JOSEPH ALLAMANO

"Take courage
and go forward... in Domino"



LETTERS TO HIS MISSIONARIES

CONSOLATA MISSIONARY INSTITUTE
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ai missionari e alle missionarie della Consolata, 2004

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On the cover:
The “postman” (original photo from the early 1900s).
Young Kikuju boy, in charge of correspondence
between the missionaries of Kenya and Italy.



JOSEPH ALLAMANO

Founder of the Consolata Missionaries

PRESENTATION

The new members of our missionary Institutes today are characterized by a wide variety of languages and cultures. How can we ensure that the Founder's charism is correctly transmitted to these young people, without penalizing its original content and, at the same time, preventing the charismatic ideal from being received in an incomprehensible way or becoming impossible in the contexts of these different realities?

The first necessary step to guarantee the so-called "creative fidelity" to the charism requires that every missionary be based on the original sources of the Founder and the Institute; fidelity, which is not a simple repetition of what Allamano said, but above all a liberation of the potential novelties that the charism contains for each of us, regardless of the culture and language to which we belong.

Among the most precious works of theFounder, our Institute counts the collection of *Letters* which he wrote to his missionary sons and daughters; together with his Formative Conferences, it constitutes a privileged source from which his thought and spirituality emanate.

Over the years, there is a growing need for young missionaries to be able to drink profusely from these sources. Already in 2004, with the first publication of the " *Lettere del Beato Allamano ai Missionari e Missionarie della Consolata* ", the desire was expressed that the translations of his works could be started, so that they could speak effectively to each one in his own language.

It is therefore with joy that I now present the Translation into English, made with passion and competence by Father GIOVANNI BONANOMI from the original Italian: I thank him wholeheartedly, while I express the hope that this volume may become a precious help, especially during the years of formation.
Courage, then, and always "*avanti in Domino!* "

Rome, 20 June 2021

Fr. Stefano Camerlengo
Superior General

In the *Instrumentum Laboris for* the Synod of Bishops on consecrated life (1994) we read: "Among the best fruits of the Council is the return to sources, the rediscovery of the charism, the renewed love for founders and foundresses, the study of their writings and of the spiritual tradition of one's own family, the renewed inspiration, in the light of the charism, of the legislative texts. This revaluation of the charism has given youth and new historical vigour to the consecrated life. This gives birth to a better integration between spirituality and mission" (n. 23).

The Istituto Missioni Consolata, in accordance with the directives of the Second Vatican Council, has carried out in the last forty years an extensive study of the life and writings of the Founder, Blessed Giuseppe Allamano, with the intention of returning to the sources of its charism and thus achieving that "integration between spirituality and mission", desired by the Synod of Bishops on the consecrated life. The last work in order of time was the publication of the correspondence by Giuseppe Allamano: an imposing work comprising eleven volumes for a total of nine thousand pages. It was carried out by Father Candido Bona, IMC, with incomparable skill and historical insight, as well as with the sensitivity of the disciple.

In the desire to make the work of C. Bona accessible to as many people as possible, especially among the younger Missionary candidates, who are not always familiar with the Italian language, the General Government has thought of a handy publication that would reproduce the best of the correspondence addressed by Allamano to his Missionaries. It comes to support the "Spiritual Life" of Allamano himself, who for over fifty years has been the *vademecum* of every Consolata Missionary.

I approached this writing with the interest of those who think of getting into a familiar reality, and yet, letter after letter, I was able to discover dimensions never before explored. The reader immediately has before his eyes the characteristic elements that reveal the heart of the Founding Father whenever he communicates with his Missionaries. But what a range of shades and how much richness of details, especially when he opens his heart to his distant sons and daughters.

Here are three brushstrokes that can serve as an example:

1. *Mission* - It is the primary purpose of the twofold foundation carried out by the Allamano, it is the longing of his entire priestly life,

it is an ardent zeal so that Christ and his Gospel may be proclaimed to all peoples. This missionary enthusiasm is the first message he seeks to convey. There is no letter or writing that does not let it shine through. Love for Christ and a flavor for the Gospel - he repeats many times and with conviction - spread spontaneously when one overflows with love of neighbour and is ready to lay down his own life for others. Zeal is the fruit of love, but of intense love. He who has zeal has love and he who has love has zeal. If there is no zeal, there is no love. They are expressions often repeated, such as to constitute the refrain of that great symphony that is the mission.

2. *Fatherhood* - The letters that Allamano writes to his Missionaries are the privileged opportunity to open his fatherly heart to distant children. He loves them deeply, but he loves them in God.
His writings, then, are a constant incitement for them to be faithful to their vocation, to give God and to the people the best of themselves, to make their lives a masterpiece.

He himself confesses that each of his writings is accompanied by so much prayer, at the foot of the icon of the Consolata. To the Mother of Jesus he entrusts his every son and daughter so that they may be guarded from all dangers. For them he asks first of all that they be saints, that they be "family", that they behave like brothers and sisters, always keeping alive the torch of fraternal love.

3. *Holiness* - This is yet another very recurrent element in the letters of the Blessed Allamano. He has personal experience that only holiness of life produces mission, and so he never ceases to remind his missionaries that the intensity of work, the amount of activity, the commitment to serve others, are not enough. Mission is first and foremost the work of God and every worker who is preparing to work in the vineyard that is the Church, must draw from a deep and prolonged contact with God all his apostolic charge. This is the origin of his insistence on prolonged prayer, on the Eucharist well celebrated, on tender devotion to the Consolata.

I express the hope that many will go through these pages rich in humanity, faith and missionary zeal and that they will be *infected* by them.

Rome, 19 March 2004

Fr. Piero Trabucco
Superior General

INTRODUCTION

«The peace of the Lord be with you!
At this time, I cannot satisfy my vivid desire to be among you often,
to help you lay solid foundations to our little Institute...
I think it is good to open my heart to you through this letter »

(Joseph Allamano, *Letter July 28, 1901*)

The letters written by Allamano during his life and compiled with prudence and meticulousness by Father Candido Bona are 1802. Those addressed to the Consolata missionaries are more or less (without taking into account some few words) 576: precisely 435 to the men missionaries and 141 to the sisters. Most of these letters are addressed to individuals, others are circulars addressed to all or to specific groups, for example missionaries from Kenya, from Kaffa or Iringa, or to groups of missionaries.

In the Institute, particular attention was given to the Conferences that Allamano periodically gave to the candidates of the Mother House and to the missionary sisters; the Letters, on the other hand, were almost completely forgotten and underestimated. Suffice it to say that it was only in 1982 that Father Bona began to consider a possible publication; in a way that the first volume (for the letters of 1865-1894) was published only in 1990, and the last in 2002!

Importance of the "epistolary style"

Before dealing with the letters of Allamano, a small consideration. It can be seen that the so-called "epistolary style" is abundantly represented in all literatures, ancient and modern; and it is known how the letters (or the collection of letters) have assumed in antiquity a literary form of a certain importance, similar to the role that an article, or an interview occupy today in civil life (as is used today with the *Open Letters* or the *Letters to the public*).

To better understand Allamano's letters, the best method (even if tiring) would be to get in touch with the large number of letters that exist in Christian hagiography, or at least with the most important ones.

There are the letters of St. Paul and St. Ignatius of Antioch; the 270 letters of St. Augustine, the 154 of St. Jerome, the 845 of St. Gregory the Great, etc.

We could then move on to the 548 fervent letters of St. Bernard, those of the first Carthusians, the dozens of letters of St. Francis de Assis, the 463 of St. Caterina of Siena, the 6,795 of St. Ignatius of Loyola, those of St. Francis Xavier ... to those of people closest to us: 1,200 from Cardinal Massaia, 531 from Cottolengo, 2,500 from Don Bosco (who was able to write up to a hundred a day), and more than 20,000 from J. Henry Newman (as for the number, I could beat them all)... It is, as it is easy to guess, an inexhaustible mine!

This long and evocative "spiritual journey" may be done not only to tune in to the letters of Allamano, but also to verify how no biography, however vast, can offer more authentic portraits of the various characters who are in epistolary correspondence with each other.

This is also the case of the Allamano; for this reason, Father Bona entitled the 11 volumes of his letters *"Quasi una vita" (almost a life).*

Allamano letters

In the myriad of letters mentioned above, Allamano's correspondence does not disfigure at all; indeed, if well known, it can permeate the atmosphere almost with a specific perfume.

This volume collects only the letters addressed to the missionaries working in Africa, which give us the essential and unmistakable characteristics of the author's human and spiritual physiognomy.

- You can gloss over the style, however always correct, never emphatic or pompous. It can be noted that in the letters, unlike the Conferences, allamano never uses the Piedmontese dialect, while short Latin phrases abound, taken from the Bible, from the Fathers of the Church, from the Imitation of Christ, from the Liturgy. There are 166 of them. He used them for meditation; on some of them he concentrates his thought, without dispersing himself in too many words.

- It should also be noted that the recipients of these letters are not all of equal importance. The Founder wrote 65 circulars and 11 Reports to *Propaganda Fide* and other Roman Congregations, again with the help of Giacomo Camisassa; 60 letters are addressed to Fr. Tommaso Gays, 34 to Mons. Filippo Perlo, 28 to Fr. Domenico Ferrero, etc.; other, to the superiors and nuns.

- It is quite evident that, in the letters, Allamano often speaks of the Consolata Sanctuary and of the Mother Consolata. How can we fail to

speak of it, when the origin of the Institute, the missions and their development depended on the Shrine and on that sea of people that gravitated around it? In the myriad of times in which the word *Consolata* comes out of the pen, he does it almost always, he almost always does so by prepending the adjective 'our' [*nostro*] (at least 147 times): "Our Consolata - Our and your Consolata", or "At the foot of our Consolata, I bless you"...

- In the Conferences, Allamano often returns to the theme of God's will; in the letters, this spiritual dimension is not only enunciated, but rather applied to itself: "*It consoles me, however, surely that I have always sought to do the will of God*". Some, especially among the members of the then powerful class of Canonicus (to which he also belonged) and monsignors, were a little afraid of him, especially for his sincerity and frankness. His freedom of spirit also appears, in a very special way, in his letters to his missionaries, especially in those most meditated or suffered. It is *the parrhesia* found in the letters from St. Paul, speaking frankly, always trying to keep alive the sense of mutual trust.

He does so with Mons. Perlo, although he must admonish him, and to another missionary, who has secretly sent a letter, he writes: "I do not think I deserve this lack of trust". And even with the missionary sisters in Africa, being at the beginning of their mission experience, he is rather severe and speaks clearly, writing to them and to some of them in particular: "While as your father, I know how to pity human frailty, I cannot, and will not, accept that we should go ahead in this spirit... *The Lord does not need you".*

- A much-discussed theme in the letters is also that of missionary methodology: the so-called *elevation of the environment*, even with work, before the conversion or baptism of people; to make oneself known and distinguished from members of the government; of "meekness" or kindness towards Africans, etc.

- In summary... the letters, compared to the Founder's Conferences, appear several times:
more concrete, because they refer to specific situations, personal cases, particular moments...;
more personalized, because the Founder takes into account individual people or, at most, a specific group; he does not say good things for everyone, but only useful things for the recipients;

more cordial, because in them is guaranteed confidentiality, almost intimacy and, therefore, the Allamano feels, in a certain sense, freer to express delicate feelings;
clearer, in the sense of better expressing the identity of the Founder as an educator; they make more evident his ability to understand particular needs, his realism in knowing how to make exceptions, his serene approach to situations and his ability to encourage...

To conclude... Father Bona writes: «Correspondence keeps us apart from the many secrets of Giuseppe Allamano's life, without the help of the inevitable mediations of the biographer. Going forward, we almost feel like uninvited guests in his office and violating his intimacy just when he manifests himself as a friend, counselor and parent: that is, when he faces problems and communicates decisions; when he opens correspondence (particularly awaited letters, such as those that came to him from the missions).

But decades later, the letters now belong to his sons and daughters, to the church. Its simplicity, calm and confident tone dissolves the feeling of being an intruder.

Of course, these letters are not the whole of life, but “almost”: they are important and indispensable for entering a little more into the (always mysterious) world of his holiness».

Fr. Igino Tubaldo

CHRONOLOGY

January, 12	1851	Joseph Allamano is born in Castelnuovo (Asti - Italy).
January, 22	1851	He is baptized in the parish church, with the name of Joseph Ottavio.
October, 21	1854	Clerical dress.
November...	1866	He enters the Turin Seminary.
September, 20	1873	Priestly ordination.
July, 30	1876	He graduated in theology.
October, 02	1880	He entered as the Rector of the Consolata Shrine, followed a a few days later by James Camisassa.
February, 10	1883	He is appointed honorary Canon of the Metropolitan Cathedral.
September, 30	1891	He sends the *Rules* of a missionary Institute to *Propaganda Fide*.
February, 16	1895	Beginning of uncle G. Cafasso's beatification process.
January 19-29	1900	Serious illness and his miraculous healing.
September, 12-13	1900	The Episcopal Conference of Piedmont approves the foundation of the Institute.
January, 29	1901	Foundation decree of the Institute.
June, 18	1901	Inauguration of the first Mother House (*La Consolatina*).
May, 08	1902	Departure of the first four missionaries for Kenya.
May, 13	1903	Eight Vincentian Sisters (of Cottolengo) leave for Kenya
June, 11-20	1904	Celebrations of the centenary at the Consolata Shrine.
September, 14	1905	Erection of Kenya as "Independent Mission".
November, 02	1908	The Junior Seminary begins at the *Consolatina*.

June, 28	1909	The Mission of Kenya becomes Apostolic Vicariate.
September, 23	1909	Cardinal Richelmy approves the *Constitutions*.
October, 23	1909	Episcopal consecration of Msgr. Perlo.
December, 28	1909	The Consolata Missionary Institute receives the *Decretum Laudis* (Decree of praise) from Rome.
January, 29	1910	Foundation of the Institute of Consolata Missionary Sisters.
February, 8	1911	The canon Camisassa begins his visit to the Kenya's missions.
January, 28	1913	The Kaffa Region (Ethiopia) is entrusted to the Institute.
November, 03	1913	The first 15 Consolata Missionary Sisters leave for Kenya.
March, 03	1922	Erection of the Apostolic Prefecture of Iringa (Tanzania).
August, 18	1922	Death of the canon James Camisassa.
November. 10-24	1922	First General Chapter of the Institute.
February, 27	1923	*Propaganda Fide* approves the *Constitutions*.
September, 20	1923	50th Anniversary priestly ordination of J. Allamano.
December, 16	1923	Erection of the Institute as *Moral Entity*.
June, 05	1924	Msgr. Philip Perlo arrives in Italy as Vice Superior General.
August, 18	1924	Msgr. Gabriele Perlo appointed as Apostolic Vicar of Benadir (Somalia).
April, 15	1925	The Institute arrives in Mozambique.
May, 03	1925	Beatification of Joseph Cafasso.
February, 16	1926	Death of Joseph Allamano at the Consolata Shrine (Turin).

Rome, 7 October 1990

Joseph Allamano beatification

Abbreviations

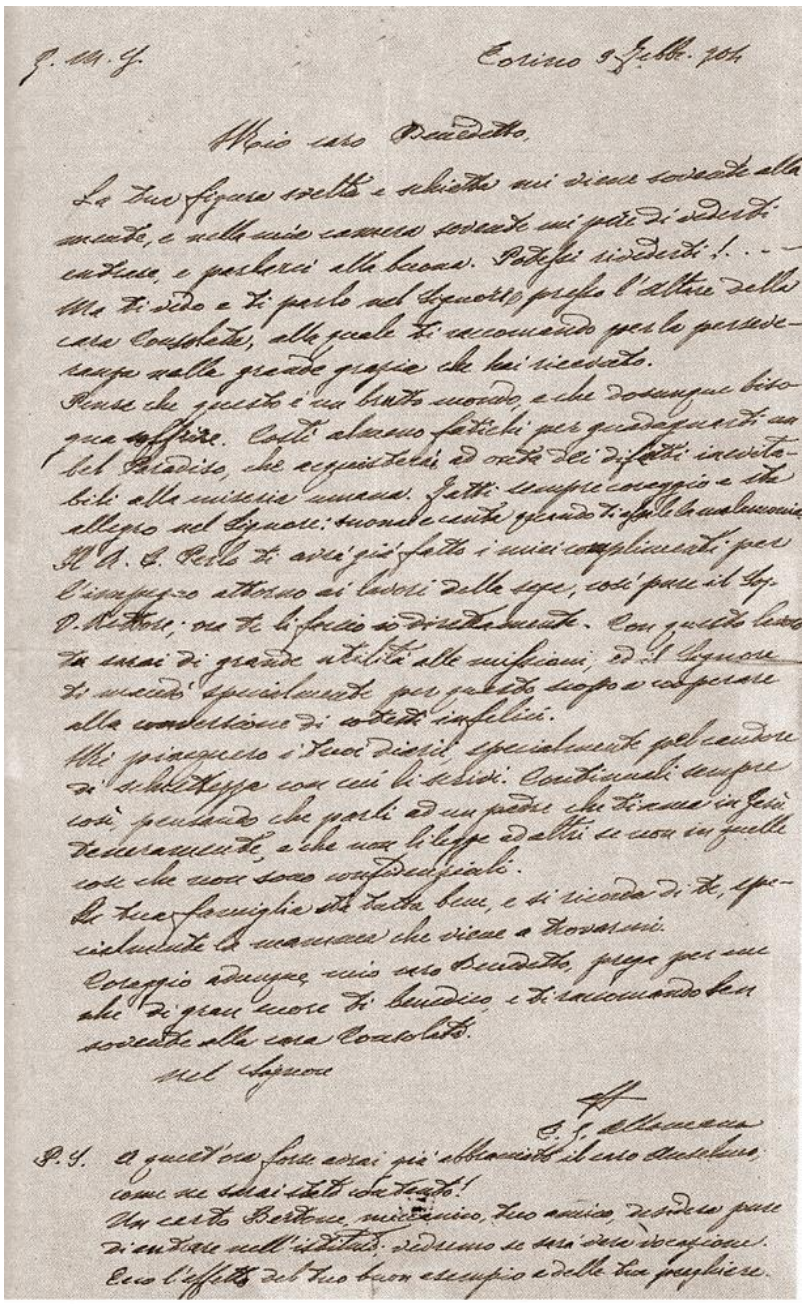
E. g.	*Exempli gratia* [example given, for exemple]
Fr.	Father
IMC	Consolata Missionary Institute
J. C.	Jesus Christ
J. M. J.	Jesus, Mary, Joseph
Mgr.	Monsignor
M. H. Consolata	Most Holy Consolata
O. L. J. C.	Our Lord Jesus Christ
O. L. [**of…**]	Our Lady [e.g. of Sorrows]
P. S.	*Post Scriptum* [After written]
S. C. [**of…**]	Sacred Congregation [e.g. of Rites]
T[heol]	Theologian
[**Very**] **aff.**	[Very] affectionate
V. Rector	Vice Rector
V. R.	Very Reverend
Y. E.	Your Excellency

ADVISORY NOTE

The letters presented here (excluding the first two) are those written by Joseph Allamano to the Consolata missionaries, "extracted" from the eleven volumes of Fr. CANDIDO BONA:

Almost a life... Letters written and received by Blessed Giuseppe Allamano
Edizioni Missioni Consolata, Rome, 1990-2002

For an explanation or in-depth analysis of the contents, please refer to this voluminous, but indispensable work; to this purpose, at the beginning of each letter, is indicated the page and the number of the Italian volume in which the letter can be traced.



Joseph Allamano, Letter to Brother Benedetto Falda, *dated February 3, 1904 (cf. Letter N. 46)*

◀ 1 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, I, 123-125)

To the theologian Giacomo Camisassa

Eremo Torinese, September 1880

Dear T[heol.] Camisassa,

I am writing to inform you of something that I felt and still feel rather unbelievable, and such will be to you, too. Monsignor Archbishop has appointed me Rector of the Shrine and Conv[itto] of Mary Cons[olata], in replacement of C[an.] Rovetti who is about to retire at the Cottolengo. Nothing succeeded in making Mgr. change his decision, nor my right observations, neither the objections of other people; my only choice was to obey. The voice of obedience removed any objection, and I hope it will remove all difficulties.

Here is, my dear, a news that is certainly new to you, and that I am giving you, as a person very dear to me, among the first. The matter, though, it's not ending here; since in that "Convitto"[1] there will be *New House* also for the office of Bursar, I in agreement with our Rev. Rector Can. Soldati, to Mgr. who had asked me to find a priest that I liked for that office, I proposed yourself. Please, do not consider only the name of Bursar, that Mgr. told me he intends to elevate in your case, neither bring up personal inabilities, because as God will supply for my weak abilities, he will supply also for yours. Mgr. approved my request and has already made opportune arrangements for substituting you as Assistant Parish-priest at Pecetto; perhaps your successor will be Fr. Ag[...].

I hope that you will accept when, on behalf of Mgr., you will receive the invitation and the order in this regard, giving witness to the spirit of obedience acquired in Seminary. See, my dear, together, in good agreement we shall do some good, will practice charity in favour of the old Priests there retired and we shall try to honour with proper S[acred] Cult our dear mother Mary Consolata. On the other hand, I hope that in this new office you will have a chance to exercise the S[acred] Ministry more than at Pecetto. I am certain that you will imitate your previous Director in obeying the Orders of our Superior and I will be happy to share with a person, whom I love so much and from whom I always received signs of love, the many new works that are awaiting for me there.

This letter is no official invitation for you; it is totally private; by means of it, I only intend to inform you of what you will soon receive. I will go to the place at the beginning of October; please, try to come at the same time so that we can do the "taking over" together. Waiting for a prompt response of yours, I beg you to consider all I have done in regard to you as a sign of the esteem and love I nourish for you, of whom I am glad to profess myself very aff[ectionate] in J[esus] C[hrist].

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[1] Similar to a Pastoral Institute, for the formation of young priests, locaded next to the Consolata Shrine, in Turin.

◀ 2 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, II, pp. 457-459)

To the Archbishop Cardinal Agostino Richelmy

J[esus], M[ary], J[oseph] Rivoli, 6 April 1900

Your Eminence,

While I am here all alone at Rivoli, my mind and heart naturally think about Torino, the Consolata Shrine, the Convitto and the Institute of the Most Holy Annunziata. And in regard to this Institute, thinking about its future, I have been reflecting on some thoughts I would like to submit to Your judgement. Should we continue to form lady-teachers; or would it be more convenient to change and use the inheritance of Mgr. Demichelis, of holy memory, for a better purpose?

In the past the Institute, by educating daughters of a civil condition and forming Christian lady-teachers, did a lot of good both to religion and to society. At the present how little is the good we can do. The present school legislation clearly aims at destroying private Institutes; therefore they undergo many vexations, a huge number of teachers is required; and then the greatest difficulty of succeeding in the examinations. In the meantime government and officially recognized schools have been increasing, where the students achieve better results and, consequently, get better jobs. Any little town that so wishes may obtain an officially recognized school, as it happened at Chieri and Bra.

This explains why, for several years now, the Institute is caring for only a few students, and in the present year they are only seven, as they were also last year. Now would it be convenient to spend so much money for so few students, since we need the same number of directors and teachers as for many of them? Last year, to the few fees received, I had to add six thousand liras, besides the free use of the compound. Last year I tried to establish a boarding-place for girls who, while living in the Institute would attend public schools; quite a number of circular letters were printed and mailed for this purpose; but only one student came. It must also be noticed that the Institute is too far from the Berti school they should attend...

As we are dealing with the matter of changing the directress and all the personnel, according to the advice of worthy Priests who are aware of the situation, and to what was judged as opportune by Your secretary, the time is right for deciding to continue as it was or to change the nature of the Institute.

If we should decide to use the House for other purposes, what kind of institution should we undertake? If I would second an ancient desire of mine, I would opt for the foundation of a Missionary Institute for Foreign Missions; and here are my reasons:

1. The presumed will of Mgr. Demichelis, who probably gave me his inheritance for this purpose. In fact, two years before he died, having seen

him all desolate for the situation of his Institute, and practically decided to close it, due to the reasons mentioned above, I exhorted him, to try again to continue for some time; if then he would see that he was spending his money uselessly, I would have advised him to invest into another institution. He wanted to know at all cost what kind of institution it would have been, and I proposed a Missionary Institute. I left him exhorting him to try again for some time. After he died, among many of his papers, I found our conversation of that day written by him.
Within myself I wondered whether that would have been the reason for entrusting to me his inheritance; I can't think of any other reason, since I have never been close to him neither to his Institute. He seems to be hinting at this also in his testament, where he clearly speaks of a change of purpose for his Institute allowing full freedom to his heir.

2. All the main Italian cities have an Institute for Foreign Missions, for instance, Roma, Milano, Napoli, Genova, etc. Will only Torino, where so many charitable institutions are flourishing, remain without one? The Salesians have some missions, but for them this is accidental, since their authentic purpose are the schools and the education of the youth. And then they take advantage of the young people educated by them; very seldom a young man not educated by them joins them. Not all people willing to go to the Missions intend to take the usual religious vows.

3. Indeed, through the experience I acquired in many years dedicated to the formation of the young Clergy, I must confess that many times I have found true vocations for the Missions. Many Seminarians and young Priests have joined Institutes outside Piedmont; we have some of them among the "Lazzaristi", among those of St. Calocero of Milano, among those of Verona, Genova, Piacenza, and even those of Algiers. But, if some of them, rather unwillingly, decided to enrol among people with different characteristics among whom they would be somehow secondary, many of them, for such reasons, forgot their vocation and are still living with such great desire. This is proven by the movement manifested in these days among young Priests to go to America; four of them went last year; and five more are asking to do so with Rev. C. Sorasio. This trend worries me, as I fear that some financial factors may be influencing them, and that, being isolated without a fatherly hand to guide them, their spirituality may be damaged. If, on the other hand, there would be a group of Missionaries from Piedmont, united in various regions, guided by their Superiors and working not in order to get rich, but only out of love of souls, this right trend would attract those who are really called. The very Card. Simeoni, when he was Prefect of Propaganda Fide, manifested to me such a desire.

Your Eminence, here is what, also to unload my conscience and for the greater glory of God, I thought of manifesting to you. Please, reflect on this matter before the Lord, and, returning to Torino in a rather short time, you will decide what to do.

◀ 3 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 105-107)

To the first members of the Mother-House

Consolata Shrine, 28 July 1901

Hurrah J[esus], M[ary], J[oseph] and St. Peter Claver

My dearest in O[ur] L[ord] J[esus] C[hrist],

The peace of the Lord be with you!

At this time I cannot satisfy my vivid desire to be among you often, in order to help you lay solid foundations to our little Institute; in fact, I must be away from Torino for a few days. For this reason, I think it is good to open my heart to you through this letter.

First of all, I am happy to tell you that your first beginnings are a true consolation to me. Your goodness, mutual charity, and the spirit of sacrifice that animate you are a good omen for our Institute. Deo gratias! [Thanks be to God!]

O[ur] L[ord] Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament should be happy about your keeping Him company and your frequent visits. The H[oly] Tabernacle is the centre of the house, and everything must be directed there like a ray. How many graces will then flow from there upon you and the future missionaries! He himself, Jesus our master, will form His own apostles.

Hold dear the booklet of the regulations; meditate on some of them every day, striving to practise well, as much as it is possible now, what is prescribed in chapter III, especially the part about using time well, and about silence. Love, therefore, being retired in your rooms, where you may study H[oly] Scripture, languages, and the other subjects you are taught. Avoid useless outings and superfluous visits.

Let it be a special commitment of each one of you not to be out of the house at the time of common practices, especially not to go somewhere else to celebrate the H[oly] Mass, and not to be absent from classes and meals.

For the sake of order and virtue, depend on our dear Fr. Scassa who, *primus inter pares* [first among equal] is responsible before God and to me for everything in the house. The young people should ask permissions from him, especially in order to go out of the house (if he is absent, they should ask the oldest priest in the house), and in everything must depend on his orders and desires.

Later, orally or in writing, I will gradually tell you many other things, which will help you to perfect yourselves and to prepare for the great work of the apostolate. For the time being, I limit myself to establish some rules for our dear young men.

1. The one who acts as a sacristan shall take great care of the Chapel, opening and closing it according to the orders of the Superior, and especially providing everything necessary for H. Mass.

2. He will sweep the Chapel and the sacristy twice a week, once (on Saturday) using sawdust. Every day he will dust the altar, the altar-rail, the pews, etc. and the sacristy; when necessary, he will clean the Chapel's aisles from mud and soil.

3. The same young man, every Saturday will change the Holy Water in its containers in the Chapel and the rooms, re-filling them with newly-blessed water.

4. The young man who acts as a porter shall pay attention to the sound of the entrance bell, welcome visitors in the parlour and, according to the superior's orders, call people to the parlour.

5. He will ring the bell for common actions.

6. The same young man, every morning, will sweep the pavement of the outside railing and those in front of the Chapel, the house and the porch; he will also remove the grass growing among the gravel.

7. Once a week, all the corridors of the house, the community rooms, and the courtyard should be cleaned, as well as the toilets and their small water tanks (even more often if necessary).

8. Every day, the garden at the entrance and the interior one should be cultivated and watered.

9. The Sisters should be helped, by splitting firewood, drawing water, etc.

10. In the Dining Hall, a week each, the young men will clean, prepare, and serve.

Very aff[ectionate] in O[ur] L[ord] J[esus] C[hrist].

◀ 4 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, pp. 352-353)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

Torino, 4 July 1902

My dear ones in O[ur] L[ord] J[esus] C[hrist],

I was on the verge of answering your letters sent to us from Zanzibar, when we received those sent from Mombasa. Deo gratias for the good news you give us and for those given by our dear Theologian [Fr. Filippo Perlo]. Our Lord is visibly helping you, and Our [Lady] Consolata assures me everyevening that you will be her blessed ones. Courage *in Domino* [in the Lord].

All of us liked the photographs very much, although I noticed that you look a bit melancholy, perhaps for the tiredness of the journey? I am sure that morally you are joyful, and this is what matters, but do not disregard your bodies, making use for you and for the dear young people [the Brothers] of all the necessary cares.

News about our Institute were sent by our Rev. V[ice]-Rector to the Theologian, and I don't want to repeat them. I only thank the Lord who *nova fecit omnia* [did everything new] and no Amalekite remains to spoil

the young people who have come and those who will come, who are already consoling me much.

His Eminence greatly enjoyed your letter and wanted to be well informed of everything, and wholeheartedly sends you his blessing and confirms what he had told you. The doctors are grateful and with time will write to you; and particularly happy was the R[ev.] Fr. Giaccardi.

The relatives of our dear Celeste e Luigi [the Brothers] are well and are happy of their sons' condition. I will receive the father of Celeste for the Spiritual Exercises at St. Ignatius free of charge and, if he will be able to make it, also the father of Luigi. They ask me to tell them many things about their families, assuring that they pray for them and are happy for their faithfulness to their H[oly] Vocation.

Mrs. Terandi came and, since I was not present, she had a long talk with our V. Rector, and she seemed to have been very happy. I will go myself to take your letter to her, and so I will have a chance to know her. The parish priest of Lucento told me that you shouldn't write any longer to that boy of Lucento, giving bad impression to the village people, because the boy does not greet the priests and the mother speaks too much adding things that could damage your integrity. I don't know what to think of all this; however I did not hand your last letter and photograph to her. They came twice to me for news, and I gave them some with moderation. You will think about how to behave with them.

May you and the dear Theologian accept my most affectionate embraces to be extended also to the dear Celeste and Luigi, and have me in the Consolata, very aff[ectionate]

◀ 5 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 384-385)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

Pian della Mussa, Balme, 30 July 1902

In your letter you tell me that you will have to introduce some changes in our customs and timetable, according to the experience of the Fathers there [the Holy Ghost Fathers, in Kenya]: do what you judge best *in Domino* after having prayed and discussed together the two of you [Fr. Gays and Fr. F. Perlo]. However, there should always be the substance of our rules, and most of all the spirit of our institution. I wouldn't like, though, that it should consist in changing our white habit with the black one or in wearing always secular clothes... The ecclesiastical habit at first will raise admiration, but it will eventually infuse more respect into the local people who will distinguish you from the protestant missionaries... and will deter people from risky demonstrations. If you need heavier clothing, we shall send it to you; but, if I am not mistaken, the long white habit should be

worn also in public. Secular clothes will be needed only during journeys, and use them parsimoniously.

In regard to the young men [the Brothers], do as you judge best; however, sometime, both in church and somewhere else, let them wear their cassock; it seems to me that it will be more proper and it will keep them away from certain dangers.

During my Spiritual Exercises at St. Ignatius, I composed the *Directory* required by our Rules... After the necessary trial, I will send you copy of it, so that you may observe as much of if as you can.

◀ 6 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 391-392)

To Fr. Luigi Borio, first "prefect" of the Mother-House

J. M. J. Piano della Mussa, 4 August 1902

My dearest in O. L. J. C.

I just received your dear post-card, and I thank you for the news. Prepare the documents for the taking of the habit of the three young men; it will take place at the tend of the Spiritual Exercises. On my return to Torino, we shall provide for the habits of Bertrandi and, if the other two did not yet provide for theirs, we shall take care of those, too. During this time, you watch them, so as to examine their vocation. It is my intention to take care of the expenses for the first one, since he is poor: as the other two come from well-to-do families, the families should take care of them. You try to interrogate them in a nice way, and then we shall see. For this it will be good to go back to the Don Bosco's Oratorio [what was done there].

Feel free to send the seminarian Valetti to Usseglio to his uncle; if he needs it, give him what is needed for the journey back and forth, and even something more if you feel it convenient. I hope he will be able to come back for the Spiritual Exercises of the 22nd of this month and, possibly, visit us at St. Ignatius the previous week.

A certain seminarian Destefanis of Torino has renewed a vivid application in order to be accepted into our Institute; He has completed the first year of Philosophy at Chieri. See if, in a proper way, you may come to know what Valetti and his companion think about him. See also Fr. Giaccardi, who knows him as a former member of the Oratorio.

Another one from the same course, Savio from Castelnuovo, is asking to join, and C[anon] Duvina thinks well of him; enquire from his two companions and, when possible, you will answer me. I will come to Torino at the beginning of next week, not later than Wednesday.

All good wishes *in Domino* to all our dear young men and particularly to you.

In Domino, very aff.

◀ 7 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, p. 437)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

Torino, 19 September 1902

In regard to the community practices, you should be firm about the substance and, as I already wrote to you, make the changes that, in agreement with the Theologian, you may feel convenient.

Concerning the young men [the Brothers] ... let them write freely and seal their letters in front of them, so that they may feel free to tell me everything they want... You should be generous with regard and spiritual consolations...; they need confidence so as to open their heart, especially for the dangers concerning *chastity*; keep them united to God and make them despise by means of supernatural thoughts the impressions of nakedness... Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament will take care Himself.

◀ 8 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 438)

To the theologian Filippo Perlo

J. M. J

Torino, 19 September1902

My dearest one in O. L. J. C.

Your letters to our dear V[ice] Rector are really what we were desiring, and Deo gratias for the good they accomplish with the parts that we publish [in the magazine]. In a special way were very pleasing those confidentially addressed to me. The sentiments expressed in them are those of a true missionary, and I enjoyed and thank the Lord for them. I hope that Our Lady Consolata will continue to fill you with graces so that, overcoming certain inevitable weaknesses of human life, you will love one another and work only out of love for God.

I recommend that you take great care of yourself and not tire you out too much; the good Lord will soon send you some help. Sustain your confreres' weakness and be the right hand of Fr. Gays, who is writing to me many good things about you.

The V. Rector will write much more to you and you answer always to him. I wrote some norms to Fr. Gays.

Many good things from all of us here, and my blessing especially on you... very aff. in J. C.

◀ 9 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 459)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

Torino, 7 November 1902

I recommend much to you the devotion to the S[acred] Heart of Jesus, especially on the first Fridays of the months. Do diligently "l'ora di guardia" [an hour of time offered to the S. Heart]; as we do it...

This S. Heart should be our strength also in our spiritual weaknesses. Say often with us the short prayers "Dolce Cuor del... [Sweet Heart of (my Jesus make me love you more and more)]" and "Gesù così mansueto ed umile di cuore... [Jesus so meek and humble of heart (make my heart similar to yours)]."

◀ 10 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 486-487)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

Torino, 12 December 1902

When you can be together observe as much as possible and with freedom the Rules and the Directory and also, as much as possible, when you are separated. What is essential is the good spirit that exists in all of you.

From the notes I am sending you, besides the Directory, you will notice the difference I established in the Mother House between the priests and the others.

It would be good to observe it also there, as much as possible.

For the Masses keep a book, and more or less every semester you will send me the total...

PRACTICES FOR THE HOUSE-INSTITUTE

I Breakfast by everybody at 8 o' clock every day; at 8.30 on feast-days after the 8 o' clock H[oly] Mass. – The Sisters give everybody a big cup of milk and coffee from the "finestrella" [small opening between dining-room and kitchen] together with a sugar-tablet each.

II At lunch and supper the food is given to each person in individual plates: the soup in bowls: two plates of meat, one of which with vegetables or sauce at lunch, and a plate with vegetables at supper.
Wine mixed with water; fruit is never given. This for the Seminarians and the "Confratelli" [Brothers] who are considered like the Seminarians and come after all of them at table.

The Priests have a separate table and have in addition fruit or cheese at lunch and supper, and a small bottle of 475g. of pure wine, similar to the one of the Seminarians in quantity but not in quality.
At table there is never any exemption from reading in no day of the year, not even at Christmas or Easter. – A Seminarian per week will do the service at table; he will also prepare and clear the table and then eat with the reader in silence. A Seminarian or a "Confratello" per week will wash the plates in the kitchen. To cook will learn first the "Confratelli" and then the Seminarians.

III The Blessing and the Thanksgiving at table will be as long as it is given in the Breviary, and then all go to the Chapel praying the "*Miserere*" [Ps 50/51].
Above the Chapel we prepared a very large room with beds separated by tents: the Seminarians and the "Confratelli" will sleep there, reserving the single rooms for the Priests. The Seminarians and "Confratelli" will study in common in the classroom; the Priests in their room.

◀ 11 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 488-489)

To the theologian Filippo Perlo

J. M. J. Torino, 12 December 1902

My dearest Theologian,

It is clearly seen that Our Lady Consolata is assisting you and directing every step of yours. The dear students of our Institute and many other people are praying a lot for you! I am very happy about You, and I thank the Lord who gave you so much strength and grace to begin well our missions. Your letters are desired by everybody, and the "notebook" supplies small things that are very much liked by the readers of our magazine. Keep writing often and much; you will thus simplify the work of our dear V. Rector for the magazine, and will attract missionaries and charity.

We have already received various applications from good people, about whom you will hear from your brother, Fr. Gabriele. In regard to the departure of our dear Fr. Gabriele, my heart is aching because your mother is quite unwell; but the Lord is giving him the grace to make the great sacrifice, and this will attract God's blessings on the whole family. The V. Rector and I have not solicited anything; indeed, perhaps we have performed a bit the *devil's office*; on the other hand, your father is always happy. The Theol. Gays gives me very good news about with one accord and good humour, and this pleases me; continue in this way for the love of God and souls, overlooking all human miseries...

Is my intention that you have the *absolute* control of every material expenditure, and the others must depend on you to have anything, whether

arrived from Torino or acquired there! About this I have informed Fr. Gays and I am informing all those coming there. Be generous with what is needed in regard to health; but in regard to agricultural tools, etc. act according to need and usefulness. See also with Fr. Gays about a way to distinguish a bit between the priests and the others; and when it is a matter of taking decisions, it should be done only by you priests, and sometimes only by the two of you.

I wholeheartedly reciprocate the greetings of all the good people there! and I would like that all of them be Christians soon; for this we pray a lot, and with patience the time of harvesting will come. People who do not understand are asking whether you are already baptizing; they do not know that your work will prepare the mass conversion of those people; and this is important, and not use your time for a particular fact or place to the detriment of many.

