mine Richwood	55 miles to the southwest	about 10
	Apple Creek	90 miles to the southwest	about 10
	Cape Girardeau	125 miles to the southeast	about 8
	New Madrid, or		
	L'Anse de la Graisse <sup>348</sup>	225 miles southeast	about 15
	Arkansas	750 miles southeast	about 20

<sup>346</sup> Letter 40. From Joseph Rosati, "Recollections III," VH 3, 145-46. (This document may have been sent as a letter to Dubourg.)

<sup>347</sup> It seems that De Andreis had intended to insert here the total number of parishes and settlements, but he did not do so.

<sup>348</sup> A nickname meaning "Greasy Cove."

*Correspondence 1818*

This last place would be better suited to the priest to be placed in Natchez, since it is only 300 miles from Natchez.

**Means of support and remarks**

[Saint Louis] It would be necessary to unite them together; all these districts together at the very most can support one priest.

[Florissant] There is a good rectory and 144 *arpents* of land.

[Carondelet] These could also support another [priest?].

[Barrens] The Church and the priests of the Barrens have sufficient support. Nevertheless, at this moment, I have no one to tell me precisely what it is. The church has been built there (a log cabin) and dedicated to the Assumption of the B.V.M., and they have begun to build a rectory in the form of a small seminary. In truth, it would be too much work for one priest. It would be necessary to put a community there.<sup>349</sup>

Thus five priests can serve the entire diocese. At this time there cannot be support for a larger number.

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<sup>349</sup> Apparently this was written before the Catholics at the Barrens settlement made their formal offer of land to Bishop Dubourg, but also it indicates that De Andreis may already have been aware of their plans. He may have been preparing Dubourg for it in this report. In all probability, however, no work had yet been done on a rectory or college building. De Andreis's comment about the log cabin church is the earliest indication that the Barrens parish was dedicated to the Assumption.

*Correspondence 1818*

**41. TO JOSEPH ROSATI, C.M., PRIEST, SAINT THOMAS<sup>350</sup>**

Saint Louis  
8 January 1818

Reverend and dear Father Rosati,

At last we are here at our post.<sup>351</sup> The activity of the bishop [Dubourg] has won over the masses, and we now have to await the happy outcome.<sup>352</sup> The installation ceremonies met with great

<sup>350</sup> **Letter 41.** *Copy, Italian, in SLAA, De Andreis papers. Cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 403.*

<sup>351</sup> The Paris manuscript recalls his reputation at Sainte Genevieve:

He was charged at the beginning with the church of Sainte Genevieve. When he arrived there, the inhabitants were unhappy with the measure that had been taken, and they received him only with a certain disregard because of his external appearance. But when they had heard him preach, there was more than one voice to cry out, "Oh, if we could keep you forever."

(*Notices VI, 444.*)

John Timon had a similar recollection, reported in his "Barrens Memoir:"

Father De Andreis had to say two masses every Sunday, preach two or three times, hear confessions, visit the sick, and teach catechism. His holy example, the zeal and unction of his preaching made a profound impression. For many years the Catholics of that district remembered with veneration the holy man.

("Barrens Memoir," 1, in DRMA, Timon papers.)

<sup>352</sup> David reported on the events to Archbishop Marechal:

We learn from the letters of Mr. De Andreis and from the accounts of several others who come from that section that he [Dubourg] has won the confidence and the affection of all the people of Saint Louis, and that the extraordinary conversion of a woman married to a second husband while the first was still living has brought him the veneration of even the incredulous.

(David to Marechal, from Saint Thomas, 26 March 1818; Baltimore Archdiocesan Archives; copy in SLAA, Rosati papers.)

*Correspondence 1818*

approval.<sup>353</sup> The people are well disposed, and offer prime matter even before they are receiving any form from the workers.<sup>354</sup> The bishop wants me near him to begin quickly, under his auspices, the great undertaking. The two bishops, after [looking for]<sup>355</sup> a letter received from you for me to transmit, could not find it again. If these might have been important matters, please be so kind as to repeat them to me by mail. The bishop has decided on Bois Brulé for our establishment.<sup>356</sup> He is thinking of moving there as soon as possible to direct the construction of the building, which will probably be built of brick. It will be finished, I hope, by this summer, although I do not know how we will be able to furnish at the same time the major seminary attached to the bishop's residence.<sup>357</sup> Time and reflection will put everything right. The bishop is reasonable and could be persuaded. I find him *identice* ["identically"] the same as he was in Rome.

For the rest we must rely not on men but on God alone. I find myself in some worry since I am deprived of so many books and other necessary items left behind there since they could not fit in the saddle bag. For this reason I recommend that you forget nothing when you receive the summons to leave and come to us this spring.

Although unworthy, I am happier each day, and am swept away by the dear calling in which I find myself occupied. I hope that the serpent, by dint of rubbing itself on tree trunks and thorns, will at length leave the old skin behind. *Qui confidunt in Domino mutabunt fortitudinem,*

<sup>353</sup> Flaget's diary gives the date of installation as 5 January. The bishop's name appears first in the baptismal register on 7 January 1818.

<sup>354</sup> This expression refers to the theory of prime matter and substantial form central to Scholastic Theology. The writer's idea was that the workers, the clergy, would succeed since the people had already received some formation.

<sup>355</sup> Blank in the copy.

<sup>356</sup> Bois Brulé, "burnt wood," another name applied to the Barrens, and currently given to a township in Perry County.

<sup>357</sup> The bishop hesitated for a long time about locating the novitiate at the Barrens and the seminary at his residence in Saint Louis. The temporary solution was that De Andreis would direct the novitiate, teach theology to the seminarians whom the bishop would lodge in Saint Louis, and the other Vincentians would open a mixed college and seminary at the Barrens. Rosati mentions the first solution in Rosati to Nervi, from Bardstown, 26 December 1817. (Original in Collegio Brignole-Sale, Genoa, Rosati papers; French translation in Archives of the General Curia, Rome, American papers.)

*Correspondence 1818*

*assument pennas ut aquila, volabunt, et non deficient, current, et non laborabunt* ["Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength, take on wings like an eagle, fly and not grow weary, run and not tire"].<sup>358</sup> How happy you are to be already well advanced in the work. God be praised, *a quo bona cuncta procedunt* ["from whom all good things come"].<sup>359</sup>

Try to cultivate the vocation of the postulants. Please give my most humble respects and thanks to Father David, etc., to Fathers Acquaroni, Ferrari, etc. I am impatient to greet you and our confreres. I am writing to have Brother Blanka come from Sainte Genevieve.<sup>360</sup> In this rectory we are one on top of the other, and we do not know where to turn. The room where I am writing is full of people, all talking loudly. Please excuse me if I have written as I have, and if I omit some things that I wanted to mention.

I rely completely on your wisdom and believe me, always with the sincerest affection and veneration,

your humble servant and dear friend,

Felix De Andreis,

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission.

<sup>358</sup> 40:31 NAB: "They that hope in the Lord will renew their strength, they will soar as with eagles' wings; they will run and not grow weary, walk and not grow faint."

<sup>359</sup> From the collect of the fifth Sunday of Paschaltide; and cited by Saint Vincent in the introduction to the Common Rules.

<sup>360</sup> Church records from Sainte Genevieve show De Andreis active as pastor, performing baptisms, etc., from 9 November to 30 December. On 31 December, Bishop Flaget officiated, and afterwards Father Henry Pratte assumed his accustomed pastoral duties. ("Sainte Genevieve Church Records. Book C. Baptisms." Transcribed by Ida M. Schaaf, Saint Louis, 1922. Copy in the Missouri Historical Society, Saint Louis.)

*Correspondence 1818*

FÉLIX DE ANDREIS, PRÊTRE DE LA MISSION (LAZARISTE)  
 décédé à Saint-Louis, aux États-Unis, le 15 octobre 1820.

Portrait of De Andreis.  
*Collection of the De Andreis-Rosati Memorial Archives*

**42. TO JOSEPH ROSATI, C.M., PRIEST, SAINT THOMAS<sup>361</sup>**

Saint Louis  
 13 February 1818

Very Reverend and dear Father Rosati,

I wish that I had the time, and that my duties and the condition of my stomach would allow me to write a long letter. Nevertheless, confident that you have already received, or are about to receive my three previous letters<sup>362</sup> sent one after another through the mails, I am dispensing myself from writing at great length. At this time, I am sending you a copy of our novitiate rules. If in your prudence you judge it to be the right time, the postulants<sup>363</sup> might begin to copy them

<sup>361</sup> Letter 42. Copy, Italian, in SLAA, De Andreis papers.

<sup>362</sup> The only extant one is Letter 41, 8 January 1818.

<sup>363</sup> At least Father Ferrari, and Messrs. Tichitoli and Dahmen.

*Correspondence 1818*

and *ex ipso* ["by this very activity"] be admitted [to the novitiate] although it is the bishop's opinion that this would not in fact mark the beginning of the novitiate.

God has wonderfully blessed our works and the bishop is thinking seriously about our establishment at Bois Brulé. With time and patience everything will turn out wonderfully. The brother [Blanka] is here with us, and is working on building rooms in the presbytery. I thank God for the situation in which I find myself of learning here in the bishop's school—much more by way of example than in any classes—the many things which I need to learn. I learn something new every day from his conduct. His virtues, like those of Saint Francis de Sales, hide under the most common and ordinary exterior. We should thank God for having given us such a fine model.

I am very worried that you are not taking care of your health in view of your manifold responsibilities. God will help you, *qui habitat in adiutorio*, etc. ["who dwells in the help (of the most High)", etc.]<sup>364</sup> I do not need to tell you to be, and to have others be, of good courage. You know this better than I do. *Sustine tentationes Dei* ["Bear with the trials from God"].<sup>365</sup> The will of God and nothing else. I cannot write any more than this.

A thousand humble, profound and grateful best wishes to Bishop Flaget, to Father David, and a dear embrace to Father Acquaroni, *et caeteris omnibus* ["and to all the others"].

I am, in the love of Jesus Christ, with sentiments of the most distinct and sincere affection for you,

your most humble and devoted servant,

Felix De Andreis,

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission.

The bishop sends to all his pastoral blessing, etc.

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<sup>364</sup> Ps 91:1.

<sup>365</sup> Sir 2:3. The NAB, translated from a Hebrew text, differs significantly.



*Correspondence 1818***43. TO CARLO DOMENICO SICARDI, C.M.,  
VICAR GENERAL, ROME<sup>366</sup>**

Saint Louis,  
Capital of the Territory of Missouri,<sup>367</sup>  
in Upper Louisiana  
the Feast of Saint Matthias [24 February] 1818

Very Reverend and Dear Father Sicardi,  
Vicar general of the Congregation of the Mission,

I thank the Lord for the consolation afforded me by the letter of our worthy visitor, Father Ceracchi. Father Rosati had it sent to me from Kentucky, and I was delighted to receive such good news of our Congregation in Italy, and especially to hear of the confreres' friendly feelings toward the American mission. Again I humbly thank our Lord for the kind remembrance in which we are held.

I have recently written two long letters,<sup>368</sup> one to Father Giordana to apprise him of my arrival at our destination and another to Father Giriodi concerning the issue of the two brothers, [Giovanni Antonio] Albasini and [Luigi] Generali.<sup>369</sup> I nonetheless think it advisable to add a page to Father Rosati's, as so many letters are lost, and also to make up for anything that he may have omitted.

I write you this from the very ends of the earth, on the banks of the Mississippi, since there is nothing else except a few days journey between us and the Pacific Ocean, which separates us from China. Only

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<sup>366</sup> **Letter 43.** *Autograph letter, Italian, four pages, with address, in the archives of the General Curia, Rome; De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part I, Sect. D, #10, 41-44. Several early copies, complete or partial, also exist, such as in the archives of Propaganda Fide. One copy in the De Andreis collection, Volume XVIII, is incorrectly dated as 15 February 1818. Cited in Rosati/Burlando, Sketches of the Life, 137-44. Cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 335-40, 388-90.*

<sup>367</sup> The designation "Territory" is exact, since Missouri became a state on 10 August 1821.

<sup>368</sup> No longer extant.

<sup>369</sup> Brothers Albassini [the more accurate spelling] (b. 1784) and Generali (b. 1777). The issue mentioned in the letter is not explained.

*Correspondence 1818*

wild animals and Indians, whose state is not unlike theirs, inhabit the country. Though the climate ought to be rather warm, since our latitude is only about thirty-nine degrees, the cold is so intense that I have never experienced anything like it. We cannot remain very far from the fire, though we often put on one coat over another. The cold is so piercing that it seems to reach the brain, and nearly makes us faint. I have sometimes found nothing but ice in the chalice while at the altar, and had some difficulty in melting it by means of a fire that had to be brought to the altar. Even then, in consuming the sacred species, I was compelled to chew it. This extreme cold proceeds from the north winds, which, descending from the icebergs of Greenland and passing over the frozen lakes of Canada, come here to freeze us where we stand. God be blessed. We can say with Saint Paul, *in frigore* ["in cold"] though not *in nuditate* ["in nakedness"],<sup>370</sup> for we are but too well provided for.<sup>371</sup>

When I consider the admirable care of divine Providence for this mission, I am profoundly moved and overcome with gratitude on the one hand, and embarrassment on the other, because of my unworthiness. I can only exclaim: *et unde hoc mihi! ... funes ceciderunt mihi in praeclaris!* ... ["and how can this happen to me!<sup>372</sup> ... the measuring lines have fallen for me on pleasant sites..."<sup>373</sup>] It is not only difficult but impossible to describe what I feel. The most ardent zeal would here find an ample field for its labors, and we have already many bright prospects of success.

This diocese covers an immense tract of land, six or seven times the size of Italy, and the labor that it will demand will soon make it expedient to divide it. Cities, towns and villages are growing up before our very eyes with marvelous rapidity; emigrants are arriving in crowds from all parts of the United States, as well as from Europe. Ireland, Germany, Switzerland and France send multitudes to people the smiling and fertile plains of Missouri, and in a few years the country will become so flourishing that Europe will no longer excite envy. The

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<sup>370</sup> 2 Cor 11:27.

<sup>371</sup> Stephen Hempstead noted the extreme cold in his diary during February: "A very cold day Said to be the coldest this Season." Jensen, Dana O., "I At Home (The Diary of a Yankee Farmer in Missouri), by Stephen Hempstead, Sr." *Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society* 14:1 (October 1957): 80.

<sup>372</sup> Luke 1:34.

<sup>373</sup> Ps 15:6.



*Correspondence 1818*

chief part of the population is French (or Creole as they call it) and consequently Catholic in their roots. They have, however, no religious culture, because of the long period during which the place has been destitute of every means of instruction and of priests. One of the wisest citizens told me: "If Bishop Dubourg had not come in time to our relief, the last spark of faith would have been extinguished in our country." But this portion of the population will soon be absorbed by the Americans and the English, among whom only a small portion are Catholics, but these are generally very fervent; the greater part are Protestants of a thousand various sects. We have also both English and French infidels. They call themselves Nullifidians, that is to say, without any religion whatever.

Let us now proceed to the border regions populated by fifty different Indian nations. They acknowledge only one God, whom in their language they call *Chissemnetu*, which means "Lord of Life"; to him they address their prayers and offer the first fumes of their pipes. To please God they treat themselves sometimes most cruelly; indeed their whole religion consists in these practices, some of which are too horrible to relate. They live like the very animals that they constantly pursue; their hunt provides them with food and scanty clothing, (for they go almost naked,) and it enables them to trade with the whites. In exchange for furs and game meat, they give them powder, spirits, paint to decorate their faces and silver rings for their nostrils and ears. Their appearance is frightful, and one feels almost inclined to doubt if their reasoning powers are fully developed.

I have seen several, and have conversed with them by means of an interpreter. In general, they regard priests with great respect, calling them *Mecate-o-coiojatte*, which means Black Robe; they also call them Fathers of Prayer. Some few among them are Catholics and, despite the efforts made by Protestant missionaries to imbue them with false doctrine, they have constantly refused to adopt it. They object that the true Fathers of Prayer have no wives and children like Protestant ministers do, but devote themselves wholly to God and to the good of souls. Notwithstanding the difficulties attending the work of their conversion, I am convinced that, when the first obstacles are overcome, it will be almost easy.

The chief impediment is the language. It is not the same among the various tribes, though the dialects are very much alike, and the

*Correspondence 1818*

Indians of different nations understand one another. With the help of interpreters, I have attempted to arrange their principal language according to grammatical rule. It is a difficult undertaking, as my interpreter, who knows nothing of such rules, cannot translate word for word, nor supply me with equivalent expressions for every idea; however, I have begun a small dictionary,<sup>374</sup> and made some translations.<sup>375</sup> The scarcity of their concepts renders their language poor in words. They are thus obliged to express themselves with the aid of paraphrase, especially on the subject of religion. As some curious person may be interested in examining a specimen of their language, I will here insert the Pater Noster as I translated it by means of circumlocution, for they have no word to express either *sanctificetur, regnum, dimitte* or *tentatione* ["hallowed, kingdom, forgive, temptation"].

*Nossak Pemenke chitaapé, ceckimitouseigniá tepará quissolimí, chira debehen tamscané cecki nironan, chirah ceheckí deberetan ouahé Apostí pemenekí. Inoki micipeneh miricané oueni perá chiró ceckekí mereo aceck chisitojangh rapini-irá niouenipirakí cehecki mereo-aceck nivoesittacu. Cattanossa deboi tarieh cané mereo-aceck chechoa sitojangh. Ceckí mací mereo-aceck paquitamocané peroí mionan.* (For the Amen:) *Ouajak deboataouiakann.*<sup>376</sup> They have many aspirations, they drag out the words, they gesture much and sing their speech to supply for the poverty of the language. Some of them, but not many, speak French or English. The language written out above is common to the nations of the Illini, the Pian, and the Mi,<sup>377</sup> but it can be used as a key to the others.

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<sup>374</sup> No longer extant.

<sup>375</sup> These translations, intended for a catechism, never entered into use, as Rosati admitted years later. (Rosati to Samuel Eccleston, 22 October 1838, from Saint Louis, AAB, Eccleston papers.)

<sup>376</sup> The text of this prayer is in a form of an Algonquian language spoken in Illinois, but which became extinct in the nineteenth century. De Andreis seems to have been ignorant of the long tradition in translating this particular prayer, such that his version is longer than most and does not include certain standard renderings of particular points. (See John E. Rybolt, C.M., "Vincentian Missions Among Native Americans," *Vincentian Heritage* 10:2 [1989]: 150-78.)

<sup>377</sup> The transcription Mi should be read as We, because of the similarity of the letters in these exotic names. The "We" are more properly the Wea, another band of Miamis, and were related to the Piankashaws. The Wea were known in the Saint Louis area. (See: Frederick Webb Hodge, *Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico*. Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 30. 2 vols. [Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911]. "Piankashaw," vol. 2, 240; "Wea," vol. 2, 925.)

*Correspondence 1818*

Bishop Dubourg, our worthy prelate, set foot in his diocese on the twenty-ninth of last December, the feast of Saint Thomas of Canterbury. I was then officiating as parish priest at Sainte Genevieve, a village about 60 miles from here. Accompanied by some 40 of the principal inhabitants, I went on horseback to the banks of the Mississippi to receive him. We conducted him in triumph, under a canopy, to the church, the bells ringing all the while amid the universal joy of Catholics, and even of many Protestants. After he had taken possession by a pontifical mass on New Year's Day, we came on the feast of the Epiphany [6 January] to this capital city to perform the same ceremony. With God's blessing, everything went off admirably.

The mere presence of the bishop, (who behaves exactly the same toward us as we knew him at Monte Citorio,) his kindness, gentleness and good manners have dispelled the storm. He has dissipated in great measure every prejudice, and so captivated hearts that the plan for a cathedral, to be built of stone, has already been sketched, and will soon be begun. When this is done, we will begin to think of the other establishments; it is only right that we should begin with the church, for we have nothing now except a miserable log cabin, open on all sides and falling to pieces.<sup>378</sup> The bishop has, however, bestowed upon it a splendid temporary decoration, chiefly composed of the ornaments from Europe. Since the population is half French and half English, we must exercise the ministry in both languages. The bishop has truly the *donum sermonis* ["gift of speech"], and has perfectly mastered both languages. I creep after him as well as I can; we have every reason to predict great things for the future, and so trust that we may soon be able to see all *in unum ovile et unus pastor* ["into one flock and (under) one shepherd"].<sup>379</sup>

At the time we left Bordeaux, the bishop appointed me his vicar general, and he also did so for Father Rosati, to act in my absence. Called as I am, in virtue of this office, to share so largely in a pastor's care, especially in our present beginnings and with so few candidates

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<sup>378</sup> The bishop described it: "My cathedral, which looks like a poor stable, is falling in ruins, so that a new church is an absolute necessity." (Dubourg to Didier Petit, from Saint Louis, 8 January 1818; cited in Melville, *DuBourg*, vol. 2, 508.) This was a suitable description for a building built, badly, in 1776.

<sup>379</sup> John 10:16.

*Correspondence 1818*

for the ministry, it will be very difficult for me to place the house that we are going to erect in a few months on the same footing as those in Italy. In this country we must be like a regiment of cavalry, or mobile infantry, ready to run here and there whenever the salvation of souls may require our presence. We make ourselves all unto all, to gain all to Jesus Christ. We came for him, to make him known, loved and served. A missionary country like this has to be an exception to general practices. Strict adherence to them would, in our case, prejudice the greater glory of God and the welfare of souls. I believe that the Congregation is for the Church, and not the Church for the Congregation. However, I will do all in my power to establish, as soon as possible, all the offices, customs and exercises prescribed by our institute. In a short time we shall all begin, according to our rule, to take our turn in the missions.

For this reason, besides the discharge of our daily duties, we are obliged to work hard to translate our sermons into French and English. Our greatest difficulty is not in writing, but in speaking and pronouncing the language. I am beginning to think that I am already a little too old to learn a language, and Father Rosati succeeds better than I do. Father Acquaroni has despaired of success in learning English after many repeated efforts. He will do an immense deal of good with his passable French. His health, however, has suffered somewhat, but Father Rosati has plenty to spare, and I am, without any comparison, better than when I was in Rome. The climate of the country is healthy, the land fertile, but things are extremely expensive. A pair of boots, fifteen scudi; ordinary shoes, three and a half scudi; and everything else in proportion.<sup>380</sup> The stipend for mass is five paoli. Good Brother Blanka is well and is very special to us, but he is right to hope for some companions from Europe. I join him in asking you to send us some. At Livorno there are ships that come directly to New Orleans and thence up the Mississippi. They will reach our residence of Bois Brulé. Father Giriodi will write you about the two brothers, *ut supra* ["as above"]. I have given him this task.

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<sup>380</sup> Another contemporary noted the same high prices. John Mason Peck, a Baptist minister in Saint Louis, paid \$12 a month for a single room, 35 to 50 cents for a pound of butter, 30 to 40 cents for a pound of sugar, and 75 cents for a pound of coffee. (James Neal Primm, *Lion of the Valley, St. Louis, Missouri*. 2nd ed. (Boulder, Colo: Pruett, 1990), 109.)

*Correspondence 1818*



Pierre Martin House (c. 1790), State Historic Site, Prairie du Pont, Dupu, Illinois.  
*Courtesy of the author*

As to the arrangement for this, Father Rosati is writing to Father Ceracchi concerning the rest .... We need whole colonies of missionaries, with considerable financial resources, to make rapid progress in these immense regions. But I remain at peace, restricting my wishes to what God has called me to do. Were they but to save a single soul or to prevent one sin, the sweat, the money, the fatigues, the study, the pains and the lives of a thousand missionaries would be amply repaid. God alone is great, and happy the one who lives just for him. With so many excellent opportunities of practicing acts of the noblest apostolic virtues, if I do not become a saint it may be truly said that I would be an inveterate and incorrigible sinner. I am more and more deeply convinced that I am, have always been, and shall always be good for nothing, unless God performs a miracle by enlightening, strengthening and sanctifying my blind, weak and perverse nature. This is my constant prayer. Do me the charity to make it efficacious by your intercession, and obtain also for me the prayers of more fervent and saintly souls. Prayers, prayers, these are what we need the most.

My respects to all and from all, and I am, with sentiments of the deepest respect and veneration for you,

your humble, devoted and obedient servant,

Felix De Andreis,

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission.



*Correspondence 1818*

*Addressed:* To Most Reverend Father Carlo Domenico Sicardi, Vicar General of the Congregation of the Mission, Rome.

*Sketch:* After the signature, the writer sketched the façade of Dubourg's new cathedral, similar to the seminary church at Saint Thomas, Kentucky.

**44. TO JOSEPH ROSATI, C.M., PRIEST, SAINT THOMAS<sup>381</sup>**

Most Reverend and dear Sir Rosati,<sup>382</sup>

St. Louis the 26th of February 1818.

At the arrival of M. James<sup>383</sup> I received two letters of yours, which caused me to be greatly astonished on account of the motive of your complaints, and calumniating of my silence; since I wrote already four letters to you, and this is the fifth. I am sorry for so great a mischief: they were very long and elaborate, I had lost a half of my stomach in writing them; my self-love (poor fellow) was very so little, and even perhaps ever so much interested in them. Therefore the great enemy who struggles always against that poor fellow has caused them to perish. What a loss for you! What master pieces you have lost! The loss is irreparable. Do what you please either weep, or laugh. At least I suppose you shall have received the bundle of papers from M. Du Meun<sup>384</sup> which will have compensate for you for so great a loss. I will non repeat any thing of what had been written in them because I think is now useless. Take this for your amusement, for I compensate your situation of being so mighty overwhelmed with classes. But I wonder that you know still how to find time, and leisure of writing everlasting letters as that to M. Ceracchi... After reflection I scarcely can express

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<sup>381</sup> **Letter 44.** *Copy, English, in SLAA, De Andreis papers. Cited in Ricciardelli, in Italian, Vita, 430-31.*

<sup>382</sup> This English letter is presented as written by De Andreis, but it is now available only in a copy.

<sup>383</sup> Probably Joseph J. James (d. 1825), head of a large family at the Barrens.

<sup>384</sup> Probably Jules Demun, or at least another member of the Demun family, longtime French settlers in the Saint Louis area.

*Correspondence 1818*

the joy which you caused me to feel in procuring me the reading of that Roman letter. How many things in so few lines! I have added two sheets another of mine to M. [Domenico] Sicardi, etc.

M. Acquaroni wrote to me a letter begging leave of coming hither.<sup>385</sup> I spoke about it to the Bishop, and I answer to say M. Acquaroni according what the Bishop told me: you may nominate him to accompany M. Carretti; after Easter they may find a Barge at Louisville and carrying there at all the trunks, and caisses not necessary at Bardstown they may come by and by by water, and they shall be placed in some hole here whatever, as we are all one upon another. Cheer up then, and do not fear that all our business will be settled better than we could never expect.

Let over all God be blessed for ever and ever. Be so kind as to present my homages to the most amiable man the Bishop Flaget, my compliments to the most obliging M. David, and all others as if they were nominated one after another; I am your earnestly and most humble servant

Felix De Andreis  
Unworthy etc...

P.S. The building of our Cathedral is at hand. In the mean time our Bishop has clothed the old one with the spoils of Europe, covered the walls with carpets of red flammel, and thus begins to look fairly. We make twice a week instruction in this lent-time giving after it the benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. At every Sunday at morning we preach in French, and after noon at the vespers in English. Twice a week also we have the catechism for preparing children to their first communion, and they come in a great number with a great eagerness, and favour; many Protestants are disposed to enter into their mother's womb;<sup>386</sup> we are almost every day employed in hearing the confessions of many persons of every kinds, and conditions. The Indian nation of the Sacks came in whole its fashion, and deep with their chief to make a formal visit to their Bishop: they were in the number of about twenty persons giving signs of great reverence, and respect. We have

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<sup>385</sup> This letter is not extant.

<sup>386</sup> The writer uses John 3:4 to refer to Protestants rejoining the mother church.

*Correspondence 1818*

established a company of musicks with voices, and instruments, etc. We all enjoy a sufficient health, pray for us. I am *ut supra* ["as above"]—

**45. TO JOSEPH ROSATI, C.M., PRIEST, SAINT THOMAS<sup>387</sup>**

My Dear and most Respect Sir Rosati,

St. Louis the 2nd of March 1818.

Lest my letters addressed to you, M. Acquaroni and M. Ferrari, which I sent lately by the post-mail be lost, as it happened to the foregoing ones, I repeat in this occasion in few lines what I wrote in them.<sup>388</sup>

About M. Acquaroni I consisted with the R[ight] R[everend] Bishop that he may come hither to accompany M. Carretti after Easter at the first occasion they will find at Louisvill for a boat coming to this territory, in which they may carry all the trunks, and effects not absolutely necessary to our gentlemen at Bardstown.

On account of M. Ferrari, you may assure him, that the noise he wrote of has non foundation; therefore he may be perfectly at rest: others have been appointed for that; and we will wait for the Lord.

We shiver here with cold, and for this account we are obliged to sing mass at home in a fire room, and many times to let a side every church's function, because the people cannot come. There is a gentleman<sup>389</sup> trading with indians who has proposed to the Bishop to send with him a missionary to the nation of Osages fifteen days of journey from S. Louis, and he will take upon himself all the expenses of his journey, and lively[hood]. I offered myself to go there, and the Bishop accepted of it; however the undertaking depends upon the issue of either the war, or the peace of such a nation with others. If this project will take place all my charge will be so happy as to fall upon

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<sup>387</sup> **Letter 45.** *Copy (by an Italian hand), English, in SLAA, De Andreis papers. Cited in Ricciardelli, in Italian, Vita, 390.*

<sup>388</sup> These letters addressed to Fathers Acquaroni and Ferrari are not extant. The mail was normally carried only once a week at the most.

<sup>389</sup> Undoubtedly Auguste Chouteau, who had developed a trading post among the Osages, and was a long-time friend of the Church.

*Correspondence 1818*

your shoulders more suitable to bear its burden, than mine are; and the[n] it will become of me whatever God pleases.

In fine we must renounce to our own judgment, and will however wise, and prudent it may seem to us in order only to fulfill the things God has been pleased to appoint for us from all eternity. Indeed what a madness would it be in us did we desire to do whatever else than what God requires of us? or to walk in a different way from that he has appointed for us? If we acknowledge a providence disposing all things, we must submit blindly to it in every thing. His will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

I have here scarcely occasion to speak english, and I preached english but twice, and very seldom I hear confessions in such tongue, therefore I am in a danger of forgetting the little I learned of it. Pray for me that I may die once entirely to myself: there is nothing in the world more interesting for me than that Holy hatred, holy contempt, holy forgetfulness of myself, and over all holy cheerfulness, which supposes we have attained the perfection of it. I thank you of your letters. Be so kind as to pay my poor homages to the R[ight] R[everend] Bishop Flaget, and M. David whose bounties, and obligations I will never forget, but God only is able to compensate.

My compliments and those of B[rother] Blanka to all our gentlemen. The R[ight] R[everend] Bishop sends his blessing to all.

I am with sincere esteem and attachment, in the love of our Lord J[esus] C[hrist].

I am most humbly servant

Felix De Andreis

undeserving C[ongregation] of M[ission]

*Correspondence 1818***46. TO JOSEPH ROSATI, C.M., PRIEST, SAINT THOMAS<sup>390</sup>**

Saint Louis  
2 April 1818

Very reverend and dear Father Rosati,

Were the mail more reliable in delivering letters I would send you and all our group news about us more often, but the Lord wishes us deprived even of this completely innocent support. May he be forever blessed. We held as best we could the ceremonies of Holy Week with the help of the prior [Joseph Dunand] and of Father [Francis] Savine with his European accouterments.<sup>391</sup> The bishop planned and Brother, with a carpenter, executed the design of a sepulcher.<sup>392</sup> Without exaggeration it was worthy of being in Rome for the magnificence of its adornment, the abundance of lamps and the majesty of its decoration. In front of the sepulcher, day and night, two civilian soldiers<sup>393</sup> provided watch, one after the other, hour after hour. In the evening there was

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<sup>390</sup> **Letter 46.** *Copy, Italian, with French postscript, in SLAA, De Andreis papers.*

<sup>391</sup> Francis Saviné—the original document spells it Saviner—was the previous pastor of Saint Louis. At the time of the dedication, he lived across the Mississippi river in Illinois. Marie Joseph Dunand was the last member of the failed foundation of Trappists in the Mississippi valley. After his confreres had dispersed, he remained to do pastoral work, visiting the scattered communities, including the Barrens. His diary for the period was published by Ella M. E. Flick, “Epistle or Diary of the Reverend Father Marie Joseph Durand [*sic*],” *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society* 26 (1915): 328-46, and 27 (1916): 45-64. He returned to France in 1821.

<sup>392</sup> “Sepulcher” was the term used for the tabernacle where the Blessed Sacrament was placed after the liturgy of Holy Thursday, to remain there, as in the Holy Sepulcher, until Easter.

<sup>393</sup> That is, laity, in contrast to the Roman soldiers in the Gospel accounts. Saint Louis did not have its own voluntary police, the “St. Louis Guards,” until 29 December 1819.

## Correspondence 1818

vocal and instrumental music, to sing the *Stabat*<sup>394</sup> and the song *Au sang qu'un Dieu va répandre* ["to the blood which a God will shed"].<sup>395</sup> On Holy Thursday, besides the blessing of the oils, we had the ordination to the priesthood of good Father [Francis] Niel.<sup>396</sup> In two previous ordinations he had been advanced from first tonsure to priesthood. Crowds of people attended everything. On Good Friday afternoon we kept exactly the other function of the Three Hours' Agony. The decoration was stupendous and surprising. The bishop had gradually altered the whole inside of the church. Everything was arranged in white and red, the picture was changed, etc., but the most surprising thing was that on the Sunday after Easter we held the

<sup>394</sup> The *Stabat Mater*, a hymn on the crucifixion and on Mary's part in it, ascribed to Jacopone da Todi, O.F.M. It opens with the words:

Stabat Mater dolorosa  
Juxta Crucem lacrymosa,  
Dum pendebat Filius.

*A common translation reads:*

At the Cross her station keeping,  
Stood the mournful Mother weeping,  
Close to Jesus to the last.

<sup>395</sup> A hymn by François de la Mothe Fénelon (d. 1715). This sentimental piece, with 13 verses, continued in use at least into the early twentieth century. Its first verse is typical of its form and content:

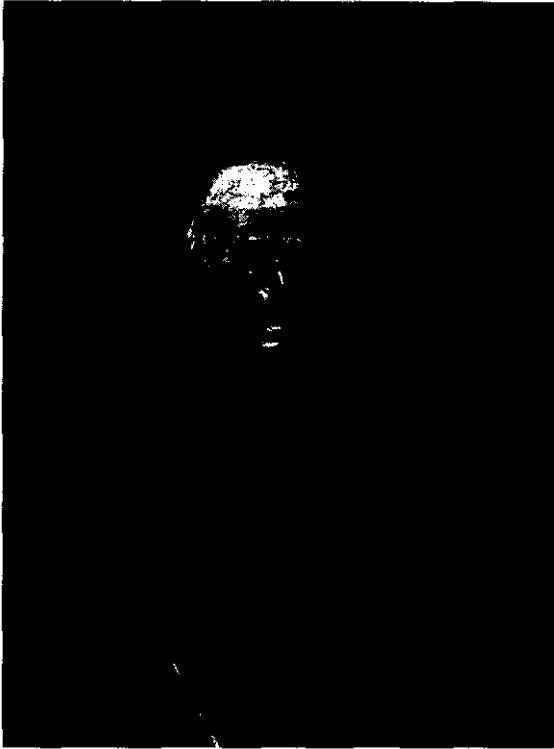
Au sang qu'un Dieu va répandre  
Ah! mêlez du moins vos pleurs;  
Chrétiens qui venez entendre  
Le récit de ses douleurs.  
Puisque c'est pour vos offenses  
Que ce Dieu souffre aujourd'hui;  
Animés par ses souffrances  
Vivez et mourez pour lui.

*In English:*

To the blood which a God will shed,  
Ah! mix at least your tears,  
You Christians who come to hear  
The tale of his sufferings.  
It is for your offenses  
That this God suffers today.  
Moved by his sufferings,  
Live and die for him.

(*Nouveau choix des Cantiques de Saint-Sulpice avec tous les airs en musique. Nouvelle édition* (Dole: Joly, 1822); 140-43 for text, and 16 for music.)

<sup>396</sup> Niel, ordained 19 March, was one of those who came from Europe with Dubourg. His name first appears in the baptismal register as a celebrant of baptism on 1 April.

*Correspondence 1818*

Reverend Donatien Olivier, C.M.  
*Collection of the De Andreis-Rosati Memorial Archives*

function of the solemn blessing of the cornerstone of the new cathedral which, according to the contract, will be usable by next Christmas.<sup>397</sup>

The ceremony was conducted with the help of Fathers [Donatien] Olivier,<sup>398</sup> Henry Pratte,<sup>399</sup> Dunand and Savine, several auxiliary clerics,

<sup>397</sup> The bishop blessed the cornerstone, 29 March 1818; De Andreis formally blessed the building, 9 January 1820. After years of disuse, it burned down 6 April 1835.

<sup>398</sup> Olivier, a pioneer priest in the Mississippi valley, served, among others, the people of Prairie du Rocher and Kaskaskia, Illinois. In his last years he moved to the Barrens, where he died. He was buried in the seminary church.

<sup>399</sup> Pratte, 1788-1822, the first priest born in Missouri, was pastor of Sainte Genevieve, Missouri, at the time of the arrival of the Vincentians. He went to Saint Louis to see to the repair of the bishop's house; his name appears on the cathedral baptismal record for 19 September 1817, thus dating his arrival. He left De Andreis in charge as pastor during the interim, and returned to his parish when De Andreis moved to Saint Louis. Pratte's last recorded baptism in Saint Louis was 7 December. (Ida M. Schaaf, "Henri Pratte. Missouri's First Native Born Priest," *SLCHR* 5:2-3 [April-July 1923]: 129-48.)

*Correspondence 1818*

and many altar boys. Inside the stone were placed two parchments, one containing the history of the foundation of Saint Louis, and the other, the record of the placing of the stone, with the names of the bishop, the individual clergy in attendance, the committee, and also various coins, etc. I am enclosing the notice from the public papers.<sup>400</sup> The bishop left the day before yesterday for the Barrens to set our seminary in order. I do not look for any results before next fall. *In patientia vestra possidebitis animas vestras* ["In your patience, you will possess your souls"].<sup>401</sup> For someone who cares only for God in everything, it is a matter of indifference to be here or there, to do this or that, to go or to stay, etc.

I want to hope that at least some of the letters about the departure of Fathers Acquaroni and Caretti have arrived, and consequently we await them here each day, although I do not know how we will be able to house them since we are extremely crowded. If there were room here, it would already have been possible to open a kind of seminary. Father Niel is studying theology, and Mr. James arrived from Saint Thomas to study grammar. But since meanwhile a house should be

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<sup>400</sup> A notice in both French and English from the *Missouri Gazette* (10:495 [27 March 1818]: 3) may be the one to which De Andreis refers:

Next Sunday, 29th inst. at 4 P.M. will be laid by the Right Rev. Bishop Du Bourg, with the solemn rites used in the Catholic church on similar occasions, the *first stone* of the new *Cathedral*. The intended grandeur of that fabric, together with the sanctity of the object to which it is destined, cannot fail exciting a lively interest in the breasts of all those who have at heart the growth and embellishment of this infant city, but above all, its moral and religious improvement. A collection is intended to be made by the Bishop among the *ladies* who may grace the ceremony with their presence, the piety which distinguishes their sex encouraging the hope that they will eagerly seize upon so precious an occasion to evince their zeal for the majesty of divine worship.—*Gentlemen*, it is expected, will also be prompted to a new effort of generosity, to supply the deficiency of the funds already subscribed for, and enable the building committee to proceed, without interruption, to the completion of that part, at least, of the whole plan, intended to be executed this year.

The stone is to be hollowed in the form of a chest, to contain and preserve to the latest generations the names of benefactors, *coins* of various descriptions and some memoirs of the present times.

*Saint Louis, (Missouri)*  
*March 26th, 1818.*

<sup>401</sup> Luke 21:19.



*Correspondence 1818*

built and lived in, it is unbearably uncomfortable here. We do not know where to stand, nor where to put a book or a coat or anything else without its having to pass through a hundred hands and then be moved immediately after without our knowing where it is finally going to be. I never before have found myself in such a situation. It is a great inconvenience for someone who needs to write, study and preach often. I console myself by the similarity that this situation offers us with that great example: *Filius hominis non habet ubi caput reclinet* ["The son of man has nowhere to lay his head"].<sup>402</sup> During the day, all the beds are folded up and piled one on top of the other; in the evening they are unfolded, etc. I report this so that you might use it to calm the impatience of those who perhaps would wish to come, and to show them the absolute impossibility of being received until our Barrens house is ready. I can just imagine the bishop's and my own worry in trying to make room for them by having them come sooner. We need time and patience to accomplish plans of such a nature.

Pray for me and thank the Lord for me for the patience with which he supports this old and incorrigible sinner. I do nothing but abuse the beautiful graces which, if they had fallen on less unpleasant fields, would have produced marvels of holiness. Give my respects to the bishop, to Father David, and give them also to Fathers Chabrat, [Stephen] Badin, etc. A cordial embrace to Messrs. Ferrari, Tichitoli, Deys, Casto, Dahmen, to the good Francis [Borawanski] and to all the fine gentlemen there who just arrived.<sup>403</sup> I have not yet had the good fortune to meet them, especially Father [Secondo] Valezano.<sup>404</sup> Brother Blancha<sup>405</sup> is well enough, and he sends you his greetings, but he is impatient to see our establishment finished, since his situation is truly

<sup>402</sup> Matt 8:20.

<sup>403</sup> This was the group of priests, clerics and the Flemish working brothers who arrived with Bishop Dubourg.

<sup>404</sup> This priest had joined the Congregation of the Mission in Italy, but never completed his novitiate or took vows. He left Bordeaux with Dubourg, 17 June 1817; and was in Bardstown, 2 December 1817. He joined Rosati on his trip to the Barrens in the following October, and went with Ferrari, Dahmen and Tichitoli to enter the novitiate in Saint Louis. Dubourg, however, sent him back to the Barrens, where he briefly served as pastor. This interference in Community discipline caused problems for his confreres, and kept Valezano from ever becoming a Vincentian. (Rosati, "Recollections," *VH* 4:2, 112, 115.)

<sup>405</sup> One of the many forms of the family name of Brother Martin Blanka.

*Correspondence 1818*

critical and he needs great virtue to be able to accommodate himself. The bishop is giving him enough work for four brothers. I just hope that he will not be overwhelmed.

Take care of your health, and believe me to be, in the love of our Lord, your dear friend and humble servant,

Felix De Andreis,

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission.

P.S. [*French*] Mr. James just now returned after attending his sister's wedding. He asks me to extend his compliments to the bishop, to Father David, and to all his former fellow seminarians.

**47. TO JOSEPH ROSATI, C.M., PRIEST, SAINT THOMAS<sup>406</sup>**

Saint Louis

20 April 1818

Very Reverend and Dear Father Rosati,

Since I am awaiting the bishop's return from the Barrens today after an absence of three weeks—according to what he told me in a letter—I will not finish this letter without giving you a report about what is happening at our establishment. I share your feelings, and I am disposed to write a letter to His Eminence [Lorenzo Litta] the cardinal prefect of Propaganda. In it I will dare to so push myself as to ask for a pair of statues of Saints Peter and Paul to place in the niches on the façade of the cathedral. It is being erected very rapidly, and has already reached the height of a man. Besides, I want to try to obtain some places in the college of Propaganda<sup>407</sup> for two Indian boys. Last week I baptized two of them (children), one of whom, five or six years old, so impressed me that I would really have liked to keep him with

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<sup>406</sup> **Letter 47.** *Copy, Italian, in SLAA, De Andreis papers. Cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 404.*

<sup>407</sup> Ecclesiastical students destined for missions fell under the jurisdiction of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (Propaganda Fide). In De Andreis's time in Rome, these students lived at the Vincentian house at Monte Citorio.

## Correspondence 1818

me, if only I had a place to put him and the means to do so.<sup>408</sup> His mother would willingly have left him with me, according to what she told me.

I wish I had time to write in both languages in order to prepare materials for the missions that the bishop has agreed to begin next year, and which I think it is very opportune to do. But the duties coming from the house do not leave me any time. I have baptisms, weddings, burials, offices of the dead, visits to the sick, catechism lessons and confessions, which are starting to become frequent. I have to preach twice on feast days in French and, on the last three, in English, since the bishop is away. Other similar things eat up my day without my noticing it.

Yet I have to admit that being occupied with God and souls is a beautiful and happy life. *Et unde hoc mihi foetido peccatori* ["And how does this happen to me,<sup>409</sup> a rotten sinner"]? Every day I discover more of the precious joys accompanying our mission in all that has happened, is happening and probably will happen. I am completely swept away and am amazed. We are always at one or other extreme, without ever arriving at port: a storm continues with its noisy waves, which *jam jam tacturos sydera summa putes... jam jam tacturos tartara nigra putes* ["Sometimes you think will touch the lofty stars... sometimes you think will touch the dusky deeps"].<sup>410</sup> May the Lord grant us the grace which the holy Church has asked today in the oration for Sunday: *ut inter mundanas varietates ibi nostra fixa sint corda, ubi vera sunt gaudia* ["that among the distractions of this world, our hearts might be fixed where true joys abide"].<sup>411</sup>

Everything is progressing at this time, and the bishop has a fixed date [for completion]. The business of the Barrens is going stupendously. Soon they will begin a house, sixty feet long by thirty-six feet wide, with three stories and a storage space in the basement. It will be on a raised spot, with good weather even better than at Sainte

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<sup>408</sup> The baptismal records of the Old Cathedral mention Joseph, "son of an Indian woman of the Osage nation, about six years old," baptized 10 April 1818. At the same ceremony, De Andreis baptized Therese, also an Indian, born six months before on Chouteau's Island in the Mississippi.

<sup>409</sup> Luke 1:43.

<sup>410</sup> Ovid, *Tristia*, 1.2.20, 22. (Loeb Classical Library, 12-13.)

<sup>411</sup> From the collect of the fourth Sunday of Paschaltide.

*Correspondence 1818*

Genevieve.<sup>412</sup> It will be near a rather copious spring, and will have 640 acres of land. The type of construction will be a mixture of log house, frame house, brick house and stone house, since it will have all of these. It will be clean and decent inside and out. There will be sixteen fireplaces. Since the new church has not yet been built, the old one will be a little distance away. To God alone is it reserved to do things in an instant; men need more or less time to bring their projects to completion. This means that you and the gentlemen there will still need more patience; *in patientia vestra*, etc. ["In your patience, (you will possess your souls)."]<sup>413</sup>

The academy at Sainte Genevieve has been arranged as an establishment for the Christian Brothers.<sup>414</sup> Two thousand dollars has been raised by subscription to build it. Even here the thought is of starting an academy for public schoolers, but I do not know where they will get enough students to sustain it.

Some debate took place during a meeting of the people of the Barrens about where to erect the buildings of the seminary, whether near the old church or at Apple's Creek [*sic*], and this led to the proposal of building two places. But now that it has begun, the good inhabitants are full of good will. They want to have us among them. They have spontaneously [agreed]<sup>415</sup> to maintain it by giving one-tenth of the harvest and animals for two years, and after that, one-fifteenth. The bishop has already found a well-trained woman who agreed to be our housekeeper, etc. I decided to send Brother Blanca there to direct the operations on our behalf, with the bishop's agreement. At last, we have started to march here, so to speak. We have a suitable bedroom for me and Brother, and we no longer crowd one another. The

<sup>412</sup> A reference to an earlier proposal for building the seminary, or at least for lodging the Rosati group until the seminary at the Barrens was completed. Rosati wrote of the plan to remain there for a full six months. (Rosati to Baccari, from Saint Thomas, 29 April 1818, Archives of the General Curia, Rome, De Andreis collection, vol. I, part II.)

<sup>413</sup> Luke 21:19.

<sup>414</sup> The Italian original reads *ignorantelli*, a term used in Rome at the time to refer to the Christian Brothers. Three of them, Brothers Antonin (Thomas F. Muraillac, born 1797), Aubin (John François Souchon, born 1793), and Fulgence (Victor Javaux, born 1789), accompanied Bishop Dubourg from Europe. Their school did not succeed, and the brothers were dispersed.

<sup>415</sup> Word supplied.

*Correspondence 1818*

beginnings of all great establishments are always painful, but the good results to be hoped for return with interest whatever is suffered. Is there perhaps any more blessed state, in the eyes of faith, than that which suffers poverty, discomfort, inconvenience, disturbance, humiliations, etc.? Oh, how great and exquisite is the nectar of paradise. Am I not filled to overflowing with these words of the Psalmist: *Laetati sumus pro diebus, quibus nos humiliasti, annis quibus vidimus mala* ["We rejoiced for the days in which you brought us low, for the years in which we saw evil"]?<sup>416</sup> We cannot form an idea of what we have not experienced. God is good, good!

I wrote Father Acquaroni not to think of Detroit for now, and to make due excuses to Bishop Flaget, until circumstances *in futurum* ["for the future"] are more opportune.<sup>417</sup> If we eat the grain destined for sowing, goodbye to the harvest. I cannot write because for the last two or three days I have had stomach problems and I have not been able to say mass.<sup>418</sup> Instead, the bishop is writing you a long letter. Give my respects to the bishop, to Father David, etc., and believe me always in the love of Jesus Christ, your humble and devoted servant and friend,  
 Felix De Andreis,  
 unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission

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<sup>416</sup> Ps 90:15 NAB: "Make us glad, for the days when you afflicted us, for the years when we saw evil."

<sup>417</sup> Detroit was located in Flaget's diocese, and he was anxious to provide clergy there. He made lengthy visits to this part of his far-flung diocese. The letter referred to is not extant.

<sup>418</sup> "Mr. De Andreis is a little indisposed: his flatulent habits frequently distress him." (Dubourg to Rosati, from Saint Louis, 22 April 1818. Original in SLAA, Dubourg papers.) This may have come from chronic colitis, as the numerous references to his stomach problems in these letters suggest. (See Rosati, "Life," *Summarium*, 78.)

*Correspondence 1818*48. TO BARTOLOMEO COLUCCI, C.M., SUPERIOR, ROME<sup>419</sup>

Saint Louis  
 Missouri Territory in Louisiana  
 27 April 1818

Very Reverend and dear father,

It would be very hard for you to imagine the consolation caused by your very polite letter of 14 June 1817.<sup>420</sup> It arrived the day before yesterday from New Orleans, where we are still waiting for the crate you mentioned, which will be sent here at the first possible opportunity. Eternal thanks be to that good God who so visibly guides us, and who amid the hard conditions of our mission still furnishes us with great consolations. It is useless for me to expound on my thanks to you. I know with whom I am speaking and the spirit which animates you better than these human considerations. Thank you for the news of the common mother house of the Congregation [in Paris].<sup>421</sup> We are soon going to offer the prescribed prayers for the dead on the list you sent. I turn now to giving you news about us.

I have wanted to write a letter to His Eminence the cardinal prefect of Propaganda about various matters, but I thought that this might look like infringing the rights of our bishop. It is his responsibility to write, and so I am abstaining from it. Nevertheless, I will lay out here simply one of these plans so that you might discover the intention of Propaganda and inform me about it.

In the last several days I baptized two Indian children.<sup>422</sup> One in particular, five or six years old, made me wonder whether there might

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<sup>419</sup> **Letter 48.** Copy, Italian, in the Archives of the General Curia, Rome, *De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part I, Sect. D, #11, 45-50*; copy in *Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Vittorio Emmanuele II, Rome. Fondo Gesuitico, No. 1363 o 3492 (no 12)*. Cited in Ricciardelli, *Vita*, 354, 357, 362-63, 371-72, 378-79, 392-95, 396, 405, 423, 429, 461-62, 481, 483.

<sup>420</sup> This letter is not extant.

<sup>421</sup> The new mother house opened officially on 9 November 1817.

<sup>422</sup> See the note on these two baptisms in Letter 47, 20 April 1818.

*Correspondence 1818*

be a place in the College of Propaganda for some Indian students.<sup>423</sup> That would bind these remote regions to the center of Christianity with a tangible link that would have its own advantages in the future. It would also avoid the difficulties caused by the preponderance of the huge number of heretical sects with no other focus of unity than their hatred for Rome.

Since last October I have been carrying out unworthily the office of vicar general here.<sup>424</sup> The bishop arrived at the beginning of January and was quite well received.<sup>425</sup> The Catholic inhabitants and the Protestants, too, were aroused by suitable exhortations, and committed themselves to contribute to building the cathedral. Plans were drawn up and the work was soon begun. We hope to see it finished shortly. Since in the drawing of the façade there are two niches, statues of Saints Peter and Paul would be very appropriate there. Underneath would be the inscription *in omnem terram* etc. [“(Their voice went out) to all the earth”], and *et in fines orbis terrae verba eorum* [“and their words to the end of the earth”],<sup>426</sup> since literally we are here at the end of the earth. There would be perpetual confusion for the heterodox in the inscription under the statue of Saint Peter: “S. Peter the First Pope of the Roman Church,” since the Protestants really want to be called Christians, and also to be called by the name of Catholics. Yet they cannot stand the name of Rome or of the pope, and because of constant contact this plague is also attacking our Catholics, among whom there are several who do not have much good feeling about Rome. Consequently, it would be good to give to Rome a greater influence, etc.

What a great decision it would be if Rome would wish to furnish the statues, and if they embarked at Ripa Grande on the Tiber and

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<sup>423</sup> The College of Propaganda Fide (“for the Propagation of the Faith”) was established in 1627, and named the Collegium Urbanum, after Urban VIII, in whose papacy it was established. The Collegium Urbanum was to train candidates from the secular priesthood to propagate the faith anywhere the pope would send them. It was closed between 1809 and 1814, but was reestablished by Pius VII in 1817. It exists today as the Pontifical Urban University.

<sup>424</sup> That is, since first setting foot in the territory of the diocese at Saint Louis.

<sup>425</sup> Presbyterian Stephen Hempstead wrote in his diary for 8 March: “Afternoon went to the Roman Church the Bishop preached in English a good discourse.” (“I At Home,” 80.)

<sup>426</sup> Ps 19:5.

*Correspondence 1818*

landed at the Mississippi just a rifle shot from the façade that they would be destined to adorn. What a beautiful opportunity to immortalize in a very special way in the annals of faith the already immortal name of Cavaliere [Antonio] Canova!<sup>427</sup> For this purpose I am including here the drawings of the façade in the architect's hand.

I am overwhelmed when I think of the grace of having been called to these missions, and I really cannot explain what I feel about it. I say only that if I do not become holy I would be even worse than a demon since the opportunities to practice the most beautiful Christian virtues even heroically are so beautiful, so frequent, so urgent, so attractive, so incomparable. In our houses in Europe I would never have had opportunities like these. Everything is so convenient there, and we do not need to think about poverty, patience, humility, simplicity, meekness, faith, confidence in God, total resignation. These are the sweetest perfumes of the heavenly bridegroom, to whose odor he attracts with his love even souls like mine from the mire.<sup>428</sup> Help me, please, to thank him for them, and obtain for me the grace of cooperating with them. As a result I am full of confidence in seeing great things, the great glory of God and great good of souls. *Non est abbreviata manus Domini* ["the hand of the Lord is not shortened"].<sup>429</sup>

Help us thank the Lord for deigning to bless this mission in so many small ways, which are as so many preludes to other greater goods to come. Among Catholics, instruction and frequenting the sacraments awaken an almost dormant faith. They inflame piety and devotion, and they multiply good acts. So many children who would die without baptism, and the many sinners who would die without any help are provided with opportune assistance. Abuses are removed, the laws of the Church which had been ignored or completely bypassed are now recognized; faithlessness is losing ground, is confounded, is forced to give way to faith. The most haughty and insulting pseudophilosophy is forced to hide without being able to conceal the remorse with which it is wounded. A good mission, for which we are gradually getting ready, and which is planned to begin in the new year after we have prepared the way with suitable precautions, will, I hope, checkmate

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<sup>427</sup> A renowned Italian sculptor (1757-1822).

<sup>428</sup> A reference to Cant 1:1-2.

<sup>429</sup> Isa 59:1 NAB: "Lo, the hand of the Lord is not too short to save."



*Correspondence 1818*

irreligion and heresy. Heretics are eager to attend our English preaching and instructions, and several whole families have been converted. The majority are awaiting only the opportunity to declare themselves completely in favor of Catholicism. The demon is not letting up on his forces, and I fear that even the Baptists are going to lay the foundation of a church not far from our cathedral.<sup>430</sup> But I hope that Dagon will fall before the feet of the Holy Ark,<sup>431</sup> and will not serve except for [the Holy Ark's] greater triumph.

When the mission to the Catholics and the heretics is well developed, we will think more about the question of the Indians. In other letters I wrote you from Baltimore,<sup>432</sup> I told you that the Indian nations were almost completely destroyed. I was then in the east of America, and this was true there. But here in the west they live in much greater numbers and, not to repeat all that I have written previously, I limit myself to reflect that a great harvest is to be reaped when the time to gather it has arrived. This allows us to hope that it is not far off. The present state of these poor afflicted people offers to missionaries a set of difficulties, which, with time, patience and prayer, will diminish and will even cease. The greatest difficulty arises really from the fact that at first sight the matter of the trade that these Indian nations have with whites should be promoted. But the whites in this commerce trade intoxicating liquors and other similar things for animal skins. Hunting animals forms the only occupation of their nomadic and wild life. This trade corrupts their innocence and debauches their habits. It nourishes the vices which on the one hand serve too well the

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<sup>430</sup> Baptist ministers James Ely Welch and John Mason Peck, with their wives and children, came to Missouri and opened a school on 1 January 1818, called the Western Mission Academy. A Baptist congregation was officially organized 18 February 1818, with eleven members. The site destined for the church was the southwest corner of Third and Market, and the deed was signed 25 April 1818, two days before De Andreis wrote this letter. This site was directly behind the "Catholic block," which opened to the east, the cathedral being on southeast side. Today, the Old Cathedral would be on the south side, much closer to where the original Baptist church was. This church was the first Protestant church in Saint Louis, and was shared with Episcopalians in the next year. (Elva Kuykendall Norman, *Biography of a Church* [St. Louis, 1978].) Norman, on page 19, notes that the French Catholics treated Protestant ministers "with courtesy and respect."

<sup>431</sup> See 1 Sam 5:3.

<sup>432</sup> 26 August 1816.

*Correspondence 1818*

Period log cabin on trip route. Possibly Shawneetown, Illinois.

*Courtesy of the author*

cruel interests of whites, and which on the other hand nullify the exertions of missionaries. Their lives would not be secure from the snares of crude avarice which, because of their [the missionaries'] efforts, would seem cheated by the filthy gains of avarice. Time will show that the Lord will himself prepare the way. He knows how.

I think that there does not exist on the face of the earth a climate more bizarre than this. One day we gasp in the heat, we sweat; then the temperature goes down. The next day a wind from Greenland, crossing the icebergs and lakes of Canada, comes to bring us cold, frost and the need to take refuge near a fireplace. We do not know how to dress in the morning since we cannot see whether north or south will govern the day. Last winter was unbelievably cold, with snow in great quantity and horrible winds that freeze your feet. Supplies here are very expensive and we cannot find cloth to make clothes after our fashion. When one of our confreres comes it would be good to bring along some length of serge to make cassocks.

*Correspondence 1818*

Father Rosati is still in Kentucky. Father Acquaroni arrived from there last week.<sup>433</sup>

Since the majority of the population here is Catholic, we wear the cassock like in Italy. Our seminary is currently under construction. To maintain it, an English settlement has granted us a piece of land, 640 *arpents* [acres] in extent,<sup>434</sup> with one-tenth of their crops and animals for two years, and then one-sixteenth.<sup>435</sup> A group of Flemish farmers, brought over by the bishop and formed into a religious society bound by simple vows, will farm this land.<sup>436</sup> During this year I hope to go there to set foot on it, but it is 80 miles from here. We will then begin to rest a little, since we could write a book about all our adventures up to now. However, to regulate perfectly this establishment will take many more years. The works of God, as our Saint Vincent says, have their beginnings, their development and their completion.<sup>437</sup> Above all, we have to keep from haste and from worldly prudence, and content ourselves with following Providence step by step without ever anticipating it. This is our preferred maxim.

It may be that the Lord has determined that I not see the outcome of the work. May he be blessed. Really I always realize that I am good for nothing, while Father Rosati promises great things. He is young, robust, holy, disinterested, full of zeal and talents, and has caused more seasoned missionaries to be amazed at his preaching in English. I have heard them exclaim about him: *Numquam sic locutus est homo* ["No one has ever spoken thus"].<sup>438</sup> Whoever knows him is taken with his holy and jovial conversation. I am certain that Rome will very quickly request him to be a bishop. God's will be done.

<sup>433</sup> That is, Acquaroni and Caretti arrived together. Acquaroni mistakenly left his breviary somewhere between Vincennes and Saint Louis. He asked his guide to send it back, but this did not happen. With the \$20 left in the book, the priest intended to buy Indian curios from trappers. These and other details are in a letter from Acquaroni to Mr. H. Lassel (or LaSelle), a tavern keeper, 7 July 1818. (Original in the Indiana State Library, Indianapolis, Lassel papers; copy in DRMA, Acquaroni papers.)

<sup>434</sup> More precisely, the trustees of the parish purchased the land from Ignatius and Elizabeth Layton in 1818, and then sold the land to Bishop Dubourg the next year. In addition, they contributed cash and work to help in the construction of the seminary.

<sup>435</sup> Said to be one-fifteenth in Letter 47, 20 April 1818.

<sup>436</sup> This group began but quickly dissolved.

<sup>437</sup> A commonplace from Saint Vincent, found, for example, in an undated letter to Louise de Marillac, cited by Collet; see *Mission et Charité* 19-20 (Janvier-juin 1970): 171.

<sup>438</sup> John 7:46.

*Correspondence 1818*

As soon as we have set up our seminary, we will open our novitiate, since five or six excellent subjects among priests and clerics from different nations are impatiently asking to join our congregation. I have already received two firm requests for confreres to make two establishments: one in the diocese of Baltimore, which Archbishop Marechal deigned to write me about; and the other in Detroit in the state of Michigan, next to Canada, to which they have already been assigned by the bishop [Flaget]. I answered both the prelates that in time if the number of our subjects increases, I will do my duty to further their zeal.<sup>439</sup> This is why it would be helpful for us to have confreres from Italy, especially brothers. But let only young men come who are strong in their vocation and eager to suffer unreservedly, otherwise they will quickly be sorry they came.

We often have to sleep fully dressed on the ground, and also sometimes out under the sky, tying our horse to a tree and using the saddle as a pillow. We eat badly, sometimes a little lard and a dab of honey on some badly baked cornbread with a little bad water. This is a gift that we have to pay a steep price for to refresh ourselves after a long trip made while fasting, freezing to death, etc. Wine is so expensive and hard to come by that we never think about it. Instead we make great use of tea and coffee. The difficulty of the language, customs and habits so different from those from Europe, especially Italy, the impossibility of having with oneself the things from our baggage which seem the most necessary, the strange things that have happened, would give much to think about for someone who for a childish wish might embark on such a sea without reflecting well on his calling. Our confreres are good, but one could do even more in this enormous mission with help, either of money or of any kind of tool, pictures, images, etc. Consequently either you or someone else could gain great merit by participating in the good of the mission if you would send something by the same means that you used to ship us the box of images. But you should be sure to send another letter to the shippers about its contents to avoid the opening of the trunk in customs.

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<sup>439</sup> See Letter 36 to Marechal, 8 July 1817. The response to Flaget was probably given indirectly; see Letter 47, 20 April 1818.

*Correspondence 1818*

I have just recovered from an illness that brought me *ad portas mortis* ["to the gates of death"].<sup>440</sup> News of my death even spread around. The affection of these good people brings me comfort in my convalescence.

Esteemed Father Colucci, please give my best wishes and those of our confreres to our superiors and to each and every one of our dear confreres, Father [Maestro] Alimenti, etc. Especially for still visiting for us the sacred thresholds,<sup>441</sup> and the basilicas.

Oh, when will we find ourselves united together again in the source of love! *Veritas Deus, fac nos tecum unum in charitate perpetua* ["O Truth, God, make us one with you in perpetual charity"]. I am in the love of Emmanuel,

your humble and devoted servant,

Felix De Andreis,

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission.

**49. TO STEPHEN THEODORE BADIN, PRIEST, BARDSTOWN<sup>442</sup>**

[Saint Louis]

[May 1818]<sup>443</sup>

[Mr. Andreis says, that his] parish in [Saint] Louis, on the Mississippi, is composed of 7,000 souls, blacks and whites, French and

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<sup>440</sup> Ps 107:18.

<sup>441</sup> A traditional name for the basilicas of Saints Peter and Paul in Rome; visiting them and praying there gained the person an indulgence.

<sup>442</sup> **Letter 49.** *An extract of a letter, in another letter to the recipient's brother, Vincent Badin. Originally published in the Catholic Miscellany, London, England, June 1825; reprinted as "Extract of a Letter from the Reverend Fr. Vincent [sic] Badin, missionary at Detroit, to his brother, the Very Reverend Stephen T. [sic] Badin, now in London," The American Catholic Historical Researches, new series 1:4 (October 1905): 304-07. The location of the original and its language are unknown.*

Badin (1768-1853) was known as the proto-priest, since he was the first priest ordained in the United States. In this period, he made his home near Bardstown. His cabin is shown on the grounds of the Loretto Motherhouse, Nerinx, Kentucky.

<sup>443</sup> A conjectural date, based on internal evidence and comparison with similar letters.

*Correspondence 1818*

English, Catholics and Sectarians, scattered over an extent of fifty or sixty miles, so that I am obliged on holidays to say two masses, to preach at both, sometimes in French, and sometimes in English; catechism instruction twice, one to the whites, and the other to the negroes.<sup>444</sup> To sing Mass, Vespers, and to hear confessions. The hardest bone I have to pick is with respect to the French Bonapartists. As for the poor savages [Indians] I feel quite affected when I see them, which I do almost every day.

**50. TO JOSEPH ROSATI, C.M., PRIEST, SAINT THOMAS<sup>445</sup>**

Saint Louis  
17 June 1818

My very dear Father,

I open by asking a thousand pardons for having put off writing you longer than usual. Yet I have had good reasons for doing so, since I was waiting for the bishop's return from his short visit to give you news about it. He has now returned. He visited Saint Charles where he gave one hundred first communions and confirmed sixty-six. He preached eight or ten times. He then went to Portage des Sioux and to Dardenne, and everywhere he did a great deal of good. Scandals were removed, and terms established for the support of the priest and the church.<sup>446</sup> Father Acquaroni is getting ready to go to serve temporarily these three parishes together. They are no more than six hours by road from here. We began here this evening at the church a kind of congregation of negroes. It started with the catechism to instruct and dispose these poor people to make their first communion, and is now

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<sup>444</sup> Rosati commented on the dedication De Andreis showed to the "instruction of the poor Negroes, to teaching them prayers and the basic elements of religion, without being repelled by their coarseness." ("Recollections," *VH* 3, 148.)

<sup>445</sup> **Letter 50.** *Autograph letter, French, four pages, with address, in the Archives of the General Curia, Rome; De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part II, #23.*

<sup>446</sup> A reference to the problems existing at Saint Charles. See Letter 51, 26 June 1818.

*Correspondence 1818*

going to become permanent, something like the Meeting of Father [Pietro] Monaci. A considerable number are careful to assemble there each evening.<sup>447</sup>

Since we cannot yet do all that we want, at least we do what we can as Providence grants us the opportunity. In the same way, when he began his career Saint Francis Xavier set out to tour the towns, bell in hand, to assemble the children. Providence and mercy have their own proper times to bring together patience, prayers and the labors of those dedicated to be their instruments. I have no doubt at all that the time will soon come for the salvation of Catholics, heretics and Indians. I have some small details of stories that are clearly the prelude to this. But it would be lengthy and out of place to mention them here ....

I have been struck to the point of emotion and tears at your situation of weakness and indisposition.<sup>448</sup> I am convinced that in the causes of your troubles about self-love there is some basis. Even more, could not an excess of sensibility enter in, since you have not yet been well enough established in *confidence* and *resignation*? But these two precious stones are acquired only in storm and trouble. The virtues that we acquire in calmness, said Saint Vincent, are not very solid. When one is so [illegible] little strengthened *nemo misit vinum novum in utres veteres alioquin etc.* ["no one puts new wine in old skins otherwise, etc."] <sup>449</sup> I speak from my own experience. When we always walk calmly, we believe that it is easy to place all our confidence in God. But at the first storm, whether it comes from within or without, we seek external and merely human helps. And if they fail, as often happens, we completely lose heart. Sometimes we turn again to God, but we are hesitant about the good, as the apostle Saint James expresses it,<sup>450</sup> and we rely in some way on the moment and means of divine assistance. As soon as we

<sup>447</sup> Monaci founded the meeting at the Porteria, whose director had been De Andreis, a point he modestly overlooks.

<sup>448</sup> De Andreis is likely responding to remarks made by Rosati to him as his superior, in which he shared the state of his conscience. This practice, called "interior communication," was called for in the Vincentian *Common Rules* 10:11 (1658). Michael Ryan, second ex officio witness for the canonization process, also stated: "The Servant of God was the spiritual director of Father Rosati by letter, until the time of his death." (Rosati, "Life," *Summarium*, 17.)

<sup>449</sup> Mark 2:22.

<sup>450</sup> Probably a reference to James 1:5-8, and 23ff.

*Correspondence 1818*

beg for it, we expect to be heard. A holy man once said that true confidence is not established in the heart except by a total stripping of the soul, by long trials, by repeated and multiple sorrows, and then by constant prayer. With good will and faithfulness to grace, we should hope that we will succeed one day at having this virtue, which seems to be reserved to souls when they begin to attain the height of perfection and perfect union with God. This is for the soul the most assured proof of eternal happiness, and the great vehicle of true zeal.