In your travelling prefer first to have as a companion your brother, Fr. Gabriel, and then, sometimes, the Theol. Borda, because naturally they both desire it. The "confratello" Andrea is rather *particular*, capable of founding a cultivation; direct him leaving then to him some free activity in what he will do well.

Many things *in Domino* and happy feasts for the whole year... very aff. in J. C.

◀ 12 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 491)

To Brother Luigi Falda

Hurray J. M. J. Torino, 12 December 1902

Dear Luigi,

From your photograph I see that you are enjoying good health, and they wrote to me that you have good legs... Well, if your beard does not want to grow, it doesn't matter; you will always have to be simple and pure like a *matotu* [young boy]. I, too, inform you that your dear brother Benedetto, who was crying so much at your departure, has joined our Institute and is now making his Spiritual Exercises. Your good mother was happy about it and also your father; as really good Christians, they made the sacrifice. Write to him a letter of rejoicing and encouragement.

You will have a new "confratello", called Andrea; all of you love him and help him to become, together with you, a strong missionary and not to get discouraged when trials come... Pray also for me, who want you to be a saint...

Your very aff. in O. L. J. C.

◀ 13 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 492)

To the seminarian Giovanni Balbo

J. M. J. Torino, 18 December 1902

Reverend Seminarian,

Your application, corresponding as it is to the nature of our Institute, was very dear to me. As I see, the idea is not a new one, as it is a long time that you are yearning for the apostolate; pray ever more to the Lord to make you worthy of such a sublime vocation.

You have probably already read the Rules of our Institute; if you haven't done it yet, you may beg the Very Rev. Rector to lend it to you. Once everything is decided together with the Rev. Rector, you write to me, and I will accept you among my dear students with the consent of our ven[erable] Cardinal.

Pray also for me. *In Domino,* very aff.

◀ 14 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 540)

To Fr. Luigi Borio

Consolata Shrine, 1st Friday of the Month,
6 March 1903

Dear Fr. Borio,

Tomorrow, Saturday, at 9.00 am. there will be the celebration of the anniversary Mass for the deceased sister of Mgr. Demichelis. Provide that all or some of our dear seminarians will participate in it at the Church of the Holy Angels.

Let them pray for her blessed soul and the soul of Monsignor; may they obtain also the grace for the Cerutti Cause that so far still sleeping; may it die out in silence, *si Deo placet* [if it pleases God]. *In Domino,* very aff.

◀ 15 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 541-542)

To the theologian Filippo Perlo

J. M. J. Torino, March 1903

My dearest Theologian Perlo,

You may imagine all my sorrow for the death of Your dear mother; a sorrow even greater as it concerns You and your brother, Fr. Gabriele. The good Lord didn't want to listen to our extraordinary prayers and took her to Himself.

However, everything was consoling on this occasion as you will better hear from our dear V. Rector.

Take courage *in Domino*. The sacrifice you offered will attract plenty of God's blessings on you...

With my all affection... very aff.

◀ 16 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 543)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

Torino, 6 March 1903

Certainly, you are not yet a sufficient number so as to comply exactly with what our Rules prescribe; anyhow do everything that can be done. I consider very important your gathering together, if not yet every month, at least now and then; and every time you meet, make your monthly retreat and everything that is written in the Rules. In each House then there must be a timetable, from the time of rising to the one of resting, a timetable that may be changed according to need, but that must be reassumed as soon as the need ceases.

I wrote to you about the customs of the Mothers House regarding food and distinction between Priests and "Confratelli"; try to observe them in a pleasant way.

Regarding what is useful there is no need to save; but when it is a matter of indifferent things, there is no need of spending money in order to send letters to the single places at any time. I also desire that everybody should write now and then, but only about things that are permitted and to people to whom it is convenient to do so.

In regard to the cassock..., having considered everything, I think that, for the time being, it should be worn always by the Priests and Seminarians, except *when travelling, doing manual works and curing the sick*; the Brothers should wear it at least in church, and in the House when they are not working, like on feast-days.

◀ 17 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 550-551)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

Torino, 3 April 1903

In regard to the rule of not building colleges, I make one only exception, and that is to prepare a kind of seminary for future catechists only in one mission... to me Limuru seems [convenient]...

But it must be a seminary very much *sui generis* [of its kind], that is *almost always* you should make them work in something useful for you,

maintaining them according to their customs, and in order to clothe them, first lend them something, and then, if they deserve it, give them as a gift a pair of swimming trunks, a great quantity of which have been made here by various ladies at my invitation... But never pay them for the work they do or service they rendered, *never*, neither by means of money, nor anything else.

And if they do not like it, patience, and you may tell them with O. L. Jesus Christ, "*vultis et vos abire* [do you also want to leave?]". However if, by doing so, you totally alienate these young people, write to me everything, what is in favour and what is against, and I will see if for those of a certain age I could make an exception, by paying them not weekly, nor monthly, but after some years of testing.

Concerning the habit of smoking, here are the decisions I have taken for the time being, and about which you will inform the others: 1st) I do not allow the habit of chewing tobacco. 2nd) those who do not have the habit of smoking or taking snuff, should not start doing it and, if somebody feels a need for it, let him write to me about it. 3rd) those who already have the habit of smoking: it is my desire that they should gradually stop doing so; if they really cannot make it, I allow them to spend a "*soldo*"[2] every two days. This expense, however, should be avoided when there is already the equivalent amount of tobacco given by somebody or cultivated by you. In this case, to prevent abuses, I allow smoking for the total of an hour a day.

I remind you that you cannot give money to Ametis[3], but only the things he might need *for himself*; and, so, if he asks you to buy him cigars, you may do so by taking account of the expense; but do not give him the money to buy them himself.

◀ 18 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, 553-554)

To the theologian Antonio Borda-Bossana

Hurray J. M. J.

Torino, 3 April 1903,
Feast of O. L. of Sorrows

My dearest Theologian,

Some time ago I received your letters, and I thank you for the enclosed news, especially for the spirit of good will present in all of you. The Lord who *coepit in vobis opus bonum, Ipse perficiet* [started in you the good work, He will lead it to the end]. You understand well how my heart is with you in order to help you become holy missionaries. I have no illusion that, no matter how

[2] It would be like saying "a penny every two days".
[3] *Giovanni Ametis*, a Turin specialized carpenter, sent to Africa to help missionaries set up a sawmill in the forest.

much good will you have, there will come gloomy days and times of discouragement, inevitable in human life, especially in the life of a missionary.

On such occasions, *respice stellam, voca Mariam,* [look at the star, call on Mary], our dear Consolata. Some small indisposition... the lack of something... nostalgia itself... Courage *in Domino* and, like the forty martyrs of Sebaste, we sustain with strength our trials, sure that the future will be for those who persevere *usque in finem* [up to the end]. But why I am speaking in this way to you, while I am sure that you and your companions will fight as strong people to plant the cross on that land and bedew it with your sweats and sacrifices...

At the beginning your life will be concerned about material things; you will have to be busy preparing your houses; do it out of love for God, and don't think you will be doing little in preparing your houses in order to shelter you from bad weather. Later will come the time for instruction and conversion. When you are in your houses, don't just walk about, but take care of the sick, and be involved in your common prayers.

Regarding prayers, even if uniformity would be desirable, do not be slave to them so as not to delay them or do them on your own in order to take care of your works... You will receive many other norms from my letters to Fr. Gays and from those of the V. Rector to the T[heol]. Perlo. I desire among you charity, great tolerance, and spirit of joy...

You will have your notebooks on which you will write every day the sentiments of your heart. Be confident that I first read them *all on my own* and only later I read or ask somebody to read what is edifying and not confidential. I ask this of you so that I may be able to guide you as a father, even if far away, and I don't expect that you tell me yet a lot of good done among the Africans; it is not yet time for this. That's enough for now.

May the Lord strengthen you and your companions in doing good under humble obedience which will triumph over everything.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 19 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 565)

To Brother Benedetto Falda

Torino, 22 April 1903

To my Son in O. L. J. C. Falda Benedetto, so that *persevering* in his vocation he may become a holy missionary.[4]

[4] Autograph dedication of the Founder on a spirituality book, given to Brother B. Falda.

◀ 20 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 566)

To the theologian Filippo Perlo

J. M. J. Torino, 23 April 1903

My dearest Theologian,

I thank the Lord who gives you strength and grace to work for His greater glory. However, take care of yourself and don't overdo it, neither be too daring.

I wrote last time to Fr. Gays establishing norms, that you should know from the letters of the V. Rector. You, as a procurator, should take care of all expenses of any kind. Be firm on matters of principles and the main lines regulating stipends, etc., and be rather easy-going with the physical and moral needs of missionaries.

In everything then, in good ways, it will become possible to grant what is necessary and even more, and gradually they will be satisfied with the apostolic life. About this some other times.

All the Sisters should stay at Murang'a for several months, and it will be your responsibility to instruct and guide them and entrust the store to them. From here I am assigning the missionaries to our various present houses after their studies, as I am doing for the Assistant Parish-Priests. It is my desire that they shouldn't be changed except for serious reasons...

Courage, *in Domino*; very aff.

P. S. I desire that you train as a bursar the Theol. Bertagna who seems to be inclined to this, so that you will have a help. When you have to go away from Muranga, he will take your place.

◀ 21 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 568-569)

To the theologian Antonio Borda Bossana

J. M. J. Torino, 23 April 1903

My dearest Theologian Borda,

By now you will be accustomed to the climate and the atmosphere and, feeling healthy, you will also feel firm in your divine vocation. Have courage in difficulties of any kind which, at the time of your profession, you accepted with great heart. Think about the heavenly reward, reserved for those who sacrifice everything for O. L. J. C.

With the coming of new missionaries, you will probably be put at the head of a house; make sure that your subjects be prudent regarding food

and clothing, and that they shouldn't feel bad about having to be busy especially with material works, since everything is *ad majorem Dei gloriam* [for the greater glory of God].

I have already written to Fr. Gays about some decisions of mine regarding the natives: it is my desire that they be observed by everybody. I intend that the good works be done in the house and not going around the villages: it is in the house that the sick should be cured and the children be taught, without giving them any food which they should bring from their homes. I spoke to Fr. Gays about salaries and tips, which I intend should be fixed by Theol. Perlo uniformly for everybody. I pray that each one of you should be able to sacrifice his own opinion for the good of all, and that among you there be true fraternity and no dissension or ill humour...

I know you too well: I know that you are ready to any sacrifice for the common good. At the moment it is important to keep back the Protestants and, therefore, to be ready to work harder in order to occupy new stations, as Theol. Perlo thinks. This is the true good for the time being, together with the cultivation.

Courage *in Domino - et esto miles in praelio Domini* [and be a soldier in the battle of the Lord].

Regards from your companions at the Consolata...

In Domino, very aff.

◀ 22 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 583)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

Torino, 15 May 1903

I desire that *everybody* should write to me once every two months and that the written notebooks should be sent to me in due time.

Tell the Priests to keep a careful note of the Masses celebrated according to my intentions. Every three months you collect them, make the total of them and send it to me.

Each one may apply only one per month [for his personal intention], if he has a special desire to do so, otherwise they are for the good and the needs of the Missions, for which huge expenses are necessary. And then, the promise of poverty would demand that, generally for special devotion, they be satisfied with the fruit that naturally is already due to the Priest.

I desire to have the number of Masses every three months, so as not to make any mistake. By the way, I don't find any longer the number of Masses celebrated by you and by Fr. Perlo in the month of May 1902 during your journey; with time, repeat the number for me...

May God bless our Institution; we should make sure that the saying *"Multiplicasti gentem sed non magnificasti laetitiam* [You increased the people but did not magnify the joy]" does not become true.

It is your responsibility to provide stable foundations for our Missions.

◀ 23 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 584-585)

To the theologian Antonio Borda-Bossana

Torino, 15 May 1903

Dear Theologian

Your sisters wrote to me that your mother caught bronchitis and rheumatic fevers, and then a serious gastritis, and recommended her to the prayers of the young men of our Institute to Our Lady Consolata. The Theol. Crosa, the assistant parish-priest who brought me the letter, told me that there was no need to worry, and that it was not necessary to inform you. However, I thought it was good to let you know about it, so that you could join your prayers to ours for the recovery of her precious health.

I take this chance to add that, since I appointed you to a special station, I desire that you conform to the norms that you can have from those who have already gained experience of those places, in regard to dealing with the natives and the authorities, remunerations, gifts and any other expense. In all this follow completely the Missions' procurator, that is the theologian Perlo, who in the past you admired for his prudence, ability and good spirit; now follow his examples and ask for directions, which I see are evermore in line with my ideas in regard to the progress of the missions; things that I had explained to him many times and that I intend to be carried out.

It is my firm will that, for the time being, the missionaries should work for the material foundation of stations, and not let themselves be carried away by an untimely zeal to run after this or that individual to convert them. There will be a proper time for everything; for the time being you must work in your houses with prudence; harvest time will come, and it will be more abundant because better prepared. O. L. J. C. waited thirty tears before beginning his preaching. Be patient in order not to exceed the expenditure and damage by wrong steps a bright future.

I have already written these things for all of you to the dear Fr. Gays, and I take this chance to repeat them to you who, I know, is ardently desiring to do good. Listen to me, who even from far, I know you and have greater experience than all of you.

Many good wishes to all; pray for me. *In Domino* very aff.

◀ 24 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 587-588)

To the theologian Francesco Cagliero

J. M. J. Torino, 16 May 1903

My dearest one in O. L. J. C.

Yesterday I received your very dear letter and, before answering, this morning I celebrated the H. Mass so that the Lord would enlighten me.

Now I feel I can tell you that the Lord is calling you to the missions of the Consolata Institute. The moral and physical difficulties are no obstacle to one who has good will and desire to listen to the divine grace. The difficulty regarding the family will be overcome as it is common to all vocations…

Nothing else remains to do than to take an absolute decision; and I, since this moment, I consider the decision as taken.

Then there will certainly arise many small matters, last moment difficulties; but, keeping the aim at Paradise and at God's will, everything will be overcome: *hodie si vocem*… [if today (you hear) his voice…]

◀ 25 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 595)

To Fr. Luigi Borio

J. M. J. Consolata Shrine, 31 May 1903

My dearest Fr. Borio,

Due to a persistent migraine, this evening I will not be able to come to the dear Institute; I will be present in spirit to implore over all of you the fullness of the Holy Spirit's gifts and the motherly blessing of the Most Holy Virgin at the closing of Her beautiful Month.

The Princess M. Clotilde donated these cards for you for the Month of the S. Heart; give one to everyone, including the Sisters.

Tomorrow morning, at 7.48 a.m., the three seminarians from Cuneo will arrive. Send a judicious seminarian to wait for them at the railway station; let them go to the Institute for breakfast, then let somebody guide them to the Consolata [Shrine]. This evening try to know at what time Doctor Boccasso could examine them in his home in the morning, and you could accompany them there, so that later you could speak with the Doctor on your own.

In the meantime, try to know also if the Doctor, as agreed upon, will begin his class at 11 a.m. on Tuesday. I send you a list of the things that those who are coming are supposed to bring; please make copies of it to give them once they will be accepted. The above seminarians will stay for lunch.

Pray for me… *In Domino,* very aff.

P. S. Tomorrow morning, after H[oly] Mass and breakfast, send the usual two people to work [at the Consolata Shrine].

◀ 26 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 597)

To Fr. Luigi Borio

Torino, 1 June 1903

Dear Fr. Borio,

I am glad that the seminarian Valetti is substantially healthy. The treatment by means of milk and eggs may be started immediately, and then we will send him on the Mountain. Let the Sister decide whether he should take also Doctor Tonelli's remedies; to me they seem rather useless, but...

The three seminarians from Cuneo showed to be decided, and responded well to many of my observations. Let's try; in about fifteen days they will join. Give them the list of the things they should bring, telling them that it is the minimum...

Give them supper and send somebody to accompany them to the railway Station.

Doctor Boccasso declared that the three of them were healthy and strong.

In Domino, very aff.

◀ 27 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 601- 602)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

12 June 1903

I am glad about the good news... I felt pain about your last one...

Mutual *humility* and *charity*, otherwise it is worse for the Institute than an external persecution.

From the letter of T. Borda:

1st tell him that I disapprove and to anybody else who may need this.

2nd Do not the presence of pagans to the Function, even less to the H. Mass, not even a boy to serve. They may visit it [the Chapel] only when there is no celebration taking place. So the H[oly] Church [says] and the White Fathers [do].

3rd No plays of physical strength and conjuring tricks.

4th No familiarity with Karoli and similar [people].

I disapprove the Muranga contract, registered also under Celeste's name; possibly remake it; in future, if possible, notify it first and I will study it; otherwise only approved priests (Gays, Perlo, Borda, Perlo e Bertagna) and I with the V. Rector.

Do not give your addresses to anybody, not even yours to all, and this include also Ametis and the Sisters. *Every* week send the letters to Nairobi; if they are not addressed to me or to the V. Rector, even if they have the *urgent* note, send them when the occasion arises; if they bear the note *urgent* and *reserved*, send them even if it requires some extra money; if they are not *reserved* open them and send them according to the required urgency.

Nobody should give his own address... and, if some Missionaries have done it or will do it, this would be against obedience.

Tell everybody not to give their own address to anybody, but that everything should pass through me, both the outgoing and the incoming mail. This is very important and also the Sisters should do it (sealing their letters) as well as Ametis.

Tell also everybody not to complain in their letters of not receiving... saying to write more often and so on.

All relatives should be informed that usually I mail the letters on the first Friday of every month; the packages when there is some shipment.

◀ 28 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 615-616)

To Fr. Luigi Borio

St. Ignatius' Shrine, 8 July 1903

My dearest Fr. Borio

I thank you for the good news of our dear Institute.

Deacon Barlassina could wait and make the Spiritual Exercises together with the others in September; now let him be busy studying the French and English languages, and moral theology with Vignoli.

Once theol. Cagliero arrives, if he prefers to go first to his home, he will make the Spiritual Exercises later on his own.

I thank the Lord for the happy solution of Beltrandi's case. If he behaves well till the end, give him the two volumes of Philosophy, but make sure he does not take any other thing belonging to the Institute: books, lithographs, etc. Let him have all his clothing and also the clerical cassocks I bought for him, so that, in a word, he may depart conveniently.

Thank Mrs. Silvetti on my behalf. This proves that the good Jesus takes care of Himself and of us as well, and the good people, if they see us poor and missing something, provide for it.

Pray for the Holy Father without any special function; if the good Lord would call him to Himself, for eight days Communions and H. Rosaries will be offered for him. I received an application from the diocese of Asti that seems a very good one; pray that the Lord may enlighten us.

My health is good; tell the young men that I often think about them and their examinations, and then about the countryside of St. Ignatius', where the weather is rather cool, and we keep willingly a good woollen blanket on our bed.

The Spiritual Exercises are proceeding well and we hope for great fruit.

Of everybody and especially of you, very aff. *in Domino*.

◀ 29 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 617-618)

To Fr. Luigi Borio

J. M. J. St. Ignatius' Shrine, 9 July 1903

My dearest Fr. Borio,

The Lord has freed us from a character not suitable for our Institute; let's thank Him. Although this is not our purpose, the young man has certainly benefited by our education.

You do well to insist on the nature of our Institute any time the occasion arises. However, do everything in a suave way, so that our young men may come to love our sublime vocation every day more, and not stay there scared and afraid of being expelled. A strong will to use all means necessary to become good missionaries is sufficient, and the Lord will do everything through his grace.

The news of good Ressicco makes me suffer. As ready as we may be to expel those who do not give moral evidence of vocation, so ready we must be not to do it when it's only a matter of physical health. So, for Ressicco I would wait to take a decision; in the meantime let him be treated with the ordinary cures and a medical doctor be consulted. The Lord always helps the will when it is a matter of health weakness. Perhaps his health declines because of an intense study superior to his capacity; in this case we may be satisfied by less study, provided that piety and seriousness make up for it! Let's pray and then we shall see.

As I am far away, when you need advice, go to the R. Canon Camisassa who is also V. Rector of the Institute; however, I desire to be kept abreast of everything.

You may do the change of Vignoli, Panelatti and Varusio in a simple way without giving any special importance.

May the Lord bless our dear students and you in a particular way.

In Domino, very aff.

◀ 30 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 622)

To Fr. Luigi Borio

J. M. J. St. Ignatius' Shrine, 15 July 1903

My dearest Fr. Borio,

I thank you for the good news of our dear Institute, especially for the good will of theol. Cagliero. It is the good God who works everything: He who gave him the *velle* [wanting], will give him also the *perficere* [doing]: Deo gratias [Thanks be to God]!

I received also two dear letters from the Deacons Vignoli and Barlassina, and I am happy about their feelings. Barlassina may go to the spa waters whenever he feels it convenient; in regard to the idea, humbly expressed by Vignoli, to accompany him, I wouldn't agree. Examining the proposal from above, I fear it would be a bad example... Once the young people have joined us, they shouldn't go out, except for those needs which cannot be provided within the Institute.

Barlassina goes to the spa, because that's what I promised him before he joined us, and then he will not be able to come to St. Ignatius', because, during the month of August, he has to stay at home because of his brother's absence. Vignoli, instead, will recover from the weakness of the year during his vacation at St. Ignatius', which I feel also more suitable for his health. I am telling you all this, because the good Vignoli is of such a great good spirit who has in mind only obedience to any desire of ours, and does not expect reasons...

I received also a very good letter from the seminarian Beltrandi, in which he expresses his good feelings of gratitude and affection for our Institute; may the good Lord bless him and guide him along the way *ab aeterno* [since eternity] designed for him. Okay for Ressicco; Saturday, on my return, we shall see.

Many good wishes in Domino to our dear young people and particularly to you, of whom I am *in Domino,* very aff.

◀ 31 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 629)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

Torino, 24 July 1903

I remind you to tell the Priests to keep an account of the Masses celebrated; you will send me the number including also those of the past; I am missing also some months of the past year.

◀ 32 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 635-636)

To Fr. Luigi Borio

J. M. J. Torino, 10 August 1903

My dearest Fr. Borio,

No matter I much I desire to come among my missionaries, it will be impossible for me to do so this week; I hope to come after the Feast of the Assumption.

Let's celebrate this Feast in the best possible way, praying also according to my intentions. On that day, at lunch, the Sister will prepare some small cakes and take two bottles [of wine] from her cupboard.

I have received from the librarian Tappi the two volumes, which I will send at the earliest occasion together with the hymn set to music by Fr. Albera. In the meantime send somebody to the railway station at Lanzo to collect *one or two* baskets of fruit and vegetables. I will send them on Wednesday with the train arriving at Lanzo at *three pm*. Let the Sister send the young man only for these baskets; I will weigh them to make sure they are not too heavy, so that he might not reasonably complain.

Be happy, all of you, *in Domino*... Very aff. in O. L. J. C.

P. S. Please, preserve the newspapers, especially the *Osservatore* of the past and future days, because I intend to later send them to Africa.

◀ 33 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 646-648)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

J. M. J. Torino, 18 September 1903

My dearest one in O. L. J. C.

From a letter of T[heol.] Arese dated 20th August, which left Nairobi on 23 August, I heard that he, Fr. Giacosa and the seminarian Cravero were left *alone* for a month, that is, from 18th July, when the others left for Tusu and Fort Hall. I am sorry to hear that these *novices* are left alone; they write to me of their vicissitudes on the occasion of the arrival of new things from Europe, as well as for the loading of goods of the second caravan arrived from Fort Hall.

The fact that you did not leave, makes me fear that you had to delay the execution of my instruction because of sickness or some other serious cause. You know how much importance I attach to the House of Limuru, and I assure you that I have in mind various projects for this station, once it would be well organized and I would be well aware of its health's condition. I wouldn't want that the coming rainy season would prevent you any longer from going to this station; therefore, if you haven't already left, go there as soon as possible.

Once I know that you are at Limuru, I will send there my letters, and you will answer them, as I have already told you some other times. From there, then, write to me more often and with longer letters, responding also to what I asked you in my past letters and I need in order to arrange from Torino the individual Houses. In everything we have to look for the greater good and the glory of God; if sometimes my instructions could be better, it is sufficient that they are good, waiting to make them better when you feel it convenient, after I receive greater knowledge of the local situation.

From Limuru you will be in better relations with the Holy Ghost Fathers and with the Government; I desire that you maintain good relations with the Fathers but, as their spirit is not like ours, I intend that our people do not stay with them, neither at Nairobi, nor at Limuru; it is better that we stay on our own and do not let them know our weaknesses; furthermore they will have habits that may be excellent for them, but are not convenient for our missionaries, who should not get used to comforts and habits not convenient for us.

Once the mission stations are established, plus others that may still be possible in order to avoid the intrusion of Protestants, we must think of a unique method to be adopted in all our Houses.

Write to me about this, mentioning yours and other people's ideas in detail in regard to the internal spiritual and physical *way of living* and to the works of service to be started, like schools, medical care, works, preaching, etc. As soon as possible it will be necessary to organize everything like in the Mother House, so that everybody will be happy with what is necessary and possible, and be able, by regularity in eating and by sacrificing what would be too expensive, to proceed with patience and discretion. By the way, from various diaries I received, I notice that some of the small sicknesses suffered were mostly due to indigestion from bananas or other food. Tell them not to be like boys; but to be able to refrain from gluttony and be habitually mortified. That's enough for now.

Let's thank the Lord for the fact that the Institute in Torino is flourishing; there are twenty students, a priest (theol. Cagliero), two, Vignoli e Barlassina, who will be ordained Priests tomorrow, other seminarians from various dioceses and a Brother. All are people of good spirit, and the House looks like a fervent Novitiate. They made their Spiritual Exercises in Torino, after having spent a month of holidays at St. Ignatius'. They are my consolation in everything. I hope that, out of them, I may form good and educated helpers for you in every science and art.

Mgr. Algeyer wrote to me a few days ago, saying that he was very happy about the arrival of the second and third group of our missionaries; I hope to send some more next December, but about this I will write another time. I am waiting for the diaries, the notes of the Masses and the bimonthly letters.

About the matter of the *lei* [form of respect] or the *tu* [confidential form] in speaking to one another, I decided in this way:

1. Those who were using the "tu" [when speaking to one another] before joining the Institute, may continue to do so.

2. Having joined the Institute, they use the "tu", as in the Seminary from the first year up to priesthood, and continue to do so afterward; on the contrary, with those who did not study with them, they use the "lei".

3. The Brothers use the *lei* when speaking to seminarians and priests and these will do the same when speaking to the Brothers; among themselves they will follow what was said above for the seminarians. This is the norm we adopted in the Mother House and I believe it is the best also for you

there. The thing is simple; it is enough to think about the Seminary. In regard to the Brothers, I think it is better for various reasons; however for you there, see if for those who are there it is convenient to change or not; to me it seems that it is convenient and, when you have a chance, inform everybody. Only you and the theologian Perlo may use the "tu" with the Brothers, as I and Fr. Borio do, if you have already done so up to now.

I inform you of the death of T[heol.] Cavaglià, head priest of Cuorgnè, for whom, as already done for the other dead, I had the Masses of the Company celebrated. He was 61 year old and died of a heart disease.

A lot of courage *in Domino* and greetings from everybody to everybody.

In Domino very aff.

◀ 34 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 665-666)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

Torino, 30 October 1903

My dearest Fr. Gays,

Your letter of the past 19th September surprised me greatly. While I was believing as sure that, after my repeated confirmations and encouragements, you would remain steady in the obedience entrusted to you, all of a sudden, after another letter, all serene, written on the 5th of the same month, you go back to the first request and, what is worse, you tell me that you have proceeded *to communicate my favourable agreement to all and each confrere* without waiting till you had received it.

Certainly you did not consider all the seriousness of the action you were accomplishing in regard to your vow, neither the difficult situation in which you placed the whole mission leaving it without a head till the arrival of my letters. By doing so, you embarrassed me seriously and compromised my freedom to deliberate on something so important, obliging me somehow to accept your renunciation without any saying.

That is what also H. E. the Cardinal thought when I told him about it, giving as a reason only your excessive humility, and who concluded by approving the choice of T[heol.] Perlo.

Therefore, this very day I am writing to him and to all mission stations announcing his election as the new Superior. I have no doubt that all of you, including yourself, will obey T. Perlo as my representative, and that all of you together, uniquely intent on the glory of God, will proceed to work for your own and for one another's sanctification.

Once again I express my regret at your decision, nonetheless do not think that my affection and esteem for you have declined, as I am always sure of yours for me and for our Institute. And you shall prove this to me by helping cordially, by means of your advice and cooperation, the Theologian, so that *viribus unitis* [by united strength] and always *cor unum et anima*

una [by one heart and one soul] you may promote the growth of our missions and the spiritual profit of all our dear missionaries. I send you my special blessing.

◀ 35 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 668-669)

To the theologian Filippo Perlo

Torino, 30 October 1903

My dearest Theologian,

Our Fr. Gays, after having written to me several times, asking me to exonerate him from the office of superior of our missions, because it was more than he could do, by means of a letter of the past 19 September from Nyeri, makes a new request, giving such reasons that I must accept. Having spoken with H. E. our Cardinal, it was decided that you should undertake his office, and that from now on you should be the Superior of everything, spiritual and temporal.

I know you too well, my dear theologian, sure that you will accept this obedience, against which I am telling you right away not to look for excuses, because I am decided not to accept any. The Lord will give you grace and strength to fulfil well all the duties proper to a superior. So, please, get down to work and *fortiter ac suaviter* [firmly and gently] give a good organization to our incipient missions.

Your main care will be to organize every mission station, prescribing appropriate rules, both for the spiritual as well as the material aspect, which I provisionally approve as from now. You have full freedom to assign the present and future missionaries the way you feel best in Domino, and to establish new stations if necessary or useful. With the new missionaries arriving in December, the total number will be fairly good, and I have no hope of sending others till the end of 1904; therefore, you dispose this personnel the way you can, without worrying if, God permitting, you will not be able to prevent the protestants to get settled in some place.

I desire that, for the time being, you won't appoint any special procurator, but that you make use of those you believe suitable, according to the various needs, so that everything may depend on you and be headed by you. Being your health extremely necessary for the good of the missions, I vividly exhort you to take good care of yourself and not to expose you to too much fatigue and hardships, especially by travelling.

In everything let's place ourselves in the hands of our dear Consolata, so that Her work may always prosper.

My blessing to all missionaries, Fathers, Brothers and Sisters, and especially to You.

In Domino very aff.

◀ 36 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 670-671)

To the missionaries in Kenya

J. M. J. Torino, 30 October 1903

My dearest ones in O. L. J. C.

Our dear Fr. Gays, out of excessive humility, has begged me several times in the past to let him free from the office of Superior of our Missions. After having several times urged and encouraged him to continue, lately I had to yield to his renewed entreaties.

Having consulted H. E. our Archbishop, I have appointed as his successor our dear Theol. Perlo, whom I am now appointing as Superior of our missions in regard to both what is spiritual and what is material.

I am more than convinced that all of you, because of your vow, as well as the good spirit that animates you, will accord to him, as to my representative, full and cordial obedience and, by your submissiveness to his orders and desires, will make lighter his heavy burden; and so all of you in unanimity will accomplish good works according to his directives.

In this sure trust, I heartily bless all of you, and acknowledge myself *in Domino* [in the Lord] and in our Consolata, your very aff.

◀ 37 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 672-673)

To Sister Clotaria Arduino

Praised Be Jesus Christ Torino, 30 October 1903

V. R. Superior,

You and your dear Sisters may imagine how much we shared in your sorrow for the death of the very good Sister Editta. According to our human views, we felt that the Lord shouldn't have tested us so soon and deprive our Missions of a Sister so good and so useful. But this was not God's judgement: he wanted to reward so soon the sacrifice made by all your Sisters by abandoning everything in order to save souls; and provide for us, as our Cardinal said, a protectress in Heaven.

Furthermore, the letters we received today from our Theologian consoled us, by informing us of precious details about her death. She received all the Holy Sacraments and was well assisted, both regarding the spiritual and the physical aspect. In the House of our Institute, as well as at the Little House [Cottolengo] we prayed and continue to pray much for that beautiful soul, that will already be in Paradise holding the palm of a missionary.

You take great courage in the Lord, and comfort, on my behalf, the other dear Sisters, animating them to ever more enjoy the grace of the vocation to the missionary apostolate. The Very Rev. Father and the Very Rev. Mother [of Cottolengo], to whom I sent your letters and those of our Theologian, perhaps will not be able to answer right away, and they asked me to encourage all of you greatly, adding that, at the sad news, many Sisters offered themselves to come and substitute for the deceased one. Courage then *in Domino,* and let's keep looking at Paradise, where the good Sister Editta is interceding for all our missionaries, both women and men.

I inform you that our good Fr. Gays, out of humility, did not want to continue being the Superior of our Missions, and I have elected in his place the Theologian Perlo, whose excellent qualities you and your Sisters will have already learnt to appreciate. Rely on him in regard to what he will organize for the greater glory of God.

Renewing to you and to each Sister my most vivid encouragements, I commend myself to your prayers, while I am happy to acknowledge myself in the Lord, very aff.

◀ 38 ▶

(cf. LETTER, III, 679-680)

To the theologian Filippo Perlo

J. M. J. Torino, 27 November 1903

My dearest Theologian,

You should have received my letters, and you should have bowed your head in obedience. One of your first duties will be to organize the various Houses, so that disorder and dissipation will not spoil everything. Prescribe *in Domino* everything that is possible according to our Rules and Directory; Our Lord will enlighten you. It will not be possible, for the time being, to practice numbers 11 and 12 of our Rules, pp. 32-33. I think that what is necessary are the schools, especially at Tusu: I remember how greatly Karoli [the chief] desired them, and from your brother Fr. Perlo, I heard, with pain, that two of his sons, besides the first two, were sent by Karoli to a Protestant school. With the arrival of the new personnel, you will provide for this, too.

It is also necessary to regulate the sending of diaries and letters, according to the prescriptions of our Rules. See to it that all of them write and write useful things…

Read the letter to the seminarian Cattaneo, here united, and, if you feel it convenient, send it to him.

You, then, as superior general [of Kenya], try to make clearer to me many things that are necessary for or useful to me, especially regarding the good qualities of your confreres.

Here, all of us are well, also your relatives, and Luigi [a brother of his] in our Institute is very promising.

Courage *in Domino*, and our dear Consolata may comfort and assist you…

very aff.

P. S. I felt it was a good thing to write a first letter to all of you; when possible, send a copy to each one. You will then describe to me its effect, and what I may say in future letters of mine.

◀ 39 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 682-683)

To the seminarian Giacomo Cattaneo

Torino, 27 November 1903

My dearest Cattaneo,

Since your arrival in Africa up to now I haven't received any letter from you. Why this silence of yours, while our Rules prescribe to write to me at least every three months? While I wait for a letter and for your diary, as superior and father in O. L. J. C., I would like to give you some admonitions, which you will certainly accept in a good way. I know, by the experience here in the Mother-House, that you are irascible and at times even violent; you have been trying to overcome it and you were willingly accepting to do public penances. Now, this temperament of yours, rendered perhaps more vivid by the changes in climate and other circumstances, leads you to lack of charity and meekness towards your confreres and especially towards the poor African people.

You, in times of nervous agitation, threaten and also hit them. Out of God's love, desist from such actions and try to practice what I wrote in the letter addressed to all of you, especially what I said regarding this. In order to overcome yourself, desire greatly and accept wholeheartedly the superiors' corrections and the exhortations of your confreres, and humble yourself because of your failures.

In order to obtain from the Lord this full victory over yourself, be humble and devout; you must think of yourself as the last of your confreres and accept their views, without thinking of knowing as much as they do. Obey even in the least things the local superior general and the superior of your mission station, remembering that *vir obediens loquetur victoriam* [the obedient man will speak of victory]. I order to you in a special way to follow the times of prayer, which will serve to prepare you to be less unworthy of the Priesthood. Be, therefore, firm in following the timetable arranged by the one who presides over the House, especially regarding what concern the morning rising. I don't want to add that, by the vow of poverty that you took, you should be satisfied with the mere necessary things, and make sacrifices in order to obtain God's graces.

I hope you will accept in a good way these observations of mine coming from my heart for your good and the good of our missions; and with your *submissiveness* in everything to the T. Perlo, the local sup. gen., and to the local superior, you will console me for all the work and worries I continually bear for all of you.

Receive my special blessing and believe me *in Domino*, very aff.

◀ 40 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 685-690)

To the missionaries in Kenya

Ad majorem Dei gloriam
[To the greater glory of God] Torino, 27 November 1903

My dearest sons in O. L. J. C.,

Thinking about the benefits that Our Lord has granted our Institute in three years since its foundation and little over a year since the beginning of our missions, I feel moved from the depth of my heart to exclaim with the Apostle, *"Benedictus Deus et Pater D. N. J. C., qui benedixit nos in omni benedictione"*: blessed be the God and Father of O. L. J. C. who blessed us with all kinds of blessing. Yes, our Lord should be thanked because He gave birth and growth to the little seed; He watered it with His many graces, so that it is promising to become a big tree that will bear many fruits of eternal life.

With your mind, go back to the time when our house was the home of only a few people, and then, like a germ hidden underground, for a year was giving no inkling of itself, and to human eyes it seemed that it had to die before coming to birth. A good result, however, could not fail, because the enterprise had been inspired by God and protected by Him, to Whom alone we are giving glory.

After the first four of you went to Africa in May 1902, trusting uniquely in the Lord who at any time sends his apostles, you had the consolation of seeing the way before you as an open one, of being in an unexpected field that our heavenly Patroness, the Consolata, had reserved for her sons. Being the first and inexperienced, you certainly had to face painful trials, both spiritual and material, but also how many consolations you experienced in the midst of your toils, and with how many graces was your path strewn! You have been writing to me that all your actions and your very mistakes have been turned by the Lord into something good, both for you and for the poor local people, so that it looked to you as if you were living in a supernatural atmosphere.

You were well treated by the Very Rev. Apostolic Vicar and the Holy Ghost Fathers; you found well-disposed civil authorities, and especially good-natured local people and a temperate and healthy climate. To these graces which had been granted to you as a group, add the many others

which each one of you in particular has been receiving from the day of your departure to the present, and tell me if we do not really have to thank the good Lord for the abundance of his blessings!

As you, there, were toiling for God's glory, and I was worrying with the fear of having to let you remain alone, without brothers for a long time, the Lord looked with special affection at this work of his and, as in the past he sent St. Bernard and his companions to console the Abbot, St. Stephen, and populate the solitude of Citeaux, so he blessed your first sacrifices, calling to our Institute a more numerous group of priests, seminarians, and brothers, who desire to participate in your apostolate and rewards.

It is certainly marvellous that, in such a short time and against any human anticipation, it has been possible to organize the departure of three groups: 8 Priests, 2 Seminarians, 4 Brothers, and 8 Sisters. And now, while I am writing, another departure is being organized: 3 Priests, 2 Brothers and 12 Sisters; and here we have a greater number of young people who, through prayer, study, and manual work, are forming themselves to the spirit of our Institute, eager to go to Africa soon.

I thank the Lord who deigned to be pleased with my humble work and the daily solicitude I undertook for his greater glory and for the salvation of the poor unbelievers. I thank our dear Consolata for the consolations with which she consoled me when, every evening, as I was pouring out my heart that was worried about you and our Institute, she seemed to make me feel that you and our Institute were under her special protection and, under the mantle of such a good Mother, nothing bad could happen.

As soon as you receive this letter, in every mission station you should sing the "*Te Deum*" [Hymn of Praise], possibly in connection with the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, and then for nine days you will pray seven times the "*Ave Maria*" [Hail Mary] and once the "*Salve Regina*" [Hail Holy Queen].

However, as there is no good work that takes place free from trials, we should also expect them. One has already happened with the death of our dear Sr. Editta, an authentic model of a missionary Sister. But this attempt from Satan will be a greater damage to him, because we are sure that, having she entered Heaven, we have gained a special protector.

Some trials soon or later will come: let's prepare for them by means of solid and apostolic virtues. Sincerely, I don't have the courage to ask the Lord for persecutions so that you may persevere in the spirit of your vocation, as the great St. Ignatius [Loyola] did for his Company [the Society of Jesus]. If trials are necessary for our Institute, the Lord will permit them, and will give us the grace endure them with fortitude and for our greater good.

However if, for God's glory and our greater good, trials are convenient, I pray that they should derive from the world, from outside our Institute, not from within, from its members because of their lack of the virtues that are proper to our state. Let it never happen that in our members there be a lack of *spirit of faith, of charity, of sacrifice, and of humility*, virtues that are indispensable to authentic missionaries.

1) **Spirit of faith.** Everybody should always keep clearly in his mind the *ad quid venisti?* [what did you come for?]. You did not go to Africa for human reasons, but only in order to became holier and, together with you, save many souls, and in this way attain the heaven reserved for the Apostles. And you shall achieve all this if practically and in all circumstances of your lives you shall strive to aim at *God alone - Deus meus et omnia* [my God and my all]: if every action of yours, every word and thought be guided by the dictates of faith. Let everyone, together with the Apostle, say to himself, "*Mihi vivere Christus est*" [My living is Christ].

2) **Spirit of charity.** The last advice I gave the first ones of you who left for Africa, and which I repeated to the second and the third group, was this: love one another as true brothers in O. L. J. C., make sure that "*sol non occidisset*" [the sun may not set], I don't say "*super iracundiam vestram*" [over your anger], but not even over the least lack of mutual love. The reports that have reached me so far assure me that you are *cor unum et anima una* [one heart and one soul], and I cannot express how great my consolation is.

A special advice I must now give you is about charity in regard to the people among whom you live. Love those poor people; treat them well, overcoming, out of love for their souls, any difficulty that may arise from their unrefined ways, and not losing your patience when, because of ignorance or stubbornness, they do not act according to your desires. And, here, let me confess the deep sorrow I experienced in realizing from your diaries and letters, that more than once those poor people have not been treated with charity and that, at times, somebody has been so impatient as to reach the point of raising hands to beat them. I assure you that I was very deeply pained by this and experienced an inexpressible distress. To those who are guilty of such harsh behaviour I say that they do not understand the spirit of Jesus Christ: "*nescitis cuius spiritus estis*" [you do not know of whose spirit you are].

Listen to what our Holy Father, Pius X, wrote in his first Encyclical Letter: "So that from this apostolate and zeal for teaching, the hoped-for fruit may be reaped and *Christ may be formed* in all, each of you, Venerable Brothers, should remember that nothing is more effective than charity. For *the Lord is not present in commotion*. In vain one hopes to attract souls to God through a bitter zeal: on the contrary, rebuking people for their mistakes, and reproving them sternly for their vices often result in damages rather than benefits. It is true that the Apostle exhorted Timothy to '*accuse, pray, reprimand*', but he added, '*with all patience*'.

Certainly Jesus left us examples of this kind: '*Come*', we read that he said, '*Come, all of you who are infirm and oppressed, and I will console you*'. And by "infirm and oppressed" he meant those who were slaves of sin and error. How great was the meekness of that divine Teacher! What tenderness and compassion for all kinds of distressed people! Isaiah marvellously described his heart with these words: '*I will pour out my Spirit upon him... He will not cry or lift up his voice... a bruised reed will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench'*. This charity,

patient and kind, should embrace also those who are opposed to us and persecute us. '*We are cursed*', so Paul protested about himself, '*and we bless; persecuted, and we tolerate it; blasphemed, and we pray*'.

People, perhaps, appear worse than they really are. Life with others, prejudices, advice and examples of others, and finally an ill-advised shame had attracted them to side with the irreligious: but their will is not as depraved as they themselves would like to make people believe. Who will prevent us from hoping that the flame of Christian charity may dissipate the darkness of their souls and bring there the light and peace of God? The fruit of our toil may, perhaps, be late in coming, but charity never gets tired of waiting, remembering that God does not reward the results of the works, but the good will".

The teaching of the Pope on the way of treating fallen away Christians applies even better to the way you have to deal with the local people. Working differently, you would place obstacles on the way to their conversion, thus frustrating the purpose for which you went to Africa.

For this reason, and for all the serious consequences for our missions, I absolutely forbid you, by virtue of holy obedience, any beating of the local people, that is striking, ill-treating, and even only threatening both adults and boys, dependents and others. Furthermore, I demand that, any time one of you slips into one of these actions, he should humiliate himself, asking forgiveness from the Superior and confreres, and promising to correct himself. In this regard, I will not accept any excuse or any reason to the contrary.

3) **Spirit of sacrifice**, which constitutes the substance of a missionary's life. When people think about missionaries, they think about people totally sacrificed, and that is what you were thinking when you were aspiring to mission. I know very well how much you have to suffer in your long journeys, uncomfortable rests and especially for some kinds of food; but this is the source of your many merits in adapting to being deprived of the comforts you were used to, and to the only foods and drinks that are available where you are now.

That is why you took the vow of poverty, whose perfection consists in being satisfied with what is really necessary, accepting and even being happy if sometimes also what is necessary is lacking. Poverty embraces also the taking scrupulous care of what belongs to our Institute as of something sacred, of which the Lord will demand a strict account; not caring for it or consuming it too easily leads to sterility and cessation of Divine Providence on God's part.

4) **Spirit of humility.** This virtue, necessary for all, is much more necessary for you, so that you may be suitable instruments in God's hands for the conversion of unbelievers.

You went there only to serve the Lord in the place and activities assigned to you by obedience. Every member shares in the merits of the body, and those who serve the Lord in humbler and less attracting positions are happier.

Read the "Imitation of Christ", Book II, Chapter II.

This is the first time that I address you as a community; accept my words since you know the heart of the one who wrote them; keep this letter with

you, so that can re-read it often, especially during your monthly Days of Recollection, and strive to put it into practice exactly. May our very sweet Patroness, the Consolata, bless you, as I implore morning and evening with my whole heart, so that in you and in me God's will may be done.

In Domino

◀ 41 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 696)

To Fr. Luigi Borio

J. M. J

Consolata Shrine, 12 December 1903
Feast of St. Valerico

Dear Fr. Borio,

I reflected on the proposal for the play, and I feel that, for the time being, we should forget about it for the following reasons.

During the winter, we cannot invite our benefactors, and even more so on the feast of the Epiphany, because, besides the bad weather, they are tired as a consequence of the Feasts and the visits for the end of the year.

On the other hand, our young people, intent on serious studies, will be affected negatively by all the work needed to prepare everything. It doesn't take much to distract them. I seem to remember that last year Fr. Dervieux [a teacher] had told me that at that time they were not studying... Let's make them study seriously the whole of this winter and then, during springtime, as a break, we will think about the play... This is what seems good to me *in Domino*.

H. Eminence accepted wholeheartedly to come for the ceremony of the departure of our missionaries, which was fixed for Monday 21st. Tomorrow we shall consider the matter of invitations.

I hope that the Spiritual Exercises are proceeding well and that today they may start going to Confession.

May St. Valerico intercede for us with our Consolata.

In Domino, very aff.

◀ 42 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 708-710)

To the theologian Filippo Perlo

J. M. J.

23 December 1903

My dearest Theologian,

I replied to your letter of 26th November by means of a telegram that you should have received at Limuru, whose contents you should have already shared with all, as well as the letters sent before. We came to this decision after

having thought well about it and after having examined any possible difficulty. In your letter you do not say anything new. The suitableness to your new office is given by the Lord when, *ad majorem Sui gloriam* [for His greater glory], the superiors appoint us, and you should be certain about this grace.

What would seem to oppose such decision would be the great amount of material work entrusted to you, and even more the apparent incompatibility of this new office with the work of procurement. But in this I see an intervention of Providence, which consists in the unity of views and action so very necessary at the beginning of our missions, even if it means slowing down to some extent their material expansion and betterment. You, favoured by God with the right and just criterion, and being free to use it, will provide this kind of organization, on which depends the peace and prosperity of our missions and missionaries.

Start working wholeheartedly, not in a *provisional*, but in a steady way, as if you had to do this for ever; endeavour to examine places and individuals and match them according to their suitability; see that you don't wear you out by means of hard works and journeys, but work by means of all: it is proper of prudent people to be able to work through others, even if the results may be a little defective.

The five new missionaries are good people and, if well placed according to their abilities, they will be successful. The theol. Cagliero is a tenacious and good man; try to sympathize with him and help him to mend himself if at times he is rather fixed in his way of seeing things; he is aware of this and is sorry for not having been able to totally overcome this defect. You will do well to give in at the beginning and show some appreciation of him, sure that he will soon give in more than others; love him and have no difficulty in accepting him.

Fr. Vignoli is a man with a delicate conscience and will offer blind obedience; he needs not to be allowed to get discouraged; his temperament is rather timid, and his tendency to some tranquillity and softness is overcome by not letting him alone with the Sisters, but in other Houses, where he can also be a good cook. He could also be a good teacher; encourage him always.

Fr. Barlassina is a first-class man, a balanced young man who will help you a lot. He will do well in every place, but he will be quite suitable for the catechists' seminary. If you need him at Limuru, let him stay there, even as the head of the work. The young people in the Torino's youth associations have been his ideal, and he was doing very well with them. However, there shouldn't be in the same House with a superior like Fr. Gays who could misinterpret him or prevent him from working; his character is similar to the one of Fr. Cravero, but perhaps with greater maturity.

The two Brothers: Anselmo is very pious and offers the best hopes for the raising of cattle and the treatment of milk, etc. Animate him always to become a great saint *by means of his work*. Agostino is still rather boyish,

but very clever and good. If formed by a firm guide, he will be successful in all kinds of work and could substitute for Ametis.

Here, my dear theologian, is what I can tell you about this new group of missionaries whom, we feel, is better than a few previous ones; I hope I will not be wrong.

My telegram was telling you to leave Fr. Gays at Tusu; the reason is that the place seems more suitable for his health and desire and, perhaps, he is more settled there or in another station than at Limuru, according to my feeling, but especially because I feel he is not suitable to train catechists, allowing himself to be carried away by his heart to improve their conditions both in regard to food as in any other thing. You do as you feel better, aiming at nothing else than the glory of God.

My many last-minute duties will probably prevent me from writing to the others, especially to our dear Celeste and Benedetto; on my behalf offer them my special praise. On the other hand, our Consolata will continue to assist and bless them; and in the oncoming centenary year She will spread more abundantly Her consolations even there.

The departing Sisters were advised by their Father to obey you and the local superiors; I hope that, by obeying, also the previous ones will recover their health, and the sorrowful news will not be heard again about the present ones.

All best wishes to all and let them pray for their, very aff. in O. L. J. C.

◀ 43 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, III, 712)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

[Short note in IMC General Archives]

Torino, 23 December 1903

Letter to Fr. Gays

Not offended but pained - A veil on everything and equal affection - help the theologian and all others.

◀ 44 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 22-24)

To the theologian Filippo Perlo

J. M. J. 22 January 1904

My dearest Theologian,

Your last letter gave us the sorrowful news of the death of Sister Giordana. The Lord is testing us by means of these untimely deaths; however, everything will be for the good of our missions. We need

protectors in Paradise, and the Lord selects the best ones; and He shows compassion for our newborn Institute by not taking away any member of ours for the time being.

I brought the news to the Cottolengo's Father, who, amazed at the kind of person, while he could have expected of others, peacefully said his *fiat voluntas Dei* [God's will be done]. At this time perhaps, I think there may be some other thorny issue; I hope I am not a prophet; anyway we must want what the good Lord wants, who arranges everything for the good of these unhappy people. We should try to profit from this experience for the future.

Since your letter did not arrive on time, we could not interpret your telegram in the right way. Anyhow most of the Sisters of the last group are younger and look strong in regard to health, so that we hope for greater good will and duration. We will apply your observations to those who will come in future. What I am more concerned with, for the time being, is that the morale of the Sisters and even more of our missionaries would not decrease, and that nobody would get discouraged because of these deaths. This did not happened here among us and not even at the L. House [Little House, the Cottolengo]; make sure that also there all the Sisters be in good spirit, according to the principles of our faith.

I received three letters from Fr. Cagliero and a telegram from Mombasa; please, thank the above missionaries on my behalf; for the time being this is my reply to them. You will probably have already undertaken the office of superior and informed all the others about it. If you have not yet done so, do not delay to do it, because, if I am consoled by the good spirit of Fr. Gays, I do not intend to change the order I gave, especially after the news I have received. The Lord will help you to carry out well the double office of superior and procurator, that providentially are in the same hands.

I received the diaries of T[heol]. Borda, Fr. Perlo, Fr. Cravero, Brother Luigi and Brother Benedetto; and no others. Insist that all write it *daily* and send it at *certain* times. Tell them not to get lost in long considerations but, both personally as well as for the rest, to follow what our Rules state, adding little adventures *true* and detailed if they occur.

Also for the Masses, the priests should have their own register, and about every three months they should give you the number, specifying the number of *each* month. Tell them that the very main merit is for the celebrant; the superior's intention will serve for the needed great expenses; at the most, they may retain one per month for their own personal intention, and even better if less.

I desire that everyone should make the Spiritual Exercises every year, even on his own or together with the companions living with him. In regard to the Sisters, their Father desires that, when possible, they should make them also with some preaching.

Being three years, on the day of St. Francis of Sales, that H. E. our Cardinal had approved our Institute *ad triennium* [for three years], he

newly approved it *ad decennium* [for ten years]. As this is the centenary year of Our Lady Consolata, I exhort everyone to honour Her with greater fervour, in order to deserve Her graces.

I have given you as a Protector of the year St. Peter Claver, appointed by the Holy See as patron of Africa; when you have a chance inform of this our Missionaries as well as the Sisters.

Encourage greatly the Sister Superior and all the Sisters, assuring them that we are praying for them and for their deceased companions. Our Lady Consolata will help them this year, so that, after working for many years, they may have a better crown in Paradise.

Many and many good wishes to all my dear missionaries, for whom alone I am now living on this earth. My fatherly blessing morning and evening on all of you, and particularly on yourself...

very aff. in O. L. J. C.

◀ 45 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 29)

To the theologian Filippo Perlo

J. M. J Torino, 3 February 1904

My dearest Theologian,

After having written a couple of lines to all our dear missionaries, I have no time left to write to you, my very dear one. I will do it better some other time; for the time being, I insist on your taking over your office as superior, so that everything may proceed well and orderly; Our Lord will help you.

Many good wishes, *in Domino*

very aff. in J. C.

P. S. My letters are not urgent; you may send them to each one whenever you have a chance to do so; they contain spiritual advice to animate them.

◀ 46 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 30-31)

To Brother Benedetto Falda

J. M. J. Torino, 3 February 1904

My dear Benedetto,

Your agile and candid figure comes often back to my mind, and often I feel as if you were entering my room to have an easy chat. Could I see you again!... But I

see you and speak to you in the Lord and at the altar of our dear Consolata, to whom I recommend you for perseverance in the great grace you received.

Think that this is a bad world and there is suffering everywhere. At least you labour in order to earn a beautiful Paradise, which you will earn in spite of the inevitable defects of human nature. Have courage and be happy in the Lord: play and sing when melancholy attacks you.

The R[ev] T[heol] Perlo has probably already congratulated you on my behalf for your commitment to the works at the saw-mill, and also on behalf of the Rev. V[ice] Rector; now I am congratulating you myself directly. By this work you will be very useful for our missions; the Lord has sent you specifically for this purpose to cooperate in the conversion of those poor people.

I liked your diaries, especially for the candid frankness with which you write them. Continue always like this, thinking that you are speaking to a father who loves you tenderly in Jesus, and does not read them to anybody else, except what is not confidential. All members of your family are well and remember you, especially your mother who comes to visit me.

Have courage then, my dear Benedetto, and pray for me who wholeheartedly bless you and quite often recommend you to our dear Consolata.

In the Lord, very aff.

P. S. By this time, probably, you have already embraced the dear Anselmo, and you have certainly been happy! A certain Bertone, a mechanic, a friend of yours, desires to join our Institute, too; we shall see if it will be a true vocation. Here is the effect of your example and of your prayers.

◀ 47 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 32-33)

To the theologian Filippo Perlo

J. M. J. Torino, 5 February 1904

My dearest Theologian,

Your letter of 25th December from Limuru has consoled me, by reassuring me that my order [to become a superior] had been executed.

Since the day that, after having recommended the matter to our Consolata and having conferred with H. E. our Cardinal, I took that decision, I never had any doubt or thought against it, certain that this was and is God's will.

Take courage because God is with you. They all like and esteem you, and you are gifted with such qualities that will enable you, with God's grace, to fulfil the required duties. I approve your idea of not forcing things, of being patient, compassionate and forgiving because, dealing with people who had already made many sacrifices, it is not probable that they act with bad intention or something similar. Human misery is great, and the change of

lifestyle disorients them, so that they act as if they were moved by bad intentions, but that is not so and, if taken in sympathetic ways and with some tolerance, they will get back on the right track.

In Torino they would have been the tops of the Clergy and laity, and this is what is believed and said here, that the Rector had good taste in choosing…

I agree with you about the need for fully following our Rules and, as far as possible, our Directory at least in its spirit. You see to it…

Also jn each House appoint a real head, paying attention only to the ability of directing the House well, without worrying about seniority if required by the greater good.

Besides the short personal letters, the others will be sent to you open: you read them and then distribute them only if convenient and opportune; otherwise do not do it.

I have written, together with the V. Rector, as a result of news received through diaries and letters; how could we do otherwise when the superior was not writing or writing quite little when the needs seemed urgent? From now on, trusting in you, I exhort you to order, command and do everything *tamquam potestatem habens* [as one who has authority], certain that I will approve everything. If other people's reports may raise some doubts, I will write to you alone so that you may see to it and take care of it. One thing I beg of you: do not be afraid to write to me about *everything*. If, so far, you haven't done so because you were not the superior, from now on you must be able to *think and judge ill of somebody,* and write to me in a detailed way about what you think. St. Francis of Sales calls it a duty; and you, every time you write to me, possibly give me your opinion about every one, their improvements, etc. This will help me, together with the norms that you may feel more necessary, for a future circular letter.

I hope that Th. Board is doing better; as far as Cattaneo [seminarian] is concerned, you do the due trials with him: if he wouldn't get any better or become deleterious, think about repatriation, and here I will provide the dispensation from his vows; I pray to the Lord for him and I am still hopeful.

When the Apostolic Vicar will come there, treat him well, solemnly in front of the Country, and in the House *not* sumptuously. On such an occasion, the idea of an Apostolic Vicariate of our own could be introduced, especially by defining clearly the southern borders. Many people are expecting this to happen; and at the right time I will take my steps with the S. Congregation of Propaganda. For the time being I am keeping quiet, waiting to hear from you when this may be convenient. Courage then, and proceed *suaviter ac fortiter* [gently and strongly]… *In Domino,* very aff.

◀ 48 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 41-43)

To the theologian Filippo Perlo

J. M. J. Torino, 26 February 1904

My dearest Theologian,

From your last letter I see that, obedient to God's will, you have settled and, forgetting all past miseries, will strive to guide our missions with prudence and *in multa patientia* [through great endurance] ...

The Lord will help you and will give me the means to sustain all the expenses, not only those necessary, but also those convenient for the common quiet, provided they do not become habitual abuses for the future.

I was given an attestation of this confidence of mine in God in the past days at the death of the saintly theol. Robilant. Without having ever mentioned anything to me when alive, he left me as an inheritance two farms of a total value of 70-80 thousand liras, besides his library and other things.

Moved by discretion, I declined the donation, but I am sure that the equivalent will come to us through confidential ways. And this is not the first generous offering received because, besides the six thousand liras left to me by the C[an]. Abre of Bra, not long ago the Rev. Casale gave me five thousand liras for the missions. This approval by true priests is very consoling! Abbot Gloria gave me five hundred liras and then another five hundred for Masses to be celebrated in the missions. I am telling these things only to you confidentially, so that you won't worry if you need some big expenses; the Lord cares for you, not only for what is strictly necessary, but also for what is needed by the human weakness and misery of those who do not immediately have the strength to be more generous in making sacrifices for the Apostolate.

Regarding Masses, I hope that, as time goes by, there will be more coming; and H. E. the Cardinal fixed the offering to no less than 3 Liras. As I have already written to you, make sure that all priests have a book where to register the Masses said; every now and then you ask them the number of those celebrated and you send it to me. It would be according to the spirit of poverty and to the good of the missions if they were all, or almost all of them, celebrated according to my intentions but, as I told the last people who came there, no more than one per month should be celebrated for personal intentions. Regarding this, as in everything else, you speak to them according to what, in your judgement, is good and prudent.

The Theol. Bertagna and Benedetto have asked me to allow them not to write the diary, because they have no time for it. I cannot allow this, because it is a very useful rule and Benedetto, in his simplicity, writes well. It will be sufficient to write a few lines, on certain days, if they have no material for it. I shall write myself directly to them; but you should know what my intention is for everybody. Fr. Scarzello wrote a nice letter to me.

We have also received many good photographs, but we don't dare to publish or show them, because the priests are wearing lay clothing. In the photographs, the priests and the seminarians should always wear their habit, and sometimes also the brothers.

I will write to you several times before our big celebrations; anyhow as of now, I tell you that they will be very solemn. They will consist of a Novena and an Octave, during which there will be the Consecration of the Church and, during the days 18, 19 and 20, a special Triduum: on the 1st day there will be the crowning of Our Lady with twelve stars; on the 2nd day the Ordinations of the Diocesan Priests in the Shrine and in the evening the Procession; on the 3rd day everything that is possible for a great feast.

The H. Father has raised the rite to the rank of 1st class with Octave for the whole Diocese and forever, and we hope for proper readings during the Octave. This is a summary of what we hope to do. You join us in spirit in order to be ready to receive many graces from our Patroness...

May the M. H. Virgin, who does not seem to want to keep the Protestants far away, render their presence less harmful; She will certainly know how to guide everything for the greater Glory of God.

May the Lord comfort you in the great work of conversion of those poor unbelievers and, together with you, all our missionaries and the Sisters. Pray for me who wholeheartedly bless you.

In Domino, very aff.

◀ 49 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 65-68)

To the theologian Filippo Perlo

J. M. J. Torino, 4 March 1904

My dearest Theologian,

Your letter of 2nd February brought me great consolation, both for the good hopes you had regarding the newly arrived missionaries, and for the directives you are taking in order to give a proper arrangement to our missions. And, speaking about this, I am glad to hear that you are gathering your confreres for the Spiritual Exercises: an excellent and necessary thing; from now on try to do it every year, and even more often if possible. Do it also for the others [the Brothers], when possible, even if at various times and for a few people. The Father of Cottolengo desires that also the Sisters may have the Spiritual Exercises every year, possibly preached by somebody. It is good to make Fr. Gays or somebody else preach, but you too should speak because, as a superior, you have a special grace, as I experienced myself, who am not a preacher. In trying to find ways and means to give a proper arrangement to our missions everywhere, you

consult our people and then, calmly, you decide irrevocably what seems better to you *in Domino*.

I don't think we should oblige those who preside [the Masses] in the Sisters' Houses to preach every Sunday, but exhort them to do it often by means of small talks, according to their ability and prudence. In regard to rendering an account of matters of conscience in writing, I don't' think it is convenient for the time being; it can be done orally when you visit the various Houses. However, if someone does it, accept it, and favour this way of sanctifying oneself.

I will take care of lithographing the Directory and the prayers, and the list of solemn Feasts. In regard to books, I think that there are already many; perhaps they may be in some of the Houses; tell everybody that, when they change House, they should not take everything with them; they should leave what they will find in the new place.

We may also think about the catechism.

Now, coming to the division of the Vicariate, about which you write in your letter: you will be the best judge from there. I will tell you what I, together with the V. Rector, think about it.

It will certainly be good to have soon a Vicariate of our own. 1) it is expected by many; 2) it would mean stability for our missions; 3) it would give rise to many vocations; 4) we would receive subsidies by the Prop. of the Faith; 5) we would work with stability for the future; 6) fears, shadows, etc. would cease.

On the other hand, there are the desires of Fr. Caysac...: the expulsion from France [of the Holy Ghost Fathers]: all this makes us fear that, having known the region well, they might want to keep it more tenaciously, leaving to us our Houses as foreigners... But would Mgr. Algeyer be ready to face many expenses in order to receive many of them? and wouldn't they prefer the easier American missions? and if they came, would they last in active apostolate, used as they are as professors and elderly to be comfortable? And then, after a short time, the source of vocations due to such an espulsion will decrease...

We have promised not to take any steps with Propaganda without their agreement; and then a good testimony to the work we have done and their consent are necessary.

The British Government could not have any good influence on our behalf, even if we could look for protection [through a diplomat].

I wouldn't know what to conclude from all the above; if not the doubt about the possibility of sacrificing some of our Kikuyu [area] in order to obtain immediately the rest, hoping to expand before long toward the North up to... [the land of the Galla people?]

You examine, pray and do what you prudently feel that is good to do. What remains to be done by us is to pray, and I will do it, and I shall make our dear seminarians, who obtain everything, do it with a special prayer every day, so that our Consolata may console us by enlightening your mind

to find the best way and, according to our short way of seeing things, to soon have a Vicariate of our own...

I recommend to you to take all the necessary care for your health, being satisfied to do all the good that may be done. In regard to the missionaries' assignments, you feel free to do it according to their ability and suitability...

Give my best regards to all, assuring them that I pray for them and I live only for them. My blessing to all, and especially to you.

In Domino, very aff.

P. S. All the letters included in this bundle are from relatives; I read all of them; there is no urgency...

◀ 50 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 79-81)

To the theologian Filippo Perlo

J. M. J. Torino, Good Friday 1904

My dearest Theologian,

I have received your letter of 29th February and, together with it, the report more than regular! of the year 1902 and the letters of the Sisters. I thank the Lord for the good news about our dear missionaries and the Sisters of the second group. I hope that your retreat will bring about order, union and good spirit.

Last Wednesday morning I received the telegram about the sickness of Sister Filippina; I went to the Father [of the Cottolengo] who, sorrowful, agreed with me about her immediate repatriation; he took time till evening to decide who was going to accompany her. He then wrote to me, and his letter was brought to me by the Mother [the Sisters' superior], saying that he did not think it convenient to have the local superior accompany her, but one of the weaker Sisters, Sister Metilde, or Sister Bonifacia.

It seems to me that the inner reason is that he is afraid that we want to get rid of the superior; therefore he could not approve the choice of Sister Opportuna to substitute her temporarily or forever. He told me that it was up to Sister Sant'Alessio to substitute her for any event, as she was the elderly and has been the superior during the journey, and has always and everywhere done well, and, for what is now known, she does not deserve such a humiliation. Naturally I told him that the reason why Sister Opportuna was indicated was the fact that she was at Limuru, and certainly there was no intention in any way to blame Sister Sant'Alessio...

I truly think that you find Sr. Opportuna more suitable, according to our spirit and our needs. However, for the time being it is better not to decide anything and remain with the present superior who, deprived of her two

helpers, will have to get settled. Anyway, you try to understand Sister Sant'Alessio and try to form her, if possible, according to your style.

In a few days I will go to the Father [of the Cottolengo] to speak clearly about the drawbacks of that superior and of her spirit, so that, at the arrival of Sister Filippina, he will be aware of the situation. I will tell him about the sending of the letters, about the spirit of independence of the Sisters from the priests, and of what you already wrote to me.

As soon as you can, write to me in detail about what you have seen and heard, and how things are. The Lord will provide... It takes patience, and you continue not to hurt them; it is better if others do it. I already told something to the Mother [General] and, sorrowful, she told me she would write some admonitions, but I told her to wait. If Sister Opportuna, when tested, will do well, she should not be praised too much, so as not to harm the possibility of her being the future superior...

I have read the diary of T. Borda: I see that he railed against the *goma* [tribal dances]; for goodness' sake, move slowly in this regard; it is like here among us in regard to dancing, even if it is eviller. We must dissimulate the evil because, for the time being, as it is impossible now to overcome the matter, and to fight it frontally could be prejudicial to conversion. I was reading a few days ago that in China conversion was proceeding triumphantly when the Jesuit Fr. Ricci was tolerating certain offerings to the dead...; some empty-headed people started opposing them, and this provoked persecution and the end of a good situation. To eliminate evil, it takes patience and *time*. You who are there will see what to do, and give everybody a clear way of behaving regarding this and many other things...

I ask you to remind everybody about writing the diaries, the letters, and the Masses. I know that someone has written a letter without passing through me. This is not good, and I forbid it; I don't think I deserve such lack of confidence. The rules concerning matters to be dealt with outsiders should be observed. It could happen, as it did at Fossano, that letters of our missionaries were published on newspapers with news not exact or opposite to what had already been published by us. It was the letter of Fr. Scarzello to Mgr. Manacorda published on "*Fedeltà*" ["*Fidelity*", a newspaper]; fortunately, there was no news of any importance.

When possible, we shall send to you the painting on canvas of the "Madonna di Bra" and the one of "Madonna di Mondovì" given by Mgr. Ressia, and another one printed on paper of "Madonna delle Grazie" of Pinerolo. You dedicate to them the future mission stations. Write and make others write in thanksgiving to the Theol. Alardo of Bra and to Mgr. Ressia.

I will soon send to you the prayers, the directory and the order of Feasts. Wishing or rather praying for a Joyful Easter to all my dear missionaries, I greet them *in Domino* and in the M. H. Consolata. You take care of your health by avoiding too much hard work...

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 51 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 86-87)

To the theologian Filippo Perlo

Torino, 8 April 1904

My dearest Theologian,

From a letter I received together with yours of 3rd March, I see that the seminarian Cattaneo is not yet settled. In it he shows reluctance to go to Metumi, that he calls an *undesired place*; he would like to remain at Wambogo to study...; as an excuse for not having written to me he says: "please, let me have some ink pots, ink and paper and then I shall send to you often news about me". He doesn't mention at all the letter I wrote to him; he simply says: "as a son, I feel obliged to ask an ample forgiveness for not having written till now, as well as for having sometime lost my patience and for having sometime slapped some insolent Kikuyu people". This is all and with what a tone!

If after renewed tests and corrections he does not achieve a true and cordial obedience, it will be better to repatriate him. I am sorry for not having telegraphed to make him accompany the Sisters who are returning to Italy. You examine the case before God and, when you have exhausted the ways of suave and strong admonition, find the way to repatriate him, for example with the pretext to come and complete his studies. H. E. our Cardinal has written the magnificent pastoral letter I am sending you. In it there is a high mention of our Institute, superior to our merits. In his goodness he gives us a public attestation of stability and laboriousness. It would be good if you could write to him a letter of thanksgiving, mentioning also the main events of our missions. At my request, in January, he approved our Institute, that was only approved *ad triennium* [for three years], *ad decennium* [for ten years], and he would have approved it for ever if I had wanted it.

About our oncoming celebrations, you will come to know something from the Pastoral letter; some other time I will write to you about what is missing in it. Best regards to all, as if I had written to each one, and also to the Sisters... Greetings to you from the superiors of the Convitto...

May the Lord comfort you in the midst of many occupations, as I pray...

In Domino, your very aff.

◀ 52 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 108-10986-87)

To the theologian Filippo Perlo

J. M. J. Torino, 6 May 1904

My dearest Theologian,

I thank the Lord for the excellent outcome of your meeting at Moranga. The resolutions adopted and the way the deliberations were carried out give

me great hopes; and I praise the practical wisdom of your conclusions. Even if I intend to reflect upon them individually in another letter, I can't refrain now from mentioning the suitability of the daily timetable and of the regulations concerning food. I approve all the conclusions *without exception*, and I desire that each and all of their parts be implemented. It is, however, necessary that you see to it and make others see to it that they be implemented *promptly, constantly and cordially*. The uniformity of everybody must prevail, in spite of some possible better ideas in some practical cases; *et quicumque hanc regulam secuti fuerint, pax super illos et misericordia, et super Israel Dei* [Peace and mercy be upon all who walk by this rule, upon the Israel of God].

The two Sisters arrived in good health, and they speak very well about the missions, the missionaries and especially, *salva humilitate* [may humility be saved], of you, my dearest. For the time being we are not thinking about sending Sisters. Probably in December we shall have four priests and a brother ready; but about this, the V. Rector will speak to you in due time.

Andrea's brother brought me 100 golden Liras for his brother. You give them to him taking them from the community fund, and I will keep an account of them in my register.

I heard from the Sisters that you made the journey on foot from Tusu to Limuru in two days: please, don't strain yourself, so as not to spoil your health.

All our missionaries are writing good news to me: *Deo gratias*.

Here at our Institute, I have dismissed the seminarians Lovenia, Varusio and Squarzino: they were not suitable for our Institute; on the other hand tomorrow a deacon from Cuneo will come, a certain Rolfo who has been a "convittore" last year, and probably a good priest, born at Brescia.

I hope to tell you another time about our very solemn celebrations, at which will be present at least five Cardinals, one of whom sent by the Pope. There is certainly a lot of work to do in order to prepare for them. You prescribe what you feel good for the Novena ad the Feast; you will receive the additional parts of the Breviary.

Best regards to all *in Domino* and, together with the blessing of our dear Consolata, receive also the fatherly blessing of the one who likes to sign as

very aff. in O. L. J. C.

◀ 53 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 116)

To the theologian Giovanni Battista Rolfo

Torino, 16 May 1904

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

Supposing that you, my very dear one, are always in the resolution made [to join], it will be necessary for you, toward the end of this month or at the beginning of June, to come to Torino, in order to obtain the explicit

permission of H. Eminence. I have already mentioned it to him, and he was happy about your decision. Then you shall have to tell your parish priest.

In Africa things are proceeding very well, thanks be to God, and Our Lady Consolata is blessing our missionaries both spiritually and corporally.

In Domino, very aff.

◀ 54 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 128)

To Fr. Luigi Borio

Torino, June 1904

Dear Fr. Borio,

Squarzino came here and told me that he intended to remove the clerical habit here in Torino, in the house of an aunt of his. I exhorted him to go home and then do what his Parish Priest will tell him. If he should send somebody to collect his things, give them, provided there is a note from him; and if he himself comes, don't let the other young people see him. The seminarian Varusio wrote to me a letter of apologies and thanksgiving.

Today, when free from class-time, send the seminarians *Balbo* and *Perlo* to the bursar of the Consolata Shrine, so tat they may record various objects arrived from Africa, which we shall send to the Institute. Tell the bearer of this letter the time when they will come; even immediately if they are free from classes.

See that there is peace; and let's not worry about the past; so for the Sisters…

In Domino, very aff.

◀ 55 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 218)

To Brother Benedetto Falda

Hurray J. M. J. Torino, 4 August 1904

My dearest Benedetto,

From your letters I see that you are always happy, in spite of sicknesses. Bravo! Keep going with this spirit and the Lord will help! I read your letter to your confreres at the Institute, and they laughed wholeheartedly: *Benedetto is always Benedetto.*

I hope that by now you will be healed, and you will try to be using the proper remedies. Think that you have abandoned relatives, friends and Country out of love for God. This will earn you a hundredfold in this world, and eternal glory in the future life. This thought urged many people to leave everything and consecrate themselves to all kind of sacrifices: Paradise is so beautiful that will never be sufficiently paid for.

See that you and dear Agostino help each other to become saints by means of obedience; and you will happy in spite of being deprived of many things. May the Lord bless you, and our dear Consolata preserve you from all troubles.

In the Lord, very aff.

◀ 56 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 221-222)

To Fr. Luigi Borio

J. M. J. Piano della Mussa, 12 August 1904

My dearest one in O. L. J. C.,

I am glad to hear about the good journey of our dear missionaries. The pure and saintly air of that place [St. Ignatius'] will do good to their bodies as well as to their souls. See that they take a short walk every morning and evening, and that they do not get too tired by studying too much without, however, being idle.

I have decided that you should lead them to me next Wednesday, the 17th. Let them arise early enough so as to leave St. Ignatius' at 6.00 a.m.; they will arrive here at about 10.00 a.m. They will then leave for St. Ignatius' at 3.00 p.m., so as to arrive there at about 7.30 p.m. Let the Sisters'superior give each one a parcel containing *abundant* bread for their breakfast on the way (at Ala) and for their lunch here at the Mussa. I will provide the "polenta" and the meat for lunch; you provide them with something else only for breakfast. For special reasons they will not climb the Crot [not enough time], but they will still enjoy a beautiful view from this magnificent plain.

The case of Mr. Reycend is risky; you acted as charitably as you could, and that's enough; let's pray...

The case of Fr. Bellani worries me; I wouldn't like to see some past events repeated; let's pray that the Lord may dispose for the best.

My health is good; and such is the one of the V. Rector.

Best regards to all, *in Domino*, very aff.

◀ 57 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 248)

To Fr. Luigi Borio

Torino, October 1904

Dear Fr. Borio,

The seminarian Valetti came, and I told him clearly that it was no longer convenient to think of missions after an illness affecting essential organs that lasted two years. I gave him total dispensation from his vows and told

him to take full rest at his home for a few months; then, when he felt better, he could study theology using the textbook by Morino and the books of the Seminary of St. Gaetano. After becoming a diocesan priest, we shall see; if totally healed, the Lord will still want him. Tell him to leave at the Institute all the books of English, Kiswahili, etc., as well as the textbook by Schouppe... He should take all his personal belongings...

He seemed to have been waiting for this decision, and also somehow desiring it; he certainly showed that he found it right.

The Sister might have already told you that it would be good to give him also the clerical cassock; it is not convenient that somebody else should wear it. Taking away all his things, he will no longer have any attachments to our Institute...

You speak clearly to him as I did, leaving him with only some future hope... To the other seminarians then tell what you feel convenient.

This evening I will not come to the Institute; I will come at the beginning of the week.

See whether Costa and companions [seminarians] would be able to make two benches like those already existing in our Chapel...

Make somebody check which books of the saintly Fathers we have *in Latin* or *in Italian*.

And the list of what is missing at Rivoli?

In Domino, very aff.

◀ 58 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 269-271)

To the theologian Filippo Perlo

Torino, first days of January 1905

I am consoled by the number of children's baptisms, because they will be our protectors in Paradise; continue to be prudent in this regard because, if they don't die, they may be exposed to lose the faith before having known it. What is essential is the formation of the environment and the preparation, by means of charity and instruction, of a general conversion.

I am sending names of benefactors (men and women) to give children at Baptism; on the mission station's registers of Baptisms also the related surnames, of which I am giving a list, should be written [...]. To meet the expenses of the missions the V. Rector generously offers the proceeds of the publication of our Magazine. But as in all other things, also in this, the world needs to be made interested; and since by now we have to speak almost exclusively of the missions, it must be done in a way that pleases people. How can we do this when the letters and diaries of the missionaries are so few and incomplete? It is very necessary, therefore, as much as bread is necessary for you, that everybody when writing the diary observe the following rules, that you, being there may better complete and explain.

1. *Detailed* description of places, trees, animal, produce, etc.
2. Inhabitants, characteristics, customs, practices connected with the various circumstances of life: births, marriages, sickness, death, etc.; religious beliefs, feasts, etc.
3. How you relate to them and they to you, and exchange of small chats, etc.

You must imagine the common desire to know every *detail* about baptisms! I recommend that you explain the situation of the family, the way you use in order to succeed, and the small dialogues taking place.

So in approaching them, at the beginning a bit suspicious perhaps, then more compliant, and then curious to know about religious matters, and all the simple questions they ask you; and finally the result of the catechisms. In a word: many anecdotes are necessary and well detailed.

I know well that various missionaries don't think they are able to do this, but it is not true; you spur them on as to something due, giving great glory to God, and necessary for the Work of the Missions.

May the Lord bless all my dearest sons in O. L. Jesus Christ, and may our Consolata comfort them in doing good.