The bishop was jolted into action by the [imminent] departure of your group, and so is getting ready to leave Monday for the Barrens. He is resolved to find shelter somewhere to house the entire Bardstown group, while awaiting the building of the seminary, and thus he wants to have all of you come as soon as possible. I do hope to embrace you after such a long time of separation! When will we be inseparably united in the true center of hearts, the good God? I long for the moment of seeing the internal seminary or novitiate opened ....

As he is in the midst of various problems involved in these beginnings, the bishop cannot decide on his projects too quickly. Yet he told to me with great happiness: "I regard your establishment as the chief, the only, support of my diocese. Now, however, we have to let ourselves be guided by the same spirit, and we should enter upon the same views, and not expect to be immediately set up like our houses in Europe." I answered him that our goal has always been the glory of God and the good of the diocese. I realize that we have a long way to go before we are set up as in Europe, but we should no longer use up the grain set aside for the sowing if we want a harvest. I realize, too, that once the establishment is complete, we will be able to do many things, but without it nothing will ever be assured.

As for me, I hate self-interest more than the devil, and I love the congregation to which I have the happiness of belonging only for the sake of God's glory and the salvation of souls. I hope that everything will go well, but especially there must be agreement.

Father [Stephen] Montgomery had the happiness of delivering to me yesterday evening your letter, with the two enclosures, one for Father [Giuseppe] Defulgure and the other for your brother. I sealed



*Correspondence 1818*

the first with the second inside, and I sent it off today for New Orleans by the steamboat "Franklin," which was about to depart.<sup>451</sup>

I have not been able to answer [the other letters] at the same time, since my stomach lets me write only a few lines at a time. Perhaps you will see Father [Louis] Sibourd, the vicar general of New Orleans. He is going to Philadelphia to have a polyp removed which developed on his nose.

The construction of the church [cathedral] has been halted for a month and a half because of some problem that arose between the contractor and the building committee. "Where God has a Church the Devil must have a Chapel."<sup>452</sup> Last Sunday the Baptists celebrated the laying of the cornerstone of their church, to be built directly across from ours. But I do not know why, when they were about to do so, they were content with delivering a sermon and collecting the money they could gather, but they did not lay the stone. They say it was because they reflected that this event would violate the Sunday obligation. A tardy scruple, and completely out of place!

I send my compliments to you and to all those whom you know, and with the care you know. I would send you some mass intentions if we had enough, but the devotion of the faithful does not furnish enough for every day. They are only small portions of one or two or three [masses], and very rarely more. Besides, they ordinarily determine the day and the hour with you since they want to attend the mass. I have had several of our books [copied?], especially since I found several offices of Saint Vincent. I found that several books were missing from my trunk. I believe that you have the missal of the archbishop of Bordeaux, the *Petit Carême* [Lenten Series] by Massillon,<sup>453</sup> the two volumes of English meditations, two volumes of Bence on the New

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<sup>451</sup> The same steamboat would bring the Sacred Heart nuns on its return trip. See Letter 52, 11 July 1818. The boat, built in 1816, sank near Sainte Genevieve in 1819. Despite its short life, it was one of the earliest vessels of its type to make the regular run to Saint Louis from New Orleans or from Louisville. (See E.W. Gould, *Fifty Years on the Mississippi, or, Gould's History of River Navigation* [Saint Louis: Nixon-Jones, 1889].)

<sup>452</sup> This sentence is in English.

<sup>453</sup> Jean-Baptiste Massillon (1663-1742), *Petit carême*, many editions; e.g. (Paris: Renouard, 1802).

*Correspondence 1818*

Testament,<sup>454</sup> a little Turin breviary containing the parts for winter and spring, and I don't know what else. I received the books you sent me by Mr. [Thomas] Whitstanly all mixed up and ruined, since they had been allowed to get wet, as if they had been pulled out of the Mississippi after perhaps a month or more. I had the two books of Genesis and of the gospels rebound. The rest of the writings are horrible to see ... patience!!!!

The day after tomorrow I am going to be godfather, for the first time in my life, for a Jew who is about to be baptized.<sup>455</sup> He has a very curious and romantic history. If there were space here it would give you a lot of enjoyment. Meanwhile the matter must be kept secret, so that no one doubts this man's Catholicism. These things could happen only in this country. A thousand best wishes to our candidates. It does me good to see you with them. Father Acquaroni is going to leave shortly.<sup>456</sup> He has delivered a sermon here, [which caused] a little worry, but sufficiently [daring ... (?)]. I must stop. They are waiting for the letter. Goodbye.

In the love of our great meeting place, Our Lord Jesus Christ, the lover of hearts, I am

your very humble servant,

F. De Andreis,

priest of the Congregation of the Mission

P.S. Father Caretti is up, but he is not yet cured, and there is little hope that he will ever be. I send his best wishes to you, to all, etc.

<sup>454</sup> Jean Bence (1568-1642), *Commentaria in omnes Beati Pauli et septem Catholicas Apostolorum Epistolas...*, many editions; e.g., 3 vols. (Louvain, 1763). Also: *Manuale in sanctum Jesu Christi Domini nostri Evangelium* (alt: *Manuale in quattuor evangelia*) [Lyons, 1626; 1682].

<sup>455</sup> Bishop Dubourg baptized Jean [John] Daniel Levy, 30 years old, on 20 June 1818. Neither his parents nor his Judaism were mentioned in the baptismal register. Since De Andreis identified the baptismal date as the "day after tomorrow," this probably means that he began the letter on one day (the 17<sup>th</sup>, the date at the beginning of the letter) and wrote this portion on the next (the 18<sup>th</sup>)—a common occurrence. De Andreis was the godfather; the pious Mrs. Marie Maguire, who had followed De Andreis from Baltimore, was the godmother. (See Letter 86(a), 15 November 1820.)

<sup>456</sup> Acquaroni's name appears in the baptismal register from 24 May to 14 June.

*Correspondence 1818*

*Addressed:* Rev. Mr. Rosati, S. Thomas's Seminary, Bardstown, (Kentucky).

*In another hand, in French and Italian:* 17 June 1818, Mr. De Andreis, Saint Louis.

**51. TO JOSEPH ROSATI, C.M., PRIEST, SAINT THOMAS<sup>457</sup>**

Saint Louis  
26 June 1818

Very Reverend and Dear Father,

On the evening of the twelfth of this month I received your letter and, although bathed in sweat because of the excessive heat, I am quickly taking up my pen to respond. When I read in your always very affectionate letters that you find consolation in news from me, I would like to put everything down in writing to offer you support. But what support can I offer you equal to that which I receive in the outpouring of your heart, which happens before our Emmanuel in the blessed sacrament? I agree perfectly with you that besides heavenly consolations in this vale of tears, we also need legitimate earthly ones coming from true and holy friendship. We also need to try to scorn them. Quite far from urging you to disapprove of your feelings and conduct in this matter, I can only share them. You know well the obligations that I profess to you, which have been afforded me very opportunely, when in fact I have very great need of them. But I am sorry because sometimes I lose letters. For example, yesterday, if I am not mistaken, I received back one very long letter in English that I had sent to you on the second of March, but may God's will be served in everything and through everything.<sup>458</sup>

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<sup>457</sup> **Letter 51.** *Autograph letter, Italian, two pages, in the Archives of the General Curia, Rome; De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part II, #28.*

<sup>458</sup> Letter 45, 2 March 1818.

*Correspondence 1818*

A thousand congratulations to Father Ferrari for his apostolic works. I thank God that he grants them [the missionaries] the capacity to preach easily in English. I do so in French, but I have not risked preaching in English, except once for a certain fervorino. The little knowledge that I once had of that language has, by disuse, constantly shrunk.<sup>459</sup> To go to preach in English I need a longer period to prepare myself and since I lack this time, the bishop nearly always preaches in English, although also *in comparatione siliginis illius furfur noster contemnitur* ["in comparison with his wheat, our bran is condemned"].<sup>460</sup>

The American ears in Saint Louis are so tender that the least mistake in pronunciation offends them very strangely. The majority are Protestants, or, to say it better, are indifferentists who believe in nothing. It is the slaves who give us the greatest consolation. They are always anxious to be instructed and make their first communion, which many people, even the elderly, have not yet done. And how many whites have not made it and do not even think of doing so. But the young people make up abundantly for the insensibility of the adults. We have already celebrated several ceremonies of first communions to the great satisfaction of all.

In my last letter, which I had delivered by hand, I told you something about the baptism of a Jewish man, which took place at the sacred font.<sup>461</sup> He is thirty years old, a talented young man with very good will. His life up to the present, according to his written report that we have of it, is very admirable. Besides, it is a masterpiece of

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<sup>459</sup> A few lines of an English poem that he wrote in 1819 have survived. They show that, despite his protestations, his knowledge of the language was very good.

When soul's salvation is at stake  
every thing is sweet for God's sake;  
and when a man has chosen  
for God to be half dead  
has nothing more to dread!  
Let him be burn'd or frozen  
let him be drown'd or slain  
his happiness increases at every pain.

(Alceste Bozuffi, *Il servo di Dio Felice de Andreis, Prete della Missione* [Piacenza: Collegio Alberoni, 1929], 94-95.)

<sup>460</sup> Based on Gregory the Great: "ad comparationem siliginis illius nostrum furfurem non quaeratis." Ep. 10,16.

<sup>461</sup> Letter 50, 17 June 1818.

*Correspondence 1818*

grace, and gives us much to hope for. During the baptism itself, a remarkable phenomenon took place, which I had never seen. A swarm of bees came to rest over the church right during the baptism, and disappeared immediately after. A crowd of boys started yelling and making noise to chase them away, but they remained until the end of the baptism. *Quis putas homo iste erit* ["Whom do you think this man will be"?]<sup>462</sup>

To our great grief, the day before yesterday, on the feast of Saint John the Baptist, we had to see for the first time the public parade of the Freemasons, each one with his apron and instruments preceded by a large band. Several times they circled the town in triumph and they concluded with a dance at night right behind our rectory. Oh, what motives for laments! The lament is the last resource of zeal when no other possibility remains.<sup>463</sup>

The bishop has resolved to take Saint Vincent, our father, as the secondary patron of the cathedral and for this reason has ordered a double office of the first class with an octave.<sup>464</sup> The building of the church has been resumed after about two months of inactivity because of a lawsuit that arose between the committee and the contractor. This was terminated by a decision reached by two magistrates who decided in our favor. The Anabaptists are building their church a few feet behind ours.

The bishop hopes absolutely to have you arrive this coming autumn even though the seminary might not be ready at that time. In the

<sup>462</sup> Based on Luke 1:66.

<sup>463</sup> The Freemasons of Saint Louis were organized as a lodge in 1804, lasting to about 1812. After a time of inaction they built, in 1816, a new lodge, and a second one in the following year. A public lottery was held to raise funds, lasting until mid-1817. "The only observance of which any public record remains occurred Dec. 27, 1819, on which occasion there was a procession from the lodge room to the 'long room of Bennett's Hotel.'" This date marks the feast of John the Evangelist, a traditional Masonic observance. De Andreis's own account adds a further event to that list. (See Frederick L. Billon, "Early Organized Masonry in St. Louis," [a set of newspaper articles from *Missouri Freeman*, begun 27 September 1913, and gathered into a volume in the Missouri Historical Society, Saint Louis, Missouri; unpagged]. Also, *Missouri Gazette* 9:459 [19 July 1817]: 4.)

<sup>464</sup> De Andreis omitted saying that the bishop had received a notable relic of the saint in Paris from Father Charles Verbert, the vicar general. (Refer to Letter 70 (a) for details.)

*Correspondence 1818*

meanwhile a place here or there will be found to house you. And so I do not say that your sufferings will cease, but at least they will partially, since we have to suffer one way or another. Also if there were nothing left to suffer there would be nothing left for us to live for here below, a place of sufferings and not of enjoyments. Everything is the road toward the goal, to keep us from losing sight of it, and we should profit from everything to advance. But we have to go either by level paths or deep gorges. The least easy way is to go by the road which shortens the journey and which leads us more quickly to the end. The less we see the road on which we are being led, the more we are right to say *ut jumentum factus sum apud te et ego semper tecum* ["I have become a beast of burden for you, and I am always with you"].<sup>465</sup>

Brother [Blanka] is well. Father Acquaroni is at Saint Charles.<sup>466</sup> Father Niel is better. Father Caretti remains the same and sends his most affectionate embraces to Father Ferrari, Messrs. Dahmen and "Take it all" [Tichitoli] and all the others there, Fathers John Baptist David, Chabrat, Badin, Nerinckx and Derigaud etc., and I am most cordially in the love of Jesus Christ,

your most humble and devoted servant,

Felix De Andreis,

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission

*In another hand:* 1818, June 26, Mr. De Andreis, St. Louis.

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<sup>465</sup> Ps 73:22-23.

<sup>466</sup> Rosati notes that Acquaroni contributed to putting an end to an enduring problem that had arisen at Saint Charles. Some parish trustees and their pastor, probably Dunand, had quarreled violently. Dubourg had worked to pacify them, and Acquaroni continued the reconciliation. (Rosati to Nervi, from Barrens, 8 December 1818, original at Collegio Brignole-Sale, Genoa, Rosati letters; copy in DRMA. Also, Gilbert J. Garraghan, *Saint Ferdinand de Florissant. The Story of an Ancient Parish* [Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1923].)

*Correspondence 1818***52. TO JOSEPH ROSATI, C.M., PRIEST, SAINT THOMAS<sup>467</sup>**

Most Dear and Respected Sir

St. Louis

11 July 1818

In spite of the most excessive heat which overwhelms and keeps me as it were in a continual state of agony, in spite of great many occupations to which I am not able to satisfy altogether, I will not omit to address you with few lines in order to comply with the desire you have witness of it. We are waiting here from day to day the arrival of M. L'Abbé [Bertrand] Martial with several Nuns called Jesuitesses (the ladies of the Sacred Heart),<sup>468</sup> the priest will remain here for the direction of an Academy, and the Nuns will go to St. Charles where all is ready for their receival. Mr. Niel will be appointed curate of St. Charles and chaplain of the Nunnery established for the education of young girls, and Mr. Acquaroni will confine his ministry to La Portage des Sioux, et La Dardenne. Sundays are for me almost intolerable for the burden of preaching always many times, and singing without interruption the whole time of Mass and Vespers because there is no body who can sing, at least without me, there is no organ, no pian-forte to give me a respite; therefore I long after your arrival that I may be released from such a burden unfit to my shoulders and the Divine Worship may be performed more decently. I have undertaken the translation of that famous Catechism, which gave me so much trouble at translation from

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<sup>467</sup> **Letter 52.** *Autograph letter, English and French, two pages, in the Archives of the General Curia, Rome; De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part II, #26.*

<sup>468</sup> The Religious of the Sacred Heart. The first superior, Saint Philippine Duchesne (1769-1852), looked forward to being with De Andreis. She wrote to her sister Marie-Amelie, Mme de Mauduit: "We are going to live in the same place as the holy Lazarist, Father de Andreis. He may be our confessor. He is at the head of the seminary and so is stationed in one place." (Louise Callan, *Philippine Duchesne* [Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1957], 221; from Bordeaux, 18 February 1818.) The sisters, Philippine Duchesne, Octavie Berthold, Eugénie Audé, Catherine Lamarre, and Marguerite Manteau, landed 21 August 1818, aboard the "Franklin." French text in Chantal Paisant, ed., *Les années pionnières* (Paris: Cerf, 2001), L. 18, p. 92.

*Correspondence 1818*



Period cabin, Shawneetown, Illinois.  
*Courtesy of the author*

Italian into English, and I am almost half way.<sup>469</sup> It will serve as a *canevas* ["outline"] for a course of instructions. We will endeavor to solemnize the best we can the feast of S. Vincent our Founder [19 July], and the Patron of our future Seminary. I have requested Mr. Niel to preach the Panegirik [*sic*], the Bishop will invite some other Priests to make the solemnity more conspicuous. Would to God that we may be fully invested with his Spirit to make him known more by the example, and virtues of his children, than by barren and fruitless praises, who do not agree with the behaviour of those, who glory on his name.

[Mr. Acquaroni]<sup>470</sup> has declared the most absolute aversion to live with us in community. I foresaw it! He wishes to live entirely at his

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<sup>469</sup> The writer refers to a catechism that he had written and endeavored to publish in 1814. His biographer Bozuffi (*Il servo di Dio*, 79-81) blames the envy and jealousy of other Vincentians for the fact that it was never published. Among his writings is a notebook, Volume VI in the Archives of the General Curia, with materials taken from other catechisms, probably intended as material for his own work. Rosati describes the affair in detail (Rosati, "Life," *Summarium*, 50-53), as does Ricciardelli (*Vita*, 100-63.) Further, his willingness to leave Italy might have reflected this period of contradictions in his life.

<sup>470</sup> The name has been scratched out, but it is known from the context, and Acquaroni is specifically mentioned on the same topic in Letter 53, 3 September 1818.



*Correspondence 1818*

ease, and liberty. I have endeavoured and scarcely obtained from him to difer [*sic*] the demand of dimission from the Congregation: he tried to obtain it from me. Otherwise he was in a resolution of getting it from Rome. I appeased him now granting him whatever he pleases in order to avoid worse evils.<sup>471</sup>

Brother Blanka seems to be tired of so much intrigues. He complains that he cannot live according to the rules of our Congregation, and he would be very glad to repair where he was [Italy]. I scarcely can appease him with future hopes. I assure you that all these things though they cause me some small trouble for a moment, however I have so great a confidence in God's mercy, and Providence that all things will succeed happily, that I rely entirely, and blindly in God's conduct. Notwithstanding I deem it necessary to consult with you as my Counsellor and partner of all trials that we may be always of one mind. Give me your opinion.

I believe that we must remain both together in one seminary until some of our novices may be sufficiently formed ... for the rest: God is our leader. "He is our Lord. Let him do that which is good in his eyes."<sup>472</sup> Mr. Carretti is always decaying ... pray for us, and especially for poor sinners ... be my interpreter to all those gentlemen so [?] you know ... I am hastening with the most perfect attachment and respectful corddality [*sic*] in the bowels of the merciful Lord.

P.S. [*French*] A monstrous ignorance raised to the highest degree of pride and presumption—this is the enemy against which we have to prepare ourselves to combat with limitless patience.

Your most humbly servant

Felix De Andreis, I.p.d.I.C.d.I.M.

[*"Unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission"*]

*In another hand:* 1818 June [*sic*], Mr De Andreis, St. Louis.

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<sup>471</sup> Acquaroni continued to have problems. In an undated letter to Louis Sibourd, vicar general in Louisiana, he stated: "My prophecy has come true. One day or another, it will be necessary to write to Rome: Father, we have no establishment here, the truth cannot be hidden." As he threatened in the same letter, he returned where he had come from. (Acquaroni to Sibourd, Italian, 1 page, no date, no place; copy or original, in Archives of the Roman Province, Rome, Baccari letters.)

<sup>472</sup> 1 Sam 3:18.

*Correspondence 1818*

**53. TO FRANCESCO ANTONIO BACCARI, C.M.,  
PRO-VICAR GENERAL, ROME<sup>473</sup>**

Saint Louis  
3 September 1818

Dear Father,

Up to now I have received only a small excerpt from your much-appreciated letter, contained in a letter from Father Rosati written from Kentucky. I received it this morning, because he did not wish to expose your original to the risk of being lost, as often happens to the mail in these immense forests. We regard the letters from Rome here as if they were a kind of relic. Since a steamboat is leaving tomorrow on the Mississippi for New Orleans with one of our priests,<sup>474</sup> I did not want to miss the chance to send this present letter to that port for its trip to Rome. In my joy I cannot yet bring myself to read the letter bringing the news from over there, because I realize that our good confreres remember us poor men, now half Indian. The consolation is very opportune, since we do not lack trouble from every side. I congratulate you here, since I have not had the honor of seeing you in person after your election to the office of vicar general.<sup>475</sup> I humbly thank God, *a*

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<sup>473</sup> **Letter 53.** *Autograph letter, Italian, four pages with address, in the Archives of the General Curia, Rome; De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part I, Sect. D, #12, 55-58; copy in the archives of Propaganda Fide. Scritture Riferite nei Congressi. Cod. 4. America Centrale. Dal Canada all'Istmo di Panama. Dal 1818 a [ui]to il 1820. Docum. 36. Fol. 114-19. Cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 358, 361, 363-64, 370, 374, 393-94, 396, 406, 435, 438-40.*

Francesco Antonio Baccari (1747-1835) worked with Sicardi in Rome beginning in 1816. In 1821, Pius VII named him vicar general for the Vincentians outside France.

<sup>474</sup> He was probably not a Vincentian, but more likely a Saint Louis priest. The steamboat was the "Franklin," scheduled to leave 4 September.

<sup>475</sup> After the French Revolution, the Congregation of the Mission was officially disbanded in France. One vicar general was appointed for France, and another for other countries. Having two temporary heads of the Congregation occasioned many problems, as De Andreis discovered in Bordeaux. Baccari, the recipient of this letter, became pro-vicar 4 October 1817, remaining in that post until a superior general came into office, 16 January 1827.

## Correspondence 1818

*quo factum est istud* ["by whom this has been done"],<sup>476</sup> and I make my reverence to you with all humility and submission.

I begin by thanking you for the part you played in the favorable outcome of our mission. I assure you that the news about sending two young students<sup>477</sup> in the company of Father Grassi has enlivened me, and has consoled both me and our bishop, who regards our foundation as the primary object and soul of all his undertakings. *Ostium magnum apertum est, et adversarii multi* ["A great door opened up, but I have many enemies"].<sup>478</sup> There are bones hard to chew. Irreligion supported by ignorance or the most shameless presumption causes huge sufferings, and renders useless all the efforts of zeal armed to ruin it. But may infinite thanks be given to the great Lord, *cuius est totum quod est optimum* ["From whom alone comes all that is good"],<sup>479</sup> and who still gives us great consolations. Father Acquaroni and I gave a retreat to about fifty young people, to dispose them for first communion.<sup>480</sup> I have never seen such emotion, such weeping, or such beautiful dispositions. Above all, I am very consoled to see the poor blacks. They did not even know what religion was, to say nothing of Christianity. They have become full of fervor and are eager for instruction, for the sacraments, and to edify their masters and friends. I have also received several heretics into the Church, and the future promises immense good, especially after we have set up the missions according to our rule. We have to do a little bit of everything. The day before yesterday I was in a place a little distance from here to place the first stone for a church that is soon to be built.<sup>481</sup> The cathedral here is

<sup>476</sup> Matt 21:42.

<sup>477</sup> Samuel Cooper had written that two students might come with Grassi. (Cooper to Rosati, from Emrnitsburg, 30 September 1818; in SLAA, Cooper file.) He must have been referring to the group of four (Cellini, Vergani, Potini, Brother Bettelani) who had already departed for Philadelphia.

<sup>478</sup> I Cor 16:9.

<sup>479</sup> From the collect of the sixth Sunday after Pentecost in the calendar of De Andreis's time.

<sup>480</sup> Acquaroni's name appears in the baptismal register for 18 August, which helps to date the retreat.

<sup>481</sup> This was the first chapel for the town of Carondelet, dedicated to Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Since it was a wooden building, De Andreis perhaps meant that he had presided at the placing of the first post. No resident priest lived in Carondelet until 1825, although the parish dates from 1821. Clergy visited from Saint Louis in the earliest days. De Andreis himself returned to celebrate two baptisms, 29 December 1818, according to the Old Cathedral baptismal records.

*Correspondence 1818*

progressing well. The demons are causing another temple for the heretics to rise directly behind ours,<sup>482</sup> but the rod of Moses swallows up that of the sorcerers,<sup>483</sup> and will force them to confess.

I am here with the bishop, and temporarily filling the office of vicar general, pastor, missionary and a little bit of everything. To put it better, I am ruining all these occupations, since I am convinced that I am good for nothing. Father Rosati remains in Bardstown, ten days away from here, and he heads our still traveling seminary. He does marvels, he is big and fat, and I am impatient to embrace him after the last ten out of eleven months when our duties have kept us apart. In a few days now he will be here, along with his group. Father Acquaroni is temporarily attending three parishes on the Missouri river. I arranged for the bishop to send him there to subdue his will, which he wants to use to be his own boss. But I do not know if I will be able in the future to let him remain separated like this once our house is established. He is disposed rather to request a dismissal than to remain in community. I have done what I could to accommodate him. I believe it expedient for his own and others' peace that he remain by himself. I await your judgment to know whether in conscience I can leave him in a parish, as if in a perpetual mission; or whether you decide that he should be granted his dismissal in case he does not wish to live as a missionary according to our rules and customs.

We have here four or five excellent postulants. I think that, according to the faculties received from Father Sicardi,<sup>484</sup> I should have them begin the novitiate and internal seminary, but I have some concerns as to when they should take vows and be incorporated into the Congregation. Since the basis of the establishment [the Barrens] has not yet been set, because the various circumstances inseparable from a mission of this type, and different plans keep being made and then changed according to the diverse circumstances and diverse roads which Providence lays out one after another, I can postpone finishing the work even for some years. Consequently I ask you to clarify this, and also to obtain for me the faculties to receive *titulo missionis* ["to the

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<sup>482</sup> This was noted in the "Missouri Gazette" for 11 and 18 September 1818.

<sup>483</sup> A casual reference to Exod 7:12, which states that the rod of Aaron swallowed up those of the sorcerers.

<sup>484</sup> Sicardi was Baccari's predecessor as pro-vicar general.

*Correspondence 1818*

title of a mission"] those who, through a special indult granted to the bishop, have been ordained *titulo missionis*, as others have already been ordained priests in Europe.<sup>485</sup>

Since other groups are going to be set up here, our establishment will most probably not be in the place indicated in my other letters, "the Barrens," but it will be here, close to the capital city of Saint Louis to be better able to help the bishop and to exercise the functions of our institute.<sup>486</sup> We will direct the major seminary, the public church, missions, retreats, etc. Yet all of this will demand time and money. Meanwhile the road to paradise, let us hope, is being built and is advancing. The reason for this change is that the bishop does not want us to leave his side, but wishes that either Father Rosati or I, in turn, should always stay with him. But this would be impossible with our establishment, since we are so few, and since I am ill so frequently, not to say always. Sometimes, too, I am laid low by my stomach troubles and am unable to do anything. These are reasons why we need to have subjects and especially brothers, like Brother Blanca. He is good at everything, although he has suffered much and is as thin and pale as a corpse, but still does the work of four men. Four postulant brothers have left us. One left us in Genoa,<sup>487</sup> another in Baltimore,<sup>488</sup> and two others are still with us but do not want to become brothers.<sup>489</sup> We agreed with the bishop that as soon as possible we would start a tour of missions, and we will go around together all over upper Louisiana.

We will thus begin to undertake the cultivation of the Indians of the Shawnee nation. They are not more than a day's journey from the present site of the current seminary.<sup>490</sup> The great difficulty is the

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<sup>485</sup> Every priest needed a "title," that is, some firm basis on which he would be able to live. For diocesan and religious priests, the title was normally their diocese or congregation. For missionaries, the concept of ordination for the mission had been developed. De Andreis was asking for permission as vicar general of Saint Louis, not as the superior of the Congregation of the Mission, to receive into the diocese those priests with this special designation.

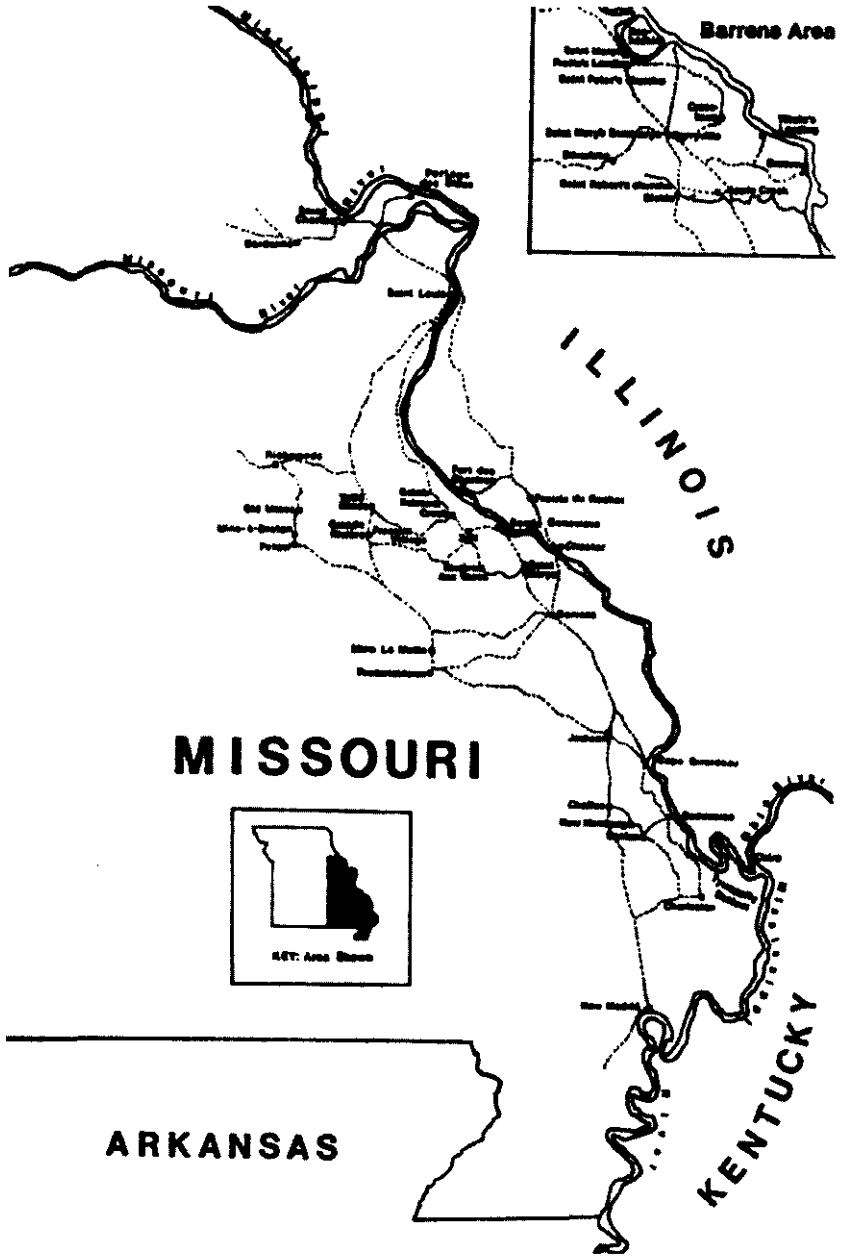
<sup>486</sup> As De Andreis and others often noted, this offers another instance of Dubourg's constant vacillation. Further, since the building had already begun, it would be proper to wonder what would become of it.

<sup>487</sup> Antonio Boboni.

<sup>488</sup> John Flegifont.

<sup>489</sup> Medard Delatre and Francis Borawanski.

<sup>490</sup> He refers to the Barrens, where the seminary had been, up to that time, planned.



Map of southeastern Missouri, with detail of the Barrens and local roads.  
*Collection of the De Andreis-Rosati Memorial Archives*

*Correspondence 1818*

language, but *gutta cavat lapidem, et dimiduum facti qui bene caepit, habet* ["A drop hollows out a stone;" and, "well begun is half done"].<sup>491</sup>

I have received the box of images from Father Colucci, and I send him a thousand thanks for them. How precious they are in these regions! We celebrated the feast of Saint Vincent with great solemnity, with music and a panegyric, with his picture at the high altar, the only altar in the cathedral. He has been recognized as its secondary patron, with a double feast of the second class with an octave. We are very busy translating our sermons into French and English, or rather, composing them anew, since that is easier than translating them.

Here we live in a state of the most complete poverty as regards providing the house with books and linens. Everything is very expensive here. The minimum expense is fifty bajocchi. A pair of badly made shoes costs us from one scudo to four and a half, and so we receive from the charity of benefactors whatever can be used in a house and church for missionaries whenever there is an occasion for someone to come. The bishop has already brought a huge quantity of items of every type, but there are so many people here to distribute them to, that what seems commonplace in itself becomes scarce when it is distributed.

Two superiors of the Daughters of Charity in Bordeaux have written me.<sup>492</sup> They are eager to come to make an establishment here, but I do not think it opportune just now, since there is lacking here the primary purpose of their institute, the poor. Here we have, so to speak, only one type of person: they are all "Messieurs and Gentlemen." There are no peasants. In their place are the black and mulatto slaves, the responsibility of their owners, and so a bajocco of alms can be given only to some wandering stranger. Tailors, shoemakers are lords, as are the others who practice trades, and they demand the same respect as a gentleman. The spirit of this great country is great liberty, equality, independence and openness. As a result we need great respect in the ministry: always to proceed sweetly, to suffer humbly, to know the right time and place for using zeal softened with great prudence. This spirit, common to everyone, is found in its greatest rigor among the Indians.

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<sup>491</sup> Cited from Ovid (*Epistulae ex Ponto*, 4.10.5) and Horace (*Epistula* 1.2.40).

<sup>492</sup> These letters are not extant.

### *Correspondence 1818*

They look on themselves as the only truly free men, and consequently much freer than other men. All this presents an obstacle to our ministry among them. But there is some good in this since they have a strong reverence for priests, but a great indifference to the Christian religion, which they deem to be only for us, not for them. They have a kind of natural religion, or rather, superstition. With the gift of miracles all these Indian nations would be converted in a moment. God is the master. *Non est abbreviata manus Domini* ["The hand of the Lord is not shortened"].<sup>493</sup> He has his own times of mercy. It is not our task to give the law to him. We must humble ourselves greatly and bear with the *sustentationes Dei* ["trials from God"].<sup>494</sup> I never stop repeating that we have not come here for this or that, to do what Saint Francis Xavier did. We are unworthy even to mention his name. But we are to do whatever God determined *ab aeterno* ["from eternity"] that we should do.

There is immense good to be done, and I firmly hope that the time will come to do it, *tempus faciendi* ["time for acting"].<sup>495</sup> Saint Vincent used to say that the works of God have their beginnings, their progress and their completion.<sup>496</sup> Above all we should guard ourselves from wanting to hurry too much. A thousand years to God are like yesterday come and gone. The smallest thing done steadily pleases self-love less. Although it looks like nothing, it is no less meritorious.

They are asking me for the letter to put it in the packet and so I have to stop. I place myself in spirit kneeling at your feet to beg you warmly to pray often for us, and to have others pray, since I assure you that I have a greater need of prayers than all the rest. Above all, through the holy sacrifice of the mass may the priests [there] be transported in spirit [here] across these wastes and exercise their zeal with their groans and promises, begging the goodness of him who disposes the hearts of men as he pleases. Perhaps just one more prayer might complete that quantity to which is reserved the grace of the conversion of so many souls of Indians, heretics, unbelievers and nominal Catholics, who

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<sup>493</sup> Isa 59:1.

<sup>494</sup> Sir 2:3.

<sup>495</sup> Ps 119:126 NAB: "It is time for the Lord to act."

<sup>496</sup> A commonplace from Saint Vincent, found, for example, in an undated letter to Louise de Marillac, cited by Collet; see *Mission et Charité* 19-20 (Janvier-juin 1970): 171.



*Correspondence 1818*

pierce our hearts with knife cuts without our being able to help. Please convey my best wishes to all, and I am, in the deepest esteem and veneration, in the love of our Lord,

your most humble, devoted and obedient servant

Felix De Andreis

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission

*Addressed:* Father Baccari, Priest of the Congregation of the Mission, Superior and Vicar General, Monte Citorio, Rome.

**54. TO JOSEPH ROSATI, C.M., PRIEST, BARRENS<sup>497</sup>**

Saint Louis

18 November (1818)

Very Reverend Father and Dear Friend,

Just yesterday I received your very dear letter of last 26 October. My blood ran cold at the news I received about the accident to your thumb. I hope that it will not turn out badly. I recall that I had forgotten to send you thanks for the large pictures of Saint Vincent, the atlas, etc., etc. On another occasion I will do so. I cannot write more here. Our Gethsemani<sup>498</sup> is ready. In order to begin, we are awaiting Mr. Tichitoli.

The bishop's change of Father Valezano for Father Ferrari is still pending.<sup>499</sup> The satisfaction we will have in [finally] seeing and embracing each another is the same thing.<sup>500</sup> You should know,

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<sup>497</sup> **Letter 54.** *Autograph letter, Italian, two pages, in the Archives of the General Curia, Rome; De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part II, #27.*

The addressee is known from internal evidence, since no name appears on the letter itself.

<sup>498</sup> The internal seminary (or novitiate).

<sup>499</sup> For some reason, the writer never recorded the bishop's ordination of Michael Portier, a diocesan priest, in Saint Louis, 29 September 1818. Portier later became bishop of Mobile, Alabama.

<sup>500</sup> That is, at the Barrens or in Saint Louis.

*Correspondence 1818*

however, that Father Caretti is still *in statu quo* ["in the state in which he has been"]. Brother [Blanka] will see when it will be [ready?] here, and through him I will write and will send [a letter].

I am completely yours, in the love of Jesus Christ, the common center of our hearts.

Your most humble servant

F. De Andreis, C.M.

*In other hands:*

1818 Nov. 18. Mr. De Andreis, St. Louis.

1818 18 9bre. Mr. De Andreis S. Louis.

**55. TO JOSEPH ROSATI, C.M., PRIEST, BARRENS<sup>501</sup>**

Saint Louis

23 November 1818

Very Reverend Father and Dear Friend Rosati,

Today at last, please God, we will begin our retreat. We have had to postpone it from week to week and from day to day until now, for one reason or another. Immediately after, we will begin the novitiate, and on this point I have firmly put my foot down. I am not at all ready to compromise because of any circumstances, except for something accidental. As to the remaining details *aut sint ut esse debent aut potius non sint* ["either they are as they should be, or else they are not"]. I would love it if you could see our little Gethsemani, for at first glance you might actually imagine it to be the novitiate of Rome, Naples or Genoa, since we tried to imitate them in every way. The dividing curtains,<sup>502</sup> for example, are cut from the same type of material and we have the same type of cleanliness, poverty and simple elegance. We have room for three, but no more. Besides Father Valezano, another excellent subject, whom I believe to be the best among those of the

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<sup>501</sup> **Letter 55.** *Copy, Italian, in SLAA, De Andreis papers.*

<sup>502</sup> The dormitory curtains traditionally hung between the beds of the novices.

*Correspondence 1818*

established new ties with the glorious apostle of the Indies.<sup>514</sup> Two different events affected us. Just as I had predicted to him, our good Father Caretti passed to another life, the first fruits of the missionaries of upper Louisiana. He was sent to heaven at the same time as our Gethsemani was being opened through the act of clothing three candidates, the first fruits of the Congregation in America. He died about 9:00 P.M., a quarter of an hour after I had left his side to perform that function. I willingly leave to Father Ferrari the task of describing this sad event, but I keep for myself the task of telling you something of our grief.

Our good deceased certainly went to possess the fruits of his long and frenzied sufferings, with all the proofs of being predestined. He told me several times that if the Lord preserved his life he wanted to enter the Congregation, and he wanted to leave the little that he could dispose of to the Lazarists. For good reasons I urged him to leave his estate to the mission, that is to say, to the bishop's disposition. He could well have said: *transivimus per ignem et aquam, et eduxisti nos in refrigerium* ["We crossed through fire and water, and you brought us to a place of refreshment"].<sup>515</sup> Everything became painful for him: eating, sleeping, etc. His purity of conscience, of which he reached a high level, caused him to analyze every thought, every intention, every word, *usque ad purum* ["to the nth degree"]. This mystic fire purified him interiorly, and disposed him for union with him who is purity itself. He received viaticum several times, and communion often. Twice he received the last anointing, and twice the plenary indulgence. In his last days I was almost continually at his side since he wished to be prepared with prayers for his great journey. He was in his right mind to the end, and made the sacrifice of his life with the most beautiful resignation. Tomorrow we will have his solemn funeral. The choir is decked all in black, and he will be buried in the sanctuary of the new cathedral.<sup>516</sup> Today his body is on view, clothed in priestly vestments,

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<sup>514</sup> Saint Francis Xavier, often proposed by De Andreis as a model missionary; his feast was celebrated 3 December. In his spiritual notes for the day, he noted that he had "said mass in the novitiate in the presence of the relics of the great saint and apostle of the Indies." (Ricciardelli, *Vita*, 468.)

<sup>515</sup> Ps 66:12.

<sup>516</sup> The present location of his remains is unknown.

*Correspondence 1818*

in his room next to ours. Many people are coming to visit him and to pray at the foot of the coffin.

I will ask the bishop for the book you asked me about, *History of the Holy Bible*,<sup>517</sup> and I will send it with the rest at the first opportunity.

Our internal seminary promises much good, if I, miserable as I am, do not spoil God's work, and if health helps us, since, with the exception of Father Ferrari, the other two<sup>518</sup> are *sub jugo medicinae* ["under the yoke of medicine"].<sup>519</sup> I do not know how I will be able *addere oneri jam opprimenti* ["to add the already burdensome weight"] the directorship [of the novitiate] and the theology class. I hope that God will help me, through the intercession of Saint Vincent. I have reflected on your plan to have theology classes offered to the novices, and I am not far from agreeing with your idea after some months, once the cycle of the exercises of the novitiate has assumed its proper rhythm. I assure you that I am doing it like a Swiss, "Get back, behind the wall!"<sup>520</sup> Yet I have to act in the greatest possible order, I who am disorderly by nature and unaccustomed to it. Pray that the Lord will strengthen me in truly not trusting in myself, and all will go well.

Concerning Brother [Blanka] I think that, overall, it would be better to keep him here *usque donec* ["until such time"]. Sometimes a disappointment produces an opportunity, and I think we are in that situation here. His case is truly pitiful. I do not know what I would do were I in his place. He is unable to share it as he should. This house is constantly like a stormy sea that cannot be calmed. It would take cold blood, even frozen blood, not to be disturbed. Only in the arms of him

<sup>517</sup> *History of the Holy Bible contained in the Old and New Testament*. ["For the use of children."] Many editions; e.g. (Philadelphia, 1809), 52 pp.

<sup>518</sup> Dahmen and Tichitoli. The latter did not remain long in the internal seminary (or novitiate) because of his weak lungs and fear of consumption or tuberculosis. Though a novice for less than two weeks, the bishop ordained him a priest on 15 December, and sent him immediately to Assumption parish, Bayou Lafourche, in lower Louisiana. He returned to the Barrens where he took his vows 26 July 1821.

<sup>519</sup> Based on 1 Tim 6:1: "under the yoke of slavery."

<sup>520</sup> "Swiss" is the name given to the ushers in some European churches responsible for good order during mass, processions, etc. Here De Andreis sees himself as a guard, keeping worldly distractions away.

*Correspondence 1818*

*cui venti et mare obediunt* ["whom winds and sea obey"]<sup>521</sup> can one find a safe haven.

[*In another hand*: About books he (Rosati) requests]

About the second encyclopedia, I think that the money would have to be minted for it, since we are honoring the immense treasures of divine providence, as Saint Vincent would say, trusting without human considerations. If one were content with a change of heart there would be fire enough to bake bread, and it would be more tasty and nutritious.<sup>522</sup> I am speaking foolishly. God knows better than I.

*Post factum lauda* ["Praise after the fact"]. I was just about to place a reverent kiss upon his [Jesus's] breast which encloses a heart so well made, when I read the tender comment about the impression which the arrival of our confreres<sup>523</sup> at Father Badin's could make at Saint Thomas.<sup>524</sup> I think that I have reflected on this, but the bishop [Dubourg] spoke to me about it afterward. But I have written to Father David with an imported ink (I should not say it) of humility and thanks for everything; I believe that the bishop [Flaget] has thought of us. How greatly those hearts please me. *Deo gratias, Deo gratias* ["Thanks be to God"].<sup>525</sup>

[*Written in the margin*: Say two masses for my intention. I enclose some money for them.]

Write me often. We are all well, except the two I mentioned and Mr. De Neckere who has a tertian fever.<sup>526</sup> I recommend the novitiate to your prayers and to those of the seminary. I am completely occupied with this responsibility as director. I am missing the manuscripts of

<sup>521</sup> Matt 8:27.

<sup>522</sup> This is the writer's way of saying that he had no money for the purchase, and that Rosati should be content with the little he has.

<sup>523</sup> This was the group led by Francis Cellini, which numbered Philip Borgna, Anthony Potini and Brother Bartholomew Bettelani. They arrived from Livorno in Philadelphia on 28 September 1818, aboard the "John Burgwin," according to shipping records.

<sup>524</sup> Badin made his home at or near Saint Thomas.

<sup>525</sup> In this confusing paragraph De Andreis means that he wrote to David with what he believed to be unaccustomed humility and thanks for the hospitality shown the new group of Vincentians.

<sup>526</sup> He might have been regarded as a postulant; he was teaching at the Saint Louis Academy. A tertian fever was one that occurred every 48 hours; the expression was used to refer to malaria.

*Correspondence 1818*

the conferences.<sup>527</sup> I am seeking to supply them as well as I can. I greatly love your frankness in having concealed nothing from me. May you be blessed for it. Nothing in the world would do me more honor than having that disposition added to such a beautiful virtue, and this is what I recommend above all else to the novices. Let us wish one another well in the Lord. Oh, how sweet it is to find ourselves inspired together here in the sanctuary of love in the most sacred heart of JESUS! Oh, *bonum est nos hic esse* ["It is good for us to be here"].<sup>528</sup> *Haec sequatur me in seculum seculi* ["May this follow me for ever"].<sup>529</sup> It is necessary to find everything there within, as in a general store (pardon the expression) where are found ornaments, and encyclopedias and dictionaries, and whatever cannot be found in Saint Louis, and which the bishop protests vigorously that he does not wish to provide and give: *quid mihi est in caelo* etc. ["This is for me in heaven."]<sup>530</sup> We can do with less, but we need God. Do not think, however, that I am in need, since I am using all my diligence at least to finish covering the dirty seminary table with a longer towel, when a tablecloth is not available. That's enough. I will never finish ....

Believe me to be, with respectful affection and affectionate respect  
your most humble and devoted servant,

Felix De Andreis,

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission

P.S. We will celebrate the Christmas Novena *sumus* [?] *tunc ad* [illegible].

*In other hands:* Letters of Father De Andreis.

1818 4 xbre. S. Louis. Mr. De Andreis.

1818 Dece. 4. Mr. De Andreis. St. Louis.

*Addressed:* Rev. Mr. Rosati Superior, of St. Mary's Seminary, Barrens.

<sup>527</sup> Probably a reference to some talks which De Andreis wrote, but which did not arrive.

<sup>528</sup> Mark 9:5.

<sup>529</sup> Ps 23:6.

<sup>530</sup> Ps 73:25 NAB: "Whom else have I in heaven?"

*Correspondence 1818*

57. TO FRANCESCO ANTONIO BACCARI, C.M.,  
 PRO-VICAR GENERAL, ROME<sup>531</sup>

Saint Louis  
 7 December 1818

Very Reverend and Dear Father,

Some time ago I already answered<sup>532</sup> your much-appreciated letter before I received the original. Now that I have it actually in hand and can read its contents, and since our situation has changed greatly, I am obliged to add hastily the following details before sailing which probably leaves tomorrow on the Mississippi for New Orleans. Your letters can be sent to the brother of our bishop, Bishop Dubourg, a resident there in that city, or even better to the bishop himself. "Right Reverend Louis William Dubourg for the Rev. Mr. De Andreis."

At long last Father Rosati with all our mobile seminary has moved from Bardstown, Kentucky, to Louisiana, eighty miles from here in a territory called in English, *Barrens*, which means sterile or deserted land. Our house, or external seminary,<sup>533</sup> is being built there. It is sixty feet long by thirty-seven wide, with three floors and stores beneath. There we have been given a piece of land sufficient to maintain the house. In particular, they are the most religious people in the whole diocese, and they have willingly imposed a tithe on themselves. They all are English Americans, a good and industrious people.

It has been more than a year since I had the consolation of seeing Father Rosati, mentioned above, and I do not know when I shall have the opportunity again since each of us is bound to his place with bonds too strong to let us leave.

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<sup>531</sup> **Letter 57.** Autograph letter, Italian, four pages, in the Archives of the General Curia, Rome; De Andreis collection, Volume I, Sect. D, #13, 59-62; copy in the archives of Propaganda Fide. *Scritture Riferite nei Congressi. Cod. 4. America Centrale. Dal Canada all'Istmo di Panama. Dal 1818 a [?]/[?] il 1820. Docum. 46. Cited in Rosati/Burlando, Sketches of the Life, 145-50, 164-67. Cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 354, 375, 391, 398, 410, 414-15, 443-44, 446, 481, 483.*

<sup>532</sup> 3 September 1818.

<sup>533</sup> That is, a seminary for diocesan candidates.

*Correspondence 1818*

I attended one of the companions who came from Europe with us during his long illness of consumption. Two days ago we buried him with great ceremony. He was a virtuous and excellent priest about twenty-eight years old, formerly a canon of Porto Maurizio, named Joseph Caretti. He told me more than once of his desire *vita comite* ["during life"] to become our [confrere].

He died on the feast of Saint Francis Xavier, our great protector, at the very moment that I had left his side to receive as our novice his worthy companion, the priest Andrew Ferrari, also from Porto Maurizio, along with two others: the German deacon Mr. Francis Xavier Dahmen and the subdeacon from Como, Mr. Joseph Tichitoli. The first and third are 26, and the second 29. They have all been fine subjects for more than a year. After the usual retreat they were admitted to the internal seminary or novitiate on that same memorable day. According to the usage of American missionaries, who give a biblical name to pious places, we have named our seminary or novitiate Gethsemani, which in Hebrew means oil press. We know that we will never lack either the press of troubles or the oil of graces, and since Gethsemani was for our Lord the prelude of his passion so ... etc. This novitiate consists of one room of about 16 feet long by 11 wide, free standing<sup>534</sup> and made of stone and brick. Inside is a passage, two wardrobes, a little altar, an adequate library, three beds separated by curtains of blue cloth like those separating the beds of the novices in Rome and in other novitiates. Each one has his own tiny table, chair, crucifix, Rodriguez,<sup>535</sup> Bible (New Testament), Roman Catechism<sup>536</sup> and Thomas à Kempis.<sup>537</sup> I have translated into French a summary of the seminary rules; it has all the essentials.

Many other excellent subjects from various nations are eager to be admitted, but the space there is too small for more than three and for now it is impossible to have a larger area. Poverty exists there instead

<sup>534</sup> That is, a small building, separated from the others on the property known as the Bishop's Block. It had been specially built during the summer or fall for use as an internal seminary (or novitiate).

<sup>535</sup> Alphonsus Rodriguez, S.J., *The Practice of Perfection and the Christian Virtues*. This work formed part of the reading required of novices, beginning in the time of Vincent de Paul.

<sup>536</sup> The Catechism of the Council of Trent.

<sup>537</sup> *The Imitation of Christ*.



*Correspondence 1818*

of decoration, and fervor so reigns that I am overwhelmed and embarrassed. We observe absolutely the same order of the day as at Rome and elsewhere, and all the other little practices down to the last detail: rising at 5:00, meditation, reading, visits, chapters, conferences and discussions, asking penances, [interior] communications, an exact silence, genuflections on entering and leaving, office in common, corporal exercises, etc., and everything in the same strict form as in Italy, reading at table, etc. I have more need of bridle than spur. Too, I am there like a Swiss Guard with his halberd, eyes closed, and I cry out to everyone who comes in: Stand back.<sup>538</sup> "Such, O God,"<sup>539</sup> since I am anxious that the plant not spoil in its development in a plot of land where one has to count doubly on the quality of the tree. Saint Vincent is beginning to be known, and is doing good here.

I am worried about the new colony of the four confreres sent from Italy:<sup>540</sup> Father Cellini, two clerics and the brother, whom I learned had arrived in Philadelphia without any money. A good priest<sup>541</sup> lent them a sum of about 400 or 500 scudi to continue their trip, and he obliged us to pay him in masses (here the stipend is fixed at five paoli). Poor men! They left on foot from Lancaster for Pittsburgh, where they will have from ten to fifteen days of travel through wooded mountains, forests, terrible roads, rivers, cliffs, etc. From Pittsburgh they will still have more than 700 miles to go by water down to Louisville. There a good priest will receive them and keep them with him until spring, and then they will come to the seminary, where Father Rosati is awaiting them with open arms. I am surprised at not receiving any letters from them. Were the journey not so lengthy, expensive and of dubious success, I would send someone to meet them, but where? The Lord and Saint Vincent will help them.

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<sup>538</sup> That is, he tries to keep away any influences that could harm his novices.

<sup>539</sup> That is, these novices should be models for those who come afterward.

<sup>540</sup> Francis Cellini, Philip Borgna, Anthony Potini and Brother Bartholomew Bettelani. They arrived at Saint Thomas in Kentucky on 3 December 1818, and at the Barrens on 5 January 1819.

<sup>541</sup> Louis Sibourd, Dubourg's vicar general, in Philadelphia for medical attention. Dubourg records that Sibourd gave them \$300 to be paid through celebrating 825 masses. (Dubourg to Rosati, from Saint Louis, 14 November 1818; original in SLAA, Rosati papers; copy in DRMA.)

*Correspondence 1818*

Meanwhile I must remain here beside the bishop, and I do not know when I will be able to get away. There is apparently no way to find someone to help me. I am good for nothing. I am nearly always sick, and I do not know how to act to accomplish the little I can do.<sup>542</sup> I have almost the entire responsibility of the cathedral on me. I am the director [of novices], and I teach a class in theology to seven or eight clerics who are giving classes in the public high school, called here an Academy.<sup>543</sup> At least I have not begun this latter duty. I have a great need of being helped by prayer to die to myself like the grain in the gospel, in order to be able to bear fruit. The state of religion is constantly improving, and it makes me hope much more for the future. Once our establishment has been consolidated, and once the front line has been drawn up, I expect that we will see marvels. Meanwhile the good being done is not small although, to my embarrassment, I have to admit that in fact I am nothing but a sterile tree, *et igni devoranda, parturiens mons et nascetur ridiculus mus* ["to be devoured in the fire,"<sup>544</sup> "bringing forth a mountain, but only a funny little mouse is born"],<sup>545</sup> ... *Soli Deo honor et gloria, nobis autem confusio* ["To God alone be the honor and glory",<sup>546</sup> "but to us be the shame"<sup>547</sup>].

Father Acquaroni is ministering to two small parishes. The people love him and he is doing much good there.

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<sup>542</sup> This statement contradicts what Baccari chose to report to his confreres in his letter of 2 February 1819:

Three years have already passed since the departure of the first missionaries, and it has been two years since they have been working at the price of the most difficult fatigues. Despite the extreme rigor of the cold that they have had to endure and are still enduring, despite a life full of pains and sufferings, God has always helped them and kept them in good health. This is not without a certain miraculous nature in the person of Father De Andreis. During his time in Italy, because of the weakness of his constitution, he was subject to frequent illnesses. Today, as he has written several times, he enjoys perfect health.

(*Recueil*, 2, 354.)

<sup>543</sup> This was the Saint Louis College, which began 16 November 1818, under the direction of Father Niel.

<sup>544</sup> See Ezek 15:6.

<sup>545</sup> Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 139.

<sup>546</sup> 1 Tim 1:17.

<sup>547</sup> Bar 1:15.

*Correspondence 1818*

An Indian interpreter fell ill and I went to visit him. He made his confession, gave himself completely to God, and now frequents the sacraments. I engaged him to work with me to translate the catechism into the Indian language. This will help us greatly on the apostolic journeys that we will make in the future. But the harvest is great and the laborers are very few throughout a land such as this diocese, equal in size to all of Europe. We are only a few priests, almost all responsible for forming the other clergy who have arrived from Europe. There are about forty of them. We are also to restore the Catholic faith. It has been reduced for the most part to just a name only, since so many here are advanced in age and still know nothing about God or religion. They have never made their first communion. They live in concubinage and give no sign of being Christians. I found some who do not know what the Sign of the Cross is, nor the Our Father, nor anything else. They have confused ideas, believing that there are three gods, that Jesus Christ began to exist as God when he was born of the Virgin Mary, and other similar things, especially in moral matters. Several times they wanted me to baptize the sick without water, blithely believing this was possible. A very large number here, especially of Anglo-Americans, call themselves *Nullists*, that is, they claim to follow no religion. Others are always floating, never deciding on anything. These are sometimes won over, especially at death, or in one way or another.

Although we are here like men totally dead to the world, buried *in loco mortis et vastae solitudinis* ["in a place of death and great loneliness"],<sup>548</sup> yet we do enjoy from time to time receiving news about our dear confreres in Italy. *Funes ceciderunt mihi in praeclaris* ["For me the measuring lines have fallen on pleasant places"].<sup>549</sup> It is truly a wonderful fate to be responsible for working in the most abandoned portion of the flock of Christ, in a thankless land which brings together all the inconveniences of bitter cold and great heat, and which does not produce the great relief such as everyone enjoys over there. No wine, no grapes, no figs, no oil, no vegetables, etc. Viewed with the eyes of faith, all this is so very precious and elicits our gratitude. If we only baptized someone about to die without baptism and gathered up

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<sup>548</sup> Deut 32:10.

<sup>549</sup> Ps 16:6.

### Correspondence 1818

a soul lost in the darkness of ignorance and vice, we would be well rewarded for all our privations and sacrifices. Through God's mercy these frequent events console us greatly.

I received the first chest with the images sent by Father Colucci, and I gratefully await the second one that he promised, the one with the rosaries and crucifixes.<sup>550</sup> I assure him that these things do great good here, since not only are there none here, but the people have never seen them. We could use entire shops full of them, since they produce such abundant fruits. They make religion known, and cause the acts of religion to be practiced with the great results that stem from them, but the country is so huge that they cannot satisfy everyone. I still await, by means of our good confreres who are yet to arrive, the pictures that you kindly promised me. They will help to adorn our house and church at the Barrens. I am edified and embarrassed at the humility and diffidence in self emerging from your letter, a spirit so proper to our institute. Please also add prayers to your example, so that I might become a worthy imitator of our great Saint Vincent.

We are very aware of the remembrance, love and interest that you and our other Italian confreres show for our poor Indians. We cannot repay you for it except by praying in the adorable heart of Jesus Christ, the shrine of charity, unity and truth, that we all be united in spirit where we repose, where we take our delight, where we find everything *omne bonum et pignus vel ipsum vita, vel ipsum vitae aeternae* ["every good and a pledge itself either of life or of eternal life"]. It is only to make known this hidden treasure, to make known, loved and served this good lord and good God to someone for whom it was impossible to do so. For this we have left the ease of Italy, sailed the great ocean, crossed the immense deserts from east to west in North America, and have sacrificed ourselves here. This alone makes us undergo shipwrecks on a sea of consolation which *exsuperat omnem sensum* ["surpasses all understanding"],<sup>551</sup> and which makes each of us cry out *et unde hoc mihi* ["and how did this happen to me"]<sup>552</sup> If the Congregation is

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<sup>550</sup> DRMA has a crucifix said to have been given by De Andreis to a young girl on the day of her first communion. It was passed down in her family and then given to the Vincentian community. The Old Cathedral in Saint Louis also has a crucifix that had belonged to him. It was probably given to Ann Lucas Hunt at his death.

<sup>551</sup> Phil 4:7.

<sup>552</sup> Luke 1:43.

*Correspondence 1818*

established here solidly, as we firmly expect and which seems certain to all of us, our successors will do immense good, since the field is unbelievably vast and keeps on growing because of the constant emigrations from all parts of Europe. People come here in such droves that the population doubles yearly, especially here in the capital.<sup>553</sup> It is so full that it is impossible to live. Everything is immeasurably expensive. What in Italy costs one, costs here 30 or 100. Since business is done ordinarily only in scudi, and in Saint Louis living expenses are double those in other areas, we are in bad straits. And so we will always need to receive help of every sort from our Italian benefactors.

Through long disuse my Tuscan language is getting wrinkled, shrinking because of the English and French that I speak, so that now it is neither one nor the other. Please pardon my misery of having such a limited spirit. We are satisfied with our good bishop. He really has been a very loving father to us. He is truly the man needed for this region. Pray for him, since the good of our establishment depends on him, as well as the good of this limitless diocese, which could form several empires.

Please convey our sentiments to Fathers Sicardi, Ceracchi, Giordana, Colucci, and all the others *nominatim* ["by name"]. We bear them all in our hearts marked with signs of sincerest affection, esteem and veneration. I will also write, or rather respond, to Father Colucci<sup>554</sup> but please obtain a dispensation for me from it since the sailing leaves tomorrow, and I still have three other letters to respond to from France, and I do not know how I will do it.

Enough. In paradise we will have time to enjoy one another at our leisure in the very center of love and charity. *O aeterna veritas, o vera caritas, o cara aeternitas, tu es ipse Deus meus, ad te suspiro die ac nocte* ["O eternal truth, O true charity, O dear eternity, you are my God, for you I long day and night"].<sup>555</sup> In God, with God and through God, God alone and nothing else.

Excuse my wandering, and believe me to be completely penetrated with the deepest respect and admiration for you,

<sup>553</sup> Saint Louis was the capital of the territory of Missouri from 1812 to 1821.

<sup>554</sup> Perhaps Letter 62, 9 February 1819.

<sup>555</sup> Based on Augustine, *Confessions*, 7, 10.

*Correspondence 1818*

your most humble and obedient servant,  
Felix De Andreis  
unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission

## 1819

*As his pastoral experience grows, Felix understands more clearly the realities of missionary life in America. He plans new missions, in Indiana and Florida, but has to battle indifferent Catholics in Saint Louis. The mission to the Indians continues to figure in his thoughts and prayers, yet their problems with alcohol and different cultural standards aggravate his worries. These doubtless weaken his health, so much so that he nearly dies (numbers 63, 64), either from illness or from being dosed with a form of mercury. He acknowledges many times that missionary life is both rewarding and difficult. He fears being named a bishop to help Dubourg. Life at the Barrens moves on and he has the happiness of being reunited with Joseph Rosati after nearly two years. Angelo Inglesi, a clerical impostor, makes his first appearance in 1819. Overwork and multiple anxieties clearly take their toll on Felix, and the year closes with him in the grip of a major depression (number 72).*

58. TO JOSEPH ROSATI, C.M., PRIEST, BARRENS<sup>556</sup>

Saint Louis  
9 January (1819)

Very Reverend and Dear Father,

I did not want to write you since I am so busy. I wrote a long letter to Rome and three to Bordeaux this afternoon,<sup>557</sup> and the novitiate has two doorbells<sup>558</sup> that keep calling me back and forth and leave me no time. But I have to think about packing the box and the package. I hope that you will be happy to find [in it] almost everything you asked

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<sup>556</sup> **Letter 58.** *Autograph letter, Italian, one page, in the Archives of the General Curia, Rome; De Andreis collection Volume I, Part II, #24, unpagged. Incorrectly dated, in another hand, 9 December 1818. Also cited by Rosati in his "Breve Relazione della Virtù del Sig[no]r Andrea Ferrari Prete della Congregazione della Missione morto alla Nuova Orleans li 2 9bre [Novembre] 1822," copy in DRMA, Rosati papers.*

The addressee is not given, but internal evidence, such as the mention of Valezano at the Barrens, leads one to conclude that it was Joseph Rosati.

<sup>557</sup> These letters are no longer extant.

<sup>558</sup> That is, the two novices.

*Correspondence 1819*

for. But Rodriguez and the Montpellier Catechism<sup>559</sup> are for the Christian Brothers.

The novitiate causes me wonderment, I am telling the truth. I am filled with contentment at the exact punctuality, dedication and fervor that these good novices show. They have more need of a bridle than of a spur. I do not need to repeat anything twice. They keep discovering my intentions. They are the first to ask me to hold chapter to ask a penance, etc. Their only problem is committing some small fault against the rule: keeping silence, genuflecting on entering and leaving, etc. They act as if they were already seasoned novices. Only once did I succeed in arriving before them at morning prayer, although I use all my diligence. They used to have some problem in getting up at five in the morning according to our practice, but the novitiate had hardly begun when their diligence reached its highest pitch. For my part I try to show my satisfaction. This excites tears on both sides, and we are happily *in Domino* ["in the Lord"]. I note readily that, even though my spirit is sluggish, it accomplishes much. God and Saint Vincent be blessed. The bishop wanted to say things which would have diverted and rendered useless all my efforts. I opposed them with some force, and he has left me completely alone.<sup>560</sup> Pray for us. Regards to Father Valezano<sup>561</sup> and to all. I am in the love of Jesus Christ,

Your very humble and devoted servant,

F. De Andreis

Unworthy Priest of the Congregation of the Mission

[In the margin:] The bishop has no time to write.

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<sup>559</sup> Pouget, François Aimé, (1666-1723), *Instructions générales en forme de Catéchisme... où l'on explique... l'histoire et les dogmes de la religion, la morale chrétienne... et les usages de l'église* (Paris, 1702). The catechism, popularly known as the Montpellier catechism, was often reprinted and translated. It had been put on the Index of Forbidden Books because of its supposedly Jansenist tendencies. Many French editions appeared. An English translation is: *General instructions by way of catechism* (London, 1723). Alphonsus Rodriguez, S.J. *Practice of Perfection and Christian Virtues*. (Many editions and translations.)

<sup>560</sup> The bishop wrote Joseph Rosati at this same period, "I sometimes find Father De Andreis not too flexible, sometimes even a little hard. This comes from his temperament .... Burn this. Besides, I count on your discretion." (Dubourg to Rosati, from Saint Louis, 24 December 1818; copy in SLAA, Rosati papers, 1-A-3.1.)

<sup>561</sup> Valezano, a priest already accepted as a candidate for the Congregation, was serving as the pastor of the Barrrens. He did not pursue his wish of entering the Community. His name is spelled variously, although the spelling here is the one he used.



*Correspondence 1819*

**59. TO FRANCESCO ANTONIO BACCARI, C.M.,  
PRO-VICAR GENERAL, ROME<sup>562</sup>**

Saint Louis, Missouri [sic] Territory  
4 February 1819

Very Reverend and Dear Father,

Thanks be to God and to the most holy Virgin and to Saint Vincent, our dear confreres, Father [Francis] Cellini, Brother [Philip] Borgna,

<sup>562</sup> **Letter 59.** *Letter, part autograph, part in the hand of Andrew Ferrari, Italian, six pages, in the Archives of the General Curia, Rome; De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part I, Sect. D, #15, 83-88; another contemporary copy exists in the same archives. Also, material on Cellini was quoted in a notice on him, Archives of the General Curia, Rome, in "America P. II," Appendice, 152. Cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 348-50, 371, 376-80, 395-96, 410, 415, 421, 431-32, 438-39, 444-45, 448-50, 481-84. The name of the addressee was added by another hand.*

In his annual letter to the Vincentians, dated 2 February 1819, Baccari reported on the American mission as follows:

I have to admit to you that I cannot read his [De Andreis's] letters without feeling moved and shedding tears of consolation. May it please God that in a few words I might be able to describe all the good being done there, and which our confreres are doing. Up to today, they have acted like true apostles .... They work at cultivating the souls of Catholics, of whom there are a good number in those vast regions. They also work at converting the many Protestants and their ministers who have become established in those areas to carry on business. They have, moreover, worked at converting the Indians, who dwell in those vast forests. [He continues to describe their personal qualities, and conduct, and the difficulties of the work.] There [Saint Louis] they have built a house and seminary, and a cathedral has been built. Up to now, their usual food is badly cooked corn and meat that is bad and tough. Their drink is water, quite often of bad quality. Their homes, at least in Kentucky where they stopped for a long period, are made of tree trunks, and the little churches where the Catholics assemble from distant places on feast days are built in the same way as the cabins in the interior of North America. Both day and night, they are summoned to help the sick and the dying in places as far away as sixty and sometimes a hundred miles. They have to preach three or four times on feast days in various parishes removed from one another, and celebrate two masses, and sometimes remain fasting until evening.

(*Recueil*, 2, 353-54.)

*Correspondence 1819*

and Brother [Anthony] Potini, and our novice lay brother [Bartholomew] Bettelani, have arrived at the end of their journey. It is our seminary of Saint Mary of the Barrens, eighty miles from here, where Father Rosati is the superior. I have not had, and I do not know when I will have, the pleasure of embracing them because of the unceasing occupations that keep us apart for now. It has been sixteen months now since Father Rosati and I have seen each another. And it has been some months since I have seen Father Acquaroni who is thirty or forty miles from here on the other side of the [Missouri] river, the first [Rosati] to the south, the second [Acquaroni] to the north of Saint Louis. I am here stuck beside the bishop to preach,<sup>563</sup> to exercise the ministry of vicar general, and to be assistant in the parish, since the bishop himself is the pastor, *ut ei Ecclesiae praediorum dominium cedat* ["as it grants to him the right to the returns from the Church"]. I have to teach theology to several young ecclesiastics who run a school for the public, called an academy. But what consoles me most is the duty of being director of the novitiate, since I have angels for novices. They anticipate me in doing whatever they should do according to the most

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<sup>563</sup> An eye-witness wrote:

Tho there is a strong current of prejudice in this place against the Catholic church, I have not heard one reasonable objection against the lives or conduct of its ministers—(there are 10 or 12 here). And I must bear witness that the sermons of the Bishop Du Bourg and the vicar general (Mr. D'Andreas) breathe only the most evangelical spirit.

(Graff von Phul to John Breckinridge, from Saint Louis, 31 December 1818. In collections of the Missouri Historical Society, Saint Louis.) Von Phul and his sister, Anna Maria, were not Catholics, although she joined the Church in 1822.

*Correspondence 1819*

minute and punctual observance of the rules.<sup>564</sup> Fortunately I have been able to get a copy of these and I have translated them from Italian. We have conferences, repetitions, chapter, readings in common, colloquies, etc., everything in English. Since I have spoken enough in other previous letters about the novitiate, I will not do so just now and will move on to other matters.

I am humbly grateful to your and Father Colucci's zeal and to all the others who have contributed to the work by the help sent us in these new colleagues. However, if you ever have the chance to send others, I would beg you please to follow the principle that I mentioned in my preceding letter<sup>565</sup> of sending only those who have finished their novitiate and their studies. Otherwise they run a great danger because the need for candidates is so great that this sometimes causes them to fall away from their duty, and we cannot allow people to come here who are still in formation and who do not yet exercise the ministry. With some difficulty I obtained from the bishop the permission for the novices to spend only six months in a strict and rigorous novitiate because meanwhile they live here at his expense and he has reading at table imposed on himself with all the others, just like in our own refectory, because the novices eat at the same table. I am awaiting Brother Bettelani here to switch with Brother Blanka and I will give

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<sup>564</sup> The Paris manuscript recalls:

While he directed the internal seminary at Saint Louis, the seminary was reduced to two young clerics. Yet, despite the small number, everything took place in perfect regularity, and both of the seminarians would go in turn one or more times a week to ask Father De Andreis what they should do to fulfill obedience. One day one of them went to find him for this purpose, and he wept a great deal. Father De Andreis told him to go with his companion and have a walk in the garden. In the fervor of obedience, our two novices went to the garden for this purpose, even though it did not have gravel paths. They had scarcely done so and gone twenty feet when they saw a door open, and Father De Andreis calling them. And what was their astonishment when they came across the threshold and saw their Director on his knees, a towel in his hand, humbly wiping their [muddy] shoes.

(*Notices VI, 1801-1847, AMP, 435.*)

<sup>565</sup> This letter is no longer extant. He would repeat the same request in subsequent letters.

*Correspondence 1819*

him the opportunity of finishing his novitiate,<sup>566</sup> something I was unable to do for Father Cellini. Since the cost of living is so high here, the bishop is not able to increase his expenses to maintain one more novice. He will do what he can there at the seminary, and at the end of the story we will see *quid iuris* ["what the condition is"].

I attribute the happy outcome of our labors in large measure to the prayers of our good confreres in Europe. There are many conversions, especially of heretics and infidels who become fervent Catholics. In all my life over there I would never have performed as many baptisms and assisted as many dying as I have done here in less than a month. Not long ago I was called at midnight to attend a man who had no religion at all. I instructed him in religion, disposed him for the better, baptized him, and he died in excellent sentiments. Similar cases are frequent. I have already baptized a large number of adults. I was a godfather (the only time in my life) at a baptism celebrated by the bishop of a very fervent Jew.<sup>567</sup> In the circumstance there took place a phenomenon worthy of mention. That is, at the very time that he was celebrating the baptism, a great swarm of bees covered the roof of the church. It was so visible that boys in the street ran in a group and were yelling around the church to chase them away. The baptism was scarcely over when the bees disappeared without ever being seen either before or since. This good omen, of which there are other examples in church history,<sup>568</sup> seems already to begin to be verified in the extraordinary zeal of this neophyte. From time to time, he writes me the most beautiful letters and they show how well grace is working in his heart. He is even ready to publicize the story of his life and conversion to help convert many others. The tender celebration of the children's first communion converted him.

I will probably include in this letter another letter from the bishop to the cardinal prefect of Propaganda.<sup>569</sup> In it he makes a petition that needs to be supported and which someone should be interested in

<sup>566</sup> De Andreis gave Bettelani some pastoral experience. He was a baptismal sponsor for a child baptized by De Andreis, 31 August 1819.

<sup>567</sup> Jean Daniel Levy. Letters 50 and 51, of 17 and 26 June 1818.

<sup>568</sup> Associated with the conversion of Saint Ambrose.

<sup>569</sup> The letter referred to is dated from Saint Louis, 16 February 1819. Original in the archives of Propaganda Fide; typed copy in DRMA, Dubourg papers.

*Correspondence 1819*

promoting. For this purpose please give this responsibility to one of our confreres. It deals with an affair for the greater glory of God and for the greater good of souls. Because printing books is extremely costly here, he would like to get from Propaganda a set of type to establish in our seminary a print shop both for English and French. Providence has already sent us a printer, a fervent convert from heresy.<sup>570</sup> The good which would be done by this means is incalculable, but you have to realize that the English alphabet has four letters more than the Italian, namely K, W, Y, X, and French has vowels accented with the three accents, grave, acute and circumflex. As a result we need a zealous person to solicit, represent and take to heart this matter. He would succeed without much effort and would contribute to the great good resulting from it.

I do not know when we will begin the formal missions prescribed by our rule. If we could be reassembled there would not be any further difficulty, but the urgent needs that keep us apart will not let up so quickly. Meanwhile, we work to form good priests and to bring order to our establishment. God has his own times. May his holy will be done. More and more each day the blessed end of possessing him comes closer and everything is going well.

The construction of our seminary has not finished, but soon will be. When it is done I will move there. Up to then Father Rosati, with about fifteen seminarians, among whom are already some Americans,<sup>571</sup> are being lodged like anchovies in a barrel, in a miserable log cabin at best. After repetition on Sunday in our novitiate chapel here we read

<sup>570</sup> The printer was James C. Cummins, the publisher of the *Missouri Gazette and Public Advertiser*. He became an intimate friend of De Andreis and was his penitent. Clearly, De Andreis was not expecting that Cummins needed a print shop, but likely meant that the publisher could help establish one and teach others how to use it. (Data from Cummins to Timon, from Pittsburgh, 20 August 1839; SLAA, Rosati correspondence, I-B-4.3B.) Dubourg made his own request to Propaganda, 16 February 1819. ("Correspondence of Bishop Du Bourg with Propaganda," *SLCHR* 1:3 [April 1919]: 189.) It is unknown whether this request was answered.

<sup>571</sup> According to records kept by Rosati, there were two American students, both natives of the Barrens: Clement Hayden and Thomas Layton. Hayden was the son of Sara Hayden, on whose property the pioneer students lodged. He left after some months. Layton also left within a short time.

## Correspondence 1819

the excellent circular letter<sup>572</sup> that was sent us. I have sent it to Father Rosati. We will try to conform ourselves entirely to it as, thanks be to God, we have always done in the past.

My stomach does not let me write much, but it lets me make use of the hand of our good Father Ferrari, a priest novice, as I do quite often in the many letters I have to write.<sup>573</sup>

I render infinite thanks for the confirmation you give me of the faculty granted me by good Father Sicardi. He already gave me the patent of superior in proper form. He added the faculty of visitor for America,<sup>574</sup> and granted me orally the faculty of being pro-vicar general should the need arise for it. I would not want that paper to be mislaid, the one I put in the hands of Father Sicardi before I left Europe. In it is contained a copy of the agreement made with Bishop Dubourg regarding our American establishment. Bishop Dubourg, Father Sicardi and I signed it, and everything should be regulated on this basis.<sup>575</sup> We have every reason to rely on the goodness, zeal and love of our

<sup>572</sup> Francesco Antonio Baccari, the Italian vicar general, 1817-1827, sent out annual letters to the members of the Congregation, at least to those under his jurisdiction. Perhaps the letter referred to here is dated 12 April 1818; it is found in *Recueil* 2, 341-46. Written in Latin, the subject was the obligations of superiors, such as good screening of candidates, uniformity in all things, observance of the vow of poverty, evenhanded treatment of all the confreres, and avoidance of singularity (great individual differences).

<sup>573</sup> Rosati expanded on this observation:

When he could not write, he dictated from his bed. It was so rapid that it was difficult to follow him, proof that his discomfort and pains never left him, and were chronic. Sometimes they tormented him terribly; he was often found confined to his room and had to stay in bed.

(Rosati, "Life," *Summarium*, 104.)

<sup>574</sup> Although De Andreis was not visitor (or provincial superior) in the strictest sense, since the American mission was not a province, he was able to exercise some of the functions of the visitor because of the distance between Rome and Saint Louis.

<sup>575</sup> An original exists in the Archives of the General Curia, Rome. It has been reprinted in English in John E. Rybolt, C.M., ed., *The American Vincentians. A Popular History of the Congregation of the Mission in the United States. 1815-1987*. (Brooklyn, N.Y.: New City Press, 1988), 451-54. Philip Borgna, who reached the United States in 1818, recalled in later years the difficulties inherent in this agreement. It was based more on theory than on experience, and the realities of frontier life, De Andreis's ill health, and high costs kept it from being observed carefully. (Borgna to Casoni, from Fermo, 20 January 1849, in the Archives of the General Curia, Rome, De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part I, Sect. D, inserted after page 300.)

*Correspondence 1819*

good shepherd, yet death can change things and prudence demands that we not overstep the accustomed forms of good procedure.

For us to have candidates we will also keep spreading the seeds of new establishments. The first will probably be in the state of Indiana in a place called Post Vincennes, and the second in Pensacola, Florida.<sup>576</sup> The one is in the north and the other is in the south of the United States. According to what I wrote at length to Father Sicardi, good Father Rosati would be better than I for the reasons mentioned in that letter,<sup>577</sup> and I do not see it necessary to repeat them here. He [Rosati] wrote me complaining that, despite my repeated attempts to obtain the instructions and rules of particular offices, our men have brought none of these with them. Therefore, it is necessary to write to Rome (these are his words) to see if they are content that we start our new institute off the top of our heads because they have left us in this state without the necessary means to keep to our own usages. The only thing we have here is that each one has his own copy of the Common Rules that I was able to find in France. It is a quarto copy of the Lisbon edition with its additions at the beginning and end, and the bulls of the Popes concerning the Congregation.<sup>578</sup> I found it with the Daughters of Charity. And my companions who passed through Genoa were able to get another one: the rules of the Visitor, the local superior and the assistant. Finally I found those for my office of professor, those of the novices and of the students. We lack all the others. For now we have resolved not to distance ourselves at all *ne latum quidem unguem* ["a hair's breadth"] from our rule, mission and customs, and so *aut simus ut esse debemus, aut prorsus non simus* ["either we should be as we ought to be, or we should not be at all"]. For this reason, we rely on God's fidelity and we have placed our confidence in the blessings of heaven and on the protection of our holy father [Saint Vincent]. We begin to see his teaching clearly verified, the saying that goes (Acami lib. 2 cap.

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<sup>576</sup> Neither of these new missions became permanent Vincentian charges. Philip Borgna visited Pensacola in 1821, mostly to evaluate the situation. He returned to his regular assignment in New Orleans, however.

<sup>577</sup> He wrote favorably about Rosati in his letters of 20 May 1817 and 24 February 1818.

<sup>578</sup> *Regulae seu Constitutiones Communes Congregationis Missionis* (Lisbon, 1743).

*Correspondence 1819*

2)<sup>579</sup> “when a certain disastrous voyage or a very difficult mission is undertaken for the service and the glory of God, it is his thought to keep us and to help us. Those can do more than three workers who say that when God sets his hand to the work, he does so forever, and takes away human means and makes it necessary for us to act without our own forces.” For you and anyone else to get an idea of our situation relative to the most important objects of our mission in these lands, namely Catholics, Protestants and the Indians, it should now fall to me to go into some detail concerning each group.

Relative to the Catholics, they are those *domestici fidei* [“of the household of the faith”],<sup>580</sup> the main objects of missionary zeal. Their ignorance and laziness is the normal result of having been deprived for so long of any cultivation and spiritual assistance. As a result, they present to the watchful zeal of evangelical workers a spectacle similar to that which is seen in the vision of the prophet Ezekiel.<sup>581</sup> a vast field full of dry fleshless bones without the spirit of life. This is a spectacle capable of causing even those with the most active zeal to lose heart because they do not know where they should begin. The same primitive ideas of Christianity and Catholicism which they have formed through their constant interaction with every sort of heretic and infidel are counterfeits, wasted and corrupted, and they are little disposed to reform them.

For example, I found myself in a city [Pittsburgh] where a rich Catholic merchant who enjoyed the reputation as the main support of Catholicism used every imaginable mark of hospitality toward us. One evening he came to visit us as we were eating and he began in a nice way to say that a person can be saved in all the sects; one has only to be good. He was so tenacious in this opinion that only with some difficulty

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<sup>579</sup> Domenico Acami, *Vita del venerabile servo di Dio Vincenzo de Paoli... raccolta da quella scritta da Mons. Louis Abelly* (Rome, 1677). This edition was often reprinted and edited by different confreres. De Andreis quotes this passage probably from memory, since Acami wrote only: “Believe me, three workers can do more than ten when God sets his hand to the work.” This citation comes from a letter of 4 December 1650 from Saint Vincent to Marc Coglée (Coste, *CED*, 4:115-16; English translation, Marie Poole, D.C., ed., *Saint Vincent de Paul: Correspondence, Conferences, Documents*. 8 vols. (New York: New City Press, 1983), 4:122.)

<sup>580</sup> Gal 6:10.

<sup>581</sup> Ezek 37.



*Correspondence 1819*

did I succeed in persuading him that outside the true Church there is no salvation. Another missionary told me that he had been taken to another city and he went to lodge in the house of a very good Catholic whose wife was reputed to be a very fervent Christian. When he was at table she told him that she esteemed religion greatly, as well as the holy practices of hearing mass and preaching, but as to confession, it is *une chalouperie* ["rubbish"]. And so there are people who are not persuaded about hell and they do not know about the most obvious things. It is very hard work to get them to abandon their prejudices. The best that can be done is with boys and girls, and this is truly consoling. They make their first communion with an admirable fervor and they continue coming to catechism lessons and the sacraments.

Above all, young women astonish me with their simplicity and purity. They are lilies of candor, angels incarnate, and already a great good can be assured for the piety of the next generation. Meanwhile, the others are saved later at their deathbed.

There are people here of every nation, even Italians. They know how to offer compliments but are perhaps the most estranged from religion. The Irish are usually fervent and fierce against heretics.<sup>582</sup> I will report here an anecdote about these Irish Catholics that is quite funny. Even though there are persistent persecutors against the Catholics, who through disrespect are called Papists, they cannot come to blows because of the perfect liberty that the government grants to every religion.

One of these enemies of the Papists had put above the door of his hotel some verses by which he invited Protestants, Turks, Jews, Quakers, Atheists, Deists etc., to enter, while refusing entry only to Papists. One of these Irish Catholics with a good wit passed by that place. When he read these verses in his own good humor, he decided to add two others that said "he who wrote this wrote very well, the same is written on the gates of hell." The heretics generally are very well disposed and many are converted, as well as entire families.

As regards the Indians, this is very difficult. These poor people remain incapable of forming even one idea of spiritual, eternal and divine things. They know God and all their actions always begin with

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<sup>582</sup> By 1819, the Irish numbered about 100, two-thirds of the foreign-born population of the city.

*Correspondence 1819*

an act of worship (something to shame Christians). When they come to have a discussion with the whites they begin by passing around [the pipe] and they say with the first cloud of smoke *Anareqare ky okakanda*, that is, "may this rise up on high to divinity." But such knowledge is only for the present life. I am persuaded that God has given them a religion different than ours. If we speak to them about the future life they don't understand anything. Being able to speak to just one of them through an interpreter is the only outcome to be expected. They agreed that, since I was the agent of the Master of Life, I should at least give them a small coin to buy some whiskey, an intoxicating liquor that they love. Then they become more like animals than they were before. Yet with patience and time one can accomplish something with them.

A good friend of mine has traveled for a long time in the midst of the Indian nations. He assures me that if we had a good remedy for ailments of the eyes, this would be a great means to open the way to do much good among them, since they are very affected by this problem. May God deliver me from thinking only about wanting to impose religion by means of apparent marvels, but why should it not be allowed that the road be opened by means of natural healing? A man who might succeed in healing their physical eyes would find them most disposed even to higher things, such as healing their spiritual blindness, which is much worse than the first. Concerning this, I remember that while I was in Rome I heard people talking about a certain water excellent for the eyes, called "the water of Signora Rosa." Perhaps God might want to use this means to heal the double blindness of these wild nations. *Tentare non nocet* ["there is no harm in trying"]. Therefore, I am appealing to your zeal or to the zeal of someone whom you might want to put in charge of this task, someone who would take the trouble on the first opportunity which presents itself for America, to procure for us a certain quantity of this water with instructions about how to employ it. Even better, get for us the secret of using it and send it to us *sub sigillo* ["under seal"], and assure those to whom it belongs that we will use it only with great care. The reason for requesting this is so important that every good Christian would appreciate it and regard it as a glory to be able by this means to contribute to such a great good.

I have received letters from the three men who were sent to us. As far as I can tell, and from what Father Rosati tells me about them, they

### *Correspondence 1819*

seem to be excellent subjects, especially Father Cellini. He has given the finest proofs of his attachment to the Congregation and to the virtues proper to a good missionary.<sup>583</sup> I recently accepted two other subjects as clerical postulants.<sup>584</sup> They are Flemish and will be admitted into the novitiate when there is room. Their vocation has been well tested and we are especially firm in the maxim of Saint Vincent that we should never move anyone either directly or indirectly to embrace our institute, since it belongs to God to call such a person, in order that for such a spiritual building there should be no stone except what has been placed by his divine hands.

My ailments continue. They bring their crises, they change their tune, but the issue is always the same: the grave will heal all. *Sanitas nostra immortalitas est* ["Our health is immortality"].<sup>585</sup> Since I do not perform the penance due for my sins, in an excess of goodness the Lord is acting with me as one does with criminal paymasters. From them one grabs by force what one can. To God's glory, all the others are quite well and they join me in offering you their respectful homage and deepest veneration with the most affectionate regards to all our confreres. We recommend ourselves warmly to your prayers and sacrifices.

When you have the opportunity to have an audience with the Holy Father, I beg you to kiss his foot<sup>586</sup> and obtain his blessing for all the American Missionaries, especially the novices, so that directly from this source and center the apostolic spirit might spread abroad abundantly on them by means of that blessing. At the same time, I ask you that we might be able to avail ourselves here of all the faculties and privileges which we enjoy over there when we are on an actual mission, since we might be able to be considered in our situation [here]

<sup>583</sup> A slightly different version was quoted in the notice about Cellini. "I received letters from all three of our novices. As far as I can tell, and according to what Father Rosati tells me about them, they are all excellent subjects. Mr. Cellini in particular has given very fine proofs of his attachment to the Congregation and of the virtues most distinctive of a missionary." Since Cellini had studied medicine in Rome, the bishop wrote Cardinal Litta for permission to have him practice medicine, something normally forbidden to priests. (Dubourg to Litta, from Saint Louis, 7 June 1819; copy in DRMA, Dubourg papers.) Cellini left the Congregation to join the diocese of Saint Louis in 1827.

<sup>584</sup> Leo De Neckere and Leo Deys.

<sup>585</sup> Augustine, Sermon 255, 7; PL 38, col. 1189.

<sup>586</sup> A common act of veneration at certain papal ceremonies at that time.

*Correspondence 1819*

as a continuous and uninterrupted mission.

A thousand pardons, please, for such inconveniences to you. Truly I have never been good for much and may it please the Lord to remove from the earth this useless weight that I am. I would only want as the summit of my desires to finish out my poor life in an Indian cabin with a death capable of repairing the disorders and corruptions of my life. Yet may God's will be done.

Meanwhile, with sentiments of most profound esteem, respect and veneration for you, I am

your most humble, devoted and obedient servant,

Felix De Andreis

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission

**60. LENTEN REGULATIONS, 1819<sup>587</sup>**

Dearly beloved children in Jesus Christ:

Since Lent was originally established for penance, all Christians who have reached age twenty-one, and whom grave reasons of health or hard work, or any other similar reasons, do not render fasting impossible or dangerous, are obliged to fast. In addition, fasting must also be joined to abstinence from meat. Even in these recent times the Church has not relaxed this discipline. Nevertheless, moved by considerations of pity and condescension for her very weak children, she has left it to the wisdom of the bishops to dispense from the law of abstinence according to circumstances and the times.

As a result, his lordship the bishop has taken into account the scarcity and high price of other kinds of food, and is permitting the use of meat during four weekdays this Lent: Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays

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<sup>587</sup> **Letter 60.** *Autograph letter, French, two pages, in the Archives of the General Curia, Rome; inserted loose in De Andreis collection, Volume XI, "Colloques, et Sentiments de Compenction."*

De Andreis, the vicar general, probably wrote this letter to the members of the diocese in the name of the bishop. Although undated, it can be assigned to 1819, since the 1820 letter from the bishop is extant. (Original printed letter in SLAA, Dubourg papers; copy in DRMA, Dubourg papers.) It is also possible that he copied the bishop's letter for his own use.

*Correspondence 1819*

and Thursdays. You should note, nevertheless, that those dispensed from fast for the reasons mentioned above may eat meat only once on these fast days.

On the four final days of Holy Week abstinence is prescribed as well as fasting.

At the same time, however, that the Church relaxes for you the severity of her discipline, you should understand that she looks to you for a renewal of zeal. This is to make up to the Lord by voluntary satisfactions and by a greater readiness to attend the special instructions customarily given to the faithful during this season. You should likewise attend to the other exercises of religion to dispose yourselves thereby to celebrate worthily the great mysteries of our redemption that took place through the passion, death and resurrection of the son of God. These will also dispose you in the best possible way for the Christian duty of confession and Easter communion. Lent was established for this great goal.

*In another hand:* We will pray for the president of the United States and the members of Congress, for his excellency the governor of this state, the members of the legislature, for all judges, magistrates and civil officials charged with watching over our temporal happiness, so that the Lord will fill them with his spirit, etc.<sup>588</sup>

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<sup>588</sup> This paragraph was written at right angles to the rest of the letter. Its connection with the remainder of the letter is not clear; it may have been written after the admission of Missouri as a state in 1821.

*Correspondence 1819*

A view of pioneer life. Early nineteenth century.  
*Public domain*



The cathedral of New Orleans. Early nineteenth century.  
*Public domain*

## Correspondence 1819

61. TO GIOVANNI CRAVERI, C.M., (?) PRIEST, GENOA<sup>589</sup>

Saint Louis  
Missouri [sic] Territory  
8 February 1819

Very Reverend and dear Father,

What a pleasure it is for me to receive here in the farthest corner of the world your kind letter along with the gift of good Brother Bettelani whom you sent here to complete his novitiate with the other three novices. They are now located at the seminary of Saint Mary of the Barrens, eighty miles from here. The good young man feels a little confused finding himself in a new country *ignotae linguae* ["of unknown language"],<sup>590</sup> whose customs differ so completely from those in Europe. But we have already become friends and I hope that eventually we will be satisfied with each other. Once more I ask you never to send novice brothers here, because they are exposed to terrible temptations. The reason is that in this country only slaves are servants, while tailors and shoemakers, etc., make immense fortunes and are on a par with lawyers and gentlemen of the first rank. Thus brothers, unless they are more than settled in their vocation, run the risk of losing not only their vocation but also their faith in God and their soul.<sup>591</sup>

I am immensely grateful to your charity for the help of your prayers in which I have great confidence; that is certainly the greatest need in the situation in which we find ourselves. Our undertaking is too far above human powers; we may suffer, struggle, and do good *in immensum* ["to the utmost"],<sup>592</sup> but everything has to come from the grace which must enlighten us *quid faciendum* ["as to what we have to do"] and strengthen us *ad agenda quae viderimus* ["to do what we have seen that has to be done"], and makes us seek God and his glory in

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<sup>589</sup> **Letter 61.** Letter, part autograph, part in the hand of Andrew Ferrari, Italian, three pages, in the archives of the Collegio Brignole-Sale, Genoa, *De Andreis* letters.

The addressee is probably Father Giovanni Matteo Craveri/Cravieri, mentioned in the "Itinerary."

<sup>590</sup> Ezek 3:5.

<sup>591</sup> An oblique reference to the postulant brother Francis Borawanski, a tailor, who eventually left the Congregation.

<sup>592</sup> 2 Cor 10:13.

*Correspondence 1819*

everything. I beg you therefore to continue this help for us and to recommend us often to the prayers of good souls. I cannot go so far as to give you all the details of our mission; you will be able to get them from Rome. As it is, my poor stomach does not allow me to write at length and often forces me to use the helping hand of good Father Ferrari who will continue from here on *dictante me* ["while I dictate"].<sup>593</sup>

Humanly speaking, our establishment is secure. According to the agreement made with Bishop Dubourg in Rome before I departed—he is our most worthy bishop, and takes truly the place of a father for us—our house, which also has to serve as the seminary, is now being built in a place called in English The Barrens, in French Bois Brulé. It is situated on a property of 640 arpents [acres] of land uncultivated, I believe, since its creation. The house will be sixty feet long and thirty-seven feet wide. Besides a basement to be used for storage and our dining room, according to the custom of this country, the building will rise up two more stories and will have an attic, a building quite respectable for a wild country like this. Until the building is ready for occupancy, Father Rosati with our confreres who came from Rome and a troop of European seminarians joined by several Americans are lodged temporarily in a poor cabin, a log house as it is called here. There they hold classes for the public and help at the parish in charge of Father Valezano, cousin of our Father [Giuseppe] Allegretti, already accepted as a novice. However, because of the small number of confreres, he has had to see his longed-for hour of beginning his novitiate delayed to serve in that parish. It is composed of very fine Anglo-American Catholics, simple, hard-working and industrious people. Father Valezano has distributed a large picture of Saint Vincent to each family, and exhorted them all to place themselves under his protection, because it seems clear that Providence has given him as their protector since it has placed their town permanently under the care of his sons.

Father Acquaroni is currently serving two little parishes about thirty miles from here on the other side [of the Missouri river]. These are the French settlements of Portage des Sioux and La d'Ardenne [Dardenne]. This priest is doing well and is well liked. I stay here beside the bishop as his vicar general and I serve as assistant at the cathedral, whose pastor is the bishop himself. At the same time, with utmost consolation, I act as director of the seminary where, by God's grace, the rules of the novitiate are observed exactly and I have only reasons for satisfaction in such employment.

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<sup>593</sup> Change of handwriting.



*Correspondence 1819*

The novitiate opened 3 December, the feast of Saint Francis Xavier, with three novices, two Italians<sup>594</sup> and one German.<sup>595</sup> Some days after, for reasons of health, one of them [Tichitoli] had to be sent to Lower Louisiana for a change of climate. Three other excellent candidates have already been accepted,<sup>596</sup> but their reception had to be delayed. The reason is the lack of room in the seminary and the great costs in maintaining subjects in this capital city full of people of every nation. They are constantly arriving from Europe or other parts of America to settle here, this being a young country that promises much to the speculators of this world here below. With regard to religion, although Catholics are at least nominally in the majority in comparison with any particular sect, nevertheless all of them together constitute a larger number. Besides the sects known in Europe, new ones are formed here, so to say, almost daily, and are based on nothing else than ignorance and religious indifference. We have to do our ministry sometimes in French and sometimes in English. Among the French as well as among the English many call themselves philosophers, but their philosophy consists of nothing but presumptuous ignorance and excessive attachment to false earthly goods. Even though the fruits of our ministry do not yet conform to our wishes, they nevertheless console us because many are converted and many more give us hope that instruction and tireless cultivation will in the end see religion perfectly established. In my opinion, conducting our missions according to the regulation of Saint Vincent will work miracles in these towns and so I am anxious to see them started.

Last October everything was ready to begin the first mission in Father Acquaroni's parishes and then we would have continued in other places, but urgent reasons forced us to postpone doing so till next spring.

I ask you to convey my regards to the very worthy Father [Gaetano] Nervi<sup>597</sup> and to all our good confreres and, if you have the opportunity through some of our Piedmontese, please convey my greetings and my poor news to my relatives in Demonte. I am not writing them because I have no time. I do not expect to have the strength to embrace you again on this earth but I firmly hope to have it in heaven.

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<sup>594</sup> Andrew Ferrari and Joseph Tichitoli.

<sup>595</sup> Francis Xavier Dahmen.

<sup>596</sup> That is, as postulants, but who lived elsewhere. They were Leo De Neckere, Valezano and Deys.

<sup>597</sup> Nervi (1768-1824) had been superior at Genoa.

*Correspondence 1819*

With sentiments of my deepest respect, esteem, and veneration, I am your most humble, devoted and obedient servant.

Felix De Andreis,

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission

**62. TO BARTOLOMEO COLUCCI, C.M., SUPERIOR, ROME<sup>598</sup>**

Saint Louis

9 February 1819

A thousand pardons, please, if I make use of the much better handwriting of our good Father Ferrari, a priest novice, to express my sentiments to you. My stomach refuses to let me write at any length, and it does so because I just returned from a twelve-mile horseback ride to minister to one sick person, and instead of one I found three. That is our life. Sometimes I even have to go up to sixty miles to visit a sick person. I have not seen Father Rosati for sixteen months. At first he was three hundred miles away. Now, for the last five months, he has been only eighty miles away. Also I have not seen Father Acquaroni for about five months, and he is only thirty miles away from me on the other side [of the Missouri river]. The reason for this is the lack of priests. I humbly thank your zeal for the help sent us in three excellent co-workers.<sup>599</sup> *Sed quid sunt haec inter tantos* ["But what are these among so many"]?<sup>600</sup> To supply the needs of this huge diocese we would need a regiment of tireless workers, and there would be work enough for all of them. But the problem is that there would be no way to support them, because we are stretched, stretched even to find enough to maintain the few who are here. Besides maintaining these men, how much other good might we accomplish if we just had the money. Churches once begun are left unfinished because of lack of funds; books to be printed cannot be produced because of lack of money and so on.

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<sup>598</sup> **Letter 62.** Copy, Italian, in the archives of Propaganda Fide, Rome, *Scritture Riferite nei Congressi. America Centrale. Dal Canada all'Istmo di Panama. Codice 4. Dal 1818 a [ut]to il 1820. Docum. 66. Fol. 375-78. Cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 359, 380-81, 391, 410, 417, 436.*

<sup>599</sup> Philip Borgna, Anthony Potini, Francis Cellini. In addition, the group numbered Brother Bartolomew Bettelani.

<sup>600</sup> John 6:9.

*Correspondence 1819*

In the hands of the missionaries in these regions money would be a means of help especially for the Indians. With money, projects could be accomplished which would best help to capture these poor creatures. I have already begun translating into English the catechism that you know, with some changes at the beginning and end to adapt it to the region where we are.<sup>601</sup> During spare moments we are working on translating into French and English, one the life of Saint Vincent, another his maxims and the Common Rules, and another a few other things. It is no small job to translate into these two languages all our writings. But I am convinced that we have to do so. Although we cannot limit ourselves to being traveling missionaries, here at the boundaries of our institute, we will see marvels since the soil is excellent, though choked with weeds and thorns that stifle the seed sown by the Father of the family. This is my constant focus, but we will need time, patience and a long life.

Father Valezano, cousin of our Father Allegretti, a confrere from Turin, has already been accepted into our novitiate. But to his displeasure he was obliged at the very beginning of his novitiate, because of a lack of other subjects, to go and help at the parish of Saint Mary of the Barrens, where our house and seminary is located. He distributed to each family of these good Anglo-Americans one of your large pictures of Saint Vincent and he encouraged them to place themselves under the protection of this saint, whose sons had come from so far to work for the salvation of their souls.

This country is now beginning, so to speak, to emerge from chaos, since it has never before been inhabited. The ground is still untilled, and the people of this colony go about clearing it with tireless labor. These are poor people, simple, hard working, industrious and above all devoted to religion, more so than many colonies which dwell under heaven.

Less than a day's journey from here is a nation of Indians called Sava Hannons [Shawnees]. These will be the first upon whom their [our] ministry will be extended. Several Indians have already been baptized, but they can be relied on only at the moment of death, unless we first take great pains to make their nomadic life suitable for Christian life. I have already undertaken the work of writing a grammar and a catechism in the most common Indian language. I found an interpreter who has wholeheartedly given himself to God. He will help me in the

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<sup>601</sup> See letter 50, 11 July 1818.

*Correspondence 1819*

Lord, and has promised to bring me an even more helpful Indian for such a work. And so I have to take things step by step, and cool my impetuous zeal, which would like to do everything in one day. It would end up by spoiling everything and by consuming the hopes for a more wonderful harvest while the field was still unripe. We certainly need to meditate often on that maxim of Saint Vincent: "God's works are mostly done little by little, and have their own beginnings and their own growth."<sup>602</sup> As a result, we should not intend to do everything at once and in a hurry or think that all will be lost if it does not happen with due care; we should rather proceed slowly and pray much."

Thank you very much, and my compliments to Fathers Giordana and [Giovanni Battista] Garofani for their contribution. Also to Fathers [Nicola De] Giorgio and Alimenti, and to all the members of the conference.<sup>603</sup>

Brother Borgna writes me in French, complaining that Father Baccari deceived him by saying that he would have much to suffer, because he seems not to have suffered at all. Their journey of eight months and their present miserable situation should have satisfied at least partially his promised sufferings.

We have celebrated all the masses for the deceased confreres, and those named in your letters, but for the many not named we have said a large number of masses. Since their names are repeated in various letters, we wonder with some reason whether the number of those not listed has been often repeated. Since masses here are our principal support, please tell the superior to be so good as, when he announces the list of the departed, to do so in such a way that we will not have to celebrate several times for the same men.

I will not repeat here what I have written in other letters. I am always taken with and embarrassed by God's goodness in calling me to this mission, and in keeping me always on the cross to detach me from the world and to purify all the filth in my heart, to make me worthy of being forever united with him. Father Colucci, help me to thank

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<sup>602</sup> ". . . but it seems to me that God's affairs are accomplished little by little and almost imperceptibly. . . ." (Coste, *CED*, 2:226; in letter 570, 9 February 1642, from Vincent de Paul to Bernard Codoing.) De Andreis joined this citation with another, "their own beginnings. . .", from an undated letter to Louise de Marillac, cited by Collet; see *Mission et Charité* 19-20 (Janvier-juin 1970): 171. The rest of the citation appears to be De Andreis's own conclusions.

<sup>603</sup> A sort of discussion or prayer group at the Vincentian house in Rome; De Andreis had been its director.

## Correspondence 1819

him for this, and pray for me that I not ruin God's work. In heaven alone do I hope to embrace you, where alone I am to rest. I am in sentiments of the most distinct esteem and respect for you,  
 your most humble and devoted servant  
 Felix De Andreis,  
 unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission

P.S. I repeat once more that I recommend myself to your prayers, and I confide greatly in the Hail Mary (this is wrong) in the Glory Be of the conference. On the evening before I left Rome, I asked them to please recite this prayer every evening for the poor American.

This *sanctorum communio* ["communion of saints"] is a great thing. We need it, but [we need] prayers especially, since we need great virtue not to ruin it. Here the poor missionaries receive after their preaching neither warm cakes, nor a barley tea, nor wine and not even the leisure time to change clothes. Instead, drenched with sweat, they have to chant mass or baptize or go to visit the sick or engage in [public] controversy. We need to be angels here, and if we start to ruin things, woe to the world. We have here priests whose example causes us to fear. There is one among others who, after turning his back on religion and taking a wife, continues to abuse religion with his rare talent of writing and publishing. When his so-called wife died, we hoped to see him return to the Ark [of Noah] as before. But, (*o tenebrae, o lutum, o sordes!*) ["O darkness, o mud, o filth"],<sup>604</sup> although he was in his sixties, he remarried, and sought to have a young woman for his wife and then brought out another small book against religion. Another young man<sup>605</sup> whom we ordained a subdeacon here began the same behavior some months back. May the Lord help us. Whoever wishes to be an example has every means here, and so there is no hypocrisy. Dear Father Colucci, I tell you the truth: I am annoyed and fed up with this evil world. I find in myself an abyss of perversity. If God had not placed his hand on my head, I would be worse than any other. Ah, when will we get out of such errors, *et erit Deus omnia in omnibus* ["and God will be all in all"]?<sup>606</sup>

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<sup>604</sup> Cicero, to Piso, *M. Tulli Ciceronis in L. Calpurnium Pisonem oratio*, 26.

<sup>605</sup> Casto Gonzalez.

<sup>606</sup> Eph 1:23 NAB: "[the church ... ] the fullness of him who fills the universe in all its parts."

*Correspondence 1819*

**63. TO JOSEPH ROSATI, C.M., PRIEST, BARRENS<sup>607</sup>**

Saint Louis  
17 March 1819

Very Reverend Father Rosati,

You should not be surprised if I have waited until now to send you my letter, since it certainly was not because of a lack of good will, but because I did not have any opportunity for it. I also add that any opportunity would have been useless for me because of a grave illness that, although it is not now so dangerous, still makes me feel its effects. This was erysipelas of the head, and because of it I suffered the most excruciating pains.<sup>608</sup> When the doctor saw the danger, he worked hard to stop its progress as quickly as possible. He employed all his knowledge to get me out of danger. Blistering agents and mustard plasters, seven or eight bloodlettings, mercury pills, purges, etc., all, so to speak, worked together to crucify my body, already badly treated by the force of the illness.<sup>609</sup> Nevertheless, since last Sunday was the seventh day, reckoned as one of the most critical days for this type of illness, I received viaticum as a precaution.<sup>610</sup> Then, thank the Lord, the danger passed, but my weakness was such that I was unable to stand up. The mercury had so affected my mouth, my gums, my tongue and my palate that every kind of food became unbearable, both because of the pain and sufferings in taking any food, and because of the little

<sup>607</sup> **Letter 63.** Copy (in an Italian hand), Italian, in SLAA, De Andreis papers. Cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 484-85.

<sup>608</sup> Dubourg also reported on his sickness of the previous month: "Father De Andreis has suffered much these days from his intestinal illnesses." (Dubourg to Rosati, from Saint Louis [?], 20 February 1819; original in SLAA, RG 1-A-3,1.) Erysipelas involves high fever and inflamed tissues.

<sup>609</sup> Stephen Hempstead, a wealthy and important citizen, recorded that doctors used the following similar treatments on his dying wife: jallup (a purgative), cream of tartar, laudanum, mercury, seneca, warm baths, horseradish root (for blistering), mustard seed (for blistering) and hot vinegar. ("I At Home," *Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society* 15:1 [October 1958]: 48.)

<sup>610</sup> Bishop Dubourg reports the same event: "Father De Andreis is out of danger. He alarmed me greatly the day before yesterday. Yesterday morning he received holy viaticum, and was much better afterwards." (Dubourg to Rosati, from Saint Louis, 15 March 1819; original in SLAA, Rosati papers, 1-A-3,1.)

*Correspondence 1819*

relish I had in tasting any. To judge by the way I felt, I would say that an infinity of needles had been placed around my gums. They pricked them constantly and caused a constant flow of disgusting saliva.<sup>611</sup>

My illness put an end to the sacred conferences that were taking place in church each Friday and Sunday in Lent to instruct the people mainly about confession. Father Niel would propose the questions and doubts, taking the part of the entire congregation, and I would answer whatever he asked me.

I recommend myself to your prayers in particular, and to those of all your good community and the Congregation.

I am with all respect your humble servant,

Felix De Andreis,

Unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission

**64. TO JOSEPH ROSATI, C.M., PRIEST, BARRENS<sup>612</sup>**

Saint Louis

27 March 1819

Esteemed and dear Father Rosati,

Although very weak as I begin to get out of bed after several days, I am anxious to report to you in detail about my illness, which I naturally thought would finish me off. The abundant bloodlettings, repeated up to three times a day, made even the doctor wonder whether nature would still be able to survive. The result was that before the doctor did the last bloodletting, he told me his doubt, but *morto per morto* [six of one, half-dozen of another], and so I told him to do what he judged best. He let the blood and I fainted in his arms. Even though not a Catholic, that good man did everything to save me, even spending the night by my side. He used everything his skill could suggest, and especially dosed me with mercury.

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<sup>611</sup> Philippine Duchesne had the same treatment, and recorded her sensations as follows: "I felt many ill effects from it—sore mouth, salivation, continual weakness in my limbs, and my head so unbalanced that I labored under the illusion that I was two people. . . ." (Callan, *Philippine Duchesne*, 329), a letter to Mother Barat, 30 October 1820. French text in Paisant, *Les années pionnières*, L. 83, p. 326.

<sup>612</sup> **Letter 64.** Copy (in an Italian hand), Italian, in SLAA, *De Andreis papers*. Cited in Ricciardelli, *Vita*, 485-87.

*Correspondence 1819*

Nevertheless, between the sixth and seventh day, a Sunday,<sup>613</sup> everything was prepared for my death. The bishop judged it proper to give me viaticum. What a situation it was for me! The room was full of people with handkerchiefs in their hands and tears in their eyes, and I was more in the next life than in this one because of the sickness. Before the bishop administered the sacred host to me, he addressed me, in English, interrupted at each word with weeping (my heart was bursting). He ordered me through the full weight of his authority as my bishop to ask God to grant me another period of life. At this unexpected announcement of such an order, which I did not expect, I experienced a certain repugnance to act, since I have always preferred to put myself completely in God's hands and have done this without ever asking for anything. But after such an order, I immediately obeyed. From then on I suddenly began to improve. The crisis passed, the illness vanished and all danger went away.

But I had, and still have, such an incredible weakness that I cannot even grasp a full glass.<sup>614</sup> I will recover, but the mercury did not let me chew and forced me to abstain from whatever might strengthen me. Only milk seemed good in that condition, but my stomach did not allow it, and so I will recover from this when it pleases God. I am reporting this so that you might help me thank God for his grace and above all to beg the divine goodness that the life granted me still will serve for nothing else than an opportunity to do penance, to detach myself from everything, to live for God alone and to prepare myself better for that great step which we all have to take sooner or later and on which our eternity depends.

I have seen the axe laid to the root of the tree.<sup>615</sup> I have looked into the terrifying face of death. I have seen all earthly vanity disappear like smoke. I have recognized how sweet it is to leave this vale of tears when the heart becomes truly a stranger. But my own heart has still not been detached from everything. I still do not know how I would describe it best, since it keeps me from complete union with God since I am still too attached to myself. But the Lord treats me with so many [pains?<sup>616</sup>] that eventually he forces me to be freed from myself. May he be blessed! How I rejoice in this ... ! Let me, let me move all my good beyond the river of this life, that is, to move all my desires to heaven, and so I will laugh at death and at everything else.

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<sup>613</sup> 14 March.

<sup>614</sup> Dubourg to Rosati, 22 March 1820, from Saint Louis (DRMA, Dubourg papers) reported that De Andreis continued to be very sick.

<sup>615</sup> An allusion to Matt 4:10.

<sup>616</sup> Blank in copy.



*Correspondence 1819*

My regards to all, especially to Brother Blanca. I feel that there is one more thing to say, and then I will finish. Pray for me, since I have become half-Turk without mass, without office, etc., since my head has become like the Brig "Ranger,"<sup>617</sup> tossed to and fro by the storm, and I do not know when it will settle down. Be happy, be healthy among your companions, and it will be a great support for me to receive news of you. I am sorry that after so much time the envelopes and the packages to be sent to you are still lying around the house, but I do not know when I will have a chance to send them. The coffee has already suffered and is half moldy. These are the circumstances of the foreign missions. We have experienced them, we have accepted them with whatever else could be expected to be worse. And so it could be said: *Amice, non facio tibi iniuriam* ["Friend, I do you no harm"].<sup>618</sup> It was said to us: *Potestis bibere calicem* ["Can you drink the cup"]? We have answered: *Possumus* ["we can"].<sup>619</sup> And so there are no means here to restore my strength. On the final days when we could eat meat,<sup>620</sup> it was impossible to find any for a broth ... with a soup of bread in putrid water from our well, which the doctor condemned, without butter, without eggs, I wonder when there will be something to restore my strength. For ten years ... how many other woes! how many causes of my illness ... to spend two weeks without being able to eat meat, which is always as hard as shoe leather, etc. May God grant us the grace to change everything into good!

I am, in the love of Jesus Christ, your humble servant,  
Felix De Andreis,  
unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission

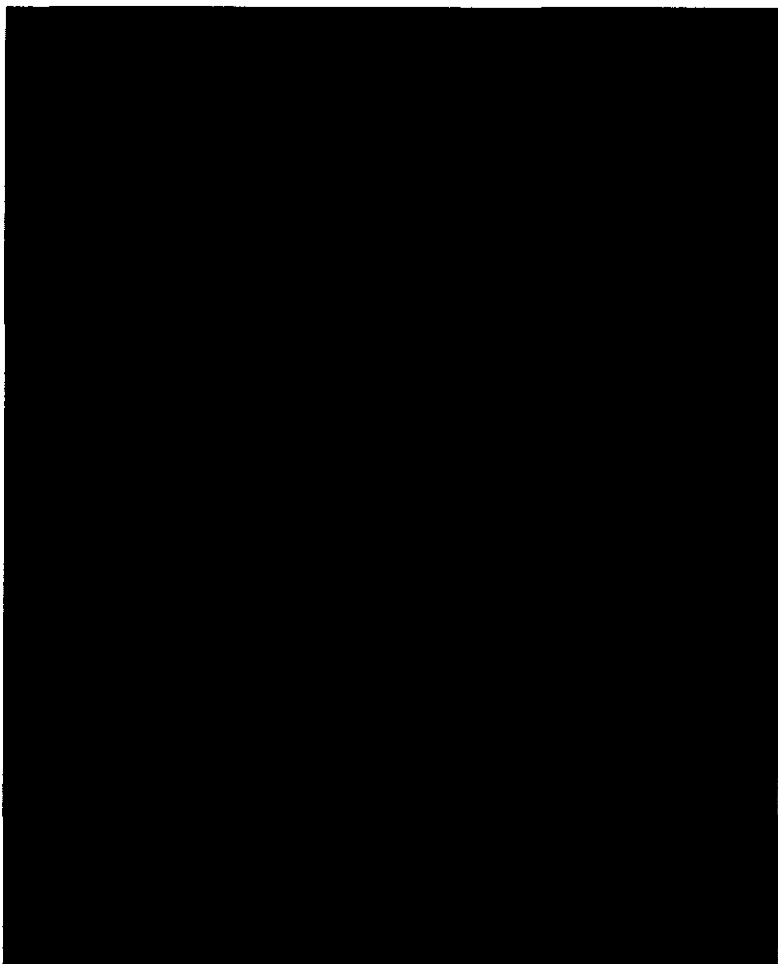
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<sup>617</sup> The vessel that brought De Andreis and Rosati to the United States.

<sup>618</sup> Matt 20:13.

<sup>619</sup> Matt 20:22.

<sup>620</sup> Before Lent.



Portrait of Louis William Dubourg.  
*Collection of the De Andreis-Rosati Memorial Archives*

## Correspondence 1819

65. TO FRANCESCO ANTONIO BACCARI, C.M.,  
PRO-VICAR GENERAL, ROME<sup>621</sup>Saint Louis  
26 April 1819

Very Reverend and Dear Father,

I found your most appreciated letter of last October very helpful in lifting me up somewhat after a serious case of erysipelas of the head which brought me *usque ad portas mortis* ["to the gates of death"].<sup>622</sup> For the first time in my life I received holy viaticum, from the hands of the bishop. Before giving me communion in the presence of a large group of clergy and laity who had gathered, with tears in their eyes, to assist at the ceremony, he gave me a short talk in English. In it, among other things, he directed me to beg from the Lord a lengthening of my life. So right then I obediently made a request that I had never made nor thought of making. But I did so on condition that this extension of life would serve only to prepare me better for death with perfect detachment from myself and total dedication to God. And so from that point on I then began to improve and to get out of danger.<sup>623</sup> Despite

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<sup>621</sup> Letter 65. Letter, part autograph, part in the hand of Andrew Ferrari, Italian, four pages, in the Archives of the General Curia, Rome; De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part I, Sect. D, #16, 89-92; partly transcribed in Volume II, Sect. D, under the incorrect date of 17 (4?) February 1819.

Although the addressee is not identified, his identity is confirmed by Letter 68, 7 July 1819, referring to this letter.

<sup>622</sup> Ps 107:18.

<sup>623</sup> De Andreis's private spiritual resolutions, dated 14 March 1819, expand on this key event:

Having received Viaticum from the hands of Bishop Dubourg, he held the Blessed Sacrament in his hands and gave me a discourse in English. In it he ordered me to request a longer life from God. I obeyed him for friendship's sake, but on condition that this lengthening of life be implored only to do penance, and to promote the glory of God and the salvation of souls, and to detach me always from myself, and to unite myself interiorly to him, with the purpose of constantly preparing myself for that last hour on which eternity depends.

At that instant, I began to improve in my illness, and little by little I gained my health back completely. From now on, I resolve to abandon myself unreservedly to God's dispositions.

(Ricciardelli, *Vita*, 475.)

*Correspondence 1819*

the many bloodlettings and frequent mustard plasters and blistering agents, the doctor had me treated with so much mercury that I almost believed that the results of the remedy were worse than the sickness itself. But at last, as it pleased God, everything turned out well. I now find myself better than before. May God will that, as the favor has been obtained, so its condition will be verified as well.

I have spent my entire life, up to this my fortieth year, in completing projects and in making good resolutions. I have chatted about the great ideas of virtue and perfection. I have talked and written much, but my whole heart is still empty of virtue. When it comes to the point of practicing what I have thought, written and preached, I find myself, to my surprise, a beginning novice. I have to start my career. This is because I still have illusions about my self-love, and up to this point I have added a certain kind of masked hypocrisy (I do not know what it should be called), hidden even from the same miserable hypocrite. May the Lord supply before death that holy hatred and that holy and sincere disregard of myself which forms the basis of virtue. It is the source of all virtues, but I am truly lacking it.

I come now to the gracious attention you give us in your much-appreciated letters.<sup>624</sup> After giving most humble thanks for them, and for the very pleasant news that they give us of the Congregation, etc., I do not add anything else, except that you can imagine the things that are required in any one of our houses with a church and seminary. I can say that we are lacking everything.<sup>625</sup> The seminary is not yet finished, and I do not know when it will be habitable. The church still exists only in imaginary spaces, and other things cannot be decided until later. Should it please the Lord to inspire some rich benefactor over there to dedicate several thousand scudi to some good work like the erection of our church, I would then beg you to please take down your harps from the willows<sup>626</sup> and play them for this good purpose. In that case, you yourself could decide on the size, the subject, and the number of paintings, etc. Since the parish church is about a [quarter of a] mile away from the seminary and is dedicated to the Virgin, we have therefore thought of dedicating ours [the house chapel] to Saint Vincent. You will discover that the matter will go far but I have little hope of seeing it completed before I die, since I think that I do not have much time left.

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<sup>624</sup> He refers to the annual circular letter of 2 February 1819, and perhaps others sent privately containing necrology notices. (See *Recueil*, 2:347 ff.)

<sup>625</sup> Ferrari's hand begins here.

<sup>626</sup> An allusion to Ps 137:2, and to the power of music to influence others.

*Correspondence 1819*

We will look for the results of the efforts of Father Colucci concerning the shipment of the statues.<sup>627</sup> As to the Indian boys, especially because of the information that came to me from the letter that I wrote about them, I now believe that it is not right to send them.

May it please God that, according to his and our desire, we live in union and completely follow uniformity in our way of dressing. But in the present state of things this is impossible. You should try to imagine the immense extent of this country. How difficult it is to cross it in any season, a land in which the population is scattered all over and does not have up to now enough priests to meet each one's needs. And so missionaries have to live according to the agreement made with the bishop, and substitute for pastors at least in these initial periods. Once the seminary furnishes suitable subjects to replace the dispersed missionaries, they will reassemble at a common center, and will again enter completely our normal rule.<sup>628</sup> It seems to me that this was the practice of the missionaries sent out by Saint Vincent to various foreign missions. They could not have been any different either, at least at the beginning. For the rest, we need to remain attached to our rules and customs as best we can.

When we are in the house, we wear cassock, cincture, biretta, just like over there. But when we have to go out into the country, we have to adapt our dress to the custom of the region to avoid attracting the laughter and ridicule which would not fail to fall on our ministry itself. For example, if we had to be seen as we are in Italy, on horseback in cassock, and especially with a tricorne hat, even Catholics would be ashamed to approach us, and the heterodox would use the occasion to take us for wild men and visionaries. We hope that, with time, they will put aside these prejudices. Meanwhile, for now, in virtue of principle, everything calls us to set aside what is secondary.

By the grace of God, religion is daily making new strides. The Catholics are being reformed, even though more heretics are converted than Catholics, and from the beginnings which we see, I do not doubt at all that one day (and that day cannot be far off) religion will be seen

<sup>627</sup> This did not take place, probably since the cathedral was never fully completed nor decorated.

<sup>628</sup> "9. When, in course of time, and by means of the training of young students for the Church, they have provided a sufficient number of priests to replace the missionaries dispersed in different parishes, the latter will then be enabled to withdraw into one or more houses, according to the regulations of their institute, restricting themselves to the usual functions of the same, retaining those others only, that are annexed to their existing houses." ("Foundation Contract," in Rybolt, ed., *American Vincentians*, 453.)

*Correspondence 1819*

to flourish in its turn in these deserts. *Pinguessent speciosa deserti* ["the deserted places will flourish"].<sup>629</sup> I am omitting various other things that I wrote in some previous letters that you have received, or I hope you will receive as soon as possible.

To arouse fervor in his flock, and especially to enable the conversion of heretics, the bishop has established a confraternity of men, all Anglo-Americans, and good and fervent Catholics, under the invocation of the Blessed Virgin. He made me its director, and last Sunday we had our first meeting. This is something really unusual in these parts. The bishop is tireless and is constantly exercising all his zeal for the good of his flock. We need a man like him, endowed with many talents, virtues, and both natural and supernatural qualities to bear up under such a weight. Besides, the affairs of New Orleans take an active turn, or to say it better, everything that placed an obstacle to episcopal jurisdiction has been handled.

Fathers Rosati, Acquaroni and Cellini, as well as our present novices, Ferrari and Dahmen, are well. So, too, are Brothers Borgna, Potini and Blanka. But in my opinion the novice brother, Bettelani, lacks vigor and he is only one among the four postulant brothers we need. He is content, however, to remain as a domestic. I assure you, regarding novices, especially brothers, that conditions in this country are so extremely difficult that, if they have a vocation, they are exposed to a great danger of losing it. If they have none, it is that much worse for them and for us.

We are praying for the deceased [confreres] whom you told us about. I repeat that we need books and relics and paintings and images and vestments and linen and cloth to make cassocks, serge for cloaks or capes, and cloth which is unavailable here, etc., etc., whatever is required, as you well know, to set up a house or a church, all that will be precious. We will kiss their hand and pray for our benefactors. I would not want you to regard as poetic, and nearly impossible, like that matter of the statues, the project that I am about to propose to you. I have thought about this a hundred times, but I have never yet remembered to mention it in my letters.

You should know that this American land, especially in this western part, still remains virgin territory, almost like in the time of Adam and Noah. The greatest need that we have is to get arms to clear and to set to work at once on the cleared land. Here the peasant class is really

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<sup>629</sup> Ps 65:13 NAB: "The untilled meadows overflow with it (and rejoicing clothes the hills)."

*Correspondence 1819*

unknown. Each one works his own land by himself or has his slaves work it. Day laborers are quite scarce and costly. Besides, slaves sell for 1000 or 1500 scudi each, and the little lads go for 600. They cause many serious problems that it would be too much to describe here. Consequently, having land is of no use, and the 640 arpents (which I do not know how to convert to Roman measure) that form the endowment of the seminary, remain up to now of no use at all to us. And so here is my plan.

I often recall having encountered in Lombardy a large number of farm families who spend their whole lives year after year under the tyrannical yoke of a despotic landowner. It is very difficult to find something to buy, and they are still up to their ears in terrible debts. If one of our confreres would decide to come here to join us in these parts, after having assembled a sufficient amount for this undertaking and be willing to have one of these families cross the sea and lead them here, he would assure the wealth both of this family and of our seminary, half of whose land would be given them. They would be sure of every spiritual and temporal help. This is not an unrealistic project, since every day rich landowners go to Europe and return here bringing back German or Irish or Flemish farm families. The bishop himself has brought back with him various Flemish farmers, whom he has already set upon land bought by him, to serve as the Bishop's Table.<sup>630</sup> If you agree to support this project, everything will go forward well to alleviate the greatest problem for the [maintenance?] of our establishment. On the other hand, according to the expression of Saint Vincent, we will continue to rest under the banner of Providence.<sup>631</sup>

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<sup>630</sup> These farmers, who had originally come to the Barrens to work the land there, soon wanted to move to the bishop's property in Florissant. They lived and worked there to support him.

<sup>631</sup> A generic citation, quoted from memory. Probably another version of "He who lodges under the banner of confidence in God will ever be favored by His special protection." (Coste, *CED*, 11:39; Conference to Vincentians, 24.)

*Correspondence 1819*

Typical French-style home. Sainte Genevieve, Missouri. About 1800.  
*Courtesy of the author*

Oh! if only we would rely on these teachings which the prudent speak of! But now this paper is about to end.<sup>632</sup>

Our compliments to all, etc. Prayers, prayers for us that we not forget our confreres, and all that has come from Europe, which seems like an answer to prayer.

I am, with the deepest respect and veneration, your most respectful, devoted and humble servant,

Felix De Andreis,  
unworthy priest of the Mission.

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<sup>632</sup> De Andreis's hand finishes the letter.



## Correspondence 1819

66. TO THE MEETING AT MONTE CITORIO, ROME<sup>633</sup>

Saint Louis  
21 June 1819

*Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*<sup>634</sup>

I learned from a letter that I recently received that one of our letters has been read at the evening meeting at Monte Citorio. Since this group continues to show zeal and interest for this mission of ours, I take advantage of the opportunity of an Italian from Bergamo, a long-time resident in this city, who is going to Europe on business, to send a letter to the same, ever appreciated and most loved meeting. It seems to me that I am still looking at you from my presider's seat.

I have no doubt that news from a mission so remote as ours might be able to reawaken in the center of Christianity extraordinary sentiments of piety, religion, zeal and fervor in hearts open to such sentiments. What a difference between Rome and Louisiana. There one swims in an abundance of the means of sanctification: churches, ministers, liturgies, books, culture, good example, monuments of piety, supports of all sorts. One would have to be monstrously evil not to experience the urge to live a Christian life. Here, on the other hand, we lack every means of salvation, and everything conspires to remove from mind and heart any idea or thought about religion. To tell the truth, our arrival in this wooded desert could not have been more opportune. People regarded as the wisest in the land have assured me that matters were reduced to such a level that they believed that the

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<sup>633</sup> **Letter 66.** *Autograph letter, Italian, four pages, in the Archives of the General Curia, Rome; De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part I, Sect. D., #17, 93-96; copy in the archives of Propaganda Fide, Scritture Riferite nei Congressi. America Centrale. Dal Canada all'Istmo di Panama. Codice 4. Dal 1818 a [fut]to il 1820. Docum. 92. Fol. 451-56. Cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 352-53, 359-60, 377, 382, 394.*

A group of clergy and laity that met daily at Monte Citorio. De Andreis had been its director. The participants seem to have listened to religious conferences, shared their faith and prayed together. De Andreis appeals here to their charity. It was at one of its evening sessions that bishop-elect Dubourg first heard De Andreis. Rosati described the group as follows: "for several of the last years he spent at Rome, he regularly preached each evening, for about three quarters of an hour, to a large group. It was composed of persons of every state, peasants, domestics, lawyers, priests, prelates and occasionally even cardinals. It met in a hall located near the door of the house at Monte Citorio." (Rosati, "Life," *Summarium*, 45.)

<sup>634</sup> "To the Greater Glory of God."

*Correspondence 1819*

old cabin which served as a church was going to tumble down and with it the last spark of piety would forever be snuffed out. That is our situation. Despite our continuous efforts, we find it quite difficult to reawaken the faith and nourish devotion. Also, although the bishop has brought from Europe a colony of about forty evangelical laborers with a surprising quantity of implements and sacred ornaments, we still find ourselves absorbed like a drop of wine in a barrel of water.

The need is still so great that we cannot even lift our head against the rush of the stream,<sup>635</sup> yet the good that is being done is great. Crowds of adults are baptized, many who had fallen away and who had no idea of religion are being reconciled and set on the path of salvation. When the youth of both sexes make their first communion, they are trained to live a Christian life. Nevertheless, so much good remains to be done, and the resources for it are so feeble, that the good [still to be done] overwhelms the good that is being done. This sometimes causes our arms to droop.

We have to deal here with every sort of person from every nation, color and language. Classes are distinguished primarily by color. There are five different colors: whites, blacks, mulattos (born of a white man and a black woman and vice versa), the reds, that is the Indians, and the reddish called half-breeds, that is, born of a white man and an Indian woman. But each color presents its own style and diverse dispositions, and each demands from us a different treatment. The whites come from different nations and languages. For the person who needs to be prepared to speak, to hear confessions and to preach in both languages, they can be reduced to those who speak either English or French according to the occasion. Ordinarily, on meeting a person, we do not know which language to use, if the other is not the first to speak.

Yet, those who love religion are not the ones who leave their native parts to come to seek a fortune in America, at least ordinarily, and so they present a vast field for zeal. And although not everyone gets in the net, still, by God's grace, the net is not cast in vain. Here normally a large number come to the sermons, given mostly in both languages, and also many times during the day the ministers of other sects are dispossessed because they have little to do. A great number of people, although not yet disposed to embrace the Catholic religion, nevertheless have this saying, "if I have to have a religion it is the Roman Catholic religion." This is already a great step and to go the rest of the way

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<sup>635</sup> An allusion to Ps 110:7.

*Correspondence 1819*

such means to him who alone is capable of satisfying completely the heart that he made for himself alone. I see through experience the great advantage of abandoning one's home country, parents, friends, etc., to become detached from the world even more and to acquire that true spiritual freedom found only in those who really love God.

We have established here, under the invocation of the most blessed Virgin, a group of men, who are for the most part good English Catholics.<sup>639</sup> We use them to convert heretics and to do other good works in places we cannot go by ourselves. I am responsible for their direction and I would like them to be associated with the meeting of Monte Citorio. I will await your pleasure and the list of indulgences with a letter of communication with all the societies and confraternities of Rome through pontifical concession. But we do not know specifically which indulgences are accorded to each individual group.

I have written this in some confusion and at various times because I do not have time and I have to run all over, sometimes to baptize or to assist the dying or to catechize or to preach or to have a funeral, weddings etc., and it would be better if I could be multiplied especially in the confessional. Every day and hour has its own ministry, and I have to be ready day and night to leave dinner or to go by land or water in pirogues—that is what we call tree trunks carved out inside on which we risk crossing rivers terrifying in their breadth, more than a mile wide, and with a rushing and speedy current. These people are accustomed to a wild life and a missionary has no small task at the beginning to overcome his natural aversion and to adjust to their habits. Sometimes I am sick to death that I cannot accomplish more. If we had money to start some establishments of charity and instruction, these would greatly facilitate our ministries, and would make them more fruitful.

Just as the see of Rome presides over all the sees of the Catholic world through its primacy of dignity and jurisdiction, so the Roman people ought to preside over all the people through the primacy of their fervor and edification. This is like what Saint Paul wrote to the faithful of still pagan Rome, [Rom] 16:19 *Vestra enim obedientia in omnem locum divulgata est* ["Your obedience has been proclaimed everywhere"]. Just as the more central parts of the human body which receive the greatest abundance of food communicate nourishment to the external members in greater abundance, so it seems to me that the faithful of Rome ought to take on themselves that which the apostle writes in 2

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<sup>639</sup> That is, of English nationality, which consisted mainly of those born in Ireland.

*Correspondence 1819*

Cor 8:14 *Vestra abundantia illorum inopiam suppleat* ["Your abundance should make up for their lack"]. Not that there are not already some rich people here who might be able, if they were willing, to supply the most basic help. Unfortunately they are not Catholics, or are Catholics in name only and so have not the least interest in the establishment of religion, to say nothing of greater interest in seeing that it not be established. Nothing would give a better idea of the Catholic faith than to see the generosity of true Catholics, especially from Rome, in propagating it in the most distant parts of the world. Nothing in fact is more effective in destroying innate prejudice in heretics—this is the mainspring that moves the missionaries to act in their interest—than in seeing how, instead of looking for money, they obtain spiritual benefit at no personal expense. That generous trait is capable of exciting them to imitate it.

I recommend the missionaries and the mission to the prayers of the meeting, especially the usual *Gloria Patri*.<sup>640</sup>

I am, in the love of Our Lord Jesus Christ most cordially your most humble devoted and obliged servant.

Felix De Andreis

*In another hand*: Received 21 January 1821

**67. TO FELIX DE ANDREIS, C.M., SAINT LOUIS<sup>641</sup>**

[Post Vincennes, Indiana]

[July 1819]

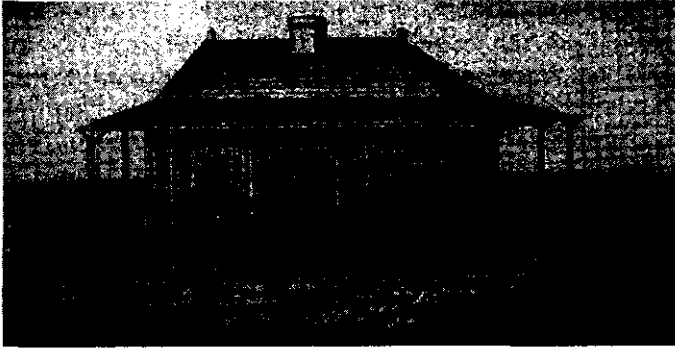
I set out on Friday morning accompanied by one of the inhabitants of Vincennes who was to be my Pilot and in the evening we arrived at a house about twenty miles from St. Louis at the beginning of the great

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<sup>640</sup> Sessions of the meeting concluded with this prayer.

<sup>641</sup> **Letter 67.** Excerpt from a letter, cited in "A Short Account Of The Holy Life And Virtues Of The Rev. Andrew Ferrari Priest Of The Congregation Of The Mission, Deceased At New Orleans On The 3rd (2nd) Of November 1822," published John E. Rybolt, C.M., trans. and ann., "A Life of Andrew Ferrari, C.M.," VH 7:1 (1986): 43-45. The translation is probably by Joseph Rosati, the author of the "Short Account."

The route taken by the writer followed roughly the same route as US Highway 50, one of the major emigrant routes of the time.

*Correspondence 1819*

Period French-style home. Engraving.  
Collection of De Paul University Library, Chicago, Illinois

Prairie ....<sup>642</sup> The next day we left the house very early to cross the Prairie which is fifty miles in breadth before the flies should become more troublesome. But after having rode seventeen or eighteen miles, I perceived that I had left my saddlebags at the house where we had passed the night. My Pilot took my horse being stronger than his, went back to the house, and instructed me to go on, and to wait for him at a house four miles farther. Riding by myself on my Pilot's horse, who was in a very bad condition [with a thoroughly broken saddle which hardly fit on its back, and with a bridle half leather and half tree bark,]<sup>643</sup> I was afraid of falling in the hands of Robbers, who as I had been told a few days ago attacked some passengers. But I think that Providence by the means of my very poor trotting horse and attire delivered me from that danger.

Arrived at the place to which I had been directed, I stopped to look for my companion with great uneasiness, which grew still greater as his arrival retarded. The night came and I did not see him. My Landlord, who was a Baptist, made me a thousand questions about Catholicks. He was a good man and seemed to be satisfied with my answers. Next morning more anxious than ever I did not know what to do. Finally I resolved to go on; thinking that he had passed in the night. [At six I arrived at another habitation where they told me that many passengers had spent the night there, and probably that my guide

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<sup>642</sup> The prairie begins at or near Lebanon, Illinois, located on US Highway 50. This town was platted in 1814.

<sup>643</sup> The material in brackets is cited from a second and expanded version of the text.

*Correspondence 1819*



The Halfway Tavern. Marion County, Illinois.  
Structure dates from 1818, and is one of several taverns on the  
Vincennes-St. Louis Trail.

*Courtesy of the author*

was with them. I stayed there till ten, and not seeing him again I set out.<sup>644</sup>] Thus during the rest of my journey always tormented by thirst, burnt by the sun which seemed to be as powerful in these Prairies as in the Wilderness of Arabia, always in motion to fight against the most importunate flies, that made the horses frantick, and more as he was not much exercised in patience once threw himself down, and turned on his back. Happily I had time to jump down, but in mounting again, I fell on the ground.

At length I arrived at Vincennes, whither my Pilot had also arrived, a few hours before. He had alarmed the whole Parish thinking that I was lost. The cause why he had not come was that the horse had run away from him. Moreover, a few miles from the place where he had left me, while he was coming back he had been attacked by a man who asked the saddle bags; and while the Robber endeavoured to throw him down from his horse he had snatched the stick from his hands and gave him such a terrible blow in the head, that he laid him dead, or half dead, on the ground. Then at full gallop he escaped from two horsemen that followed him for several miles armed with rifles.

[Andrew Ferrari, C.M.]

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<sup>644</sup> The probable location of this "habitation" is Half-Way Tavern, built in 1818 as a stagecoach stop. It is now a reconstructed historical site on US Highway 50.

*Correspondence 1819*

**68. TO FRANCESCO ANTONIO BACCARI, C.M.,  
PRO-VICAR GENERAL, ROME<sup>645</sup>**

Saint Louis  
7 July 1819

Very Reverend and Dear Father,

I have not even one Italian with me to help me write in this language, and so I have to write myself, despite the trouble it causes my stomach. I had to send out on mission the only Italian remaining with me, Father Ferrari, a priest novice, with another French priest<sup>646</sup> twenty days ago to Post Vincennes. It is a four-day trip from here, in the state of Indiana, among the Indians, in the diocese of Bardstown, and we hope to have a second establishment there. I will not repeat here what I said in the enclosed letter addressed to the meeting of the Porteria,<sup>647</sup> since you can read it at your leisure. The bishop has been at the Barrens for three months now supervising the building of our house and seminary there. I have agreed that Brother Borgna be ordained a subdeacon on Father Rosati's assurance to me that he had finished his theology studies.

I am now going to speak to you of a delicate matter that I ask you, please, to keep very secret, *salvo necessitatis jure* ["except in case of need"]. The bishop has spoken to me several times of his need, and the diocese's too, of having a coadjutor [bishop]. This person would become his successor *pro praemortente* ["in case of his early death"]. The need is urgent, but the difficulty concerns the person on whom the choice would fall. Because of my physical condition, to say nothing of my absolute moral inability, which everyone recognizes, and, also, because of the conversations which the bishop had with me, I seem to

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<sup>645</sup> **Letter 68.** *Autograph letter, Italian, four pages, in the Archives of the General Curia, Rome; De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part I, Sect. D, #18, 97-100; copy in the archives of Propaganda Fide, Rome, Scritture Riferite nei Congressi. America Centrale. Dal Canada all'Istmo di Panama. Codice 4. Dal 1818 a t[ut]to il 1820. Docum. 102. Fol. 479-82. Cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 374-75, 378, 383, 417, 422-23, 436, 440-41.*

<sup>646</sup> Actually, Francis Xavier Dahmen, a German by birth.