◀ 59 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 276-282)

To the missionaries in Kenya

Ad majorem Dei gloriam Torino, 6 January
[To the greater glory of God] Feast of the Epiphany, 1905

My dearest Sons in O. L. J. C.,

The blessed year of our centenary feasts [of the finding of the Consolata Icon] is ended, and my heart is still full of delightful emotions for the homages paid to our Heavenly Patroness. Torino, the Piedmont, indeed very many people from all parts of Italy and also from abroad seemed like one heart and soul in venerating and invoking the M. H. Virgin Consolata. The report published on our magazine ["*La Consolata*"] gives only a faint idea of the general enthusiasm of those holy days, spent in the presence of the Venerated Icon.

In such an admirable concert, the homage of the Consolata's favourite sons could not be wanting and, indeed, it has not been wanting. Having prepared by means of a fervent novena and the vigil's fast, you tried to celebrate the blessed anniversary with the best possible solemnity in the poverty of your Chapels. Being so far from our dear Shrine and not being able to admire the Holy Icon adorned by new crowns, has certainly been quite a painful sacrifice for you.

But, for the very fact that this sacrifice was so much felt by you, it must have been rewarded by Your Mother with special blessing for each one of you, our Institute, and your beloved people. If your young confreres, our

seminarians, were rightly proud to represent you at the feet of the Consolata in those days, I undertook it as a very special duty for myself to do so. I somehow forgot all my other functions, to remember only that I was the father of this new Family and, as such, I presented all of you together and each one in particular to our good Mother, entreating her not so much for a material growth of our Institute, but for the grace that the will and the effort to sanctify yourselves may continue to grow in you, while you work with zeal for the conversion of the poor unbelievers.

The fact that the work for your own sanctification has been on top of all your concerns has been proven to me by the wise conclusions of your conferences of last March [*The 1904 Murang'a Conferences*]. Your Superior, there, must have told you what a great consolation I experienced in reading your deliberations and in realizing that the Holy Spirit had clearly assisted and enlightened you in reaching them. After re-reading and meditating at my convenience those resolutions, I felt that they were fully worthy of my approval. Through them, you started putting into practice that directive of our Rules which prescribes that, as time goes by, you would be establishing rules of life and apostolic action suggested by experience, as the most suitable for the achievement of your purpose.

The rules, then, have been inspired to you by the Lord. The important thing now is to put them into practice exactly and perseveringly. And also about observing them, up to now I have received consoling news. Allow me, however, to insist on a full and constant execution of the decisions.

Experience will certainly suggest to you some variations and additions. These will be discussed in your next conferences of this year; but, for the time being, unless new instructions come from your Superior, it is indispensable that each one of you follows strictly what was decided, not allowing himself to introduce changes, neither for the idea of something better, nor with the excuse that what was established is not giving the hoped-for results.

If, in some concrete circumstances, somebody may see some change as useful, it is not convenient for him to introduce it on his own; let him consult your Superior there, and wait for his decision.

A recommendation I also believe useful for you is about using time well. It is the Holy Spirit who says, "*Fili, serva tempus*" [Son, bide your time]. Time may be lost by doing nothing – and I am sure this will never happen to any of you – or by not using it in a useful and orderly way. Your way of life, there, is so different from the one you were used to, here in your Country, that you may easily be disconcerted and find it difficult to follow a certain order in your occupations. If this is difficult, however, it is not impossible by means of some good will and God's grace. First of all, the order to follow is indicated in your daily timetable: commit yourselves to follow it punctually and, I would say, scrupulously, except in case of real hindrances. The observance of the timetable should always be the first object of your particular examination of conscience at noon and in the evening. When hindrances occur in regard to your apostolic activities

designated by the timetable, e.g., during rainy days, you should observe a certain order and discernment about what to do. It is not good to just undertake the first work that comes to one's mind; it is better to reflect a moment on what work, among the various ones that may be done, is more important or more urgent in regard to the only purpose for which you are there. "*Quid hoc ad aeternitatem?*" [What bearing does this have in regard to eternity?], a holy monk used to ask himself before every action; so should somehow each one of you say before undertaking any occupation: to what does this serve in regard to the purpose of my apostolate?

I believe that the study of the local language is one of the most important things you have to do; at first sight, it may seem easy enough for the words indicating material things, but it must be quite difficult for abstract ideas, especially for those of a supernatural order. Yet, the full mastery of the language is indispensable, in order to succeed in your spiritual ministry; this is why I am ardently urging you to study it seriously and constantly, during all the time that is free from other occupations.

Another thing that is more important than it seems at first sight, and for which I exhort you to find time even during the days you are very busy, is the writing of your diaries, so that they may serve the purpose for which your regulations prescribe it. To achieve this, follow these steps: on the first day of every month, report the order of the actions as it is fixed by the timetable, or as it has been fixed by each one of you for those things that the timetable leaves up to the discretion of each Superior of a mission station. Then, when you follow the timetable, there is no need of reporting it every day; however, when some items of the timetable could not be observed, it should be indicated, mentioning also the reason why, whether for some health problem, bad weather, etc.

But what is most necessary to report in your diaries are the habits and the ideas of the local people as you come to know them, and your relationships with them. Then, relate how they accept your words; what impression your words have on them; their conversations, their sayings, their questions and objections in regard to the truths of our faith. For instance, I know that everywhere you take care of sick people and, often, of a good number of them every day. It is impossible that this may take place without some interesting conversations. It may be about the origin of their sickness, the treatments already tried, their trust, or lack of it, in your treatments, and how they receive your words of concern about their diseases, and the religious teaching you offer them. And, how about children's Baptisms? Thanks be to God, they have already been administered in all mission stations, but in none of your diaries there are any minute details of these facts of great importance, which would be very useful to be made known to our Benefactors.

It is impossible for me now to enumerate all you have to say: it is enough to remember the news as ordinarily reported by the newspapers, and the minute descriptions they usually give of the facts that happen. We certainly

do not expect this in regard to all that happens in a day, but at least it should be done for what is more original, more interesting. However, talking about your diaries, I do not approve that they should be habitually written, as some people usually do, after supper: this is harmful to your health; therefore, some time should be found for them before supper.

Another important work which you must attend to, even, if necessary, by removing some amount of time from pastoral work, is the kitchen garden (see *"Regol., capo IV, art. 19"*). Every mission station must have, if the locality allows it, a garden of such size that it may abundantly provide vegetables for the station. I would wish that the place and the size of the garden be fixed by your Superior, Fr. Perlo, for each mission station, and that no change should take place without his permission.

Then, it will be up to the local Superior to plan the sowings in such a way as to have the various kinds of vegetables (greens, beans, etc.) continually, according to the local needs. Be careful, then, to do at the proper time the sowing, transplanting, weeding, watering, protection to defend the garden from animals, etc., and using the remedies suggested by experience against insects and anything else that may damage the crops. I wanted to mention these details because, from the diaries, I realized that they are not always practised, consequently not profiting from a local resource that may bring about a good saving on daily maintenance expenses. Furthermore, it is certain that by eating, at least in part, the vegetables and foods you were used to in your Country, it will benefit your health.

I would like to give you two more recommendations which, I believe, are the most useful at present: charity and perseverance. About charity, especially the meekness to be used in dealing with the local people, I have already written to you, insisting a lot about it, so that, I hope, there is no more need to go back to that. I only repeat to you that I have this very much at heart, and I would like this to be one of the resolutions that you renew every morning during your meditation. What I want to inculcate now is mutual charity. With an increase in the number of people, also the differences in appreciations increase, because each of us has his own way of seeing things, and especially a good amount of pride, which deceives us without our realizing it.

From this comes the temptation to internally disapprove the way of thinking and acting of our confreres and, sometime, also of our Superiors. Be careful and firm against this temptation, because the day when mutual criticisms begin, will mark at once the sterility of your works, and will be the beginning of the dissolution of our Institute. If, during your evening examination of conscience, you find that you have failed in this regard, remedy it immediately by a good resolution and, if necessary, also by retracting the words of criticism that may have slipped out of your mouth.

Another cause of temptation against mutual charity could be the appointments to the various duties established by obedience: it may seem that more important or more comfortable ones are given to others, without taking into consideration the merits of each one. When you left, you

promised to totally sacrifice yourselves out of love for souls, undergoing any hardships, being satisfied with any duty, provided you could succeed in sanctifying yourselves and your neighbours.

Never forget such generous resolutions; rather, renew them any time that envy or discontent will tempt you. And do not feel offended because I give you this recommendation: this very temptation was manifested at the beginning of the Church, in spite of the fervour of the first Christians. This is why St. Paul felt it necessary to repeatedly insist on speaking against it, and he did it by means of the gracious comparison with the members of a human body and their respective functions. Consult Rom 12:4 and especially 1Cor 12:12ff.

Reflecting on the fact that all of us are one body, and that each member, even the least worthy, concurs to form the admirable harmony of the human body, must be of particular encouragement to our Brothers when they are engaged in material works. They must always remember that also these works of theirs are authentic works of apostolate in favour of the non-believers, and that, if performed with faith and commitment, they will be rewarded by God in the same way as the spiritual works.

The last recommendation I want to give you is about holy perseverance. After a year, two, or even more since you toil in that apostolic field, the fact of not seeing the sprouting of those fruits you have expected could be a strong temptation of discouragement. Card. Lavigerie, who knew a lot about Missions, wrote: “This apparent sterility of their apostolate is one of the most painful sufferings for missionaries, especially at the beginning of a Mission. In fact, it is always a long and difficult enterprise to lead a people to change and go from error to truth, from vice to virtue. Therefore, if a missionary arrives with illusions too common among generous people, if he believes that it is enough to be seen in order to attract those who listen, that words will lead them to conversion, he will soon experience disappointments which will lead to discouragement.”

However, it should not be so. First of all, it is not true that the fruits you have gathered are so scarce; thanks to God, a lot has been achieved and, I am telling you sincerely, more than what I have been hoping, considering the hurried preparation of almost all of you. These fruits are not so evident to you; like a mother, who always has her child with her, almost does not notice his/her growing, you almost do not see the fruits of your work, but they are there: first of all, the confidence and kindness you gained from the local people through the care you have been giving them; then, as it appears from your diaries, an ever more growing interest of theirs in what you do and say, which is not so habitual for them.

Also in regard to children’s Baptisms at the time of death, the Lord has consoled you beyond my expectations. Therefore, instead of getting discouraged, start thanking warmly our Mother Consolata who has blessed you work with blessings that we should call truly exceptional, if we consider what I know about other Missions that are just beginning.

But, let's also suppose that the fruit does not correspond with all your toils; should you get discouraged because of this? Always remember that each one will be rewarded *secundum proprium laborem* [according to his labour] and not according to the results achieved. In the lives of the Saints we have many examples of extraordinary and persevering toiling, whose fruits they did not have the consolation of gathering in their life.

They did the sowing, but they did not have the consolation of harvesting. If this should be the case also with you, which I hope it would not be, "first of all, firmly convince yourselves", as Card. Lavigerie wrote, "that what is demanded of a missionary are not so much good results, but fidelity to his duties", and what is essential is that, constantly working, you may fulfil God's will and be able to say like Our Lord, "*Meus cibus est ut faciam voluntatem Eius qui misit me, ut perficiam opus Eius*" [My food is to do the will of Him who sent me, and to accomplish His work] (John 4:34).

So, keep going ahead always, courageously, zealously, untiringly, with your mind continually fixed on the great reward that God reserves for those who *have done and taught others to do* [have done and taught others to do] according to the words of Jesus Christ: "*Qui fecerit et docuerit hic magnus vocabitur in regno coelorum*" [He who does them (the commandments) and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven] (Mt 5:19).

May the blessing of Our Lady Consolata, which I wholeheartedly bestow upon you, confirm you in your good resolutions and obtain for you the grace to practise them with purity of intention, fervour and perseverance.

Your very aff. in Jesus Christ

◀ 60 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 285)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

Torino, 26 January 1905

My dearest Fr. Gays,

It is a long time since I received any letter from you, and even longer since I received any diary.

I cannot believe that any of them went lost, because other letters of yours, addressed to others, have arrived and I transmitted them immediately to the right addresses. How can I explain such a long silence of yours in regard to a matter so important and prescribed by the Rules? You know well how much I love you; please, remove without any delay this thorn that is stinging my heart, and that I am sure I don't deserve.

I know that all of you there are working with good spirit, and that you are cordially helping the Theologian Perlo, so that our missionaries may achieve their own sanctification, and the good of the local people. I praise you in a special way for the publication of the Catechism and for your

commitment to the very important work of forming the catechists. Thanks be to God. The two priests, who are on their way to Kenya, are good people, and I hope they will give a good contribution to your work there. The young man Aquilino is well known to you: treat him as a true confrere, even if he has not yet taken his vows.

The special blessing of your Consolata on you, so that She may preserve you in good health for the good of all.

In Domino, very aff.

◀ 61 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 287)

To Brother Benedetto Falda

Hurray J. M. J. Torino, 26 January 1905

My dearest Benedetto,

Quite often I think of my dear Benedetto, and I would like to have him here at my side, in my room, and hear him speaking, bold and joyful as usual. Also the Sisters and the seminarians at the Institute remember a lot the brio and activity of Benedetto.

I know well that, due to your sensitive heart, nostalgia may easily come upon you, as well as some melancholy, and because of this you need some words of cordial encouragement.

When this happens, think of me, and imagine to hear me saying *coraggio in Domino* [courage in the Lord] and what I would tell you! And, then, don't you have your superior who likes you a lot and wrote to me many good things about you!? And then Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, who makes lions out of weak people! You are a sacristan...!

I desire that you do not work too hard and, when you have sweated, keep away from cold air and humidity; in a word, I desire that you take good care of your health. I don't blame you for the long letters you write to your relatives and friends, which they enjoy greatly: feel free to write also at length but, so that I don't become jealous, write long letters also to me or to the Rev. V. Rector.

Soon will arrive there a dear young man, Aquilino Caneparo, who is a very good carpenter and will be able to teach others; receive him as a younger brother, as if he were your Alessandro.

He is a Brother, like you, and observant of the same rules in everything; love him and help him to become a good missionary, keeping him away (in confidence) from Ametis... I trust in you and in Agostino.

Courage in the Lord and in Paradise which, when you will be tired to remain here on earth, is ready for you.

Receive my special blessing which I give you also on behalf of our dear Consolata, very aff. in J. C.

◀ 62 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 294-295)

To the theologian Filippo Perlo

Torino, 3 February 1905

My dearest Theologian,

I received your letter this morning at 9.30 and at 11.30 I went to the Father [of the Cottolengo] in order to come to an understanding.

He told me that he had written to the Sisters *to obey the missionaries*. If he had added not to copy, etc., he intended to speak only of confidential matters and all things proper to the Priests, that is, matters that could diminish the Sisters' full esteem and reverence for the priests, fearing that you may make use of your secretary [a Sister] to send them admonitions or reprimand; knowing your prudence, I assured him that this would be impossible. Therefore, he did not intend to speak of my and your communications to the Houses and to the missionaries, not even of the diaries and similar matters, and even less of the store. He told me to write to you about this so that you may inform the Sisters on his and my behalf. He added that the same things should be observed by the Sisters in all mission stations.

Asked about photographing the Sisters, he answered that he did not approve photographing them on their own *just for a show*; but he had no problem about having them photographed with the local people or with the missionaries, as it was done by the other Sisters in the missions; indeed he praised the Limuru group on the occasion of the Consolata feast. Also, about this he told me to write to you so that you may inform the Sisters on his behalf.

I then spoke to him about singing and sound, and he approved it not only for the church and in the house, but also when going through the villages, since, he added, the Akikuyu are fond of singing, and this becomes a means of apostolate. He was also very happy to know that the *Lodate Maria* [a hymn to Mary: "Praise Mary"] was so widely spread and taught.

He then told me that he had written a letter to you so that in the single mission stations the local superior [a priest] would turn to the assistant [a Sister] for general matters, as stated in the Rules, but for specific matters he could also turn to the Sister in charge of them, e. g., the seamstress, etc.

I hope that the good Sisters will obey to my will and to the will of their Father, and that in the true spirit of God will work for the salvation of the local people.

My blessing upon them, upon everybody and upon you my dearest one.

In Domino, very aff.

◀ 63 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 390-391)

To the theologian Antonio Borda-Bossana

5 May 1905

My dearest Theologian,

I am replying to the last two letters of yours, my dearest one. As far as the second is concerned, I thank you for all the details you give me about the future mission station of Madonna dei Fiori [Our Lady of the Flowers, at Karima]. Our Lady is looking for a less unworthy dwelling; therefore we must not wonder about the various ups and downs that must be overcome in order to arrive at the nice mountain that you describe to me. It is written: *"Ego in altissimis habito... flores mei, fructus honoris et honestatis* [I have my tent in the hights... my flowers, the fruits of honour and honesty]*"*.

Turning now to the other letter, I rejoice with you about the fact that the Lord allows you to taste the fruits of a worthy missionary. O. L. J. C. told the apostles and disciples to go *sine pera, sine calceamentis* [no bag, no sandals] and what follows; to be a worthy successor of theirs you should share in such trials. Be generous and the graces of conversion will abound in your ministry. However, with the freedom of a father in J. C. and of your rector, I would like to point out that, at times, you allow the fogs of selfishness and envy to darken your mind, as if you would not be sufficiently appreciated there and, perhaps, also here in Torino.

Please, do not give in to such temptations. I know that there everybody likes you; and you know how much I have loved you and still love you! Why, then, should you believe that you are disregarded and complain because you are not placed in more prominent places? Have you forgotten what I used to say about the Assistant parish-priests, that the best ones had to be placed in the most difficult places? Be happy, therefore, to remain or to depart as and when obedience requires it, and do not lose the fruit of the vow of obedience by reasoning too much in regard to the decisions and intentions of the superiors.

Indeed, because of the confidence I have in you and because I want you to be a true apostle, I would like to mention that you are quite inclined to see big, to envy your confreres, and to judge too easily everything and everybody. Remember the words of the *Imitation* ["Imitation of Christ"] about judging. It seems to me that you are not sufficiently careful about the vow of poverty you took, because you are continually amassing too many things without a real need for them, out of too great a foresight, and with the risk that they may deteriorate. Think of how much it costs me and the public charity to provide you with what you need; why should you keep with you what is unnecessary?

Worse still is the habit of gathering from all Houses things that are due to others, or to other Houses; doesn't it look almost like the rich man of the Gospel who was delighted at seeing that his barns were full... My dear, if you want to make miracles in the missions, be humble, satisfied with what

is merely needed, and also being delighted at being deprived of many things etc., then be detached from many things.

Please, don't be offended by my fatherly freedom; and work uniquely for God's glory and according to all the views of the one who give you orders in God's name. If you will work in this way, the special gifts with which the Lord endowed you will be useful not *in destructionem* [for tearing down], but for the great *aedificationem* [building up] of our missions.

What I have written has been meditated by me in front of our Consolata; accept my words wholeheartedly; examine yourself following the example of St. Francis Xavier and then take the resolution to imitate him especially in regard to humility and poverty.

My special blessing on you and on the mission station of Madonna dei Fiori [Our Lady of the Flowers]. *In Domino,* very aff.

◀ 64 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 422-423)

To the missionaries in Kenya

J. M. J Torino, 4 August 1905

My dearest in J. C.,

Your Superior, the Theologian Perlo, has happily arrived in Torino, and was received by H. Em. our Cardinal, our benefactors, and by all, with special appreciation and affection.

He brought me excellent news about our missions and about you, by assuring me that charity, obedience and unwearied zeal for the conversion of the local people are reigning among you.

I thank the Lord who was so good as to bless the many sacrifices undertaken for a good beginning of our missions. Our heavenly Patroness [O. L. Consolata] is visibly protecting you.

You have probably already guessed the reason for which I called back to Italy our dear Theologian. More than my very vivid desire to see some of my dear sons from Africa after their departure, the coming of your Superior was necessary in order to plead with the Holy See for the cause of our missions. To this purpose, he shall have to remain here for some time. I am sure that, during his absence, each of you will continue to work well in his place, according to the established norms. And this also for deserving the desired grace of stability of our missions. Continue, therefore, to pray, and ask also your good neophytes to pray; and, to prayer add the spirit of mortification, to which every major grace is promised.

The Lord, so implored, will grant us what we desire, and we will soon be able to sing to him the *Te Deum* [Hymn of praise] as a sign of our gratitude.

I wholeheartedly bless each one of you in particular, and also the good Sisters.

Believe me very aff. in the Lord

◀ 65 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 455-457)

To the missionaries in Kenya

Torino, 25 September 1905

My dearest in Jesus Christ,

With my heart full of the liveliest joy, I am sending to you the consoling news that the S. C. of Propaganda Fide has established as an independent mission entrusted to the Consolata Missionaries the whole Province of Kenya, including our station of Limuru (Decree dated 14 September 1905).

These are a few words, but they are like a summary of a whole story of worries and long negotiations, which ended with a result superior to my own expectation. Worries that have been troubling me for three years, fearing that the first field of your toiling could be taken from us, without being able to foresee the place destined by Divine Providence as a stable area for our missionaries: laborious negotiations which started when we were asked to leave Metumi and lasted until these days; a very happy and unhoped-for result, because all our requests were totally accepted by the S. Congregation of Propaganda, and this rarely happens in similar situations.

How can we not recognize in this a very special protection of our Consolata who, after having led her missionaries into one of the most beautiful and healthy Countries of Africa, now gives it to them permanently, in spite of all difficulties against it?

The story of these difficulties, and of the long negotiations needed to overcome them, will be related to you by your Superior, the Theol. Perlo, on his return; he will also be happy to report to you the expressions of great benevolence in regard to all of you and to your dear local people addressed to us by the Holy Father in a long particular audience, by H. Em. Card. Gotti and several other Cardinals. For the time being, let it be sufficient for you to know that the Holy Father spoke high words of praise for the state of our missions and for your work in particular, and to each one of you, missionaries and Sisters, he imparted wholeheartedly his apostolic blessing, adding that he is expecting great fruits from our Institute.

We also heard many words of praise and great encouragement from many Cardinals whom we had to approach on this occasion; unanimously they praised especially two things: the organization of our missions, and the unity of action of all of you in your work, both spiritual and material. To these two things, besides to God's grace, they said, should be attributed the extraordinary results achieved in such a short time.

For the good organization you must be grateful to your local Superior who was able to fully interpret my intentions and to execute the instructions given him at various times according to needs; this should increase your trust in him and animate you to an ever more perfect obedience. The unity of action, then, is especially a source of praise for you who were able to fully conform to the directives received. This should be an

encouragement to obey even more perfectly in the future, an obedience not only of works, but also of judgement, by renouncing individual views and appreciations, and committing yourselves to put into practice promptly and exactly the directives received and those you will receive in the future.

After having established the Mission of Kenya, H. Em. Card. Gotti nominated the Theologian Perlo as its Superior, endowing him with the jurisdiction and all the powers usually accorded to Apostolic Vicars, among them the one of administering Confirmation, excluding only those attached to Episcopal Ordination.

As a consequence, from now on, the authority of the Apostolic Vicar of Zanguebar [Zanzibar] over you expires, and all the powers he had granted you for the carrying out of your sacred ministry are now granted by the Theol. Perlo.

We, here at the Institute, have already thanked with special functions our Consolata for such a remarkable grace. As far as you are concerned, you will stop using the prayers offered after Mass up to now for this purpose and, on the first Sunday after receiving this letter, in each mission station you will sing a solemn *Te Deum* followed by the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament; then for eight days you shall add to the Collect of the Mass the one *Pro gratiarum actione* [for thanksgiving].

If this eminent grace is, for us, reason for holy exultation, it also a reason for an ever-deeper trust that the uninterrupted series of blessings of our Consolata will not decrease but increase, as the development, that all of us wish for our work, increases; with this hope and wish, I send you wholeheartedly my blessing.

◀ 66 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 473)

To the missionaries in Kenya

Torino, 27 November 1905

My dearest sons in Our Lord Jesus Christ, I greet you and wish you all kinds of graces. My heart is with you; our Patroness, the Consolata, is with you, and the Lord is with you through the blessing of his Vicar on earth, the lovable Pius X.

Work for your sanctification and for the conversion of those poor people.

Have a very deep faith in Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, and a very tender devotion to the Most Holy Virgin. Be obedient and you will become saints; be humble and you will save many souls. Happy will you be if, always thinking of the *ad quid venisti* [what you came for], you will live supernaturally, and will not allow the weaknesses of this world to cool you down. *Sursum corda; merces vestra copiosa est in coelis* [Lift up your hearts; your reward is great in heaven]. I bless the priests, the Brothers, the Sisters, the baptized, the catechists, the catechumens, etc. etc.

◀ 67 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 490-491)

To Brother Benedetto Falda

Hurray J. M. J. Torino, 25 February 1906

My always dearest Benedetto,

Your letters, rather rare, are very dear to me, especially the last one that made me feel as if we were together in my room on the first day you came to see me. Believe me: in your writings the whole of your heart is visible, and I like them a lot. I know that your health has improved, but I want that you be *perfectly* healed: I order this to you on behalf of the Consolata. See that you do not tire yourself out in your work, by not worrying yourself, and by being patient when, and this is often, things do not happen the way you would like [...].

What I particularly recommend to you is not to get discouraged because of your faults, be they in the area of humility, obedience, charity, and anything else. You are not yet a saint, and you will always have enough of this stuff, as long as you will live, due in great part to your lively temperament. It is sufficient to have, in front of God, the desire to improve, to diminish the number and the seriousness of your faults and, when you fail, to humble yourself in front of God and of your confreres or superiors. And then be joyful as ever and daily Holy Communion.

You may do a lot of good to the local people by teaching them to work and teaching them the truths of our H. Faith! In your diary you describe in detail what you tell them; believe me: we like your diary very much, and you try to write it at least once a week.

Your good mother, whom I always see, prays for you and for the stability of your vocation; your relatives liked your gifts and are happy about the fact that you are a Consolata missionary.

Therefore, courage always, dear Benedetto, reply to me soon, and know that on your feast-day I will offer my Mass for you, so that you may become a holy man and a holy missionary. In the Lord, very aff.

◀ 68 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 492)

To the theologian Giovanni Battista Rolfo

J. M. J. Torino, 26 February 1906

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

It is a long time that I have been intending to reply to your various and dearest letters. First of all I want to thank the Lord who gives you grace and joy in your new life: the good God is generous with us and will grant you a

hundredfold of what you left and then [eternal life]!... Courage then *in Domino qui te confortat* [in the Lord who strengthens you]. Do not worry about the fact that the "old man" is not yet dead in you: for your greater profit the Lord allows you to be tried, like St. Paul, by temptations and miseries of pride, or maybe chastity, to better sanctify you and so that *omnis caro* [all flesh] should not rely on itself. Courage always, because *infirma elegit Dominus* [the Lord selects weak things] to perform great works.

I sympathize with you about that missed Baptism, but you acted prudently; don't worry about it relying on the mystery of God's grace. I will send soon to your R. Superior some norms concerning Baptisms of the dying for all of you; they will be very useful to you and will bring peace to you.

I am very happy about your diaries; continue in this way, describing *in detail* the facts, e. g. the Baptisms, and the talks when dialoguing; they will be useful for our magazine.

The chaplain of the Racconigi mental hospital came to me and told me to assure you that your two dear people are peaceful and happy, also your sister; he watches over them, visits them often and they don't need anything; the Sisters, too, give them special treatment because their brother is a missionary...

Courage *in Domino* and know that I am praying for you, so that you may do a lot of good and earn a beautiful Paradise. Very aff.

◀ 69 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 505)

To the theologian Giovanni Battista Rolfo

J. M. J. Torino, 5 April 1906

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

After I had written to you, my dearest, I received two letters, to which I now reply briefly. I have read the letter to your brothers and I found it correct; I only added the word *about* before the word "thousand". I have now heard from the brother of your sister-in-law, who is a priest, that the proposal was well accepted by this sister-in-law and by your brothers, but not by the other sister-in law, although she will also eventually do it; but about this, they themselves will write to you.

To the other letter I reply by inviting you to have courage; true fervour consists in our will; try to reactivate your will often and then keep going relying on God. Thank the Lord for not having experienced those temptations any longer; but, if the devil should send them again, do not worry; in the heart of Jesus there is nothing to be afraid of: *tuta requies in visceribus Salvatoris* [in the heart of the Saviour (there is) sure rest] (St. Augustine).

Keep writing your diary in detail. Courage *in Domino*, and with all my affection I bless you, very aff.

◀ 70 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 589)

To Giovanni Chiomio

J. M. J. Torino, 6 September 1906

My dearest in J. C.,

Having received the recommendations of your Rev. Parish-priest and of the Rector of the Giaveno seminary, I now accept you in our Institute. This is valid if, after reading our Rules, you feel to be called to the life of our missionaries.

Having received the clerical habit and obtained the consent of our Card. Archbishop, come as soon as you can to begin the formation proper to the Apostolate.

May the Lord bless you and grant you the grace to become a worthy minister of His.

In Domino, very aff.

◀ 71 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 609-612)

To the missionaries in Kenya

Torino, 8 December 1906

AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM
(To the greater glory of God)

My dearest sons in O. L. Jesus Christ,

During the past year I have not written to you any circular letter, but I had asked your very dear Superior to inform you, on his return among you, of my thoughts and intentions. He has done it, especially during your Holy Spiritual Exercises [Annual Spiritual Retreat], and I was happy to know that you accepted them very well, and have been striving up till now to conform to them.

Your work among those poor and dear Akikuyu is now undergoing a crucial and decisive moment. You have gained their confidence; you have spread widely religious instruction and, thanks be to God, it was accepted well; but now it is the practising of the Christian principles that should begin: it is the wills and the hearts that should submit to the observance of God's law. What you have obtained is the renunciation of their errors; what remains to be done is the most difficult part: the renunciation of what in their customs is contrary to God's commandments, thus starting to live an authentic Christian life. The protection of our Mother, the Consolata, who has obtained for you from God the first happy results, will not fail to accomplish the work, by obtaining for you also this transformation of their souls.

Now, in order to cooperate to this result, what is required is the union of all forces and their subordination to the one who has been called by God to direct them; it is necessary that your activity and zeal be constantly conformed to the spirit of obedience. I am not doubting your good dispositions towards the vow of obedience, but I know well how much the devil fights against this great virtue, and how many specious pretexts he suggests to us in order to prevent our obedience from being perfect.

First of all, he strives to divest it of its essential characteristic, which consists in acknowledging God in the one who commands, and believing that the Superior's faults do not diminish at all your duty to obey. Then, our astute enemy convinces us that our merits are not sufficiently recognized by our superiors, so that other people less educated, less experienced and younger are entrusted with more important and conspicuous positions. And if, after the Superiors have put us at the head of others, they put us again under the authority of others, Satan solicits our pride, as if we had been punished, or too harshly and toughly humiliated; in this way, he does not allow us to understand how good is the state of subjection, especially after having had some authority.

The Rules of the White Fathers, among the means that are indispensable to missionaries in order to remain faithful to their vocation, indicate "*a practical spirit of absolute obedience to the Superiors, without which*", they add, "*there is no common work and, consequently, no Apostolate is possible.*" In order to inculcate this great principle even more, Card. Lavigerie inserted into his Constitutions the admirable letter of St. Ignatius [Loyola] on this virtue: a letter that I am also presenting to you, so that you may meditate on all of it during your Spiritual Exercises [Annual Spiritual Retreat], dividing it in various parts, one for each day; then, you should re-read it privately during the year, especially during you monthly retreats [Days of Recollection], and make it a constant object of your particular examination of conscience.

In the meantime I invite you to focus your attention on three thoughts expressed in this letter, thoughts that I make my own. Here they are:

At No. 2: "*And, although I desire that in all gifts and in all spiritual graces you be perfect, nonetheless, as you have already heard from me on previous times, it is particularly in obedience more that in any other virtue that God Our Lord gives me a desire to see you excel.*"

At No. 3: "*We may allow that other religious Institutes surpass us in regard to fasting, vigils and other hardships of life, which, according to each Institute are observed in a saintly way; but in authentic and perfect obedience and in the renunciation of one's own will and judgement I greatly desire, my dearest brothers, that those who serve God in this Company* [the Society of Jesus] *be excelling, and through this they may be known as true sons of it.*"

At No. 20: "*It is, therefore, for such a reason that in this Congregation, in which God has given me some superintendence, I ardently desire that*

such an important virtue be exactly practised and kept with such a vigour, as if all the good and the preservation of our Company depended on it."

May the Lord grant also to our Institute part of the good that came and is still coming to the Company of Jesus from this letter; we will certainly obtain this if we have a common and constant commitment to observe what is recommended in it.

May the M. H. Consolata, our Patroness, who was a model of perfect obedience, help you to acquire this great virtue, as I desire and pray to the Lord for, and as I send you my blessing.

◀ 72 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 665-666)

To the theologian Giovanni Battista Rolfo

J. M. J. Torino, 28 February 1907

My dearest Theologian,

I like your openness. You don't experience the fervour you would desire; be satisfied with renewing this desire of yours before Jesus, and offer to Him the good you may already accomplish in favour of the souls of non-believers. It seems to me that your diary is well written and, with a greater knowledge of the language and of the customs, you will be able to describe the facts more fully, so that they could be printed.

You should thank the Lord who makes use of you to proclaim His marvels; and don't worry when you don't succeed in saving all the dying people, or in converting everybody as soon as you would like. I know that Fr. Cagliero is on good terms with you and, as brothers, you are working for your sanctification and trying to *do all things well.* Continue to help your confrere, especially by inculcating always good spirit and obedience to the brothers.

I thank you for your love for our Institute and Missions, demonstrated by your New Testament. You should still think better about it, so as to make sure that it doesn't cause too much sorrow to your family.

On the other hand, I pray to the Lord that he may preserve you for about fifty more years in the Missions, and then we shall see what will be the convenient way of making a will. I hope that the above-named patrimony does not include everything that belongs to you, so that something will be left to your relatives. And then we must think at least about the two minors at Racconigi [mental hospital] in case they may need more than what belongs to them. I am certain that they are peaceful and helped by your family.

It would be better to change the word *I declare to want* into *I want, I intend* etc.; but enough of this now.

Pray for me; every evening I recommend you to our Consolata, so that she may obtain for you the spirit of St. Francis X[avier], very aff. in O. L. J. C.

◀ 73 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 749)

To the theologian Antonio Borda-Bossana

Torino, 17 November 1907

Dear Theol. Borda,

From your letter the desire to come back to Italy as soon as possible appears clearly. I will write about it to the R. Superior T. Perlo so that he may arrange for it when possible and convenient. In the meantime, when the five-year period expire, you renew your vows till your arrival in Torino, till we have a chance to speak about it. Try to behave as a true missionary till the end and to make less burdensome for the Institute your travelling expenses.

Desiring to re-embrace you, I pray to our Consolata to bless you during your journey. Very aff. in J. C.

◀ 74 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 759)

To the theologian Giovanni Battista Rolfo

J. M. J. Torino, 6 December 1907

Dearest Fr. Rolfo,

I have excellent news of you from Fr. Cagliero and from the Very Rev. Superior himself; and I thank the Lord for it.

After having made many sacrifices in order to respond to God's voice that was calling you to save the souls of the local unbelievers, it is certainly convenient to work at it with all of one's strength.

Your diaries and letters are exactly the way I desire them; and the young people of our Institute listened to them with enjoyment. Keep writing in the smallest possible details; they will be useful also for our magazine. I have good news of your family from your sister-in-law, and of your brother and sister from the Rector of the Racconigi's M. [mental hospital]: the good Lord takes care of all of them more than you could do.

I received the 2nd copy of your testament, and I will keep it till your return.

Coming to your confidences, after having prayed to our Consolata and our Venerable [Cafasso], I recommend to you to be peaceful about your past, to live *in Domino* day by day, imitating the B[lessed] Peter Chanel that I am giving you as a Protector for the year 1908.

I know that you are in good terms with Fr. Cagliero; in this way you will help one another in becoming saints and in doing all the good that the Lord wants of you.

As if you were present here, I bless you with all my fatherly heart; and you pray for Yours *in Domino,* very aff.

◀ 75 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 761)

To Fr. Carlo Saroglia

J. M. J. Torino, 6 December 1907

Dearest Fr. Saroglia,

The good news you have been sending throughout the year of your physical and spiritual health have greatly consoled me. Even in the midst of many rather material occupations, I see that you can clearly see God's will, and this should be sufficient for everything. It is with this spirit of obedience that you should go on, especially in our Missions.

Also your diaries are written well and gladden the confreres of our Institute... Keep going, my dear, in the right spirit of blind obedience, and in union with God, who lives in us and is present in your poor Chapels.

May the Lord bless you and our dear Consolata make you a saint, like the Blessed Peter Chanel. *In Domino*... very aff.

◀ 76 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IV, 769-772)

To the missionaries in Kenya

J. M. J. 24 December 1907

My dearest sons in O. L. Jesus Christ,

You will soon gather for your Holy Sp. Exercises and I, present with you in spirit, am inviting you to study the means most suitable for your sanctification and for the conversion of your people.

First you must think about your sanctification; therefore, I am warmly exhorting you to examine your life, from your last Exercises, or rather from your going to Africa until now. Each one of you should see whether during this time he has been progressing or regressing in regard to the virtues that are proper to a *Priest-Religious-Missionary*. I hope that all of you, penetrating into the innermost parts of your souls, will feel the witness of having done all that was possible to keep yourselves at the height of your vocation. However, it may happen that some of you may find out that, as the author of the *Imitation* ["Imitation of Christ"] says, "*meliores et puriores fuisse in initio, quam post multos annos professionis*" [they were better and purer in the beginning than after many years of profession] or, worse, if "*nunc pro magno videtur si quis fervoris partem posset retinere*" [now he may see as something great the fact of having kept part of his fervour] (Imit. I, 11).

The coming Exercises, undertaken with good will, will serve to shake up these last ones and bring them back to the original fervour, and to help the first ones to evermore sanctify themselves. To guide you in such an

important work, I kindly ask you to reflect with me on the fact that you are *priests*, *religious*, and *missionaries*.

You are *priests* and, as such, you must behave *sicut Dei ministri* [as God's ministers]. Have you retained the spirit of Priesthood and the fervour of the beautiful days of your H[oly] Ordination? If the conscience of someone should reproach him for having fallen into lukewarmness or worse, let him shake himself up and go back to *charitatem primam* [the original charity]. Here examine yourselves also in regard to your love for Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, to the way you celebrate the H. Mass and pray the Divine Office, etc.

As *religious*, you must strive for perfection. According to the common teaching of Saints and Theologians, this is a strict duty: a religious who is satisfied with an ordinary life and has renounced striving for perfection would be failing. Also, essential to the religious state are the three vows of *poverty*, *chastity*, and *obedience*.

Because of the *vow of poverty*, a religious is not the owner of what belongs to the Institute or to the missions: such are the Mass offerings and any other offering which, even if given to an individual, are given *intuitu* [in view] of the missions. The use of the goods that belong to the Institute is always subject to a permission from the Superior General, and limited to what is necessary; as a consequence, anyone who wastes or misappropriates them, and takes more than what is needed, is not acting according to the vow of poverty.

In regard to the vow of *chastity*, to which you are doubly bound as religious and as God's ministers, have you always used the means necessary to preserve this precious gem, that is great prudence in regard to your eyes, imagination, etc., and in dealing with the local people?

I am not talking to you about the vow of *obedience*, for which I propose to you again the beautiful letter of St. Ignatius, on which you should always model yourselves. Examine yourselves also in regard to the general rules and the particular directives fixed for the individual mission stations. Do you observe the timetable for the various prayers and all the other actions of a day, from promptly getting up in the morning at the fixed time until going to rest in the evening at the fixed time, and observing the silence after 9.30 p.m.? I realized that someone sends and receives letters without the Superiors' knowledge: this is against the rules.

Furthermore, you are *missionaries*, which means apostles full of zeal for the salvation of souls. How great was and is your thirst for souls, so as to totally sacrifice yourselves day and night, like St. Paul and St. Francis Xavier? A sign of this zeal is the studying of the local language, not superficially and sporadically, but deeply and perseveringly, in order to come to know well the wrong ideas of your people and correct them, thus catechizing them efficaciously. To this purpose, I insist that your Superior should fix some periodical examinations.