<sup>647</sup> The "Meeting," which gathered at Monte Citorio. Probably Letter 66.

*Correspondence 1819*

have nothing to fear.<sup>648</sup> Nevertheless, since I know that our bishop lives up to the saying of the Sage, *prudentis est mutare consilium* ["the prudent man changes his plan"],<sup>649</sup> it is very easy for him to change his plans even two or three times a day before finally executing them. For this reason, although he has often wanted to see, and has placed in my hands letters addressed to the cardinal prefect of Propaganda to request, bulls of a coadjutor for N.,<sup>650</sup> yet he might have changed his plans, especially during such a long absence from Saint Louis. As a result, I am persuaded that Propaganda will take no step without consulting you, or at least without letting you offer a suggestion. For this reason, I think that you are obliged in conscience for more and more reasons to object strongly, if it is a question of your unworthy correspondent. Please do not suppose that this is a result of humility. The episcopal dignity offers here no nourishment to ambition. It would rather be the result of laziness, if it were not a duty of justice, piety and religion.<sup>651</sup> I leave to one side all the personal reflections that clearly make me unworthy of such a position, and I point out only that it is for the good of the Congregation, since I see clearly that were this to happen, our American establishment would completely disappear. There would be only Father Rosati left to maintain it. But he would seem, for even more and better reasons, irreparably exposed to the same result if he were *ad altiora vocatus* ["called to higher things"]. Consequently I assure you that I am tired of living; I would like to pull myself away. It is time for me not to go higher but lower. I do not want to clothe myself but rather to be stripped. Hence I prefer to die with weapons in my hands, since the time for rest has not yet arrived. An eternity of rest is good enough for a fool like me, but it is quite another thing to work and to govern a diocese where there is every difficulty imaginable and where the smallest imprudence could ruin everything. At present, I still pull the cart as vicar general, but I would rather let that go, and I hope soon

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<sup>648</sup> Rosati reported that, during De Andreis's years in Rome, the pope himself had suggested that he might be made a bishop: "We should not lose sight of this worthy priest. Men like him should be placed on bishops' thrones." (Rosati, "Life," *Summarium*, 47-48; another instance on 62.)

<sup>649</sup> A commonplace expression, based on *hominis est* ... ["it is human to change one's plan"], which De Andreis incorrectly attributes to the author of the biblical book of Proverbs.

<sup>650</sup> Probably John Baptist David, S.S., as coadjutor of Bardstown, Kentucky. He was elected to this position 4 July 1817, but consecrated only 15 August 1819.

<sup>651</sup> The writer means that his being made a bishop would be the result of Baccari's laziness in not objecting; Baccari is obliged to object from justice, piety and religion.



*Correspondence 1819*

to succeed. In such a position, although not at the ship's helm, I am nonetheless in a position to understand the huge gulf between pastoral duties and my dispositions for them. Hence, nothing could drag me into it, and with me, drag down endless souls. What use would it have been then for me to have come seeking a desert in America to hide in and disappear? I hope that this suffices to let you enter into my feelings. Espouse my cause and take my part, and so I will rest secure.

In another letter of mine<sup>652</sup> I spoke to you of the project of sending me a family of farmers accompanied by one of our priests. A more favorable opportunity to carry out this project could not present itself, since the bearer of this letter, as you can find out from him in person, has the same plan himself, and he will not stop until he completes it. If it seems right, you will be able to come to an agreement with this same person about the method, the arrangement and the passage. Should it ever happen, as it could, that this letter reaches you by another means, the bearer will, nevertheless, not miss the opportunity of making himself known over there.

This last week we held the first communion of about forty young boys and girls, with great satisfaction and many tears, and for the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin [15 August] we will have another group of them. It is also quite consoling for me to hear a former prostitute tell me: Since you arrived in this area, no one has touched me. Then a blasphemer tells me: Since you began the instructions I have not blasphemed or sworn. Another infidel<sup>653</sup> assures me that the first communion of the children induced him to be baptized, etc. Yet amid these consolations there sometimes develop very sharp thorns. For example, two days ago I was forced to deny ecclesiastical burial to a former Parisian from a leading family who had died without letting me or another priest come to see him. Several times during his illness we arrived to minister to him. This is a very serious matter in this area, so much so that another priest, who denied burial to a vile slave living in concubinage, barely escaped with his life, since his assembled relatives are bound by blood ties to the main families. This makes me see that God watches over us in a special way, because everything passed with the greatest tranquility. Even though they had protested to me that they would first bury me and then bury or have someone

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<sup>652</sup> Letter 65, 26 April 1819.

<sup>653</sup> Jean Daniel Levy, the convert from Judaism, baptized by the bishop. (See Letters 50 and 51, of 17 and 26 June 1818.)

*Correspondence 1819*

bury the impenitent man, they were persuaded greatly by my unworthiness to merit martyrdom.<sup>654</sup>

We have a great need here of English books. The few that are here are very expensive. I know that over there you can find them sometimes, and quite often in the bookstalls, as they call them, and because purchasers are few, they are available very cheaply. I myself have bought many there for less than one scudo. Consequently, inasmuch as the good of our mission moves you, please pay attention to this and get us some. Father Grassi, who has not been in the west of America beyond the Alleghenies, thinks that books are abundant here, such as they are in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and especially in Washington and Georgetown, but he is quite mistaken. If there is an area or an institution where books are necessary, it is without doubt this area and this institution.

At Monte Citorio I sometimes had to look for additional work for myself, and it seems to me that more than half my fingers were idle, but here I am loaded with jobs and I am tired of listening *ad nauseam* to paradoxes and paralogisms being repeated. At Rome these are found only in books of theology called *Objecta Adversariorum* ["the objections of adversaries"]. They are cabbages fried and refried, cooked and recooked, pounded and repeated, and they get up every day to sally forth as if they had just been born. This calumny has been shown to be

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<sup>654</sup> The same incident is reported with greater detail in the Paris biography:

One time there was a question of giving ecclesiastical burial to an old Parisian who lived with a woman publicly; he died without having given the least signs of repentance and after refusing the assistance of the Church. Father De Andreis, who had at that time gone to bed because of a headache, was asked [about this] by a clergyman [Niel]. He absolutely refused ecclesiastical burial; the bishop had been leaning toward granting it, but he appreciated Father De Andreis's repugnance. He spoke about this with him; the discussion was lively and at the end the bishop went to the church and found the people before the door, and they brought in the body. As soon as he [Dubourg] went up in the pulpit, both with words and with the spirit of Saint John Chrysostom and Saint Ambrose, he said, "You may pull me in pieces," he cried out, "before making me disobey the laws of the Church." Those who were present were in confusion and left in silence; they brought the body with them and buried it in the woods.

(*Notices VI*, 439.) Borgna reports the same incident, adding that the man had died from drink. (Borgna to Casoni, from Fermo, 20 January 1849, in the Archives of the General Curia, Rome, De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part I, Sect. D, inserted after page 300.)

*Correspondence 1819*

as bright as the sun; but they turn a deaf ear and the same song continues to be sung as if it had never been sung before. It is so horrible to deal with ignorance supported by malice and presumption. This only makes me see more clearly that evil abyss of heresy, and it always makes more clear to me our beautiful and resplendent truth. May it please God to receive the gift of my blood to strengthen it. What a grace this would be. Truth and nothing else. God is truth. Jesus Christ is the truth who prayed for all the true faithful *ut sint sanctificati in veritate; fiat, fiat, amen, amen* ["they may be sanctified in truth; let it be, let it be, amen, amen"].<sup>655</sup>

My very humble compliments to all, and with the deepest respect I am your most humble

Felix De Andreis

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission.

P.S. Your goodness and zeal for our missions that exudes from every part of your very welcome letter inspires in me the confidence that I employ in mine. I would like to know if the months Father Cellini spent on the journey, as well as the time he spends now at the seminary, might count for the time of his novitiate. Since it is now under construction and poor Father Rosati is very busy, he can scarcely follow any of the exercises of the novitiate, since he is busy with distracting duties, and it is impossible to give him a place here, as I have tried in vain. Besides, although I have not yet seen him, the bishop writes me that he is a precious subject, and Father Rosati is taken with him, especially because of his great attachment to our Congregation and his genuine spirit. If you agree that, however he has spent them, the last two years since his admission constitute a considerable time of strict novitiate, I will admit him to vows.

You cannot believe our great need of another good brother. Brother Blanka is excellent, but he is alone. We do not have here the three or even four postulants and the novice who recently came.<sup>656</sup> Here artisans are haughty, and one has to pay them reverence. Even if you would pay double the price, you would not find a shoemaker who would want to adjust a stitch on a shoe, and likewise when shoes and clothes are in need of repair, the matter is desperate. We would have to throw them away. Everyone is equal .... We need more brothers who have

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<sup>655</sup> See John 17:17, and the conclusion to various psalms.

<sup>656</sup> Francis Cellini, Philip Borgna, Anthony Potini, Brother Bartholomew Bettelani. Cellini was a novice, as was Brother Bettelani.

*Correspondence 1819*

made their vows and who are very much attached to their vocation. Otherwise, they are in great danger of being lost. With time, we will perhaps be able to find postulants among the Americans. I have written you once before<sup>657</sup> about admitting ordained men and candidates for ordination *titulo missionis* ["to the title of the mission"], and I am waiting for your answer.

*Addressed:* To Most Reverend Father Francisco Baccari, Priest and Pro-Vicar General of the Congregation of the Mission, Monte Citorio, Rome.

*In another hand:* De Andreis. Received 26 June 1821.

**69. TO FELIX DE ANDREIS, C.M., SAINT LOUIS<sup>658</sup>**

Assumption Parish [Louisiana]  
3 September 1819

Dear Father,

This is the first time that I have taken the liberty of writing you, at least to have the consolation of asking for some advice and for a little courage in the exercise of my difficult ministry. I have always been against burdening myself with parish ministry, and in my own country perhaps I would have been able to have a parish, but the fear of burdening myself with such a great weight has made me prefer an assignment that took me elsewhere. Yet, to admit this has terrified me, and I have not looked for it. The result is that Father [Giuseppe] Tosi, your confrere,<sup>659</sup> in some way obliged me to do so, and I did not have the courage to resist him because of my esteem for his holiness. So, now I find myself in charge of a parish where I think I have 20,000 souls scattered over more than 50 leagues. I always encounter the most difficult cases that bishops would decide in Europe. But I am here alone, with no one of experience to whom I can turn to ask for advice.

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<sup>657</sup> Letter 53, 3 September 1818.

<sup>658</sup> **Letter 69.** *Autograph letter, Italian, three pages with address, in archives of the archdiocese of Saint Louis, Bigeschi file.*

<sup>659</sup> Giuseppe Tosi (1769-1842), a Vincentian priest at the seminary of Piacenza, which Bigeschi had attended.

*Correspondence 1819*

I have consulted with an old Spaniard,<sup>660</sup> but he did not satisfy me. The Italians are young and have had no practice in this region.<sup>661</sup> Those who might be able to console me are too far away.

The administration of all the sacraments here is more difficult than elsewhere and, as inexperienced and ignorant as I am, I find myself in this abyss without seeing when I can escape. I assure you, dear Father, that I have often drenched with my tears the bread I eat and the roads I tread. In everything, I see what I lack. I have an enormous negligence, extreme tepidity. What can I do in such a difficult post?

Yesterday, two Spanish girls came to go to confession. They are twenty years old, but have not yet made their first communion. One of them wanted to get married in two weeks. They have not learned one syllable of the catechism, and said only that they knew the basic prayers. There is nothing else in this than the fear of not being able to get married. This fear drives them to learn the catechism, since my predecessor was very insistent on not giving the sacrament of matrimony to anyone who had not received the sacrament of the eucharist. Once I open this door, I am done with.

Most of them do not take care to become instructed. What to do in such difficult cases? I cannot burden myself with the instruction of the Spaniards, since I do not know the language, and they do not speak French. A quarter of my parish is inhabited by Spaniards. If they are refused marriage, they go to the justice of the peace. I see what a labyrinth exists for me, a person of no experience.

Here the blacks are made to work on feast days, with the excuse of fearing a revolt, and of keeping them from being given as prey to all sorts of vices. If the masters come to confession, and, for the reasons mentioned, do not want to desist from making their slaves work, then absolution may be given to them.

This is a little sketch of the thorns to be found in the exercise of parish functions. Dear Father, please examine whether I could do enough so as not to want to leave the parish. I have always had the wish to give missions for idolaters, but I see that I do not merit this favor. Nonetheless, I feel this desire. In your charity, please tell me if you think this is a temptation or a vocation.

Tichitoli is in a good house some five leagues from here to be purged, something he needed. I have received news about him that he

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<sup>660</sup> Perhaps Bernardo de Deva, a Spanish Capuchin, and founder of the parish; he died in 1826.

<sup>661</sup> These priests were mainly those recruited by Dubourg for his diocese.

*Correspondence 1819*

vomited up a great deal of bile, and that he is now well. The doctor caring for him assures me that his chest is very good, and that after this purge he will put on a lot of weight. I wrote the bishop about him, but I do not think that he will be able to remain alone in a parish. He does not yet have the necessary reflection, since he finds himself embroiled in tiny details, and doubts of conscience torment him. In a parish he needs to be carefully controlled. Yet I see that he is doing very great good in the confessional, and that God grants him some special illumination.

Please recommend me to God, so that I might do his will, and that I might once be converted.

With all respect, I have the honor of calling myself,  
your most devoted servant,  
Joseph Bigeschi<sup>662</sup>

*Addressed:* Monsieur, Monsieur De Andreis, Vicar general, Territory of Missouri, Saint Louis of the Illinois [*in another hand:* Missouri].

*Postmark:* New Orleans, Sept. 23.

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<sup>662</sup> Joseph Bigeschi was a diocesan priest from Florence who arrived with several others in early 1817. The bishop stationed him at Assumption parish where he remained until his return to Europe in 1827. Little is known of him.

*Correspondence 1819***70(a). TO FRANCESCO ANTONIO BACCARI, C.M.,  
PRO-VICAR GENERAL, ROME<sup>663</sup>**

Saint Louis  
23 September 1819

Dear Father:

I am taking advantage of the departure of several priests for Lower Louisiana to send you this letter. It has been 22 months now since I separated from dear Father Rosati on the banks of the Mississippi, and from that point on I have not been able to see him again. However, a few days ago, I was able to embrace him again. On that occasion, I was able to shed the responsibility for the English, which I gave to him.<sup>664</sup> Afterward, I was able myself to give the retreat for the ordinands. During my poor retreat conferences I took as a theme the motto of the United States, *E pluribus unum* ["One out of many"]. I will be happy if I succeed. Please help me with your prayers and those of the Congregation, since I am convinced that a great good depends on this.<sup>665</sup>

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<sup>663</sup> **Letter 70(a).** *Autograph letter, Italian, six pages, in the Archives of the General Curia, Rome; De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part I, Sect. D, #19, 101-106; copy, undated and recipient unnamed, in the archives of Propaganda Fide, Rome, Scritture Riferite nei Congressi. America Centrale. Dal Canada all'Istmo di Panama. Codice 4. Dall 188 a [ut]to il 1820. Docum. 122. Cited in Carlo Casoni's manuscript life of Rosati, archives of the Congregation of the Mission, Rome, Rosati papers, America, P. II, 17. Cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 418-20, 437. Letter 70(b).* *Drawing and autograph description, Italian, two pages, in the Archives of the General Curia, Rome; originally in the De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part I, Sect. D, #19, 107-108, but removed for Bozuffi's biography. The originals are in the Archives of the General Curia. Cited in manuscript life of Rosati, Archives of the General Curia, Rome, America, Parte II, 17. Drawing and description reprinted in Bozuffi, Il Servo di Dio Felice de Andreis, plates XIV, XV.*

This letter was partly reprinted, in French, in *Ami de la Religion* 24:618 (12 July 1820): 281. This demonstrates that at least some of De Andreis's correspondence became known and was circulated.

<sup>664</sup> This was temporary, lasting only during Rosati's visit, which lasted for about a month, from at least 22 August to 12 September, according to his notes, "Funzioni." (Copy in DRMA, Rosati papers.)

<sup>665</sup> His care was to assure that the future priests from various countries would become united.

*Correspondence 1819*

Father Rosati's presence has caused a scruple to develop in me: should I not go instead to replace him in running the seminary, which is what our formal mission has been, and leave him here to fulfill the office of vicar general, and to see to all the other needs? I proposed this plan to the bishop, but he opposed it very strongly for many personal and local reasons. To reassure my conscience, we left the decision to some wise priests who had been called to a meeting for this purpose. Among these was Father Rosati himself. It was decided that I could go in good conscience, but that I should remain a little while longer until the seminary is completed, provided someone from elsewhere could take my place. One of the reasons put forward was my health. Last winter, I suffered ferocious erysipelas of the brain.<sup>666</sup> Although it left me wavering between time and eternity, it has now somewhat improved.

You tell me in your letters of being burdened *ultra vires* ["beyond your strength"].<sup>667</sup> I could say the same, but it should not be concluded from this that it is just that my strength is weak.<sup>668</sup> Yet, so that they might know something to glorify God about, to whom alone the glory is due, the number of baptized adults is large. Several times I have baptized an entire pew at one time during the High Mass. I explained one by one all the ceremonies of baptism to a huge crowd of people. These people are partly Indian, partly half-breeds, and come from all sorts of sects or nations. We always have catechumens to instruct, the sick to visit—who sometimes become Catholics on their deathbeds—and other services that always occupy us. I can say that the confessional has become our daily post. Preaching is very frequent, since there is not a marriage or a baptism without preaching, and often, too, at funerals. Frequently several times a day there are both French and English sermons.

During next month, October, I will go with a Flemish priest<sup>669</sup> to give a mission at Portage des Sioux, where Father Acquaroni fulfills the duties of pastor. I am here alone with only one novice, a German priest.<sup>670</sup> I had to put him into my room to leave the building for another

<sup>666</sup> Erysipelas is characterized by high fevers and severe skin blisters. See Letters 63-64.

<sup>667</sup> An allusion to 1 Cor 10:13, "God is faithful and will not let you be tried beyond your strength."

<sup>668</sup> He seems to mean that his spiritual life and abilities are also weak.

<sup>669</sup> Probably Francis Niel, ordained a priest in Saint Louis, 19 March 1818.

<sup>670</sup> Francis X. Dahmen, ordained in Saint Louis only two weeks previously, 5 September 1819. He did not take vows, however, until 28 May 1821.



*Correspondence 1819*

use. There should be others, since they are asking to be received as novices, excellent prospects all, but I have to wait to accept them since there is no proper room.

Concerning the novice or postulant brothers, I have a plan to propose to you. We are here in the greatest need of brothers, and it would not be difficult to have some free blacks or mulattos, but once we begin to admit these "people of color," as they say here, the matter is over. No white man will ever want to be associated with them, since there is a prejudice deeply rooted here that a white man would disgrace himself by being associated with those people. Another means might be, therefore, with papal permission, to found a kind of third class, coadjutors distinct from the regular brothers. This would hold only for America, because of the special conditions in this country. The bishop<sup>671</sup> and Father Rosati have made this suggestion to me at various times. I await thoughts about this.

When the bishop was in Paris [he received]<sup>672</sup> from Father Verbert,<sup>673</sup> the vicar general there, with all the most authentic documents, an important relic of Saint Vincent, that is, his kneecap.<sup>674</sup> He was kind enough to divide it with us after breaking it down the middle, and he gave us a superb reliquary to contain our half. The other half he has kept for his cathedral, whose secondary patron is Saint Vincent. His feast is celebrated as a double of the first class with an octave, since the first patron *ab antiquo* ["from the beginning"] has been Saint Louis, who gives his name to the city and to all of Louisiana. To hold the relic reserved for the cathedral, he would be delighted to have a gilded wooden bust depicting Saint Vincent, with an opening

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<sup>671</sup> Dubourg made the same suggestion to Philippine Duchesne concerning the Sacred Heart nuns, as reported in Paisant, *Les années pionnières*, L 69, p. 283, 15 November 1819.

<sup>672</sup> The word is missing in the original.

<sup>673</sup> Charles Emmanuel Verbert, French vicar general from 12 August 1816 to 4 March 1819.

<sup>674</sup> This event took place 16 May 1817 at the chapel of the Daughters of Charity, 140 rue du Bac, Paris, where the body of Saint Vincent was then kept. The records specify that Verbert opened the oak box containing the saint's bones, removed the right kneecap and, in the presence of several Vincentian priests and Daughters of Charity, gave it to the bishop. Bishop Dubourg brought his half of the relic with him to Montauban when he left the United States. It was later given to the Vincentian Province of Toulouse, whose provincial gave it to the Cathedral of Saint Vincent de Paul in Fort-Dauphin, Madagascar. There is no record today of where the other half of this relic is now, whether it was ever divided, or whether the requested reliquary was ever made or delivered. See [Alphonse Vandamme], *Le Corps de Saint Vincent de Paul* (Abbeville: Paillart, 1913), 82-83, 212.

*Correspondence 1819*

in the chest to hold the sacred pledge. I now ask you to get this for us, and find the way to give this worthy bishop this small token of our gratitude for the many benefits that we receive continuously from him. Thus, at the first opportunity of sending something else, you could send us something beautifully made in those parts.

I would like to be able to give you a complete report of our establishment, which consists in a square mile of land probably completely uncultivated since the time of Adam. The building will be habitable this coming November. The expenses occurred in this country for construction are incredible. For this reason, we are making all the economies we can. Each one lends a hand. Father Cellini works all day long like a common laborer, and the bishop himself has no problem with working and helping to carry lumber and spending the whole day supervising and encouraging the work under the blazing sun until nightfall. I hope to be able to include a little sketch of the design for you.<sup>675</sup> Up to now, the seminary exists in a poor and badly built log cabin, called here a log house. Our rules and our exact daily schedule have been introduced there as far as the situation allows. They live extremely poorly. There is bread baked on the hearth, fresh water in place of wine, sometimes meat, sometimes not, potatoes, cabbages and vegetables. Dinner normally consists in a porridge of creamed corn, and this is the best gift there is. They sleep as they can, almost one on top of the other, so to speak, and they wear themselves out greatly in the ministry and in teaching.

The extremes of cold and heat here are unbelievable. The ground is stingy in producing edible fruits, but, by contrast, is extremely fertile in insects of every kind. These bother us terribly. I counted up to ten different kinds of little beasts that infest me at night and do not let me sleep. It seems incredible, but I have really succeeded in killing hundreds of bedbugs. Above all there is here a kind of insect unknown over there, called a tick in English. It is like a little scorpion, which gets completely under the skin and makes you see stars. People have told me that someone died for not having been able to pull out the insect from the delicate part where it was hidden. The only way to remove it is to make an incision and then pick it to pieces. To kill it you have to get it out as quickly as possible with a tweezers. Excuse me for dwelling on these details. I think that this might satisfy the curiosity of those who love knowing about everything.

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<sup>675</sup> See item 70(b) below.

*Correspondence 1819*

I assure you that when I think of Italy, it seems to me like an earthly paradise in comparison with America. I do not understand why so many Europeans come to submit to so many problems and privations for a miserable grant of land. Were it not for the glory of God and for the salvation of souls, I would not stay here even if I were gilded with all the gold in the world. Consequently, those determined to come should have a great hunger for souls; otherwise, they will not remain. If they have this hunger, fine, but they should realize that will have ways of satisfying it here. This is not the way it is over there, where, if I do not do something well, someone else will do it instead, and better than I. Here, however, you can say that in nearly everything that is done, if I had not come, it certainly would not be done. The reason is that even now with all the many priests who have come, we act as if each one were acting alone, since each one has enough and more than enough to occupy him. And so, when someone is needed for a work, there is no question of supplying another as happens over there, but rather of letting the work go. For this reason, our souls get so rusted out that our arms droop. The more the work, the greater the need. The other [day]<sup>676</sup> I went to visit a Catholic who was dying in a completely Protestant family. I ministered to him and while I was saying goodbye, the father of the family came up to me and declared that his entire family wanted to become Catholics. I clasped him to my chest and encouraged him that with instruction he would be ready to be baptized. There are many scenes like this, and there is no time for pitched battles: *sustine ... tentationes Dei* ["bear with the trials from God"].<sup>677</sup> The demon does not sleep. He directs all his efforts to disturb the good. The other day a troop of Protestant ministers arrived here from New York to uphold the falling Dagon.<sup>678</sup> *Hi in curribus et hi in equis, nos autem in nomine Dei nostri* ["Some are strong in chariots; some, in horses; but we are strong in the name of the Lord, our God"].<sup>679</sup> Here, heretics are starting to disappear, but [there are]<sup>680</sup> states among the United States without any Catholics at all, and they are not even known there. What good could be done in time!

I have to say candidly that I have a little problem with what I wrote on a previous page: "fresh water in place of wine," since I would not

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<sup>676</sup> The word is missing in the original.

<sup>677</sup> Sir 2:3 (Vulgate).

<sup>678</sup> 1 Sam 5:3.

<sup>679</sup> Ps 20:8.

<sup>680</sup> The word is missing in the original.

*Correspondence 1819*

like to leave anything doubtful or exaggerated. That is true of the seminary, but here, at the bishop's table, there is a watery beer, and, to my embarrassment, I make use of wine for my stomach, even though it costs one dollar a bottle. It is true that I follow the letter of the rule, *aqua plurima diluto* ["(wine) diluted with plenty of water"],<sup>681</sup> since a little bottle is enough to redden the water for an entire day. My illness follows me everywhere to turn me away conclusively from my self-love, provided I do not talk about it. The clever tempter always finds ways to gain access and rise to the surface. *Infelix ego homo. Quis me liberabit de corpore mortis huius* ["Miserable one that I am. Who will deliver me from this mortal body"]?<sup>682</sup>

I beg your prayers, that my foolishness not cause the destruction of God's work!

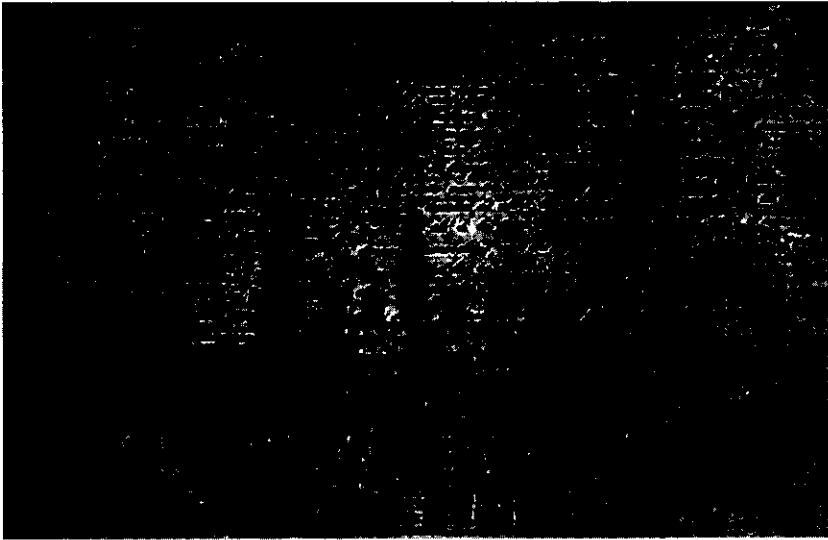
With profoundest respect and veneration for you,  
your most humble, devoted and obedient servant,  
Felix De Andreis  
unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission.

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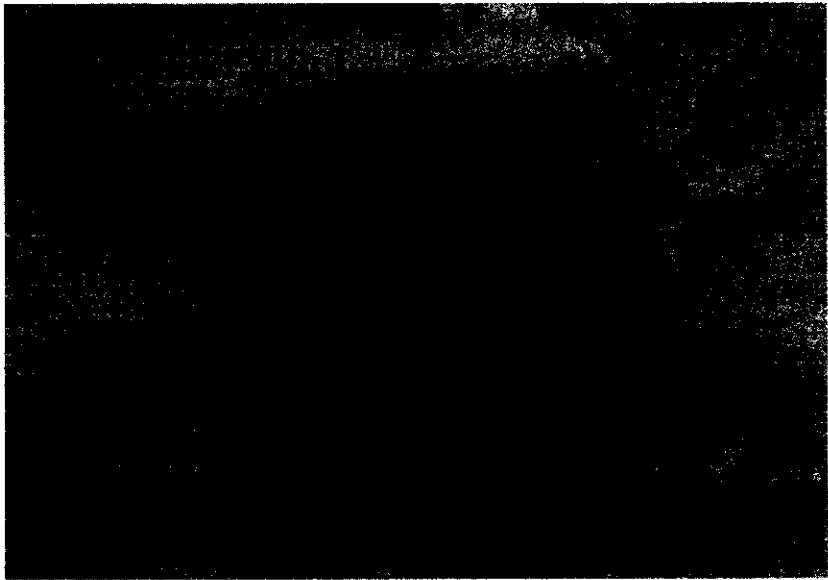
<sup>681</sup> Common Rules, 4:3.

<sup>682</sup> Rom 7:24.

*Correspondence 1819*



Letter, with sketch of the seminary at the Barrens.  
*Copy courtesy of the author*



A detail of De Andreis' sketch of the Seminary at the Barrens.  
*Copy courtesy of the author*

*Correspondence 1819*

**70(b). DRAWING AND DESCRIPTION OF THE HOUSE AT THE  
BARRENS**

The inside of the building is divided, as usual, into corridors, large rooms and private bedrooms. To save space, some corridors have to serve also as dormitories for the seminarians. During the day, their beds will be raised up into a sort of wardrobe, and will stay out of sight. The large rooms will be used for classes, a study hall and recreation room, office, library and one [is set aside] for the internal seminary [novitiate]. There are four on each floor. The dining room, the kitchen and the pantry with the storeroom are in a semi-basement. The harsh cold of this climate has obliged me to agree to have eight heated rooms. In all, there will be room for 24 persons, with 15 chimneys.

A large courtyard, a farmyard and adjoining garden. The building is 60 feet long, 37 wide. It has three floors, with the storeroom in the basement.

A considerable part of the land has already been planted to meet the most urgent needs, and if the 640 acres are put into cultivation, there will be no need for more land. But where will we find the hands? The seminary is already provided with horses, cows, and other necessary animals, but it is located in the middle of woods 25 miles away from Sainte Genevieve, the closest city, or rather village, where everything is lacking.

There is a population to form the parish, but the houses are scattered all over an area of 20 or 30 miles, with the closest house half a mile away. They are all farmers, country people who work their own lands and live in the direst need.

Next year, I hope to see everything finished, and to move there in person, *vita comite* ["if I am still alive"] and to lay my bones there, *ut ibi requiescant in pace* ["that they may rest there in peace"].

*Correspondence 1819***71. TO FELIX DE ANDREIS, C.M., SAINT LOUIS<sup>683</sup>**

Bordeaux  
24 November 1819

Father, I received your two letters dated 10 August and 8 December 1818 at almost the same time.<sup>684</sup> The first informed me of the decline in your health, and I learned of your pains and the dangers that you have run during Lent. Thanks be to God that you are with my brother on that dear mission.

Take care of yourself. If chocolate does you some good, use it. You ought to have some by now. I sent to my brother a box that left here 1 August this year, but I am afraid that it might not arrive in as good a condition as the first one. Please tell me about it frankly, so that I might not neglect to take needed precautions. Besides, this last box is inside an even larger one sealed with tar. I had it double wrapped in tin. Without realizing that this large box would have to be emptied at New Orleans, the chocolate will have to make its own trip to Saint Louis, and it might spoil en route. Please be so kind as to tell me a word about it.

Father Vincent [Wlechmans] thanks you for your remembrance. His health is still flourishing; his house is prospering, and it is very edifying. It has been asked to form a new establishment at Libourne.

The archbishop [Aviau] enjoys better health, although he had two very serious falls. He just purchased a chapel dedicated to the Holy Virgin under the name of Our Lady of Verdélais, where two very visible miracles took place this year. One woman, sick for 15 or 18 years. (Madame de Camiran) used to vomit up all her food one hour after eating. She went to Verdélais, and after mass she ate a fine breakfast. She returned for her husband, not expecting a miracle, and saw him putting away all that she had taken, yet she kept her breakfast down and did not vomit afterwards.

Father [Guillaume] Soupre, pastor of Sainte Croix, became deaf to the point of not being able to hear a cannon close to his ears. He was struck by paralysis on his right side, and so he spent all his funds at the Faculty [of Medicine], which decided that it could provide no other

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<sup>683</sup> **Letter 71.** *Autograph letter, French, two pages, with address, in SLAA, De Andreis papers.*

<sup>684</sup> These two letters are no longer extant.

*Correspondence 1819*

remedies. Then he thought about agreeing, with shame, to submit his resignation to the bishop, and to retire to Cadillac [tear]. People gathered to ask for his cure from God through the intercession of his most holy mother. They held a novena at Verdélais, and each one said his mass in turn, with Father Soupre in attendance. On the last day, young De Selau, whom my brother knows, was celebrating. At the Our Father, Father Soupre said in a low voice to the person next to him: "I am healed. I can hear the Our Father." Many people attended, but he did not say anything until after mass. Then, when the priest had gone to the sacristy, he went to announce the miracle, and intoned the *Te Deum*. The witnesses signed.<sup>685</sup>

After these two events the bishop acquired that chapel. He is going to provide there for the elderly priests who can no longer work in their parishes because of their advanced age.

The weather is turning marvelous. They are pressing us for our letters. I have only the time to recommend myself to your good prayers, and to offer you my profound respect.

Widow Fournier, née D[u]B[ourg]

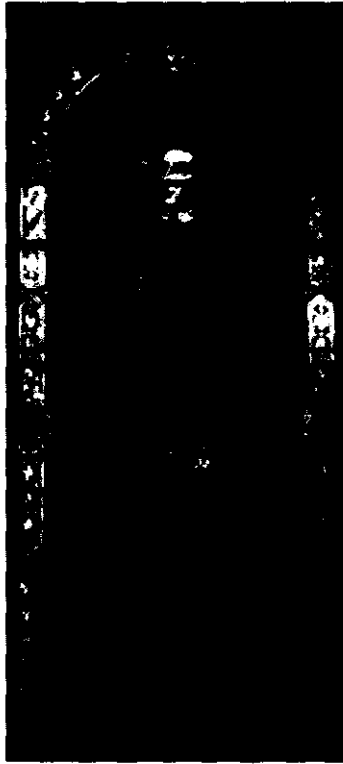
*Addressed:* Father De Andreis, Missionary of Louisiana, Saint Louis, Upper Louisiana

*In another hand:* 1819, 24 November, Bordeaux, Madame Fournier

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<sup>685</sup> These events are recounted in Patrick J. O'Reilly, *Histoire de Verdélais* (Bazas: Labarrière, n.d.); and R.P. de Rouvray, *Histoire du pèlerinage de Notre Dame de Verdélais* (Paris: Grasset, 1953). The date of Mme. de Camiran's cure is given as 9 July 1819.



*Correspondence 1819*

Stained glass portrait of De Andreis. Germantown.  
 Collection of the De Andreis-Rosati Memorial Archives

I will not try to describe our situation here because at your convenience you can learn of it directly from the bearer of this letter, who stayed with us for several months. There is no more fitting situation for a missionary, I think, than to fulfill the three ends of our institute: one's own sanctification, the sanctification of the clergy, and the sanctification of the country people. What is to be found in a foreign country with strange languages, with usages and customs that vary so much, with persons of different nations and characters, with no other bonds than those of faith and charity? You could not believe how many humiliations, privations, anxieties and harsh problems there are for someone who is found perhaps between a sky of bronze and an earth of iron<sup>691</sup> without being able to find any other solution than recourse

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<sup>691</sup> A reference to Deut 28:23, a curse in the mouth of Moses.

*Correspondence 1819*

to God for the necessary strength which can contribute greatly to one's own sanctification.

I do not know if the greater evil in this country has been to have so few priests, or to have some who are evil, and so the greatest need is to form good priests. This is our main occupation. Father Rosati is in charge of our house and seminary, eighty miles from here. As vicar general, I must for the moment remain here beside the bishop where there is a college of young men near the bishop's house. They form something like another seminary, and I offer courses in theology and philosophy for them. Practically all the people in this area can be called country people because here there is no peasant class. Each one is at the same time both lord and farmer, and the women are called Madame or Lady. One cannot be distinguished by dress. What an opening is being granted to missionary zeal. Beginning with nominal Catholics and then moving through the infinitely diverse ramifications of sects, one also encounters even infidels, atheists and Indians. In the area of the one million square miles that constitute this immense diocese we have a little bit of everything. I gave a retreat a month ago to a monastery of nuns of the Sacred Heart.<sup>692</sup> They came from Paris and are occupied successfully in the education of girls, and they are like angels. Among the Catholics there are those with good hearts, and faith and grace make new conquests daily. I reproach myself continually for my meager zeal. Oh, if you were here, how you would burn, seeing what we see!

The Freemasons hold their public processions in broad daylight with their weapons, their ornaments, their coats of arms, their symbols, with a band etc., and they cannot be forbidden. Besides, everything works toward keeping Catholics from taking part; at least human respect keeps them from doing so.<sup>693</sup>

In the public streets of the city [Indian] men walk about practically naked with that same nakedness with which our crucified Lord is depicted. Their shoes are made of skins as is the covering hanging upon their back, with earrings and nose rings, with feathers on their head, their faces painted in various colors. These are the poor Indians. The women wear a type of trousers and a jerkin almost like one of our men. They have masculine faces, and wear a wool blanket on their

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<sup>692</sup> De Andreis would go to the Sisters again to celebrate the feast of the Sacred Heart, 8-9 June 1820.

<sup>693</sup> Letter 51, 26 June 1818.

*Correspondence 1819*

back. It is adjusted in such a way as to form a kind of hood on their shoulders, and there they carry their babies.

You should hear the wild declamations of Protestant ministers who rage and gnash their teeth against us. They avail little or nothing with those [Indian] people, for they despise them. If they do not become Catholic, only laziness will prevent them. Their meetings are deserted and each one runs to ours.<sup>694</sup> They say that it is important to have a religion, and there is no reason to hesitate, and that they should become Catholics.

In all this an overabundance of zeal on our part would ruin every effort. A certain Protestant minister named Thayer had the grace of converting to Rome when he saw certain miracles which took place there through the intercession of the Venerable [Benedict Joseph] Labre.<sup>695</sup> He became a Catholic and was ordained a priest and he returned to America full of zeal for converting all the Protestants. He might have succeeded if he had acted with less ardor, but his zeal was so excitable that it proved to be an insuperable obstacle that ruined all his endeavors.<sup>696</sup> Whenever I have spoken forcibly I have had to repent because people began to cry out, "What is this? Do you think that you are preaching in Italy? Doesn't he realize that we are in a free country? If you keep going like this, we will burn the church and your house." We have to move moderately and respect their prejudices. We have to keep ourselves from calling them heretics, and not to profane the names of Luther and Calvin, etc. Otherwise, it is quite certain that no progress

<sup>694</sup> Stephen Hempstead, a practicing Presbyterian, would attend the funeral services for his son-in-law, Manuel Lisa, 13-14 August 1820. The use of Latin left Hempstead mystified. Lisa had been an important figure in the development of the fur trade. De Andreis, however, was not the celebrant for Lisa's funeral.

[Sunday, 13 August 1820] . . . the Funeral of Manual was attended in the afternoon at the Roman Church—being his request to be Buried there and to have high Mass according to the Order of the Church with the request that I and family would attend.

[Monday, 14 August 1820] I with my family in the forenoon go to the Roman Church and attend Mass by the request of Manual altho to me it was an unknown Tongue not understanding one Sentence of their Cerimony [sic].

("I At Home," *BMHS* 15:1 [October 1958]: 46.) On Lisa, see: Richard Oglesby, *Manuel Lisa and the Opening of the Missouri Fur Trade* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963.)

<sup>695</sup> Benedict Joseph Labre (1748-1783); canonized in 1883.

<sup>696</sup> John Thayer (d. 1815), a converted Congregationalist, joined the Church in Rome in 1783, was ordained in Paris in 1787, and returned to Boston in 1790. After some failures in administration, he served in missionary capacities in various places, including Kentucky, where he worked with Father Badin. He retired to Ireland in 1803.

*Correspondence 1819*

would be made and that we would die as martyrs because of our own imprudence. A Protestant general<sup>697</sup> happened to see, with his own eyes, a priest in a biretta violating the sixth commandment in a meadow with a certain woman.<sup>698</sup> After some time the bishop told me that this priest was me, something that I had not known. I could do nothing but laugh and so did the bishop; but everyone else regarded it as a calumny, since at the very time that it was being spread about, I was in church giving instructions on that same topic with all the simplicity that my conscience inspires. May God be blessed in this. But here is why we should find the wise middle, *ne quid nimis, et ne quid minus* ["not too much and not too little"].<sup>699</sup> It is a matter of attracting souls to God. If what is needed is nerve, then there it is; but this is not a matter of seeing what the proper means is to bring about this effect. This is the main point, *Arundinem quassatam non confringit, et lignum fumigans non extinguet* ["The bruised reed he does not crush; the smoldering wick he does not quench"].<sup>700</sup>

I admit the truth that the sea on which I have embarked is so vast, stormy and strangely varied, that if I could not from time to time glimpse the northern star of God's will so clearly and brilliantly as to calm my every anxiety, then I would soon go crazy and despair. In vain would I try to describe for you such a state. This is evident in my every expression. Although there are many very distinguished clergy here, I can say *hominem non habeo* ["I have no man"].<sup>701</sup> I myself have to stand and be the support of everyone else without any human support. I have horrible moments in which I am under pressure without finding any means of escape. I am obliged to preach often, and always in foreign languages. I have to expend myself, so to say, to the point of exhaustion to hear confessions every day in one or other language. I have to decide

<sup>697</sup> Brevet Brigadier General Daniel Bissell (1768-1833) is the likely author of this slander. After being courtmartialled for "Disobedience to orders; unofficerlike conduct; and ungentlemanly conduct," General Bissell spent the years 1815 to 1821, the date of his honorable discharge, at Bellefontaine, his estate still standing near Saint Louis. He died there in 1833. (Harold W. Ryan, "Daniel Bissell—His Story," *Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society* 12:1 [October 1955]: 32-44.)

<sup>698</sup> Literally, "Berta," a traditional woman's name in ecclesiastical Latin for "So-and-So."

<sup>699</sup> Probably a commonplace expression, or developed by De Andreis; used in part in Terence, *Andria*, 1,61 (Loeb Classical Library, Terence, 2 vols; vol. 1, 10-11).

<sup>700</sup> Matt 12:20.

<sup>701</sup> Based on John 5:7 NAB: "I do not have anyone (to plunge me into the pool) . . .

*Correspondence 1819*

on cases with unimaginable speed; these actually happen here daily. Every day I must always be ready at any time to go and to come on foot or on horseback, to make long trips exposed to heat, cold, hunger, thirst etc., and these at a moment's notice! One fatigue follows another, one pain follows another without anyone to offer the mutual support available in the [parish] missions over there. Since it is impossible to change clothes after preaching, I always wear wool against my skin, and so after preaching I am no different than before!

Because of the intense cold, I find ice in the chalice some days, even though we have a fire by the altar, without which it would be impossible to celebrate. This morning the precious blood was so stuck to the bottom of the chalice that I needed some time to detach it by placing the chalice near a flame and turning it around and around. The cold of these regions is such that it quickly penetrates the marrow of the bones, as well as the brain, where it seems ready to kill me. Whenever external problems are not joined with internal ones, they are tolerable and even sometimes pleasant; but when the nails of the cross pierce both body and soul, then the poor Adam is destroyed and human strength is really exhausted. The divine is then made more clearly visible than ever.

My main goal here is to build an establishment for the missionaries where regularity is observed in all its vigor. But who am I to so do? I lack only three things to do it: insight, strength and holiness. For this reason I go to the source of all of these, and repeat each day the following prayer, with as much confidence as I can: *Illumina, Domine, tenebras meas claritate sapientiae tuae ut quae agenda sunt videam; adjuva infirmitatem meam potentia virtutis tuae ut ad agenda quae viderint conualescam, vince malitiam meam suavitate gratiae tuae, ut te solum in omnibus quaeram et in te super omnia requiescam* ["O Lord, enlighten my darkness with the light of your wisdom that I may see what I should do. Aid my weakness with the power of your strength that I may be strengthened to do what is to be seen. Conquer my wickedness with the sweetness of your grace that I may seek you alone in all things, and that I may rest only in you"]. Afterward I remain at peace amid all the storms and contradictions, amid all the doubts and anxieties. I rely on this promise: *quodcumque orantes petitis credite quia recipietis, and iacta super Dominum curam tuam et ipse te enutriet* ["whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you will receive";<sup>702</sup> "cast your care upon (the Lord) and he will support

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<sup>702</sup> Mark 11:24.

## Correspondence 1819

you").<sup>703</sup> After this it seems to me that I will not be far from the place where I will find my peace, since I will then be disposed to conform myself to the meaning of this prayer; besides, I would welcome your advice on this.

Oh, very dear and most venerated Father Depietri, pardon me for this expansion of my heart. How differently I now see the matters than I did when I was in Europe! How much this external and internal solitude, this state of being despoiled and of living precariously contributes to dissipating the clouds of self-love! When Moses and Elijah disappeared, there remained only God and so the transfiguration ended. Oh, God alone! God alone! God alone! In heaven, on earth, everywhere! Really, I have to say this! In God there is no jest; there is no question of giving but of being given, or of sacrificing but of being sacrificed, or of being loaned out but of being immolated without reserve. Oh, if I could put an end to being worried about myself, and be occupied only with the salvation of others! But God's will can accomplish this. It is enough that we have the strength of reaching the end, of seeing God, or loving him and possessing him, *O eterna veritas, O vera charitas, O vera eternitas, tu es ipse Deus meus ad quem suspiro die ac nocte* ["O eternal truth, O true charity, O true eternity, you are my God whom I long for day and night"].<sup>704</sup> O oneness! O simplicity! Everything in the blink of an eye, God in everything and everything in God. Everything with no relationship to God is darkness, horror and death and nothingness. No creature can prevent the divine will from being fulfilled in us, and we want nothing more and nothing less than this. *Sicut fuerit consilium in coelo ita fiat* ["As it is willed in heaven, so let it be"].<sup>705</sup> And so there is no question of doing as much as Saint Francis Xavier did, or Saint Francis Solano, but only as much as the eternal God wants to demand of our weakness and our meanness. This is the sum, the crux, no matter what anyone might say about it to the contrary.

For a hundred different reasons, only Bishop Dubourg himself could have undertaken and sustained this mission. In fact he is, after God, its mover and its principal foundation and, humanly speaking, he seems to be the one who over the years with due firmness established the clear priorities for the works he has undertaken. May God deign to preserve him for us because a great good depends on him. He came

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<sup>703</sup> Ps 55:23.

<sup>704</sup> Based on Augustine, *Confessions*, 7,10.

<sup>705</sup> Cited loosely from 1 Macc 3:59/60.

*Correspondence 1819*

here to establish the episcopal see and he found here only a miserable and completely dilapidated hut for one priest, and a tumbledown cabin as a church, along with four acres of land, half of which served as a cemetery, the other half as a garden. He found here hearts little ready to accept him, souls plunged in ignorance, vice, and an almost total forgetfulness of religion. But today what a difference! He has already set up a considerable foundation to sustain his household, a cathedral (perhaps the best in the United States), where he will begin to officiate in a few days. In addition, he has built in various places five or six solid brick churches with a certain magnificence, a college for the education of young people of our sex, and a monastery for the weaker sex. These are already inhabited and functioning. Our seminary and house have become an object of wonder for the Americans. The Catholics call it a "big house" par excellence and the Protestants call it a "papist nest." In fact, nothing in these regions is more elegant, although we are quite far from having one single side of the Alberoni quadrangle. The desire for change is so great. The church is frequented, the liturgies are celebrated with pomp and propriety. The nourishment of the word of God is abundant. A considerable number of persons frequent the sacraments on great solemnities. About a hundred people come to communion, and many adults are baptized, sinners and heretics converted, marriages legitimized, scandals abolished and much more is expected soon. Except for a large number who are still enemies of religion and who threaten us greatly in their determination to manifest their evil intentions, hearts are generally won and the bark begins to set sail. The bishop unites to his very great talent the fact that he is an American citizen. He has some relatives in New Orleans, and he has many great gifts that make him worthy of esteem and love. He has a prudent zeal, he is active, industrious and tireless.

I am always mindful of the advice concerning the independence of our establishment that you kindly offered me in your room the eve of my departure from the college. You gave me the example of the house of Bastia. I am very much obliged to you for this and because of that I have held several long conversations with the bishop concerning these issues. They resulted in the placing of our establishment on a good foundation with all the proper legalities. He has already signed over 640 acres of land, of which a certain section has already been farmed. I do not know, however, where we will find hands to cultivate the rest. If we had a family of good peasants from Piacenza we would do ourselves great mutual service. If you and others could do this, I would be very grateful. The moment is very opportune; they could

*Correspondence 1819*

accompany Brother Albasini. You can take this proposal to be as serious or as ridiculous as you wish, but this brother could bring us a little of the good reputation of the Alberoni, and this would be very useful for us.

Brother Blanka has done well for us during the past year, but as he could not find all the medicines, I wound up being a *neutrum quid* ["big nothing"]. We are in a country full of medicinal plants but we are unable to acquire them. We are in a country of sugar cane, and coffee grows not far from us, yet we pay more for each of them than you do in Italy. In addition, we have here in the Mississippi excellent and abundant fish, and in fact anyone succeeds if they take the trouble to go fishing but I do not know if they do so except occasionally. Such a situation means that this is a young country where, so to say, the basic needs of establishing it absorb all human activity and no thought is given to the indispensable needs of [the spiritual] life.

My poor Italian has already become useless. I use it now only for these letters sent to our correspondents in Italy, and it is beginning to grow rusty. I think that the scholars of the Academy would find many points to correct, and so please pardon them because of the enormous drain caused by our having to translate into French and English all the Italian texts. Since our heads are limited, one idea chases out another, *et pluribus intentus minor est ad singula sensus* ["the more intent I am to many things, the less care I give to each one"].<sup>706</sup> At least in all this there is more profit from imitation than less.

I now realize that I have made a mess of this letter. It has no order or design because it was composed at various times during periods of relaxation. And so I hope you will please take it just as it is. Because of my sins I am the one who suffers less than the others. My companions suffer more than I do because they do not have the advantages that I have of being at the bishop's side and in the capital city. My health seems to have improved daily. Oh, might it still please God to lead me to die in the midst of the Indians. I would reach the summit of my desires. And because it is almost certain that we will never see one another again in this world, we will have certainly enough time to see one another in the next world. I hope to join you there in glory, not because of any merit of mine, but only through the merits of him who came to save poor sinners like me. Nevertheless, how much I would delight in receiving a few lines from your hand. I beg you to permit

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<sup>706</sup> A commonplace expression in scholastic psychology.



*Correspondence 1819*

that all my good friends and acquaintances, for example Fathers Laura, Rigo, Passeri, Giriodi, Reviglio, De Bernardis ... I don't know if Fathers [Giuseppe] Martinengo, Bianchi etc., Father [Domenico] Dell'Anna, Briasci, Coppaloni, Gambarelli, [Giuseppe] Bersani etc., and especially Father Concellini, the rector of the Seminary, are still there.<sup>707</sup> I hope they find here a token of my remembrance, esteem and respect, and that they are remembered in the sacrifices of these poor missionaries to the Indians. Immense tracts of land and sea divide us in body, but the same faith and charity unite us in spirit and love, and the same happiness will unite us one day in heaven where only friendship is true, solid and durable. I will never finish. The satisfaction I experience in conversing with you, although at some distance, is holy. Finally, this letter is quite long and tiring. A thousand pardons and believe me to be always filled with the same sentiments of affectionate esteem and sincere veneration for you.

Your most humble and obligated servant,  
 Felix De Andreis  
 unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission

*In another hand:* Letter of Father Felix De Andreis to Father De Pietris.  
 Authentic copy.

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<sup>707</sup> Fathers Bianchi, Briasci, Coppaloni, Gambarelli and Concellini may be diocesan priests, since their names are not found on lists of Vincentians. Diocesan clergy often taught at the Alberoni.

## 1820

*In his final year of life, 1820, Felix gradually comes to terms with life in frontier America: food, climate, insects, the demands of an active pastoral ministry. He notes that indifferentism in matters of religion is the basic pastoral problem. Despite his maturity, he still is depressed, feeling lonely, isolated, neglected and worthless, a condition expressed in his longest letter (no. 77). He is constrained to purchase a slave for the first time and his justification shows his scrupulous attention to American realities. The mission to the Indians continues to attract him, but he gradually realizes that the time is not ripe, since other work is more pressing. All the while, the work at the Barrens advances and new candidates to the Congregation present themselves. He senses death approaching during his final illness, although others do not. After he died, his reputation for holiness is openly proclaimed. He lived 41 years, 10 months and 3 days, a little more than four of those in America.*

73. TO JOSEPH ROSATI, C.M.(?), PRIEST, BARRENS<sup>708</sup>

[January, 1820]  
[Saint Louis]

I have crossed and recrossed the Mississippi on foot over the ice in order to go to Illinoistown.<sup>709</sup>

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<sup>708</sup> Letter 73. Sentence from a letter, cited in Joseph Rosati, "Recollections," VH 4:2 (1983): 130. The original letter is no longer extant.

<sup>709</sup> Illinoistown was a small settlement opposite Saint Louis, laid out in October 1817. The entire month of January, 1820, was noted for its extreme cold.

*Correspondence 1820***74. TO VINCENZO DE ANDREIS, DEMONTE<sup>710</sup>**

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Saint Louis  
1 January 1820

My dearest brother,

I am well aware that this letter will reach you a little too late to wish you a happy New Year. On the other hand, today is the day in which tradition establishes this custom, not only out of politeness but also cordial friendship. I am observing this custom as much as the great distance by sea and land that separates us allows me to do so. Although it separates us in body, nothing can separate us in spirit, because I always carry you in my heart, together with our father and all the rest of the family and our relatives.

Since one of our priests<sup>711</sup> is going to Rome on business concerning the mission, I am taking advantage of this opportunity to send you this letter by way of your brother-in-law Giriodi. You will be able to use the same means to send me your reply. I wrote you last summer, although I do not know if the letter has reached there.<sup>712</sup> You cannot believe what consolation you could give me by a detailed account of all the family news and news of our country, which I love sincerely. It may be difficult for you to believe it when I say how much I love the one and the other, even though I am so far away. Yet, if you could see the spiritual miseries of this enormous country and imagine how important it is to save so many thousands of souls deprived of every help of religion, then far from finding something to laugh at in my conduct you would be the first to advise the sacrifice of all the most tender affections of blood and homeland to offer help to these poor people. From the moment when one state is chosen, a person has to go or stay wherever his state takes him. In this way, once a soldier enlists

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<sup>710</sup> **Letter 74.** *Autograph letter, Italian, four pages, with address, in the archives of the province of Turin; copy in the Archives of the General Curia, Rome; De Andreis collection, Volume XVI. Cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 274.*

<sup>711</sup> Angelo Inglesi

<sup>712</sup> This letter is probably not extant.

*Correspondence 1820*

in the army, he is no longer free to move about on his own and remain among his "household deities" should duty call him either to war or to garrison a square. You could say the same of me. When I became a missionary I enrolled in the army of Jesus Christ and thus would be a traitor and disloyal if I disobeyed the orders of the one to whom I am consecrated. He makes known his will to me by means of his spokesmen.

For several months in this part of the world my health has been gradually improving, and little by little I am becoming accustomed to the climate and the foods of the region. The difficulties with the weather are abating. I speak and preach in French and in English just like I used to do in Italian when I was in Italy. There is some suffering in this, but also great consolations. They make my position here truly happy and I really would not exchange them with the first monarch of the world. There is work to do here with people of every sort of nation, sect and color. Since the government is republican, it grants liberty to each one to profess whatever religion he pleases, and so every person does good voluntarily and without the motivation of mere human respect. Just as when the sun sheds its rays properly the darkness disappears and shadows vanish, so in the same proper way we make known to these people the beauty of the truth and the divinity of our holy religion. Recognizing their errors, they are converted and give thanks for the truth. On the day of judgment these poor converts will rise up to condemn the negligence and evil of so many Europeans born in the womb of the true Church, brought up in the bosom of religion with all the resources of churches, priests, confessors, preachers and similar persons to live a Christian life, who, with all this, remain only nominal Christians.

Today on my way to lunch I was called to attend a dying man who had no religion at all. I instructed him, baptized him and left him happy. A poor old woman, more than seventy years old, came on foot for eighty miles through dangerous woods to be able to go to confession. There are places where they spend years without seeing a priest, and they make considerable trips just to have the consolation of hearing mass, of listening to the word of God and receiving the sacraments. They have to fast and often they have to return home fasting after receiving communion, even up to the evening, and this is called having faith. What shame for those who have all the means of being good Christians and think only of making money and having a good time, of eating, drinking, sleeping, laughing and entertaining themselves, and who wait until death to admit their sins or perhaps to despair. I hope, dear brother,

*Correspondence 1820*

that neither you nor anyone in our family is of this number. Yet, since the French Revolution has indeed made a great ruin of Europe—I am speaking the truth—I fear for those whom I love. You would console me greatly if you would write me in detail about how all our relatives and friends are good Christians, and especially how they frequent the holy sacraments because I assure you that I have no regard for any worldly vanity. Nothing in the world merits esteem save what is related to God, to the soul and to religion.

Give my compliments to the archpriest, whom I know only by reputation. To the Father Prior Nanis, whom I love greatly, and to our Fathers [Placido] Beltriti, [Domenico] Andreis, etc.

I am the vicar general here and my main occupation is to form priests. I teach philosophy and theology. We have young ecclesiastics from every nation and they are all excellent. I have to speak sometimes in Latin, sometimes in English, sometimes in French, and so my Italian is good only for writing letters to Italy. You should see me on horseback, wearing a round hat, a tie at my neck, a colored cape, dressed like seculars in my colored trousers and boots. You would take me for a fop. We have to dress this way at least outside the house, otherwise we would be pointed out and ridiculed, and so goodbye ministry.

It is not impossible for us to meet again. Wish me well, and give my regards to our father and mother, to our brother Giuseppe, to Theresa your wife and the other sister-in-law, with our uncle Spirito, with Aunts Maria and Christina, and the other Maria and Felice and all the nephews and nieces whom I do not know, with our sister Margherita etc., etc. Let me know in a very detailed way the news about everyone, each one in particular, and believe me with all my heart to be your most affectionate brother,

Felix De Andreis,

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission

*Addressed:* To Monsieur Vincent De Andreis, Demont

*Correspondence 1820*

75. TO FILIPPO GIRIODI, C.M., PRIEST, PIACENZA<sup>713</sup>

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Saint Louis  
2 January 1820<sup>714</sup>

My dear friend,

Please don't ever think that the distance between places, or the constant sight of black Africans or of naked and bronzed Indians or any other strange topic could ever (what a fine expression!<sup>715</sup>) cause me to forget my friends in Europe or my near compatriots or near relatives, or even nearly foster brothers!<sup>716</sup> *Absit!* ["Far be it!"] I still recall those wonderful happy times when we used to sing about the babbling little brook as we climbed up Urtica Hill. Who could have said it then? ... But where am I heading? Is this is the style of a shaggy missionary dating his letter from the banks of the Mississippi? Please don't take offence at this; you know me. And why would you ever bridle this fantasy of mine done in my free time, since moments like these have already become very rare, nearly impossible to find? Finally, at the end of this entire prelude, I don't want to say anything besides this: I often think about you and about what you are doing, and I sincerely look forward to embracing you in Paradise.

A strange phenomenon became visible here two days ago, the last day of the year. Our ignorance of nature finds it hard to explain it, and our mystical types are already taking it as a good omen of the imminent conversion of all the Indians, since this phenomenon appeared exactly

<sup>713</sup> **Letter 75.** *Printed letter, Italian, in A. Bugnini, "Lettera inedita del Servo di Dio Felice De Andreis," Annali della Congregazione della Missione 48 (1941), 262-267. The original is in the archives of Collegio Alberoni, Piacenza, Italy, Giriodi file. Filippo Giriodi (1781-1842) was, in 1820, professor of theology at Piacenza.*

<sup>714</sup> Although the letter was begun on 2 January, it was not finished until at least a week later, 9 January, when the writer celebrated the dedication of DuBourg's cathedral. Bugnini, the original editor of the letter, noted several places at which the ink and the handwriting changed. The train of thought is hard to follow as well, which may signify the points at which the writer resumed his narrative.

<sup>715</sup> A reference to the obsolete Italian term *unquamai*, used here.

<sup>716</sup> Although De Andreis was not directly related to Giriodi, their families were bound by intermarriage.

*Correspondence 1820*

over the region where they live, to the north of us. I'm appealing in this to the astronomers of our dear Collegio Alberoni. Exactly at six-thirty, after finishing my usual meditation, I was going over to say Mass, when the novice<sup>717</sup> accompanying me had me look at the moon in the sky. It was about one-third the distance between the horizon and the zenith, and was cut through its center by a magnificent cross formed by four rays extending for quite some way, one to the zenith, the other two to the east and west, with the last losing itself at the horizon. The rays were very vivid and, where the two lateral rays stopped, there arose a magnificent rainbow, which became less apparent as it reached the zenith. The sky was perfectly clear and full of stars; it was also extremely cold. I leave its explanation to you.

I am sending you the enclosed to be sent on to its recipient; please have the answer sent back to me by the same means.<sup>718</sup> As you can get news of me *aliunde* ["elsewhere"], I am going to give you here a description of the Indians. You should understand that it was for a time disputed *utrum* ["whether"] these peoples belonged, yes or no, to the human race. Indeed, when you consider their lifestyle and how they dress and eat, their innate cruelty, their instability, and the huge difficulty of having them rise to spiritual ideas, you might be tempted to consider them as a *quid medium* ["third species"] between man and beast. They live from hunting, wandering through the forests in search of the wild buffalo. The men go about almost entirely naked, and they eat almost nothing but meat, even of humans. They think nothing of killing someone, but they don't finish off their victim without first having him undergo the most frightful tortures.

They are very proud of having many scalps, which they keep as trophies of their bravery. To get them, they know how to give a violent blow to the forehead with a rounded axe, called *tomahak*, by which they cut around the whole head and then pull off the hair completely, what they call scalping. They have no other law than their own wishes and, although each nation has its chief or king, their authority is quite precarious and limited to command in war and to speak for the nation in negotiating with the whites. To attain this level, chiefs have to secure the confidence of the tribe with acts of bravery, with severe fasts, going for days without eating, and with barbarous scars which they make

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<sup>717</sup> Francis Xavier Dahmen, the only novice still with him in Saint Louis.

<sup>718</sup> A reference to letter 74, 1 January 1820, addressed to his brother Vincenzo.

*Correspondence 1820*

on their body. Besides this, they are supposed to dream, and the outcome should confirm these dreams. On this point, something curious happened. An American general was in his camp on land still belonging to the Indians. The king of that nation came to relate to him that, the previous night, he had dreamed that the general had made him a present of his rich general's uniform. And so, according to custom, the general would have to give it to him. The general agreed and did so. But the next day, the general had a dream himself to relate to the Indian chief. He had dreamed, he claimed, that "you had given me all this land as far as the eye could see." ... The chief then, although with much ill will, had to hand over to the general a very large tract of land. But he added one condition: that from then on, neither of them should have any more dreams.

They have knowledge of a Supreme Being, whom they call the Master of Life. They bring him gifts and offer prayers, but they limit all these to the needs of daily life. Although they recognize good and evil, in practice their moral concepts are quite vague and uncertain. They believe themselves as happy in their wild life, and compassionately judge those who live in civilized society as slaves. They have had some experience of their young men sent to Europe, brought up in schools, educated, some of whom even became priests. Then when they were sent back to their tribe, they forgot everything and returned to their nakedness, to their hunting, and to all their wild customs, just like their fellows. They are very addicted – at least those who trade with whites – to strong drink, which they use to get drunk, and then they kill each other off. Some of them speak some English or French. We baptize some of them now and then, especially at the point of death. There are many, known as *métis* ["half-breeds"], born of a white man and an Indian woman, who come for instruction and baptism, and who then remain in civilized society. When they have learned enough to explain themselves in some language, they come to confession, but when they do not know how ... since the Indian language is extremely difficult because their impoverished tongue lacks any term corresponding to ideas of religion, conscience, law, sin, etc. Also, with the aid of a translator paid by the government to interpret the Indian language, an Iroquois<sup>719</sup> came to me for confession, something he ardently wished to do.

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<sup>719</sup> The Iroquois had a long tradition of the Catholic faith, brought to them by the Jesuits.



*Correspondence 1820*

I see now that we have to use other means to accomplish anything with them. We need time and patience and, with these two, I firmly hope that one day *pinguescent speciosa deserti et terra deserta erit in stagnum etc.* ["let the beauties of the desert bloom," and "waterless lands into water springs" etc.]<sup>720</sup> The greatest obstacle that a missionary would find today among the Indians would be something that at first glance might seem to be a resource for them, namely trade with whites. The reason is that the whites frequently take advantage of their simplicity, and so this would place a missionary in the difficult dilemma either of cooperating in the traders' wicked ways, or of becoming inescapably a target of their resentment. How manifold the mysteries of evil! For one bottle of whiskey they make them hand over skins worth thousands of scudi, and married men wed Indian women, etc. They have to have no conscience about doing such things, and for such people, everything has to wait. *Rogamus in bonum monstra converti.* ["Let us pray that the monsters be converted to doing good."] God has his own plans and times to bring them about. We are here at his orders, like soldiers ready to march at the first sign from the general.

Here a missionary has to be able to say with Saint Paul *in omnibus institutus sum.* ["I have learned how to cope with every circumstance."] <sup>721</sup> To be ready to mount a horse at any moment, to ride through unknown areas with a guide, to cross huge rivers on a carved-out tree trunk, what we call pirogues, and to get the horse to swim. Your horse runs off and you have to go for miles and miles to get him back. Sometimes, to eat, you have to get off your horse and hobble his legs to keep him from escaping; and, while he is munching on grass, you have to look for berries to trick your appetite. You have to know how to saddle a horse, how to care for it, to harness it, etc. I saw a bishop<sup>722</sup> doing all this by himself. You have to shave yourself, to sew, to wash your own linen, etc. To be ready to sleep on the ground, even in the middle of the woods, with the saddle for a pillow and protection from the rain. At night, in the middle of a dark woods, the tree branches sometimes armed with thorns as long as your hand, constantly lashing at your face (once I figured I had lost both eyes, and for several days I had a wound between both eyes), they knock your hat to the ground and you have to dismount to grope for it in the

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<sup>720</sup> Ps 65:13; 107:35.

<sup>721</sup> Phil 4:12.

<sup>722</sup> Most probably Bishop Flaget, whom he characterizes in Letter 29 as "one with his horse."

*Correspondence 1820*

mud. After such toil, you arrive dead-tired at the place where, instead of any refreshment, you find a cold, meager welcome, with much to tire you, but still sometimes with the consolation of seeing abundant fruit. But I have to speak the truth: the Master we serve is so generous that he pays us back with interest *ineffabiliter* ["beyond all telling"] for all our labors. He makes us discover something superhuman and delicious in poverty, in sufferings, etc., which abundantly repays us for it all. Everything bringing with it some likeness to the Man-God or to the virtues which were his constant companions, has such an aroma of Paradise as to make us delirious and drunk *ab ubertate domus eius*, or better, *Domus eius*. ["from the prime gifts of your house.]"<sup>723</sup>

The bishop has deigned to grant to our congregation the honor of blessing the truly magnificent new cathedral, although only the center nave is finished. The other two naves will be completed in due time.<sup>724</sup> Consequently, this morning<sup>725</sup>, with two other of our priests<sup>726</sup> and a deacon of our congregation<sup>727</sup> and other clerics, I will perform the blessing, to be followed by the bishop's pontifical mass with music and such solemnity as to be noticed even in Rome. Besides twenty large and expensive paintings, many of which were donated by the king of France<sup>728</sup>, there are a large number of silver-plated candlesticks coming from Paris, the height of a man, reliquaries, flowers, carpets, a canopy, and decoration of the loftiest taste; and twenty-six altar boys, all beautifully vested in the French style. The priestly and episcopal vestments would do honor to any European cathedral, etc. I am going to celebrate mass this morning with the intention that in time the words of the epistle assigned to be read on the current feast<sup>729</sup> be correctly applied to this church: *Super te autem orietur Dominus et gloria eius in te videbitur ... quando conversa fuerit ad te multitudo maris...* ["The Lord rises over you, and his glory shines upon you ... for the riches of the sea shall be emptied out before you..."]<sup>730</sup> since the Indian hordes

<sup>723</sup> Ps 36:9.

<sup>724</sup> In fact, the other naves were never constructed.

<sup>725</sup> 9 January.

<sup>726</sup> That is, priests of the diocese, since the only other Vincentian priests (Rosati, Acquaroni and Tichitoli) lived outside Saint Louis.

<sup>727</sup> Francis Xavier Dahmen.

<sup>728</sup> Louis XVIII.

<sup>729</sup> The Epiphany, which in those days extended over eight days, and whose readings were repeated daily during the entire octave.

<sup>730</sup> Isa 60:1, 5.

*Correspondence 1820*

already extend to the Pacific Ocean ... *fortitudo gentium venerit tibi, etc.*, [“the wealth of the nations shall be brought to you,”]<sup>731</sup> because of the nearly overwhelming opposition they have to the Gospel...

Well, the ceremony has been finished, with much pomp and circumstance. There is no pleasure like seeing the expansion of the worship of God, *ex hoc adipe nempe, ut arbitror, superna satiatur Jerusalem...* [“it is namely from this food, I believe, that the heavenly Jerusalem is nourished.”]

I want to add here some information that I heard from the mouth of a good priest arrived from Canada, about how those missionaries to the Indians travel in winter. They go to visit their congregation in that hard season, which lasts there the greater part of the year, by walking with snowshoes, so as to keep from sinking in the snow. These are made of a kind of net of cords stretched across an oval frame, formed by bent branch attached to the shoes. Indians accustomed to this kind of shoe move like the wind over the snow. Because of the bitter cold, a person can travel only on foot and, since a missionary would not know the way, he is led by an Indian armed with a pole. And seeing that a missionary, no matter what he does, could never move like an Indian, his guide runs and turns around to mark his footsteps. Sometimes he goes back only to find the missionary frozen and lying motionless in the snow. Then, with blows from his stick he revives him, gets his blood running again, then forces him to walk and stay the course, even though they are still quite far from reaching their goal. What a way to wake up!

But look – without realizing it, I am nearly unable to fold the sheet any more for having written so much. My regards to everyone, and let us act in such a way as to be able to meet in Paradise.

I am as ever full of the most affectionate esteem in the love of O[ur] L[ord], your dearest friend

F. De Andreis, i.p.d.C.d.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Philippe Giriodi, Prêtre de la Congrégation de la Mission au College de St. Lazare à Plaisance.

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<sup>731</sup> Literally “strength,” but translated from the Hebrew as “wealth.”

*Correspondence 1820*

**76. TO GIUSEPPE GIORDANA, C.M., PRIEST, ROME<sup>732</sup>**

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Saint Louis  
1 February 1820

Very Reverend and dear Father,

Would it ever be possible that on this occasion I should forget the breasts that nurtured me at my birth to the Congregation twenty-three years ago?<sup>733</sup> Such remembrance is too precious for me to forget. I still recall with great joy those happy days spent under the serene sky of Mondovi and it would have been good for me had I gathered more fruit from your wise, gentle and zealous direction. What good would I not be able to achieve now? And I would not have to weep all day before God and deplore my lack of zeal for which, unfortunately, I now feel that I have only myself to blame.

I remember how you used to tell me as if foretelling my future: *grandis tibi restat via* ["a long journey is awaiting you"].<sup>734</sup> May heaven grant that this long journey conclude with him who is *via, veritas et vita* ["the way, the truth and the life"].<sup>735</sup> I still remember that once you gave us a conference on the words *vado ad eum qui misit me* ["I go to him who sent me"];<sup>736</sup> and I would never have believed that after twenty-two years I myself would give (almost) the same conference in English to our novices of Louisiana, so lively was the impression that has always remained with me. How happy would I be if I could ever reach the point where I could say *vivo ego, jam non ego, vivit vero in me Christus* ["I live, now not I, but Christ lives in me"].<sup>737</sup> Yes, as a true missionary I should not be anything but Jesus Christ and him crucified but, unfortunately, how far I am from being this! In spite of myself, the old disgraced Adam, whom I should have buried in the fervor of the

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<sup>732</sup> **Letter 76.** *Autograph letter, Italian, two pages, in DRMA, De Andreis papers.*

Giuseppe Giordana had been director of the internal seminary (novitiate) at Mondovi when De Andreis entered, 12 November 1797.

<sup>733</sup> An allusion to Luke 11:27.

<sup>734</sup> 1 Kgs 19:7.

<sup>735</sup> John 14:6.

<sup>736</sup> John 16:5.

<sup>737</sup> Gal 2:20.

## Correspondence 1820

novitiate, still lives: *vivit, vivit, imo in senatum venit* ["this man is still alive. Alive? He even attends the Senate"],<sup>738</sup> and pretends to make laws and act as a master. Tell me, is this not the greatest of all miseries? Is it not a pity that a missionary who came *in finibus terrae* ["to the ends of the earth"]<sup>739</sup> to enlighten those sitting in darkness, to spread the fire of the Gospel everywhere, to dethrone that usurper, self-love, and to enthrone in its place in the hearts of men the legitimate sovereign love of God, should himself still be so far from what he should be? Woe is me, if the support of Jesus Christ should fail me. I have placed all my hope in him through the powerful intercession of the great Mother of Mercy! My present situation would be a real despair, because I have no other support and must support those who support others. My age, my duties and my relationships oblige me to be always on duty to give without receiving, to counsel, direct, give, correct, console, without being able to find someone to counsel me, to direct, encourage or console me, etc., because *aquae aegre retrofluunt* ["the waters do not easily flow backward"]. Accustomed as I was in our Italian houses to take no step without asking advice and to depend on the opinion of those whose authority, wisdom and prudence I respected, now in the extremely difficult steps that I have to take daily, I am lost. I seek advice, but silence prevails everywhere and a monotonous echo brings back to me the words by which I beg direction, saying *bibe de cisterna tua* ["drink from your own cistern"].<sup>740</sup> This situation sometimes becomes irksome and unbearable and makes me fear that this is the punishment for my sins and pride.

I was pleased to learn that you had returned to your former work as master of novices. I know that you are good at it, although *non est in medico semper relevetur ut aeger* ["it is not always in the physician's power to cure the sick"].<sup>741</sup> I therefore readily recommend myself to the prayers of the master of novices that I may learn to say well the words *quoniam tu es Domine spes mea, altissimum posuisti refugium tuum. Deus meus et omnia. Quis mihi det te fratrem meum*, etc. ["for you, O Lord, are my hope, you have made the Most High your stronghold";<sup>742</sup> "My God and my all";<sup>743</sup> "Oh, that you were my brother,"<sup>744</sup> etc.]

<sup>738</sup> Cicero, Oration against Catiline, 1,2 (Loeb Classical Library, Cicero, vol. X, 32-33).

<sup>739</sup> Ps 19:5; more correctly, *in fines orbis terrae*.

<sup>740</sup> Prov 5:15.

<sup>741</sup> Ovid, Pontica 1.3.17 (Loeb Classical Library, Ovid, 280).

<sup>742</sup> Ps 91:9.

<sup>743</sup> A phrase attributed to Francis of Assisi.

<sup>744</sup> Cant 8:1.

*Correspondence 1820*

The most formidable enemy we have to combat is indifferentism. How many people never give the slightest thought to religion! In a way, it is good that Protestants care little for their sect because in this way they are more accessible and disposed to Catholicism. Several times I have been for dinner or supper in the houses of Protestants when the head of the house invited me to give the blessing before meal and thanksgiving afterwards. This is the common practice when a priest is present. Yesterday I was called to an old dying man who up to that time had no religion; I baptized him and in that same house was the third person I baptized in a like situation. Also, a lady who came to call on me had no religion. Although I tried to persuade her to prepare for baptism, I could not get any other answer but that she was unworthy to die a Catholic because she was too wicked. Thus to have a religion is regarded here almost as a counsel of perfection and supererogation. Is there any more horrible blindness than this? You can say to them whatever you want, they answer: *c'est très vrai, c'est la pure vérité ce que vous dites, c'est la vérité même* ["it is very true, you are in the right, you are perfectly right"]. However, when they should draw the conclusion, they resort to delay, to pretexts, and only a few let themselves be drawn in to the net, considering the large number of those who remain entrenched in their fatal indifference.

In various letters I note down different things as they come to my pen, but I am afraid that in all this writing there is, under plausible pretexts, a great deal of the trash of self-love. But, my God, what shall I do? To escape this sly fellow and his traps it is not enough to penetrate into the deep forest, it is not enough to cut all the dearest bonds, to have trodden underfoot all natural tenderness, to have promised hundreds of thousands of times to cut myself off from all his tyranny, to repeat every day the most formal renunciations. In spite of all this he is always underfoot and at our side, everywhere like a twisting serpent trying to poison everything. Woe to those who do not fear him and, without realizing it, swallow his fatal poison like pure nectar. *Hoc aliquando fui, et utinam non idem sim modo* ["Such was I in the past, and would that I were no longer the same"]. One spark of the true love of God is sufficient to unmask the most subtle self-love and explode it instantly because they are incompatible and cannot tolerate each other ... *Oh, quando absorpta erit mors in victoria* ["When will death be swallowed up in victory"]?<sup>745</sup> When, when shall we be once and for

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<sup>745</sup> See 1 Cor 15:54.

*Correspondence 1820*

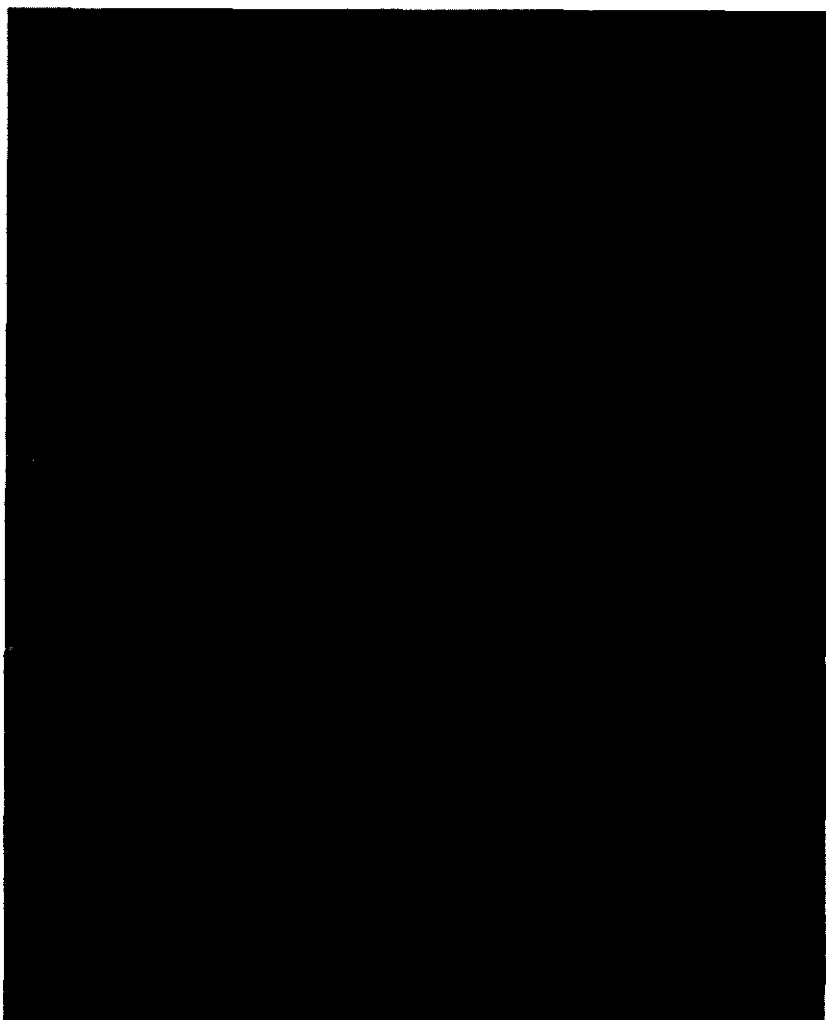
all immovably fixed, lost and absorbed in him who is *Aeterna Veritas, Vera Caritas, Cara Aeternitas* ["Eternal Truth, True Love, Beloved Eternity"]!

I wish to express my compliments to you and all the others. As at other times believe that I am with all respect and veneration your humble and most obedient servant,

Felix De Andreis

unworthy Priest of the Congregation of the Mission

*In another hand:* To Father Giordana, Director of the internal seminary in Rome

*Correspondence 1820*

Excerpt from original of Letter 76, To Giuseppe Giordana, C.M., 1 February 1820.  
*Collection of the De Andreis-Rosati Memorial Archives*



*Correspondence 1820*

Our college here is making rapid progress. The number of boarders is growing, so to say, from day to day. The bishop's departure for Natchez has been put off until Father Inglesi sends some news concerning how well the inhabitants are disposed to receive their bishop.

We are in Holy Week and consequently are quite busy. Nevertheless I will tell you the thought which has occupied me the most during this week in order that you might help me with your prayers to obtain what I desire with all my heart—to die to myself in order to live only for Jesus Christ who died for me. Alas, for such a long time I have been like a man who decides to leap without ever leaping, or like a person with a rope around his neck to be strangled and never actually is. What happiness if I could finish all at once. Death to self demands a complete renunciation. By it we resolve to let ourselves die to everything. As regards the body, we refuse it every kind of care and we wish neither to nourish it nor to give it rest, neither to warm it nor obtain any kind of assistance, nor satisfy any of its needs as if it were truly dead. Concerning reputation, we should not care about that anymore because it would deal with a person who is completely unknown. Even with regard to the soul, we would wish only virtue, grace, merit, holiness and perfection precisely for it.

But after we make this absolute renunciation into the hands of God, it is he himself who ordains that the soul, thus dead, should for his glory take a moderate care of the body, as well as of its reputation and sanctification. This is why even after the soul has died that it continues to care for and look out for its body, its reputation, its perfection, but no longer for the natural motives and interests which made it act before, but only for the glory of God, to please him, and to obey him. Thus all his actions, even the least and most natural ones, acquire a degree of elevation and inestimable merit. Yet, one always has to watch out that nature does not come to life again and, without realizing it, that the former reasons creep anew into his intentions and innermost thoughts. This is a matter for prayer and constant vigilance.

When one has arrived at this state, he may say with the sacred spouse *Inveni quem diligit anima mea etc.* ["I have found him whom my soul loves, etc."]<sup>806</sup> He is facing paradise. A whole book would not be enough to explain the advantages of such a state. As a result, then, we are ready to accomplish great good for souls. By our ardent desires,

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<sup>806</sup> See Cant 3:2.

*Correspondence 1820*

we begin to possess it. *Domine, ante te omne desiderium meum* ["Lord, all my desire lies open before you"],<sup>807</sup> etc.

Let me hear news from you often. Everybody here sends you their compliments and I yield to no one in my devotion for you.

I am, gentlemen and my esteemed confreres, your very humble servant,

Felix De Andreis,  
unworthy priest of the Mission.

*Addressed:* To Rev. Mr. Dahmen, Post-Vincennes, (Indiana)

*In another hand:* Received 24 April 1820, dated 27 March

*Postmark:* St. Louis, Apr. 14.

*In another hand:* Letter of Father De Andreis, Missionary at Saint Louis in the United States, to Father Dahmen, 1820.

**80. TO FRANÇOISE VICTOIRE FOURNIER, BORDEAUX<sup>808</sup>**

Saint Louis  
4 April 1820

God's blessing on this mission and on this vast diocese is very apparent ....

The most terrible enemy to be conquered is indifference toward religion. On the Sunday after Epiphany<sup>809</sup> we held the solemn entry into the new cathedral. Your brother, the bishop, celebrated a pontifical mass there. He was attended by a considerable number of priests and clergy, and by about twenty-six magnificently dressed altar boys ....

The question now is about an establishment for the Vincentians to instruct the Indians at Prairie du Chien, about 700 miles north of here. The government itself is supposed to take charge of building the house and maintaining the missionaries. I long for the moment to run off

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<sup>807</sup> Ps 38:10.

<sup>808</sup> **Letter 80.** *Excerpts from a letter, French, published in L. Bertrand, Histoire des séminaires de Bordeaux et de Bazas, 3 vols. (Bordeaux, 1894), 2:366.*

<sup>809</sup> 8 January.

*Correspondence 1820*

there, if your brother, the bishop, wishes to let me do so. Here we are ten Vincentians, six professed and four novices who, in a few months, will also take their vows ....<sup>810</sup>

For me, I have attained the summit of my hopes, since I find here what I have long been searching for, *an apostolic Chartreuse*.<sup>811</sup> In it, without abandoning the work of Martha, we can enjoy the sweet repose of Mary; and, without renown or much responsibility, we can give ourselves to the ministry of sanctifying all sorts of people who are ready to receive it.

I am delighted with the happy success of Father Vincent's [Wlechmans] establishment.<sup>812</sup> Please tell him of my interest.

*Addressed:* Madame Fournier, rue de l'Eglise Saint-Seurin, Bordeaux.

**81. TO SAINT PHILIPPINE DUCHESNE, RELIGIOUS OF THE SACRED HEART, FLORISSANT<sup>813</sup>**

Saint Louis, Missouri  
26 June 1820

Madame:

You should be attributing to God's grace and to your good dispositions the sweet unction that you experienced on the occasion

<sup>810</sup> The professed were: De Andreis himself, Acquaroni, Rosati, Borgna, Potini and Brother Blanka; the novices were: Ferrari, Cellini, Dahmen and Tichitoli.

<sup>811</sup> Saint Vincent is said to have often repeated his conviction that, at Saint Lazare in Paris, his confreres lived as Carthusians at home and missionaries elsewhere. De Andreis also gave this Latin title, *Carthusia apostolica*, to a notebook containing various spiritual reflections.

<sup>812</sup> The Sisters of La Réunion, see Letter 37, 20 July 1817.

<sup>813</sup> **Letter 81.** Copy, French, in "*Lettres intéressantes—l'Établissement de notre société du Sacré-Coeur à la Louisiane. Paris 1817-1839.*" Manuscript in the General Archives of the Society of the Sacred Heart, Rome, C-VII, 2 c), Box 1, 40-41, no.27.

Rose Philippine Duchesne (1769-1852), born in France, arrived in New Orleans 29 May 1818 with four companions. She opened a school in Saint Charles, Missouri, and moved to Florissant in 1819.

*Correspondence 1820*

you wrote me about.<sup>814</sup> Every instrument is marvelous in God's hands. He is the sovereign of hearts and moves them as he wills. I regard the heart of Jesus as the universal link joining the hearts of all who cling to him through the sweet bonds of charity. What union, what exchange, what delicious association!

I have established here the Sacred Heart Association, and people are rushing to sign up. I already have a long list of men and women, both French and English. This is the means to move them to frequent the sacraments and practice their religion.

In the love of the Sacred Heart, I have the honor to be respectfully,  
Your very humble servant,  
De Andreis, unworthy priest [of the Mission].

**82. TO JOSEPH ROSATI, C.M., PRIEST, BARRENS<sup>815</sup>**

[Saint Louis]  
[July 1820]<sup>816</sup>

*Alleluia. Deo gratias* ["Thanks be to God"]. At last the [plan for the] mission for the Indians is going to be concluded. I will have the consolation of leaving with the bishop in a little while, etc.<sup>817</sup>

<sup>814</sup> De Andreis had been present at Saint Ferdinand, Florissant, from 8-10 June. According to the sisters' journal, he heard confessions, celebrated a solemn mass at which he gave a "touching exhortation before the renewal of vows," and preached at vespers for the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. ("Journal de la Société du Sacré-Coeur, 1818-1840. 2. à St. Ferdinand." General Archives of the Society of the Sacred Heart, Rome, C-VII, 2-c), Box 1.)

<sup>815</sup> **Letter 82.** *Fragment found in the summary of materials prepared for the cause of beatification. The original letter is no longer extant. Another translation is found in Rosati-Burlando, Sketches of the Life, 158 (1861 ed.), or 205 (1900 ed.)*

<sup>816</sup> This letter can perhaps be dated to July since the writer spoke of a mission to the Indians to be held during the summer (letter 83). It was characterized, in the summary for his cause, to have been the "last sparks of that divine flame of charity." (Rosati, *Summarium*, 107-08.)

<sup>817</sup> The site for the visit may have been Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, where the bishop hoped to open a school for Indian boys to be run by Vincentians. In fact, the bishop changed his plans, to De Andreis's disappointment.

*Correspondence 1820***83. TO MOTHER OCTAVIE BERTHOLD, RELIGIOUS OF THE SACRED HEART, FLORISSANT<sup>818</sup>**

Saint Louis  
1 September 1820

Madame:

There is no need to make excuses nor stand on ceremony in writing me. Your letters console me greatly in Our Lord, since they increasingly reveal for me the abundant graces that the heavenly spouse is pleased to shower on that blessed house of yours and on your little community. Even though you judge yourself unworthy, you are nonetheless one of its members. At the beginning of any religious house, when only the most essential elements are present, the smallest loss can injure the entire establishment.

I am very edified by your attachment to your rules and practices, and particularly to cloister. You are carrying it so far as, if needed, to sacrifice your health to it. I do not doubt your sincerity for an instant. It might be that you believe that you are also, for the moment, perfectly recovered. Yet since your former illness might arouse some fears about a relapse, you will have to take some steps to use truly extraordinary precautions to prevent this. In France, where the loss of one member of a community would not harm a house, such precautions might be deemed excessive. However, in this extraordinary case, they become indispensable. God is the supreme law, a law eternal and immutable. All others derive from him, more or less directly. Laws deriving more immediately from God are always to be preferred to others. Thus, when someone cannot observe the one without violating the other,

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<sup>818</sup> **Letter 83.** Copy, French, in *"Lettres intéressantes—l'Établissement de notre société du Sacré-Coeur à la Louisiane, Paris, 1817-1839."* Manuscript in the General Archives of the Society of the Sacred Heart, Rome, C-VII, 2 c), Box 1, 40-41, no. 28.

The manuscript attributes this letter of spiritual direction first to Mother Octavie, then the copyist wrote in the name of Eugénie Audé. The first name is correct. Mother Octavie Berthold, one of the original band of Sisters to come to the United States under the leadership of Philippine Duchesne, had broken her leg the month previously and had spent the time recuperating in bed. ("Journal de la Société du Sacré-Coeur. 1818-1840, 2. à St. Ferdinand," entry for 15 September 1820, 16. General Archives of the Society of the Sacred Heart, Rome, C-VII. 2-c). Box 1.)

*Correspondence 1820*



Felix De Andreis Street. Rome.

*Courtesy of the author*

natural law is to be preferred to positive divine law, and divine law to ecclesiastical and civil law, and these latter to particular laws and to the rules and practices of lawfully established societies. To please God, who is order itself, this is the order to which charity and well-regulated piety must always adhere.

Saint Francis de Sales praised Saint Ignatius Loyola, who ate meat on the Wednesday of Holy Week on the simple orders of his doctor. He said that a less enlightened spirit would have had prayers said for three days, but would have ended up by doing nothing about the matter. Nonetheless, this case involved ecclesiastical law of the first order, a very severe one, binding under pain of mortal sin. It was much graver than a mere community practice with no direct obligation.

I hope that the example of one saint commended to you both as father and model, and the opinion of another occupying a first place among teachers of the spiritual life, will lead you finally to set aside your other very laudable concerns. May they bring you to submit to the advice of your spiritual and physical doctors when and if they treat you again. Have no fear that this will become an example and that the others will use it to become lax on this point. Since the others know of the aversion you have always shown in this matter, you will have nothing to fear on this account. I will even go so far as to say that you did well to resist at the beginning; but now I think that you would do better to obey blindly. When I put myself in your place, I am sure that you are suffering from this. Yet, thanks be to God, you know well the art of trampling on your feelings. You know well that we cannot please the worthy object of our love without suffering, without being humbled,

*Correspondence 1820*

and without sometimes becoming, like him, a spectacle to the eyes of men and angels.<sup>819</sup>

Please accept my sentiments, etc.

Your very humble servant,

F. De Andreis\*

\* (This holy priest died in the odor of sanctity in Saint Louis in October of the same year, one month after this letter. His body is at the Barrens.)<sup>820</sup>

**84. TO FRANCESCO ANTONIO BACCARI, C.M.,  
PRO-VICAR GENERAL, ROME<sup>821</sup>**

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Saint Louis  
4 September 1820

Very Reverend and Dear Father,

I suppose that by this time the most worthy count, Father Inglesi, charged with the affairs of our bishop, has reached the City [Rome] and will have brought you the many letters he was carrying. By reading them you will have learned of our situation and our news, yet since between the date of those letters and the date of this present letter there is quite a considerable time, I am bringing you up to date on everything, as is my duty.

I am taking advantage of the occasion of a departing steamboat to report the following to you. I regret that I have not yet received nor have I any notice of the package of letters that you announced to me in your last letter, received about six months ago, and which you had given to the Very Reverend Father Grassi. I would be very interested in knowing where such a treasure might have disappeared. Please be

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<sup>819</sup> An allusion to 1 Cor 4:9.

<sup>820</sup> Copyist's note.

<sup>821</sup> **Letter 84.** *Autograph letter, Italian, two pages, in the Archives of the General Curia, Rome; De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part I, Sect. D, #22, 129-30. Cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 453-54, 482. Also cited partially in a manuscript notice of Father Cellini, De Andreis collection, Part II, appendix, 153.*

*Correspondence 1820*

most diligent with Father Grassi to find out where the problem lies, and whether the matter could be handled and confided to the secure hands of Father Inglesi.

Providence continues to singularly bless this mission of ours here. To his and our mutual satisfaction Father Cellini made his vows. He is a priceless subject for this establishment. He already speaks English sufficiently and is exercising the ministry. Besides, he is the only one among us who understands temporal affairs, so I made him our procurator. Next December, three other novice priests will make their vows.<sup>822</sup> It is only necessary then to send you according to the custom of the Congregation the attestations of their profession of vows. They are all excellent subjects, and to give you some idea of them I am enclosing the letter of one of them that I received the day before yesterday. I would have been able to send you many other similar edifying letters if I had thought of it before now;<sup>823</sup> meanwhile, our novitiate increases. It is composed of six others, besides the one I mentioned, three clerics<sup>824</sup> and three clerical brothers, generally excellent.<sup>825</sup> Also, there are already four or five other postulants. The seminary building is coming along and the land is being farmed, but expenses are exorbitant and it is amazing that the bishop does not succumb under the huge weight. Beginnings are always difficult. Perhaps the establishment could be ready to run on its own in another year.

The bishop has proposed founding a new house in lower Louisiana right in the place that serves as our benefice, that is, 1140 miles from

<sup>822</sup> Of those, only Ferrari took vows in December 1820. The others waited until later.

<sup>823</sup> The following postscript on page one refers to this sentence: "P.S. If I had time to translate them into Italian, [but] the original is already quite long." The letter in question does not appear in the De Andreis materials among the Archives of the General Curia.

<sup>824</sup> Andrew Ferrari, Francis Xavier Dahmen, Joseph Tichitoli, all of whom lived outside of Saint Louis.

<sup>825</sup> John Rosti, admitted 31 May 1820; Leo De Neckere, admitted 1 June 1820; Peter Vergani, admitted 13 June 1820. Rosti and Vergani had come from Italy in a band of nine or so candidates, headed by Father John Rossetti. They reached the Barrrens 4 January 1820. Members, as Tichitoli had been, of an informal group from Milan, the Oblates of Saint Charles, they had come to work in Dubourg's diocese. Lack of means to live their own religious life in common led some of them to join the Congregation of the Mission at different times. (Rosati, "Recollections," IV, 129-30.) Because of bad health, Rossetti withdrew 3 June 1821.



## Correspondence 1820

here as reckoned in the Italian mile.<sup>826</sup> (Judge by this the huge distances in this country.) A great field is opening to ministry as far as the Floridas. During the bishop's absence I had already planned to spend the summer among the Osage Indians to learn their language, translate the shorter catechism, and begin to make some converts. The bishop judged the project premature, however, because the number of priests is still too small for us to be away for a long time from the flock and go in search of those scattered sheep, who are not *ex hoc ovili* ["of this flock"],<sup>827</sup> and so I continue still to wait for another time. *Sustine tentationes Dei* ["bear up with trials from God"].<sup>828</sup>

Father Rosati heads the seminary and enjoys perfect health, but he suffers from the problem of needing temporal goods. Father Acquaroni is often sick but his parishioners adore him. Through some excess of fervor, Brother Borgna has contracted an attack of coughing that makes us fear for his health. He came to visit us since there was a place for him here. His cough has already stopped and he is beginning to improve. He has been a priest for five or six months.<sup>829</sup> He is a subject of the greatest hopes. Here with me he has returned to perfect health, but he will have to remain in the warmer climate of lower Louisiana.<sup>830</sup> Brother Potini is a deacon. Father Rosati, who came here to spend a few days, assures me that he is ready to be ordained a priest and that this will probably take place next Christmas.<sup>831</sup> This good young man exceeds in a lack of self-confidence. Brother Blanka is finally consoled by having some brother companions. These are especially one Irishman and another Milanese.<sup>832</sup> They are two real saints. There are also excellent postulant brothers, one a Spaniard and the other an American, a convert from Protestantism.<sup>833</sup>

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<sup>826</sup> Now the village of Plattenville on Bayou Lafourche. The usual distance, reckoned by river, was somewhat more than 1200 miles.

<sup>827</sup> John 10:16.

<sup>828</sup> Sir 2:3.

<sup>829</sup> He was ordained 20 March 1820 in Saint Louis.

<sup>830</sup> Rosati recalled that Borgna was also put to work teaching in the Academy, replacing De Neckere until his return in September. (Rosati, "Recollections," IV, 135.)

<sup>831</sup> He was ordained 29 October 1820 in Saint Louis.

<sup>832</sup> Brothers Daniel Harrington and Domenico Donati, although the latter was from Rimini, not Milan. John Bosoni and Joseph Pifferi were both from Milan. It is uncertain which one is meant.

<sup>833</sup> A certain Smith, if that is the correct reading of his name, mentioned only once, was probably the American convert; Antonio Perez, the Spaniard. He entered after De Andreis's death, 1 November 1820, but did not persevere.

*Correspondence 1820*

We have needed copies of the Common Rules in English. I had a translation made into English but it costs an arm and a leg to have them printed here. As the writer, I enjoy good health, not without problems, but these do not keep me from doing my little work. I am embarrassed to say that I am truly swimming in a sea of perfume. I could not be more content in this mortal life. I find myself in my center and I am eager for nothing else than to consume the sacrifice. A few days ago I ran the risk of being torn to pieces by a converted Methodist minister. This month he became violently insane and others could not restrain him. After threatening me, he hurled himself at me with such fury that he could have torn me to pieces; but, thanks to the workings of Providence, five or six holy men were found who jumped on him together and so he succeeded only in throwing my hat to the ground and ripping my clothes.

Please recommend me to the prayers of our good confreres in Italy to help us thank God for our good successes, for which I bless him.

At the beginning when we came there were four of us, and now we have been multiplied from four up to sixteen and more.<sup>834</sup> Little by little regularity is being established just like in our Italian houses. My compliments to each and every one of our men over there, to Father Grassi and the Very Reverend Father Inglesi and all those interested in our mission, not to exclude those who by chance might be favorable to it. Why do we love everybody *in visceribus Christi* ["in the affection of Christ"]<sup>835</sup> other than to attest to our thanks toward our benefactors? Ah, when will we all be united together in truth and charity and in eternity! We will form nothing else than one single unity in God. I am your most humble, devoted and obedient servant,

Felix De Andreis,  
priest of the mission.

*In another hand:* Final letter from Father De Andreis.

<sup>834</sup> The members at his time were: (1) De Andreis, (2) Acquaroni, (3) Rosati, (4) Borgna, (5) Potini, (6) Cellini, (7) Ferrari, (8) Dahmen, (9) Tichitoli, (10) Rosti, (11) De Neckere, (12) Rossetti, (13) Vergani, all priests or clerical students; and (14) Blanka, (15) Harrington, (16) Donati, all lay brothers. Those not numbered were the postulant brothers mentioned above. Of these, Rossetti, Rosti and Vergani arrived at the Barrrens, 4 January 1820, in company with four postulant brothers.

<sup>835</sup> Phil 1:8.

*Correspondence 1820***85. TO JOSEPH ROSATI, C.M., PRIEST, BARRENS<sup>836</sup>**

Saint Louis  
7 October 1820

Dear Father,

After embracing you in the sacred hearts of Jesus and Mary I announce to you with sadness that our dear superior is in very weak health. He cannot write by himself, and so he has asked me to write this for him. The bishop, I think, is writing you too, and he will give you more news that I am doing.<sup>837</sup>

He is sick with a bilious fever accompanied by delirium.<sup>838</sup> He is in almost constant confusion, produced by the great weakness of the brain. The brain, in turn, is easily moved by any sort of idea to which the imagination attaches itself. For example, since Sunday he seemed quite struck with the idea of death, and he asked for the sacraments when the doctor and others did not see any danger. His pains and his weakness have done nothing but increase all this week. For this reason

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<sup>836</sup> **Letter 85.** *Autograph letter, in the hand of Leo De Neckere, French, two pages with address, SLAA, Rosati papers. Cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 488-89. Copy in DRMA. (Although written by the novice Leo De Neckere, this letter represents De Andreis's wishes.)*

<sup>837</sup> The bishop wrote only the following paragraph on this subject:

We have the sadness, my dear Father Rosati, to have Father De Andreis seriously ill, although the doctors assure me that he is in no danger. Nevertheless, we administered holy viaticum to him yesterday. It is a putrid bilious fever, accompanied by a painfully sore throat. The fever has lessened. He is using tonics because of his great weakness, after having been purged for several days.

(Dubourg to Rosati, 7 October 1820, SLAA, Rosati papers. Copy in DRMA.)

<sup>838</sup> "Bilious fever," the name given at the time to typhoid fever, had already claimed some victims, including two children of Alexander McNair, future governor of Missouri. They died on 8 and 13 September. Typhoid fever is spread by fecal contamination, such as through water. De Andreis wrote about the putrid water in their well in Letter 64, 27 March 1819, a possible foreshadowing of the cause of his death.

*Correspondence 1820*

the bishop administered holy viaticum to him yesterday. I think that the doctor does not find him in great danger.<sup>839</sup>

Yesterday, he mentioned to me his very ardent wish to see you. I do not know if the bishop will mention it to you for you to come; he did not ask me to handle this. Today is the twelfth day that he has had this fever, and since crises happen every seven days, we are waiting until the fourteenth, and then until the twentieth for the fever to stop. He thinks that he will not be cured.

Nothing more edifying or tender than to see his transports of joy and the outpourings of his heart when the thought of death comes to give him hope of an early union with his creator. I do not need to expand on this, since you know his virtues better than I do.

I conclude by praying the Lord that, in the perfect accomplishment of his holy will, we might be able to find peace of soul in this life and unalterable happiness in the next.

I am sincerely, Father,  
Your most humble servant,  
L. De Neckere

*Addressed:* To the Revd. Mr. Rosati, St. Mary's Seminary, Barrens, by St. Genevieve; Kindness of Dr. Williams.

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<sup>839</sup> Nevertheless, on the following Wednesday, De Andreis was attended by Dr. Bernard Farrar, brought in for a second opinion. Farrar noted: "Mr. Deandres. To visit in consultation, etc." ("Account Book. Dr. Bernard Farrar," Vol. I. Missouri Historical Society, archives, entry for Wednesday, 11 October 1820.) As evidenced in his account books, Farrar was neither De Andreis's nor Dubourg's regular physician. Instead, the bishop went to Dr. George P. Todsen, and brought him several times to Florissant to care for Philippine Duchesne ("Journal de la Société de Sacré-Coeur, 1818-1840. 2. à St. Ferdinand," 16, entry for 15 September 1820 [C-VII, 2-c, Box 1]).

## Correspondence 1820

86. TO FRANCESCO ANTONIO BACCARI, C.M. (?), PRO-VICAR  
GENERAL, ROME<sup>840</sup>

Father,

God has visited us in a way most painful to my heart and most terrible for our mission by taking away from us the venerated Father De Andreis. He died on Sunday, the 15th of this month, the day on which we were celebrating the feast of the Holy Guardian Angels. I have no doubt that at the very moment of his death the prayers that we offered for him had their full effect. *Subvenite angeli Dei*, etc. ["Come (to his aid) angels of God, etc."], and *Jubeas eam a sanctis angelis suscepi et ad Patriam Paradisi perducere* ["Have his (soul) brought by your holy angels and led to Paradise, his home"].<sup>841</sup> This precious death has plunged the city and the diocese into universal mourning, because he was commonly venerated as a saint.

I hope that God will glorify him with miracles, since people here are well disposed to believe them. Thus, since a beautiful star<sup>842</sup> shone in midday in the sky at the very hour of his funeral, and people said aloud that it was the soul of Father De Andreis.<sup>843</sup> An elderly woman, my housekeeper, had suffered from stomach pains for three years because of erysipelas. She was suddenly, and I hope forever, freed

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<sup>840</sup> Letter 86. Copy from original by Dubourg. Italian. One sheet, two pages, inserted between sheets 18 and 19, in "Annales de la Congrégation de la Mission en Italie. Quatrième Époque, de 1815 à 1874." Paris, archives of the Congregation of the Mission.

This Italian letter is evidently a translation from French, Dubourg's native language, and was probably written to Baccari. Since the bishop did not sign this copy, and the copyist misspelled the bishop's name (de Bourg, for Dubourg), it was probably copied in Rome for the French vicar general in Paris, Charles Boujard.

<sup>841</sup> Texts taken from the funeral service.

<sup>842</sup> Examination of star charts displaying the night sky at this period in Saint Louis shows the prominence of the planet Venus in the southeast. Its appearance was not otherwise remarked by Saint Louis observers of the period, nor is a comet known to have been visible at the time. The object seen during the day could have been a meteor.

<sup>843</sup> Mrs. Elisabeth Moranville, née Hayden (b. 1822) testified in 1900 that her father, Thomas Hayden, had accompanied Felix's remains to the Barrens, and "that he had witnessed the wonderful star which appeared in the sky just over the house where the body of the servant of God was reposed, and which seemed to accompany the remains on the journey from St. Louis. I also heard Bishops Rosatti [sic], Odin, Timon and De Neckere relate the same occurrence. They all regarded this apparition as an evidence of the great sanctity of Father De Andreis, whom they, with so many others regarded as a saint of God." (DRMA, original notarized document in De Andreis files.)

*Correspondence 1820*

from this illness through the application of a piece of cloth belonging to the venerable priest.<sup>844</sup>

I am sending you the notice in English, and the circular letter in Latin<sup>845</sup> that calls this loss irreparable.

At the point of death, Father De Andreis named Father Rosati as the superior of their men. He is the only one who could be superior since all the others are young. It is very necessary, Father, that you try to send us two subjects of a mature age, with talent and solid virtue, so that they can consolidate their wonderful establishment in Louisiana. If Father Rosati leaves, everything will collapse. He will certainly ask for this. Allow me to add my strongest wishes to his own. Besides the seminary that I have given to their Congregation, I use him as the procurator of yet another retreat house and of missions in one of the most populated places in Lower Louisiana.<sup>846</sup>

The good they will do with two establishments is incalculable. You are well informed that the diocese already has six novices; almost all priests<sup>847</sup> and for the most part they are subjects remarkable for their talent and virtue.

Saint Louis, Missouri  
in the United States of America  
19 October 1820

I have the honor of being, etc.  
Your very humble and obedient servant,  
L[ouis] Wil[liam] de Bourg, Bishop of Louisiana

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<sup>844</sup> This healing is reported in various ways in other letters.

<sup>845</sup> See 87(b) and 87(c).

<sup>846</sup> The convent at Grand Coteau, near Opelousas, Louisiana. "Retreat house" likely is a misunderstanding of the bishop's description of the institution as a boarding school for girls run by the Madames of the Sacred Heart.

<sup>847</sup> More correctly, the bishop should have written that the Congregation, not the diocese, had six novices. They were probably Leo De Neckere, Leo Deys (who joined the diocese), Andrew Ferrari, John Rosti, and Joseph Tichitoli, all priests. Peter Vergani was ordained only in 1826.

*Correspondence 1820***87(a). TO VINCENZO DE ANDREIS, DEMONTE<sup>848</sup>**

From Saint Mary's Seminary  
15 November 1820

Dear Sir:

This diocese of Louisiana and the Congregation of the Mission have suffered a loss which is common also to you and to your family. After a very painful illness of about four weeks,<sup>849</sup> the Lord called your respectable brother and our most worthy superior on 15 October to receive the reward of his apostolic labors and of all the virtues that he practiced heroically during his precious life. I have recovered a little from the sorrow in which his unexpected death plunged me. He was the one person dearest to me and was like a father to me. I believed it my duty to send you this very sad news in this letter, and to add a few things which might offer you some reasons for consolation after you have paid the very proper tribute of tears to the memory of our dear departed. Though we have lost a brother and a father on earth, we have gained a protector in heaven. You know that his life had been the life of a saint, and so it is easy to see that his death was like the death of

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<sup>848</sup> **Letter 87(a).** *Autograph letter, Italian, four pages, with address, in the archives of the province of Turin, De Andreis papers. Letter 87(b).* *Autograph (?) letter, Latin, one page, in the Archives of the General Curia, Rome, De Andreis papers. Another copy, typeset, also exists, addressed to Philip Borgna, New Orleans, in the De Andreis collection, vol. 1, 138. Letter 87(c).* *Original offprint, English, in DRMA, De Andreis papers. From Missouri Gazette & Public Advertiser 13:629 (18 October 1820): 3. Another version, retranslated into English from Italian, is found in his Life, 177-79.*

<sup>849</sup> Most likely typhoid fever. His constitution was ruined by being dosed with calomel, mercurous chloride, which certainly hastened his death. Besides general debility from a weak stomach, probably chronic colitis, he was commonly spoken of as suffering from consumption. (Rosati, *Summariium*, 213.) The account in *Annales ... Italie* surmises that worrying about being made a bishop "contributed not a little to hastening" his death. (p. 18v.)

*Correspondence 1820*

a saint.<sup>850</sup>

The Lord had been preparing him for this with frequent illnesses, constant problems and chronic pains. For several years these tried his heroic patience. Death had always been the goal of his desires. In his last illness he spoke of God with transports of joy, and these aroused the admiration of those who witnessed it. Amid his most terrible sufferings he spoke only of God; the deliriums to which he was at times subject did not keep him away from this topic, always the only object of his thoughts and emotions.

The whole city of Saint Louis, the last scene of his apostolic labors, witnessed a very edifying spectacle. The finest people came to visit him and to offer him even the basest services. All the citizens who wanted to preserve him in this precious life showed their constant worry during his illness. At the end, when they despaired of keeping him, each one sought to visit him to receive his blessing, contemplating in

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<sup>850</sup> Rosati wrote the following to his brother Nicola:

He was a saint, and he lived and died as a saint . . . He united in himself the most beautiful qualities, extraordinary talents, eloquence, learning, holiness, and virtue that made him truly respectable, not only for Catholics but also for all those who had the good fortune to know him, of whatever religion they were.

(Joseph Rosati to Nicola Rosati, from Barrens, 18 [?] October 1820; copy in DRMA, Rosati papers.)



*Correspondence 1820*

his face all the features of one predestined.<sup>851</sup>

At his death regret and sorrow were universal.<sup>852</sup> Every class of persons wept over him as a desolate family weeps over the death of a venerated and beloved parent. Protestants were indistinguishable from

<sup>851</sup> The Paris manuscript gives more details about his dying days:

When he arrived at Baltimore, God brought to him, even then, a chosen soul who wanted to put herself under his care. Mrs. [Marie] MacGuire, a very pious woman, advanced in the spiritual life, had for a long time asked God to give her a director capable of leading her in the way of perfection and of fulfilling his designs for her. One day she went to a mass said by Father De Andreis and she knew then, by an interior voice from God, that there was the director destined for her. From that time she placed herself under his care and made great progress in virtue. She later came to Saint Louis where Father De Andreis was, and she gave herself to all sorts of good works. God showed her again the glory that he was preparing for Father De Andreis. He lived at the Bishop's house, about a kilometer from Mrs. MacGuire's house. A hill separated the two quarters of the city. One day Mrs. MacGuire was amazed to see a light appearing in the sky in broad daylight. She looked at it and saw a chariot attached to fiery horses like that in the scripture belonging to the prophet Elijah. The chariot passed above the houses, and she saw it go down beside the hill toward the Bishop's house. Father De Andreis was then in his bed of pain. Mrs. MacGuire did not doubt that God was going to bring him up on the chariot that He had showed her. Some days after, in fact, he died. Only one person witnessed this marvel, which we have just spoken of; the sky looked different to everyone else, and on the day of his funeral a brilliant star appeared in broad daylight above his body and followed it to the tomb. He was laid out in an open coffin, and they brought it throughout the city.

(*Notices VI*, 436, 442.) Mrs. MacGuire died in Saint Louis, 15 October 1828; see also Rosati, *Summarium*, 215.

<sup>852</sup> Eugénie Audé, Religious of the Sacred Heart, wrote in a similar vein to Madeleine Sophie Barat in Paris, October 1820:

You certainly know, my worthy Mother, that the bishop has just lost Mr. D'Andreis, his vicar general. He [Dubourg] had been so affected by this that for two days he had suffered very violent attacks of nerves. Everyone joined him in this loss, since we are weeping for a saint. He was a person of the greatest merit, and his zeal for the salvation of souls knew no limits. The climax of his last illness was a continuous aspiration toward heaven, where he had fixed his heart and all his thoughts. The world was so foreign to him that he himself used to say that he did not know a single woman, although he heard the confessions of everyone in Saint Louis.

(Paisant, *Les années pionnières*, L. 84, p. 335.)

*Correspondence 1820*

Catholics in this. On the same day that he went to heaven our departed received the most solemn funeral honors.<sup>853</sup> Contrary to the custom of this country, his body, clad in priestly vestments, was exposed to public view. Although he died in the bishop's house, next to the church, there was a lengthy procession before he was borne into the cathedral. People here had never seen such a large procession. The sacred ceremonies were more like a solemn procession than a funeral. All the priests and the bishop in pontifical vestments preceded the mortal remains of this venerable priest. The priests carried them, but some of them had to give in to the pressure of the main men of the city, to grant them the consolation of bearing his coffin in their turn.

Our worthy bishop pronounced a funeral oration in which he had no need to rely on the artifices of eloquence. He let his heart speak, and he drew tears from the eyes of his many hearers. God has wished to glorify this faithful servant of his by allowing the sincerest honors to be given him after death, a result of the high reputation that everyone had of him.

A large number of people had wanted to have something used by our departed.<sup>854</sup> The bishop kept some of his hair; I am enclosing some of it for you. At the end, the Lord himself wanted to begin to glorify him in an extraordinary way. During the illness of Father De Andreis, a widow of great piety, troubled for a long time with terrible stomach problems, had many times tried to enter his room to touch his bed or something else in the firm confidence of obtaining a cure from her illness from the Lord through the merits of his servant. She was unable to do so. After his death, she approached his body, touched it, and was healed

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<sup>853</sup> This probably refers to the wake, since his funeral was celebrated on 16 October, according to the register of funerals signed by Francis Niel: "His funeral was held the next day, and his body has been moved to the Seminary at the Barrrens."

<sup>854</sup> Bishop Dubourg wrote to Rosati: "I am also having the Rice family bring you his trunks containing his personal effects and papers. There are perhaps still some books here. I do not have the time to worry about them." (From Saint Louis, 19 October 1820; original in SLAA, 1-A-3,1.) A note in Rosati's hand records the following concerning the disposition of some of his manuscripts: "Given to Mr. Calvo at the seminary Father De Andreis's notebook entitled: *Ad Quid Venisti et Europam reliquisti*; to Mr. Mignard the notebook entitled *Carthusia Apostolica*; to Mr. Paquin a notebook of resolutions, etc. These gentlemen are supposed to copy them and return them to me." (Source: Roman Province archives, Rome, Rosati diary 1837-40, 12.5.3.; note inside front cover.)

*Correspondence 1820*

in an instant.<sup>855</sup>

Although he did not want to do so, the bishop decided after the



The Jarrot Home, Cahokia, Illinois.  
*Courtesy of the author*

funeral to send the mortal remains of our beloved superior to the seminary at the Barrens. This transport took place with the greatest propriety, although the journey is about 100 miles. The main citizens of Saint Louis and Sainte Genevieve voluntarily accompanied him in great numbers to the seminary.<sup>856</sup> On 17 October we received this treasure here, accompanied as it was by three priests. We placed him in a well-constructed monument. When the Lord grants us the grace

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<sup>855</sup> The housekeeper is called Zama (page 4), or Zamon (pages 5, 213), in the official inquiry for his cause. On the other hand, De Andreis's friend, James Cummins, asserted that she was Mrs. Charity Hern (elsewhere, Ahern or Hearn), his wife's aunt. While the bishop and others were at their meal, this lady entered the seminary refectory where his body was exposed, and "she pressed his naked foot to her stomach and was relieved." (Cummins to Timon, from Pittsburgh, 20 August 1839; SLAA, Rosati correspondence, I-B-4.3B; also, Rosati, *Summarium*, 111-12, 214, 260.)

<sup>856</sup> This funeral procession passed through Cahokia, Prairie du Rocher and Kaskaskia before reaching Sainte Genevieve. Testimony for his canonization mentions visits he made to Prairie du Rocher, about 60 miles from Saint Louis (Rosati, *Summarium*, 2, 207). Acquaroni accompanied the body.

*Correspondence 1820*

of building a new church, we will move him there. Meanwhile I hope that the Lord will do something more.

You can see that we have motives for our consolation in this loss. I have not yet had the time to gather up all the information to write up an account of his life. You could do me a great service if you would kindly send me the information that you could gather there [and] to address the letter as follows: Mr. Joseph Rosati, Sup[érieur] du S[éminaire] de S[ain]te Marie, Barrens, Conté de S[ainte] Genevieve, état du Missouri, mandé a M[ada]me Fournier, Bordeaux, rue de l'église de [Saint Seurin] n[umér]o 7 [Superior of Saint Mary's Seminary, Barrens, Sainte Genevieve County, Missouri; sent to Madame Fournier, 7, rue de l'église Saint Seurin. Bordeaux].<sup>857</sup>

I am enclosing here the letter in which the bishop informed all the priests of the diocese of the death of Father De Andreis, as well as an extract from the newspaper on the same subject. I have not had time to translate it from English.

Please accept my sincerest expressions of esteem and respect. With these I have the honor of being

Your humble servant

Joseph Rosati

priest of the Congregation of the Mission

*Addressed:* Monsieur, Mr. V. De Andreis, Demonte, in Piedmont, Italy.

*Postmarks:* Chambéry, Bordeaux

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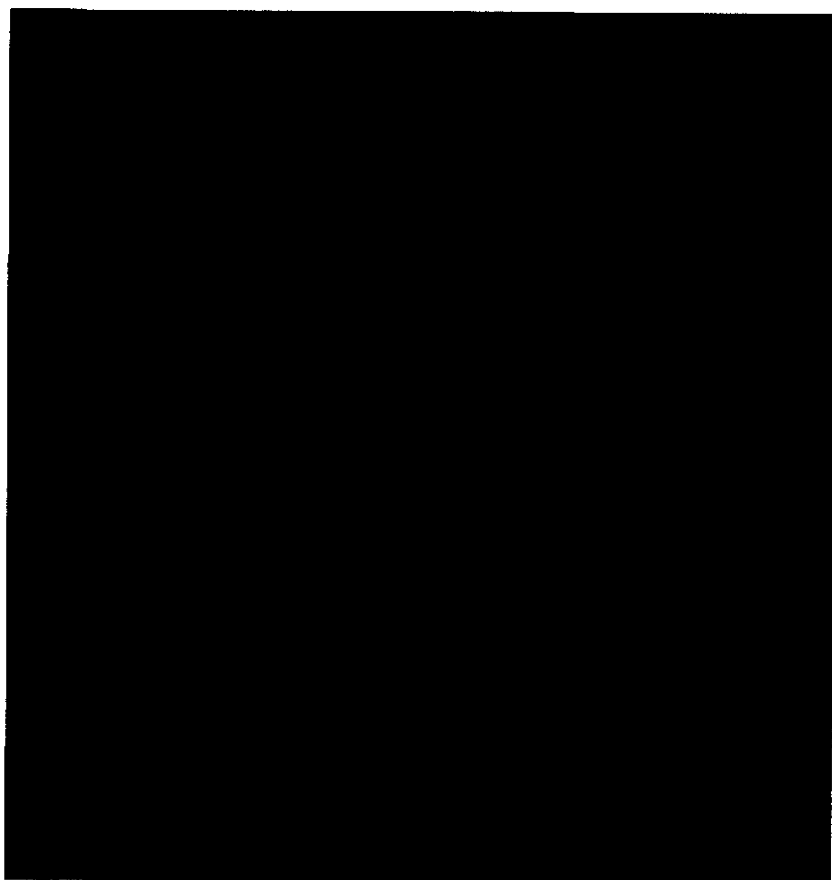
<sup>857</sup> The material in brackets, marking a missing portion of text, has been restored conjecturally.

*Correspondence 1820***87(b). (TO THE PRIESTS OF THE DIOCESE OF LOUISIANA)**

[Undated]

By order of His Excellency, the Most Reverend Bishop, I send to you the very sad news of the death of the Very Reverend Father Felix De Andreis, vicar general and superior of the Congregation of the Mission in this province of Louisiana. He was a man of outstanding holiness and doctrine, and after suffering a long illness, departed for a better life on 15 October 1820. He bore with his sufferings with admirable meekness, and, strengthened by the sacraments, experienced in advance the delights of heaven. He was about forty-two years old. Alas, he was the light and adornment of our clergy, a powerful preacher of the Gospel, a lover of the poor, the hope and support of the mission of Louisiana! The bishop experienced the death of this venerable priest with inexpressible sorrow, and men of all ranks lament it. May the God of all consolation, moved by so many groans, raise up for us heirs to such great virtue.

Your very obedient,  
Charles De Lacroix  
Secretary of the bishop of Louisiana



Obituary.

*Collection of the DeAndreis-Rosati Memorial Archives*

## Correspondence 1820

## 87(c). OBITUARY

From the *Missouri Gazette*, St. Louis, October 18<sup>th</sup> 1820.<sup>858</sup>

DIED — On the 15th instant, in this town, after a painful and lingering illness, in the 43 year of his age, the Reverend FELIX DE ANDREIS, Vicar General of Louisiana, and superior of the Congregation of the Mission. This venerable Priest was born in Piedmont, (Italy,) of reputable and wealthy parents, and early engaged in the ecclesiastical career.

His youth spent in perfect innocence and marked by the most distinguished proficiency, portended the man of God and the Apostle. The comforts of domestic affluence, and the endearments of a dearly beloved family were the first ties which the heavenly voice called him to break, to devote himself to the humble and arduous labours of country Missions, and to the practice of the evangelical counsels of poverty and obedience, in that truly Apostolic Congregation established two hundred years since by Saint Vincent of Paul.

The various states and provinces of Italy were successively the theatre of his zeal, and the animated strains of his divine eloquence brought to his feet thousands of poor sinners, who found relief and comfort in his indulgent tenderness. Called to Rome, as to a scene of action better suited to his noble talent and extensive learning, he soon became the oracle of the clergy of that capital of the Catholic world, and drew upon himself the admiration of its most eminent prelates. But his humility sickened under the weight of a consideration, which paved before him the way to the highest honours, and his zeal, too

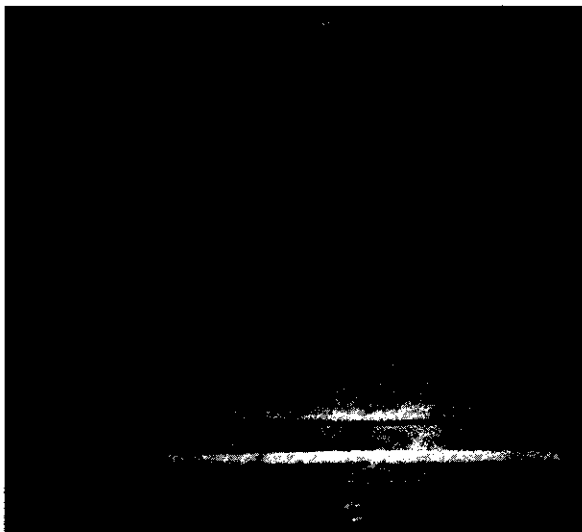
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<sup>858</sup> The text has been set into paragraphs for easier reading, but the spelling has been kept as in the original. Such obituary notices were very rare, the only previous one being for Daniel Boone (1820). James C. Cummins related that Dubourg had written the text. Since he was a close friend of the deceased, Cummins published it, which may account for its unusual length and prominence in his newspaper. In 1838 he recalled for John Timon that he also published it "afterwards in handbill form to be distributed to the various clergymen throughout the diocese etc." (Cummins to Timon, from Pittsburgh, 20 August 1839, original in SLAA, Rosati correspondence, I-B-4.3B.) One of these handbills reached Ireland, sent home by Hugh Quin, then an ecclesiastical student in Saint Louis. (Hugh Quin to his father, from Saint Louis College, 30 October 1820; copy in DRMA, De Andreis papers.) The same notice also appeared in the only other Saint Louis newspaper of the period, the *Saint Louis Enquirer* 3:221 (Saturday, 21 October 1820): 3. For some reason it was also summarized in the *Rochester Telegraph*, Rochester, New York, 9 January 1821. The obituary mentioned as appearing in the New Orleans papers has not been located.

*Correspondence 1820*

confined, sought after a more extensive and desolate field.

Long had he solicited the favour of being sent on a Foreign Mission. China was his first object; but Providence, by frustrating his views on that side, turned them towards America. Great were the obstacles he had to overcome to obtain his favourite wishes. His superiors, assisted by a combination of the most influential characters in Rome, strenuously opposed his departure. It was represented to the sovereign Pontiff himself as a calamity, against which they succeeded in enlisting for a moment his supreme authority. But at last persuaded by the fervent entreaties of the humble Priest, he silenced the opposition and granted his request. In 1816, the venerable man sailed for America, accompanied by several members of his Congregation, over whom he had been regularly appointed superior; and after a residence of about one year in Kentucky, where he left a most precious remembrance, he arrived in this Territory with the Rev. Bishop who had long made him his Vicar General and the soul of his councils.



The tomb of Felix De Andreis. Saint Mary's of the Barrens Church.  
*Courtesy of the author*



*Correspondence 1820*

The three short years he lived among us were wholly spent in the most active and charitable exercise of his divine functions, and have sufficed to embalm his memory in the hearts of all the classes of our citizens. Long will his fervent piety, his unaffected humility, his indulgence to others and severity to himself, his indefatigable solicitude for the sanctification of souls, his tender and industrious charity to the poor be the theme of common conversations.

Long will his frequent and pathetic exhortations from the Pulpit vibrate in the hearts of his hearers, to be a melting reproach to the negligent, and an encouragement to the faithful. His last moments were those of the just, who has every day of his life studied and improved the great lesson of Death. The news of his approaching dissolution not only found him resigned and contented, but excited in him rapturous joys.

Heaven with all its glories brightened on his emaciated countenance. His last words were in favour of his spiritual children, whom he recommended to the peculiar solicitude of the Bishop. His death is universally lamented; every one seems to have lost a Father; and the immense concourse, that graced with their tears the solemn pomp of his funeral, proclaimed him to be the beloved of God and men, whose memory is in benediction<sup>859</sup>

His earthly remains have been conveyed, under a pious escort, to the Seminary at the Barrens, county of St. Genevieve, kept by the gentlemen of his Congregation.

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<sup>859</sup> Sir 45:1.

**II****HISTORICAL WRITINGS**

## IMPORTANT NOTICES

### INTRODUCTION

*This document is contained in a booklet used by De Andreis from 1815 to three months before his death in 1820. It presents an account of his journey, notes taken mainly on the spot, and at times related in the first person, and sometimes dated. Part travel diary, part record book, it has an immediacy that his other narrative, the "Itinerary," lacks. Although the "Itinerary" is more polished, "Important Notices" contains details that he did not copy into the later work and are not available elsewhere.*

*This document is divided into five sections. It opens with an historical account of the events in Rome leading up to the departure of the Vincentians for the American mission. De Andreis kept rough financial accounts in section two, along with details of the voyage. Section three recounts their ocean crossing and gives the text of the vow taken by the missionaries as they feared for their lives. A lengthy fourth section follows, written by someone else, clearly a French missionary to America, as a memorial to attract missionary vocations and financial support. Dated 2 July 1815, this insert predates the rest of the material. This probably means that De Andreis had it copied, probably at Baltimore. Section five is a short account of the rest of the trip to Saint Louis. The author finished the last page in July 1820 with some reflections on the successes of the missionaries.*

*This little booklet, 3 1/2" by 2 1/4" (9 by 5.5 cm), is small enough to be slipped into a breast pocket for reference. Some headings are original; those in brackets have been added to facilitate reading.*

# IMPORTANT NOTICES CONCERNING THE MISSION OF LOUISIANA IN NORTH AMERICA<sup>1</sup>

*"Eo purior, quo altior, fontique proximior sumitur unda"*<sup>2</sup>  
Father De Andreis, Rome, 1815

[Section One: Rome to Bordeaux]<sup>3</sup>

In August 1815, Bishop Louis William Dubourg happened to come to lodge at the house of Monte Citorio in Rome. He was the administrator and is now the very worthy bishop of New Orleans and of all Louisiana, where he was sent by Propaganda.

Without anyone planning it, Providence arranged a meeting between the bishop and Father Felix De Andreis. During this meeting, after describing at length the state of the diocese, the bishop asked him to undertake this mission. He expressed his ardent desire for such a mission, something he had nourished for more than sixteen years. Yet he protested that he did not want to do anything without having God's will openly manifested through his lawful superiors. In view of the recovery of the Congregation, they were unable to let their confreres go.<sup>4</sup> But<sup>5</sup> the bishop made them realize that he would make the request for him to the Supreme Pontiff.

<sup>1</sup> **Important Notices.** *Autograph notebook, Italian and French, 76 pages, 3 1/2 x 2 1/4", (9 x 5.5 cm), with pages 23–69 in another hand, in French. In the Archives of the General Curia, Rome, De Andreis papers. Two early copies, one in Italian, one in French, also exist in the same archives.*

<sup>2</sup> "Ever purer, ever higher, ever closer does the wave rise to its source." This citation, typical of the De Andreis style, probably was intended by him to refer both to the spiritual journey to God and to the physical journey to America undertaken by the missionaries.

<sup>3</sup> The editor has added headings in brackets to facilitate reading.

<sup>4</sup> Napoleon suppressed all religious congregations in his empire, 25 April 1810. This included almost all of Italy with the exception of Naples. After the emperor's fall, in June 1815, the way was open to start anew the Italian houses closed until that time.

<sup>5</sup> Beginning here and continuing to the end of page 4 of the original, Rosati quoted De Andreis in the former's "Recollections." See Rosati, Stafford Poole, trans., "Recollections," 71-73.

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

That same evening De Andreis went to explain the entire matter to Father [Carlo Domenico] Sicardi that he might be aware of all that was being requested. As a result, the bishop together with His Eminence Cardinal [Lorenzo] Litta, the prefect of Propaganda, placed the request before the pope. The latter immediately agreed and to the reply that his superiors might forbid it, added, "it doesn't make any difference."

The next day Father Sicardi was presented to the Holy Father and spoke against De Andreis's departure. He [De Andreis] submitted a report in which he showed that his superiors had already approved his consistent wish since they had once destined him for China. He mentioned his superiors' opposition and his desire to remain always a member of the Congregation. Nevertheless, he submitted the decision to His Holiness as the supreme oracle and remained indifferent toward whatever the response would be.

When the Holy Father had read his report he responded that "we will deal with the superiors about this" and he delegated the responsibility to Cardinals [Mario] Mattei and Antonio Doria to handle the matter. These cardinals spoke first with the superiors and then with De Andreis. Then without Father De Andreis having made the least request, two other subjects spontaneously joined him.<sup>6</sup> Seeing this, he recalled his lively desire, shared several times with Father [Joseph] Rosati when these two were giving missions, of dedicating himself to the foreign missions. He notified Rosati of this opportunity with a simple letter without asking for it [his agreement], but requiring just a simple yes or no.

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<sup>6</sup> Rosati identifies these two confreres as a Mr. Cremisini and Brother Pietro Polenghi. Both quickly withdrew. (Rosati, "Itineraire," 27 September 1815; also Ricciardelli, *Vita*, 184.) Cremisini was possibly Antonio Cremisini (1792-1875), later the provincial of Rome.

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

A simple yes was Rosati's response, provided that the will of his superiors be united to the will of the Holy Father.<sup>7</sup>

Father Sicardi, the vicar general, added that he was indifferent and would abide by whatever the Holy Father determined, but he remained opposed because of the frail health of De Andreis. Providence disposed that at that time the house physician had spoken in favor. Consequently his [Sicardi's] opposition remained without effect.

Other very strong opposition, however, was presented, such that it more than once seemed that the affair would not be concluded at all.<sup>8</sup> The bishop had already resolved to defer his consecration until he saw its outcome.

<sup>7</sup> Rosati wrote his own recollections:

Toward the middle of this mission [in La Scarpa, which began 5 September 1815] I received a letter from Father Voggi with a note from Father De Andreis. He told me about the mission of Louisiana in North America, and he told me that, since he was aware of my dispositions, he had counted me in the number, etc., but that there was time for me to withdraw if I did not wish, and that, consequently, I should answer with just a yes or a no. Beside myself at news so unexpected, and so conformable with my desire, I recommended myself to God, and consulted with Father [Bartolomeo] Colucci, my director. I answered him with a simple yes on condition that our superiors would give me permission for it.

(Joseph Rosati, "Memoria," typed copy, in DRMA, Rosati papers.)

<sup>8</sup> This is an oblique reference to some doubts about the orthodoxy of De Andreis's teaching. Questions had been raised about his use of a book which, harmless in itself, had a French translation placed on the Index of Forbidden Books. Bishop Dubourg was aware of the accusations, and wrote "I have reasons to believe that the charge, from beginning to end, is a vile slander." (Melville, *Louis William DuBourg*, 347-48; Bozuffi, *Il servo di Dio Felice de Andreis*, 110-11.)

A note in the Paris manuscript may also allude to this:

With his departure he left a great void, both with the people who lived at Monte Citorio and among externs who regarded him as one of the most learned priests and holy ecclesiastics in Rome, and who, for that reason, esteemed him and loved him greatly, even those who, for another reason, would have wanted to see him more attached to the doctrine of Saint Alphonsus Liguori which began to be fashionable at that time.

(Notices VI, 432.)

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

Nevertheless, he was consecrated on 24 September and went immediately to Castelgandolfo to plead his cause. Knowing well how to act, with God's blessing he succeeded in having the entire affair brought quickly to Cardinal [Ercole] Consalvi, the secretary of state. The latter had arrived in Rome two days before and had Father Sicardi summoned to convey to him the Holy Father's wishes.<sup>9</sup> He did not have to repeat them, and so the affair was concluded, namely that a seminary would be founded and subjects would be named, that is, four priests, one brother and several postulants.<sup>10</sup> Afterwards, however, one priest and the brother withdrew.<sup>11</sup>

On 14 October, in the company of Bishop Dubourg, those destined to depart were presented to the Holy Father at Castelgandolfo to receive his blessing: Fathers Felix De Andreis, a priest of the Mission, John Baptist Acquaroni, a priest of the Mission, Joseph Rosati, a priest

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<sup>9</sup> One of Dubourg's accounts is found in a letter to John Carroll, archbishop of Baltimore:

Divine Providence, having, from the first days of my residence in this capital, inspired four or five of the best members of the congregr. of the missions of St. Vincent a' Paulo, to offer me their services towards the formation of a Seminary and the attendance on the Missions in my Dioceses, The most distinguished Prelates and Cardinals joined in a Kind of coalition with their saintly Superiors to appose [*sic*] the departure of one of them, the head and soul of the rest, who is considered the model and oracle of the Roman Clergy; But the Pope decided in my favour and ordered his own Secretary of state Cardl. Consalvi to terminate the contest.

(Dubourg to Carroll, from Rome, 5 October 1815, in AAB, Carroll papers, 8AH6. English.)

<sup>10</sup> Rosati also mentioned a Roman priest, Father Bighi, who was among the first to ask to join the group. He withdrew, but later came to Lower Louisiana as part of Dubourg's band. (Rosati, "Itineraire," 27 September 1815; also Ricciardelli, *Vita*, 185.)

<sup>11</sup> Father Joseph Pereira and Brother Antonio Boboni. (Rosati, "Memoria," typed copy, DRMA, Rosati papers.)

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

of the Mission,<sup>12</sup> Joseph Pereira, a postulant priest,<sup>13</sup> Mister Leo Deys, a cleric for Propaganda,<sup>14</sup> Antonio Boboni, a postulant brother.

In the name of all, De Andreis presented a formal request: (1) that we be able to celebrate the office of Saint Vincent as a double minor on 27 September<sup>15</sup> and on 19 July, since on that day Cardinal Consalvi, the secretary of state and the pope's delegate, and Father Sicardi, our vicar general had concluded the question of the American mission. (2) A plenary indulgence in our churches on 3 December, the feast of Saint Francis Xavier. (3) A dispensation from the oath of remaining in the dioceses, for the former students of the Alberoni, who might want to join us.<sup>16</sup> (4) The faculty for the entire group to go to confession on the journey to all the confessors already approved, until arriving at our destination. (5) To make the Way of the Cross with a crucifix and to erect it where there were no Franciscan convents.<sup>17</sup> Afterward, the request was made orally for the faculty of celebrating mass on the ship.

We were received with great kindness at the foot kissing<sup>18</sup> and he [the pope] gave us his blessing. Afterwards there was no difficulty at all concerning all the favors requested, with the exception that to

<sup>12</sup> Rosati arrived in Rome 3 October after his missionary journey.

The consolation I experienced in speaking in person with Fr. De Andreis and with Fr. Acquaroni about our mission, and especially in knowing the very worthy Bishop Dubourg, just consecrated bishop of Louisiana, was a suitable reward for the trouble which I could not in the least expect in seeing how much suffering our departure was giving to our superiors. I will thank the Lord who helped me to bear up under this very painful conflict that my heart was experiencing.

<sup>13</sup> That is, he was seeking admission to the Congregation, having already been ordained a priest. If he was the same Joseph Pereira de Miranda listed in the Roman province catalogue for 1822, he would have been 35 years old.

<sup>14</sup> Leo Deys, a student for Propaganda Fide, entered Monte Citorio, at age 24, on 27 September 1814, and left 21 October 1815 for America. It was he, perhaps because of his knowledge of French, who introduced Bishop-elect Dubourg to De Andreis. The register of student remarks: "He behaved excellently in all ways." ("Catalogus in quo praeter Convictorum nomina, eorum etiam qualitates adnotantur," register of students at Monte Citorio, 1720-1870, Archives of the Roman Province, 3.5.11, 37.)

<sup>15</sup> This feast was extended to the entire Congregation only in 1822.

<sup>16</sup> None joined De Andreis, although some did join the bishop.

<sup>17</sup> The erection of the Way of the Cross was restricted at the time to Franciscans.

<sup>18</sup> A papal ceremony.



*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

celebrate mass there was the condition that the altar be well fixed. He [the pope] did the same with various other special requests presented subsequently and gave us his permission. Besides the great opposition offered very forcefully by some, even cardinals, against the departure of De Andreis, at the end the secretary of finances, a person very dear to the Holy Father, to whom the Holy Father usually would readily agree in everything, presented his opposition. The pope responded in frank and precise terms "just leave, and don't ever talk to me again about this matter." This confirmed, as the final evidence, the manifestation of God's will and wishes beyond any hope to the contrary.