Coming to the most suitable means of the conversion of your people, besides what is stated above, I consider very important and indeed

necessary the work of the catechists. All of you should be committed to cooperate in their formation, by preparing them by means of some study and special care in the mission stations before sending them to their School. And, when they come back, you should love them by making them live like a family, instructing them by means of daily talks, making them enthusiastic about their work, and making them accustomed to the evening report, so that you may be aware of what is happening in your area, in regard to the children, the sick people, etc.; make good use of them, and do not neglect them, nor make them waste time on other duties or works.

In a word, concentrate your best care on them, so that they may live as sober, pious and intent on their work. You know how much the catechists cost us, since we have to pay them also during the time they spend at their School; therefore, let's make the best possible use of them. It is a fact, which I can see from your quarterly reports, that the stations that are doing well and *produce* are those where the catechists are doing well and work; through them it is as if the missionaries were multiplied.

Now it is already time to *initiate* the local people into Christian life; make sure, therefore, that some families, especially those of the catechists, live according to the Christian laws and practices. On feast-days, more than being concerned about the number of people coming to the stations, be concerned about their constancy and willingness to learn; and you satisfy this desire and willingness, by making them understand in a practical way that this and nothing else is the purpose of your living among them. Where possible, you should also add some kind of "*oratorio*" [place for meeting, recreation, prayer, etc.] for young people.

All those present should always be invited to go to the church for some prayer, so that they may understand the meaning of our Feasts, and so that the good Jesus may bless and make fruitful the seed you spread over their souls. I am not talking to you about your regular visits to the villages, which in some reports appear rather rare to me. In order to obtain the best fruit from them, a unity of direction is necessary; therefore, every evening all the members of a station, missionaries, Sisters, and catechists, should give an account to the station's superior of what they have done during the day and, together with him and under his direction, plan for what they will do the next day. In this way, the visits will not be simple walks, and the sick people and the most needy villages will not be neglected.

I am uncertain about insisting once again on the obligation, which our Rules impose on you, to write your diaries well. While some of you continue to do it diligently, most of you neglect it, or write them in such a way that they are totally no good for publication. I am only telling you that, in such a way, we will gradually remain without matter for our magazine and, consequently, see the main source of the people's offering dry out. Do it also so that I am not compelled to require your dear Superior to be busy so much and almost only with writing articles. For the time being I am not adding anything else, as it seems to me that I have told you what is most necessary at the present time.

May the Lord grant you that peace which he is coming to bring in these days [Christmastime] to people of good will, as I am sure all of you are.

Pray for us and for our benefactors, who rely so much on our prayers. We continually pray for you to our Heavenly Patroness and entreat her to bless you and your toiling. In the Lord, very aff.

◀ 77 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 40)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

Torino, after the 5th March 1908

My dearest Fr. Gays,

Your long letter brought me great consolation. Keep writing to me often and at length, and also detailed reports for our magazine.

May the M. H. Consolata bless you and sanctify you.

In Domino, very aff.

◀ 78 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 41)

To Brother Benedetto Falda

J. M. J. Torino, 6 March 1908

Dear Benedetto,

I like your sincerity and openness. I, too, speak to you frankly as a father.

It seems to me that the present needs of the Mission demand that you delay by some months your coming to Italy; in this way you could be replaced by some Brothers-mechanics who are being prepared at the Institute.

It is true that before God nobody is necessary, and the Mission could go ahead also without you. However, think that, although you are a man and a religious, you are quite soft-hearted, and the land and the blood could make you lose the vocation God gave you, and the Lord is not obliged to sustain in the fight those who trust too much in their own strength. I wouldn't like to see you later regret a wrong decision, over which others have already cried.

Be a *man* then, and rely on the dispositions of the Very Rev. Fr. Perlo; instead of taking perpetual vows, renew them only till the time you will se me in Torino; that's what Fr. Gays did.

Your brother Luigi is working for a pipe-organs' manufacturer, Vegezzi-Bossi, and earns a fairly good salary. Without undergoing the second visit, he obtained the total exemption from military service. *Deo gratias* [Thanks be to God]! He is always desiring to come back to the missions, and he often

asks me for it. I encourage him to be good and to continue working till the Lord will make Himself better heard.

May our Consolata bless you and you pray for your very aff. in J. C.

◀ 79 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 64)

To the missionaries in Kenya

Torino, 15 May 1908

My dear Missionaries,

In order to provide you with an ordered and complete set of books that you may be needing in your life as missionaries, I would need to have a general list of all the books that you already have there.

I wish, therefore, that each one of you prepare a complete list of the books which belong to the Institute that are in his possession. I mean all the books that you received, even individually, from me or from somebody else, during your staying here in Torino and at the time of your departure for Africa.

I would also be grateful if each one of you could also send me a list of his personal books, as this will help me in providing the set of books mentioned above.

May the M. H. Consolata bless all of you as I pray for you your very aff.

◀ 80 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 80)

To the theologian Mario Arese
and to Brother Benedetto Falda

J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 15 July 1908

My dearest,

While desiring to hug you soon, I think it important to give you the following counsels.

1. In our Institute preserve an edifying behaviour, remembering that all our young students will be looking at you in order to know what kind of people the Consolata missionaries are. Your talk should be pious and without giving any judgement about your confreres in Africa.

Participate in the community practices steadily, especially in the prayers.

2. If I am absent, ask the Rev. V. Rector when and how you can visit your relatives and, when you leave, inform the Rev. Prefect.

During your staying in Piedmont: 1) You must not speak about confidential matters regarding the missions and not judge and criticize missionaries or Sisters. 2) You should not write letters to Africa without

passing through me. 3) Any offering you receive, be it money or objects, except what you receive from your relatives, should be given to me as something given for the Mission.

Place yourself immediately under the protection of our Consolata in Her dear Shrine. I'll be seeing you soon…

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 81 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 83)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

J. M. J. Torino, 20 July 1908

Dear Fr. Gays,

I have seen and have been happy to read various letters that you wrote to several people in regard to Baptisms. Continue this important apostolate and we, as soon as we receive copies of them, will print the more detailed and moving ones.

We received good news about you from Fr. Arese and Br. Benedetto, and I thank the Lord for it. Continue to work for the good of souls, and write also to me who greatly desire to be in touch with you.

Best regards to everyone… very aff. in J. C.

◀ 82 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 88)

To the seminarian Lorenzo Sales

St. Ignatius over Lanzo, after 30 July 1908

I answer: I am not astonished to know that the devil is raving. This is no proof against your vocation. Be at peace and you will win the trial; just do what St. Augustine used to do in similar temptations: "*Cum me pulsat aliqua turpis cogitatio recurro ad vulnera Christi: tuta requies in vulneribus Salvatoris* [When some bad thought bothers me I turn to the wounds of Christ: (there is) sure rest in the wounds of the Saviour]". Now and then place the whole of yourself in the S. Heart of Jesus, and then be at peace; what happened is no longer a sin. Keep going…

I send you my Holy Blessing.

◀ 83 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 90-91)

To Brother Benedetto Falda

Hurray J. M. J. St Ignatius', 23 August 1908

My dear Benedetto,

You will understand that my sorrow for not having seen and embraced you before your departure for Africa is at least equal to your own. I would have liked to be with you in private conversation at St. Ignatius'. But *fiat voluntas Dei* [God's will be done]. What we could not tell one another face to face we shall do by means of letters; I will write to you before you depart [he was in France with the Salesians], and then, when you are back in Africa, we shall resume the usual exchange of letters. With time you will certainly return to Torino, at the very least when you will be 39 year old [the failure to report for military conscription will have expired]. Perhaps at that time I might not be alive any longer, and will be in Paradise; but you know that we shall be all together for ever with our dear Mother.

As a companion on your journey to Africa, I will send the good Fr. Morino, and our prayers will accompany you. The Rev. V. Rector will send you what you desire: what you left at St. Ignatius' and in Torino, the desired accordion, etc.

Be sure that I will continue to watch over the dear Luigi and Celeste [a former Brother and brother] and I will see that they live as good Christians. Last Thursday, your mother came to see me at the Consolata Shrine and did not show to have anything against you. The Lord allowed those misunderstandings so that your departure would not be too hard for you and you would become ever more fond of the missions. In Paradise we shall see one another in holy harmony.

I have already spoken with the Deputy Marquis of Saluzzo, who will take care of speaking to the Minister Tittoni about our affairs [the military conscription], and he feels sure that he will fix everything in our favour.

For the time being, don't write to anybody about the reason for your staying in Marseille and for your hurried departure for Africa; within a few days I shall let you know in which way you may announce this to those you desired to write.

Be joyful in the Lord, who prepares for you many graces as a compensation for your sacrifices; and consider yourself happy to be able to suffer something out of love for God, so that you will be able to say like St. Paul: *now I begin to be a true disciple of O. L. Jesus Christ*.

Many other good wishes in the Lord... very aff. in J. C.

◀ 84 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 94-95)

To Brother Benedetto Falda

Hurray J. M. J. Torino, 2 September 1908

Dearest Benedetto,

I see that you are generous, not only in making the sacrifice of not seeing your Country again, but also in your resolution to become a holy Missionary: *Deo gratias*. Truly, in order to enjoy peace of heart in this miserable life, we must be resolute and give the whole of ourselves to God, without any reserve. Be pious, humble, obedient and kind to all people, and you will enjoy an anticipated Paradise. I am not surprised at your temporary temptation of discouragement; you still have some "world" in your heart.

By God's grace it will disappear, and you will become a missionary of good spirit; which means living not only in order to work, but also in order to do good to the local people, and above all try to convert them by means of your good example and your prayers. Our Mission will proceed and prosper, because it is a work of God and of the M. H. Mary Consolata. Men will pass, with more or less merit according to their spirit; some leaves may also fall, but the tree, blessed by the H. Father, will prosper and become gigantic; I have marvellous proofs of this in my hands.

Fortunate are those who resist temptation and persevere; they will see splendid results. You are blessed, because you are the first Brother to take perpetual vows: you will be at the head of a large group of holy Brothers in Heaven, and up there you will have to thank also me who did not fail to correct you. For the time being, renew your temporary vows till the R. Superior Fr. Perlo, to whom I will write, will make you take solemnly your perpetual vows. Since now your desire to take them is already a credit for you. You may send the portraits to whomever you feel like, and send them also to me so that I may see you and embrace you, as if we were present to one another.

While giving your letters to your mother, I notice that she keeps loving you; she was not wondering at the fact that you were not returning, indeed she told me that she was already imagining it; I told her about the real reason, the conscription, and she was satisfied. She will write to you a nice letter. Yesterday your brother Luigi came here and said that you were lucky; he is resigned to not seeing you again, so that you may not be unhappy, like he is, for having lost his vocation, something that he still regrets. I encouraged him to continue being good and to keep going along the new way he has undertaken.

Next Sunday, at St. Ignatius, we shall have a simple ceremony for the departure of good Fr. Morino, and I will give your letter to the young men. You will be present in spirit and will also receive my fatherly Blessing.

I will write to you again when your confrere will come there; in the meantime, since now, I recommend to you to guide and help him in a

brotherly way; he is very good but a bit shy; however, he is happy that he has been chosen to depart.

Therefore, courage in the Lord, and consecrate yourself in front of Our Lady of the Guard [near Marseilles in France] as if you were in front of our Consolata.

I bless you wholeheartedly... very aff. in J. C.

◀ 85 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 97)

To Brother Benedetto Falda

Hurray J. M. J. Torino, 7 September 1908

Dearest Benedetto,

Yesterday, on my return from St. Ignatius', I received your letter: it was the fulfilment of the joy I felt up there on a beautiful day. Somebody else will reply to your nice letter to your confreres, and the dear Fr. Morino will tell you everything else.

Therefore, courage in the Lord and have a safe journey to our Missions, where you will enrich yourself with many merits for Paradise. Happy are you who, having overcome the worldly miseries, are giving the whole of yourself to the *unum necessarium* [the one thing needful], without which all the rest *nihil prodest* [is of any use].

As I cannot send you other books, I am sending you one which, read and re-read, will be very good for you and will be a comfort to you in your apostolic life.

Go with Christian strength; be humble, kind, obedient and pious, and you will be happy also here on earth. Greetings to all... Be a good guide to your confrere... in J. M. J. very aff.

◀ 86 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 100-105)

To the missionaries in Kenya

Torino, 7 September 1908

My dearest ones in Jesus Christ,

I was pleased to hear from your very beloved Superior that your Spiritual Exercises were dictated with very solid doctrine and great piety, and that all of you participated in them with special zeal and in an edifying way. Thanks be to God, and may His grace see to it that the fruit you drew from the Exercises be long-lasting for your sanctification and the good of your people.

I have reasons to be consoled also by the results of your examinations in the S. Ceremonies and in the Kikuyu language; especially in regard to the language, I want to express my satisfaction to those missionaries and

Sisters who obtained the best marks both in theory and practice, and I hope that in the next examinations everybody may imitate them.

From the conclusions of your conferences, I am also pleased to see that you are ever more increasing your knowledge about the beliefs and customs of the local people, and improving the methods to follow in their evangelization. I approve the resolutions adopted at that time, as well as the prayers established for all. In regard to the explanations, you asked me through your Superior about rule No. 12 of chapter IV, p. 33, I answer as follows:

1. The word *confreres*, as on p. 29 and 35, must be understood as meaning both the Priests and the Brothers (this is how all the rules of other religious Institutes use it); therefore, everybody must write to me every three months.
2. The superior of every mission station certainly satisfies in part to the above with his quarterly reports, which are always sent to me promptly. However, this is not enough because, being at the head of a House, he has a very special responsibility for what is going on and, for this reason, must keep in touch at least every three months with the Superior General. Besides, I believe I would do you wrong by insisting on this because, more than an obligation, it should be a need of your heart to open up often to the one who loves you like a father and, on his side, feels the need to share in your joys and sorrows, and to offer you all the advice prompted by his experience and the grace of his office.

The excuse used by someone that, by writing often to me, one may generate in the confreres of the same station the suspicion of being relating things about other people, does not deserve an answer because, thinking that some confreres may be capable of such mean and childish suppositions, would do them wrong. The conclusions, therefore, is that everybody must observe this article of our rules and truly commit oneself to it, more than the way many have done in the past.

Another article of our rules which needs an explanation is No. 7, chapter I, concerning the personal goods of each one. About this, I say that are to be considered as such the goods previously owned and those that relatives give of their own and by reason of kinship. Therefore, the following *belong to the Institute* and not to the individuals:

1. All the offerings coming from non-relatives, even if given to an individual or with the explicit declaration that he should use them for himself or his mission: this declaration is invalid because it is against your vow of poverty.

2. What relatives give that is not their own, as simple executors of the generosity of other non-related people.

3. What relatives give for the general purpose of supporting missionary work.

These norms are valid for both money offerings and other donations. To this I am adding that the S. Congregation, questioned about the *use* of the goods which belong to an individual missionary, has declared that *for this* the permission of the Superior is still needed, because an authentic vow of poverty cannot be reconciled with the freedom to use goods. Therefore, in order to comply with this, missionaries should request such permission

from me or from Fr. F. Perlo, who will grant it only to single individuals and in conformity with the limitations established in this regard for the greater good of the missionaries, the community and the apostolic work.

Related to the above is the buying and sending of objects or products from there to relatives or acquaintances; in regard to this, in order to avoid the inconveniences of the past, I decided that from now on no missionary may send such objects either directly or through repatriating confreres or Sisters. I only permit that each missionary coming back to Italy may carry with him, with the approval of Fr. Perlo, a few small things, not bulky and, clearly understood, bought with personal money; from this it is certainly excluded anything forbidden to be exported by the British government, or forbidden to be imported by the Italian government. In this regard, allow me to add that I painfully realized that some people, both in collecting and sending such things, are more concerned with favouring relatives than the Institute's Museum, by sending to them the most interesting and rare objects.

In order to avoid confusion and other inconveniences which may take place with the increasing number of missionaries, after serious consideration and advice from competent people, I decided to establish that all missionaries, priests and brothers, when speaking to one another should use the "*lei*" [polite form]. This is what is done in all religious Orders and Congregations in which not even blood brothers and sisters use the "*tu"* [familiar form].

After the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament sing the "*Laudate Dominum omnes gentes*" [Praise the Lord all you peoples] as it is done in the Mother-House, for this Psalm is very appropriate for missionaries. The "*I adore you...*" should be recited only when leaving the Chapel.

I am sure that, in your good will and religious spirit, you will commit yourselves to observe what I have told you, thus assuring God's blessings on you, our Institute, and the dear people entrusted to us by Divine Providence.

In the Most Holy Names of Jesus and Mary I wholeheartedly bless you and am pleased to profess myself always as

Your very affectionate Father

Text *B*[5] (see "*Lettere*" V, Introduction, p. 100)

Circular Letter

1. There is too much talking; there is criticism; there is an inventing of things, in regard to the Institute, the rules, and the superiors. Perhaps clandestine letters. All of them must be submitted to the superior, Fr. Perlo.

2. Too much talking and concern about eating (overseas foods), drinking and clothing. *Habentes ... his contenti sumus* [Having (food and clothing), we

[5] The IMC General Archive also preserves two other autographed texts by Joseph Allamano (text *A* and Text *B*) and the final draft which was rewritten by the Founder. Text *A* is a simple outline; text *B* can be considered the first attempt at drafting. We publish Text *B*, as it contains elements, historically interesting, which were not incorporated in the final text.

shall be content] (see book Card. Vives). Consequently, grum blings about the store, and those who can take care of themselves. And the vow of poverty?

3. Our vow allows ownership of one's own goods and of those that come from close relatives (father, mother, brothers and sisters), and not from others, which should be regarded as given *intuitu missionis* [in favour of mission]. But even the personal ones must be used according to the vow of poverty, which requires the permission of the Sup(erior), Th. Perlo, who will not give it if it is for a different kind of food, clothing, or dainty things. So, any kind of food and drink received, even from one's family, must be for the community and used only as the Superior will allow; to do otherwise would be a failing in brotherly charity and an incentive to one's pride.

I consulted the S. Congregation about this, and they told me that it cannot be considered a true vow of poverty if there is no obligation of asking permission in order to use what is allowed as personal property; this is the way it is, in fact, with the Vincentian Fathers and the Sisters of Charity; therefore, so that our Rules may be approved by the Holy See, what we have about this (Rules, p. 16) must be explained as above, and they asked us to start observing the above rule already now.

4. In regard to our Rules, I know that there are rumours about their being changed some day by the H. See or otherwise. This is not true. The S. Congregation will certainly not change the aim, nature and essence of our Institute; therefore, our missionaries will always and only be dedicated to our missions and with the three religious vows. The revision and approval will be only in regard to accidental things, like prayers, practical matters, etc. If, by any chance, a change in the duration of vows should be introduced, requiring perpetual vows before going to Africa, this will bind only the future missionaries and not those already in the missions; these, as it has happened to the Verona missionaries, will be first consulted and let free to take perpetual vows immediately or at the end of the present five-years commitment.

For the priests as a patrimonial title, the oath "*serviendi perpetuo missionibus*" [to dedicate himself in perpetuity to missions] is required and this is clear in order not to be registered for a diocese. The bishops are not compelled to ordain for their diocese, according to the last decisions of the S. Congregation of Bishops and Regular, those who do not intend to remain in their diocese and also not to receive him back in case he wants to return. Anyhow, the missionaries are not supposed to be always in our Missions, but with permission from the S. Congregation, could go to other Missions. On the other hand, this would apply to people only with temporary vows and would not exists if there were perpetual vows before going to the Missions.

Anyway, for people of good spirit, and I think all of you are, the decisions and desires of the H. See will be pleasant and they will willingly submit to what the divine wisdom of the H. See will judge convenient for the good of our Institute and missions; that is what we profess in chapter I, article 5 of our Rules. This is what happened to the Salesians, the religious of St. Joseph, and all those who wanted to submit their Rules, as required and in

order to enjoy the many privileges, to the judgement and approval of the Holy See; for all of them there were amendments. But, as I already said, remain peaceful and trustful in God's dispositions, because they will always be for our greater good and the good of our labours.

5. Your superior has asked me on your behalf for an explanation of art. 12, p. 30 of our Rules. It seems clear to me that here all missionaries are included, even the superiors of mission stations, for whom there is greater need and convenience to be more frequently in touch also with the superior of Torino; this was our intention in formulating that rule, even if we could not foresee and express everything in a perfect way. The Rules of all Congregations were not published as perfect at the beginning; they were perfected by time and experience. As you know, I am not speaking as *Cicero pro domo sua* [speaker in favour of his home], because the short time the Lord will still leave me here on earth and the affection of all missionaries toward me do not need this rule in order to write frequently to me, as I vividly desire, in order to participate in your joys and sorrows and, when needed, to offer them the advice that my experience, enhanced by the divine position of being your father-superior, requires.

And, in this regard, I wouldn't want that somebody be prevented from writing to me often and at length by the fear that others might think or say that he is reporting things to the superiors about others. This would be bad spirit and also an insinuation against the superiors who receive and judge letters only for the good of the one who writes. Similarly nobody should think that I betray the secrets of what missionaries write; facts prove the opposite to them, and nobody so far could reasonably think about such a thing. You know well that at times I read your letters to your confreres in our Institute, but not all of them, and often only parts of them, and directly those things which, while they edify your confreres and make you and the missions alive to them, do not reveal any secret; you yourselves write letters to this purpose. I have never read, I repeat, anything confidential to them; indeed, I erase everything pertaining to conscience.

Concluding this painful matter, I invite you to greater simplicity by means of obedience and humility, because holy missionaries write for the good and edification of others, and are not afraid to appear defective; let St. Francis Xavier be your example with his many letters printed and spread throughout the whole world even when he was still alive.

◀ 87 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 137)

To the seminarian Maurizio Domenico Ferrero

J. M. J. Torino, 27 September 1908

My dearest in J. C.

Yesterday your Director, Fr. Airaldi, told me about the serious illness of your dear father. Now you are informing me about his passing to a better life. In this hard time let's admire the Divine Providence that led you on time to see him dying: your presence must have certainly helped him to prepare for that serious moment. This morning the priests, the seminarians and the Brothers received Holy Communion praying for the one we thought was only sick; from now on we shall pray for his eternal rest.

Encourage your good mother and yourself, too. The Lord has certainly taken into consideration the fact that he had offered you to the missions. Remain at home for the time you deem necessary for the consolation of your mother and for taking care of any other matter. Courage, then, *in Domino*, and I bless you. Very aff. in J. C.

◀ 88 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 144-145)

To the theologian Francesco Cagliero

J. M. J. Torino, 6 December 1908

Dearest Theologian,

I take the chance of the departure of three new confreres to send you a few words. I am happy about your being so regular in writing and in sending the financial accounts of the two mission stations; in this way I remain aware of the spiritual and material life of the stations. Certainly, you have to be patient with some grumblers although, thanks be to God, they seem to be decreasing in number; courage, by means of good ways, exhortations and preaching about the obligations of a good religious, gradually you will lead everybody to be good.

Writing to the seminarians of our House, Fr. Morino, reports a summary of a talk you gave about Benedetto: I liked the thoughts you expressed; continue to infuse into those depending on you and into any confrere you may meet that good spirit. I hope that Fr. Savio will receive a good formation under your guidance: he is a good man but, in some periods of the year, he must be tolerated and approached by way of the heart. In a special way make him understand that material work is a good missionary's kind of work. Another one who needs to understand this even more is Fr.

Balbo. We have always been insisting on this here in the House and will continue to insist on it.

I am not adding anything more, because you know what I think.

If you haven't yet taken your perpetual vows, I wish you for that time the fullness of God's grace and the precious gift of constancy and perseverance. Many good wishes *in Domino*... very aff. in J. M. J.

◀ 89 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 146-147)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

Torino, 6 December 1908

Dearest Fr. Gays,

I am very happy about the good news you gave me in regard to the new experiment you carried out in the formation of catechists. This is one of the most important works needed in order to stimulate the conversion of your dear people there. Take care of it wholeheartedly.

I am sending you a book about the Saints throughout the year, the only one I found that could be opportune: it is a remembrance of my youth. Together with it, I am sending you the Letters of St. Paul with the desired commentary. I was very happy, and together with me Mrs. De-Luca, for the acquisition of a God-child, the catechist Nguru; I received a dear letter from him expressing good sentiments. I hope I will be able to send to him a short letter and some gifts. May the Lord sustain him in his trials and strengthen him evermore: I will be praying for him.

You continue to write letters and reports about the catechists: we shall soon publish something about them on our magazine.

I recommend you to confirm in the good spirit all the confreres you will have a chance to meet, so that certain miseries, like grumblings, etc. may disappear and everybody may live a life of faith and sacrifice. May the Lord bless you and preserve you in good health for the good of our missions.

Many good wishes from the Rev. V. Rector, the Prefect, the superiors of the Consolata, and the whole of our Institute. In the Lord very aff.

◀ 90 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 149)

To Fr. Giovanni Balbo

Torino, before 7 December 1908

My dear in O. L. J. C.

Fr. Rosso had already written to you about that book written in German: we shall not buy it until the time it will be translated into Italian or English. With

the future group coming to Africa, I will send you the other book and the one that was given you by H. H. the Princess Clotilde; so also with the boxes, etc.

Continue during your free time to study and collect material [of natural history] for our Institute. Most of all persevere in the good spirit, taking care to advance every day more towards perfection, by means of which alone you will be able to convert other people's souls. Courage…

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 91 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 151)

To Fr. Giovanni Balbo

J. M. J. Torino, 7 December 1908

Dearest Fr. Balbo,

From the two letters of yours, it appears that you are always happy and joyful; and this is the way it should be with people who received so many graces from God. Keep going like this, taking care to be, in the hands of the superiors, an instrument of the good that the Lord requires of you and of any religious only through that means.

I am glad to know that during your free time you attend to Botany and the like, without neglecting the many spiritual and material works that obedience desires. The good Fr. Rosso will talk to you about the books you desired. The one on Geology could not be found, and the one in German is very expensive: a hundred and ten liras. I examined it in its three volumes, and I saw that the illustrations were scarce; it seems to me that it is not as useful as you think, and the buying of it not in conformity with our poverty. You will comply with my eventual decision.

I rejoice with you at the sacrifices performed on the occasion of night work done at the *Sega* [the sawmill], and at the fact that you attend with good spirit to it, in spite of some slight ailments. Believe me: there is greater merit in performing material work under obedience than any spiritual work freely chosen; due to this, I cannot hide my predilections for the Frs. Cagliero, Bellani, Saroglia, Savio, etc. If they, as well as you, would not perform such works, all the others would have to be involved in material work. I exhort you, therefore, to continue working with good spirit anywhere obedience would want you.

May the Lord bless you, as I pray to Him for it… very aff. in J. M. J.

◀ 92 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 152-153)

To Fr. Francesco Gamberutti

J. M. J. Torino, 7 December 1908

Dearest Fr. Gamberutti,

There is no need to tell you how much I enjoyed your letters, in which you tell me openly what you think. It is not necessary to go back to past miseries; from them we must draw reasons for humiliations and greater courage in responding to our holy vocation. The good God worked real miracles for you; be grateful to Him by a desire to become a true St. Francis Xavier...

Keep being an instrument of God's will in the hands of the superiors; and as they wanted you in such a place of responsibility [Limuru], do not desire another one, executing everything in accordance with their instructions, without any fear of what others may think, etc. Try to get Africanized, so as to be able to resist to any variety of climate, food, etc.

May the Lord bless you, as I wholeheartedly bless you, and with greetings from everybody else I leave you... very aff. in J. C.

◀ 93 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 154-155)

To the theologian Giovanni Battista Rolfo

J. M. J. Torino, 7 December 1908

My dearest Fr. Rolfo,

Your letters are always very pleasing to me, especially the last ones, in which I see how happy you are about your vocation and of one heart with the sentiments of your superiors. In one of these letters I see that you are sorry about a certain misery in regard to a confrere, and you feel guilty about it. See, my dear, when these things happen, don't worry too much but, once we acknowledge the fact and get reconciled, we should not be discouraged.

Our nature will die only when we do so; but from its excesses we must draw occasions for humbling ourselves and trusting more in God, who sometime may even give us the meekness of St. Francis of Sales. So don't be discouraged if sometimes you are more distracted, irascible, etc.; at that time tell the Lord: *vim patior, responde pro me* [I am suffering violence, respond to it on my behalf] and place yourself in the S. Heart of Jesus or in the H. Tabernacle: *tuta requies in visceribus Salvatoris* [sure rest in the heart of the Saviour].

In us *omnia cooperantur in bonum, etiam peccata* [everything cooperates in our good, even our sins], dice the Glossa [a book], because out of them we shall draw reasons for thinking about our meanness and abandoning ourselves to God. Courage, then, always *in Domino* and in the voice of

obedience. I know that the R. Superior likes you and, in order to make you gain merits, at times places you in difficult places; the good God will help you, even when you feel weak. Keep going; I pray for you every day, so that you may be a missionary of true spirit among your many occupations.

The R. Vice Rector and all the superiors here, as well as the whole of our Institute remember you with pleasure…

My full blessing at the feet of Our Lady Consolata. Very aff. in J. C.

P. S. I have good news about your relatives, also about your brother and sister of Racconigi, who are at peace: *Deo gratias*!

◀ 94 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 156)

To Brother Benedetto Falda

Hurray J. M. J. Torino, 8 December 1908

Dearest Benedetto,

You may certainly understand how much my fatherly heart exulted at hearing about your perpetual profession.

Our dear Fr. Morino sent me a detailed report, including also the main points of Fr. Cagliero's homily. Put into practice such a homily and you will be a model of all the Brothers who will come after you. The grace you received from God on that day will be a source of great glory for you in Paradise; try to respond to it by a fervent practice of the religious virtues.

With my blessing I intend to confirm you as the first Brother of our Institute.

Receive my congratulations, those of the Rev. V. Rector, of the Bursar, the Prefect, and the whole House. In the Lord, your very aff.

◀ 95 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 178)

To the theologian Giovanni Battista Rolfo

Torino, 19 January 1909

My dearest in O. L. J. C.

I will send you as "printed matter" what is mentioned in the above letter [of Can. L. Boccardo]. You and the others may have to abandon the membership in the Apostolic Union as well as in the Third Order of St. Francis, according to a decree that has just been issued. But I will write about this when the right time comes.

Courage: *infirma elegit Deus* [God chose what is weak]; our miseries will make God's goodness stand out better. Courage… very aff. in J. C.

◀ 96 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 198-199)

To the theologian Giovanni Battista Rolfo

J. M. J. Torino, 15 February 1909

Dear Fr. Rolfo,

Once again I recommend to you to be at peace, and not worry about defects. Certainly, there is something to suffer also morally; but have courage based on obedience, bearing all the crosses out of love for God. Away with pains and melancholies; we do all the good we can desiring to do even more... You may be sure about your vocation and keep going; the Lord *loves you* and will sanctify you and then reward you.

I am placing this note at the feet of Our Lady Consolata, so that she may make it work... God alone... God alone.

very aff. in J. M. J.

◀ 97 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 199-200)

To the seminarian Maurizio Domenico Ferrero

J. M. J. Torino, 20 February 1909

My dearest in O. L. J. C.

As an answer to your dear letter, I allow you to remain at home all the time necessary to settle the whole business. If something cannot be settled at this time, you may go home at another time. And about the seminarian Sciolla? His health? Be grateful to your Rev. Rector, Director and all the Superiors who are so good to the two of you.

In the Seminary be edifying, and do not force any other new vocation, also out of respect for the Superiors who are already quite favourable to us...

Give thanks also to my old companions: the Very Rev. Fr. Vachetta and Fr. Rovere and your worthy Director, and recommend me to their prayers. The two of you pray also to the Most Holy Virgin of your place[6] for our Missions and for me. In J. M. J. very aff.

Courage and best wishes to your good mother and family.

[6] *Regina Montis Regalis* (Queen of the Royal Mount) in the city of Mondovì, in Piedmont.

◀ 98 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 207-208)

To Fr. Giovanni Balbo

J. M. J. Torino, 29 March 1909

Dear Fr. Balbo,

Your last letter was certainly written at a bad time. I never expected from you certain expressions which, I hope, were written by mistake. Read my letter once again and you will see that it gives you no reason for replying as you did. You had asked for cardboard and I sent it to you; you asked for that particular book, and I told you that its cost was too high in comparison to its usefulness, and you reply that, if you had known it, you would have prepared that amount of money yourself. Wouldn't I be ready to pay for it if it were really convenient? It is normal to have the inner intention to obey, but to write bluntly *that you have started out of obedience and you now leave it out of obedience* is too hard. Similarly to say that, *not having had the book nor the required chemicals you feel that it is useless indeed a waste of time to study the soil,* is too absolute. I don't want you to go to extremes: either the whole or nothing. I overlook the other thing you mention about using your money for something else, giving them to your parents, etc.

As a conclusion, I have no problem if you, for the spiritual and material good of the mission you abandon *ad tempus* [temporarily] such studies, but not for the reasons you are giving. Anyway, as you were saying before your departure, such studies must be only accessory and restricted to the time for recreation or free from mission's works.

I hope you have understood me and that, as a good religious, you will submit *toto corde* [wholeheartedly] to the desires of your superiors who, as they did in the past, will make it easy for you to accomplish the good that the Lord wants of you. I don't know if in my letter I have told you not to inform your relatives about your little ailments in order not to alarm them, nor about your dispositions. I have spoken to you out of fatherly love, and you accept my writing wholeheartedly.

I bless you... very aff. in J. C.

◀ 99 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 221)

To the seminarian Lorenzo Sales

Torino, 17 April 1909

My dearest in J. C.

Under the protection of Blessed Joan of Arc go ahead with courage and ease: the M. H. Consolata will help you. At home, with your family, be

social, and go to the visit [for military conscription] without any fear. No matter what bothers you, despise it and don't examine yourself afterwards. Our Lady of St. John [venerated at Sommariva Bosco] will assist you.

Courage. You will leave today with your younger brother and come back on Thursday together with him. The Prefect will give you the money for the journey back and forth, and also for the journey to Alba; the money for your nbrother should be asked from Fr. Perlo.

My blessing... very aff.

◀ 100 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 259-260)

To the missionaries in Africa

J. M. J.

Torino, 31 August (*July*) 1909
Feast of St. Ignatius

My dearest sons in Jesus Christ,

With a heart full of the most vivid joy, I write to announce to you a remarkable grace which the M. H. Consolata has obtained for us from Our Lord for the good of our Missions and of our Institute.

Our Holy Father, Pius X, with three separate "Briefs", dated 12 and 15 of this month, has elevated our Mission of Kenya to the rank of Apostolic Vicariate, and entrusted it to our dear Fr. Filippo Perlo, conferring on him the title of Apostolic Vicar and Bishop of Maronia.

By means of such an act, the highest dignity and importance that a field of apostolate among non-believers may acquire has been conferred upon our Missions. And this only seven years after you entered those unexplored lands; and this happened on the past 28th June, the vigil of the feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, the precise day on which seven years earlier you reached Tuthu. The S. Congregation of Propaganda Fide, in plenary session, on that day unanimously decided to propose the two things to the approval of the Supreme Pontiff, who benignly approved the decisions of the Very Eminent Cardinals of Propaganda.

Among the common joy of our Institute and of the devotees of the Consolata, my first thought was for you, because your apostolic zeal and labours have obtained the best possible prize here on earth. In the past years you have been sowing among all kinds of toils and troubles; but now you see your hands full of sheaves of souls converted or close to the Faith.

The saying of the Psalm may, therefore, well be applied to you: "*Euntes ibant et flebant mittentes semina sua. Venientes autem cum exultationes portantes manipulos suos*" [They went forth weeping bearing seed for the sowing. They came back with shouts of joy bringing his sheaves with them]. And it is this good harvest, gathered in a short time, that moved the S. Congregation and the Em. Card. Gotti to skip the rank of Prefecture and grant us so early the one of Vicariate.

Thank Our Lord for this favour and, as it is done in the Mother-House, as soon as you receive this letter sing a solemn *Te Deum* with the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Then, omitting the prayers I had prescribed for you some time ago, for nine days recite in common, three times, the *Salve Regina* with the *Oremus pro gratiarum actione* [prayer of thanksgiving]. Later, you will start again reciting the *Veni Creator* [Come, Creator (Spirit)] with three times the *Ave Maria* [Hail, Mary] to implore the abundance of the episcopal graces upon the new Bishop, until the day of his Consecration, which, since we have already received permission, will take place shortly in our Shrine.

This act of predilection by the Holy See should be most of all an efficacious encouragement to persevere in your holy vocation and to devote yourselves with greater ardour and constancy to the work so manifestly blessed by God. But your work must be performed with the greatest purity of intention, so that it may be worthy of divine protection, as it is written, *protegam eum, quoniam cognovit Nomen Meum* [I will protect him, because he knows My Name].

At the feet of our dear Patroness, I wholeheartedly bless all of you, and entrust myself to your prayers. In J. M. and J. very aff.

◀ 101 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 293)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

Torino, 1 November 1909

Dear Fr. Costa,

This evening you will send to the “Consolatina” [the first Mother-House] a newly ordained Priest, or rather two of them, and the seminarians needed for a solemn Benediction at 4.30 p.m. They will return immediately after the celebration. You there begin praying the whole Rosary at 5.00 p.m., so that I will be able to be there for a simple Benediction. Allow the seminarian Sales and his brother to go out with their mother; tell them immediately.

Tomorrow at 9.00 a.m. you will send the seminarians, the young people and also some Brothers to the Funeral Mass at the *Consolatina*; they should be ready to sing a Requiem Mass, for instance, the one of the Gradual Book.

◀ 102 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 295)

To the Theologian Giovanni Battista Rolfo

J. M. J. Torino, 5 November 1909

Dearest Fr. Rolfo,

Your last letter brought me excellent news about your frame of mind and your health. Let’s thank the Lord for it and let’s enjoy peace, while getting

ready to put up with some future thorn in the life of this poor world of ours: *ostendam illi quanta oportet pro nomine meo pati* [I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name].

I see your good dispositions towards the future. It is also my opinion that you should bind yourself perpetually to our Institute. The Lord, who granted you the grace to do the most by detaching yourself from the world, will give you the grace to continue *usque ad mortem* [unto death] to sacrifice yourself for the holy work of saving souls.

Courage, then, and with my full consent, when Monsignor together with the good Fr. Bellani will be back, offer yourself perpetually to the Lord. If by any chance the five-year promises will come to an end, renew your temporary vows till the solemn day of your perpetual vows. As time goes by, you too may have a chance to come back to Italy, but let's leave this in God's hands.

I bless you wholeheartedly... very aff. in J. C.

◀ 103 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 298-299)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

Hurray Mary Immaculate Torino, 8 December 1909

Dearest Fr. Gays,

This year has been for us a time of grace and happiness. After the raising of our Mission to Apostolic Vicariate we had the opening if the new house of our Institute [the new Mother-House now in Corso Ferrucci], and then the consecration of our Monsignor [Episcopal Ordination of Bishop F. Perlo]. And the feasts did not stop there; the presence of our new Bishop among us is the object of many demonstrations of support for our Missions and the chance to come to know them better. This led to a delay in the very vivid desire of our Bishop to come back among you and, even if it were convenient to still hold him here, I will make a sacrifice for you and let him depart at the beginning of January together with the old and a number of new confreres.

I am not telling you to receive him with the greatest possible solemnity, because I know well how much you love and appreciate him; from now on He will be even more your guide and father. The best consolation for him will be to see each one of you in his own place intent on sanctifying himself and on evangelizing the local people.

As far as I am concerned, having stayed now with Monsignor for a long time, hearing from him the praises he always attributes to each one of you, especially of you my dear Fr. Gays, I increased, if it were possible, my affection for you and, at times, I wept out of consolation in coming to know the good spirit that is reining among you. Keep going, my dear ones, along this way, and

the M. H. Consolata will bless ever more your labours to the consolation of the H. Church and of the H. Father Pius X who loves all of you much.