When the departure of this apostolic vanguard approached, the superior gave a rule to be followed on the journey. It consisted of twenty articles drawn from the rules and practices of the Congregation and from the advice Saint Vincent gave to those whom he sent to the foreign missions.<sup>19</sup>

On the night between 21 and 22 October, the first group embarked from Ripa Grande for Marseilles. The members were Fathers Joseph Rosati, John Baptist Acquaroni, members of the Congregation of the Mission, Father Joseph Spezioli,<sup>20</sup> a clerical postulant, Leo Deys, a cleric for Propaganda, postulant brothers Antonio Boboni and Francis Borawanski. They were joined at Civitavecchia by Father Joseph Pereira, a clerical postulant.

Cardinal Litta predicted great things for the mission, as he was a very experienced prefect of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. He said that he was sure of the eventual good outcome of this mission.

Bishop Dubourg insisted from the beginning and often repeated in various ways and on different occasions that he was assuming the total expense of the journey for the missionaries, and that, besides, he had already in hand as much as he needed for their transport. In the presence of the vicar general Father Sicardi, he obliged himself besides to take care of their clothing.

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<sup>19</sup> Since De Andreis was the superior for the first time in his community life, he is the likely author of this document, which, however, is no longer extant.

<sup>20</sup> Spelled Spezioli here.

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

Finally, a plan for the regulation for the establishment of the missionaries in Louisiana was drawn up in Naples. The bishop signed it on 17 November 1815, and it consisted of ten articles. A copy of it or the original signed in this way is with the vicar general.<sup>21</sup>

In a long meeting held with His Eminence Cardinal Litta an agreement was made to tolerate slavery, provided that the slaves be treated with equity, charity and humanity, as Saint Paul also says: *Domini, quod justum est et aequum servis praestate* ["let the masters deal justly and fairly with their slaves"].<sup>22</sup> Yet they should always speak up for emancipation. Concerning the seminary to be established, the cardinal said that the revenues for the support of the bishop of New Orleans should, when gathered, easily furnish its endowment.

At Naples they could not obtain anything from the king, but the cardinal [Aloysio Ruffo Scilla] nevertheless donated 100 ducats, and Father [Fortunato] Masturzi, another eighty, which had been held by Father [Giuseppe Antonio] Defulgure and by me. Besides two chalices, two missals, six or eight large reliquaries, a new cassock made of thin cotton cloth and several other significant items, such as pictures, rosaries, scapulars and other things, were awaited.

On their return from Naples they understood that from the convoy that had gone by sea to Genoa had come the sorry news of the departures, first of Boboni and then of Pereira.<sup>23</sup>

In Rome Father Luigi Giorgi donated a silver chalice and forty scudi. He said that he intended to make this gift to us missionaries.<sup>24</sup> He had already donated a trunk, a beautiful reliquary, and various pictures and devotional items from Father Maestro Alimenti. The following showed that they were eager to come to America: Fathers [Simone] Ugo, [John Baptist] Tornatore, [Filippo] Dalla and the novice brother Agnello Rosati; in Naples, Fathers [Giuseppe] Girardi, [Emanuele] De Ecclesiis, Brother Luisi, Brother [Pasquale] D'Urso and Brother [Agnello] Graziano.

<sup>21</sup> This document bears two dates: 27 September and 17 November. The earlier marks the day when the agreement was reached; the later, the actual day of signing. It is reprinted in Rybolt, *The American Vincentians*, 451-54.

<sup>22</sup> Col 4:1.

<sup>23</sup> From Genoa, Boboni went to San Remo, his native place, to bid goodbye to his family. De Andreis wrote him to stay there. Pereira felt he too should withdraw to care for his aged mother. (Rosati, "Itineraire," 10 October 1815.)

<sup>24</sup> That is, not to the diocese of Louisiana.

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

It was proposed to the vicar general that should we need faculties exceeding those of a visitor, which would not be easy to request again, it might be judged appropriate to concede those given to missionaries going to Goa: the establishment of a council which would hold the faculties of the [superior] general. He responded that he had given all the faculties, which he specifically reconfirmed, to bring to America whoever would wish to come, especially brothers.

It was resolved that the following four would leave by land for Bordeaux: Fathers Marliani, a Roman, Joseph Buzieres, French, Don Casto [Benito Gonzalez], a Spaniard, and De Andreis.

Mister Deys purchased a [book by] Defulgure from Father Thomaso for twenty-five paoli. Several hundred large and small pictures of Our Lady and of Saint Louis were left for the bishop on our return from Naples.<sup>25</sup>

That group left on 15 December from Rome. Francis Xavier Dahmen,<sup>26</sup> a German, joined them. They went to Monterosi where they had to wait for Buzieres to arrive from Viterbo. He came on the next day by private coach, at a cost of twenty-six paoli.

From there we left on the sixteenth and went to spend the night at Otricoli. On the seventeenth we ate at Terni and spent the night at Spoleto. The eighteenth we ate at Foligno and spent the night at Nocera. On the nineteenth we ate at Sigillo and spent the night at Cantiano. On the twentieth we ate and spent the night at Fossombrone. On the twenty-first we ate at Fano and spent the night at Cattolica. On the twenty-second we ate at Savignano and spent the night at Cesena. On the twenty-third we ate at Castel San Pietro. On the twenty-fourth Bologna and we spent the evening at Castelfranco. On the twenty-fifth<sup>27</sup> we stopped. We left after lunch and arrived at Marsaglia. On the twenty-sixth at Parma and we spent the night at Borgo San Donnino. On the twenty-seventh at Piacenza, which we left on the thirtieth.

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<sup>25</sup> This confusing paragraph in De Andreis's hand, and dealing with financial matters, seems to have been placed here because of space left on the page during the composition of this booklet.

<sup>26</sup> Spelled Dhamen here.

<sup>27</sup> Christmas Day.

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

Brother Blanka joined us at Piacenza. On the thirtieth of December we left Piacenza at six and arrived at Stradella. The next day, the thirty-first, we ate at Voghera and spent the evening at Tortona. On January first [1816] at Alessandria and the evening at Asti. On the second we reached Turin in the evening. We left Turin on the third.<sup>28</sup> On the sixth we passed Susa and, fortunately, Mont Cenis. On the seventh at Bramans, the eighth at Saint Michel, the ninth at Aiguebelle, the tenth at Biviers, the eleventh at Tullins, the twelfth at Saint Marcellin. I celebrated mass in the church where our confrere Father Bouchant was the vicar.<sup>29</sup> We spent the evening at Romans. On the thirteenth at Valence and in the evening at Loriol. The fourteenth at Montelimart and Pierrelate, the fifteenth at Bagnols and in the early evening at Pont du Gard.<sup>30</sup> On the sixteenth at Nimes and in the evening at Lunel, on the seventeenth at Montpellier where we stopped and the bishop had us stay at the seminary where we remained until the twentieth. In the morning we reached Pezenas. On the twenty-first in the morning at Béziers, in the evening at Narbonne. On the twenty-second at Moux, the evening at Carcassonne. The twenty-third at Castelnaudary, the evening at Villefranche. The twenty-fourth at Toulouse, the twenty-fifth the same place. The twenty-sixth at Castelsarrasin, the twenty-seventh at Agen. The twenty-eighth at Marmande, the twenty-ninth at Langon and the thirtieth at Bordeaux.

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<sup>28</sup> Letter 8, 4 January, yields the date of departure as the fifth, the more likely one, in view of the business they conducted there, as mentioned below.

<sup>29</sup> Gabriel Bossan.

<sup>30</sup> This reading is conjectural; the original text is unclear, and the early copy omitted it. The two manuscript versions of this portion of the journey differ as to where they spent the night of the fifteenth (see the *Itinerary*). The text of *Important Notices* places Pont du Gard after Bagnols; the text in *Itinerary* places Pont du Gard before Bagnols. Since the group traveled an average of 30 kilometers a day, it is likely that *Important Notices* is the correct version, since this distance easily fits with the route Montelimar-Pierrelatte-Bagnols-Pont du Gard. The mention of Pont du Gard in the *Itinerary* could be a confusion with Pont St. Esprit, which the group traversed between Pierrelatte and Bagnols.

*Historical Writings: Important Notices***[Section Two:****Assistance received on the road]**

At Piacenza support for two and a half days, some few provisions for the road, and more than ten écus in cash. At Turin Father Craveri paid all the expense of lodging, about fifteen écus. No mass.<sup>31</sup>

At Montpellier we were lodged for three days at the seminary and when we left the superior gave us 25 francs. At Béziers the pastor gave us 27 francs for 27 masses, 13 for Father Marliani and 14 for me.<sup>32</sup> I began the twenty-first of January at the Hospital of the Incurables of Saint Louis. At Castelnaudary we dined at the house of the Sisters of Charity. One of them, Magdelaine Seguin, is a pharmacist and she offered herself for Louisiana. They are not Sisters of Saint Vincent; they are called [Sisters of Charity] of Nevers.<sup>33</sup>

At Toulouse I received 150 francs from the superior of the major seminary for 150 masses that we are to celebrate, at least one every day. At La Reole we dined at the home of the pastor.

**Extraordinary expenses**

A gradual<sup>34</sup> at Turin, 3 francs.

Two crucifixes, one for Father Marliani, the other for Mr. Casto, 7 lire and 9 sous.

A hat cover for Father Marliani at Turin, 15 sous.

A pair of gloves for Mr. Casto at Turin, 30 sous.

At Valence, 5 francs for Father Buzieres for his travel to Clermont.

For shoe repair and other small expenses, 5 francs to Mister Deys. Other shoes and tobacco, etc., 3 francs.

To the brother for Father Marliani's cassock, and to buy iron, 60 francs. Another 61 francs given to the brother for the expenses incurred on 25 February.

<sup>31</sup> The missionaries had stayed in public lodgings and were unable to say mass because the Vincentian house was not yet opened.

<sup>32</sup> At this point, the writer begins the account in French.

<sup>33</sup> Perhaps a mistaken identification, since no sister by this name belonged to the Sisters of Charity of Nevers.

<sup>34</sup> A service book with liturgical music.

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

To Father Marliani for a book, 2 francs. For three vestments and an antependium, 6 napoleons each. For laundry, about 6 francs.

The expenses incurred by the brother are recorded separately.

Also, all Father Acquaroni's expenses are registered in order.

For an Italian and French dictionary, 16 francs and 10 sous. New shoes and soles, 10 francs.

To the brother on 14 March, 4 louis d'or.

On 16 March I gave the procurator 89 silver écus for the house. I mean 89 Roman écus.

For 350 masses, Bishop Dubourg gave us from Lyons 1000 écus (that is 1000 francs) to have the baggage sent.

The bishop arrived at Bordeaux on 22 May 1816. He accepted Brother Medard [Delatre] and let go Fathers Marliani, Spezioli and Buzieres.

Father [Joseph] Boyer, the first vicar general of Bordeaux, presented us with the Holy Bible of Vence in seventeen volumes in quarto or octavo.<sup>35</sup>

Father Bornac [Bournac], honorary canon and chaplain of the [Hospital of the] Incurables, gave us an English dictionary, several books and other items.

From Rome to Piacenza, 150 écus for the private coachman and daily expenses.

One single coachman, 150. From Piacenza to Turin, 45 to the coachmen.

37 1/2 écus ut s[upr]a ["as above"] from Turin to Montpellier.

For the coachmen, 28 louis d'or.

At Aiguebelle, 9 January, I gave him 5 louis.

At Romans another 6 louis, 12 January, and then 9 at Lunel totaling 20 louis d'or.

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<sup>35</sup> *Sainte Bible en latin et en françois, avec des notes . . . du commentaire de . . . Calmet, de M. [Henri François] l'Abbé de Vence, etc.* 1st ed., 17 vols. (Paris, 1748-50); 2nd ed., 17 vols. (Paris [and elsewhere], 1767-73). This was commonly called "Sainte Bible de Vence."

*Historical Writings: Important Notices***[Section Three: Bordeaux to Baltimore]**

We arranged for the same coachman from Montpellier to Bordeaux for 25 louis. At Bordeaux, I gave the coachman, Jean Lognier, 59 louis for all the expenses of the journey, which included the private coach, a broken window and some other expenses for portage etc. That is, I completed that payment. From the rest of the letter of exchange taken at Turin for 300 Roman écus, I have 6 louis d'or, at present, on 2 March. I have given the brother 46 francs.<sup>36</sup>



Period corner tavern. Baltimore.  
*Courtesy of the author*

On 12 March 1816, the archbishop of Bordeaux, Charles d'Aviau du Bois de Sanzai orally gave me the power to hear confession for all reserved cases, even those reserved with excommunication. He appointed me chaplain in the prisons of the Chateau du Ha<sup>37</sup> where I preached and said mass on all the feast days and where I heard

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<sup>36</sup> This reference to 2 March 1816 dates the passage.

<sup>37</sup> The Fort du Hâ, now demolished, was located just a few steps away from the cathedral.

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

confessions for four and a half months. Fathers Marliani, Spezioli and Buzieres stayed in Europe but we added the priests, Fathers Caretti and Ferrari, the cleric Tichitoli, and Brothers Medard Delatre from Amiens, thirty-eight years old, and John Flegifont from Limoges, thirty-five years old. They were received [as postulants] and should have commenced their seminary [novitiate] on 9 June 1816, but it was believed better to defer this.

On 12 June we left Bordeaux on a sloop. We ate dinner at Bec d'Ambese and on the same sloop on the Garonne and the Gironde, we arrived at 1:00 A.M. at Poliac [Pauillac] and boarded the American brig "Ranger" where the thirteen of us slept: Fathers Rosati, Acquaroni, Caretti, Ferrari and De Andreis, the clerical brothers Tichitoli, Deys, Gonzalez and Dahmen, and the lay brothers [Martin] Blanka, Francis [Borawanski], Medard [Delatre] and John [Flegifont] with another traveler, a young man from Baltimore.<sup>38</sup>

The next day [13], Corpus Christi, six of us came on the sloop to Poliac [Pauillac] to celebrate there. Two of us<sup>39</sup> celebrated mass, the others received communion. When we returned to the brig we set sail at eight and arrived in the evening off Royan.

On the fourteenth we all celebrated mass on the brig and at about eight o'clock we entered the ocean amid very favorable weather, but because of the extraordinary movement we immediately fell sick. On the fifteenth, because of sickness, no one was able to celebrate mass. We celebrated two masses on the sixteenth,<sup>40</sup> a Sunday, and the weather was wonderful. Before leaving Bordeaux the bishop [Dubourg] had given us a brief discourse, exhorting us to have confidence in God and fraternal unity, and he gave us all the information we needed for Baltimore. He named as his vicar general the superior [De Andreis], and gave the faculties for this to Father Rosati as well, during his [De Andreis's] absence.

A vow made on the sea on 18 July, being 300 miles from Baltimore and afflicted by the contrary winds, at first vespers of the feast of Saint Vincent de Paul.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Rosati identifies him as a Mr. Norris, a Quaker.

<sup>39</sup> De Andreis and one other.

<sup>40</sup> De Andreis preached. See Letter 18, 14 August 1816.

<sup>41</sup> The ship was unable to make headway, and supplies were running low. The passengers feared starvation more than death in a hurricane.



*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

We, the undersigned missionaries of Louisiana, amid the perils which surround us, being firmly convinced of the influence and special favor which thou, O glorious and illustrious hero of Christian Charity, St. Vincent of Paul, dost enjoy, before the throne of the Divine Majesty; on this day, dedicated by the Church to the celebration of thy feast and glorious triumph; prostrate at thy feet, implore thee by the zeal which inflamed thy heart for the glory of God, the salvation of souls, and the welfare of those who consecrate their lives to promote these ends, to deign to accept the vow we joyfully offer thee, and by which we bind ourselves to celebrate, in the best possible manner, the day of thy happy death, on the 27th of September, 1816, to prepare for it by a novena, and a fast on the eve; in the hope that thou wilt obtain for us a favorable wind, and a happy outcome of our voyage; together with an increase of that apostolic spirit, which was so conspicuous in the whole course of thy holy life. Amen.<sup>42</sup>

Each one then signed his name. We celebrated the feast with the greatest possible solemnity.

On the day of the octave, 26 July, we set foot on land on the American continent at Baltimore in the state of Maryland in the United States.<sup>43</sup> We went immediately to the Sulpician seminary<sup>44</sup> where we received the most charitable welcome in the world. An Irish merchant,

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<sup>42</sup> This text is repeated in Letter 19, 26 August 1816, and in the *Itinerary*. It preserves the flavor of the nineteenth century translation published in the first English *Life of De Andreis*, Saint Louis, 1861, 86. It has been corrected against the original version in the notebook.

<sup>43</sup> Rosati noted the distance of 4,280 miles for their journey from Bordeaux. (Rosati, "Itineraire," 26 July 1816.)

<sup>44</sup> Saint Mary's Seminary.

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

Mr. [Luke] Tiernan, took care of our baggage at the customs, had them moved along, and they were, fortunately, released when we paid 200 dollars.<sup>45</sup> Today, 8 August, with great consolation we heard of the conversion of three heretical ministers in New York.<sup>46</sup>

Brother Flegifont left us since he was sick. Father [Simon] Bruté gave us 100 dollars on two occasions.

**[Section Four:**

**Information about the United States,  
about religion and the missions]<sup>47</sup>**

The United States, with Louisiana, which now forms a part of it, extends between the twenty-eighth and fiftieth degree of latitude and has more than fifty degrees of longitude. It is more than 700 leagues<sup>48</sup> long and 500 wide, measured at their greatest distances, and contains about 2 million square miles, or more than 222,000 square leagues. By

<sup>45</sup> Rosati glossed over the problem in his "Recollections," II:38, but was more explicit in his "Life of De Andreis," *Summarium*, 265. Charles Nerinckx also referred to their mistake of not presenting a bill of lading with detailed prices and descriptions of the items imported. (C.P. Maes, *The Life of Reverend Charles Nerinckx* (Cincinnati, 1880), 351.)

<sup>46</sup> This reference to 8 August 1816 dates this passage. One of these ministers was Virgil Horace Barber, 1782-1847, an Episcopalian, later a Jesuit. His wife became a Visitation nun in Georgetown, and all of their children entered religious life. ("Barber," *New Catholic Encyclopedia*.) The identity of the others is not clear. They may have been George Edmund Ironside (d. c. 1827), probably a layman, and later an active author of works about the classics; another called variously Dr. Keeley or George Kewley; perhaps John Richards, and Keating Lawson. ("New York," *Catholic Encyclopedia*, XI, 23b.) De Andreis summarizes the event in Letter 20.

<sup>47</sup> The following generic material is not in De Andreis's hand. Because it betrays long familiarity with American missionary life, its author was possibly a Sulpician (Bruté?) or another missionary, even Dubourg himself. That the author was French can be deduced by references to "our France," and "our Bossuet." De Andreis probably intended this material as information for him to pass along to his students. The date of 1815 for its composition suggests that it was copied in Baltimore, from another document dated 1815, and inserted here by a member of the group. Its numerous exhortations show that it was intended for prospective missionaries.

<sup>48</sup> One league equals nine miles in this section of the document, although the standard measure is much smaller.

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

contrast, France, taken in its former borders, has only 180,000 miles, or 20,000 square leagues.

China, which some say has 150 and others more than 300 million inhabitants, has about one-third less surface. It is as large as four-fifths of Europe.

Britain has 1609 square leagues and 2,290,000 inhabitants.

Ohio has 4350 square leagues and 227,000 inhabitants. It could have 6 million, and is one twenty-fourth of Europe. The Mississippi Territory has 10,000 square leagues and 40,000 inhabitants. It could have 14 million, one twenty-seventh of Europe. Pennsylvania has 5200 square leagues and 810,000 inhabitants. It could have 7 million. Maryland has 1600 square leagues and 380,000 inhabitants. It could have 2 million, one-fifth the size of Europe. Virginia has 8000 square leagues and 974,000 inhabitants. It could have 10 million. Kentucky is a province of 5500 square leagues, that is to say three times larger than Britain, which has only 1609. The first family was established there in 1775. Fifteen years later, in 1790, it already had 73,677 persons, and in 1810, 406,511.

Now if Britain has 2,200,000 inhabitants, the result in the table of population of these five departments<sup>49</sup> is that Kentucky (even supposing that it does not have the best soil, nor the more favorable circumstances of population than Britain) could have 6 million and if it follows the same growth in population as it does now, this would happen before the middle of this century.

#### Description of the current state of 2 July 1815<sup>50</sup>

A weak Catholic mission has continuously existed in the English colonies in North America since their origin. It was supported by the zeal and perseverance of the Jesuits, established in Maryland, from where they helped certain parts of the neighboring provinces. All the

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<sup>49</sup> That is, states. This is one of several indications that the author was French, since "département" is a rough French equivalent of "state."

<sup>50</sup> The date 1815 may be an error for 1816. If not, this material was probably copied from another memorandum written by a French missionary to America. A reference at the end of the section to the baptism, "last year," 1814, of the children of William Clark, points to 1815. On the other hand, the reference to "Bishop" Dubourg below, ordained 24 September 1815, may point to 1816.

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

laws of the English penal code against Catholics, and particularly those against missionaries, were in effect in these lands, although in general they have been less rigorously enforced in recent times. The Church was supported with difficulty amid the greatest obstacles, but at the revolution of 1775 these provinces formed an independent nation under the name of the United States and they adopted a system of universal tolerance. Religion increased so rapidly that in 1789 the venerable Pius VI deemed it proper to establish a permanent episcopal see at Baltimore for all the United States instead of vicars apostolic. Bishop [John] Carroll was the first bishop. After this period the number of Catholic congregations increased daily in the various states. At the request of the bishop and the clergy of the United States, Pius VII, although in the midst of his bitter problems, undertook the division of this vast diocese. In [8 April] 1808, Baltimore was erected as a metropolitan see and four suffragan dioceses were given to it: Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Bardstown, Kentucky. In addition, there was the administration of the diocese of New Orleans in Louisiana, an area as vast as all the United States together, and which had just been annexed to it. Although vacant at the time, this see depended at the time of its annexation on the archdiocese of Havana.

Bishop Carroll took the title of archbishop of Baltimore and received the pallium. Father [Jean Louis] Cheverus, a French priest, was named bishop of Boston; Father [Benedict Joseph] Flaget, another French priest, a Sulpician, bishop of Bardstown; Father [Michael Francis] Egan, an Irish Franciscan, bishop of Philadelphia, and Father [Richard Luke] Concannon, a Dominican and a close friend of Pius VII, bishop of New York. This latter died in Naples just as he was about to leave for his diocese.<sup>51</sup> The three others were consecrated in Baltimore in the first days of November,<sup>52</sup> 1810, by Bishop Carroll assisted by Bishop [Leonard] Neale, a former Jesuit like himself but American born and previously nominated his coadjutor under the title of bishop of Gortyna. All these bishops, as well as the archbishop, had been missionaries. Their promotion was regarded less as a reward for their apostolic virtues than as a benefit for the flocks confided to

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<sup>51</sup> Concannon had been detained by the French military authorities in Naples as a British subject. He remained there from 1808-1810.

<sup>52</sup> Actually, 28 October.

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

their zeal. Their promotions merely opened a way for the bishops to work harder.

Bishop Egan died in 1812.<sup>53</sup> His see is still vacant.<sup>54</sup> That of New York was filled in September 1814.<sup>55</sup> When our Holy Father, Pius VII, returned to Rome and was free to exercise anew his care for all the churches of the world, among the numerous nominations that he made, he gave to the diocese of New York Father [John] Connelly, an Irish Dominican, consecrated in Rome.

As for New Orleans, Bishop Dubourg from Bordeaux, the president of the College of Saint Mary at Baltimore and a Sulpician priest was named its bishop by the archbishop administrator [John Carroll], while waiting for His Holiness to make arrangements also for the diocese of Philadelphia.

The clergy of the United States are composed of a certain number of priests born in the country and educated before the American revolution in the seminaries of the Low Countries or France. Afterwards they were educated in those now existing in the United States. They were also composed of a larger number of priests who came from Europe, that is from France and Ireland, the great majority; from Belgium and Germany, from Italy and even from Russia, that is to say Prince [Demetrius] Gallitzin for the long time at the head of a very flourishing parish in [Loretto,] Pennsylvania.

These priests belong for the most part to various societies or congregations. First, the Jesuits, who had first planted the faith in these lands, have for a long time been left alone or nearly alone. There are about twenty of them. The greatest number are employed in the ministry in various states. The others remain in Georgetown, a little town separated from the capitol, Washington, by only a bridge. Their college there is very flourishing and has more than eighty boarders. It has magnificent buildings, and is under the guidance of Father [John]

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<sup>53</sup> Actually, 22 July 1814.

<sup>54</sup> He was succeeded by Henry Conwell, 26 November 1819.

<sup>55</sup> Actually, 4 October 1814.

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

Grassi, who came from Russia three years ago and is the current superior of the Jesuits in the United States.<sup>56</sup> They also have a novitiate at White Marsh where there are some twenty subjects, its superior is Father [Anthony] Kohlmann the younger, called from New York for this purpose last January.

The Dominicans have a house in Kentucky where there are several priests and novices. The Augustinians have a beautiful church and a house in Philadelphia, but there are only two of them.

At Baltimore the Sulpicians have a seminary, the archbishop's seminary. To this seminary, which has not been large up to now, is joined the college of Saint Mary which they run. The buildings are considerable and the chapel is a beautiful edifice in Gothic style with a basement and vaulted underground chapel. The college has had up to 130 boarders but it declined greatly during the war [of 1812]. Another seminary and college was established 1809 at Mount Saint Mary's at the foot of the Alleghenies, 18 leagues from Baltimore in the same state of Maryland. It has some eighty students of whom twenty or so are destined for the ecclesiastical state. Bishop Flaget has succeeded at Saint Thomas near his episcopal see of Bardstown in Kentucky to recruit a dozen or so ecclesiastical students, and Father David, like him a Sulpician, directs this young seminary.

There are also six Trappists in New York. They are what remains of a larger number whom their superior general brought back with him to France last year. Some other societies have a few dispersed members.

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<sup>56</sup> Since the Society of Jesus had legal existence for a time only in Russia and Prussia, John Anthony Grassi had been there on official business. His "The Catholic Religion in the United States in 1818" appears in *American Catholic Historical Researches* 8 (July 1981): 98-111; reprinted from *Woodstock Letters* 11 (1882): 236-44. He wrote of the Vincentians (pages 103-04):

Some Lazarists from Italy have lately reached the Western territory of the United States, and they are only waiting the arrival of the Bishop from [of] New Orleans to fix upon a place for their establishment. The zeal and activity of the Rev. Mr. Andreis, who is the Superior of these missionaries, excited expectations of great works for the glory of God: he has already written that God has deigned to crown his labors amongst the Indians with signal success.

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

even produced among the most enlightened persons a degree of favor and a marked preference for the true Church. They respect its ministers more even than those of the sects and they have no problem at all in agreeing that it is quite bad that imprudent or evil reformers have thus divided Christians among themselves and rent the bosom of mother Church. Many Protestants are true deists, without faith or any other practice than those that their becoming name and their particular sect impose on them for Sundays, and on a small number of other occasions. They resemble bad European Catholics, and it is very hard to free them from their deism. But those sincerely attached to Our Lord and to His Gospel, although in error, seriously lend themselves to the examination proposed to them, and they often overcome all their difficulties to be openly united to the true Church. If a number of missionaries permitted them to consecrate a part of their time to them—the number being far from sufficing for Catholics themselves—they would be united to the Church in quite large numbers. This cannot be done now, although there is already great consolation in this matter.

**Extent and population of the United States**

One cannot give a better idea of the extent of the field open in the United States to the zeal of priests zealous for the glory of their divine master and for the salvation of souls, than by looking at some of the data which geography and official statistics furnish in this regard, especially relative to the current state and the very rapid progress throughout the country.

The United States extends from north to south as far as Paris to Cairo, and from east to west as from Lisbon to Astrakhan, if one includes Louisiana, or only from Paris to Saint Petersburg if one takes only the United States. In comparing them with our France, the United States can be represented in a general way by the figures below which represent it as ten times larger than France, including Louisiana, or five times larger taking only the United States properly so called.

United States	8,000,000 inhabitants
Louisiana	100,000 inhabitants
France	28,000,000 inhabitants

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

Currently, the United States comprises about one million square miles and Louisiana, which has been annexed to it, just as many. That makes two million square miles, while France taken in its proper boundaries by the medium calculations, comprises only 190,000 square miles, that is to say, less than one tenth. On the other hand, the United States contains only about eight million inhabitants, while France has 28 million, but it is ten times less extensive, and this means that it is, therefore, really inhabited more than forty times the United States. Or if one takes only the United States without Louisiana, currently nothing more than an enormous wild country with some 100,000 colonists dispersed, France is twenty times more populated than the United States.

But the population is increasing at a truly astounding rate, especially since the revolution that made these territories independent. One can have an idea of this only by displaying the tables of its progress and for those we go to the public newspapers. We see from these tables that all the states are growing in population but at very different rates. Some of them are quite small or medium-sized like Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts and even Virginia, the oldest states. Several others are much more like New York, which has tripled in twenty years. Kentucky has quadrupled in the same time. Ohio has grown six times in ten years. Some are only just beginning, and have a territory more extensive than the most populated states such as New York, Pennsylvania and Virginia. They have only 40,000 inhabitants, like Mississippi or 14,000 like Illinois. But if one considers their progress in ten years, one sees that they have grown five times during that period.

If we examine the proportion of the population in the territory, we see that it offers another curious aspect of what one can, except for local data, calculate for the future. All the territory of the United States can generally be well populated, from Maine in the north, to Mississippi in the south. The rest of the immense proportions of territory, where one cannot yet have any exact account of the population, is left still blank on the tables.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> That is, on printed population tables.



*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

From Kentucky and Ohio to the Lake of the Woods between the other lakes and the Mississippi, a territory larger than France has only a population of 30,000 to 40,000 souls. Therefore, what could these areas become one day? What could they become in a half-century or century? And if religion is dear to us, what vows should we not make that the Lord prepare the ways for it by assuring its benefits at the same time as those [other benefits] which are doubtlessly inferior, although interesting themselves, namely civilization and education.

The United States with Louisiana has its natural frontier at the mountains, where the Missouri with its tributaries and the Mississippi have their source, but they intend to move its borders westward all the way to the Pacific Ocean, which is very near the mountains, and where the beautiful Columbia river should take them. They ought to form one day a new Europe. Without doubt it is not presumptuous that they then be one single republic or association of republics as at present. Perhaps before that time they will have undergone the political changes more or less like those that Providence has bestowed on the ancient nations and those we call modern nations, and which for America are the truly ancient nations. But whatever the chances are, the existence, promises and graces of religion and the Church of Jesus Christ should extend everywhere for all time until the consummation of the ages. They will be accommodated with that sovereign liberty, that essential and characteristic independence, which has marked their progress in the midst of the nations whose customs, interests and social institutions seemed more different. May true Christians and great souls made for thinking, so to say, with Jesus Christ himself and the apostles (*Hoc sentite in vobis quod et in Christo Jesu* ["have that same mind in you which is also in Christ Jesus"]<sup>62</sup>) carry to these vast regions the intention of solicitude and hopes, of outpourings of love, prayers, true prayers and may they make by them on that occasion the efforts which Providence will be able to grant to their zeal.

Towns are forming and multiplying, and they grow in those regions at the same rate as the states themselves. Nothing is more common than hearing people in the little towns of 200 or 300 houses

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<sup>62</sup> Phil 2:5.

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

say that fifteen, twenty or twenty-five years ago this house was here and it was the first to be built. Many of these towns soon stop growing at a size that they will never be able to surpass. Others slow down at least somewhat. Others continue to grow at an astonishing pace. Take for example a glance at the four towns below:

Boston in 1790	[blank]
Philadelphia	[blank]
New York	[blank]
Baltimore	[blank] <sup>63</sup>

In the towns and in the states Catholics progress like others. How happy they would be if their clergy grew at least as rapidly. Baltimore has four churches and ten or so priests for 7000 to 8000 Catholics or more. Philadelphia has four or five priests for 15,000 to 18,000 Catholics. New York has as many Catholics, but has only three priests and two churches. Boston, two priests and one church. How a religious and charitable heart ought to groan at seeing in these few examples given here the large difference between the needs and the resources.

*Support of the clergy*

The Catholic clergy, as well as those of the sects left to themselves, support themselves and divine worship by either their own resources or contributions of various sorts.

(1) The clergy have their own funds, or rather certain groups or individuals have property. People cannot acquire property until they are naturalized. A group can acquire property under the name of one of its members charged with passing it on by his will to a successor who is also naturalized. Thus it is that, up to the American revolution, the Jesuits kept the lands that they had acquired when they came with Lord Baltimore to found the Maryland colony in 1632. Or this group may incorporate, that is to say, can be recognized as a legal and authorized association. Those of its members who are naturalized own property as a body, under conditions of transmission, acquisition or alienation, and recognition either by Congress for the entire republic,

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<sup>63</sup> These spaces for figures were left blank in the original.

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

or by the particular legislature of a state within its own territories. A parish can acquire and own the same in the name of its trustees. The lands acquired for this purpose can acquire a great value, and this is the most solid means of existence that the clergy can manage. But management problems only interfere with the zeal of a good priest.

(2) Individual clergymen or a society can undertake instruction and out of their proper benefice they can support themselves and the young people whom they prepare to share with them the works of the holy ministry. This is one of the most honorable and useful means for becoming independent of the people, even those whom they serve. It is one of those means that gains the most respect and interest; in certain ways it best favors the success of the mission. But this method is more or less precarious according to times and persons, and often depends on the caprice of relatives, and on fashion, on the talents of teachers, etc., and although religious instruction of Catholic children is part of their work and is a great good, it also harms other purposes of the mission.

(3) The manner in which the faithful support the missionary who should rely on them is to make a sufficient subscription for his support, for a servant, a horse and the support of a chapel. The subscription is paid partly in money, partly in gifts, rental income, etc. One can, however, generally reproach Americans for not being very generous in subscribing or very exact in fulfilling their obligations. The priest uses one of the trustees to gather the subscription, or where the collection itself is very disagreeable, he does it himself. In one or other case, he is almost everywhere obliged each year to recall the people to their religious obligations and their natural honesty in this regard. There is a way of doing this with dignity, authority and delicacy. There is [also] a way of being compromised in this.

(4) There are occasional mass intentions, only a few in certain areas, but more in others. This occasional income is regulated by the bishops for those normal times which are the ordinary procedure among Catholics.<sup>64</sup>

(5) The places in church are rented. These are the pews rented in proportion to their location near the altar and the pulpit. The pews

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<sup>64</sup> That is, the bishops regulated stipends for baptisms, weddings, etc.

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

contribute to good order, and their rental has remained generally in the hands of the trustees. One part is set aside with the collection during the liturgy either for the support of the building and for divine worship, or for the poor, etc. This revenue is quite considerable in certain churches in the towns, enough to provide the income for the majority of the expenses, and one of the main objects of the responsibility of the trustees.

(6) Also one must take into account the zeal of the Catholics in Europe, who at least for vestments, books, travel expenses etc., cannot show too much zeal in a cause as beautiful as that of the missions. Neither can they encourage themselves enough to follow the glorious examples of their parents, particularly as regards this North America, of which the French have already acquired both Canada and Louisiana for religion and the Church.

One can see from these few observations that the situation of the missionaries and the resources which they have to do good in all that concerns temporal matters depends too much on the initial funds brought over and on their use if they have any. They also depend on the societies or individuals through whom one can be related to the people and especially to the trustees with whom the missionary is obliged to deal. There are as many religious and tactful trustees to render services to religion and its ministers as there are bothersome and troublesome men to harm them.

**Missionaries**

A missionary arriving from Europe must learn the language. He can always suppose that he is succeeding in some small way in becoming useful, but the degree of application and of success has to rely greatly on the services that he will render to a people particularly eager for instruction and ready to hear good sermons. Simple manners, a sincere piety and solid instructions captivate their attention and attract others. The American people are in general respectful listeners, have good sense and are ready to render justice and to allow for imperfections in those whom they hear.

A missionary has to be prepared to change several points in his European way of living: his dress, food, lodging, use of time, etc. A zealous man does not worry at all about this. It is sufficient for him to

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

realize that all the confreres who have preceded him are well cared for in the changes that he has to undergo.

Provisions for journeys can be found on his own land. When he does not stay in town at all, and even if he does stay there, he always has to be ready to travel, generally on horseback. In fact, scarcely a day goes by without being on horseback, and a missionary acquires great facility and ease and even appreciation for this exercise.

What a missionary should desire above all is to be able to know in advance the kind of people for whom he will have to act. But among such a mixed population it would be very difficult to recount all the chances of social communication for the ministry. There are all sorts of nuances. A man of God, an apostolic man, prepares himself to become all things to all in order to gain all. For the rest, one generally sees a reasonable, meek, sustained way of living, devoted to duty and disinterested succeeding everywhere. One can repeat here that despite the depravity present in several places, there is much good sense and good will in most people. This prepares the ways favorably for every prudent and well disposed [missionary].

One can sometimes encounter prejudices to be overcome at first, but by applying oneself with goodness, perseverance and skill he eventually succeeds and so becomes more respected and useful. For the rest, who could, who ought to count on a ministry exempt from contradictions and even from more or less sensible afflictions?

It is a matter of giving oneself first to God and not of going here or there on this earth except where his love and service lead, and of doing whatever God's will is.

One further observation. This is that circumstances often involve obstacles difficult to overcome regarding the degree of pomp or simply of greater decency than one would want to bring to the various parts of the divine service. Happy are we if we begin in several places with very few of these exterior consolations which are so sweet to a good priest. We can expect that our successors will one day reap more agreeable fruits from our first troubles. For the rest, a zealous priest will soon find the means to provide for himself and for his people a good chapel where the divine service is celebrated quite well.

Oh, great is the consolation of missionaries, of founders and the first workers of these infant churches. What should suffice for them is their unity in all things for their divine master, and their sense of his

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

presence and of attention to him in all things; their heart-to-heart communications with him in prayer and even more intimate and completely ineffable communications at the holy altar; their custom of deepening several of the words that they read by repeating them very often in their liturgy and their readings, for example, to enjoy the gospel of John, read every day at the end of mass, and so fitting for missionaries in danger of producing little fruit. The words of the Our Father *adveniat regnum tuum!* ["thy kingdom come"], the words of the creed *propter nos homines descendit de coelo, incarnatus est, crucifixus, passus, sepultus, cujus regni non erit finis* ["for us he came down from heaven, became man, was crucified, suffered, buried, his kingdom will have no end"]; of the Benedictus, *tu puer propheta altissimi vocaberis; parare vias ejus ad dandam scientiam salutis* ["you, child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; you will prepare his ways to give knowledge of salvation"];<sup>65</sup> *Illuminare* ["Illumine"], etc. A thousand other like phrases. The *Veni sancte spiritus et emitte caelitus* ["Come Holy Spirit, and send forth from heaven"],<sup>66</sup> etc.



George Caleb Bingham's *Boatmen on the Missouri*. 1846.  
Collection of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco

<sup>65</sup> Luke 1:76-77.

<sup>66</sup> The sequence (hymn) for the mass of Pentecost.

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

A missionary ought to redeem the time, and the best means of all is the habit of recollecting himself, for example, on trips, in the country, etc. This habit doubles the strength of the soul and the results of a very transient life, one so full of distractions as ours is.

Without doubt, in our France, where in the majority of provinces the population is Catholic, there is need for a much greater number of priests than in the United States. But also this comparatively great overabundance, if we realize that outside the towns the dispersal of families renders the ministry otherwise quite difficult, and the distance between places where the priests are found stationed, makes it almost impossible for neighbors to assist and to substitute for each other. The result is that the majority of Catholics are absolutely deprived of every assistance, especially at their death.

If we ask what causes this very admirable growth of population, this is not our topic to examine. We point to emigration from Europe as one of them, and many French families have come to be established in the United States since the revolution. A greater number of families came from Germany, an even greater number still from Ireland. But one should notice already the emigration from the older states to the newer ones, from the shores of the Atlantic to the west. Families prospering in the old states are increasing their departures for the new states where they continually pour in, even though those states are already populated, or the means for establishment are even more abundant in the new areas where they go.

### Protestantism

The constitution of the United States and those of individual states permit no national religion and pay no salary to any clergy. In fact the Protestants form the great majority of the population and in several states they are almost the entire mass. Only in Louisiana are Catholics themselves the large majority. Although Catholics in Maryland are as numerous as any one of the sects found there, Protestants dominate in number. They are generally richer but they have not been able to fill the greater number of public offices. Catholics, however, are admitted there without any distinction and the laws do not offer a pretext for any trouble relative to the religion that one professes. There are Catholics in the Congress and in the legislatures of the various states, among the generals, etc.

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

Protestants are distinguished by that name from Catholics, as well as by their common principle of the arbitrary interpretation of scripture, without acknowledging any authority established by Our Lord to direct them in this interpretation. They differ among themselves in every imaginable nuance, whether considered in general as divided into different nominal sects or even considering each of the sects in particular. They often differ more among themselves than they do from Catholics. The details of opinions about clothing and of practices of each sect, of the name of the character and the classes of



Period log-built church. Located along the route through Pennsylvania.

*Courtesy of the author*



*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

their followers, of their ministers and of their places of assembly, would make a large book. The following short notices should suffice here.

The Episcopalians of the Anglican Church, the national church before the revolution, had agreed to receive their ministers from England. Separated from their mother church after the revolution, they had to keep their clergy independent of the English bishops, who have consecrated only their first bishops. The articles of faith and the liturgy have already undergone notable changes. This sect has lost much since the revolution, especially among the people. It is one of those whose members tend the most to indifferentism, although their clergy are supported still, as far as one can determine, like those of England. They share their pretensions for apostolicity, share in their biblical enterprises, and defend themselves as well as they can by a conduct full of superiority and of dignity against the zeal of Methodist ministers who take many people away from them.

The Presbyterians and the Congregationalists have gained rather than lost since the revolution. Their more republican spirit renders this sect more popular. Their ministers are even more opposed to the Episcopal Church than to the Catholic Church, above all, in the eastern states. The ministers principally tend to Socinianism, or they profess it openly. Like their predecessors they strongly neglect baptism and the Lord's supper. This is probably the most widespread sect.

The Methodists, a sect dating from only the middle of the last century, is a composite of the two first churches and still attaches itself to the members of the following ones. This is a popular sect for the people and for the blacks. Like the Episcopalians they have bishops. The first one of them was ordained by Wesley, a simple minister at the time of his final decision to break completely with the Church of England. Their meetings are noisy and their preaching is animated and often attended by cries of joy or gasps from their hearers. They still go to hold their assemblies in the country. They camp under a tent for three or four days, fewer, however, now than at the time of their first fervor.

The Baptists, or Anabaptists, appear to follow in number the preceding sects. They get this identity from their parents, but among the people they mix easily with Methodists and Presbyterians. Though still baptizing by immersion, they hardly baptize at all. Among all the Protestants negligence of this sacrament has remained enshrined

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

among the majority of the former sects. By it they would bring even more children to the true church, which is still the largest.<sup>67</sup> This deplorable situation is very astonishing on the part of the people who pride themselves so much on being attached in all things to the holy scripture, which is so evident and so clear in twenty places concerning this sacrament.

The Quakers still exist in great numbers in Pennsylvania and in certain commercial towns. They are no longer those tremblers of the past nor those zealous people who are coldly and modestly fanatics, whose stories one has read. They are people who are still regular and attached systematically to their practices and special observances, which are half religious and half civil. Without sacraments or liturgy, or practically any ministry, they have nothing Christian about them except for the name and seem just like a sect of religious freemasonry. A good Quaker is a moderate person, tidy, with a modest and pleasant life quite devoted to his business, even sharp and taking advantage however he can. They dispute [about religion] only rarely, they heartily reject all the other sects, and do not mix at all as their ancestors did in catechizing or converting others. A Quaker is still a kind of wise man in the eyes of a philosopher, but a very sad Christian in the eyes of one who believes sincerely in Jesus Christ, his gospel and his divine institutions.

The Lutherans exist in a large number among German emigrants or their descendants, but Luther is hardly recognized among them, so far are they from him on every matter.

The Moravian Brethren are found also principally among the Germans, but they are not a numerous sect. Though hard working and thrifty, they are very ignorant.

Protestants from France, Switzerland, Holland and from part of Germany are the former Calvinists, but they have only a few churches in certain towns, and they generally join their neighbors of all the sects.

The Swedenborgians, or the people of the New Jerusalem, the Mennonites, the Scuders, the Shakers, the Dunkers, the Sandemanians, the Universalists, the Priestlians, the Covenanters, etc., etc., are the least numerous sects. One could easily enlarge the list of the sects by

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<sup>67</sup> The author means that those baptized become by that fact, members of the Catholic Church, whether they realize it or not.

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

the names of several other formally separated schisms or by markedly detailed nuances that subdivide those main sects that we have already decided to mention.

As to the Jews, they are everywhere in the commercial towns. There are several synagogues.

Again, one would need a book to give the detail of each sect in a way to come to know them well. It would be very interesting to study this. Methodists in particular offer in their organization some things less known than what one sees in the first sects of Protestantism. Ecclesiastical history has known them for a long time, although to know their current state well would entail making a new study about the places where one has to observe and deal with them.

I do not fear at all advancing the opinion that all the enlightened members of these numerous sects, and especially their ministers, experience the radical vice of their position, the nullity of faith, of ministry and of any divine institution. When they still dispute about points of detail and bring up secondary grievances, they experience the immense superiority of the Catholic Church and they recognize the rights of the mother church. Therefore, why do they not reunite? There would be many reasons to deduce from it, of which the least good would try to be surrounded and covered with the pleasant mantle of indifference that at bottom is the least philosophical and the least Christian reason. There would be need for an even greater number of missionaries who would at the same time be instructed, zealous and moderate to operate or to speed greatly the ruin of all this assembly of sects whose incoherence and vanity our great Bossuet<sup>68</sup> pointed to so well from the beginning.

Protestants frequent Catholic churches in great number, often even in preference in some way to their own. When they marry Catholics they have no difficulty in presenting themselves to Catholic priests, who always reserve to themselves the celebration of marriages, nor in consenting to the principal condition that is always demanded, that all the children be raised Catholic. Quite often in the missions they themselves offer their children to be baptized with the promise that they will be Catholics. So it is that Bishop Flaget last year baptized, at

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<sup>68</sup> Jacques Benigne Bossuet, *Histoire des variations des églises protestantes*, 1st ed. (Paris, 1688), and often edited, reprinted and translated.

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

the insistence of their father, five children of the governor of Upper Louisiana, Mr. [William] Clark,<sup>69</sup> with other children of the nephew of General Wilkinson, etc.<sup>70</sup> By order of the president and the Congress he was responsible with [Meriwether] Lewis for traveling to the sources of the Missouri river and to the mouth of the Columbia river on the Pacific Ocean.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Actually three. The baptismal records of the (Old) Cathedral list the following as baptized by Benoit Joseph [Flaget], bishop of Bardstown on 8 August 1814: Meriwether Lewis Clark, William Paston Clark and Marie Marguerite Clark. These were children of William Clark, "Governor of the Missouri Territory" (1813-1820), and his first wife Julia (Judith) Hancock. The bishop also listed himself as the godfather for the three children, aged 5, 3 and 1. Julia Clark, who died 27 June 1820, had two other children, George Rogers Hancock Clark and John Julius Clark. Of their five children, only Meriwether Lewis and George Rogers survived their parents.

<sup>70</sup> The only other baptism recorded on that day was of Julie Clark Kampbelle, daughter of Jean Kampbelle and the late Marie Nicholas, perhaps a relative of the general.

<sup>71</sup> The next paragraph resumes De Andreis's account in his own hand.

*Historical Writings: Important Notices***UNITED MAIL STAGES.**

Mail logo, with detail of carriage. Etching in newspaper, 1820s.  
*Copy courtesy of author*

**[Section Five: Baltimore to Saint Louis]**

On 1 September two wagons left. On the third, four of our companions left with a third wagon<sup>72</sup> and on the tenth all the others left by stage.<sup>73</sup> For this journey one can look at Father Rosati's journal. We arrived at Pittsburgh the nineteenth where after lodging at the Western Hotel<sup>74</sup> for two days we left for a boarding house.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>72</sup> Francis Xavier Dahmen, with Brothers Blanka, Delatre and Borawanski. Pack animals drew the wagons, and the missionaries followed on foot.

<sup>73</sup> They were De Andreis, Rosati, Acquaroni, Caretti, Ferrari, Deys, Gonzalez, Borgna. Bruté, their host, reported the departure, that same day, to Elizabeth Ann Seton:

We have fixed in the stage of Pittsburg [*sic*] our good missionaries, Mr. De Andreis. (a saint, but why should not I add to it many of the others, God knows!) Mr. Rosati and Mr. Acquaroni, two priests more of St. Vincent, Mr. Carretti [*sic*] and Mr. Ferrari, two other priests, the last one twenty-four years old, so amiable. Mr. Tichitoli, a charming youth in minor orders, and three more, all indeed the most amiable pack of men you ever saw. Then, Ross, one of our pupils who returns that way to New Orleans, very pious, given to them (O Providence) as their guide on the road.

(*Rev. Simon Gabriel Bruté In His Connection with the Community.* [Emmitsburg, Md.]: 1886. Cited partially in M.J. O'Malley, "The Centenary of the Foundation of the St. Louis Diocesan Seminary," *SLCHR* 1 [1919]: 44.) Mother Seton responded to him: "Communion, directed those of the Sisters to thanks for the blessed missionaries sent to enlighten our savage land." (Seton, Emmitsburg, to Bruté, Baltimore, 2 September 1816; original in archives of the Daughters of Charity, Emmitsburg, Maryland, Seton letters, XII-55-1-8.)

<sup>74</sup> Apparently one of several rooming houses in the city.

<sup>75</sup> The four who had left with the wagons arrived later: Dahmen and Delatre on 21 October, Blanka and Borawanski the next day. (Rosati, "Itineraire," 21 and 22 October 1816.) The next paragraph is in Latin.

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

On the anniversary of the happy passing of Saint Vincent, 27 September, and at the same time [to celebrate] the growth of the American Mission, to fulfill the vow made while we were tossed about among the waves of the Atlantic Ocean, we celebrated a novena and fasted on the vigil. At Pittsburgh we celebrated the feast with a solemn mass and first and second vespers with a spiritual joy increased by receiving certain letters from Europe and the arrival of the wagons.<sup>76</sup>

We left Pittsburgh on a bad flat boat 27 October, and arrived at Louisville 19 November. We were all lodged at the house of Francis Mod,<sup>77</sup> a good Catholic.

The superior [De Andreis] went to the seminary of Bardstown and decided with the bishop that the entire group should wait in Kentucky for Bishop Dubourg to arrive. He [De Andreis] wrote to the others to come to the seminary to learn English there.<sup>78</sup> The priests would exercise their ministry and the seminarians would study their theology as they did up to the beginning of October of the next year, 1817. When the news came of the arrival of Bishop Dubourg with another band of missionaries at Annapolis in Maryland, and following the orders of this bishop, Fathers Rosati and De Andreis with Brother Blanka and, at their head, Bishop Flaget, the very worthy bishop of Bardstown, traveled overland to Saint Louis in upper Louisiana to prepare the way and to dispose minds and hearts to receive the bishop.<sup>79</sup> After having discussed with the people of Sainte Genevieve and of Saint

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<sup>76</sup> The next paragraphs are in French.

<sup>77</sup> Spelled Modde, Mode, or, more usually, Mudd. Rosati notes that the group, or some of them, lodged with Mr. Tarascon. (Rosati, "Itineraire," 19 November 1816.)

<sup>78</sup> Rosati notes that they remained in Louisville until the feast of their patron, Francis Xavier, 3 December, about two weeks. (Rosati to Nicola Rosati, from Bardstown, 8 June 1817; copy in DRMA, Rosati papers; also, Rosati, "Itineraire," 3 December 1816.)

<sup>79</sup> In keeping with the charge given him by Dubourg, Flaget had sent a circular letter to all the parishes of Upper Louisiana. In it he asked that each parish hold a meeting to select a delegate to meet him in Saint Louis, to deliberate on the support of the bishop and the maintenance of a seminary. (The text is given in Rothensteiner, *History of the Archdiocese*, vol. 1, 252-54.) Flaget's diary specifies their departure on 2 October, also in company with Joseph Tucker. Their route led them through Elizabethtown, Owensboro and Morganfield, and they crossed the Ohio at Shawneetown. They arrived 11 October in Sainte Genevieve, and 18 October in Saint Louis.

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

Louis, both in the church<sup>80</sup> and in groups that met in the priest's house, they determined certain general matters to receive and support the bishop, and they also received 1000 piasters for the journey of the bishop and his missionaries. Bishop Flaget and Father Rosati returned to Kentucky, and Father De Andreis with the brother stayed at Sainte Genevieve to await the bishop.<sup>81</sup>

At last, on 29 December, the feast of Saint Thomas of Canterbury, the two bishops, Dubourg and Flaget, arrived by steamboat at Sainte Genevieve.<sup>82</sup> Father De Andreis went to receive him [Dubourg] at the bank of the Mississippi on horseback accompanied by about forty of the main inhabitants of the village. To the sound of bells, he was received there under a canopy carried by the most elderly heads of households. The throne was arranged majestically, and twenty-five altar boys in red cassocks and linen surplices went to receive him with

<sup>80</sup> Rosati's name appears in the cathedral baptismal register for 19 and 20 October, further confirming the dates of their visit.

<sup>81</sup> Flaget reported on his visit as follows to David:

How much was I astonished to find that they did not seem concerned about his arrival, than about that of the emperor of China! Moreover, in what a state was the presbytery! No doors, no windows, no floor, no furniture; the church still worse; the people filled with prejudices against their Bishop, whom they had never seen. But at last I succeeded in reconciling them to the new arrangement; they seemed to rejoice at the thought of having a Bishop: they began to fix up the presbytery, etc.

(Cited from Melville, *DuBourg*, vol. 1, 416.) De Andreis remained in Sainte Genevieve mainly to spare his delicate health the harsh return trip to Kentucky. (Ricciardelli, *Vita*, 331.) Flaget and Rosati left Saint Louis 23 October, and Kaskaskia on the 28th; they arrived at Saint Thomas, 6 November.

<sup>82</sup> According to Flaget's "Journal," the bishops arrived on the "Pique." Flaget described their craft:

Nothing could be more original than the medley of persons on board this boat. We have a band of seven or eight comedians, a family of seven or eight Jews, and a company of clergymen composed of a tonsured cleric [Francis Niel], a priest [Stephen Badin] and two Bishops; besides others, both white and black.

("Journal," 17 décembre; Spalding, *Flaget*, 173-74, spells it Piqua.) "Pique" or "Pike" was the "Zebulon M. Pike," the first steamboat to arrive in Saint Louis, which it did on the previous 9 August. It called regularly at Sainte Genevieve during its years of service. (See Gould, *Fifty Years*, 103; and William M. Lytle, comp. *Merchant Steam Vessels of the United States. 1807-1868* [Mystic, Conn.: Steamship Historical Society of America, 1952]).

*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

Father De Andreis who performed the office of the pastor at the door of the Church.<sup>83</sup> On the second day of the year he [Dubourg] made his solemn entry into Saint Louis, and on the Epiphany he celebrated there a pontifical mass.<sup>84</sup>

On 3 December 1818, the feast of Saint Francis Xavier, the internal seminary or novitiate of the Lazarists opened at Saint Louis in a little brick house situated between the priest's house and the church. It was called Gethsemani. Three novices took the habit, the priest Andrew Ferrari, the deacon Francis Xavier Dahmen, the subdeacon Joseph Tichitoli, who after several days, because of his bad health, was ordained a deacon and a priest<sup>85</sup> and was sent to lower Louisiana.<sup>86</sup>

On the vigil of the Epiphany, 1819, four Lazarist missionaries arrived at our seminary of Saint Mary of the Barrens from Italy: Father Francis Cellini, a novice priest, Brother Francis Anthony Borgna<sup>87</sup>, a clerical student, Brother Anthony Potini, a clerical student, and the coadjutor brother, the novice Bartholomew Bettelani. He, however, afterwards declared that he did not wish to become a brother.<sup>88</sup>

On 9 January 1820, the new cathedral was at the point of being able to be used and the bishop took the step of bestowing the honor of blessing it on us Lazarists, and so, accompanied by Fathers Acquaroni, Borgna, Dahmen and four altar boys, I performed the ceremony at eight o'clock in the morning, and immediately after I brought the blessed sacrament there and that evening I gave benediction. In the morning at eleven o'clock, the bishop in his pontifical vestments

<sup>83</sup> The traditional rites for the reception of the bishop and the subsequent visitation of parishes specified that the bishop be received by the elders of the town or parish, and then escorted beneath a canopy to the church. Once arrived there, the pastor offered a sprinkler and holy water, then the vessel with incense. The pastor incensed the bishop, who then proceeded to the main altar. It is likely that the same ritual was repeated in Saint Louis. De Andreis was only substituting for the absent diocesan pastor, Henry Pratte.

<sup>84</sup> Dubourg arrived by horse and carriage Monday, 5 January, according to Flaget's "Journal." Flaget then installed him as bishop during the mass.

<sup>85</sup> He was ordained a priest on 15 December 1818.

<sup>86</sup> The next paragraph is in Italian.

<sup>87</sup> Usually called Philip Borgna. It is doubtful that someone else is meant here.

<sup>88</sup> Rosati, in a letter from the Barrens, dated 20 July 1820, noted that Bettelani was now seeking readmission. (Rosati to Baccari, copy in DRMA.) The next paragraph is in French.



*Historical Writings: Important Notices*

accompanied by an assistant priest and a priest who was master of ceremonies, and four other priests in chasubles, two deacons, two subdeacons and twenty-six altar boys superbly dressed, made his solemn entry into the church. Pictures, chandeliers and other beautiful ornaments adorned it, while beautiful music was playing, and the singing caused the church to echo with this verse from the fifth psalm: *Introibo in domum tuam, adorabo ad templum tuum, et confitebor nomini tuo* ["I will enter your house, I will worship at your temple, and I will proclaim your name"].<sup>89</sup>

In July 1820, four years after our arrival in America, we found that the root had multiplied four times. Four of us had emigrated, and counting novices and professed we now number sixteen.<sup>90</sup>

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Father Cellini arrived at the Barrens 24 December 1818. To Louisiana 1822. Went to Europe 1825. Returned 1826. Went to the diocese 1827. At Saint Michael 1829.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Ps 5:8. The next paragraph is in Italian.

<sup>90</sup> He makes the same reference in Letter 83, 4 September 1820.

<sup>91</sup> De Andreis did not write these lines. Someone else added them on a loose page in the back of the booklet. Cellini, formerly a canon of Santo Spirito in Sassia in Rome, had also studied medicine there. (Rosati's "Catalogus Parochiarum et Missionum Dioecesis S. Ludovici Anno 1816." DRMA, Rosati papers, 28; also, his "Life of De Andreis," in *Summarium*, 60.)

## ITINERARY

### INTRODUCTION

*The "Itinerario Italo-Gallo-Americano," in its original Italian, is De Andreis's most important account of the founding of the American mission. After his three years on the American mission, the events leading to its foundation had come into sharper focus for him, its first superior. He summarizes his purpose in the opening paragraph: to satisfy the holy curiosity of others and to lead them to praise God.*

*The sources of his work, besides his own recollections, must have been the small notebook entitled "Important Notices," which it completes, and his letterbook, now lost. He may have had access to a journal kept by his companion Joseph Rosati. De Andreis's two accounts, while parallel, are also complementary. The importance of this narrative lies in its rich details. The author recounts the basic events carefully, but also, unwittingly, gives a picture of his own psychological and spiritual alertness.*

*He divides his narrative into three main sections. The first and most interesting part begins in Rome and brings the reader up to the landing of the missionaries in Baltimore. The second section inserts details on the American mission: land, population, the position of Catholics and information on Protestants for readers unaware of them. The final section briefly reviews his travels to Kentucky and then to Saint Louis. He concludes with an attempt to interest others in the American mission, speaking frankly of the difficulties of missionary life in the New World. An appendix details the role of Bishop Dubourg. In so doing, the author anticipated some of the criticisms to which the bishop was later subjected—and probably deserved.*

## ITINERARY. ITALY, FRANCE, AMERICA<sup>92</sup>

Saint Louis,  
[December] 1819

To satisfy the holy curiosity of our friends in Italy, I have intended for some time now to undertake a lengthy, more detailed and more interesting account of what we underwent after our arrival in America. My work has not always left me free enough, nor did it not grant me the necessary time and leisure. Now, however, I am confident that I have found both the time and required leisure and, confident of both, I foresee that it will be some time before the bearer [Angelo Inglesi] departs. At the moment, I do not know my goal in writing this somewhat brief narrative, but I am sure that whatever I have to say will move my readers to praise God and to arouse pleasing religious sentiments in their hearts. I begin by giving an overview of our time from Rome to Bordeaux, and from there to our landing in Baltimore.

### From Rome to Bordeaux<sup>93</sup>

Exactly four years ago today, that is, from 15 December 1815 till now, 1819, I left Rome before dawn in the company of the Roman priest, Father [Caietano] Marliani<sup>94</sup> (he remained in Bordeaux because the doctors judged him incapable of handling a sea voyage); the German, [Francis] Xavier Dahmen, then still a layman, but now a priest novice in our Congregation, and present here where I am writing; and the Spaniard, Mr. Casto [Benito] Gonzalez, who, although an excellent

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<sup>92</sup> **Itinerary. Italy, France, America.** *Original document, 17 pages, Italian, in the Archives of the General Curia, Rome. De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part I, Sect. D, #14, 63-82. A copy exists in the archives of Propaganda Fide. Scritture Riferite nei Congressi. America Centrale. Dal Canada all'Istmo di Panama. Codice 4, fol. 346r-55v. Partial citation in Rosati, "Life of De Andreis," Summarium, 126.*

<sup>93</sup> The editor has added headings to facilitate reading.

<sup>94</sup> Marliani, a priest of the diocese of Rome, was ordained there, 20 January 1814, after making his ordination retreat at Monte Citorio. Although his name does not appear in any extant Vincentian document attesting to his membership in the Congregation, it does occur in an ordination list for secular priests. ("Libro in cui sono scritti i nomi degli ordinandi," 1788-1842, Roman Province Archives, 3.5.31.)

*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

Christian, for proper reasons and to our mutual satisfaction, left our mission and left the diocese. On the next day, [16 December] the French priest, Father Buzieres, joined us. By mutual consent, however, he remained in France to do good there.

We did not know each other. We were strangers to one another and had not previously understood our common objective. Nevertheless, we were soon bound together with the bonds of the most sincere and cordial friendship. The next day [17 December] we began the Christmas novena.<sup>95</sup> Each day we celebrated our pious exercises and had holy conferences and discussions that were full of zeal. All during our journey our goal was never to miss mass and usually we three priests celebrated it, although that cost us dearly. Almost always we had to use our privilege of saying mass *post meridiem* ["in the afternoon"], with all its attendant problems of hunger,<sup>96</sup> cold, fatigue and the like. This privilege caused me to dispute with certain priests in France who did not want to allow me to use it. In addition, in the various dioceses we had to have our *Celebret* examined by the Ordinary.<sup>97</sup> This made our contentment in being able to celebrate somewhat thorny.

Since among the priests I alone was a confessor, I very often had to allow the others to use the faculty given us of hearing confessions of our own confreres in turn, but I was obliged in different regions to go and beg here and there for a confessor, and this exposed me to strange arrangements especially in France. Ordinarily since we had to pay for the coachman, we contented ourselves with one meal daily during the trip, and in the carriage itself we distributed to each some bread and a block of chocolate, our breakfast and lunch. We observed this practice until we reached Bordeaux.

Here, now, is our itinerary. We left Rome on the 15th and stopped at Monterosi, to wait there for Father Buzieres, who according to our

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<sup>95</sup> This may mean that the group celebrated the novena traditional in the Italian provinces of the Congregation, but it most probably means that they held other special devotions during the nine days before the feast.

<sup>96</sup> That is, since they had to remain fasting from food and water from the previous midnight until after mass. They also had the privilege of celebrating mass before dawn, as mentioned below.

<sup>97</sup> This document identifies the bearer as a priest and had to be presented to the proper authorities before he could celebrate mass. The title means "Let N. celebrate."

*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

agreement came from Viterbo to join us the next day. On the 16th, we stayed at Otricoli. On the 17th, we stopped at Terni and left for Spoleto. On the 18th, I had the pleasure, which I had longed for, of saying mass at the oratory of the Buon Gesu of Foligno. This pleasure too, however, soon became bitter, since, because of the recent large snowfall on the Calla, the road to Loreto was impassable. We had greatly wanted to visit that shrine before leaving Italy to place ourselves under the auspices of [Mary] Star of the Sea and so we were deeply depressed. Yet in the end we had to resign ourselves to embrace this mortification from God's hand and admit our unworthiness of receiving such a favor.

Then we took the road to Furlo and by evening arrived at Nocera. There we clambered up on the ice with lanterns in our hands to the upper city to visit the holy bishop of this diocese.<sup>98</sup> On the 19th, we went up to Cantiano, where we nearly had to spend the night in the rain because of the convoys of French carriages restoring the manuscripts stolen by the preceding government.<sup>99</sup>

On the 20th, we were at Fossombrone, the 21st at Cattolica, the 22nd at Cesena, the 23rd at Castel San Pietro. On the 24th we visited the body of Saint Catherine at Bologna but, unable to locate our confreres despite all our looking, we spent that evening at Castelfranco. There we had the consolation of passing that memorable night in the church, taking part in the offices, and we readily satisfied our devotion with the celebration of the three masses. We were somewhat perplexed about traveling on such a day [Christmas], but after thinking it over, we left after lunch so as not to inconvenience the coachman. That evening we were at Marsaglia. On the 26th, after mass at Parma, we spent the night at Borgo San Donnino. On the 27th, we reached Piacenza, where we had Benediction after vespers at our college of San Lazzaro. Refreshed by the cordial reception of the worthy superior and the confreres, we did not leave there until the 30th, having enrolled in our troop a German coadjutor brother, Martin Blanka.<sup>100</sup> On the 30th we were at Stradella, and the 31st at Tortona.

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<sup>98</sup> Bishop Francesco Piervisani.

<sup>99</sup> After Napoleon's fall, the artistic and archival treasures that he had looted had to be returned to their proper owners. He had annexed the papal states, 16 May 1809, and began the removal of the archives in 1810.

<sup>100</sup> He was born in the present-day Czech Republic.

*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

On the first of January [1816], I had the pleasure of embracing in Alessandria our confreres Fathers Bianchi and Kobutt, and also that evening, in Asti, Father [Giovanni Battista] Gardini. On the second, we reached Turin, where I fortunately found several of our confreres, among whom Father Cravieri was very kind to us, as was the merchant, Mr. Crodara. It was there that I met my half-brother,<sup>101</sup> who had come with an empty carriage just to bring me to our family home. Convinced that it was impossible for me to make such a visit, I saluted my father in a letter.<sup>102</sup> On the fifth we went to Susa, and the next day, the feast of the Epiphany, we celebrated a very early mass, taking full advantage of the privilege of celebrating mass *ante auroram* ["before dawn"].

We began the ascent of Mont Cenis. It was covered with snow and terribly cold, but the trip was pleasant, and by evening we were at Lanslebourg. The third day [7 January], Sunday, was memorable for us. It had been snowing all night, and the very high wind scattered the snow in all directions. We started before dawn, however, but after two or three leagues, we had to stop. A terrible fatigue would have overcome the horses in plowing a way through the snow, which by then reached their bellies. They had been whipped continuously by a ferocious wind that made the snow fall horizontally. We clearly were running the risk of falling into a precipice, since in Savoy almost every public road runs along one of them. The blizzard made it such that it was impossible to make out the road from its surroundings. The result was that the coachman had no other recourse than to release the horses since it was impossible to turn the coach around and return. He left us there between the mountain and the cliffs. The wind made the coach bounce and, although it was apparently hermetically sealed, the snow still penetrated through invisible openings. We were eventually covered with it, though we did not know how.

We stayed about two hours exposed to the danger of being tipped over and buried in the snow. The coachman reappeared and harnessed the horses again, and then with great difficulty we made a few more leagues up to Bramante,<sup>103</sup> where we stayed in a poor inn. We had no

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<sup>101</sup> His father married three times; he refers here to his half-brother, Vincenzo, born of the second marriage.

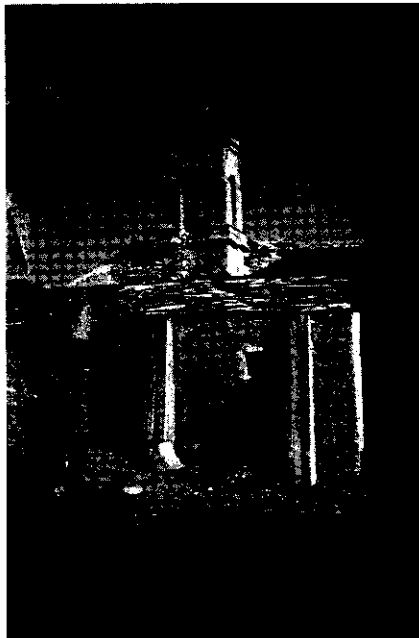
<sup>102</sup> See Letter 8, 4 January 1816.

<sup>103</sup> Now a French town, Bramans.

*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

sooner set foot inside than I asked if it would be possible to say mass. The innkeeper's wife told me that the church was at a distance, and that, because of the storm, it was impossible to take me there. A little while later the innkeeper himself arrived. I asked him the same thing, and he told me that since the church was only a stone's throw away, he was encouraging me to follow him, as he would precede us. We prepared to follow him right through the waist-high blinding snow. The wind froze our breaths, but after a few steps, this Savoyard greyhound of ours vanished because of his rapid pace. We remained lost amid a bewildering sea of snow, unable to see either where we had come from or where we were supposed to go (at least I could not), since the wind and the snow kept us from even opening our eyes.

Half dead from the cold and covered at the same time with sweat from the exertion of the walk in the snow, I was for a moment left speechless, believing that death was inevitable. I could not refrain



The ruins of the chapel at Monte Cenisio, which De Andreis sought shelter in during a blizzard.

*Courtesy of the author*

*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

from blaming what happened to me on my imprudence. At length, it pleased God to bring us to the church, more dead than alive. I needed a full fifteen minutes to catch my breath. My cloak was covered with rock-hard ice and was completely damp with sweat, the snow disguising its natural color. We found the church full of people and the pastor insisted that I preach. Since I did not yet have enough French to be able to preach *ex abrupto* ["on the spur of the moment"], I found myself in a state in which it would have been possible only to recommend my soul to God.<sup>104</sup> We had no fire or place to rest, and so I sought strength in the "food of the strong." Consequently I celebrated mass, but it scarcely seemed possible that I had escaped alive.

Many other circumstances have to be omitted so as not to delay too long. On the next day, 8 January, we left to go to Saint Michel, on the 9th, to Aiguebelle, the 10th at Biviers, and on the 11th we entered France,<sup>105</sup> and went to Grenoble. There we were unable to celebrate mass because bad weather did not let us visit the bishop to have him examine the *Celebret*. When he learned of it, he sent us the vicar general to give us his greetings, and so we returned to Tullins. On the 12th, I said mass at Saint Marcellin, where the vicar was Father Bouchate,<sup>106</sup> whom I had met in Italy. We spent the night at Romans. On the 13th, I said mass at the Valence cathedral, where the entrails of Pius VI repose in an elegant marble vessel.<sup>107</sup> This would be beautiful even in Saint Peter's [in Rome]. We spent the night at Loriol.

On the 14th, 15th and 16th, we went through Montelimart, Pierrelatte, Pont du Gard,<sup>108</sup> Bagnols, Nimes, Lunel, and on the 17th we arrived in Montpellier. Our desire to celebrate mass was frustrated, and it made us fast until about 5:00 P.M. The bishop welcomed us at the seminary, where we stayed until the 20th. I was impatient to hear

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<sup>104</sup> That is, to prepare himself for death.

<sup>105</sup> The current French border begins at Montcenisio.

<sup>106</sup> Gabriel Bossan, b. 1759, entered the Congregation in 1777. At the Revolution, he fled from the seminary community at Béziers to Bologna, perhaps where he met De Andreis.

<sup>107</sup> This pope, under the control of the French revolutionary government, died in Valence. In keeping with ancient papal tradition, his heart and entrails were removed from his corpse and preserved apart. The monument, consisting of a portrait bust of the pope, was carved in white marble by the contemporary Italian artist Antonio Canova.

<sup>108</sup> Conjectural reading. Also see *Important Notices*, note 30.



*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

news of our companions who, under Father Rosati's leadership, had traveled by sea. A lady came looking for me hoping I would have some news about Bishop Dubourg. She told me that of the twenty-one boats that set out for the southern ports of France, only nineteen had arrived. Added to our lack of news, this information certainly made me very fearful of the shipwreck of our companions. God only knows what an awful night this caused me, perceiving vividly in my dreams their supposed death in whirlwinds on a stormy sea.

On the 20th we were at Pezenas. On the 21st, after saying mass at Béziers, we spent the evening at Narbonne, and we received some confused information that our confreres had stayed at the same inn where we were staying. This consoled me greatly. On the 22nd, we were at Moux and Carcassonne, the 23rd at Castelnaudary and Villefranche, and the 24th at Toulouse, where at the major seminary we at last had the supreme consolation in embracing all our dear companions, safe and sound. For their part, they had been worried about us. We stayed two days to enjoy their company. On the 26th, we left them to go to prepare our lodgings at Bordeaux, the place chosen for our stop until we would embark [for America].

We crossed Gascony and on the 30th arrived in the city [Bordeaux]. It would be difficult for me to express the kindly and charitable reception which the archbishop, Charles [François d'Aviau] du Bois de Sanzai, gave us there. He kindly kept me in his home for four and half months, and he arranged for each member of our double group a lodging with some religious community or with a priest. He immediately gave me all the [ecclesiastical] faculties, and came in person to install me as chaplain of the prisons of the Château du Hâ, where I said mass, preached and heard confessions on feast days. Since I have spoken enough in other letters about our stay at Bordeaux, let us move now to our embarkation.

Bishop Dubourg arrived in Bordeaux on [22 May] the day before the Ascension and began to arrange for our departure. This prelate arrived in the company of a young cleric from Milan, [Joseph] Tichitoli, an excellent subject, now our priest novice. I neglected to mention that about two months after our arrival in Bordeaux, we were joined there by two wonderful priests from Porto Maurizio, the canon Joseph Caretti, a young man, to say nothing of his beautiful politeness and moral qualities. I closed his eyes [in death] a year ago, and he was the

*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

first one buried in the new cathedral of Saint Louis.<sup>109</sup> The other was Andrew Ferrari, equally lovable for his even greater talent. He is now our novice and works in the state of Indiana, at Post Vincennes, in the diocese of Kentucky. I sent him there at the request of the two bishops [Flaget, Dubourg] in the hope of making an establishment there. He will soon be joined by another subject [Dahmen]. I forgot to say that one of the greatest consolations I had in France was to come to know and to experience the holy friendship of the good Daughters of Charity. My own mother could not have done more. It is incredible, and we still keep up a correspondence.<sup>110</sup>

**From Bordeaux to Baltimore**

On 12 June, dressed in civilian clothes, with a cravat and a round hat, the normal garb of clergy in America, we embarked on the Garonne in a sloop. About midnight it reached the American brig, "The Ranger," which awaited us off Poliac [Pauillac]. We climbed aboard the vessel by a rope ladder. Our baggage had already been loaded. We were, all told, thirteen: five priests, four clerics, one brother and three postulants. All three of them have since left us.<sup>111</sup> Our places were prepared in a large open room. Each of us had a bed with his belongings around him like the shelves in a bookstore. We made our entire voyage with another young man, a Quaker from Baltimore.<sup>112</sup> The captain professed no religion. He was an American, along with his entire crew. Among them were two blacks and an Indian. Not only did the captain not impede us, but he helped us as much as he could in the exercise of religion. He always treated us very well and enjoyed attending our services and hearing about religious matters. But when we came to conclude our discussion, he would frankly say that dollars, money, moved him more than the soul, and this world more than the next. His blindness moves me to tears!

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<sup>109</sup> No trace of his grave remains today.

<sup>110</sup> These letters are no longer extant.

<sup>111</sup> Medard Delatre, John Flegifont, Francis Borawanski.

<sup>112</sup> Rosati identifies him as Mr. Norris.

*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

The next day, [13] the feast of Corpus Domini,<sup>113</sup> since we were still off Poliac [Pauillac], we went ashore early in the morning in the sloop, and two of us said mass while the others received communion. We hurried back to the brig, and at 8:00 it set sail and in the evening we arrived off Royan. On the 14th, according to the permission given us by the Holy Father, we all celebrated mass on the ship. We had all the necessary requirements with us, hosts, wine and candles. Every time we celebrated, a priest vested in surplice and stole stood beside the celebrant, with his hand on the base of the chalice after the consecration, to eliminate any problem. At about 8:00 we entered the sea amid favorable weather. But the effect of the sea was quickly felt, and all fell ill. The result was that on the next day, the 15th, we did not have mass because we were all seasick. On the 16th, a Sunday, there were two masses, and so with the exception of one or two days of violent storms, we always had two or more masses. On feast days, we sang mass and vespers. We regularly held conferences and the other pious exercises in common, such as [spiritual] reading, the Divine Office, examens and the litany of the saints for the conversion of souls. Fathers Rosati and Caretti and two of the postulants were always ill. The writer was the one who suffered least of all.

We had several stormy days, and we spent one particular night at prayer, since we thought it would be the last night of our lives. The blows that the sea directed against the boat were so violent that at every instant it seemed to be hurled about and it looked like it would shatter into a thousand pieces. The sailors were trembling and the captain begged us to pray. God wished us to escape although this martyrdom was lengthy and its victims prepared, but the blow was deferred—God only knows why.

Before leaving Bordeaux, Bishop Dubourg gave to the writer the patent [official appointment] of vicar general, and another one to Father Rosati, in case the first came to be lost. The archbishop of Bordeaux, as the bishop with jurisdiction over the coasts, gave us all the permissions we needed up to Baltimore. As we passed by the coast of Spain we saw sea monsters and whales, sometimes swimming a little distance from us. Among the other fish, we admired the fish that flew

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<sup>113</sup> Another name for Corpus Christi, the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ.

*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

like birds. One evening one of them flew onto the table in our room. We ate it and it was excellent. It was shaped something like a small cod, with wings of scales spread out enough to let it fly from wave to wave. Quite often we observed a very curious phenomenon at sea. Although we were miles and miles from the continent, we saw a huge tall tower, arising from the waves all by itself, without any apparent foundation.

We made a novena to Saint Vincent, and it happened that on the feast day of this saint, a black slave was to be punished for theft and drunkenness with the penalty customary in similar cases. This consisted in his being thrown from the top of the mast into the sea, tied with a rope that passed beneath the ship. It was then pulled and made the poor sufferer pass underneath once or twice, at the risk of losing his life. I told the captain that, since the day was a great feast for us, he should spare the poor man on behalf of our saint and teacher. Fortunately I obtained what I wanted.

We were at sea about 40 days, and on several days we made no headway owing to calms or adverse winds. The captain noted sourly that the provisions would run out and that we might even die of starvation. We were about 300<sup>114</sup> miles from Baltimore, and each day we made no progress either ahead or behind. Consequently, we jointly resolved at first vespers of the feast of Saint Vincent to make a vow conceived in the following terms:

We, the undersigned missionaries of Louisiana, amid the perils which surround us, being firmly convinced of the influence and special favor which thou, O glorious and illustrious hero of Christian Charity, Saint Vincent de Paul, dost enjoy, before the throne of the Divine Majesty; on this day, dedicated by the Church to the celebration of thy feast and glorious triumph; prostrate at thy feet, implore thee by the zeal which inflamed thy heart for the glory of God, the salvation of souls, and the welfare of those who consecrate their lives to promote these ends, to deign to accept the vow we joyfully offer thee, and by which we bind ourselves to celebrate, in the best possible manner, the day of thy

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<sup>114</sup> The manuscript reads 3,000.

*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

happy death, on the 27th of September, 1816, to prepare for it by a novena, and a fast on the eve; in the hope that thou wilt obtain for us a favorable wind, and a happy outcome of our voyage; together with an increase of that apostolic spirit, which was so conspicuous in the whole course of thy holy life. Amen.

As some of our number were French, the above words were translated into that language, and all joined in making the vow. We celebrated the feast of Saint Vincent with all possible solemnity; our little room was hung with sheets festooned with fringes, and decorated with reliquaries, mirrors, Agnus Dei, etc. Each one celebrated mass. Mass, vespers, sermons in French, etc., etc. These exercises were performed with heartfelt delight.

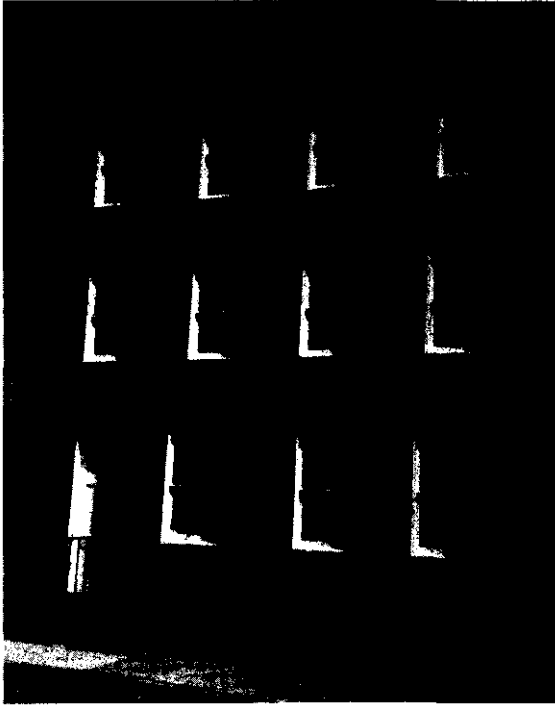
It was not long before we experienced the effects of our vow. A few days later, to everyone's great surprise and joy, we began to perceive the American continent. It seemed at first only like a dark line, dotted here and there with clusters of green trees. We soon entered Chesapeake Bay, from which we had so long been kept away by the current flowing out from the Gulf of Mexico into the Atlantic Ocean, like a large river bearing along with it masses of seaweed and other marine plants. When we entered the bay, a sloop came out from the Maryland shores, according to custom, with a pilot on board, to take command of our brig and steer her through the difficult passages in the bay. The captain immediately came to tell us the news that the pilot was a Catholic, which was, of course, sufficient reason for an exchange of mutual congratulations. On the 25th, we drew near land and, anxious to go ashore, Father Acquaroni asked my leave to make use of the opportunity presented by the return of the sloop to satisfy that wish of his. He did so and returned that same evening to the ship.

I cannot describe the impression produced upon us the next morning by the magnificent view of Baltimore harbor, together with the splendid situation of the bay. I hardly think there can be a more beautiful prospect in the world. Our first impulse, on landing, was to kneel and kiss the ground and offer ourselves to God with certain religious acts, but the place where we disembarked was so crowded that we deferred doing that to a more opportune time. Our landing

*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

took place on 26 July, the octave day of Saint Vincent, about ten o'clock in the morning.

Having entered the place, we soon perceived the difference between the cities of Europe and those of the new world, with regard to the construction of the houses, streets, etc. The streets are very broad, the houses rather low. There are sidewalks, as in the Corso at Rome, usually bordered with trees and numerous pumps and siphons to get water. The population is absolutely half whites and half blacks.<sup>115</sup> Hungry and sweating as we were because of the excessive heat of the season, we had to cross the entire city, inquiring as we went along for



Period brick home. Baltimore.

*Courtesy of the author*

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<sup>115</sup> The *Baltimore Federal Republican and Baltimore Telegraph* for 27 July 1816, the day after the arrival of the group, included, among other signs of local life, an announcement of a grand concert by Signor Pucci on the "grand pedal harp," also accompanying himself on the Spanish guitar. Elsewhere was an advertisement for the sale of a negro woman, 35 years old, a good seamstress and cook.

*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

Saint Mary's College, the Sulpician house to which we had been recommended. It was situated outside the city, at the very opposite end to the place of our landing.

We reached it at last, and were received by the president, Father Bruté, the most holy, humble, affable, learned and zealous man I have ever known. He welcomed us with the utmost cordiality, and during the whole time of our stay in Baltimore and even afterward never ceased to bestow upon us marks of his kindness. He obtained for us many handsome donations of several hundred scudi, besides which he supplied us with everything that we could possibly need. For some days we remained at the college, after which we were located with different priests, as had been done at Bordeaux. The worthy vicar general, Monsignor Fenwick, conferred on me the honor of singing the solemn mass at the cathedral, on the Assumption [15 August], the principal diocesan feast, and the day on which the first bishop in the United States was consecrated. We were constantly employed on feast days in various sacred functions at the different Catholic churches, but it pained me, as I saw magnificent churches and heard their bells pealing, to be told that these edifices belonged to various sects of heretics, although in the state of Maryland, and especially in the city of Baltimore, the Catholics are more numerous and fervent.

I immediately wrote to the archbishop, residing at Georgetown, to apprise him of our arrival. I asked from him the requisite permissions, which he gave me in a most courteous response.<sup>116</sup> I wrote to the bishop of Bardstown in Kentucky [Flaget] to inform him of our arrival and to accompany a long letter of recommendation from his friend Bishop Dubourg. He deputed him [Flaget], as his neighboring bishop, to assist us. The worthy prelate, Bishop Flaget, of whom I have already spoken much in former letters, answered very quickly. He encouraged me to leave as soon as possible before winter and assured me that he would help us in every possible way. In view of this, we prepared to leave, but before resuming the story of our journeys in America, I think it opportune to add some description of the state of religion in the United States, to illumine what follows.

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<sup>116</sup> Letter 17.

*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

**Geography and Statistics**

To give a proper idea of the extent of the field open in the United States to the zeal of priests, zealous for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, we should begin by giving some notions of geography and statistics about the locality and the progress of population. The United States including Louisiana, recently added, are situated between 28 and 50 degrees latitude and comprise more than 50 degrees of longitude. They have more than 3000 leagues in length and more than 500 in width, measuring the greatest distances, and they contain about two million square miles. This means that they extend as far from north to south as Paris to Cairo, and from east to west as Paris to Astrakhan. Louisiana alone is as large as the rest of the United States together, that is, it alone contains a million square miles. It is hard to determine the size of the population, since it changes and increases with unbelievable speed from one day to the next. Thus Louisiana, which a few years ago counted scarcely 60,000 inhabitants, today climbs to around 600,000.

Here we are truly in our infancy, both in the world and in the Church. The cities and the states that we see being born, grow and develop before our eyes through constant immigration from all parts of Europe. They come here to unite, and they show the truth of the motto on the seal of the United States, *e pluribus unum*. Here mixed together are English, Irish, Scots, French, Germans, Flemish, Danes, Spanish, etc. Out of this mixture there results a new and original character. Louisiana is already divided into four states or territories that will shortly become states. It has the peculiarity that it extends to the Pacific Ocean and embraces from thirty to forty nations of yet uncivilized Indians. Pushed by the waves of European colonies, they are concentrated in that last section of the continent, and they will shortly be constrained either to become civilized or to give way. This is the right moment for their conversion. These are the designs of Providence in sending so many missionaries to this part of the world. The time has come to fulfill the prophecy *in fines orbis terrae verba eorum* ["to the ends of the world their message"].<sup>117</sup> Some days ago, the bishop spoke to me about the project of an establishment to be formed in a

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<sup>117</sup> Ps 19:5.



*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

place one hundred leagues up the Mississippi called Prairie du Chien, for the education of Indian boys. The government will provide support and will help to open up missions among these barbarous nations who begin to gather in that place. Oh how happy I would regard myself if I could spend the rest of my miserable life there! Generally, however, all the parts of the United States can seize the attention and arouse the zeal of Gospel workers, since these are regions now in the process of formation. They are coming out of chaos, and in terms of religion they will be, so to say, *primi occupantis* ["belong to the one who arrives first"]. All the states are increasing in population and although in different proportion, the oldest ones, in the East, like Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts and Virginia, are growing almost imperceptibly, while the others are growing more rapidly, like New York, which has tripled its population in twenty years. Kentucky in a similar period has quadrupled, and Ohio has sextupled. The population grows, properly speaking, in proportion to migration to the West. Louisiana, however, is today the land of promise, where people come not only from Europe but also from the eastern states in a constant flow of emigration. Catholics were cheered in particular by the news of the arrival of the bishop with a great number of missionaries.

**The Position of Catholics**

There are various states among the United States where Catholics are barely recognized, and in some, like New Jersey, they have been forbidden. There are large cities where no Catholics live. There are very few priests in the dioceses of Boston, New York and Philadelphia. In Maryland and in Kentucky they are in greater number, but still are quite far from meeting the need of the Catholics. The priests have to be, so to speak, always on horseback to travel around to oversee the various congregations of which each priest has a certain number determined for his province. Louisiana, until recently the most abandoned, today seems to be the best served. With all this, we are still quite far from sufficing. The more priests there are, so to speak, the more the needs grow. Too, the more thoroughly we sow, the more easily we discover that there would be so much more to do were there only more workers.

*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

Unhappily for North America, the first colonies founded there were composed almost completely of heretics from all the sects thriving in England. This is why in the great mass of population there is found such a truly deplorable state of religion. Attached to their sects by accident of birth and education, they grow in an ignorance and laziness nearly impossible to eradicate. It is true that the first colonists in Louisiana were Catholics. Yet, since they were for a long time bereft of ministry, their Catholicism has become a *nomen sine re* ["meaningless name"]. If Providence had not sent to them in this quandary a bishop in due time, that is, to the multitude of new colonists who had arrived to make a foundation after the union of this region with the United States, then the weak progress of the Catholicism which still remained would have been eliminated. The spark was so close to being snuffed out that, with all our efforts, two years of hard work would still not suffice to revive it. The number of the sects is astonishing, and no year passes without the birth of another new one, such as the New Light Christians, recently born.<sup>118</sup>

**Notes on Protestants**

Consequently, I will give a little idea of the main sects. No one should wonder if I pass over in silence much that deals with the nature of the age, of production and commerce, of civil behavior, because such information is available in books of geography and natural history, and my work would be overly long. I have to restrict myself to my goal: we came here only to seek souls, and so I let myself be occupied only in what concerns that. The greatest obstacle to the reform of Catholics and the conversion of the Indians is the numerous and varied sects of the heretics.

The Episcopalians, the Anglicans, form the major sect. This is the dominant religion, becoming the national religion when England sent the first colony to America. Its ministers came from England and had government support. This sect has lost out with the United States revolution, because not only was it forced to separate itself from the

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<sup>118</sup> The New Light Christians developed from the Presbyterians in Kentucky, beginning about 1803.

*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

head of the so-called religion, the king of England, and consequently admitted a thousand changes in its faith and liturgy, but also it lost its quality of dominance and all those related advantages. The constitution of the United States established after the revolution did not allow any national religion, and did not pay any clergyman. Consequently, the Catholics, who had been so persecuted by the Anglicans in Great Britain and the United Kingdoms, enjoy in America the same privileges as Protestants. They are admitted into public life without discrimination, and the laws allow no pretext for any sort of repression of religion. Hence there are Catholics in the congress, in the legislatures of individual states, etc. The Episcopalians have their own bishop and priests and are always in league with the Methodists. There are schisms among them, and they go to war, but there are great crowds of proselytes. The Presbyterians gained more than they lost at the revolution. Their republican spirit makes their sect more popular. Their ministers are also rivals to the Catholics, since, like Episcopalians, they overlook baptism from day to day, and that is the reason why many among them die without baptism.

The Methodists were born some fifty years ago, and are a composite of the two preceding and of many members of the following sects. This sect is fashionable among the people and among the blacks. They have bishops like the Episcopalians. The first of them was consecrated by a simple minister named Wesley, the founder of the sect. His principle was this charming maxim that he produced once for his justification. It is contained in a verse from Milton, "Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven."<sup>119</sup> The meetings of these sectarians are loud and noisy. Their energetic and noisy preaching is accompanied with shouts of joy and confusion from the whole audience and by manic outpourings. They assemble in the open for several days under many thousand cabins and tents and make a kind of spiritual retreat. These are called Camp Meetings, and they recruit members from other sects. It must be admitted that sometimes those far from the way of salvation do a great good. They move souls from vice and oblige sinners to make their confessions in public meetings.

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<sup>119</sup> Meaning, probably, that it would be better to be master in one's own irregular situation (a bishop ordained by priests) than to be subservient to others. It is a citation from John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, book I, line 263.

*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

The Baptists, or Anabaptists, are in Kentucky and Louisiana, Illinois and Indiana. They are perhaps the strongest and most numerous there. They baptize adults publicly through immersion in rivers. This does not happen without violating modesty, especially with persons of the weaker sex. After being baptized, they regard themselves as confirmed in grace, and hence baptism is for them a point of perfection, and it happens that they generally neglect it. Unfortunately, by the evil of the devil, in all protestant sects this negligence in the administration of a sacrament of such importance is daily becoming common. This could still generate so many children for the true Church. Oh, how many souls are excluded from heaven! *Quis talia fando temperet a lacrimis* ["Who could refrain from weeping after mentioning such things"]?<sup>120</sup> I have baptized several people much advanced in age and on the point of death after having instructed them better, and having them make a renunciation, and then embrace the true faith in the true Church. We do not have to deal with heretics but with infidels. They take their liberty so far as to interpret the Scripture as they will, and even are blinded about the most interesting, clearest and most repeated points, like baptism, which is found in twenty different places in sacred scripture.

The Quakers are still found in large number in Pennsylvania, which is their kingdom, and in commercial cities, but today they only quake coldly and are modestly fanatical, unlike those whom history mentions. They live a regular and tidy life, and are attached to the system of their practices, but they are unusual, half civil and half religious, enemies of fashion, of entertainments, of compliments and above all of oaths. They have no sacraments and no liturgy, and are Christians in name only. They have a reputation of being generous and honest, they abhor war and slavery and do whatever they can to emancipate slaves. They would rather be killed than utter an oath and be enrolled in the militia. They do not wish to dispute in religious matters, and they heartily ridicule all the others. They are attentive to their own interests. They seem to be wise men to the eyes of the philosopher, but to an enlightened Christian they are pious.

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<sup>120</sup> Virgil, *Aeneid*, 2.8. (Harvard University Press: Loeb Classical Library, *Aeneid*, page 294, verse 5.)

### *Historical Writings: Itinerary*

The Lutherans and their descendants came in great numbers as emigrants from Germany. From Luther they maintain only the simple name, but they are quite removed from his teaching and thinking.

There are a few Moravian Brethren among the Germans, and they profess a kind of brotherhood, as if they were a religious order. They are normally hardworking, industrious and frugal, but quite uneducated.

The Dunkers are a type of religious community, very similar in many of their maxims and practices to the ancient Pythagoreans. They are bearded and wear clothing of an old-fashioned cut. They profess great rejection of the world and of themselves, and are very religious and upright. They agree with Protestants in the more essential issues.

The French, Dutch and German Calvinists are quite few in number, and have only a few churches of their communion. They have no great difficulty in coming together wherever they are with some other sect.

The Swedenborgians, or Brothers of the New Jerusalem, the Scuders, the Mennonites, Shakers, Sandemanians, Jumpers, Hutchinsonians, Priestellians, Testamentarians, Universalists, Detensionists, Muggletonians, Brownists, Ubiquitarians, Antonians, Burghers, Kitlers, Independents [Congregationalists], Puritans, Johnisians, etc., are very few in numbers.<sup>121</sup> The Socinians are making great progress. Jews have some synagogues in commercial centers. For the rest, even a thick book would not suffice to give a single detail about each sect and to make them known. All these sects tend toward indifferentism, a system for everything, half philosophy, half Christianity. Many of them have the name of some sect but at root are Deists, materialists or atheists. Some even call themselves nullists: I am nothing. This is true, although many in each sect would willingly come to the Catholic church, and they prefer it to the majority of their temples. They have no difficulty in preferring in their esteem a Catholic priest to one of their own ministers. Thus is it quite evident that to have them return to the bosom of the Church, always supposing God's grace, etc., we would need only a larger number of well instructed, zealous and moderate priests to bring about the ruin of the empire of

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<sup>121</sup> This list of names combines both popular and official names of small formal or informal sects. Most of them had only a transient existence.

*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

error, already parading in a thousand guises, and to establish the rule of truth and Catholic unity.

I say "moderate," and woe to an impetuous zealot in this country. He could ruin everything and would cause infinite disorders, with no gain. We have examples before our very eyes, as I myself learned to my cost. I have had to suffer terrible threats and the blackest calumnies of simony and even more delicate matters. It pleased God that these were not believed, despite the testimony which a Protestant general gave as being an eyewitness.<sup>122</sup> He tried to make me confess the crime, but this was for me only a reason for consolation, since it did not make the people unready to listen to a man who was so persecuted. Thanks be to God I am no longer in this state, since I perceived the danger in time and withdrew. Good Catholics love good moderation in their priests, and this is the genius of the nation and the taste of the present age. Whoever is not liberal is more moved to cause disturbances than to edify.

**From Baltimore to Kentucky**

I return now to our journeys. Having made the requisite arrangements, a cleric,<sup>123</sup> Brother Blanka and the two postulants<sup>124</sup> set out from Baltimore on foot on 3 September for Pittsburgh. They were to accompany our baggage, about eighty trunks and cases. The others, not strong enough to go on foot, started on the 10th of the same month in a public conveyance, for which we had previously paid a high price. It was a kind of diligence, called here a "stage." It was very inconvenient and exposed to all the inclemency of the weather. All eight of us got in, along with our luggage. The first day everything went well, and we stayed at Chambersburg, one of the congregations of Father [Nicholas] Zocchi, a Roman, who, when we passed through was in another congregation, that is, parish, in Tauney-Town.<sup>125</sup> The

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<sup>122</sup> See Letter 72, 28 December 1819, on the same subject.

<sup>123</sup> Francis Xavier Dahmen.

<sup>124</sup> Delatre and Borawanski; Flegifont had decided not to continue because of his health.

<sup>125</sup> Nicholas Zocchi (1773-1845) came to Baltimore in 1803, and after his ordination lived in Taneytown, where he died 17 December 1845. Although the party passed through Emmitsburg, they did not have the occasion to visit Elizabeth Ann Seton and her sisters.

*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

next day, the rain began and seemed to follow us for four or five days, during which we passed over the most frightful roads. We were obliged to get out every now and then to ease the vehicle. Two occurrences, almost of a miraculous nature, took place along the way. One was that Father Acquaroni and two others,<sup>126</sup> wishing to take a shortcut, got lost in the woods for half a day. This caused us the greatest anxiety since we did not know how to find them in this immense forest. We found them at our first stopping place.

The other circumstance, which I myself witnessed, was as follows. An enormous boulder became detached from its place and, rolling rapidly down the mountain, crossed the road at the very moment that two or three of our companions were walking there.<sup>127</sup> It seemed inevitable that it would severely injure or kill them. They were preserved, the huge mass passing within a hair's breadth of their feet without touching them. The rains continued to fall in such torrents that it was almost impossible to continue our journey. Dark night overtook us at the foot of a steep hill, where, with the excessive rains, the bad roads were full of ruts. The horses were so fatigued (one of which fell and needed ropes to be raised to his feet again,) that they were reduced to the most pitiful condition. Indeed, I was told that one among us could not refrain from shedding bitter tears. And, in fact, there we were, in the midst of frightful precipices unable to see each other, with the rain beating down on our head and shoulders. This kept us from having any light. We were far from human habitation, with streams of water running under our feet, with no help to raise up the horses, and no way to continue our journey—it is difficult to depict all the horror of such a situation. At length, after many efforts the horse was raised up and, wet through and through, we returned to the stage. There, as if sitting on a hobbyhorse, we could see the stars at every moment. After three or four hours we

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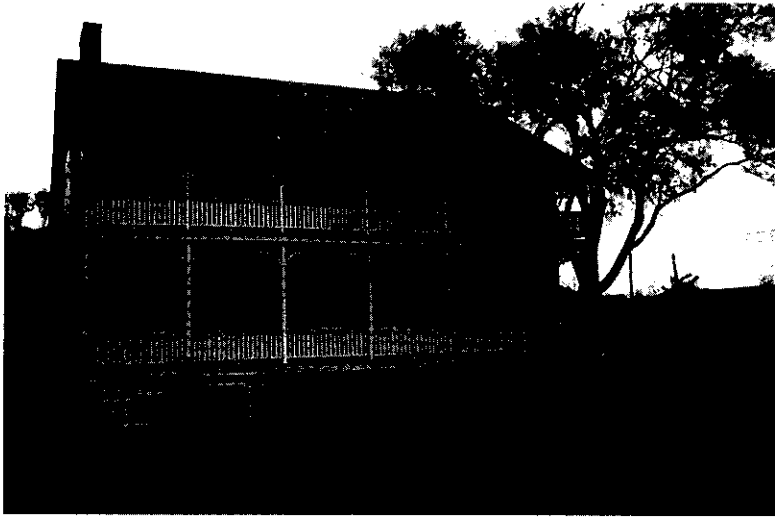
<sup>126</sup> Rosati identified them as Tichitoli and Ross, a student. (Rosati, "Itineraire," 11 September 1816.)

<sup>127</sup> Rosati identified them as Deys and Casto. (Rosati, "Itineraire," 11 September 1816.)

*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

arrived at a wretched inn where there was fire enough to dry our poor garments.<sup>128</sup>

The next day we arrived at a place called Bloody-Run, in memory of the outrages there committed by the Indians. Here we seemed to be in the midst of a spacious sea, for the whole country had been



The Bonnet Tavern, Bedford, Pennsylvania. Built in the 1760s and licensed as a Public House in the 1780s. Located along the route taken by De Andreis.

*Courtesy of the author*

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<sup>128</sup> Morris Birkbeck, founder of the English Settlement in Illinois, traveled this road in the spring of 1817. He wrote:

Old America seems to be breaking up and moving westwards. We are seldom out of sight, as we travel on this grand track, towards the Ohio, of family groups . . . . To give an idea of the internal movements of this vast hive, about 12,000 wagons passed between Baltimore and Philadelphia, in the last year, with from four to six, carrying from thirty-five to forty cwt. The cost of carriage is about seven dollars per cwt., from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh, and the money paid for the conveyance of goods on this road exceeds £ 300,000 sterling. Add to these the numerous stages loaded to the utmost, and the innumerable travellers, on horseback, on foot, and in light waggons, and you have before you a scene of bustle and business, extending over a space of three hundred miles, which is truly wonderful.

(Archer Butler Hulbert, *The Old Glade (Forbes's) Road (Pennsylvania State Road)*. Vol. 5 of *Historic Highways of America* [Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark, 1903], 201-02.)



*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

flooded. We were, therefore, detained for two or three days at no slight expense. Finally we started with some difficulty. After going some three leagues, the coachman stopped at an inn. Without saying goodbye to the innkeeper in the American way, he turned back under the pretext that the Juniata had overflowed its banks and that the stage would be unable to cross it.<sup>129</sup> Thus, after paying the whole fare to the end of our journey, we were left halfway on the road. By good fortune, I had a letter of introduction to an Italian doctor who lived at Bedford, on the other side of the river. I therefore asked one of our priests and a student to ford the river as best they could, to convey it to its address and get another stage. Their undertaking succeeded, and the next day we crossed the river in boats. We had to be very careful to keep our balance in them to keep from falling, since they were long and narrow.

On the other side of the river, we found the stage awaiting us, and in it we continued for another day's journey. But towards evening or, if I am not mistaken, the following morning, we met with the same difficulties at Stoystown. Here we had to remain three or four days more to wait for another stage. It came finally, but it was already full of passengers, and we were told that it would be vain to wait for another one, since our turn had passed. These enormous expenses threatened to leave us without resources in a country where there were only a few dispersed Catholics, no churches, no priests, no friends, with an entirely foreign language and customs. Having considered the matter carefully, we put our baggage into a wagon, and set out on foot in two bands. At one point I chanced to be alone,

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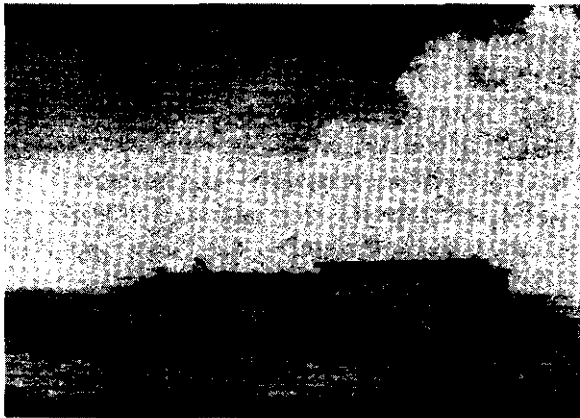
<sup>129</sup> Another traveler wrote:

The roads, at that day, across the mountains were the worst we can imagine, cut into deep gullies on one side by mountain rains, while the other was filled with blocks of sand stone . . . As few of the emigrant wagons were provided with lock-chains for the wheels, the downwards impetus was checked by a large log, or broken treetop, tied with a rope to the back of the wagon and dragged along on the ground. In other places the road was so sidelong that all the men who could be spared were required to pull at the side stays, or short ropes attached to the upper side of the wagons, to prevent their upsetting.

(Hulbert, *The Old Glade*, 197-98.)

*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

and somewhat apart from the rest of the company. In the midst of these frightful mountains, in doubt as to the road, and scarcely knowing how to get on, the smiling picture of Rome, its churches and my friends, presented themselves vividly to my mind. Like a sword, it made me experience, for an instant, all the tortures of melancholy. But, thank God, faith and the desire for the salvation of souls soon restored peace and serenity to my soul. We stopped after two days, met the other band, and only with some difficulty found a stage. We arrived at Pittsburgh on the evening of 19 September. On the 27th, we fulfilled there the vow we had made to Saint Vincent, and we received letters from Europe, a considerable source of consolation to us. The Catholics of the city received us well, but I recall that I have related all that occurred in other previous letters.



Engraving of flatboat by Victor Collot.  
*Collection of the Ohio Historical Society*

We had to remain there until the 27th of October, since the waters of the Ohio were too low to let us continue. On that day we started in a sort of vessel called a "flat-boat," made just like a small house or large tent whose roof served as a deck. It was a moving sight to behold the banks of the river crowded with persons who came to bid us farewell. Many of them gave us considerable sums of money and exhibited lively marks of sorrow at our departure. Our voyage went on very well. There is not, I think, in the world a longer river whose banks are more diversified with the beautiful scenery that presented

*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

itself day after day. From time to time we went ashore on one side or the other of this enormous river, about fifty times the length of the Tiber. We would walk about among the thick forests, where no human had ever walked, except for Indians, nor human voice ever heard. Joyfully we made the echoes repeat for the first time the sweet names of Jesus and Mary, and the canticles of the Lord.<sup>130</sup> In these forests, one is stopped at every step by brushwood and hanging branches, while the ground seems to sink under the feet, covered as it is with decayed tree trunks and leaves, fallen during so many years. There is also some danger in advancing too far into the woods because of the snakes, especially the *sonnettes* [rattlesnakes]. I saw some of them. Their tails have a set of bent rings, running one into another. When the snake moves, these rings warn of its approach, and allow the traveler time to put himself on his guard. I think I have elsewhere mentioned the cordial welcome in the various places that we passed, but especially at Marietta. There, a lawyer, one of the main citizens of the place, earnestly tried to detain us so that we might teach him the [Catholic] religion. He promised that he would be most docile to all our instructions, but Providence willed us elsewhere.<sup>131</sup>

At last, on 19 November, we reached Louisville where, after two days rest, I left my party at the house of a good Catholic and went on horseback to Bardstown, about forty miles away. I went to ask the bishop [Flaget], *quid faciendum* ["what we should do"].<sup>132</sup> He was well acquainted with Louisiana, since he had visited there some years before, and he had since kept up a correspondence with people who

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<sup>130</sup> He repeated the same idea, as Philippine Duchesne reported in 1820. French text in Paisant, *Les années pionnières*, L. 72, p. 298.

<sup>131</sup> The author omitted mention of a personal devotion of his, celebrated "on the boat, at Cincinnati, on the Ohio, 11 November 1816, the vigil of my vocation day," i.e., the day of his entry into the internal seminary (novitiate) in Italy. He left several lines of spiritual resolutions taken on that day. His text concludes: "the 27 of September 1819, at St. Louis, I made a one-day spiritual retreat, in which I confirmed *in globo* the preceding resolutions reduced to the motto of the U.S., *e pluribus unum*." (Pages 39-40 of "Bridegroom's concerns, *nec superflua nec superflue*," a notebook in Volume II, *Scritti varii*, De Andreis collection, Appendix.) He refers to this latter retreat in Letter 70, 23 September 1819.

<sup>132</sup> De Andreis traveled with Casto, and they had their interview with Flaget on 26 November. He notes in his diary for that day: "Father De Andreis made me realize his desire to spend the winter with me. I happily agreed, although I foresee the great difficulty I will find myself in to feed and house so many."

*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

lived there. We still had a long way to go. With winter rapidly approaching, we were running the risk of being stopped by the ice. Besides, we needed some time to study English and become more perfectly acquainted with French. The question now was whether we should continue immediately or stop.<sup>133</sup> The bishop received me with the greatest kindness and convinced me that it would be very imprudent to proceed immediately to Saint Louis where nothing had been prepared to receive us. That, however, would be the least inconvenience. I therefore resolved to accept Bishop Flaget's generous offers to stay at Saint Thomas seminary at Bardstown. Bishop Dubourg disapproved of my action, but when he arrived on the spot and saw how matters stood, he could do nothing else but approve it. I think that I have probably already given in previous letters enough information about what took place in Kentucky and what concerns my departure from there, my arrival in Louisiana, my stay at Sainte Genevieve, the meeting, reception and taking possession by the bishop [of his diocese] on Epiphany, 1817.

**From Bardstown to Saint Louis**

Some details of the ten-day trip on horseback from Bardstown to Saint Louis should be mentioned.<sup>134</sup> For example, we got lost at night in the woods with nothing to eat except some corn bread cooked on the hearth with a little honey and some sage tea. We found flocks of parrots and other beautifully colored birds. Their song, however, is not worth much, and so on, but there were many things of this type. When I reached Kaskaskia in the state of Illinois, two days before arriving in Saint Louis, I saw my first Indian.<sup>135</sup> He came along carrying

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<sup>133</sup> The original plan had been that the students would remain at Saint Thomas, and the priests and Brother Blanka would go on to Saint Louis. (Rosati, "Recollections," II:51; also, his "Life of De Andreis," *Summarium*, 84-85.)

<sup>134</sup> Their trip took them across the Ohio river at Shawneetown, Illinois, and then roughly following Illinois routes 13 and then 3, one of several trails known as the Shawnee-Ozark Trail. Donatien Olivier, the pastor of Prairie du Rocher and Kaskaskia, was apprised of their coming into his parish. He rode to Kaskaskia to accompany them to the landing across from Sainte Genevieve.

<sup>135</sup> Since one of the crew of the "Ranger" was an Indian, here he probably means an Indian in his own surroundings.

*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

his catch, a kind of small buck. Later on I had occasion to see them often and to deal with them and instruct and baptize them, as well as to hear their confessions and bring them Holy Communion. Once I saw the people of an entire nation. Truly, they arouse my compassion, and I long for the moment when I can dedicate myself to their civilization and sanctification.



Period brick home, Shawneetown, Illinois.  
*Courtesy of the author*

Since Father Acquaroni was impatient to come to Saint Louis, I wrote for him to come. He arrived after Easter, 1818, and after a few months was sent to help in three French parishes. Soon after arriving in one of them [Saint Charles] he was replaced, but he continues in the other two. Just recently I went to visit him. He has much to suffer, but the people love him and he is doing much good.<sup>136</sup> In the following October, Father Rosati left Bardstown and, with the entire band of missionaries who had remained there, he went to the Barrens, where the site of the seminary had already been determined. It will also become our house and a center for our foundations.

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<sup>136</sup> Acquaroni began his missions in June 1818; he was also briefly the substitute pastor of Saint Charles. The baptismal records show him celebrating baptisms there from 21 June through 11 August 1818. See Letter 70, 23 September 1819, concerning De Andreis's visit.

### *Historical Writings: Itinerary*

In 1818 we began our novitiate here in Saint Louis in a little separated brick hut that we called Gethsemane. I have already spoken of this sufficiently in my previous letters. At present it seems that my main occupation is the formation of good clergy. Those whom we now have, after they unpacked their things, are excellent, thanks be to God. I leave it to Father Rosati to tell you about that, since he has been diligent in keeping almost a daily record of what has happened.<sup>137</sup> I do not have that much patience, and I recall well whatever has happened, but as to chronology, especially in what I wrote about our trip in the mountains of Pennsylvania, the passage of the Alleghenies and Lamb-Hill before arriving in Pittsburgh, I might have made mistakes, because my memory sometimes deceives me.

### Conclusion

Many other events that cut more to the quick force me to suppress them out of respect, but help me to add to the glory of God. Under a bitter and hard shell the Lord hides the almonds of paradise, and no words can express this. *Secundum multitudinem dolorum meorum in corde meo consolationes tuae laetificaverunt animam meam* ["When cares abound within me, your comfort gladdens my soul"],<sup>138</sup> and *sicut abundant passiones Christi in nobis, sic per Christum abundat consolatio nostra* ["As we have shared much in the suffering of Christ, so through Christ do we share abundantly in his consolation"].<sup>139</sup> Oh, how true is it that God did not leave us to conquer by shrewdness, who *dat nivem sicut lanam* ["He spreads snow like wool"];<sup>140</sup> *fidelis [autem Deus est] ... non patitur nos tentari supra id quod possumus, sed facit etiam cum tentatione proventum* ["God keeps his promise. He will not let you be tested beyond your strength. Along with the test he will give you a way out of it."]<sup>141</sup> Whoever truly desires to die to himself really tastes how

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<sup>137</sup> Rosati was an assiduous record keeper. Most of his journals are still extant, forming the basis for his historical account of the early days of the American mission. See his "Recollections," *Vincentian Heritage* 1 (1980) to 5:2 (1984).

<sup>138</sup> Ps 94:19.

<sup>139</sup> 2 Cor 1:5.

<sup>140</sup> Ps 147:16.

<sup>141</sup> 1 Cor 10:13.

*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

sweet the Lord is, who seeks him with simplicity, who desires to be able to say, *funes ceciderunt mihi in praeclaris* ["For me the measuring lines have fallen on pleasant sites"],<sup>142</sup> *et in terra deserta, et in via, et in aquosa, sic [in sancto apparui tibi]* ["the earth, parched, lifeless and without water; thus have I gazed toward you in the sanctuary"],<sup>143</sup> etc. Whoever desires to know what is said in the Apocalypse: *quod nemo scit nisi qui accipit* ["which no one knows except the one who receives it"],<sup>144</sup> whoever tries to sing happily in this exile, *dirupisti vincula mea tibi sacrificabo hostiam laudis* ["you have loosed my bonds; to you will I offer sacrifice of thanksgiving"],<sup>145</sup> etc., who has left all, and understands his feelings and also himself, and comes to America resolved to sell his dear life for Jesus Christ, will suffer less than he thinks. With infinite contentment he will suffer and say with joy when he will have to be deprived of the most necessary and dear things: *satiabor cum apparuerit gloria tua* ["I shall be filled when your glory appears"].<sup>146</sup> Amen. Amen.

P.S. Having read over the preceding wandering itinerary, it seems to me that I should be reproved for an essential lack and for having to duly enhance the majestic and radical mass of the entire machine,<sup>147</sup> instead of doing justice to the rare and extraordinary merit of our prelate, the most worthy Bishop Louis William Dubourg. Of all the vices, that which I feel the most is an insuperable aversion to adulation. Nevertheless, it is born from that inexhaustible source which dominates me and, despite my weak efforts to destroy it, I still want to speak out of pride and innate arrogance. I glorify God and honor the unrecognized truth of the person of whom I speak. I certainly must admit that after God I owe the merit of what has happened and what is happening to the rare talents, industry, experience, enterprise, skill, prudence, vigilance, zeal and dogged insistence of this singular man, of whom history struggles to furnish a like example. He provided us

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<sup>142</sup> Ps 16:6.

<sup>143</sup> Ps 63:3.

<sup>144</sup> Rev 2:17.

<sup>145</sup> Ps 116:16-17.

<sup>146</sup> Ps 17:15. A modern translation reads: "on waking, I shall be content in your presence."

<sup>147</sup> That is, the rest of this pioneer group.

*Historical Writings: Itinerary*

with ready cash, with directions and recommendations for everything. He opened the way to us, removed obstacles, secured the means, and while remaining personally in France disposed of matters so wisely that we could have continued with our eyes closed. His reputation and loving manners turned hearts to favor him and his missionaries. Under his protection, or to say it better, under his wings, or to say it even better, upon his wings, we crossed the long routes of the country, and we found everywhere the finest hospitality.

If at this moment there is a college built for the education of young men,<sup>148</sup> a monastery for the education of young girls,<sup>149</sup> a magnificent seminary for ecclesiastics,<sup>150</sup> a cathedral in which in a few days they will begin to officiate, all is the fruit of his active, discreet and bold zeal. He preaches tirelessly like an angel in both English and French, and whoever preaches after him will have to do a lot to fill his shoes. The many conversions of sinners and heretics that have taken place, and generally all the good that has been done—thanks be to God much good has been done—should for many reasons be attributed to him. He alone is at the wheel, the rudder, and he is also at the sail and the oar. He is everywhere. He preaches, hears confessions, baptizes, joins in marriage, assists the sick. He is general, captain, sergeant and private; he spends his evenings answering letters pouring in from every part of America and Europe, *instantia quotidiana, sollicitudo diocesis immensa* [“the daily tension, immense anxiety for his diocese”].<sup>151</sup> God gives him health, and the good we rightfully await from such a man, rightly called apostolic, is beyond all conjecture. God’s hand is visibly upon him, and it alone is capable of adequately rewarding him. *Notum est Domino opus eius* [“his work is known to the Lord”].<sup>152</sup>

<sup>148</sup> The Saint Louis Academy.

<sup>149</sup> Under the direction of Philippine Duchesne.

<sup>150</sup> Saint Mary’s of the Barrens.

<sup>151</sup> Based on 2 Cor 11:28.

<sup>152</sup> Acts 15:18.





## APPENDICES

# I. DE ANDREIS, THE MISSION PREACHER, 1806-1815

## INTRODUCTION

*This appendix contains notices about missions in which Felix De Andreis took part during his years as a member of the house of Monte Citorio in Rome. Unfortunately, accounts of the missions he gave as a member of the Piacenza house are probably no longer extant. Although these accounts do not deal with his American years, they are still instructive. The background they provide illumines his experience as a traveling missionary and preacher, and, as well, these brief accounts help to interpret his interest in beginning similar missions in the United States.*

*These accounts cover the years 1806 to 1815, during which time he gave missions nearly every year, while fulfilling many other responsibilities. Following the pattern Saint Vincent de Paul established, the Vincentians kept written records of their missions. Each account here follows roughly the same traditional outline: dates of the mission (closing with the papal blessing,) the personnel and their responsibilities, notable events or problems encountered, an evaluation of the outcome, lodging and finances. Those accounts in the handwriting of De Andreis have been noted as such. Names of dioceses have been added where needed within square brackets.*

### I. MISSIONS IN 1806-1807<sup>1</sup>

CECCANO, DIOCESE OF FERENTINO  
15 August—14 September 1806. No. 410.<sup>2</sup>

On 15 August, Fathers Domenico Casso and Felix De Andreis left Rome and met Father Gaetano Milani in Ferentino and Brother Luigi Felice. Because the magistrate and the priests repeated their requests, the missionaries agreed to extend this mission from eight days to four

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<sup>1</sup> **Missions in 1806-1807.** *Selections from an untitled register in the archives of the province of Rome containing "Relazione delle Missioni, 1784-1882." Italian.*

<sup>2</sup> Page 209. De Andreis wrote the accounts of all of the missions in the series lasting until 11 February 1807. Ceccano was a town of 4600 at the time.

*Appendices: Mission Preacher*

weeks. The papal blessing was given on 14 September to a large crowd of peasants from Possi, Amara, Giuliano, Bratica, Frosinone, etc. Since the crowd was greater than 4000 people, the general communion was held for two days. On one of these Father De Andreis gave the homily, and on another, Father Milani.

The evening ceremonies were held in the town square, and the morning events in the church. The former were crowded, but the latter were not. On the first three days and on the free days Father Casso gave some conferences to about fourteen priests and several clerics. Since the weather was very hot, the workers<sup>3</sup> had the opportunity to gather merits, but the farm workers were occupied at the time in the corn harvest, and they could not profit from the mission, something the missionaries desired very much. Even so, the three pastors and the main inhabitants of the area showed their great satisfaction. It should therefore be noted that the right time for this mission is the month of May.

The missionaries lodged as usual in the home of the very welcoming Mr. Domenico Nicola Gizzi, who showed himself a very dear friend of the Congregation.

GIULIANO, DIOCESE OF FERENTINO  
17 September—5 October 1806. No. 411.<sup>4</sup>

This mission lasted nineteen days. It began on 17 September and finished on 5 October. The people crowded into all the ceremonies and profited from them greatly, as became clear from the eagerness of so many men and women to go to confession. To remove ignorance in the matters of faith, Christian doctrine was taught after lunch.

On the morning of the fifth the general communion was held, and after lunch the final sermon with the papal blessing to the many people who attended.

Father De Andreis addressed the clergy five times about their duties; if they fulfill them exactly, their people will be quickly sanctified and eager to do good. The aforementioned Mr. Domenico Nicola Gizzi offered his dwelling here, since it was very near the church.

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<sup>3</sup> The writer regularly called the missionaries "workers."

<sup>4</sup> Page 210. In De Andreis's hand. This was a town of about 1600 inhabitants.

*Appendices: Mission Preacher*

## SAN LORENZO, DIOCESE OF FERENTINO

9-26 October 1806. No. 412.<sup>5</sup>

On horses coming from San Lorenzo, and in the company of six gentlemen from Giuliano, the same workers left that town, and the mission opened on 9 October. After three days, Father Pietro Boeri arrived; he is a member of the house of Tivoli. Brother Giovanni Quattrosanti from the house of Monte Citorio also came. They substituted for Father Milani and Brother Felice, who were called back to Rome after the mission of Giuliano.

Father Boeri gave the retreat to the large group of 27 priests. This consisted in several conferences, as was already done in two previous regions.

On the morning of the 26th, the general communion was given, and Father Boeri gave the homily. At the conclusion there was the usual blessing. As in the two previous missions, as well as in towns belonging to the house of Colonna, the missionaries visited the Confraternity of Charity. Although found to be nearly defunct, it was helped with some alms gathered in a collection taken at the end throughout the area. The archpriest, Father Ignazio De Luca, was unable to rent another lodging, even though he had sought lodging from several persons. He housed the missionaries in his own home, doing so almost completely at his own expense. He insisted that this should be the home of the missionaries whenever they came there to give the holy missions.

## SONNINO, DIOCESE OF PRIVERNO

1-23 November 1806. No. 413.<sup>6</sup>

In Sonnino, a noble princely town of the house of Colonna, some evil-minded persons did not want a mission, yet the same three workers [Fathers De Andreis and Boeri, Brother Quattrosanti] went there and began the mission on 1 November. Only a stone's throw from the town, in the convent of the Conventual Franciscans, the band

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<sup>5</sup> Page 210. The entry is in De Andreis's hand, although he does not mention himself by name.

<sup>6</sup> Pages 210-11. This town numbered about 2400 inhabitants.

*Appendices: Mission Preacher*

of missionaries received lodging. Also, since the town church was too small, the usual ceremonies of the mission were held in the church of the same priests. The distance from the church, bad roads and rainy weather only helped to increase the fervor and devotion of the people, who crowded into the ceremonies although the olives, which were beginning to fall, kept some away.

Peace was restored even in entire families, discords resolved through kindness, with the exception of one family, which, for just reasons, decided not to end their problems. Father De Andreis gave conferences to the clergy. The Confraternity of Charity had been abolished by one of the former bishops, who decreed it during his canonical visit. By the permission of Bishop [Francesco] Mondelli, the present bishop of Piperno [Priverno], it was reestablished and, through the alms gathered during a collection made in town, the Confraternity received a good subsidy.

On the morning of the 23rd the general communion took place, and after breakfast the papal blessing was given, to the accompaniment of the rifle fire of 25 French soldiers.<sup>7</sup> They accompanied the solemn procession of the Blessed Sacrament, which took place here as it did in Ceccano and in San Lorenzo. The extraordinary attendance that the people gave to this final ceremony was a certain proof of the profit that they had taken from the great exhaustion of the missionaries. They were all the more aware of it when they left.

The best time for this mission is the month of August.

SANTO STEFANO, DIOCESE OF FERENTINO  
24 November—8 December 1806. No. 414.<sup>8</sup>

Santo Stefano had not been counted among the missions to be given in this region. But it had to be given since the archpriest asked the superior of the house, Father Romualdo Ansaloni, to accede to the wishes of its people. Thus the same superior accepted these requests and ordered the missionaries in Sonnino to leave on the following

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<sup>7</sup> That is, the forces of the occupying French armies.

<sup>8</sup> Page 211. Although De Andreis is not mentioned here by name, the following account says that he had been in Santo Stefano. The town numbered about 1000 inhabitants.

*Appendices: Mission Preacher*

day, 24 November. They arrived in Santo Stefano about 11 P.M., and shortly afterward opened the mission.

The people attended all the ceremonies, and showed the same sincerity with which they had asked for the holy mission. The outcome was proportionate to their wish. Since it was necessary to finish it quickly, the [papal] blessing took place on 8 December, the feast of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady. It was given in the square outside the town, since the church was too small and could not hold the large number of peasants. Despite the bad weather, they came from several villages, mainly from Giuliano and Santo Lorenzo.

The communion held in the morning was truly general. During the mission, Father Boeri gave the conferences to the clergy. The Confraternity of Charity was visited. The people were asked to help build the new church of the Sorrowful Virgin Mary, and they quarried many stones for it during that period.

The Confraternity of the Sacconi, as it is called,<sup>9</sup> was reestablished and, since there were no members after it had been disbanded, Fathers Luigi Beraci and Luigi Frocco were made its directors. This same advantage was also given to Giuliano with the reestablishment of the Confraternities of the Blessed Sacrament, of Death<sup>10</sup>, and of the Rosary.

After this mission, Father Boeri left for Tivoli, and the others were taken to join the bishop of Ferentino, for whom they had worked in the diocese where the mission had been given. They left on the evening of the 11th for Olevano, where Father [Martino] Pomi, arrived from Rome, had already opened the mission on the eighth.

## OLEVANO, DIOCESE OF PALESTRINA

8-28 December 1806. No. 415.<sup>11</sup>

Father Pomi began this mission by himself on 8 December. Afterwards Fathers Casso and De Andreis arrived on the 11th, remaining till the 28th. As mentioned above, they came from Santo Stefano to help him. There was always a crowd at all the ceremonies, and the general communion took place on the morning of the 28th.

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<sup>9</sup> That is, those clothed in sackcloth as a penitential act.

<sup>10</sup> A burial society.

<sup>11</sup> Page 212. This was a town of 2300 persons.

*Appendices: Mission Preacher*

The closing talk and the papal blessing were given in the square outside the gate [of the town] because of the peasants who had arrived from several villages. Father Pomi gave the retreat to the priests, as usual.

As elsewhere, a talk was given to the sisters of the Confraternity of Charity. The oratory for men was reestablished as in other missions, since after five years [since the last mission] it had to be started up again. The missionaries lodged in the house of Signora Metilde, under the auspices of the archpriest, Father Baldi.

MONTE FORTINO, DIOCESE OF SEGNI  
31 December 1806—18 January 1807. No. 416.<sup>12</sup>

On the evening of Saint Sylvester [31 December], the same workers opened this mission. There was a throng at all the ceremonies. The men, however, did not crowd in until halfway through the mission to go to confession. Toward the mid-point, they gave the missionaries, the priests, and the Reformed religious, in whose convent they stayed, much work to do.

The general communion was given in the morning of the 18th of January and, since the church was too small, the closing talk was given in the town square, in front of the palace of Prince Borghesi, the baron of the place.

Since the Confraternity of Charity did not exist then, it was founded successfully this time to take care of poor sick parishioners, to the satisfaction of everyone in the two churches of Santa Croce for the two parishes established here as well as for Santo Stefano. Both of them received a charitable subsidy taken up through the generosity of the faithful.

Father De Andreis gave the conferences to the clergy.

They lived near the church, but in cramped quarters, in the house of Mr. Francesco Caponieri.

VALMONTONE, DIOCESE OF SEGNI  
20 January—8 February 1807. No. 417.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Page 212. This was a town of some 2500 persons, 22 miles from Rome.

<sup>13</sup> Pages 213-14.



*Appendices: Mission Preacher*

It had been 114 years since our confreres had given a mission in this illustrious dependency of Casa Bona. It pleased God to call them through the zeal of Archbishop Pietro Antonio Luciani, present archbishop of the famous collegiate church of Santa Maria Maggiore. Together with the pastor of the other parish church, Santo Stefano, he took care of our expenses. The mission was a success. There was a crowd at all the ceremonies, and we were very busy with confessions.

The mission began on 20 January and lasted until 8 February, Quinquagesima Sunday. The general communion took place in the morning and, after lunch, the papal blessing was given to the people outside the church. The peasants from Monte Fortino and Lugnano increased their number.

Reconciliations were obtained and these were made public, and people laid down their arms, as had already happened elsewhere. The Confraternity of Charity was visited, and a collection was taken up among the people by means of collection boxes in the area. It amounted to fifty scudi.

Father De Andreis gave the conferences to the clerics and priests.<sup>14</sup>

The missionaries lived in the baronial palace next to the Church. Valmontone is inhabited by about 2200 people. Besides parishioners of the collegiate church, there is the advantage of a convent of Observant Franciscans near by, and a seminary of the Pious School Sisters for the education of girls. The baron employs the Sisters as teachers for his other towns. The missionaries made the 27-mile journey to Rome in a carriage provided them by Lieutenant Ballaradi on 11 February, the first day of Lent. Thus they returned to this house of Monte Citorio.

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<sup>14</sup> Ricciardelli, in his biography of De Andreis, reports rumors of certain quasi-miraculous events that took place at this mission. Asked about them, the bishop of Segni responded in a letter dated 16 April 1841:

Although I have reflected about it, I am unable to recall any special events or wonders performed by the late Father De Andreis while he gave the mission at Valmontone in 1806 [sic]. Yet I recall very well his spotless life, which distinguished him from all the others. He was greatly accepted by all the people and, in my admiration for his rare virtues, I conceived the highest regard for him.

(Ricciardelli, *Vita*, 35-36.) Pages 224-25.

*Appendices: Mission Preacher***II. MISSIONS IN 1808**

## CITY AND DIOCESE OF AMELIA

11 September—30 November 1808. No. 444.<sup>15</sup>

On 9 September 1808, Fathers Pomi, [Giuseppe] Giovannoni, [Domenico] Casso and De Andreis, with Brother Luigi Antonini, left this house of Monte Citorio for Amelia. This satisfied the legacy of the late Canon Leonini, who obliged [the missionaries] to give a retreat every nine years to the monks and give missions in the city of Amelia and in the diocese. On the 11th of the month, Fathers Giovannoni and Casso with Brother Antonini went to give the little mission at Porchiano, while Fathers Pomi and De Andreis began the retreat for the clergy in the cathedral church. They stayed there for eight days, and the bishop, Fortunato Maria Pinchetti served the mass of the priests of his diocese; and for the other half they gave the retreat to the clergy of Lugnano, led by the same Fathers Pomi and De Andreis, on the feast day of Saint Matthew the apostle. They finished on the feast of Saint Michael the archangel. When the mission of Porchiano was finished, Fathers Giovannoni and Casso, too, came to Lugnano for ten days to give a retreat to two monasteries of nuns. Father Giovannoni went to the monastery of Santa Chiara; they are Franciscans; and Father Casso went to the monastery of the Benedictines, called Annunziata. On 4 October, they all returned together to Amelia after their work was done, for the retreat for those nuns. They had wanted them at another time since they were involved in this month in the grape harvest; nevertheless, they accepted them. Father Giovannoni was assigned to the Franciscan nuns of Santa Elisabetta, and the Benedictines of San Giovanni; Father Casso to the Benedictines of Santa Caterina; and Father Pomi to the Augustinians of Santa Monica and the Benedictines of San Magno. These are under the monks of San Paolo [fuori le mura] in Rome. All three of them began their exertions on the fifth of the month.

After a few days of rest in Amelia, Father De Andreis returned to Rome where he was awaited to go to give the retreat to the seminary

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<sup>15</sup> **Missions in 1808.** Pages 224-25. All the missions, including retreats, were given in the diocese of Amelia in 1808.

*Appendices: Mission Preacher*

of Palestrina, and afterwards to give the retreat to the pastors and confessors of that renowned city; and then he was to assume the chair of theology in this house.

The mission of Amelia could have been begun toward the end of the month of October had the farmers not been involved in the harvest. Consequently it had to wait until 13 November, and so, in any case, it lasted to the 20th. Attendance was small since the harvest was not yet completed at that time. Nonetheless, the mission ran into the novena of Saint Fermina, to whom those people have a great devotion.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, on the 13th, on which day fell the feast of the Patronage of the Blessed Virgin, this mission was opened with the bishop in attendance. He attended each evening in his choir robes both at the catechism lessons and the sermon. Father Giovannoni gave the talks in the morning, and Father Casso the catechism lessons. Father Pomi did the preaching, and Father [Romualdo] Ansaloni, superior of this house, came to help, given the number of 4000 people in the parish. Don Vincenzo, marchese of Toni, Father Teodoro, a student at Propaganda, Father [Giuseppe] Blengini from our Congregation also helped with confessions, and this helped us to complete them.

At the beginning it was planned that the mission would last ten or twelve days, but since there was no time for confessions in fifteen days, the people asked that the mission be extended to eighteen days, which was done. The festival of Saint Fermina, which fell this time during the period of the mission, did not disturb it at all, since there were neither races nor games nor bonfires as in past years, but only the *Pontificali* [papal troops] playing music. This interrupted the catechism lessons and the sermons for two evenings, but it gave the workers [missionaries] more time to hear the confessions of many people. They gave unequivocal proofs of sincere contrition and the result, especially from the confessions of the men, was not indifferent.

On the morning of the feast of Saint Andrew the apostle, the bishop himself gave the fervorino followed by the general communion. After lunch he gave the final sermon and then the blessing. To maintain the good results of the mission, this bishop instituted an oratory for the

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<sup>16</sup> Saint Fermina (or Firmina), whose feast was celebrated on 24 November, was remembered as a virgin martyr from the time of the persecution of Diocletian.

*Appendices: Mission Preacher*

men<sup>17</sup> like the one of Father [Vincenzo] Caravita<sup>18</sup> in Rome for some evenings a week to become like that in the parish of the Madonna. He recommended to the men a frequent participation in this oratory, and he felt that it would run well.

The missionaries were lodged comfortably at the seminary. It should be noted that a better time for the mission of Amelia would be May.

### III. MISSIONS IN 1810

CERI, DIOCESE OF PORTO  
15-25 March 1810. No. 463.<sup>19</sup>

On 15 March 1810, Fathers De Andreis and Giuseppe Martini with Brother Bartolomeo Purgher left from Rome, from this house of Monte Citorio, and they arrived in the evening at Ceri. Since the archpriest was not there, being absent in Rome, the beginning of the mission had to be postponed until the following evening. They lived in the ducal palace. The mission consisted of the regular functions and confessions, and all the usual exercises were carried out. Father Martini gave the morning discourse and the evening catechism. The general communion was held and benediction on the 25th, the feast of the Annunciation. The population was between 400 and 500 souls, including the children and the farm workers. A request was made that the mission be continued for another five or six days beyond its determined time. However, the missionaries could not do so because they had to leave immediately for Santa Marinella.

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<sup>17</sup> A small prayer group.

<sup>18</sup> A Vincentian priest, and writer of spiritual treatises.

<sup>19</sup> **Missions in 1810.** Page 230. In De Andreis's hand. This town numbered about 350 persons.

*Appendices: Mission Preacher*

SANTA MARINELLA AND SANTA SEVERA, DIOCESE OF PORTO  
27 March—11 April 1810. No. 464.<sup>20</sup>

The missionaries should have first gone to Santa Severa, but since they could not be there because of another assignment and, because the archpriest had been held up on the 26th by the rain, they began on the 27th at Santa Marinella. The missionaries lived in an old vacant house in front and to the left of the landlord's palace. The usual two evening functions were held. In the mornings and on Sunday, generally speaking, only a few were in attendance, although several times we missionaries went around in the hills to get their attention, and to invite these wandering people weighed down with fatigue. They hardly gave any indication of remembering what it was to be a Christian. We had the blessing and on the following day we left to begin in the evening at Santa Severa. The attendance from there as well as from the neighboring farms was very large. We lived in a vacant house belonging to the archpriest. We performed the functions as at Santa Marinella and we gave the blessing on the 11th, because we had to rush to leave on the next day, although we had been requested to stay another week; and so the workers returned to Rome.

#### IV. MISSIONS IN 1811

ANGUILLARA, DIOCESE OF SUTRI  
9-19 March 1811. No. 469.<sup>21</sup>

On 9 March 1811, Fathers Francis Xavier Curti and Felix De Andreis, along with Brother Bartolomeo Purgher, left Rome and arrived at Anguillara the same evening, Saturday of the Ember Days. They opened the holy mission, which, for good reasons, they had to

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<sup>20</sup> Pages 231-32. In De Andreis's hand. These two towns numbered about 300 persons.

<sup>21</sup> **Missions in 1811.** Page 232. In De Andreis's hand.

*Appendices: Mission Preacher*

call a retreat. Because of the deportation of the clergy,<sup>22</sup> the people remained with only one priest, a Roman, who came to help the one confessor. Although there were two other simple priests<sup>23</sup> who were not confessors, they were very anxious to have the mission. With all this, despite urgent work in the fields, many people still attended the services, especially at the evening sermon. They came to confession, except on the first days when only a few did so. The missionaries lived in a house belonging to the exiled archpriest, and the mission succeeded fairly well. The papal blessing was given on the 19th, the feast of Saint Joseph, because they were in a hurry to return to Rome for the catechism lessons in the city that were to be given on the next day. For the expenses of the mission the missionaries received what was assigned for Lent. The mayor himself and the priest, Father Vincenzo Marchetti, the acting pastor, had requested the mission. There was a recently ordained priest who had been repatriated, Father Isidoro Rezzesi from Anguillara.

CERVETERI, DIOCESE OF PORTO

13-21 April 1811. No. 470.<sup>24</sup>

The same priests mentioned above with Brother Vincenzo Ciapparola left again the following Holy Saturday morning, 13 April, early in the morning, and with very bad horses. For nine hours a terrible storm accompanied them on the road. They made only 27 miles and arrived at Cerveteri where they were lodged in the palace of Prince Ruspoli, the patron of the area. We intended to begin the mission that same evening, but because of the shaking that we took on the trip and because the archpriest had thought otherwise, the mission was deferred until the next day, Easter Sunday, to start the instructions.

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<sup>22</sup> The Napoleonic government decreed the repatriation of all foreign clergy. Because present-day Italy was then divided into many small independent states, this led to much dislocation of the Italian clergy, accustomed to working outside their native regions.

<sup>23</sup> That is, young priests who had not yet received permission to hear confessions.

<sup>24</sup> Page 232. In De Andreis's hand. Cerveteri numbered about 500 inhabitants.