Monsignor will tell you directly many consoling things about his staying in Italy. In the meantime I wish to thank you for your good wishes for the coming Christmas celebrations and for the new year; I reciprocate them wholeheartedly. For coming new year, I give you as a special protector Blessed Gabriel Perboire, and I propose to you to imitate him especially in his *total conformity with God's Holy Will*. The Saint exercised this virtue especially in the missions, as you will be able to read in the small book I will sent to you about his life. Read also and meditate the 8th treatise of the first part of the Exercise of Perfection by Rodriguez, where each one of you will find things to learn about this virtue.

May the Lord bless all of you, as well as the good Sisters; and you pray for your very aff. in J. C.

◀ 104 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 342)

To the seminarian Lorenzo Sales

uncertain date

My dearest in O. L. J. C.

Take courage; it is the devil who wants to disturb you; *in Corde Jesu* [in the Heart of Jesus] and that's enough. This evening I would have come there, but I couldn't, because of a meeting at the Archbishop's place.

Listen to me: continue to receive Communion trusting my word, as if you had gone to Confession, and do not think about anything else. Let obedience suffice. Tomorrow we shall meet.

My blessing, very aff.

◀ 105 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 343)

To the seminarian Lorenzo Sales

uncertain date

You must be humble, but not disheartened. God forgives and forgets; you make up by means of your fervour and virtue. Your Superiors like you; don't run away from them, and don't take amiss their words and deliberations. We don't have to die but to work according to the Superiors' will, which is God's will.

Courage... Keep going... I bless you.

◀ 106 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 362)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

Torino, 8 April 1910

V. R. Assistant,

The young man Antonio had been accepted only for a few days so that he may come to know the community and his spirit; but not to remain there yet. This was also done for Severino of St. Damiano and for Tomaso.

Therefore, instead of sending a letter to his home asking for things, let him go there tomorrow, Saturday; then we shall see. This is what we usually do; so let him return to his home, and then we shall write to him.

Many good wishes in the Lord, very aff.

◀ 107 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 363)

To the seminarian Domenico Spinello

Torino, 14 April 1910

Reverend Seminarian,

After considering your prudent behaviour and your Superiors' report, on behalf of Our Lady Consolata, I accept you into our Institute. You will wait till the end of the schoolyear, continuing to pray to the Lord, so that he may direct you to the vocation he has prepared for you since eternity.

If you have a chance to come to Torino, we will be able to better talk to one another, and also you could undergo the visit by our Doctor, as we usually do with everybody. Pray for me...

◀ 108 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 378)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 9 July 1910

Dearest Fr. Costa,

I have received your two letters, which are exactly the way I desired them: detailed and in conformity with the full truth of things.

I think we should be satisfied by the examinations' results; almost all of them seem to have done all they could; still some more effort and then will come the rest and cool weather of St. Ignatius'. Everybody should exhaust all his energy, then Our Lord will crown our works. However, make sure

that there is discretion. I am praying to St. Ignatius that he may grant us a lot of his spirit, as well as the one of His son, St. Francis Xavier.

Once the second course of Spiritual Exercises has begun, next Tuesday or Wednesday, I will return to Torino; in this way I will be able to see again my dear missionaries, without whom I feel *lost*. Pray for me and for the good result of the Sp. Exercises.

Many blessings. *In Domino,* very aff.

◀ 109 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 401)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. Torino, 29 August 1910

Dear Fr. Costa,

Tomorrow (30 Aug.) we shall send, by the 4.10 p.m. *train*, a large hamper of vegetables. Tell the Sister Superior to send the courier of the evening, after 5.30 p.m., to the station to receive it and carry it to St. Ignatius. It will be only one hamper, weighing no more than forty kilograms.

From now on, I will write when we will send something. Collect all the empty hampers, join them together and give them to the Lanzo courier, telling him to take them to the Consolata Shrine in Torino. Here we are out of hampers.

May the M. H. Consolata bless all of you and obtain for all of you a true religious and apostolic spirit. *In Domino,* very aff.

◀ 110 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 402-403)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. Torino, 4 September 1910

Dear Fr. Costa,

After my vivid expectation, your letter was very dear to me. I like every detail of what you wrote. I am happy to hear about the pilgrimage to the Marsaglia Shrine. Make sure, however, that, during long walks, the young men may not overstrain themselves and so lose what they gained during the holidays, and especially that, after sweating, they do not stand still across the drafts of cold air.

Tomorrow, at the usual time, I shall send some fruit that the Sister needs. When you will write to me, let me know if we have to send more or less vegetables, and continue doing it every other day.

Probably Wednesday morning the Brothers will come there and will stay there only till Friday evening. Vittorio will not be there: he asked to go home for

some problems about his hearing, something that he has been carrying along since he was younger. At home he will also study better his vocation, something about which both he and I have some doubts. Tell his brother about it.

Many good wishes and my fatherly blessing on everyone. Very aff. in J. C.

P. S. If you can, try in a nice way to prevent Fr. Borio from reading newspapers' articles to the young men there.

◀ 111 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 404-405)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. Torino, 5 September 1910

Dear Fr. Costa,

Just now I have received from Miss Agnesina Perlo your last letter, while this morning you should have received my last one in which I was telling you that this evening we would have sent some grapes.

For the time being, we shall not send any more vegetables till after the return of the Brothers.

These will come there on Wednesday morning and return on Friday evening. In this way, they will be with you for the great Feast [the Nativity of the B. V. Mary].

I am not repeating what I told you about Vittorio who, as he was leaving, told the Bursar that he was not returning till the completion of the period of military service. Tell his brother to be at peace; at the request of Vittorio, I have written to the parish priest of Bra; we shall talk about it on your return to Torino.

Take the seminarian Benedetto in a private place and, in a loving way, without mentioning about the harmonium, correct him in regard to his way of acting...; with the others, do what you can; let's pray...

I have no problem about working for that ball game, but you should find out if the Mayor's permission is necessary; find the correct information...

Fr. Dolza would like to know if you have received the basket sent on Saturday containing three Kg. of *destrina*[7]; so, this evening, you should have sent to collect the grapes.

Tell the Sister superior that, when the Brothers will come there, they will bring two rabbits, already slaughtered.

Many good wishes to all... very aff. in J. C.

[7] White substance used as glue.

(cf. LETTERE, V, 407-412)

To the missionaries in Kenya

J. M. J.

Torino, 2 October 1910
Feast of the Guardian Angels

My dearest Sons in J. C.,

It is time for me to answer your dearest joint letter, all full of holy joy and apostolic spirit.

You are right in saying that last year was a *golden year* for our Institute, because of the extraordinary graces the Lord granted us. No matter how much our dearest Mgr. Vicar might have told you, he certainly could not convey to you the whole reality; several times I had wished that all of you could have been with me in Rome and in Torino. You should have seen the Holy Father, all goodness and almost oblivious of his dignity, becoming concerned about the least details of our Institute and missions.

You should have heard him exclaiming, with tears in his eyes, that we were consoling the Church which, while losing many ungrateful children in Europe, was recompensed by the many fervent new-Christians in Africa.

The Very Em. Cardinals Gotti and Vives spoke in a similar way, as did the many people in Rome who have a special affection for us. In Torino, then, there was an ongoing feast around the new Bishop, beginning on the day of his Consecration until his departure which, for us, took place too soon.

We repeat, therefore, that the year 1909 was and will be the golden year for our Institute, together with the years of its foundation and of the establishment of Kenya as an independent Mission. But the greatest grace received last year is the official approval of our Institute and Constitutions, which established it on solid bases and elevated it to the dignity of a true Congregation, with all the rights proper to the Congregations officially approved by the Holy See.

It is the Lord who, in such a short time, in spite of our littleness, worked so many marvels: *a Domino factum est istud, et est mirabile in oculis nostris* [this is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes]. For so many favours, we must be grateful to God from Whom comes *omne datum optimum et omne donum perfectum* [every good endowment and every perfect gift]. Let us thank our dear Patroness, the M. H. Consolata, who deals with us as a true Mother and munificent Queen.

Next, our thanksgiving should be for the Holy Father and for our Superiors; and we should not forget the multitude of our friends and benefactors, who helped us so much to achieve these blessed results. Let us pray for them and offer for them to the Lord the merit of our apostolic labours. But we should not stop at this. You wrote to me that, conscious of the greatness of the many gifts received from the Holy Church, you felt animated to respond ever better to your sublime vocation. Your resolve is truly right.

The missionary vocation is a sublime vocation because it is the continuation of the Mission of O. L. Jesus Christ himself, of the one of the Apostles and of the saintly missionaries who preceded you. This vocation elevates you above the Christians, the religious and even the priests of our parishes, to whom it is not given to make God known and loved by many who otherwise could never have known and loved Him. To missionaries are proper in a special way the words of Our Lord: *Vos estis qui permansistis mecum in tentationibus meis; et ego dispono vobis... regnum... ut sedeatis super thronos...* [You are those who have persevered with me in my trials; and I assign to you... a kingdom... that you may sit on thrones...]. What a consoling promise and what a reward!

How can we respond to such a sublime vocation? Meditate upon and put into practice what is written in the first chapter of our Constitutions: to have as our first goal our own sanctification and, secondly, the evangelization of non-believers. Whoever gives himself entirely to the works of Mission but neglects prayer, the practice of virtues, and the observance of the holy vows and Constitutions is greatly mistaken. Although the Lord promised to be with the Apostles all days, even to the end of time, he grants special assistance only to those who are united with Him in mind and heart.

Only those who live in O. L. Jesus Christ, as St. Paul did, will be able to repeat his words: *Omnia possum in Eo qui me confortat* [I can do all things in Him who strengthens me]. This union with God will make us seek his glory alone and practically acknowledge that it is God himself who works every good through us; and then the Lord will not set limits to the graces He grants for our sanctification and the conversion of non-believers.

With these dispositions give yourselves *toto corde et omnibus viris* [with all your heart and all your strength] to the work of evangelization. It is for this special goal that, in order to become saints, you chose the missionary way, and chose our Congregation in preference to many other Congregations that attend to other ministries.

But, so that your work may obtain the desired fruit, it must have three characteristic qualities: it must be *persevering*, *united* and *enlightened*.

Not one who begins well, but one who perseveres with constancy will receive the fruit of his labours; and only one who perseveres to the very end will receive the prize of the Apostles. May it never happen, therefore, that any of you, after having arduously worked, because of some opposition or malaise, would become cold or lukewarm and, almost regretting the choice of his vocation, would long for what he once generously renounced out of love for God and souls. You are not among those who desire to return quickly to their Country, but you rather dread receiving the command to return here, in your great desire not to lose any part of the time destined for saving souls. However, I judge it useful to mention what Fr. Joaquim Llevaneras, Procurator of the Capuchins' Missions, wrote in this regard: "Missionaries who are continually devoured by an ardent zeal for the salvation of souls; who are apostolically denying flesh and blood; in other

words, missionaries very attached *pro Deo and propter Deum* [for God and because of God] to the Missions, stay willingly in their new Country, nearer to the heavenly Country, and love the local people as new fellow-citizens, new brothers and sisters, indeed as very beloved children.

ll such missionaries, imitating the apostolic perseverance, never depart, nor desire to depart from their mission places, unless they are compelled to do so by a command of holy obedience; it is pleasant for them to remain there until death and, so to have, among their fellow-citizens and spiritual children, an apostolic grave: *ex quo defuncti adhuc loquantur* [from which, even if dead, they still speak]".

Another characteristic quality of missionary work is unity. Unity of mind and heart makes light the toil, gives strength and obtains victory. Woe to the missionary who tenaciously adhere to his own judgement and is not capable of renouncing his own view and cordially accept those of the majority of his companions and, above all, those of his superiors. He will labour in vain and perhaps even destroy the good performed by others. A false esteem of self and of his own knowledge leads such a person to believe that he sees matters better and that he has more zeal than his confreres, who, however, having greater knowledge of places and persons, proceed with greater prudence and produce authentic fruit and lasting good. Work united, and God will bless your common labours.

I come now to the third characteristic of your work, which I call enlightened, and which refers to the method to follow. The decree of official approval of our Institute by the Holy See, the attestations of the S. Propaganda, and the words of the Pope himself proclaim the method of our apostolate. You must make industrious people out of the natives, so that you may later make them Christians; they will love a Religion that, besides offering them the promises of a future life, makes them happier on this earth as well.

In the past, some people happened to criticize our method of apostolate, as if we were too involved in material things to the detriment of the spiritual good; it was said that we should preach and baptize and not get involved in anything else. But, after the publication of the decree of official approval and the talks by our Monsignor and by Fr. Gabriele, people changed their mind, and many in good faith confessed it. Let our example be the renowned Fr. Ricci, of the Society of Jesus, who, in order to enter China and, there, gain credit for himself and other missionaries so as to open the way of conversion for those people, started teaching mathematical sciences, making geographical globes and sundials: this gained him esteem and consideration, and eventually belief in what he was teaching about the Christian faith.

To those who, in Europe, were criticizing him as if he were wasting time, he used to say, "*For me this matter is more worth than having made ten thousand Christians*". And in fact, even if during his life only two thousand

people were baptized, God's word reached millions of non-Christians and, only a few years after his death, there were already forty thousand Christians.

But, why am I telling these things to you who willingly spend months and years in a saw-mill or in a farm, without getting tired of it, indeed being happy and sure that this is your best apostolate? You understand well that, as of now, a real preaching would be useless, that the word of God must be sown in a plainer and almost casual way, during your work and with frequent catechizing. In the meantime, your *Kerera* (catechism) spreads through the villages, and you will find that, slowly-slowly, the truths of our holy Religion will penetrate through all those people and, through God's grace, they will be ready for Baptism. This is the method for the conversion of the whole wonderful Vicariate of Kenya.

I conclude by congratulating you on your excellent willingness to become and remain worthy missionaries. This is the greatest desired reward that I and our dear Vice-Superior are expecting from all our care. May the Lord confirm the good resolutions you made during your Spiritual Exercises and, through His grace, make them efficacious. In so doing, the M. H. Consolata will continue to bless your labours and will raise new aspirants for our Mother-House to come to your help, and a continuous number of benefactors to meet the high expenses of our present Mission and of others which Divine Providence will want to entrust to our Institute in the future.

The charity of O. L. Jesus Christ may always be with our worthy Apostolic Vicar, with all of you, priests and Brothers, with the good Sisters, the new Christians and neophytes, and with the whole Mission of Kenya.

Very aff. in J. M. J.

P. S. While wishing you all kinds of blessings for the year 1911, I propose as our special patron for the year Blessed Antonio Neyrot, through whose intercession we will strive to develop the holy virtue of *Humility*.

◀ 113 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 459)

To the theologian Roberto Bertagna

Torino, beginning of January 1911

Dear Theologian,

I cannot understand the first two pages of your letter. The idea of asking you such questions never crossed my mind. If you have talked to others about it, you tell me you did it *confidentially*; they never told me anything, if they ever understood you.

If you were asking me for advice, I could examine you better, in order to evaluate the situation. But you tell me right away that *you did not take perpetual vows according to the rules, and now you do not feel like*

renewing them. What can I tell you except bowing to your absolute decision? When the Rev. Vice-Superior will come there, he will fix the date of your return to Italy. In the meantime, remember that you are obliged not to mention the problem to anybody, except to Monsignor, and you must continue to observe your vows till your return to Torino.

I do not feel like writing anything else, but I pray to our Consolata to bless you. *In Domino,* very aff.

◀ 114 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 613-614)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 4 July 1911

Dear Fr. Costa,

I have received this morning your dearest letter, and I thank you for the good and *detailed* news you give me.

Certainly, my heart is with you and my mind would always like to think of our dear Institute; but I, too, have to make the Spiritual Exercises, and think about my soul; for this reason, I offer every thought of mine to St. Ignatius, who will make up abundantly by means of his graces for what I don't want to do. Also, some trust in the Divine Providence of Ven. Cottolengo.

I was glad to hear that the Friday Practice an the Monthly Retreat are going well. I hope for a lot of good spirit from these practices well done!

So I was glad to hear about the examinations. If you can, feel free to go to the Brothers for the distributions of the awards.

I would be happy if you would give the priest-confessors some soft drink with cool water (no ice) or wine. Should we introduce the habit of coffee for all the Fridays of the year? I wouldn't. As an exception you may ask each one, time by time, if they desire a drink because of the warm weather. I am sorry about the recall [to the army] of the seminarian Casa; it will be a test for a vocation that for me was not quite certain.

The Rev. Fr. Giaccardi, while thanking for the offering received, is asking, if possible, to anticipate his examinations, because he might have to go to Lourdes on the 3rd of August. Try to satisfy him.

The seminarian Marengo wrote to me, sending also a letter of Th. Mascarelli, the Dir. of the Seminary, in which, on behalf of the Cardinal, he refuses to admit him into the Seminary. I answered telling him to remember the sentiments he had when he left our Institute and to do what he would like to have done at the moment of his death.

Today our dear Bursar is probably gone to Caramagna; when he comes back give him my warm greetings.

My blessing on all my dear sons, on whose prayers and little sacrifices for the cordial observance of their duties, I will rely for the good result of these Spiritual Exercises for the 80 priests of this turn.
In Corde SS. Jesu [the Most Holy Heart of Jesus]. Very aff.

◀ 115 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 634-635)

To the missionaries in Kenya

25 July 1911

(Letter accompanying the "Booklet of Ceremonies")

My dearest Missionaries,

I am presenting to you some notes about the S. Ceremonies, which I recommend to your serious consideration. They are fruit of a long experience, extracts from the Rubrics and from the decisions of the S. C. of Rites, and from the best authors.

You are well aware of the importance given by Our Lord in the Old Law to the S. Ceremonies, and how much they were recommended. In chapter 8 of Deuteronomy we read, "*Observa, et cave ne negligas mandata Domini et caeremonias, quae precipio tibi*" [Observe, and see that you do not neglect the Lord's commandaments and ceremonies, which I enjoin to you this day]. And in chapter 11 the observance of ceremonies comes even before the divine commandments themselves: *videte ut impleatis caeremonias atque iudicia* [see to it that you fulfill the ceremonies and the ordinances].

In the New Law, the Holy Church, inspired by God, always took the greatest care of the S. Rites and, to this purpose, it established a Congregation for any decision in regard to them. Meditate the words of the Holy Council of Trent, at Session XXII: "*Quanta cura...*" [How much care...].

One more comment. All Orders and religious Congregations at their beginning and at times of fervour were always observant of the S. Ceremonies. Their practice decreased when they declined, and perhaps they declined for the very reason of having neglected the S. Ceremonies.

All of you, therefore, sacrificing your individual judgement, in common uniformity must perform and teach your new Christians the proposed Ceremonies with precision and a spirit of faith, both internal and external. So, the Lord will be able to say about us, "*sanctificabor in eis qui appropinquant mihi, et in conspectu omnis populi glorificabor*" [I will show myself holy among those who are near me, and before all the people I will be glorified].

May the Lord bless you, as I wholeheartedly pray to Him to do, very aff.

◀ 116 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 678)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J St. Ignatius', 17 August 1911

Dear Fr. Costa,

Our dear Brothers and the three aspirants are coming back to you, restored in their bodies and animated in their spirit. I recommended to them as a special sign of vocation *activity in their works*.

Let Mario go home for the whole day tomorrow. Giovanni will go on Monday for a few days.

I will be the last one to come back tomorrow evening together with Carlo, whom probably I will keep at the Consolata Shrine. If you will come to me on Saturday, morning or evening, we shall talk about various things.

Many good wishes *in Domino*, very aff. in J. C.

◀ 117 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 680)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. Torino, 25 August 1911

Dear Fr. Costa,

I am glad to hear the good news about the seminarian Cagnolo and of the improvement of Garrone. For this one continues the necessary treatment, making sure that he walks as much as possible.

I hope that yesterday you had some rain, as we did here, where we had a lot of it; and today the weather will be nice as it is in Torino.

This evening, at 5.45 p.m., I will sent to the station, according to what Fr. Borio wrote; I doubt there will be some mushrooms already; anyway if tomorrow, Saturday, there will be some, send them by means of the Courier.

See that, in order to collect mushrooms, there should not be a waste of time, and the meadows would not be spoiled, with complaints from the local people.

The seminarian Maletto is feeling better, but he must still remain in Torino, in order to see the doctor. As soon as the Novena [to obtain the rain] is over, the Blessed Sacrament should be brought back to the main altar. I don't know when I will be able to come back to St. Ignatius'; I hope I will. Tell Fr. Borio that I received the letter for the Cardinal; the Th. Gunetti will type it out.

Many good wishes to all of you together with the blessing of our dear Consolata.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 118 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, V, 762)

To the priests Umberto Costa and Luigi Perlo

J. M. J. Roma, 13 December 1911

Dearest Fr. Costa and Fr. Perlo,

By now we are at the end of our mission. We arrived at Roma one and a half hour late, on Sunday the first thing we did was to go to St. Peter [Basilica], where I prayed for many things... Then I visited Mgr. Bonzano, the Theol. Barlassina, and Mgr. Virili, the postulator of the cause of our Venerable [Cafasso]. On Monday I visited Card. Gotti who entertained me very affably for a long time.

On Tuesday we took the Process[8] to the S. Congregation of Rites, re-visited St. Peter and applied for an audience with the H. Father. On Wednesday we visited the Secretary of Propaganda, Mgr. Laurenti, who likes us very much. Tomorrow we shall have the audience with the H. Father at 11.30 am. Today we re-visited Mgr. Martinelli, Secretary of the Congregation of Rites, Card. Vives, Mgr. Verde and Mgr. Mariani.

I am well; I hope to complete everything by Friday, in order to return to Torino on Saturday evening.

Pray for me and for this coming of mine to Roma that it may be for God's glory and for your good as well as mine. The time of my absence from our dear Institute and from those who are making their Spiritual Exercises seems quite long to me. Give my news also to the Consolata Sisters.
Many good wishes *in Domino*... very aff.

◀ 119 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 40-41)

To Fr. Giovanni Balbo

J. M. J Torino, 15 January 1912

Dear Fr. Balbo,

You are writing telling me that for some time now you have been waiting a judgement of mine about your behaviour and your future.

In regard to the first thing, you have your direct Superior, the Monsignor, who has probably told you what he told me that he is content with you; and the proof of this is the fact that he let you at the head of a station for a long time, and now he has chosen you to found the new station of Meru. Also the Rev. Vice-Rector wrote good things to me about you.

[8] The material for the Process of Cafasso' Beatification.

In regard to the future, it would have been better if you had not written to your relatives asking to advise about this; they were quite worried about your letter and told me openly that they felt that they should not get involved in this. In this regard, advice should be asked of competent people and of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

I am now replying to the two objections of yours.

1. I have always been happy about the fact that you should secondarily be involved in studying botany; for this reason, I sent you that German book and what else you asked of me. It is true that up to now nothing has appeared in our magazine; but whose fault, is it? Of Prof. Negri, who failed to do what he had promised and now does not let himself be contacted any more by Fr. Costa, who is claiming back the herbarium.

After coming there, the Rev. Vice-Rector has already written to me, praising your work and promising to publish them soon. Therefore, the first objection has vanished.

The second objection is about the changing of place. Truly you have been a very long time in the same station, therefore this matter should not affect you. However, be humble and submit to the voice of obedience that feels differently. The Jesuits change place often, also in order no to get too attached to certain posts, even if it means decreasing somehow some particular good. When the general good demands it, we must have the obedience of *mind*, and not judge the one who is placed by God to direct things. If the Superior makes some exception to the rule, this is only for the greater good.

It seems to me that I have replied to you the way you had desired. Take courage, pray and think about the heavenly reward in Paradise, set aside for truly persevering missionaries.

May the M. H. Consolata bless you together with the other missionaries who are with you at Meru. We pray that the seed you are sowing there may bring abundant fruit; you are like the favourites of

very aff. yours in J. C.

◀ 120 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 77)

To Fr. Carlo Saroglia

J. M. J. 14 February 1912

Dearest Fr. Saroglia,

As a matter of principle, you must remember that you are there by God's will and that the missionaries are moved often following my directives. Perhaps there may be small signs that can make you think that such moves are due to a diminution of trust in you by your Superiors; but it is not so; don't dwell on such things; but, as you write to me, send those thoughts

away. Limuru is certainly a place of special importance, and you shall have to study some languages, but the Lord will help you and you will succeed. It will be a chance for me, as it is now, to write to you often, and you will thus feel closer to the Superiors.

Courage, then, and receive the dear people who are coming to you today; they are two good Brothers: comfort them and animate them spiritually.

So that you know, I am giving Fr. Bianciotti 400 golden Liras and 4 Sterling; all this for their journey: he will give an account of this to you or to Monsignor. Courage, I repeat; and remember that I love you, also because, due to your perpetual vows, now you are my son forever. Write to me often.

very aff.

◀ 121 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 95)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J Rivoli, 10 March 1912

Dearest Fr. Costa,

The good news about our dear Institute and the examinations undergone with fairly good results gladdened me. Deo gratias! About the reading of the marks: probably I will not be able to do it till Thursday evening, because I am planning to return to Torino on Thursday morning. If you think that it will be better to do it before, do as you feel it is better *in Domino*.

From your letter I see that you are distressed by what I told the Bursar. You have interpreted my words too threateningly. In my frankness, and for the greater good, I made some remarks about both of you, without however giving too much importance. Be at peace and keep going with the usual laudable alacrity for the good of the Community. The Lord will bless you and strengthen you for your work. I feel that it would be good if the few words of welcome to Mgr. Bonzano should be written and read by you *in English*; what do you think?

In this hermitage of mine, while I try to keep away from me many other thoughts, I allow those about my missionaries to dominate me; I pray for you, so that God's holy will be accomplished in you. Many good wishes to everybody, especially to the two of you, and my blessing...

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 122 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 158-159)

To Fr. Giuseppe Perrachon

J. M. J. Torino, 7 June 1912

Dearest Fr. Perrachon,

I wish that you would read this letter of mine in your little Chapel, in front of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. It is the matter of a news which still seems untrue to me; yet it is true that, last night, your good father has left us for Heaven. In the midst of your sorrow, you express your *fiat* [let it be] as a prayer for his blessed soul. Even if only 52 years old, he was already ripe for Heaven, where he will also have some special glory for having willingly consented to your vocation.

On Sunday, 26th May, he came to visit me; he went to Confession and Communion in the Consolata Shrine, then, during the day, a cerebral congestion befell him, which made him loose part of his memory. However, he went back to Pinerolo, where he seemed peaceful and healthy. On Tuesday he came again to Torino, where the disease hit him more seriously, and it was necessary to take him to the Martini Hospital that is near our Institute. We have always been hoping for a healing, until repeated small strokes led him to the end of his life; he died with the blessing of our Cardinal and all the Sacraments of the dying. You will easily understand the sorrow of your dear sister in these days. Your aunt here in Torino is assisting her, and we are doing all we can to this purpose. The Th. Gunetti is taking care of his transport to Pinerolo, where he will be buried tomorrow.

In regard to what concerns your sister and the interests, you be at peace; I will be like a father to her, as she desires; I'll see to it that your relatives won't bother her. Based on the truths of our faith, she is strong, and the Lord will help her. I will keep you informed of everything, also because she is still a minor.

May the M. H. Consolata console you and make you strong as a true apostle... I have already arranged for the Masses to be celebrated for your father; you celebrate those that are to be celebrated according to our Rules.

Courage *in Domino*; I bless you. very aff. in J. C.

◀ 123 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 168-171)

To the missionaries in Kenya

Torino, 21 July 1912
Feast of the Most Holy Redeemer

My dearest in Our Lord,

If the happy and long-desired return of the Vice-Superior was a time of joy for me and for all in our Institute, a greater consolation was enjoyed by

me at the wonderful news that slowly, slowly, he has been giving me in long conversations about the general state of our missions, and especially about the good spirit by which you are always animated as religious and as missionaries. I was about to write to congratulate you and, at the same time, offer you some exhortations that seemed to me more necessary or at least opportune, when the sorrowful news of the death of our dear Fr. Manzon reached me like a thunderbolt.

You may imagine how dismayed all of us were at the sad news, which was a really hard trial for our Institute. Our Very Em. Card. Archbishop consoled us with the thought that our good God, having asked of us the youngest of our missionaries as an offering to Him, will certainly repay with more abundant blessings and graces all of us and our African people, for whom the dear Father was called to intercede in Heaven. And we hope that our community prayers may have already obtained for him the reward of the labours and sacrifices he performed during his short apostolate, and also for the sharp sufferings of his painful illness and holy death.

I am grateful to Fr. Dal Canton for the full report he sent me about the edifying details of the painful transition, and I am greatly consoled by what he wrote about your not-being discouraged by this but, on the contrary, taking it as a reason for new ardour and zeal in responding to your vocation. I think that this is the first fruit of the intercession of the one who generously offered his life for your good and the good of the missions. The same effect it had on the people here, priests, seminarians, and Brothers, who unanimously showed that they are ever more animated to follow the divine call, especially on the priests who, with the five last-ordained, are now 9, all of them longing to soon depart, to fill the place left empty by the beloved and envied confrere.

Other fruits I would like you to derive from this premature death are: a serious reflection on how fleeting is life, even by those who are in better health and more robust than he was, who from the tomb is telling us, "*hodie mihi, cras tibi*..." [today to me, tomorrow to you...], and you must meditate on this seriously, especially during your monthly retreat. You have to focus on the insignificance of all the satisfactions this life can offer us, even the very consolations from your ministry or work..., as well as on the fact that also the inevitable sufferings, privations and sacrifices of your missionary life are nothing if, like the Saints "*aspicientes in remunerationem*" [with eyes fixed on the reward], you keep your minds fixed on the great reward that is prepared for missionaries who are faithful to their vocation.

The news given me by our Vice-Superior about the spirit that animates you and about your work has certainly consoled me, as I have already told you, and I thank the Lord for this. However, from the the reports there is, as I was already surmising out of my experience, a virtue on which I think I must insist, a virtue that is greatly necessary for all of you, priests and Brothers, both in works of apostolate as well as in material works, it is the virtue of obedience: the one that our Constitutions define as a fundamental

virtue for a missionary Institute (see No. 35), the lack of which is sufficient to lead to dissolution any Religious Community.

From that letter of St. Ignatius, whose reading I have always so much inculcated, you know how great an importance he gave to the practice of obedience, and how he wanted it to be the badge of his Society. Read it again and meditate on it seriously, and let each one of you apply to himself individually what is written on it. Can you sincerely say, before God, that you are always and in everything obedient in spirit, heart and actions? Matter of obedience are our Constitutions and the rules about community life, apostolate and material work given you in detail and with great precision by the Circulars of Monsignor and the Conferences; and also the orders and directives he gives you according to needs and circumstances. These instructions concerning life in the missions could not be given by me, neither when you were here, nor later by letter, because I did not sufficiently know the different and changing environment in which you live.

From the outline of your Conferences, sent to me every year, and especially from the explanations given me now by our Vice-Superior, I realize that those rules were really given with great wisdom and prudence. Have you always bent your intellect to them, striving to persuade yourselves that they are truly the expression of God's will in your regard? Have you ever, on the contrary, thought sometimes, perhaps obstinately judged, worse still if you told somebody else, that it would have been better if things had been established in another way?

Let’s not discuss if and how much of an obligation is there to submit one's judgements to the directives of the Superiors; certainly, there is the obligation to follow them in one's actions. Well, when one's judgement is against, it will be quite difficult to act in a simple, sincere, cordial and full way... with that *animo volenti* [willing spirit] which does not let us feel the burden of obedience, and which, after the purity of intention, is the greatest qualification for the reward of our actions. Our Constitutions state that, without a practical spirit of absolute obedience to the Superiors, a unity of action and the consequent success of apostolate are not possible. This is so because labours and even sacrifices performed according to one's own judgement are not blessed by God: what happens is what happened to those priests of the Ancient Law who, on their own initiative *sine consilio exeunt in praelium* [went out to fight in a foolish way] and were badly defeated, so that the Book of Maccabees concludes by saying, "*Ipsi autem non erant de semine virorum illorum per quos salus facta est in Israel*" [These were not of the same mould as those to whom the deliverance of Israel had been entrusted].

The spiritual transformation of your people, believe me, will take place sooner or later, will be more or less broad and deep, according to how much the obedience of each one of you, in carrying out your work, will be exemplary.

I know that the devil will always be able to come up with the excuse that you are in special circumstances regarding people, place, weather, etc.; that your Superior does not know things the way you do...; that he does not give enough consideration to your observations; that, if I were well informed, I would agree with you... All of these are devil's tricks, my dear, to deprive you of the great merit and fruit of obedience. Your local Superior is reasonable; if there are truly exceptional circumstances, inform him with sincerity, and then accept with humility his decision...; in the meantime, however, before you receive his decision, you continue to follow the previous instructions.

It could also happen that somebody act differently than the directives received either because he forgets them, or at least does not think of them before acting... and, consequently, in his conscience he feels excused. This is a mistake. Forgetfulness, inadvertence, or thoughtlessness excuse only when somebody does everything possible to prevent them. See what is usually done when it is a matter of material concern: notes are written on notebooks or diaries; knots are made on handkerchiefs, and many other devices are used in order not to forget a deadline, or some business or another, about which someone is concerned.

Is as much done in order to call to mind the directives of obedience? Going on at random, doing things on the impulse of the moment, making no efforts to remember instructions in due time, will certainly lead to violate them often; but, I repeat, do not think that you are totally excused at God's judgement. Each one of you, therefore, should read again and meditate on what our Constitutions say about obedience, use it as a daily matter for resolutions in your meditation, as well as in your examination of conscience at noon and in the evening.

Remember that you will be missionaries of that Jesus who *factus obediens usque ad mortem* [who became obedient unto death] in as much as you will be able to affirm with Him that all you do in mission is directed to the only aim that He had on this earth: *non ut faciam voluntatem meam, sed voluntatem Eius qui misit me* [not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent me]. The will of the one who sends you, that is of your Superior, is the only and constant directive of your apostolate.

This is what I wish for you with my whole heart while, together with our dear Vice-Superior, I renew our thanks for the joyful welcome you offered him and for the docility with which you accepted what he felt he had to tell you for your greater good; this docility assures me that you will treasure these recommendations and the ones that our Lord will inspire to me for the achievement of your great aim: the sanctification of yourselves and of others.

May our Heavenly Patroness, the Consolata, comfort, sustain and bless you always as is always praying. Yours very aff. in J. M. J.

◀ 124 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 176-177)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J Melezet, 25 July 1912

Dear Fr. Costa,

Today I have received your letter and I was glad to read about the good news of the House.

You did well in exempting the seminarian Maletto from the examination; make sure that he does what the doctor prescribed him. The seminarian Atzeni wrote to me saying that he had a good journey, and that he is under the care of a good doctor who has assured him that he will be healed soon; he then explains to me what his relatives did about the money, asking for forgiveness; it seems that in those places people are out of touch with reality.

The Th. Alberione, from Alba, wrote to me saying that he has informed the father of Saffirio about the need for a retreat. It would be good if you could inform the father, about it, the day after the examinations and before going to St. Ignatius'. The same Alberione writes to me saying that a certain Ciravegna would like to come to us. He has already done a year of Moral theology after the theological studies, but he cannot be ordained before Christmas due to the age requirement. Perhaps you may know him, or you might have heard about him; if such is the case, write to me, and I will wait before replying. I have then accepted the young Margiaria and the two from Cerrina Monferrato.

You will seal the joined note and give it to Fr. Bodino.

Here we are enjoying the cool weather, invigorating the physical and moral strengths, in view of the good that the Lord requests of us.

Many good wishes and my blessing to everybody. very aff. in J. C.

◀ 125 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 181-182)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. Melezet, 27 July 1912

Dear Fr. Costa,

From the letter that you will send to the father of the young Saffirio, you will see my decision. The last and momentary sparks are not sufficient to destroy the faults of the whole year, especially in regard to vocation, about which I have sound doubts. We may still give him some hope; when departing, we may tell him to reflect on it, to ask for advice, and to pray; to his companions we may tell that he went home for family reasons. I wouldn't allow the seminarian Calandri to go home; if his father writes to me, I will reply negatively. If we

don't cut off such whims, we will end up badly. You may allow Bazzoli to go for a few hours, while going to and returning from St Ignatius'.

The results of the examination are all right; at the end you read all the marks and see to it that they are all good, especially those in conduct.

Many good wishes to the Bursar and to all of you, also on behalf of the Rev. V. Rector. May the Lord bless and sanctify all of you.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 126 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 186)

To Fr. Giovanni Balbo

J. M. J. Torino, 30 July 1912

Dear Fr. Balbo,

From various letters of yours to me and to Monsignor, but especially from those to your family in which you speak about preparing an ecclesiastical patrimony for you, I believe I can understand that you have no intention of taking the perpetual oath, or at least you are quite doubtful about it.

As far as I am concerned, if such is your intention, I have nothing to tell you, because, when your five-year commitment is over, you are free to do as you like. I would only like to make you notice that, if you return to Italy now, you shall have to undergo the military service, because the exemption from it as a missionary is valid only if you have been in the missions till you are 32 years old. Therefore, if you wish to avoid undergoing military service, I would propose that you renew the oath till your 32nd birthday; in this way you will also have more time to better study your vocation and then take a final decision.

Now, please, let me know right away if you accept my proposal, as I still have to ask Propaganda for the needed faculties; it is my intention that you decide from there; if you would come to Italy now, I would consider this as your final decision to leave our Institute.

Think well about it, pray and reply to me soon, while I will also be praying that the Lord may enlighten you and I bless you wholeheartedly.

Your very aff. in J. M. J.

◀ 127 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 188)

To Fr. Angelo Dal Canton

Torino, 30 July 1912

Dear Fr. Dal Canton,

From all the information I received about you in the past years first by Monsignor and lately by the Vice Superior, I must tell you that I am quite

doubtful about admitting you to take the final oath. I am not thinking that you don't have a vocation, but rather it seems to me that you are not responding to it with enough commitment, both in regard to correcting your faults and to acquiring the virtues that are proper to a missionary and a religious.

I do not intend to remind you of your faults, that were made already known to you by Monsignor and by the Vice Superior, and I wouldn't know whether they should be attributed to your kind of life involved mostly in material works, but the truth of the matter is that I am not at peace in accepting you without another proof of your sincere will of improvement.

As a consequence, I would propose that you continue to remain in the missions by renewing your oath for three years, after which we shall take a final decision. Think well about this, pray and reply to me soon, because I desire that you decide while you are still there, and also because I shall have to ask Propaganda for the needed faculties for such a temporary commitment. On my part, I will recommend you greatly to Our Consolata, so that She might inspire you for your greater good, and help you to become a true missionary.

◀ 128 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 200-201)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. Melezet, 12 August 1912

Dear Fr. Costa,

I have read the two letters of yours and I greatly enjoy hearing about the good time and the good spirit of our dear students.

See to it that they restore their strength by means of morning and evening walks, waiting for the two or three one-day walks till they are stronger.

I am feeling better, and it is a week now that I am walking around briskly on the mountains as an evident sign of recovery (Deo gratias!) so that I may be able to work, according to God's H[oly] will, with greater strength for your good. On the 20th I will certainly return to Torino, and on the following Saturday I will come to St. Ignatius' for a day. After my arrival at Torino, as soon as the Rev. V. Rector will not need any longer Fr. [Luigi] Perlo, he will come to St. Ignatius'. You will then be able to come back to Torino, where we will have many things to organize. On your way back, you may go for a short visit to your relatives. You will probably go back to St. Ignatius' for the last week of the holidays.

Since you there are a Community, for the celebration of the H. Mass, you may follow your liturgical calendar. When the Chaplain is there, he may follow his own.

I am sorry about the late discovery about Blandino [eye problem]; in future, we shall have to send all of them to Doctor Precerutti. It wouldn't be according to charity to dismiss him immediately. We shall do it after my return to Torino and the doctor's visit.

Patience about Albis [homesickness?]; all right about the seminarian Goletto; let him stay, and in regard to the Bishop we shall see. To the new Brother-aspirant we shall give the name of Antonio.

All right about Gemello and Farina [some problems]. Vercelletti still has to be considered; unfortunately, his situation is common to all those who go home.

And now I pray to the Lord to bless all my dear missionaries, my main hope and consolation. May all of them respond properly to the great grace of their vocation! I vividly recommend to them the devotion to the Most Holy Mary on the occasion of the Feast of Her Assumption. On that very solemn day, if you don't have any homily, read to them the instruction of Saint Alphonsus or something else about devotion to Our Lady (Selva).[9]

Many good wishes to all and you pray for

Your very aff. in J. C.

◀ 129 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 206)

To Fr. Gaudenzio Panelatti

Torino, 12 August 1912

Dear Fr. Panelatti,

From the contents of various letters of yours, especially the last one, I see that you are very hesitant about joining our Institute for ever, indeed you are inclined to leave. I, too, have been doubting for a long time about this. I have recommended this matter to the Lord, and I reached the conclusion that I cannot admit you to take the perpetual oath.

As far as the time of your coming to Italy is concerned, you will arrange with Monsignor and follow his decision. I would like to make you notice, however, that the Curia of Torino will not accept you as a member of our Clergy and, therefore, it is useless for you to come to Torino; therefore, once you arrive at Genova, you will take the train directly for Voghera-Piacenza-Codogno-Mantova- Peri-Trento, going to your diocese.

May the Lord bless you and above all grant you the grace to live as a good priest as is asking you your very aff.

[9] *Selva di materie predicabili ed istruttive* [Forest of predictable and instructive subjects]: a devotional book by St. Alphonsus M. de Liguori.

◀ 130 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 210)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. Melezet, 15 August 1912

Dear Fr. Costa,

I am glad about the good news concerning the health and the good spirit of our dear young people.

However, don't be too much of an optimist, but be vigilant in order to come to know the temperament and the habits of each one; and this can be more easily achieved when they feel freer.

I congratulate Fr. Sales [for a homily of his], and Deo gratias!

You are asking me to allow the Brothers to remain there for the Monday walk. But the first group of Brothers have always been returning to Torino the day following the Assumption; why making longer their already too long holiday? Now, however, there is nothing more that can be done: it is useless to ask permission when you know there is no more time to reply. I think that in this matter Fr. Dolza with his great heart, especially for the Brothers, has something to do; make sure that the same evening they will be in Torino.

I see that among you, you started calling you *padre* [Father] (P. Dolza, P. Cagnolo, P Benedetto, etc.). With the possible menace of soppressing the religious Congregations, I do not think this is the right time to introduce this practice which may become a pretext to suppress the whole Institute. From now on both in the House and talking and writing to one another simply use the word *Don*[10]. In form everybody about this without mentioning the reason for it.

My health, thanks be to God, is improving, and in the evening of the 20th I will be in Torino.

May Our Lady, especially today, bless you, and may St. Ignatius infuse into you some of his spirit. Many good wishes to all. very aff. in J. C.

◀ 131 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 213)

To Fr. Luigi Perlo

J. M. J. Torino, 28 August 1912

Dear Fr. Perlo,

Yesterday the mushrooms and the flowers arrived on time and in good shape. After arranging them in a nice basket, accompanied by a letter, they were presented to the Cardinal in the evening.

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[10] *Don* [*Dominus* = Lord] is, in Italy, the name of respect with which the priests of the secular clergy and members of nobility are called.

H. Eminence appreciated wholeheartedly the gift; today at lunch with many invited people, among whom myself, the whole table was decorated by cyclamens, and some fried mushrooms were served. Naturally the Cardinal told everybody about it... He asked me to thank you, and to tell you that he sends you his Blessing. Tell everybody about it, so that they will be happy.

Tell also the priests, the seminarians, the Brothers and the young men that, during my short staying with them, I was quite consoled by the good spirit I noticed. Let them continue to commit themselves to piety and to perfect obedience. This is the reward the Superiors are expecting for the many sacrifices they undertake for them. For the novena of the Nativity of the M. H. Mary, pray after the holy Mass a *Salve Regina* [Hail Holy Queen], and recommend to them little sacrifices.

Here at the Institute all are well and send their greetings. The works are proceeding well and, for the time being, the Rev. V. Rector does not need your help.

Many good wishes in the Lord; pray to St. Ignatius for

Your very aff. in J. C.

◀ 132 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 225)

To Fr. Francesco Gamberutti

J. M. J. Torino, 1 September 1912

Dear Fr. Gamberutti,

I heard from Monsignor that, at the end of your five-year commitment to our Institute, you desire to join it for ever; indeed, that you feel that you are already bound to it since the time you were in Torino.

I don't remember what you have done at that time; certainly you could not have promised to the Institute more than what you were asked for, and any promise you may have made on your own could bind you but not the Institute. Therefore, I, following the good report received from Monsignor and from the Rev. V. Superior, accept you in our Congregation; you may proceed to take your perpetual vows as soon as your five-year commitment expires.

May the M. H. Consolata bless you, so that you may be a source of consolation to your Superiors and a worthy instrument for the holy works of our Missions. Very aff. in J. C.

◀ 133 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 226)

To Fr. Domenico Gillio

J. M. J. Torino, 1 September 1912

Dearest Fr. Gillio,

You are asking me to be allowed to join our Congregation for life, and I willingly agree. I know about your good spirit and that you desire to respond willingly to the aims of the Superiors. I heard about this from Monsignor and lately also from the Rev. V. Superior.

Therefore, when your five-year commitment is over, you may consecrate yourself for ever to our missions, with the intention of always better forming yourself and become a holy and zealous missionary. I am also glad to hear that you do not desire to come to Italy, so that you will not waste such a precious time to work for the salvation of the local people.

May Our Lady Consolata bless you, as I wholeheartedly ask Her to do.

Very aff. in J. C.

◀ 134 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 232-233)

To Fr. Luigi Perlo

J. M. J. Torino, 6 September 1912

Dear Fr. Luigi,

I am glad to hear the good news about all of you and the nice walk you all had to St. Christina [a Shrine]. You may still have one or two of them next week, besides the one you will have tomorrow to the Consolata [a Chapel at Mezzenile, a small municipality of the valley].

On the feast of the Nativity of the B. V. Mary, you could make them read something about Our Lady taken, for instance, from the *Selva*[11] of St. Alphonsus, which you can find in my room. You will have a Solemn High Mass. In the refectory, once you finished the life of the missionary [who?], you could make them read the life of the Blessed Parish Priest of Ars, which you can find in my room.

Monday morning send definitely to Torino Br. Giuseppe. The other Brothers will no more come back to St. Ignatius', because there is a lot of work to do here at the Institute.

[11] Cf. letter to Fr. Umberto Costa, of 12 August 1912, note 10.

I told the Sister of Lanzo not to put velvet collar [to the seminarians' overcoat], because it is not conforming to the spirit of poverty. The Jesuits and the Giuseppini are forbidden to do so by Rule; it will be so also for us.

What you did in the case of seminarian Maletto is all right.

Should Fr. Chiomio receive worse news about his mother's health, let him come down to visit her; it would be better to do it while our young men are still at St. Ignatius'.

The two parcels of coffee are for the Parish Priest of Gisola and for Th. Vianti; you will present them to them towards the end of the holydays.

It seems to me that you will return to Torino on the 19th of this month; this as a norm for you; but we shall better arrange about this.

It would be good if, when Giuseppe comes, he could bring some fresh mushrooms, if you have any.

Many good wishes to all of you, and a happy Feast with the blessing of the M. H. Mary. Very aff. in J. C.

◀ 135 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 277)

To Fr. Francesco Gamberutti

J. M. J. Torino, 12 November 1912

Dear Fr. Gamberutti,

When you receive this letter, you will be already bound to our Missions for life. Receive my most cordial congratulations. *Non alleviasti onus tuum; sed ad majorem teneris sanctitatis perfectionem* [You did not lessen your burden; but you are bound to strive for a greater perfection of holiness] (Imitation of Christ).

From this great grace you will draw greater vigour to perfect yourself and to perform with greater zeal the work you are doing. If obedience keeps you working at the School for the Chiefs' sons [at Murang'a], think about the good that will result from your labours. I am asking the M. H. Consolata to grant you the *patience* and the spirit necessary to fill with Christian spirit those dear young men, who will be the hope of our missions. Think about your responsibility in regard to the H. Church and, trusting entirely in God, offer the whole of yourself as a sacrifice for such a great good. I have sent you the two books you desired and, at the proper time, also the harmonium will arrive.

Courage, then, *in Domino* and don't allow the nostalgia for Italy to catch up with you: *Paradisus est!...* [It is Paradise!]. I bless you wholeheartedly.

Very aff. in J. C.

◀ 136 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 279)

To Br. Luigi Bezzone

Hurray J. M. J. Torino, 13 November 1912

Dear Luigi,

I am enjoying your frequent letters; continue in this way, and write to me in details about the things you see; putting them together, we might be able to compose an article for our magazine. It's no longer very far the time when you shall have to take your perpetual vows; pray so as to deserve such a great grace, and write to me on time telling me your intentions.

Renew every day your will to become a saint; and make use of the suitable means, especially the exercise of God's presence: it is for Him that you are there.

I'll do my best to send, a few at the times in order to avoid too many expenses, various Life of Saints for all of you, and those that you desire. This time I have sent 2 volumes of the life of Bd. Sebastian Valfrè; later on, others will come.

So, courage in striving to become a holy missionaries, heartily obedient and patient... My fatherly blessing on you. Very aff. in J. C.

◀ 137 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 419-420)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

Torino, 28 June 1913

Dearest Fr. Gays,

Monsignor wrote to me saying that you have asked to retire from your present work, because of tiredness and weak health. I certainly do not intend that you spoil your strength and have to suffer for it in the future. But since the work you are carrying out is one of the most important for the good of our missions, I can't convince myself to give in to your request. You have the experience of many years, so that in the past and even more in the future true catechists may be formed, in order to supply the deficiency of missionaries for the conversion of your local people.

Take courage and keep going *in Domino,* who *infirma elegit* [chose the weak] for great works. I pray to our M. H. Consolata to give back to you the former energy for the greater glory of God, and our prayers will obtain the grace. I have written to Monsignor telling him to give you the *five hundred* liras brought for you by Th. Perardi.

Ahead then with renewed vigour, thinking also of the great reward that will be given us in Paradise, where, according to our Venerable [Cafasso], *we shall rest.*

In Domino very aff.

◀ 138 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 421-422)

To Fr. Angelo Dal Canton

J. M. J. Torino, 29 June 1913

Dear Fr. Dal Canton,

I was convinced that I had written to you after your profession: if I haven't done it, it is not because I had forgotten you, or because of something concerning your behaviour.

Monsignor has always been writing good things about you, and the very Brothers Giacomo and Bartolomeo in their letters have been praising you as their teacher and counsellor. Away then any cloud, and forget that short delay that our Lord allowed, not as a punishment, but as a greater test, before your final profession. You were and will always be a worthy son of Our Lady Consolata destined to work also materially for the prosperity of the Kenya Vicariate and, you never know, maybe also of Kaffa…

You well know the kind of spirit I desire from our missionaries. That they be well founded on the spirit of faith, so that they may work for God and, in their behaviour, they may represent God himself in front of the Africans. If you can find it, read the homily on *modesty* by our Venerable [Cafasso]. What is very important for me is the virtue of obedience to Monsignor in everything and according to his directives, especially in regard to the use of money. The fact that somebody is not sufficiently delicate in this regard and is not reflecting on the violation of the vow of poverty is grieving me. Wanting to give the workers more than what has been established by Monsignor is like stealing from the Institute; as well as obtaining money and making use of it arbitrarily.

In regard to poverty some people are wanting in tact; and I fear that the vow of poverty is too easily violated. Tell freely this worry of mine to your companions. The same diligence that is used in regard to one's own money should be used in order to preserve and increase the Institute's goods. I fear that, because of the lack of this tact, the Lord may allow the source of the charity of our benefactors to dry out.

I pray every day to the Lord so that all of you may constantly live as worthy missionaries, and may first work for their own sanctification and then for the conversion of your dear Africans.

I bless particularly you with the affection of a father, and you have me *in Domino* as such. Your very aff.

◀ 139 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 428-429)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 11 July 1913

Dear Fr. Costa

I have received the two letters of yours and the one of the Bursar, and I am glad to hear the good news about our dear Institute. You may think that I am always thinking about you; instead I have offered this pleasant consolation to the Lord, so that He may always hold his holy hand on each one of you and bless you continually. As I watch these eighty four priests, who are seriously making their S. Exercises and are striving to undertake strong resolutions to work for their own sanctification and for the good of the people entrusted to them, I think about how much greater commitment my dear missionary students should undertake in order to sanctify themselves: they, who are destined to be apostles not only in a Parish or Rectory, but for a multitude of people... Happy are you, a Parish Priest was telling me this morning, to whom will be granted to collect not only handfuls but real sheaves of souls.

This, my dear, is how I forget you.

Like Moses on the mountain, I pray while you fight on the plain against your faults. May the Lord grant you a clear knowledge of yourselves and a lot of grace, so that you may resolve, once and for all, to become true saints. May St. Ignatius grant you to be ready for this when you will come to visit him.

When you go to the Curia to arrange for the examinations, let Can. Alassia assign the examiners that he likes; if he asks, you could suggest Fr. Coccolo or Can. Bues. If the seminarian Calandri may satisfy that Priest [unknown] without wasting too much time, let him do it, helped also by Fr. Dolza. All right for Fr. Chiomio and Fr. Prina.

Many good wishes to the R. Sister Superior and the other Sisters; at this time, it is impossible for me to write to them. May the Lord bless you, the dear Bursar, all of you and all the Sisters.

In J. M. J. very aff.

◀ 140 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 434-435)

To Sr. Margherita Demaria

Hurray J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 17 July 1913

Rev. Sister Margherita,

Thank you for your long and detailed letter. I am glad about the good spirit that reigns in the House. As long as we are on this wretched earth,

there will always be faults; let's make sure that the people who are tainted, *know their faults, are persuaded of them, and are willing to correct them*. In this consists the formation of people.

As far as you are concerned, don't worry about the aridity you are experiencing in spiritual matters. Accept it peacefully from the will of God, who at times hides himself to test our fidelity. In most cases, this depends on having to think about the whole Community and, therefore, many thoughts during prayer.

Make an offer of it for the sake of your office, and you will share in the merit of all that is accomplished and prayed for by the others. Therefore, keep going *in Domino* with peace and tranquillity of heart.

Feel free to speak publicly and privately with ardour about virtues and holy practices; the Lord will apply the whole of it to you.

For the time being do not make any special mortifications; only make sure that they will not treat you in any particular way in regard to food, clothing, etc. Keep yourself free from certain trifles that the Sisters' affection may offer and impose on you. Your mortification be the community life, that must be broken only by necessity; then we can make exceptions, which we should allow also to the others.

I'll see you in a week's time. I bless you.

Very aff. in J. C.

P. S. Tell Sister Maria degli Angeli not to write any longer to her father. If necessary, I will speak to him myself at St. Ignatius'.

Don't have any problem at seeing Vicentina leave. When doubtful, we must send back home the aspirants; and when, at the beginning they don't feel permeated by the Community environment and somehow spiritualized, they will never be properly formed, and later on will always be the same kind of people with the same faults. Dismissing therefore one, the Lord will send us three, and then what matters is not the number, but the spiritual substance.

◀ 141 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 437-438)

To the missionary Sisters

Hurray J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 17 July 1913

My dear daughters in J. C.,

I received from your R. Superior the desired news about you, and I was pleased with them in the Lord. Pray for me, and offer all your actions to the Lord for the best result of these Spiritual Exercises. I thank you, and I tell you that it isn't a small matter to renew in the spirit 160 priests and more than eighty lay people. Keep praying, and your merit will be great.

I am consoled by the news of the good spirit that is reigning in your House and of the fact that you are making use of any opportunity to adorn yourselves of the virtues proper to your state of life, particularly the perfect execution of the letter of St. Ignatius. I have prayed and I pray to this Saint, here, where he grants many graces, to imprint well that letter in your mind and in your heart both now and in the future.

In the refectory we are reading the life of the Venerable Father Colin, founder of the Marist Congregation, and the many interesting things narrated there. When sending his missionaries to Oceania, he was recommending to them *mistrust of themselves and trust in God. The exercise of God's presence in every action;* most of all, *he was exhorting them to be people of prayer and meditation, because the conversion of unbelievers is a grace that is obtained only by means of prayer.* This golden advice of the Venerable obtained good results, and the sons of Fr. Colin worked marvels of conversions; and various of them, like Blessed Peter Chanel, obtained the palm of martyrdom.

You, too, prepare for your not-far departure, by forming yourselves according to this spirit. Convinced of your true meanness, you wholeheartedly ask God for everything; while you do not neglect to practice everything that may make you constantly humble, obedient, mortified in body and soul, charitable, etc. etc. You should be striving to become saints, great saints and soon saints. Believe me: sometimes we think that we have grown in virtues but, when temptations come, we relapse again into our old faults. Perhaps we don't know intimately ourselves, and we don't set ourselves with resolute constancy to eradicate from us the little, old and never improved faults. Each one of you should resolve, with the help of God's grace, not to allow any Amalecite to survive in herself. An Amalecite is that particular fault in regard to charity or humility that has often been pointed out to you by your confessor or by the superiors.

To this purpose, I offer to the Lord the weight and the responsibility that burdens me in regard to your perfect formation for the Apostolate and, all I can do, and this is the most, is to pray continually the good God so that He himself may operate in you the best sanctification.

To this purpose I offer to the Lord my labours and solicitudes for the good results of the three courses of Spiritual Exercises, to which I must attend because of my office. At the end of them, returning to you, I will be happy to find you more advanced on the way to perfection.

Next Sunday it will be the Feast [name-day] of your good Superior, and I am sorry because I will not be able to be present. You represent me with the good wishes you will offer her to repay her for the great care she takes of you.

May the Lord bless you and may St. Ignatius obtain for you the spirit of O. L. Jesus Christ.

Very aff. in O. L. J. C.

◀ 142 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 440-441)

To Fr. Luigi Perlo

J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 18 July 1913

Dear Fr. Perlo,

Thank you for your well-detailed letter. It is evident that there is good will in everybody. That Beppino is not suitable for us, and so he wrote to me yesterday asking for advice, or rather manifesting his will to leave us. See to it that, if he hasn't done it yet, he writes in order to have the money for his journey. He should have brought them when he came, as we had told him. And this should be done as soon as possible in order to remove a cause of pain in the Community. So, you shall let his relatives take away the young Gonella. We should also as soon as possible let the two Farina go: they are not suitable for us. Once we know their father's domicile, we will definitely send them there.

Our V. Rector has written to the parish-priest of Nizza Monferrato in order to know if he is living there. After reading and sealing it, give the enclosed letter to Br. Domenico. I think it is good for him to go home for two or three days, as soon as possible, to visit his mother and his sick brother. This will create a good impression and many help to convince that carpenter [unknown] to come.

The Bursar of St. Ignatius thanks you for the photographs; however, it is not convenient to take others, because they are too costly to be sold.

I suppose that Fr. Costa has left together with the Rev. V. Rector; they needed some care, and we hope for good results. You, calmly, without straining yourself and with the help of the H. Angels, will keep everybody on the right track. Tell all of them that I am praying for them, for their studies and so that they may be pious and obedient. St. Ignatius is getting ready to welcome them soon, to give them a break, and to reward them for the sacrifices they have made out of love for God.

I hope to return to Torino on Saturday, the 26th of this month, in the evening. If Th. Baravalle desires some Masses or confessors send them; and you may offer you and somebody else for the Feast of St. Anne.

Fr. Costa had written to me asking if he could invite Th. Baravalle for the examination of speculative Theology: feel free to do so if you still need him.

Many blessings of God over the whole House…

Your very aff. in J. C.

◀ 143 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 466)

To Fr. Luigi Perlo

J. M. J. Torino, 28 August 1913

Dear Fr. Perlo,

We have offered to our Cardinal the mushrooms and the cyclamens; and he was pleased; and at today's lunch we have been invited to eat the mushrooms and to enjoy the sight of the cyclamens spread on the table of the Archbishop's House. H. Eminence was very interested in knowing about all of you and also about the Sisters; and he asked to send all of you his blessing. Deo gratias! We had offered all that had been gathered, and it was sufficient.

I am pleased with the good news about all of you. I have read the long and nice letter of the seminarian Cavallo and I approve it, except the long talk about Carlino that seems rather childish...

The V. Rector yesterday wrote to you advising you not to take part in the long walk planned for Saturday, both because of confessions and also because it is the vigil of a feast.

As we had agreed, I was expecting Fr. Bodino and Fr. Prina to come to Torino on Saturday. They may remain there till Monday and come to Torino with you. If Fr. Maraviglia arrives on Saturday, I will tell him to wait till Monday. In the meantime, Sunday morning, after having celebrated Mass, Fr. Costa will come there, and you will have the whole day to talk about things.

The seminarian Goletto wrote to me about his need to go home, which I had already recognized; he can also come to Torino together with you.

I was pleased with the letters of Fr. Bodino and Fr. Chiomio.

May the Lord bless all of you in order to the essential purpose of common sanctification. Pray for your

very aff. in O. L. J. C.

◀ 144 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 469)

To the deacon Maurizio Domenico Ferrero

J. M. J. Torino, 3 September 1913

My dearest in O. L. J.C.,

For a superior it is an intimate consolation to see that his sons, for whom he spends the whole of himself, open up their hearts to him. It is also the splendid way to religious perfection. I am pleased with what you told me and will tell me orally or by writing. May the Lord bless you.

Place the pains of the past in the H. Chalice; Jesus will wash away every stain and *super nivem dealbabor* [I will be whiter than snow]. I pray to our dear Consolata to prepare well you and your good companion [Deacon Maletto] for the priestly dignity.

Coming to family matters, feel free to do as you tell me, especially in regard to your mother; to take her to France is good [she was French]. Take the chance of your Ordination, and then go to France, both in order to satisfy the good desire of your relatives and provide for the tranquillity of your mother. Write there and arrange everything, taking all the time required in order to do things well. After your first Mass here in our Institute, you may go home and there do what they desire. I will prepare some gifts to take there; but the faculty of blessing with indulgences attached is reserved for priests who are empowered to hear confessions.

On the other hand, what is essential, both for you and for your companion Maletto, is to enter into the H. Cenacle and merit the *cornu plenum* [full horn] of the Sacramental Grace, that will give you what is necessary in order to be holy and zealous priests.

Keep going with trust and full surrender to God who, because of His Goodness and mercy, can and wants to make you holy. Tell this to our dear Maletto.

I bless both of you

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 145 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 477-479)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. Torino, 11 September 1913

Dear Fr. Costa,

Yesterday Sub-deacon Ciravegna arrived, but he could no longer see his mother because she had already left for home; he will ask the doctor about her problem. I am planning to keep him here as a help to the Bursar to set the House in order. By the way, I decided to put all the future Novices into the dormitory in front of their study-room, which up to now has been used as a depository. In this way we shall have them more and more apart from the others. The room next to it will be for the director of novices who, for the time being will continue to be Fr. Sales. We shall put the eight future seminarians together with the other seminarians; Sabino and Giuseppino together with the Brothers in the usual dormitory. Luigi, Giacomino and Antonio will continue as aspirants. The students will begin from De-Ambrosis.

The day before yesterday that young man from Brescia, Negri, has arrived here, accompanied by his parish-priest. He is good-looking, and our Doctor has found him in good health; however, he needs eye-glasses because of short sight; Doctor Battagliotti said that he will improve. He

started needing them only in the Seminary. You may see how from far away they never say everything. He has completed the third year of gymnasium and, since he is already almost 17 years old, we shall put him with the three people of the fifth year.[12]

I am telling you all this so that, if you have some comments in this regard, you should write to me. For the good, and so that, when you return, everything may be properly arranged, think about everything and feel free to write to me. We are looking only for the greatest good; so feel free to speak to me about everything. You did well in regard to the Mass at Traves and to Merlo Pich: as I am not present there, you should reflect in front of God and then do what you feel I would tell you.

This is the spirit of God; and I like to know everything only in order to direct you to what is best for you. In this way, acting when you are far from me, even if you make mistakes, you shouldn't worry. The good Fr. Sales, having been entrusted by the Rev. V. Rector with the work of Fr. Cravero and having not succeeded in doing it, should have sent back the manuscript before the 25th of the month, so that the V. Rector could have asked somebody else to do the work, since it was supposed to be published in the next number of our magazine.

Another slight mishap took place also in regard to the seminarian Meineri's coming to Torino; since he has been late, he was no longer on time for the wine decanting, which was supposed to be done before the new moon. I am saying this only because, when something is arranged either orally or by writing, it must be taken into account, even if the reason is not clearly stated, except for serious unforeseen circumstances. In all simplicity and truth. In the case of Fr. Cravero and Fr. Balbo, when they write from Africa in such a way that is not suitable, nor adjustable for publication, so that I have somehow to force Monsignor to write himself, without whom our magazine will disappear with the practical consequences.

I am saying this for those envious priests who qualify our magazine as *perloide* [of Perlo] according to what the seminarian Albertone told me. But, enough of this.

Sister Metilde, if she does not improve, send her down, even alone, by means of the train, or accompanied by another Sister.

Well done in regard to the feast of St. Peter Claver and to the sick. You strive for a good recovery during the remaining time. All of you will come back on Thursday, the 18th of this month; the Th. Gunetti will come there: leave some people to help him and give him the list of broken things. Make sure that everything is properly arranged on time and nothing should be taken away, neither books nor anything else: advise everybody about this, especially the students. The books were supposed to be numbered, but Ciravegna told me that this was not done. If still possible tell the seminarian Gallea and some other people to do it, but to make sure that the numbers

[12] All the above are students who wanted to join our Institute.

are not too big. I don't know what kind of present we could offer to the Parish-priest and the Theologian [who had gone for Confessions]; perhaps we could also send them something later on; thank them and tell Sister Agnese to thank the Parish-priest on Friday.[13]

See whether the Th. Vianti intends to remain there still a long time; if such is the case, show him our difficulty here in Torino [to confess the seminarians]. However, I could do without him; in his place I would invite Fr. Chichon, and he would accept.

Read the letter to the seminarian Garrone here enclosed and, if you find it suitable to his present behaviour, give it to him, otherwise don't do it. Thank Fr. Chiomio for his letter. I dismissed Dughera; his mother will come to Torino on the 18th of this month to take him.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 146 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 483)

To Fr. Francesco Gamberutti

J. M. J. Torino, 15 September 1913

Dear Fr. Gamberutti.

Thank you for the dear news about the School [for the Chiefs' sons at Murang'a]. A lot of patience is certainly needed *"in multa patientia"*, and then wait for the time of grace. They are inconstant children; however the seed sown with time will bear fruit and harvest time will come. And then the Lord will pay not according to the results, but according to our work. I am recommending very much to our dear Consolata such an important institution as this one.

Here we are not forgetting you, and Fr. Costa remembers you often and will write to you. You, however, should write many sketches about your "principini" [that is, little princes, as they were called] there, suitable to be read in public, especially to our students here. Do it minutely; they could be useful also for our magazine.

Take courage and do not loose heart because of your weaknesses; most of all work always in agreement with Monsignor's directives.

Greet those who are there with you. I bless you...

very aff. in J. C.

[13] The male communities had left St. Ignatius' the day before.

◀ 147 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 495-496)

To the first Consolata Missionary Sisters departing for Kenya

J. M. J. Solemnity of All Saints, 1 November 1913

My dearest daughters in O. L. Jesus Christ,

While giving you my fatherly Blessing, I add some thoughts, as a compendium of the instructions given you during the years of your formation. Receive them as inspired by God, and strive to constantly practice them.

Most of all, always keep on top of all your thoughts the purpose for which you became Missionary-Sisters, which is uniquely to become saints and to save, together with you, many souls. Doing so, you will have responded to your sublime vocation, and will receive a great reward in Paradise.

To succeed in this intent, strive to perfectly acquire all the religious and apostolic virtues. Especially you should strive for a *spirit of Faith, obedience, charity and sacrifice*. Almost everywhere you will have your Spouse, Jesus, living in the poor little Chapels: turn to Him often at least in spirit: He will give you strength when suffering, and will make you generous when bearing hardships out of love for Him.

Obey simply and heartily, even in the small things, to Monsignor Vicar and to the Vice-Superior Sister, never changing their directives because of your personal views; this comes from pride. God does not bless such infringements, while she who obeys blindly will always sing victory. However, each of you can and will have to simply propose her own observations to the Sister Superior when it may be for the greater good, ready however to later comply with obedience. I recommend to you mutual charity and union: love one another as sisters in O. L. J. C., bearing one another's weaknesses, loving and correcting one another.

With the local people, you will never have enough charity and patience: you shall have to ask the Lord for it every day. Don't get disheartened and hold on to your place and propriety as Sisters; and, out of false charity, never give them anything more or salary than what is established by Monsignor; by doing so you would also be failing against holy Poverty.

The one who will not be able to suffer some privation in regard to food, clothing or housing, and be looking for the small trifles of her Country will certainly not be a true missionary. The Lord wants generous souls and usually, in order to accomplish great works of conversion, He makes use of people who are sacrificed and dead to the delicacies of life.

Since I think that you are not yet perfect, with that perfection that you will reach only in Paradise, I vividly exhort you not to get discouraged because of your, even repeated, weaknesses; make an examination of conscience and, if the weakness was public, humble yourselves in front of

the Superior and of the other Sisters every evening and, if it were a matter of lack of charity to the Sisters [humble yourselves] as soon as you fail.

As I am coming to the end, I am asking our holy Patron the M H. Consolata, to grant you all the graces necessary to respond well to your vocation and to the aims that the Superiors have for each one of you. May the S. Heart of Jesus bless you, and I like a father greet you, assuring you that every day, morning and night, I will pray for you at the Altar of our Consolata... In J. M. J. very aff.

◀ 148 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 498)

To Sister Margherita Demaria

Torino, between 1st and 3rd November 1913

1. For the year 1914 you will have as Patron Saint St. Ignatius of Loyola.
2. In regard to correspondence, they may write a letter or a post-card from Massawa: only one to their relatives. Then another one when they arrive at Limuru. After this, every six months in the first year and once a year afterwards they may write to their parents, or tutors or great benefactors.

The letters should be given open to the V. Superior, who will read them, and then give them to Monsignor, who could also read them. They will be allowed to write any time they wish, sealing the envelope, to me, to the V. Rector, to Monsignor and to the Superior [General].

The V. Superior will write to me often and I will frequently pass on your news to your relatives, and also I will pass on your relatives' news to you.

◀ 149 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 515)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. Torino, 9 December 1913

Dear Fr. Costa,

I rejoice with you and thank the Lord for your attitudes on this day, one of the greatest days of your life [perpetual profession]. As you did in the past, place yourself for the future perfectly in God's hands, desiring uniquely that His Holy Will be perfectly accomplished in you *integra and usque ad finem* [totally and till the end].

The Lord usually selects *infirma et ea quae non sunt* [what is weak and what is nothing] to perform what is greatest; therefore, He will sustain you, both in soul and body, so that you may accomplish the good He wants of you.

Remain always heartily united to your superiors, and in their directives, you will find God's will and your sanctification.

Your present work is certainly full of thorns, but to the eyes of Faith is of the greatest importance; do it as if you had to do it for the whole of your life and, at the same time, ready to leave it for another one if so required by obedience. Moreover, we keep going *in Domino* saying: *Dummodo consummem cursum meum et ministerium, quod accepi a Domino Jesu* [Provided I lead to the end my journey and the ministry that has been given me by the Lord Jesus].

Courage up to the full holocaust of the H. Vows. very aff. in O. L. J. C.

◀ 150 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 518)

To Fr. Giovanni Battista Rolfo

J. M. J. Torino, 12 December 1913

Dearest Fr. Rolfo,

I hope that you will continue courageously with your holy mission, without allowing physical or moral trials and not even failures to discourage you.

Often remember the words of the Imitation [of Christ]: *Fili, non te frangant labores quos assumpsisti propter me; nec tribulations te dejciant usquequaque* [Son, don't allow the labours you undertook for me to depress you, nor the tribulations to dismay you at all].

The Th. Borda, after having told me about your brothers' desire, wrote to you. You should not worry regarding contrasts among brothers, which are not serious; they are simply moved by jealousy fearing that the administrator will gain. It seems to me that they are trying to give you the least they can, depriving you of the patrimony. You reply to them saying that you do not want to be deprived of the ecclesiastical patrimony; and, if it is sold, the whole amount should be set up as securities. However, this is not urgent, and you could take care of it on your eventual return to Italy. In the meantime, tell them to do every year a clear account of the income and send it to you. It is better for the spiritual good of the brothers not to surrender anything to them while you are alive; in this way, the hope and the awe will urge them to live as good Christians.

I always recommend you to Our Lady Consolata; and you pray for

Your very aff. in J. C.

I think, however, that, since you have already taken you perpetual vows, you are no longer obliged to keep the patrimony.

◀ 151 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 520)

To the missionary Sisters in Kenya

Hurray J. M. J. Torino, 24 December 1913

Rev. and dearest Sisters,

From various letters written to me by your Superior and from the dearest lines of each one of you I learned that your journey was quite good and that you arrived happily at the field of your sanctification. Let's thank the good Lord and Our Lady Consolata. I was pleased to hear about your behaviour on the ship, whereby means of your prayers and your good example of obedience and all religious virtues you impressed the other passengers; and also for this Deo gratias.

Now, having overcome the first impressions of newness and also of inevitable disorder, you will be already settled; and according to the requirements of your new life you will have taken up the order of your individual occupations. I recommend to you courage and confidence in God, and cordial reference to your Superior and to Mgr. Vicar.

I am not adding any more words; what I told you at the time of your departure should be enough.

Now I am accompanying all of you in spirit, especially your Superior, in every day and every hour of your African life, so that the H. Name of God be sanctified.

I pray for many blessings on all and each one of you; and you do not forget your old father in the Lord.

very aff.

◀ 152 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 527-530)

To the missionaries in Kenya

[Torino, beginning of 1914]

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

Your joint letters written at the end of your H. Sp. Exercises were quite appreciated and brought me true consolation.

I was already sure of your habitual disposition to preserve yourselves as worthy sons of O. L. Consolata and suitable instruments in God's hands for the redemption of your local unbelievers; but it is pleasing to the heart of a father to hear these things from his sons. Under the wise guidance of your Very Excellent and very beloved Vicar, and through the living and

efficacious words of good preachers, you renewed yourselves in the spirit of your vocation. The spiritual fervour and the grace experienced in those days strengthened your apostolic spirit that had unfortunately been weakened by your continuous and various occupations; you felt stronger: more diligent in your prayer practices, readier for labours, and more zealous for being where obedience sent or will send you to work. At the end, you renewed your oath to faithfully observe the H. Constitutions and the directions of your superiors, especially those given by Monsignor in your Conferences.

Deo gratias! On these resolutions, so practical and convenient, I invoke the blessings of God and of our dear Consolata with all my heart. But, so that they may be efficacious and bear the desired fruit, you shall have to recall them often during the year; and you will do that if, as it is done in our Mother-House, you will make some notes to re-read in the days of your monthly Retreat and weekly Confession.

As you know, to the individual resolutions I usually add a common one, to be kept by all, and this time I feel inspired to propose the spirit of *economy* and *poverty*.

Do not see as strange and absurd the fact that I recommend poverty to you, missionaries who already have to make many sacrifices. Blessed Gabriel Dufresse, Bishop and martyr in China in the last century, in a Synod recommended to his missionaries, who were just priests, not to accept poverty as people forced to do it, but to be happy with frugal meals, simple foods, intended to preserve people's life and not to procure delights; not to search for anything exquisite, sumptuous, or refined... He added that, following the example of the Saints, they were to be so poor, sober, and moderate that they would not only abstain from superfluous things, but also subtract what was less necessary from food and clothing in order to contribute to the conversion of unbelievers, building of mission schools, and other needs of their missions.

The S. (Congregation of) "Propaganda" on various occasions recommended to missionaries this spirit of economizing; for instance, in a decree of 1869 it said, "*curent expensas pro victu atque itineribus minimas fieri*" [let them see to it that their expenses for food and travelling be reduced to a minimum]; on another occasion the S. Congregation exhorted them to adapt as much as possible to the conditions of the foods of the region where they were living, and only for real needs turn to overseas food: "*experientia constat, pauca vel nulla ultramarina alimenta ut plurimum necessaria fiant*" [it appears from experience that, in most cases, few or no overseas foods are necessary]. In order not to multiply expenses, it also exhorted to have a vegetable garden near each residence, where to cultivate greens and legumes needed for the daily meals, and to cultivate land not only to promote agriculture, but also to lessen the missions' expenses.

What can I add to these authoritative exhortations in order to animate you to a spirit of economy and poverty? I tell you that this duty affects you even more because, besides being missionaries, you are also religious and,

as such, you promised poverty and are obliged to practise it. You know well that the evangelical poverty as a *vow* consists in renouncing the right to freely use and administer temporal things without the superior's permission; and as a *virtue* [it consists] in detaching your heart from things, renouncing superfluous things and keeping your heart detached from necessary things.

When, as young people, you were aspiring to missionary life, you imagined many sacrifices to be performed, and even painful martyrdom like the one of Bd. Chanel and Bd. Perboire, and with fortitude and gusto you embraced it. In these days, with the advance of civilization, the occasions of real martyrdom are rare even in the missions. However, what always remains to undergo is a bloodless martyrdom, one of many and frequent sacrifices, like lacking the comforts you had in your Country and tolerating with patience and joy the privations you experience in the Country where you are, being satisfied with what is only really necessary in matters of food, clothing and housing.

And you have what is really necessary, thanks to the admirable set-up of our missions, in which everything is so well arranged that thing are provided on time for all people, and the daily care of individual needs is not entrusted to unable or inexperienced people. Thank the Lord for such wise arrangements, praised also by the S. Propaganda, and do not allow selfishness, or a certain spirit of freedom and comfort to make you desire the possibility of possessing and administering money, so as to spend it your own way, satisfying whims and little comforts, unknown to the Superiors. You would be truly unhappy if, after having made many sacrifices, you allow little trifles to fool you and deprive you of many merits before God and of greater blessings on your zeal.

Certain graces of conversion cannot be obtained by means of prayers alone; these must be united to sacrifices. This is what all holy missionaries have done, from St. Paul to the contemporary ones.

And, if the task entrusted to you by obedience requires you to administer money, think carefully that your condition of religious and the conditions of our Institute impose on you the obligation to use the greatest moderation in spending, not exceeding what is necessary, and conforming with mind and heart to the rules already established or to be established by the superiors in regard to arranging works and giving wages to the workers.

Now let me tell you about the pain I felt in the past when I heard that somebody was complaining of not being allowed to spend independently from the account due to the superiors, and also rather big amounts; the foolish reason given was that I am rich and there are abundant offerings from the faithful. My dear people, you must understand that, if there was money in my pockets, this has gone by now, because of the huge expenses needed for the foundation and the settlement of the Mission of Kenya, the building of the large Mother-House, your support and the support, here in Torino, of more than eighty aspirants and fifty Sisters.

With regard to the monthly offerings that Divine Providence is sending us, gratefully thank the Lord together with me and, praying well the *Pater noster*, beg that they may continue for a long time in order to provide for our many needs both in Africa and here; but be also aware that the Consolata, who has been helping us almost miraculously in our beginnings, may stop doing so if we abuse of her help and do not use all possible means to be self-sufficient by means of our toiling. To this purpose, the S. Propaganda has greatly recommended agricultural cultivations and other works that may support us in the present and in the future.

Let this be your common commitment, especially for those among you who are entrusted with these kinds of works, Brothers, Sisters and priests, who should not feel that they are less missionaries; let them be convinced that they are involved in real apostolate, like the ones who are involved in more spiritual works. Let them have commitment and solicitude, so that their works may prosper. Read again what our Constitutions are saying in this regard.