*Appendices: Mission Preacher*

Only a small number of people were present because it had not yet been possible to notify the groups of children and farmers who form the majority of the population. The ministers and businessmen had been asked to be present and on the next evening these poor creatures came to the usual sung procession, and filled the church. Meanwhile, one of the missionaries preached and the other assembled the children in the oratory both in the morning and in the evening to give them a little instruction that appeared to be very necessary, especially for the people living in the country. There was always a group at the confessional and it would have been necessary to remain at least another week to satisfy everyone, but since the return had been set for late Wednesday the blessing was given on the Sunday after Easter and Monday was left free to finish up the confessions. This could not be done, however, and they were not finished.

The missionaries returned [to Rome] on Wednesday in the carriage of the assistant, Father Calzaroni, at whose expense they had been received with great politeness. The vicar general had requested the mission, and the expenses of the mission were helped by the stipend set aside for the Lenten preacher.

**V. MISSIONS IN 1812**

CASAL NUOVO, DIOCESE OF PORTO  
8-23 February 1812. No. 471.<sup>25</sup>

On 8 February Fathers Felix De Andreis and Vincenzo Cesari, along with Brother Purgher, went to Casal Nuovo di Porto, to give a retreat to the people. In the evening of the following day they opened the retreat. Despite the time of Carnival, many of these devout people participated, paying not the slightest attention to the Carnival. The retreat lasted for two weeks. During this time almost everyone received the holy sacraments, and on the 23rd of the same month, the papal blessing was given in the evening to a large group of assembled people.

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<sup>25</sup> **Missions in 1812.** Page 233. Also spelled Castel Nuovo, this town numbered about 1600 persons.

*Appendices: Mission Preacher*

The missionaries received lodging in the home of the Countess Sarazzini, who lives in Rome. The house was very convenient, since it was facing the church. The church was lovely, and could stand in any city. We had to pay something because of the great poverty of the place, but God bestowed his consolation and blessings on these people.

RIANO, DIOCESE OF PORTO  
24 February—2 March 1812. No. 472.<sup>26</sup>

On the day following the papal blessing, that is on the 24th of the same month, the missionaries were accompanied by the vicar forane, the archpriest, and one other priest, and went to Riano. This was a walk of an hour and a half. They lodged at the palace of Prince Ruspoli, next to the church. There they gave seven days of retreats as they did in Casal Nuovo, and with a similar attendance of the devout people. Even on the first day they began to crowd in for confessions. We concluded on the evening of 2 March, with the usual papal blessing.

PROCOJO VECCHIO NEAR RIANO, [DIOCESE OF PORTO]  
3-8 March 1812. No. 473.<sup>27</sup>

At the insistence of Prince Ruspoli, as well as the leaseholders Graziosi and Barberini, we had to move to Procojo Vecchio, four miles from Riano. We went by horseback, since the bad roads did not allow us to walk as we had planned. There we lodged together in the same house, and were provided abundantly with everything for the five days of the retreat.

The attendance for confessions was not as great as in the two previous places. The farm workers, the young men, were fatigued by their work. Yet they were persuaded to come in the evenings to hear the word of God. They had to walk about a mile at night, and then return to their own homes. Nevertheless, many went to confession, especially those from Procojo, and this was stimulus for others to dispose themselves better to celebrate Easter. The papal blessing was

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<sup>26</sup> Page 233. Riano was a town of 500 persons.

<sup>27</sup> Page 233.



*Appendices: Mission Preacher*

given on the eighth, a Sunday. There was a larger attendance from the surrounding areas and, on the ninth, the missionaries returned happily to Rome.

**VI. MISSIONS IN 1813****SANTA SEVERA, DIOCESE OF PORTO**

20-28 February 1813. No. 481.<sup>28</sup>

Fathers De Andreis and Pereira,<sup>29</sup> with Brother [Luigi] Scardini, left on 20 February for Santa Severa. They began the mission on Sexagesima Sunday with the catechism lessons and preaching in the afternoon. They stayed in the home of the archpriest, according to the normal practice. There was a sufficient attendance each day. The papal blessing was given on Quinquagesima Sunday. Father Galassi [the pastor] provided support and transportation.

**CERVETERI, DIOCESE OF PORTO**

3-14 March 1813. No. 482.<sup>30</sup>

The same priests left for Cerveteri on 2 March 1813 and began the mission on the third. As usual, they lived in the palace of Prince Ruspoli, but the priests lived in other, better, rooms. The exercises were given in the afternoon [not at] 8:00 P.M., but at 1:30 P.M., for the convenience of the people. The attendance at services, and at confession, was sufficient. The papal blessing was given on the 14th. Father Calzaroni [the pastor] was sometimes absent.

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<sup>28</sup> **Missions in 1813.** Page 236.

<sup>29</sup> There were several Portuguese Vincentians with this same name at this period in the Roman province, rendering their identification nearly impossible.

<sup>30</sup> Page 236.

*Appendices: Mission Preacher*

CERI, DIOCESE OF PORTO  
15 March—4 April 1813. No. 483.<sup>31</sup>

The same workers left Cerveteri on the 15th, and traveled to Ceri, where they lived, as usual, in the small palace of Duke Odescalchi. They began the mission in the afternoon. The services were held at the usual time. The attendance both at the services and at the sessions was more numerous than the last time. The papal blessing was given on the 25th, the feast of the Annunciation. The fervent duke provided support; he asked for nothing in return except four masses. From there the workers left on 4 April and returned home.

## VII. MISSIONS IN 1814

VICOVARO, [DIOCESE OF TIVOLI]  
26 February—21 March 1814. No. 487.<sup>32</sup>

On the morning of the first Saturday of Lent, 26 February 1814, the following left from Rome, Fathers Giuseppe Giovannoni and Felix De Andreis with Brother [Bartolomeo] Martini and they arrived at Tivoli. Father [Paolo] Vespasiani joined them. He was the only member of that house which had been suppressed. He brought them in the evening to Vicovaro where they arrived on horseback. When they came there they followed instructions and were lodged at the house of the bishop next to the church of Saint Peter, where they were to begin the mission.

They began it the following evening with a great number of people, and a large number attended the evening functions and continued up to the end, but at the morning conference, because of the unusually harsh cold weather, they had to cut it short. In the first week only a small number of men came to confession but in the two following weeks there was a larger number. There were several problems to be regulated and reconciled. This happened through the intervention of

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<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *Missions in 1814*. Page 257. In De Andreis's hand.

*Appendices: Mission Preacher*

two zealous priests, Fathers Francesco Capocci and Sebastiano Maneci. A brawl had broken out among five young men in a certain tavern during in the first days of the mission. This grieved the missionaries in no small measure, and all the well-intentioned people in the country, through God's mercy, turned toward the good of the mission itself. There was great public satisfaction when the young men themselves came to the dais at the end of the sermon and acknowledged the scandal they had given and, amid sorrow and tears, asked the peoples' and their parents' forgiveness. Several conferences were then given for the clergy gathered from the three parishes and for five other priests. The infernal enemy worked hard to ruin the mission and to impede its fruit. Nevertheless, with the help of God and our Blessed Mary of Victories, whose holy image had been set up in the middle of the church on its cart for the majority of the mission, the missionaries had sufficient reason to be consoled in the matter and to thank God and the Mother of Mercies. On the 16th, Father Vespasiani left to begin the usual novena for the Annunciation in our church at Tivoli. Therefore, on the feast day of glorious Saint Joseph on Saturday, they held the general communion with the usual exhortation, which Father Giovannoni gave. In the evening there was the solemn procession with the Blessed Sacrament, and then followed the sermon adapted to the circumstances.

The next day, Sunday, there was free time in the morning for the remaining reconciliations and communions that it had not been possible to satisfy on the preceding day. Then, as happened the previous day, they began to reach a large crowd of peasants from the surrounding country towns of Cantalupo, Santo Polo, Santo Cinesco, Sambuci, Roccagiovine, Percile and others. As proof of this, the enormous church of Saint Peter was full, something never seen before, and the peasants outnumbered the villagers. Because of this large number it was necessary to speed up the ceremony, and the papal blessing was given with the usual solemnities and with an evident emotion among the people.

During this time there had been various other requests for missions from the people eager for the saving nourishment. They had come from La Scarpa, Sambuci, Roccagiovine, Vallinfreda, Vivero and La Mentana, but the unhappy news came of the death, on the evening of 13 March at 1:30 A.M., of our very worthy superior and visitor, Father

*Appendices: Mission Preacher*

Romualdo Ansaloni. He was mourned by all, and not only by our own confreres, but by those for whom he had been a Noah in the ark sent by providence to save the congregation in the ark of Monte [Citorio] from the universal flood of the Napoleonic persecution, but also likewise the whole city and those who lived outside it. He was lamented for his well-known wisdom and economic prudence, and because of his charity and goodness, which everyone admired and publicized. All plans were put on hold, as it was necessary to return immediately to Rome. This happened on the 21st of the month in the evening.<sup>33</sup>



Mosaic of De Andreis.  
*Collection of Kenrick-Glennon Seminary, Saint Louis, Missouri*

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<sup>33</sup> In August of this year, De Andreis was deputed to give one of the missions in Rome that was designed to welcome back the exiled pope. This open-air event was held at the Piazza Colonna. Others were held at different locations around the city.

*Appendices: Mission Preacher***VIII. MISSIONS IN 1815**

MANZIANA, [DIOCESE OF SUTRI]

6-25 January 1815. No. 492.<sup>34</sup>

Through the lively insistence of the archpriest of Manziana, Father Leone Mariani, a canon of Santo Spirito in Sassia in Rome, the mission [team] left for that place on 4 January 1815. The workers were Fathers De Andreis for the preaching, [Simone] Ugo for the morning talks, and Curti for the catechism lessons. Since the weather was bad and the roads were awful, they had to stop at Bracciano, where they arrived at midnight. On the next morning they continued their trip for the remaining five miles. But since the coach was too heavy and could not enter the area, they stopped a little distance away and the missionaries continued on foot into town.

The mission began on the morning of the sixth, the day of the Epiphany. Father De Andreis gave the sermon, and after lunch only Father Curti gave the catechism lesson. It was decided to close the mission on the 22nd of the same month, which fell on a Sunday, to be able to go home for the vigil of the Conversion of Saint Paul. However, the large number of people in attendance at the services and at the confessional obliged them to ask the superior, Father Ceracchi, to extend it, and this was granted. Consequently, the very large general communion was held on the 25th, the feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul, and after lunch the papal blessing was given in the public square.

The weather that day began by being very quiet and mild, but afterwards it became rainy and stormy, and they had to wait until the 28th [to leave]. They left that day on horseback after lunch for Bracciano, where they met the coach for Rome. On the next day, the 29th, they returned home.

The missionaries were lodged quite comfortably in the baron's palace, as usual. Since there was no income, and the missionaries were charged for their round trip and their support, part came from the archpriest and part from the community house.

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<sup>34</sup> Missions in 1815. Page 240.

*Appendices: Mission Preacher*

The result of this mission was that all the discords existing between people and families were eliminated by means of the peace that was established. Many debts and repayments were satisfied and restitutions given. Scandals were removed, such as that of a tavern located beneath the school of the Sisters of the Pious Schools; it had very bad spiritual effects on their students. The Company of the Confraternity<sup>35</sup> of Charity was erected and commenced with great fervor. Its officers began to function, many women joined, and many more kept asking to become members. A good collection was given for a beautiful and large oval painting of Saint Vincent de Paul, which was put in the chapel of the Blessed Trinity.

When everything had been set aright, reformed and established, the good that should be expected in this parish was recommended to the noteworthy zeal of the archpriest. The people loved him, and the magistrate of the town had asked the missionaries to go to the commendatore of Santo Spirito, Father Pallotta, to have him remain longer, to establish firmly all the things which had been begun. However, these recommendations did not take place on time, and the missionaries had hardly returned to Rome when the bishop had sent a new archpriest. He knew nothing about what had been done during the mission, to the universal displeasure of the people.

Manziana is 32 miles from Rome.

CORI A VALLE, [DIOCESE OF TERRACINA LATINA]

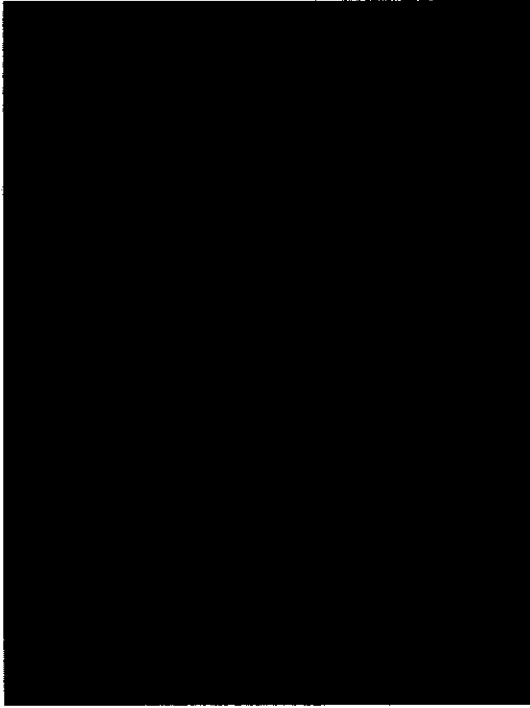
7-26 February 1815. No. 497.<sup>36</sup>

The morning of 7 February, the following missionaries left for Cori where they began the mission in the region of the valley on the evening of 8 February, Ash Wednesday. In the morning Father [Bartolomeo] Colucci began the Lenten observances there in the usual way. A homily followed the sacred functions and the [papal] blessing was given on the 26th of the month in the third week of Lent. This mission had not been very fervent at least on the part of the men, who had shown a great resistance to the word of God and to going to confession. As the

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<sup>35</sup> The text reads "Daughters," clearly an error.

<sup>36</sup> Page 243.

*Appendices: Mission Preacher*

Rev. Bartolomeo Colucci, C.M.  
*Courtesy of the author*

days went on, the people warmed up somewhat and the men began to crowd the confessional. They also attended [the meetings of] the Company of Charity founded by Father Giovannoni.

On the Thursday preceding the third Sunday of Lent Father De Andreis arrived for the priests' retreat.<sup>37</sup> He gave this in Santa Oliva from the morning of 28 February to the evening of 4 March. On the evening of the sixth, all the confessors assembled and Father De Andreis proposed a sacred agreement for the correct administration of the sacrament of penance. After a long discussion, during which each one proposed what he believed right and various points were debated, they agreed to adhere to the most important articles. These were written down and a commission was given to the canon, Father

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<sup>37</sup> One of his conferences is cited in Ricciardelli, *Vita*, 37-38.

*Appendices: Mission Preacher*

Talenti, to have them copied and distributed to all the confessors. It was hoped that this agreement would do great good in Cori if everyone remains firm in the decision. At the same time, Father De Andreis gave three talks to the sisters. The missionaries lived in the Fasanelli home.

CORI A MONTE, [DIOCESE OF TERRACINA LATINA]

27 February—12 March 1815. No. 498.<sup>38</sup>

On the evening of the 27th, Father Giovannoni left for Giuliano and Fathers Colucci and Rosati and the brother went to the area of [Cori a] Monte where they began the mission on 28 February. Father Colucci gave the sermons and Father Rosati the catechism instructions and the conferences.<sup>39</sup> Although the people lived in the same town as did those in the valley, and showed very different dispositions for the mission, it turned out very fruitfully.

At the first sound of the bell the church filled up with people in the morning for the conference. Likewise in the evening, they thronged the church to hear the word of God, who had opened many hearts. Its effects could be seen, both by the cessation of the occasions of sin and by their eagerness and the generosity with which they distanced themselves from them. These effects were also seen in their docility to whatever was said, not only in particular by the confessors but also in public to what was spoken to them from the pulpit.

Fifty side arms were gathered up, among which there were many valuable items, [including] four pistols.

Also, musical instruments, which in the past had caused a thousand sins, were surrendered. There were four guitars and one mandolin. The missionaries gave only one signal with the tambourines, which had been an entertainment for the girls, as well

<sup>38</sup> Page 243. This was De Andreis's last recorded mission. Rosati notes in his memoirs that De Andreis gave a retreat to the priests at the church of Santa Oliva.

<sup>39</sup> In his usual careful way, Rosati recorded the topics of his eleven instructions and conferences, as well as the conference given to the Confraternity of Charity. These instructions dealt principally with how to make a good confession, and the conferences with such sins as blasphemy and cursing, murmuring, obscene thoughts, theft, and drunkenness. (Rosati, "Memoria," typed copy in DRMA, Rosati papers.)



*Appendices: Mission Preacher*

as the frequent cause of various sins.<sup>40</sup> At this signal, on the last day these [instruments] were brought to the pulpit and just before the blessing in the middle of the public square in the presence of the archpriest, one missionary and almost all the people, at the head of whom were those who had made this sacrifice to the Lord. Amid public exhortation and rejoicing, the public square rang with cries of "long live Mary, long live peace," and the blacksmith smashed the knives and pistols, the tambourines and the guitars with the blows of his hammer.

Large numbers of both men and women went to confession. Many people crowded in at the doors of the church and many among the men and women waited to occupy the first places and to make sure they could go to confession. There was, however, a scarcity of confessors and time; consequently a large part of them were not able to go to confession.

The missionaries lived in the Ceva home. The people of Cori decided to maintain the missionaries with the stipend of a Lenten preacher, who had not been invited. At [Cori a] Valle on the fourth Sunday Father De Andreis gave a sermon about purgatory before he left for Giuliano, and at [Cori a] Monte Father Rosati, who had visited the Confraternity of Charity at Monte, did the same. Father Colucci had checked at Santa Oliva on the ceremonies of mass for each of the priests whether at Monte or Valle, according to the orders of the cardinal bishop.

The [papal] blessing was given on 12 March, Passion Sunday, and on the 15th they left for Rome. They took along the way Fathers Giovannoni and De Andreis. They had hardly arrived at Velletri when they found it opportune to provide themselves with a stout club. They arrived happily in Rome before nightfall on that same evening. The Lord always protected the missionaries on all their journeys undertaken in this countryside. In these difficult times he made their way favorable, against all hope. He preserved them from dangers and very difficult situations. He freed them from thieves and assassins who, even now, constantly infest the places where they traveled. Through God's help the Lord preserved them unhurt even after various accidents.

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<sup>40</sup> That is, it caused dances to be held.

*Appendices: Mission Preacher*

GIULIANO, DIOCESE OF VELLETRI  
27 February—12 March 1815. No. 499.<sup>41</sup>

On 27 February, Father Giovannoni arrived in Giuliano and began to instruct the people, reduced to fewer than 200 souls. Since their ignorance was great, each day he had to hold Christian doctrine, the instructions and lastly the sermons. And thus he continued to Monday, 6 March. At that time, Father De Andreis came to help him. The latter gave the sermons up to Passion Sunday, 12 March, when the [papal] blessing was given. The people attended the services and the confessional. The missionaries lived in the palace of the prince, and the leaseholder, Mr. Fochi, saw to their support.

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<sup>41</sup> Page 244.



## II. CHRONOLOGY OF FELIX DE ANDREIS

- 1778 12 December Birth and baptism in Demonte, Piedmont
- 1786 July – August Confirmation at San Donato parish, Demonte
- 1794 5 October Enters Turin seminary for first year  
11 December Nominated to a benefice (Saint Colomba) in Demonte
- 1795 Second year of seminary at Turin (six months)
- 1796 12 April Installation in benefice  
October Third year of seminary at Turin (seven months)
- 1797 Fourth year of seminary at Turin (remains only five days before entering Congregation of the Mission)  
12 November "Vocation Day," enters the internal seminary (novitiate) of the C.M., Mondovi
- 1799 7 February Interrupted novitiate; returns to Turin  
12 December Returns to novitiate
- 1800 21 September<sup>42</sup> Takes vows; leaves Turin  
26 December Arrives in Piacenza for studies
- 1801 21 March Ordained subdeacon, Piacenza  
30 May Ordained deacon, Piacenza; begins to give missions with Colucci in the diocese until called to Rome
- 1802 19 June Ordained priest, Piacenza
- 1803 Director of studies, Piacenza, until transferred to Rome for reasons of health
- 1806 20-25 March Arrives in Rome; stationed at Monte Citorio  
1806-1815 Giving missions near Rome; teaching, lecturing, preaching retreats in Rome
- 1807 Prints *Dio Solo*
- 1814 Prepares a translation of a catechism; writes *Norme ed Avvisi*  
24 May Pope Pius VII reenters Rome  
July, August Problems with Catechism; medical leave at Subiaco
- 1815 September Meets Louis William Dubourg  
24 September Episcopal ordination of Dubourg, Rome

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<sup>42</sup> Bozuffi says October.

*Appendices: Chronology*

27 September	Contract finalized with Dubourg, Rome
27 September	Negotiations concluded between Cardinal Consalvi and Sicardi
8 October	Signs agreement with Colucci on a book, Rome
14 October	Papal audience at Castelgandolfo
21-22 October	Rosati group leaves by sea for Genoa
10 November	Rosati group in Genoa; leaves 28-29 November
17 November	Signs contract with Dubourg, Naples
3 December	Retreat at Monte Citorio
7 December	Rosati group arrives in Marseilles
15 December	De Andreis and companions leave Rome
27 December	In Piacenza until 30 December
<b>1816</b> 2-5 January	In Turin; meets his brother Vincenzo
11 January	Enters France; Rosati group leaves for Toulouse
19 January	Rosati group arrives in Toulouse
24-26 January	In Toulouse
1 February	Arrives in Bordeaux
3 February	Rosati group leaves Toulouse for Bordeaux
7 February	Rosati group arrives in Bordeaux
8 March	Caretti and Ferrari leave Marseilles for Bordeaux
21 March	Caretti and Ferrari arrive in Bordeaux
1-6 April	Annual retreat
22 May	Dubourg arrives in Bordeaux
28 May	Dubourg tonsures four candidates at chapel of La Réunion
1 June	Dubourg confers minor orders
13 June	Group begins voyage from Bordeaux
10-13 July	Severe storms at sea
18 July	Vow to Saint Vincent
23 July	Land sighted
26 July	Lands at Baltimore, remains to 10 September
2 August	Flegifont decides to return to France
15 August	Celebrates solemn mass at the Baltimore cathedral
19 August	Retreat in Baltimore

*Appendices: Chronology*

2 September	Two wagons leave
3 September	First group leaves Baltimore on foot with third wagon
10 September	Second group leaves Baltimore by stagecoach
19 September	In Pittsburgh until 27 October
21 September	Dahmen and De Lattre arrive in Pittsburgh
22 September	Blanka and Borawanski arrive in Pittsburgh
26 September	Two wagons arrive in Pittsburgh
28 September	Third wagon arrives in Pittsburgh
30 September	Planned departure is deferred
4 October	Father O'Brien arrives for first time
14 October	Bishop Flaget leaves Louisville after waiting
27 October	On Ohio river in three boats until 12 November
3 November	Encounter near Marietta with pious family
11 November	At Cincinnati; celebrates his "vocation day"
19 November	In Louisville until 3 December
21 November	De Andreis and Casto go to Saint Thomas
29 November	Casto and Derigaud return to Louisville
4 December	Group arrives at Saint Thomas
9 December	David begins English classes; De Andreis starts theology classes
1817 23-29 March	Annual retreat
4 April	Arranges for the <i>Tre Ore</i> at Saint Thomas
5 April	Begins two-week mission near Bardstown
12 April	Rosati leaves for Vincennes
19 April	Rosati gives mission at Vincennes with Chabrat until 27 May <sup>43</sup>
8 September	Meets Charles Nerinckx at Saint Thomas
9 September	Dubourg arrives in United States at Annapolis
End September	De Andreis, Rosati, Acquaroni, Ferrari on retreat
2 October	Flaget, De Andreis, Rosati, Blanka, and guide Joseph Tucker, leave for Sainte Genevieve and Saint Louis
5-7 October	Often lost in Kentucky woods
7 October	Crossing Ohio river at Shawneetown

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<sup>43</sup> Rosati's "Recollections" say he arrived at Vincennes on 21 April. Joseph Rosati, C.M., "Recollections," *VH* 3, 133.

*Appendices: Chronology*

10 October	Arrival at Kaskaskia, lodging with Pierre Menard (1766-1844)
11 October	Arrival at Sainte Genevieve, evening
12-14 October	Meetings with parishioners
15 October	Leave for Saint Louis; night at Prairie du Rocher
16-17 October	Night at Cahokia, at Mr. Nicolas Jarrot's
18 October	Arrival in Saint Louis
19-20 October	Rosati baptizes in Saint Louis
6 November	Rosati, Flaget arrive at Saint Thomas
9 November ( <i>approximate</i> )	De Andreis and Blanka return to Sainte Genevieve
2 December	Dubourg arrives at Saint Thomas
29 December	Flaget and Dubourg arrive in Saint Genevieve
1818 4 January	Visit with Saviné at Cahokia (with Dubourg and others)
5 January	Flaget installs Dubourg as bishop
19 January	First baptism by De Andreis, Saint Louis
19 March	Priesthood ordination of Niel, Saint Louis
After Easter	Acquaroni and Caretti arrive in Saint Louis
29 March	Dubourg blesses cornerstone of new cathedral
	early April. Dangerously ill
20 June	Assists at baptism of Jewish convert, Saint Louis
21 June	Acquaroni baptizes at Saint Charles
2 July	Cellini group leaves from Livorno
1 September	Blesses Carondelet church
27 September	Rosati group celebrates on banks of Mississippi at mouth of Ohio
28 September	Rosati and others leave for Barrens, traveling 29 and 30
2 October	Rosati arrives at Barrens <sup>44</sup> ; others later
6 October	Cellini group arrives in Philadelphia
1 November	Ordinations at Sainte Genevieve
End November	Annual retreat until 3 December

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<sup>44</sup> The only date ever given is in Rosati, "Life," *Summarium*, 99.

*Appendices: Chronology*

	3 December	Internal seminary (novitiate) opens in Saint Louis; Caretti dies
	15 December	Priesthood ordination of Tichitoli, Saint Louis
1819	5 January	Cellini group arrives at the Barrens
	7-14 March	Seriously ill; receives viaticum
	June	Rosati and students move from Mrs. Hayden's cabin to temporary cabins at the seminary
	22 June	Ferrari leaves for Vincennes
	18 July	Annual retreat begins
	September	Meets Rosati in Saint Louis
	5 September	Priesthood ordination of Dahmen, Saint Louis
	27 September	Spiritual retreat at Saint Louis
	October	Mission at Portage des Sioux; visits Sacred Heart nuns
	18 October	Rosati begins to live in seminary buildings at Barrens
	December	Writes Itinerary
	3 December	Visits Acquaroni at Portage des Sioux, preaches
	5-12 December	Preaches retreat to Sacred Heart nuns, Florissant
	19 December	Priesthood ordination of Leo Deys, Saint Louis
1820	4 January	Rossetti group arrives at the Barrens <sup>45</sup>
	9 January	Blesses new cathedral, Saint Louis
	18 February	Dahmen at work in Vincennes
	20 March	Priesthood ordinations of Philip Borgna and Angelo Inglesi, Saint Louis
	8-9 June	Preaches at Sacred Heart, Florissant
	21 August	Last recorded baptism
	11 September	Last recorded funeral
	7 October	Serious illness
	15 October	Death in Saint Louis
	16 October	Funeral in Saint Louis; procession through Cahokia, Prairie du Rocher, Kaskaskia, Sainte Genevieve to reach Barrens (17)
	17 October	Burial behind old church at the Barrens

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<sup>45</sup> Rossetti and several others arrived in Philadelphia in October 1818 and took one year to reach the Barrens.





### III. BRIEF BIOGRAPHIES

*Biographical notes about those persons who figure most often in the writings of Felix De Andreis.*

**Acquaroni, John Baptist, C.M.** A priest member of the first group of four Vincentians. Returned to Italy after some time of living alone in Saint Charles. He was a native of Porto Maurizio, Italy. The date of his ordination is unknown, but may be 1808. In 1824, he returned to Italy where he cared for his mother. Father Jean-Baptiste Étienne, superior general, expelled him from the Congregation 25 September 1848, after he had lived on his own as a priest for some years. The date of his death is unknown.

**Blanka, Martin, C.M.** The only brother in the pioneer group, and by profession a tailor. He was born 5 October 1773 in Ostrava, in what is now the Czech Republic, and was the first brother in America. After his assignment at the Barrens, he moved to the Louisiana seminary, Plattenville, on Bayou Lafourche, in 1837. He died there 18 February 1853.

**Caretti, Joseph (Giovanni Battista Giuseppe).** A member of the first group, already a priest. He was born 22 June 1790, in Porto Maurizio, Italy. He became a candidate for the Vincentians, but died in Saint Louis on the day of the opening of the internal seminary (novitiate).

**Cellini, Francis, C.M.** The leader of the second group of Vincentians to arrive in America, traveling from Rome, 8 May 1818, and landing in Philadelphia, 28 September. He had studied medicine in Italy before departing and was able to continue after his ordination, which took place possibly in 1822. He arrived at the Barrens 24 December 1818, returned to Europe in 1825 but came back the next year. In 1827 he left the Congregation to join the diocese of Saint Louis. He died in Saint Louis as vicar general of the diocese, 6 January 1849.

**Dahmen, Francis Xavier, C.M.** A diocesan student member of the first group, German born, and a former soldier. He joined the Congregation in Rome. Ordained in Saint Louis, 5 September 1819. He did not take vows, however, until 28 May 1821. The first pastor of

*Appendices: Brief Biographies*

Saint Vincent's parish in Saint Louis. He returned to Europe in 1852 and remained at the motherhouse in Paris until his death, 26 March 1866.

**David, John Baptist Mary, S.S.** Sulpician, superior of the seminary at Saint Thomas, Kentucky, from 1811, and briefly bishop of Bardstown (1832-1833). Founded the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth. Named auxiliary bishop, 1819. His letters written from Saint Thomas give a corroborating witness to those of De Andreis. He died at Nazareth, Kentucky, 12 July 1841.

**Dubourg, Louis William, S.S.** Born in Santo Domingo, 14 February 1766, but taken to France where he made his studies and was ordained a priest, 1788. Emigrated to America, where he joined the Sulpicians. President of Georgetown College, 1796-1798. Founded Saint Mary's College, Emmitsburg, Maryland, 1803, and helped Elizabeth Ann Seton to found a women's community. Appointed administrator of the diocese of Louisiana, 1812, and later its bishop. After securing Vincentians for his diocese, he was consecrated bishop in Rome, 24 September 1815, and returned to America, 1818. Consecrated Joseph Rosati as his coadjutor, 25 March 1824. He resigned his see, returned to France, and became bishop of Montauban, and archbishop of Besançon, where he died after only a month in office, 12 December 1833.

**Ferrari, Andrew (Antonio Andrea Agostino), C.M.** One of the members of the first group to arrive, a secular priest. Born 13 June 1792, in Porto Maurizio, Italy. He entered the Congregation and, while a novice in Saint Louis, became secretary of De Andreis, many of whose letters he wrote during his illnesses. He died of yellow fever in New Orleans, 2 November 1822, the first Vincentian to die after De Andreis.

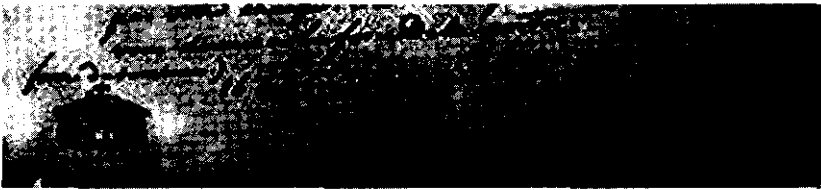
**Flaget, Benedict Joseph, S.S.** Born in France, 1763. Entered the Sulpicians in France, and came to Baltimore in 1792 as a professor. Named bishop of the new see of Bardstown, 1808, which he reluctantly accepted in 1811. He received the Vincentians at his seminary at Saint Thomas, and traveled with De Andreis, Rosati, and others to pave the

*Appendices: Brief Biographies*

way for Dubourg's arrival in his new diocese. The saintly bishop died in Louisville, Kentucky, 11 February 1850.

**Rosati, Joseph, C.M.** Born in Sora, Italy, 12 January 1789. Entered the Vincentians in Rome, and was ordained a priest, 10 February 1811. Engaged in giving popular missions, 1811-1815, when he joined the original group of pioneers for America. Succeeded De Andreis as superior of the American mission, 1820-1830. Elected coadjutor bishop of Louisiana, 14 July 1823, and succeeded Dubourg as bishop in New Orleans, 1826, but moved to Saint Louis, 1827. Apostolic delegate to Haiti from 1841 to 1842, when he returned to Rome, dying there 25 September 1843. In 1954, his remains were reburied in the cathedral he had built in Saint Louis.

**Tichitoli, Joseph, C.M.** A native of Milan, he came to America as a young clerical student in the first group. Entered the first internal seminary (novitiate) in Saint Louis, but was ordained soon after by Dubourg, 15 December 1818. He was the first Vincentian priest ordained in America. He died at Donaldsonville, Louisiana, 27 February 1833.



An extract of a letter from Louis William Dubourg, C.M., to Joseph Rosati, C.M., dated 16 October 1820. Of particular interest is the line drawing to the lower left depicting De Andreis's original tomb. The tomb was located behind the original parish church of the Assumption at the Barrens.  
*Copy courtesy of the author*



## INDEX

## A

- Acquaroni, John Baptist: 54-55, 66, 69, 73, 76, 82, 92-93, 106, 108-09, 120, 136, 138, 140, 150, 179, 183, 185, 192, 195-96, 201, 206, 212, 215, 219, 223-26, 228-29, 245, 253, 267-69, 281, 301, 329, 339, 344, 360, 366-67, 376, 388-90, 395, 397, 420, 423, 436, 446, 452, 485-87, 489
- Agen, France: 393
- Agesso, Giovanni Battista: 54
- Aiguebelle, France: 393, 395, 431
- Albassini, Giovanni Antonio: 186
- Alberoni, Cardinal Giulio: 55
- Alessandria, Italy: 393, 429
- Alessi, Francesco: 143, 171
- Alimenti, Maestro: 53-54, 214, 271, 391
- Allegretti, Giuseppe: 267, 270
- Alphonsus Liguori: 387
- Amelia, Italy: 465-67
- Amiens, France: 397
- Anguillara, Italy: 468-69
- Ansaloni, Romualdo: 461, 466, 475
- Antonin, Brother: 205
- Antonini, Luigi: 465
- Apple Creek, Missouri: 179, 205
- Arkansas: 179
- Assumption Parish, Louisiana: 239, 297, 299, 336
- Asti, Italy: 393, 429
- Aubin, Brother: 205
- Augustinians: 403
- Aviau du Bois de Sanzai, Charles d': 60, 65, 69, 308, 396, 432
- Baccari, Francesco Antonio: 45, 205, 226-27, 229, 234, 242, 245, 252, 257, 271, 278, 292-93, 297, 300, 336, 344, 347, 364, 370, 423
- Badin, Stephen: 75, 202, 214, 223, 240, 315, 422
- Bagnols, France: 393, 431
- Baltimore, Maryland: 57, 64, 66, 70-71, 75-76, 79, 81, 84, 86, 89-91, 93, 95, 98, 101, 105-06, 109, 111-13, 115-18, 134, 136, 143-45, 153, 159-60, 165, 169, 181, 210, 213, 219, 230, 346, 374, 384, 388, 396-99, 401-04, 409, 420, 425-26, 433-38, 445, 447, 484-85, 490
- Baptists: 416, 443
- Barat, Madeleine Sophie: 166, 168, 274, 374
- Bardstown, Kentucky: 33, 85, 91, 98, 118, 124-25, 127, 131-32, 135, 137, 144, 146, 149-50, 152, 155, 162, 166, 168, 170, 173-74, 176, 183, 195-96, 202, 214, 217, 220, 229, 242, 292-93, 346, 401, 403, 419, 421, 438, 450-52, 490
- Barrens, Perryville, Missouri: 34, 68, 75, 95, 138, 179-82, 194, 198, 200-05, 217, 223, 229-30, 234-37, 239, 241-42, 244, 247, 250-51, 253, 256, 266-67, 270, 273-74, 282, 292, 307, 321, 338, 356-57, 361, 364-65, 367-70, 373, 375-77, 423-24, 452, 455, 486-87, 489
- Bastia, Italy: 318
- Baton Rouge, Louisiana: 357
- Bayou Lafourche, Louisiana: 339,

## B

Babad, Peter: 113, 117

- 345, 355, 366  
 Bec d'Ambese, France: 397  
 Bedford, Pennsylvania: 448  
 Beelen, Anthony: 112, 115, 118, 120  
 Beltriti, Placido: 324  
 Benedict XV, pope: 35  
 Bergamo, Italy: 284  
 Bersani, Giuseppe: 320  
 Berthold, Octavie: 224, 362  
 Bertola, Angelo: 71  
 Bettelani, Bartholomew: 228, 240,  
 244, 253-54, 266, 269, 281, 296,  
 345, 423  
 Béziers, France: 393, 431-32, 394  
 Bianchi, Father: 320, 429  
 Bigeschi, Joseph: 297, 299, 355  
 Bighi, Father: 388  
 Biviers, France: 393, 431  
 Blacks, free and slave: 91, 95, 102,  
 151, 179, 214-15, 221, 228, 232,  
 266, 282, 285-86, 298, 302, 311,  
 325, 346, 391, 416, 422, 433,  
 435, 437, 442-43  
 Blanc, Antoine: 356-57  
 Blanca, Martin. See Blanka, Martin  
 Blanka, Martin: 56, 66, 68, 76, 106,  
 109, 112, 123, 138, 161, 178,  
 183, 185, 192, 197, 202, 205,  
 223, 226, 230, 235-36, 239, 254,  
 276, 281, 296, 311, 319, 344,  
 346, 360, 366-67, 393, 397, 420-  
 21, 428, 445, 451, 484-86, 489  
 Blasini, Pietro Paolo: 143  
 Blengini, Giuseppe: 466  
 Boboni, Antonio: 66, 69, 79, 230,  
 388-91  
 Boeri, Pietro: 460, 462  
 Bois Brulé. See Barrens, Perryville,  
 Missouri  
 Bologna, Italy: 61, 392, 428, 431  
 Borawanski, Francis: 59, 66, 69, 80,  
 95, 106, 109, 112, 138, 202, 230,  
 266, 344, 390, 397, 420, 433,  
 445, 485  
 Bordeaux, France: 55, 57, 59-64, 69,  
 70-73, 76-77, 79-81, 83-85, 87,  
 90-91, 93, 98, 102, 105, 109,  
 111, 120, 124, 132, 136, 143,  
 153, 159, 166, 168, 170, 173,  
 191, 202, 218, 224, 227, 232,  
 250, 308-09, 359-60, 377, 385,  
 392-93, 395-98, 404, 426-28,  
 432-34, 438, 484  
 Borgna, Philip: 240, 244, 252, 257-  
 58, 269, 271, 281, 292, 295-96,  
 337, 345, 357, 360, 366-67, 372,  
 420, 423, 487  
 Borgo San Donnino, Italy: 392, 428  
 Bornac, Father: 395  
 Bosoni, John: 367  
 Bossan (Boussan), Gabriel: 61, 393,  
 431  
 Boston, Massachusetts: 86, 314, 401,  
 409, 440  
 Boudon, Henri-Marie: 155  
 Boujard, Charles: 370  
 Bourlié, Francesco: 53-54  
 Boyer, Father: 395  
 Bramans, France: 393, 429  
 Briasci, Father: 320  
 Brunet, François: 40  
 Bruté, Simon: 86, 95, 103, 106, 113,  
 115-16, 120, 131, 133-34, 144-  
 45, 150, 152, 159, 168, 176, 399,  
 420, 438  
 Buzieres, Joseph: 66, 72-73, 79, 392,  
 394-95, 397, 427
- C**
- Cadillac, France: 309  
 Cahokia, Illinois: 376, 486-87

- Camiran, Madame de: 308-09  
 Campbell, Henry: 95  
 Canova, Antonio: 209, 431  
 Cantiano, Italy: 392, 428  
 Cape Girardeau, Missouri: 179  
 Caravita, Vincenzo: 467  
 Carcassonne, France: 393, 432  
 Caretti, Joseph: 69, 73, 76, 79-80, 92-93, 106, 108-09, 120, 150, 161, 201, 212, 219, 223, 235-36, 238, 243, 397, 420, 432, 434, 484, 486-87, 489  
 Carmelite nuns: 169, 404  
 Carondelet, Missouri: 179-80, 228, 486  
 Carretti, Joseph: 195-96, 226  
 Carroll, Dennys: 118  
 Carroll, John: 66, 388, 401-02  
 Carsamiglia Brothers, Marseilles: 54, 173  
 Casal Nuovo di Porto, Italy: 470-71  
 Caseau, Mr.: 84, 173  
 Casso, Domenico: 458-59, 462, 465-66  
 Castel San Pietro, Italy: 392, 428  
 Castelfranco, Italy: 392, 428  
 Castelgandolfo, Italy: 388, 484  
 Castelnaudary, France: 393-94, 432  
 Castelsarrasin, France: 393  
 Casto. See Gonzalez, Casto Benito  
 Castres, France: 73  
 Cattolica, Italy: 392, 428  
 Ceccano, Italy: 458, 461  
 Cellini, Francis: 228, 240, 244, 252, 255, 262, 269, 281, 296, 303, 338, 344-45, 360, 362, 365, 367, 423-24, 486-87, 489  
 Ceracchi, Marzio: 56, 81, 143, 186, 193-94, 248, 476  
 Ceri, Italy: 467, 472-73  
 Cerveteri, Italy: 469, 472  
 Cesari, Vincenzo: 470  
 Cesena, Italy: 392, 428  
 Chabrat, Guy Ignatius: 106, 133, 144, 146, 150, 168, 202, 223, 485  
 Chambersburg, Pennsylvania: 445  
 Cheverus, Jean Louis: 86, 401  
 Cheigné, Louis de: 113, 117  
 China: 39-40, 186, 381, 386, 400, 422  
 Chouteau, Auguste: 196  
 Christian Brothers: 205, 251  
 Ciapparola, Vincenzo: 469  
 Cincinnati, Ohio: 132, 153, 450  
 Civitavecchia, Italy: 390  
 Clark, William: 400, 419  
 Clermont-Ferrand, France: 66, 79, 394  
 Collegio Alberoni, Piacenza, Italy: 56, 65, 73, 311, 318-20, 325, 389  
 Colucci, Bartolomeo: 53-54, 61, 93, 97, 158, 207, 214, 232, 247-48, 254, 269, 271-72, 280, 341, 387, 477, 479-80, 483-84  
 Columbia River: 408, 419  
 Compans, Jean: 60-61  
 Concannon, Richard Luke: 401  
 Concellini, Father: 320  
 Congregationalists: 416  
 Connelly, John: 402  
 Consalvi, Ercole: 388-89  
 Conwell, Henry: 402  
 Cooper, Samuel: 113, 117, 158, 162, 228  
 Coppaloni, Father: 320  
 Cori, Italy: 477, 479-80  
 Craveri, Giovanni: 62, 266, 394  
 Cremsini, Mr.: 386  
 Crodara, Mr.: 429  
 Cummins, James: 256, 376, 380  
 Curti, Francis Xavier: 468, 476



## D

- Dahmen, Francis Xavier: 73-74, 106, 109, 112, 122, 124, 129, 131, 161, 184, 202, 223, 239, 243, 268, 281, 292, 301, 311, 326, 329, 339, 341, 345, 356-57, 359-60, 365, 367, 392, 397, 420, 423, 426, 433, 445, 485, 487, 489-90
- Dahmen, Peter: 124, 129
- Dalla, Filippo: 391
- Damphoux, Edward: 113
- Dardenne, Missouri: 215, 224, 267, 344
- Daughters of Charity: 33, 60, 65, 79, 138, 174, 232, 258, 302, 404, 420, 433
- David, John Baptist: 33, 98, 106, 125, 131, 133-34, 137, 140, 146, 150, 152, 161, 165, 168-69, 176, 178, 181, 183, 185, 195, 197, 202-03, 206, 223, 240, 293, 403-04, 422, 485, 490
- De Andreis, Gioannino (nephew): 50
- De Andreis, Giovanni Maurizio (father): 44, 50-51, 57
- De Andreis, Giuseppe (brother): 51, 57, 324
- De Andreis, Margherita (sister): 42, 51, 324
- De Andreis, Vincenzo (brother): 39-40, 44-45, 47, 49, 52, 57, 69, 71, 84-85, 101, 322, 326, 372, 429, 484
- De Bernardis, Antonio: 68, 320
- De Deva, Bernardo: 298
- De Ecclesiis, Emanuele: 391
- Defulgure, Giuseppe Antonio: 391-92
- De Lacroix, Charles: 378
- De Lattre, Medard: 94, 485
- De Neckere, Leo: 236-37, 240, 262, 268, 357, 365-71
- De Petris, Carlo Saverio: 52, 65, 143, 310
- Defulgure, Giuseppe Antonio: 217
- Delatre, Medard: 80, 106, 109, 112, 230, 395, 397, 420, 433, 445
- Dell'Anna, Domenico: 320
- Demonte, Italy: 30, 40, 43, 45, 47, 49, 52, 57, 69, 71, 84-85, 101, 105, 268, 322, 372, 377, 483
- Demun, Jules: 194
- Depietri. See De Petris, Carlo Saverio
- Derigaud, James: 125, 142, 223, 485
- Detroit, Michigan: 206, 213-14
- Deys, Leo: 66, 69, 73, 81, 106, 109, 120, 131, 138, 202, 262, 268, 371, 389-90, 392, 394, 397, 420, 446, 487
- Dio Solo* (book): 44, 50, 483
- Dominicans: 141, 153, 403
- Donaldsonville, Louisiana: 491
- Donati, Domenico: 366-67
- Doria, Antonio: 386
- Doria, Cardinal Joseph: 55
- Dornig, Father: 74
- Doyle, Michael: 117
- Dubourg, Louis William: 33-34, 55, 57, 64-65, 76-77, 79, 81, 84, 90-91, 95, 98, 106, 111-113, 118, 120, 124, 129, 133, 136-38, 145, 154, 159-60, 162, 165-66, 169, 173, 179-81, 189, 191, 199, 202, 205-06, 212, 219, 223, 230, 236, 240, 242, 244, 250-51, 255-57, 262-63, 267, 273, 275, 278, 284, 295, 298, 302, 310, 317, 325, 336-38, 343-44, 354, 356-57, 365, 368-70, 374-75, 380, 385, 387-90, 395, 397, 399-400, 402,

- 421-23, 425, 432-34, 438, 451,  
454, 483-86, 490
- Duchesne, Philippine: 90, 111, 166,  
168, 224, 274, 302, 360, 369,  
450, 455
- Duclaux, Antoine: 98
- Dudon, Henri Marie: 44
- Dunand, Joseph: 198, 200, 223
- Dunkers: 417, 444
- E**
- Eccleston, Samuel: 190
- Egan, Michael Francis: 401-02
- Emmitsburg, Maryland: 158, 228,  
404, 420, 445
- Episcopalians: 416, 441-42
- Eustache, Philippe-Clément: 60-61
- F**
- Fano, Italy: 392
- Farrar, Bernard: 369
- Fatin, Marie-Eulalie: 170
- Felice, Luigi: 458, 460
- Fenaja, Benedette: 61
- Fenwick, Edward Dominic (Monsi-  
gnor): 141, 153, 438
- Fenwick, Enoch: 95, 113, 117
- Ferentino, Italy: 458-62
- Ferrari, Andrew: 69, 73, 79-80, 93,  
106, 108-09, 120, 150, 162, 183-  
84, 196, 202, 221, 223, 234, 236,  
238-39, 243, 250, 252, 257, 266-  
69, 278-79, 281, 289, 291-92,  
339, 341, 345, 356-57, 360, 365,  
367, 371, 397, 420, 423, 433,  
484-85, 487, 490
- Flaget, Benedict Joseph: 33, 76, 90-  
91, 96, 98, 106, 109, 113, 118,  
125, 132-34, 137, 140, 142, 150,  
156, 159-61, 169-70, 174, 178,  
182-83, 185, 195, 197, 206, 213,  
240, 328, 356, 401, 403-04, 418-  
19, 421-23, 433, 438, 450-51,  
485-86, 490-91
- Flegifont, John: 80, 94, 230, 397,  
399, 433, 445, 484
- Florence, Italy: 299
- Florissant, Missouri: 179-80, 223,  
282, 360-62, 369, 487
- Foligno, Italy: 392, 428
- Fossombrone, Italy: 392, 428
- Fournier, Françoise Victoire: 66, 70,  
76, 79, 81, 90-91, 111, 113, 132,  
166, 309, 359-60, 377
- Francis de Sales: 34, 185, 363
- Francis of Assisi: 332
- Francis Solano: 317
- Francis Xavier: 34, 73, 131, 216, 233,  
238, 243, 268, 317, 344, 389,  
421, 423
- Fulgence, Brother: 205
- Furlo, Italy: 428
- G**
- Gallitzin, Demetrius: 402
- Gambarelli, Father: 320
- Gardini, Giovanni Battista: 429
- Garnier, Antoine: 116
- Garofani, Giovanni Battista: 271
- Generali, Luigi: 186
- Genoa, Italy: 63, 73, 79, 93, 111, 138,  
146, 168, 182, 223, 230, 235,  
258, 266, 268, 345, 391, 484
- Georgetown, District of Columbia:  
89, 95-96, 149, 169, 295, 399,  
402, 404, 438
- Ghent, Belgium: 138
- Giordana, Giuseppe: 62, 186, 248,  
271, 325, 331, 334
- Giorgi, Luigi: 391
- Giorgio, Nicola de: 271
- Giovannoni, Giuseppe: 465-66, 473-  
74, 478-81

Girardi, Giuseppe: 391  
 Giriodi, Filippo: 43, 45, 48, 51, 68,  
 186, 192, 320, 322, 330  
 Giuliano, Italy: 459-60, 462, 479-81  
 Goa, India: 392  
 Gonzalez, Casto Benito: 73, 93, 106,  
 109, 120, 123, 125, 131, 161,  
 202, 272, 392, 394, 397, 420,  
 426, 446, 450, 485  
 Grassi, John Anthony: 95, 116, 118,  
 141, 149, 155, 158, 162, 176,  
 228, 295, 341, 364-65, 367, 402-  
 03

Graziano, Brother: 391

Grenoble, France: 431

## H

Hancock, Julia: 419

Hanon, Dominique-François: 60-61,  
 63, 65-66, 82

Harent, Joseph: 112-13, 115-17

Harrington, Daniel: 366-67

Hayden, Mrs.: 487

Hempstead, Stephen: 187, 208, 273,  
 314

Heretics: 103, 126-27, 138, 151, 156-  
 57, 172, 175, 210, 216, 228-9,  
 233, 255, 260, 280-81, 288-89,  
 304, 314, 318, 336, 350, 438,  
 441, 443, 455

Holland, John Joseph: 117

Hosten, Philip J.: 138

## I

Ignatius Loyola: 363

Illinoistown, Illinois: 321

Indians, native Americans: 57, 75,  
 79, 80, 84, 87, 97, 126-27, 141-  
 42, 144, 168-69, 179, 187, 189-  
 90, 195-96, 203-04, 207-08, 210,  
 212, 215-16, 227, 230, 232-33,  
 246-47, 250, 252, 259-61, 263,

270-71, 280, 285-87, 292, 301,  
 313-14, 319-21, 325-30, 336,  
 344, 350-51, 359, 361, 366, 403,  
 433, 439-41, 447, 450-52

Inglesi, Angelo: 250, 310-11, 322,  
 336-38, 344, 357-58, 364-65,  
 367, 426, 487

Isaias di Giacobbe: 41

Isolabuona, Italy: 80

## J

James, Joseph: 194

James, Mr.: 201, 203

Jesuits: 95, 103, 127, 141, 149, 155,  
 327, 400, 402-03, 409

Jews: 219, 221, 255, 260, 418, 422,  
 444

Joubert, James: 113

Juniata River: 448

## K

Kaskaskia, Illinois: 200, 356, 376,  
 422, 451

Kentucky: 57, 76, 79, 86, 96, 98, 106,  
 108, 124-25, 127, 131, 133-35,  
 137-38, 144-45, 149, 152-53,  
 155, 160-61, 166, 168-70, 173-  
 76, 186, 212, 214, 220, 227, 242,  
 244, 252, 293, 314, 381, 400-01,  
 403-04, 407-08, 421-22, 425,  
 433, 438, 440-41, 443, 445, 451,  
 485, 490-91

Kobutt, Father: 429

Kohlmann, Anthony: 403

## L

La Lumiere, Simon Petit: 168

La Reole, France: 394

La Scarpa, Italy: 387

Labre, Benedict Joseph: 314

Lancaster, Pennsylvania: 244

Langon, France: 393

Lanslebourg, France: 429

- Lasselle, H.: 150, 212  
 Laura, Giovanni: 68, 320  
 Layton, Ignatius: 212  
 Levy, Jean Daniel: 219, 255, 294  
 Lewis, Meriwether: 419  
 Libourne, France: 308  
 Limoges, France: 73, 397  
 Lisbon, Portugal: 109, 258  
 Litta, Lorenzo: 171, 203, 262, 386, 390-91  
 Livorno, Italy: 192, 240, 486  
 Loreto, Italy: 428  
 Loriol, France: 393, 431  
 Louisiana: 60, 63-64, 68, 73, 75-76, 79, 86, 90, 94-95, 98, 103, 106, 118, 120-21, 125, 127, 129, 135-37, 141, 160, 165, 173, 179, 186, 207, 226, 230, 238-39, 242, 268, 284, 297, 300, 302, 309-10, 331, 338-39, 353, 365-66, 371-72, 378, 380, 385, 387-89, 391, 394, 398-99, 401, 406-08, 411, 414, 419, 421, 423-24, 435, 439-41, 443, 450-51, 489-91  
 Louisville, Kentucky: 91, 98, 108, 112, 121, 123, 125, 131-33, 136-37, 142, 150, 195, 218, 244, 421, 450, 485, 491  
 Lugnano, Italy: 464-65  
 Luisi, Brother: 391  
 Lunel, France: 393, 395, 431  
 Lusardi, Giuseppe: 68, 143  
 Lutherans: 132, 417, 444  
 Lyons, France: 46, 72-73, 140, 357, 395
- M**
- MacGuire. See Maguire, Marie  
 Maguire, Marie: 219, 374  
 Manziana, Italy: 476-77  
 Marechal, Ambrose: 113, 117, 165, 181, 213  
 Mariani, Angelo: 35  
 Marietta, Ohio: 123, 126, 132, 450, 485  
 Marliani, Caietano: 72, 79, 84, 392, 394-95, 397, 426  
 Marmande, France: 393  
 Marsaglia, Italy: 392, 428  
 Marseilles, France: 54, 59, 173, 390, 484  
 Martial, Benedict: 338  
 Martial, Bertrand: 224  
 Martinengo, Giuseppe: 320  
 Martini, Bartolomeo: 473  
 Martini, Giuseppe: 80, 467  
 Martorelli, Paolino: 170, 173, 343  
 Masturzi, Fortunato: 391  
 Mattei, Mario: 386  
 McNair, Alexander: 368  
 Menard, Pierre: 486  
 Merry del Val, Raphael: 35  
 Methodists: 97, 124, 126, 416, 418, 442  
 Milan, Italy: 109, 365-66, 432  
 Milani, Gaetano: 458-60  
 Mine a Breton, Missouri: 179  
 Mine Lamotte, Missouri: 179  
 Mississippi river: 85, 136, 141, 165, 169, 186, 191-92, 198, 200, 204, 209, 214, 218-19, 227, 242, 300, 319, 321, 325, 357, 400, 408, 422, 440, 486  
 Missouri river: 141, 229, 253, 267, 269, 287, 408, 419  
 Mobile, Alabama: 234  
 Mod (Mudd), Francis: 421  
 Monaci, Pietro: 216  
 Mondovi, Italy: 31, 43, 331, 483  
 Mont Cenis, France: 393, 429  
 Monte Citorio, Rome, Italy: 41, 55,

- 83, 88, 102, 128, 136, 154, 170,  
191, 203, 234, 284, 288, 292,  
295, 297, 344, 385, 387, 389,  
426, 458, 460, 464-65, 467, 475,  
483-84
- Monte Fortino, Italy: 463-64
- Montelimart, France: 393, 431
- Monterosi, Italy: 392, 427
- Montgomery, Stephen: 217
- Montpellier, France: 59-60, 66, 69,  
76, 152, 251, 393-96, 431
- Moranvillé, John: 113, 117
- Moranvillé, John Baptist: 95
- Moravian Brethren: 417, 444
- Mount Saint Mary's, Emmitsburg,  
Maryland: 403-04
- Moux, France: 393, 432
- Murat, Joachim, king of Naples: 50
- N**
- Nanis, Father: 324
- Naples, Italy: 50, 235, 385, 391-92,  
401, 484
- Napoleon Bonaparte: 40, 47, 50, 60-  
61, 82, 385, 428, 469, 475
- Narbonne, France: 393, 432
- Natchez, Mississippi: 180, 354, 358
- Nazareth, Kentucky: 138, 169, 404,  
490
- Neale, Leonard: 89, 95, 165, 401, 404
- Nerinx, Charles: 174, 223, 399,  
485
- Nerinx, Kentucky: 214
- Nervi, Gaetano: 111, 138, 146, 168,  
182, 223, 268
- New Bourbon, Missouri: 179
- New Madrid, Missouri: 179
- New Orleans, Louisiana: 33, 55, 59,  
64, 68, 74-75, 77, 79, 116, 144,  
159, 169, 173, 192, 207, 218,  
227, 242, 258, 281, 289, 299,  
308, 310, 318, 337, 357, 360,  
372, 380, 385, 391, 401-04, 420,  
490-91
- New York, New York: 96, 304, 399,  
401-04, 407, 409, 440
- Niel, Francis: 199, 201, 223-25, 245,  
274, 295, 301, 357, 375, 422, 486
- Nimes, France: 393, 431
- Nocera, Italy: 392, 428
- Norme ed Avvisi (book): 45, 483
- Norris, Mr.: 397, 433
- O**
- Oblates of Saint Charles: 365
- O'Brien, William F.X.: 108, 112,  
116-17, 120, 485
- O'Hara, James F.: 121
- Ohio river: 57, 75, 91, 98, 108, 111,  
125, 132, 136, 421, 447, 449-51,  
485-86
- Olevano, Italy: 462
- Olivier, Donatien: 200, 451
- Orleans, France: 60, 66
- Otricoli, Italy: 392, 428
- P**
- Palestrina, Italy: 462, 466
- Paris, France: 46, 55, 60-61, 63, 65-  
66, 70, 98, 116, 145, 160-61,  
181, 207, 222, 224, 251, 254,  
295, 302, 309, 313-14, 344, 347,  
360, 370, 374, 387, 404, 406, 439
- Parma, Italy: 56, 393, 428
- Passeri, Perpetuo: 68, 320
- Pauillac, France: 91, 397, 433-34
- Peck, John Mason: 192, 210
- Pensacola, Florida: 258
- Pereira, Father: 472
- Pereira, Joseph: 66, 69, 79, 388-91
- Perez, Antonio: 366
- Petit, Didier: 191
- Petrarca, Vincenzo: 143

- Pezenas, France: 393, 432  
 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: 79, 91,  
 95, 134, 162, 218, 228, 239-40,  
 244, 338, 401-04, 409, 440, 447,  
 486-87, 489  
 Piacenza, Italy: 31-32, 43, 51, 55-56,  
 65, 68, 73, 221, 297, 310-11,  
 318, 325, 392-95, 428, 483-84  
 Pierrelate, France: 393  
 Pierrelatte, France: 393, 431  
 Pierron, Nicolas: 61  
 Piervisani, Francesco: 428  
 Pifferi, Joseph: 366  
 Pinelli, Giovanni: 49-50  
 Pinelli, Pietro: 50  
 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: 57, 91,  
 105-06, 111-13, 115-16, 118,  
 121-23, 125, 129, 132, 143, 157,  
 244, 256, 259, 308, 376, 420-21,  
 445, 447, 449, 453, 485  
 Pius VI, pope: 67, 401, 431  
 Pius VII, pope: 32, 50, 55, 82, 208,  
 227, 343, 401-02, 483  
 Plattenville, Louisiana: 489  
 Plessis, Joseph Octave: 91, 98  
 Polenghi, Pietro: 386  
 Pomi, Martino: 462-63, 465-66  
 Pont du Gard, France: 393, 431  
 Porchiano, Italy: 465  
 Port Tobacco, Maryland: 169  
 Portage des Sioux, Missouri: 179,  
 215, 224, 267, 301, 487  
 Portier, Michael: 234  
 Porto Maurizio, Italy: 73, 109, 243,  
 432, 489-90  
 Potini, Anthony: 228, 240, 244, 253,  
 269, 281, 296, 345, 360, 366-67,  
 423  
 Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin: 359,  
 361, 440  
 Prairie du Rocher, Illinois: 200, 290,  
 376, 451, 486  
 Pratte, Henry: 183, 200, 423  
 Presbyterians: 416, 441-42  
 Procojo Vecchio, Italy: 471  
 Protestants: 96, 98, 112, 121, 124,  
 126, 132, 134, 143, 152, 156-57,  
 166, 174, 189, 191, 195, 208,  
 221, 250, 252, 260, 314, 318,  
 333, 374, 405-06, 414-18, 425,  
 441-42, 444  
 Purgher, Bartolomeo: 467-68, 470
- Q**
- Quakers: 417, 443  
 Quattrosanti, Giovanni: 460  
 Quebec, Canada: 91, 98  
 Queenstown, Maryland: 118  
 Quin, Hugh: 380
- R**
- Reviglio, Tomasso: 68, 320  
 Riano, Italy: 471  
 Ricciardelli, Raffaele: 35  
 Rigo, Cristoforo: 68, 320  
 Ripa Grande, Italy: 390  
 Romans, France: 393, 395, 431  
 Rome, Italy: 32-33, 35, 39-42, 44-45,  
 47-50, 52-55, 59, 61, 63, 65, 68-  
 70, 73, 75, 77, 79, 83-84, 86-88,  
 90-91, 93-94, 97, 101-02, 105-  
 06, 108-09, 111-12, 124, 126,  
 129, 131-32, 135, 142-43, 149,  
 154-55, 162-63, 166, 170-74,  
 176-77, 182, 186, 192, 194, 198,  
 203, 205, 207-08, 212, 214-15,  
 220, 224, 226-27, 234-35, 237,  
 242-44, 250, 252, 257-59, 261-  
 63, 267, 269, 271-72, 278, 284,  
 286, 288-89, 292-93, 295, 297,  
 300, 310-11, 314, 322, 325, 331,  
 334, 336-37, 340-41, 343-44,

- 348, 350, 356, 360-62, 364, 370, 372, 375, 380-81, 384-85, 387-89, 391-92, 395, 402, 424, 426-27, 431, 437, 449, 458, 460, 462-65, 467, 470-73, 475-77, 480, 483-84, 489-91
- Rosati, Agnello: 391
- Rosati, Joseph: 39-40, 55, 59, 61, 66, 68-70, 72-73, 79-82, 84, 87, 91-94, 96, 98, 100, 106, 108-09, 111, 116-18, 120-21, 123-25, 132, 135-38, 140-41, 143-46, 149-50, 153, 162, 166, 168-70, 178-79, 181-82, 184, 186, 190-94, 196, 198, 202-03, 205, 212, 215-16, 220, 223-25, 227-30, 234-35, 237, 240-42, 244, 250-51, 253, 256-58, 261-62, 267, 269, 273-76, 281, 284, 289, 292-93, 296, 300-02, 311, 313, 321, 329, 331, 344, 347-48, 360-61, 365, 366-69, 371-77, 380, 385-91, 397-99, 420-26, 432-34, 446, 451-53, 479-80, 484, 485-87, 490-91
- Rosati, Nicola: 106, 123, 162, 373
- Ross, R.: 116, 420
- Rossetti, John: 365, 367, 487
- Rossi, Antonio: 22, 68
- Rosti, John: 365, 367, 371
- Royan, France: 397, 434
- S**
- Sacred Heart, Religious of the: 132, 166, 218, 224, 302, 313, 360, 362, 374, 487
- Saint Charles, Missouri: 179, 215, 223-24, 360, 365
- Saint Ferdinand, Missouri: 179, 223, 361
- Saint Louis, Missouri: 30, 33-35, 59, 68, 74-76, 79, 81, 86, 89, 91, 129, 136-37, 141, 143-44, 159-60, 166, 169, 178, 179-84, 186, 190-92, 194, 196, 198, 200-03, 206-08, 210, 212, 214-15, 218, 220-24, 226-28, 230, 234-35, 237, 240-42, 244-45, 247-48, 250-55, 257, 262, 266, 269, 273-74, 278, 284, 289, 292-93, 297, 299-302, 308-10, 315, 320-21, 324-25, 336, 338, 341, 344-45, 353, 355-56, 359-61, 364-66, 368, 370-71, 373-76, 380, 392, 394, 398, 420-23, 425-26, 433, 450-53, 455, 486-87, 489-91
- Saint Marcellin, France: 393, 431
- Saint Mary's of the Barrens, Perryville, Missouri: 89, 241, 338, 369, 378, 398, 455
- Saint Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, Maryland: 398
- Saint Michel, France: 393, 431
- Saint Thomas, Kentucky: 57, 98, 125, 131, 133-34, 138, 140, 142, 145, 150, 159, 161, 165, 168, 176, 181, 184, 191, 194, 196, 198, 201, 203, 205, 215, 220, 224, 240, 244, 403, 422, 451, 485-86
- Sainte Genevieve, Missouri: 33, 179, 181, 183, 191, 200, 204-05, 218, 307, 376-77, 421-22, 451, 485-86
- San Lorenzo, Italy: 460-61
- San Remo, Italy: 391
- Santa Marinella, Italy: 467-68
- Santa Oliva, Italy: 478-80
- Santa Severa, Italy: 468, 472
- Santo Stefano, Italy: 461-64
- Savignano, Italy: 392
- Saviné, Francis: 198, 200, 486

- Scardini, Luigi: 472  
 Selau, Father de: 309  
 Seton, Elizabeth Ann: 420, 445, 490  
 Shawneetown, Illinois: 421, 451, 486  
 Sibourd, Louis: 74, 218, 226, 244, 338, 354  
 Sicardi, Carlo Domenico: 52, 55, 59, 61, 63, 77, 83, 86, 88, 105, 135, 149, 154-55, 162, 186, 194-95, 227, 229, 248, 257-58, 343-44, 386-90  
 Sigillo, Italy: 392  
 Sinnot, John: 116  
 Sisters of Charity: 63, 77, 84, 138, 168-69  
 Sisters of Charity of Nazareth: 404, 490  
 Sisters of Charity of Nevers: 394  
 Somaglia, Giulio Maria di: 32  
 Sonnino, Italy: 460-61  
 Spalding, Catherine: 142, 169  
 Spezioli, Joseph: 66, 69, 79, 84, 390, 395, 397  
 Spinelli, Giuseppe Antonio: 73  
 Spoleto, Italy: 392, 428  
 St. Martin, Mrs.: 113  
 Stoystown, Pennsylvania: 116, 448  
 Stradella, Italy: 393, 428  
 Sulpicians: 64, 86, 152, 346, 403, 490  
 Susa, Italy: 393, 429
- T**
- Taneytown, Maryland: 445  
 Tarascon, Mr.: 421  
 Terni, Italy: 392, 428  
 Tessier, Jean Marie: 98, 106, 113, 116-17  
 Thayer, John: 314  
 Tichitoli, Joseph: 79, 106, 109, 120-21, 131, 152, 161, 184, 202, 223, 234, 239, 243, 268, 298, 329, 339, 345, 353, 355, 361, 365, 367, 371, 397, 420, 423, 432, 446, 487, 491  
 Tiernan, Luke: 118, 399  
 Timon, John: 181, 237, 256, 370, 376, 380  
 Tivoli, Italy: 460, 462, 473-74  
 Todsén, George P.: 369  
 Tornatore, John Baptist: 194, 391  
 Tortona, Italy: 393, 428  
 Tosi, Giuseppe: 297  
 Toulouse, France: 59, 60-61, 66, 69, 73, 393-94, 432, 484  
 Trappists: 198, 403-04  
 Tucker, Joseph: 485  
 Tuite, Mr.: 118  
 Tullins, France: 393, 431  
 Turin, Italy: 30-31, 40, 43, 45, 47, 49, 56-57, 62, 65, 69, 71, 84-85, 101, 105, 219, 270, 322, 372, 393-96, 429, 483-84
- U**
- Ugo, Simone: 45, 155, 158, 391, 476  
 Umpierres, Raffaello: 54  
 Urban VIII, pope: 45  
 Ursuline nuns: 169, 404
- V**
- Valence, France: 67, 79, 393-94, 431  
 Valezano, Secondo: 202, 234-35, 250-51, 267-68, 270  
 Valmontone, Italy: 463-64  
 Velletri, Italy: 480-81  
 Vepres, Francis: 113, 117  
 Verbert, Charles: 222, 302  
 Vergani, Peter: 228, 335, 367, 371  
 Vespasiani, Paolo: 473-74  
 Vico, Antonio: 35  
 Vicovaro, Italy: 473  
 Viguier, Pierre-François: 40  
 Villefranche, France: 432



Vincennes, Indiana: 115, 134, 146,  
150, 168, 212, 258, 289, 291-92,  
339, 341, 345, 356-57, 359, 433,  
485, 487

Vincent de Paul: 34, 53, 57, 64, 79,  
81, 83, 89, 92, 94, 102, 106, 112,  
138, 142, 146, 153, 174, 243,  
259, 262, 267-68, 270-71, 280,  
282, 302, 337, 353-54, 360, 380,  
389-90, 394, 397, 404, 421, 435-  
37, 449, 458, 477, 484

Visitation nuns: 399

Viterbo, Italy: 392, 428

Voggi, Father: 387

Voghera, Italy: 393

### W

Washington, District of Columbia:  
190, 295, 337

Watel, François: 61

Welch, James Ely: 210

Whitstanly, Thomas: 219

Wlehmans, Vincent: 61, 170, 308,  
360

### Y

Young, Henry: 102

### Z

Zocchi, Nicholas: 445

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