To the above motives, another one is being added now. We have to think of the new Prefecture of Kaffa which the S. Propaganda had entrusted to us. We shall have to meet once again huge expenses as we did for Kenya: expenses for travelling, provisions, etc. It is up to you to save as much as possible, and with your toiling and savings cooperate to a good foundation of the Prefecture of Kaffa.

Animated by this spirit of economy and poverty, you will be able to say with St. Paul, "*Habentes alimenta et quibus tegamur, his contenti simus*" [As long as we have food and clothing, let's be content]. Know that the life and prosperity of our Institute depends largely on your observance of this economy and spirit.

Happy for being able, by doing so, to alleviate the daily care of your superiors, you will receive God's blessings on your toiling.

What is written above is the common resolution I propose to you, on which you will often examine yuorseves rigorously. May the Lord bless these words of mine, and give all of you the spirit of intelligence to understand them well, and the docility of heart and the constancy to practise them well.[14]

[14] N.B.: This letter, found among our Founder's copies and drafts of letters, was never sent to Kenya. Probably J. Allamano must have been aware of not being able to adequately express his thoughts, not so much on the spiritual level, but on the juridical one.

◀ 153 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 546-547)

To Frs. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero and Giuseppe Maletto

J. M. J. Consolata Shrine, 17 January 1914

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

I am pleased with your confidence; and you should have it as good children. As a father I will tell you freely and clearly what I think and mean.
Your desire for Africa is conforming to your vocation, but the time to go there is subordinated to God's will, which is manifested by the Superiors' mandate. In this regard you must mistrust the inclination of your will, which might want to anticipate God's will. On the other hand it would be a bad sign to be disgusted with the Mother House, where you have received and continue to receive many graces for a better apostolate. And then, wouldn't it be right to give back the bread that has been given you by helping the poor and overloaded superior to carry the weight of the education of your younger brothers and of the works that materially support our Missions!
In regard then to the examination required in order to be allowed to hear Confessions, it is my intention that it should be regularly taken only after two years of practical studies, as it is done in our Diocese. It is not right to ask the Cardinal to allow us in a few months to do what the Diocesan priests are allowed to do only after two years of Convitto, and after having studied Moral Theology for five years in the Seminary. I would also like to add that our people did not always do a good show in front of the diocesan examiners.

Here it's all my thinking open to you, which I feel right *coram Deo* [in front of God]; inform of this, by reading this note, all priests and other people who have received some Holy Orders in our Mother-House.

Everything ad majorem Dei gloriam [for the greater glory of God]...

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 154 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 574-575)

To Sr. Margherita Demaria

Hurray J. M. J. Torino, 16 May 1914

Rev. and dearest Sister Margherita,

I received your nice letter and I thank you for it, being pleased in a special way with your total sincerity and the minute way in which you write to me. It is a matter of importance, and you should not be afraid to pain me.

It would be more painful if, in order not to displease me, you would hide something. All of us want only what is good, for the community and for everyone. On the other hand, the news you told me about, is not different from what I was expecting. People, as they are in the Mother-House such are also in the Missions, perhaps with some increase in human misery, caused by the climate, the diversity of life and a weakening of fervour. Things that, with the help of God's grace, will disappear. You exercise great patience, encouraging, consoling, and correcting always in a maternal way.

Thus, you did well in regard to Sister Caterina, who, having repented, I hope she got settled. In regard to Sister Filomena, if the good ways are not enough, turn to the tough ones, at the end threatening her to send her away. After so much charity used in reprimanding her, she should be humbler, more obedient and active than the others. I am resolved to repatriate her, even before the five-year period is over, if she doesn't get settled. You may also read these words to her.

From the letters received from the Sisters, I see that they feel that they are sacrificed, because they don't move around the area, but they have to carry out material works at the Farm. Try to remove this prejudice from their head, reminding them of what they have been told many times in the Mother-House about the perfect indifference necessary for a missionary. Perhaps what influenced this were the many experienced they saw in the various stations where they passed, where they enjoyed the work of others, and saw the good work of the visits to the villages. I praise the Sisters Costanza, Lucia and Domenica if they will continue with the same spirit. Make sure also that they preserve religious modesty and don't become rough, that in the midst of material works they remain united to God, and direct everything to Him.

Feel free to write about the Baptisms you tell me about and still others. It is better to send the reports to people directly from there, if you know their correct address.

The Community here is proceeding well and is always increasing. At the moment they are making their yearly Spiritual Exercises, at the end of which there will be professions and the taking of the habits.

Courage then in carrying out the important mission the Lord has entrusted to you. He will help you spiritually and physically, as I always ask Him to do, so that you may place a solid foundation to the good work that our present and future Sisters will do.

Thank the Sisters for the dear letters they wrote to me, and tell them what you think I will tell them, because at the moment I cannot write to them.

I bless you at the feet of our Patroness; see that you are always worthy of the name you bear.

In J. M. and J. very aff.

◀ 155 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 584-585)

To Sr. Margherita Demaria

Torino, 13 June 1914

Rev. Sister Margherita,

I have received your letter, and I thank you for having written so much and so minutely. Believe me: not saying everything in order not to saddened me is a false compassion. The whole truth and always so is the best consolation for the one who desires your good and, in this way, knows how things really are.

As I already told you, I don't worry about certain miseries, indeed I was expecting them. By God's grace they will disappear. It is impossible for people who made sacrifices in order to come there and save souls not to rouse themselves, after the first revenges of the devil, and rise with new energy to fight him. Encourage yourself and all the others. They are young and easily discouraged, but they all have good will and the Lord will help them.

You continue to sustain them using charity and forbearance; without neglecting to admonish and correct them, so that they may be worthy of their Mission. Repeat to all of them that God helps those who take courage; that a poor health should not be the cause for the lack of virtue; that one should strive for sanctity more than for health; this the Lord grants to those strong souls who attend wholeheartedly to the duties of obedience.

For you, this is the time for a second Novitiate, during which those who do not prove that they are truly obedient people, active in their works and in every religious and apostolic virtue will lose the grace of their vocation and like the 40th of Tebaste will not have the glory of matyrdoom. Remind them of the fact of Gideon; we should not worry about the number, but about the spirit; unhappy are those who should be repatriated. I am writing all this to you so that you do not worry and, if necessary, after the compassion, make use also of threats against those who would not get properly settled.

I knew in advance that some of the Sisters were not capable to do much like, for instance, Sister Candida; but at least let her be humble and not stubborn; let her work energetically at what she can do. I have already written to you about Sister Filomena; you hold on to that. Regarding Sister Caterina, tell her that I was expecting more of her. Remind all of them of the avowals of *long martyrdom* sustained by an ardent heart; which consists in bearing courageously the small diseases, and then working in any kind of work wanted by obedience, without envying the one of the other Sisters, nor the going around the country. A Sister should be satisfied with the last places and the material work. They should not be guided by the *this is not up to me*; words of real laziness; but they should help each other and steal the work from one another. The reward will be according to the toil: *unusquisque mercedem accipiet secundum suum laborem* [each one will receive according to her labour].

Enough of this. Encourage all of them, particularly Sister Cecilia. I don't know the reason for her indisposition: are you perhaps drinking contaminated water? Be careful... If she has not done it yet, tell her to write to her father, saying that she has healed, without describing the seriousness of the disease. Tell all of them to write to their relatives *according to the given directives*.

Courage: I pray during this dear novena to M. H. Consolata. She will console, heal and form all of you, so that you may be true missionaries.

I bless all of you, and you in a particular way. In the Lord very aff.

I received letters from each one of you; for the time being I am unable to reply; but I pray my Holy Angel to inspire my reply to each one: listen to him. You don't work too hard; take care of yourself and proceed spiritually in peace.

The Sisters of the Mother-House greet all of you...

◀ 156 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 588)

To Sr. Margherita Demaria

Hurray J. M. J. Torino, 27 June 1914

R[ev] and dear Sister Margherita,

We have received your long letter. From it I see a general betterment among the Sisters. Gradually through God's grace all of them will get settled. You don't get discouraged, and continue to direct them suavely but firmly; and don't worry when you get impatient. The Lord will fix also your weaknesses and mistakes...

Read the two letters for Sister Filomena and Sister Caterina and, after sealing them, give them to each one of them. I reply to the one Sister Caterina wrote to me, without involving you. Let's hope for a good result from both of them; if then they shouldn't get settled, we shall find some other remedies.

Courage and many blessings on all of you, and particularly on you.

In the Lord very aff. Father

P. S. I wish you a Happy Feast [*Onomastico*, i. e., Name-Day]; on that day I will send you a special blessing from St. Ignatius'. I take the chance to wish each one of you a Happy Feast at the proper time.

◀ 157 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 589-590)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J St. Ignatius, 10 July 1914

Dear Fr. Costa,

I thank you for your letter and for the news about our dear Priests, Seminarians, Brothers and young people. I bless them on the occasion of their examinations, or rather I pray to our dear Patron St. Ignatius to bless them ad Majorem Dei Gloriam. May this great Saint obtain a true correspondence to their vocation for all of them; may he make us also "Jesuits", that is, full of the spirit of O. L. Jesus Christ and fervent imitators of the virtues of his Divine Heart.

We are at the end of the first turn of the Exercises, which proceeded well; pray that also the next two turns will succeed in helping the participants with their sanctification. Address to this purpose the little sacrifices that the Lord offers to all of you at this time.

I send you a letter of Fr. Molino about Fr. Ciravegna. I have already replied to it. For the time being do not show it to him. Our moralists must be persuaded that they are not perfect in moral theology, and that they should study it evermore.

You and Fr. Chiomio continue studying the doubtful young men, including Luigi. May the Lord enlighten us in regard to their vocation.

Many good wishes to all.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 158 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 592-593)

To Sr. Maria degli Angeli Vassallo di Castiglione

Hurray J. M. J St. Ignatius, 14 July 1914

R[ev] and dear Sister Maria,

I thank you for the two letters of yours, in which you give me good news about the dear missionary Sisters. As I arrived at this mountain, I placed all of you at the feet of St. Ignatius and I let Him think about you. I didn't miss blessing you often and praying so that you may become saints, not only in words and desires, but by the acquisition of solid virtues, especially the characteristics that you well define as being the intimate union with God and the most active hard work. In regard to yourself, be at peace, following the will of God and of the superiors.

I heard from the Rev. V. Rector that the aspirant from Belluno wrote saying that she will no longer come. Well, thus ends her story, and on her envelope you

write “no” for ever. Concerning the Argentero and the Consoli, speak to and decide with the V. Rector. I have no idea in regard to the one of the parish-priest of Torre.

Let’s thank the Lord for the case of Agnese: I will write a few lines to her.

In regard to all the rest, keep going in the Lord, who listens to the good wills of all of you and will make them effective.

My blessing on all of you, and particularly on you... very aff. in J. C.

◀ 159 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 593-594)

To Agnese Battaglia

Hurray J. M. J St. Ignatius’, 14 July 1914

My good Agnese,

You have all reasons for saying heartily *Deo gratias*; and I join you in thanking the Lord for having opened the eyes of your father and your brother. From now on we forget about it, and you should not worry any more.

Now it is up to you to proceed along the way on which God is calling you: to proceed with constancy and to become a saint against any temptation.

Blessed are you who, keeping your eyes directed to Paradise, will one day arrive there with your hands full of good works for the salvation of the souls of unbelievers.

Courage, my good Agnes; I bless you...

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 160 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 594-595)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. St. Ignatius’, 18 July 1914

Dear Fr. Costa,

All of you are probably desiring to have some news about me, and now I am telling you that, thanking God, I did not suffer at all and breathed fresh and healthy air.

I will possibly come back about the middle of the week, and then we will talk about many things. For the time being you arrange for the examinations, remembering that, this year the Feast of St. Ignatius will be celebrated on the 2nd; therefore on the 3rd you shall have to leave for St. Ignatius’. After the examinations, we will allow the four students of the 5th year to go home, as well as those to be dismissed. To all the requests of our students’ relatives, reply with a clear “no”. As soon as possible, send home

for a day the seminarian Sandrone. Probably the Rev. V. Rector has already spoken to you about this.

I pray to the Lord to bless all of you, to strengthen your spirit of piety and the ardour necessary for the studies and the manual works. This kind of energy is absolutely necessary in order to become true missionaries, and so that our Institute may prosper.

Many good wishes to all of you, together with the blessing of St. Ignatius.

very aff. in J. C.

P. S. Prepare something for the celebration of the Feast of St. Giacomo, the Feast-day of the Rev. V. Rector: three or four essays; on my return I will arrange the way to do it.

◀ 161 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 608-609)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. Torino, 8 August 1914

Dear Fr. Costa,

Thank you for the good news I received from the Rev. Bursar and then from your letter that I received this morning. I am pleased with the regularity of the Community, and with the fact that all of them are imbued with the special grace that St. Ignatius is granting them and are committed to respond properly.

At our Mother-House everything is proceeding well and I am going there every other day. Fr. Meineri tells me that, after my general and personal remarks, everybody is following the orders. This morning Luigi came to me asking to come back; naturally I sent him back with little or no hope. Having reproached him for having spoiled the tomato plants by giving them too much verdigris, he answered in his own way by keeping quiet. It's no use talking about his coming back.

Tomorrow evening I will send to you Cesare, Savino, Davide and Eugenio. I think it is good to take this chance to place Davide among the Brothers; therefore, do so.

For the Novena of the Assumption, do something, even by only singing the "*Ave Maris Stella*" [Hail, Star of the Sea]. I still do not know when I will be able to come to visit you. Mgr. Barlassina will come soon. This morning Fr. Ferrero left; he will stay for a short time at his home. Monsignor will come Monday morning, and he will be ready to teach [Kikuyu language] by 11.00 am.

Many good wishes to all.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 162 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 611)

To Sr. Maria degli Angeli Vassallo di Castiglione and Sisters

Hurray J. M. J Torino, 8 August 1914

My good Sister Maria and all Consolata Sisters,

I have received news about you from the Rev. Bursar and then from the Rev. Prefect. As well as your holidays began, so they will proceed if, by taking advantage of the materially healthy air to *strengthen* your bodies, you will keep in front of your eyes the *spiritual air* that surrounds you on that holy mountain.

Day and night Jesus dominates you and among you, and St. Ignatius maintains that place as the throne of his graces, all of his own. Live by faith and you will feel the effects of the supernatural.

The Sisters at Rivoli and at Torino are all well and peaceful; and nothing new has taken place. Keep going then with an intensive care, because these days will pass quickly.

I still do not know when I will be able to come to visit you; but I bless you often and remember you in front of our M. H. Consolata. Get ready for the Solemnity of the Assumption, not by multiplying your prayers, but by increasing your fervour.

I bless all of you wholeheartedly and you pray for me.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 163 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 614-615)

To Giulio Peyrani

Hurray J. M. J. [between 12 and 19 August 1914]

Dear young man,

As we had agreed, I have written to the Very Rev. Rector of the Seminary of Giaveno. He replied giving me good news about you; he regrets, however, that you leave before completing the Gymnasium. I would advise you to write to him, informing him of your decision and giving the reasons that lead you to do so, as the burden on your parents and the greatest difficulty in obtaining next year the consent of the Archbishop. You could also add that, after having prayed and asked for advice, you feel you should answer now the voice of God: *Hodie si vocem audieritis nolite obdurare corda vestra* [If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts]. Do not tell him anything about what we spoke about.

Having received his reply, come to see me in Torino, where I will be after the 21st of this month.

Many good wishes to your good parents; and let's pray to he M. H. Consolata...

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 164 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 616-617)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. Torino, 20 August 1914

Dear Fr. Costa,

The news of the sudden death of the Holy Father has probably already reached you by means of Mgr. Barlassina and then by the *Momento* [newspaper], sent to you by Fr. Dolza. If such a death is a calamity for the whole Christianity, that is losing a Father according to the spirit of God, for our Institute is a very serious loss.

He loved us as his favourite children, and always granted us whatever we asked. He was deeply pleased with our good beginnings and was encouraging us to grow in number and in virtue. He used to say that he was consoled by the work of our missionaries, who were bringing new children to the Church, in exchange for the many ungrateful European Christians. Let's mourn his death... As a sign of gratitude, let's pray for his Holy Soul.

To this purpose you will sing a *Requiem* Mass, with only one Priests, since you do not have the proper vestments, during which all those who can should receive Communion to the benefit of his soul. You will do this next week, *in die septima* [on the seventh day]. For nine days you will offer your Communions, H. Rosaries, with requiem, for his great Soul; every evening, after the *Angelus*, you will sing the *De Profundis* [Ps 129/130] with the first *oremus* [prayer] given by the Missal: *Deus qui inter summos Sacerdotes...* [God who among the high Priests...]

The priests then, omitting for the time being the *oremus* against the war, should say the one *Pro eligendo Summo Pontifice* [For the election of the Supreme Pontiff], till the election of a new Pope. This should be observed in all Blessings by the M. H. Sacrament, during which, after the litanies, you will sing the *Veni Creator* [Come, Creator (Spirit)] with its *oremus* and *three Ave* to our Consolata. In Torino we will join you and do all that is possible to us. Our Institute, the Consolata Shrine, and the Ven. Cafasso have sufficient reason to mourn; but we hope to have, soon, a Protector in Paradise.

May the Lord bless all of you, as I pray for all of you to our dear Consolata.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 165 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 622-623)

To Fr. Lorenzo Sales

J. M. J. Torino, 5 September 1914

Dear Fr. Sales,

I thank you for the news you sent me; keep going this way, since you know well how much I care about anything, good or bad, of our dear Institute. I have entrusted the Rev. Prefect with the task of replying to you; I am now adding a few words in regard to the H. Father.

While you continue praying in favour of the great soul of Pius X, rejoice greatly for the elevation of Card. Della Chiesa as the new H. F. Benedict XV. Besides the reason, common to all, that we have in Him a new Pope, for us there is a special reason, that is his devotion to our Holy Patroness, the Consolata: He asked specifically our Archbishop to pray for Him at the Shrine. Let's rejoice and thank the Lord by singing the *Te Deum* [a Hymn of Thanksgiving] tomorrow at the Benediction and by praying the *Oremus pro gratiarum actione* [prayer in thanksgiving] for three days after the H. Mass and the various Blessings during the day.

What mostly matters to the new H. Father is certainly our firm profession of Faith in the H. Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church. And you, tomorrow, during your monthly Retreat, renew this Profession by means of the *Credo*. And since every Christian obedience comes from the Pope, and through Him reaches out to all spiritual superiors, even the least ones, you should promise obedience to your superiors, all of them and always. This is your best gift to the new Pope.

I bless you.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 166 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 624-625)

To Fr. Lorenzo Sales

J. M. J. Torino, 5 September 1914

Dear Fr. Sales,

I received your letter after the three Brothers had left; I reply to you now and the letter will be brought to you by Br. Angelo who will come there tomorrow morning. Tell the Sisters that, if they need sugar, they should buy it from Cordero at Lanzo and, if it is very urgent, from the very hotelier of Piano di St. Ignazio. The Sister Superior is surprised at the lack of it

because, according to last year's calculation it should have been sufficient; anyhow, buy what is needed at Lanzo.

I am sorry about the sick, but they are small miseries that will disappear. You acted well with the seminarian Albertone, and be firm in controlling the bad mania of studying. I don't think we should remove the daily *hour* of teaching the Kikuyu language. There already is no other study and, as you say, is not an intensive kind of study... we would be raising up lazy people... Already during last year, Fr. Giaccardi, and maybe other professors, complained that people were studying less than in the previous years. Yet I had already released them from classes of manual work... It seems that, when there is more to be done, more is done; and on the contrary... At the beginning of the new schoolyear, I intend to shake up such an inertia, especially in the young seminarians.

In regard to the speaking of languages, since the recreations are exempted, and it is tolerated during long walks, I don't see any need to change the rules. This for those who do it willingly or dutyfully cannot do any harm. In regard to this, feel free to tell the individuals and the community what you feel is good for them.

It seems to me that the long walks, if too many, are not good for many people. So, after doing another one of a whole day, don't allow any others, but only one in the morning, or in the evening, till the end. Fr. Meineri and the *last-arrived* Brothers, not those already there, may do one on Monday and one on Wednesday. Thursday morning *all* Brothers should return to Torino. If there will be any need to repair shoes, the seminarians will do it.

For all the rest, courage; well, they are all little miseries...

Many good wishes in the Lord to all of you.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 167 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 638-639)

To the missionaries in Kenya

Torino, 15 September 1914

My dearest in O. L. Jesus Christ,

I have been waiting for the time of your Spiritual Exercises to answer your joint letters of the past year. The Exercises are getting near, and I wish to thank you for the sentiments of affection for me that you have expressed, and to congratulate you for the resolutions of greater perfection in your personal and apostolic life that you made in the last Exercises. With the fervour inspired to you in those days by the good preachers and by the conferences of your Vicar (Bishop Perlo), you renewed in yourselves the spirit of your vocation, resolving to put more diligence in your prayers and

to practise a more perfect obedience to you superiors. I thanked the Lord and, as I was reading your names one by one, it seemed to me that you were present in front of me as when you were here in Torino. I placed your names [and resolutions] at the feet of our Patroness so that she could bless them and obtain for you the grace to practise them.

But, in order to succeed in so doing, you should make notes of them, as it is done here in the Mother-House, and recall them to your mind every morning during meditation, in the evening during the examination of conscience, for your weekly Confession, and especially in the days of your monthly Retreats.

Now, after a year, as you gather again for your Spiritual Exercises, examine yourselves on the fruits you reaped; if you fulfilled them, thank the Lord; if not, ask for forgiveness and make stronger resolutions, looking for ways and means to be more faithful in the future.

You have already heard of the death of our Holy Father, Pope Pius X, and of the election of the new Pope, Benedict XV. You have prayed and will continue to pray for the holy soul of Pius X, also as our special benefactor. You know how much he loved our Institute; for this reason, his name will be written in golden letters in our history.

The new Pope, a devotee of our Consolata, will also love the missions that bear Her name. Pray that in these difficult times He may be able to accomplish all the good He desires. Let us promise to Him, as Vicar of O. L. J. C., our obedience of mind and heart, and let us console Him by increasing the number of Christians in order to compensate for the many Catholics whom error and vice snatch away from our Holy Church.

May the good Lord bless your oncoming Exercises, so that they may contribute to your greater sanctification. I recommend all of you to our Most Holy Consolata, in Whose name I fatherly bless you, the good Sisters, and your dear people. In J. M. J. very aff.

◀ 168 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 648)

To Sr. Margherita Demaria

J. M. J Torino, 4 November 1914

Rev. and dearest Sister Margherita,

The Lord is testing us, and we kiss His H. Hand. Everything will be for the best, whether the Sisters will heal, or whether they will depart for Paradise. But my heart tell me that they will heal; and together with the body the Lord will heal also their souls. They need to rouse themselves from similar miseries, and go back to the resolutions taken in Torino, and in this way make up for the lost time.

I demand that the two Sisters and Sister Filomena stop the refrain of jealousy; tell this to them clearly on my behalf. You keep going with your method which I consider right; and see that you don't get tired bodily or spiritually because of them; preserve your strength for other things that are more important and make also others serve the sick. During their convalescence, remind them of their vow and spirit of poverty and of the gratitude to the Institute. On the other hand, I am pleased with the good spirit of most of them, and I thank the Lord for it.

I bless all of you, also those of Tetu, from whom I received pleasant letters.

Courage particularly to you; I pray to the M. H. Consolata to sustain and console you. In J. M. J. very aff.

◀ 169 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 678)

To an unknown Brother

Torino, 21 December 1914

I am pleased with you and the dear Bartolomeo and Eugenio, your companions. Love one another, correct one another, and help one another to do everything out of love for Jesus.

I bless you at the altar of Our Lady Consolata. very aff. in J. C.

◀ 170 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 682-683)

To the Consolata missionary Sisters in Kenya

Hurray J. M. J. Torino, 27 December 1914

My dearest in O. L. J. C. Sister Superior, Assistant, and all Sisters,

It is more than a year since your departure and your living in Africa: and your fist year of Apostolate is very important, both for you and for the future of our Institute. As a matter of fact, it is the first test of your missionary virtues, so that your example may be a norm for the Sisters who will follow you. Therefore, make a serious examination of the way in which you have lived this time. If your heart assures you that you have responded well to the grace of your sublime vocation, thank the Lord; and revive in you the true spirit of a missionary, in order to grow ever more in perfection and in zeal for the souls of unbelievers.

Should your conscience reproach you for infidelity, and for having failed in the generous promises you made during your formation, and especially at the

time of your departure, repent sincerely; and work right away to repair your wrongdoing and your failures by means of firm and constant resolutions.

Don't take it badly if, as the father of your souls, I speak clearly, and I tell you that, while during the year the good news about most of you greatly consoled me, those about some of you who did not agree with my expectations and to the promises made in front of the H. Altar greatly pained me. Not all of you and not always have been promptly and cordially obedient to the Superior and her Assistant; and this in regard to any work also a material one, and in carrying it out with punctuality; lack of generous charity in helping one another with your occupations; but there were pride, envy and jealousy so as to give bad example not only to your Sisters, but also to outsiders.

The good God wanted to test you by means of diseases, even serious ones, for a good nember of you; and someone showed little patience and spirit of mortification, but rather intolerance and lack of gratitude to the solicitudes of the Superiors, especially your good Superior, bymeans of exaggerated demands in regard to treatments and food, certainly not conforming to your professed poverty. I am telling you things that you have seen on your own, and that were reported to me, not so much by your Superior, but by others who were certainly not edified by them.

While, as a father, I can have compassion for human frailty, I cannot and do not intend to allow things to proceed in this way. Let the guilty ones recover their senses and think about the consequences of such a behaviour in front of God and of your Superiors. The Lord does not need you, and may also withdraw the grace of your vocation because of lack of a proper response to it; in this case the consequences will be terrible, both during your life and at the time of your death.

Forgive me for this fatherly outburst, which I judged necessary in order to put all of you back on the right track: the faithful ones to be reaffirmed, and the others to go back to their original fervour. I am sure that the second year will remedy the deficiencies of the first; and so, our M. H. Consolata will be pleased with Her favourite daughters.

I will pray for you every day at the Altar of our heavenly Patroness, from where I bless you wholeheartedly. Very aff. in J. M. J.

◀ 171 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 685)

To Sr. Margherita Demaria

J. M. J. Torino, 28 December 1914

Rev. and dearest Sister Margherita,

I am sending you the enclosed letter to be read to the Sisters. You may think it is rather severe; however, read the whole of it to all the Sisters.

I thought about it and meditated it in front of our M. H. Consolata. You have courage in the Lord; He will sustain you bodily and spiritually, a I am asking Him to do.

Write always about everything as you see it, and be at peace...

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 172 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 694)

To Sr. Maria degli Angeli Vassallo di Castiglione

Torino, second half of 1914

I think we should establish that, in case of a *true danger* of death of the *father* or the *mother*, not of brothers or others, we may allow the Sisters to go home as the Salesian Sisters of Don Bosco do. Make sure now that there is *real danger* as the postcard says. If the Sister knows that the Chaplain does not exaggerate in describing things, let her go tomorrow and come back at the earliest, for instance on Monday, unless he should die, when she may stay for the burial, if she feels it opportune.

Otherwise she may telegraph.

About the Pregno, we have agreed not to accept her, whether they come there, or here to me tomorrow.

About the one of Saluzzo, patience: you could write to her and tell her to pray and hope.

About the one of that little town... (this morning) do not write any longer; let's forget the matter already too long and mystified.

◀ 173 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VI, 696)

To the seminarian Domenico Spinello

Torino, second half of 1914

You obey and the Lord will bless you. However, you may mention the problems to your Superiors, especially for what concerns teaching the Students.

Courage and trust in God; I bless you.

◀ 174 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 23)

To Fr. Lorenzo Sales

Torino, January 1915

Dear Fr. Sales,

You suffered a little during the journey [sea-sickness]; but now you will be all right. I confirm, *nullis rebus ostantibus* [in spite of everything], the written saying: *hanc regulam secutus... pax... et misericordia...* [the one who has followed this rule (will have) peace... and mercy...].

Courage: *Dominus tecum* [the Lord is with you]. very aff.

◀ 175 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 102-103)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. Torino, 23 June 1915

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

I received this morning you dearest letter to which I could not reply immediately [Fr. Costa is at his home, in order to rest].

I am pleased with the fact that you are already feeling a bit better; continue your total rest, and our Most Holy Consolata will heal you soon.

Here at the Institute everything is proceeding as usual. This evening Fr. Bolla and Ugo [a Brother] will begin their Spiritual Exercises. Tomorrow there will be the celebration of St. John the Baptist [Patron of Torino]. Three postcards have arrived: one from the father of the seminarian Baldi, who is thanking us; one from Br. Savino and one from the seminarian Sciolla, who are giving good news and Br. Savino is thanking you for your letter. Just now a card has arrived from Sciolla for Borello Giovanni.[15]

For all the rest we are in the H. Hands of God, and may His Most Holy Will be done in everything.

Best regards to your good mother and to all your relatives; best regards also to the Rev. Vicar and greetings to the assistant parish-priests...

Happy Feast of St. John... very aff. in J. C.

[15] The young people mentioned are all in the Army, during World War I, started in May.

◀ 176 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 105)

To the seminarian Eugenio Valentino Baldi
[in the Army]

Torino, 30 June 1915

My dearest,

We have received your news, and are glad about your good humour. Try to be prudent in everything. When you can, meet with your dear companions, and support one another in doing good. I hope that you will pass successfully this test and come back strengthened in body and soul.

Remember the Institute and his spirit: and live by it. The Most Holy Consolata to Whom many soldiers turn, will assist you. I registered you in Company of the *soldiers*, as it is called. Sometime imagine that I am next to you and what I would tell you... I bless you often.

◀ 177 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 107)

To the deacon Giovanni Mauro
[in the Army]

Torino, 30 June 1915

My dearest,

I am glad to hear that you are strong and courageous. Away with the pains, and absolute confidence in God and in our Most Holy Consolata. You are dispensed from the Breviary; just keep united with God by means of good thoughts. When possible, go to your companions and listen to them, especially Ferrero, who is representing the superiors. The M. H. Consolata will make you return to us healthy, and stronger both in body and spirit. All of us love you and pray for you. Courage...

You are a son of the Consolata, who has already worked miracles there...

I bless you often.

◀ 178 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 111-112)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 6 July 1915

Dear Fr. Costa,

There is no need of telling you that I remember our dear Institute. All of you: Africa, priests, seminarians, brothers and students, and especially our

soldiers have been deposed in front of St. Ignatius, in order to take them back in my mind at the end of the Exercises: but my thought is always there; and I always try to send it away so that the Saint may think about it…

I am pleased with the news about studies and examinations. I imagine that the weather will be quite hot, since also here it is not cold. Encourage Fr. Meineri and Antonio [sick].

May the M. H. Consolata assist our soldiers and may She bring them back soon and healthy to our nest. It would be excellent if the three people of Torino [the seminarians Carlo Re, Giovanni Borello and Mario Borello] could obtain to remain in Piedmont as male nurses; let them enquire and, if possible, apply for it, presenting a testimonial of their medical studies.

In regard to the Masses of the two [Fr. Ferrero and Fr. Cavallo, who were in the Army], do not worry; just write down what you know and give the note to the Rev. Vice-Rector. Write to Valdieri's friend but, in order to be more certain, tell him to come in August. As far as you are concerned, as I already told you, take care of yourself in regard to food, rest, and frequent short walks.

Many good wishes to all, and the blessing of
your very aff. in J. C.

P. S. It would be good if you could go to the Parish priest of S. Massimo, to find out if he had a chance to recommend our three people [Carlo Re, Giovanni Borello, and Mario Borello] to the Captain.
Best regards to the Rev. Superior and all the good Sisters: St Ignatius is sending them some of his spirit, according to his letter on obedience.

◀ 179 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 114-115)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 9 July 1915

Dear Fr. Costa,

I just received your letter, and I am replying to it briefly. I am glad to hear that everything is proceeding normally there; remind everybody that our dear soldiers are suffering from cold weather, rain, hunger, etc.; it is, therefore, right that all of you be generous in suffering from some hot weather, sacrificing your tongue and studying diligently, in order to sustain them and obtain from our most holy Consolata that She may console and sustain them, and bring them back to us soon, healthy and also reinvigorated in spirit, the poor people…

I don't know if you have already read to them the letters and postcards they sent to me; I am returning them to you, so that you may read them to them, according to your prudence; the one of Fr. Ferrero will certainly do

good to them. In the meantime, make them write some postcards: for instance the novices to Fr. Ferrero; the students to the seminarian Sciolla, and so forth, with only a signature on each of them. Make sure that they are serious, full of spirit and rather *Italian* [patriotic]. Encourage *Fr. Meineri*; I am praying for him so that his sickness may not become incurable. All right about the three soldiers [C. Re and G. and M. Borello] in Torino.

For the rest, we live by faith and all confident in God. Pray for your very aff. in J. C.

P. S. The seminarian Calandri wrote to me saying that he has become sick again, and is asking permission to go for some time on the mountain, according to the desire of his relatives; I will answer "yes".

◀ 180 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 117)

To Sr. Maria degli Angeli Vassallo di Castiglione

Hurray J. M. J. Torino, 9 July 1915

Very Rev. and dear superior Sister Maria degli Angeli,

From this Holy Mountain [St. Ignatius'], from where I often bless you during the day, I greet you warmly. I believe that you are praying and making little sacrifices, due to the hot weather, etc., not only for me, but even more for our confreres in the Army.

Yes, through the intercession of our most Holy Consolata, obtain for them all the graces they need both for their souls and their bodies. The Rev Fr. Ferrero wrote to me saying that you have promised him to do so. Ask Fr. Costa, the prefect, to show you his letter.

In regard to all the rest, keep well and joyful in the Lord...
very aff. in J. C.

◀ 181 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 121)

To Sister Maddalena Audisio

St Ignatius', after 13 July 1915

Dear Sister Maddalena,

We have prayed for your brother [who died in the War]. You take courage and be resigned to God's will, who is always a Father, and who, at that particular time, must have helped your brother in an extraordinary way.

◀ 182 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 122-123

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J St. Ignatius', 16 July 1915

Dear Fr. Costa,

I am sending you the letters I have received from the [Army] Camp. I am pleased with the one of Br. Savino: we know that now he is healthy.

I think you could do well in sending 25 liras to Fr. Ferrero, where there is the largest group; find the safest way to do so.

I am sorry about the bad news of the seminarian Calandri [sick at his home]; I am recommending him by means of a vow to St. Ignatius, and I still hope. Try to know something about him even by means of a telegram and, if convenient, go to visit him and take to him my blessing. Keep me informed and speak about this with the Rev. Vice-Rector.

The Lord is really trying us, as well as all people, in exceptional times like these. He will draw good from everything. The very departure, or rather our missing them, the four who left [for the missions] must have affected everybody. Try to keep up their morale. Speak with the V. Rector about the Hospital; I think it is good to send some [for hospital practice] as you say.

For all the rest we are in the hands of God and of our Consolata; and let God's H. Will be done.

Wouldn't it be good to delay the examinations, at least for the students [the youngest classes], so that they still have something to do...

Write to me about this...

Very aff. in J. C.

I had already written the above as a precaution, when I received your letters. We give thanks for the good luck of the four [who have departed] and pray for their good journey by means of the usual prayers.

Deo gratias for the news about Antonio and Fr. Meineri, to whom you will tell that I am praying for the courage of St. Ignatius.

I am renewing the invitation to go on Monday to Moretta to visit the seminarian Calandri. Let's still hope that it is something that can be healed; but there is need for courage; take to him my blessing. In regard to the Ordinations, we shall speak about them on my return.

Courage to all and the blessing of St. Ignatius.

very aff. in J. C.

P. S. When writing to our soldiers be careful not to say anything about the departure of the four, and even less the reasons for which they left.
Also the three in Torino [three seminarians] should not write without your rigorous supervision.

◀ 183 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 125-126)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 20 July 1915

Dear Fr. Costa,

I thank the Lord for the improvement of the seminarian Calandri; let's hope that he may be well soon. You will have enquired about the way he got sick, and whether that blood comes from his lungs or not. In case of lungs' weakness, the mountain will not be good for him...

The V. Rector was supposed to go to the thermal waters of St. Genesio; if he has gone, just write a letter to him from all of you, as our four people in Udine [two Fathers and two seminarians] have already done. If he is still in Torino, you could ask him to come there, or you could go to the Consolata Shrine to wish him a happy *onomastico* [name-day]. In any case, it will be good if each class would write a letter to him: Seminarians, Brothers and Students. Tell this also to the Sisters.

I intend, if nothing intervenes, to remain at St. Ignatius' till the 1st of August for the Feast. I will rest for a week: this will be my holiday. So that you know.

Toward the end of the examinations, write a nice letter to the Parish-Priest of Nasi [a student] and to the Toselli [friends]. I will write to the Parish-Preist of Buttigliera Alta [the Parish of Albino Chiarle]. Let those of the 5th year go home for a few days, except the one from Brescia [Ciatti] who is not supposed to go.

May the Lord bless all of you as I always pray for through the intercession of St. Ignatius. very aff. In J. C.

P. S. Give the above news to the Sister Superior; I have no time to do it.

◀ 184 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 130)

To Sister Maria degli Angeli di Castiglione

Hurray J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 22 July 1915

Dear Sister Maria,

I thank you for the good news about the health of the Sisters and the common good spirit. As far as you are concerned, keep going in peace, certain of practicing obedience; the Lord makes up for any deficiencies of ours...

You will not do the walk to St. Ignatius' next week, but later; some of you will come, while the missionaries will come a few at the time. The V. Rector will write to you about this, if he will not come back to Torino.

Unfortunately, you will be able to celebrate the Feast of the V. Rector only by means of a letter, since he has run away from Torino as usual.

All right about the Gerbore [a postulant].

I intend to come back to Torino only on the 1st of August. Then I will remain there constantly. Many good wishes to all of you and many blessings of St. Ignatius. In J. C. very aff.

◀ 185 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 132-133)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 24 July 1915

Dear Fr. Costa,

I am sending you a nice letter from our dear Fr. Ferrero. To our young people you will able to read only a few parts of it. I shall reply to him.

Since I have to stay here till Sunday, the 1st of August, it will be fitting that you read all the examinations' marks on Friday evening; in this way, also those who will come to St. Ignatius' on Saturday will know them, as well as those who will go to their homes on Monday. As we had agreed, I will write only to the Parish Priest of Buttigliera Alta [the Parish Priest of Albino Chiarle], and you will write to the others [the Parish Priest of Nasi and the Toselli (friends)]. I have written to the Rev V. Rector in order to know whether Dolza and Carlo could be away from the store.

After receiving his reply, we shall decide.

The Exercise to the lay people is ending, and it seems that some good has been done: *Deo Gratias*!

Many good wishes to all, together with the Blessing of St. Ignatius.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 186 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 134)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero
[in the Army]

J. M. J. Shrine of St Ignatius, 26 July 1915

Dearest Fr. Ferrero,

Your letters are always very welcome, the more frequent and longer they are, the better. They are comfort to you and a great consolation to me. I

cannot tell you how much I suffer for all of you, and especially for you, whom I know as very sensible, both spiritually and corporally. I continually pray to our Most Holy Consolata, so that She may sustain you in your hard trials and shorten the time of the *hard trials*.

In the meantime you continue your good work in favour of your confreres; you have been entrusted with this mission by me. Warn them in a brotherly way, sustain them in spirit, and help them also materially. The Rev. Prefect has sent you 25 liras; but I am willing to send you all that you need, not only for what is necessary, but also for comfort and consolation. Feel free to write to me. In this way, you did well in regard to the photograph, that I will heartily receive; do it freely in any other occasion. I heard that Fr. Garrone has come back in order to convalesce. Up there remain only the good confrere [the seminarian Michele Bruno] for whom, as well as for Br. Savino [Agagliatti] I specially pray.

You probably have already heard about the departure of the 4; may the Lord help them...

I will return to Torino quite soon and will remain there constantly. The seminarians and the young people, this year will not come to remain for long at St. Ignatius', but only *ad tempus* [temporarily]...

Courage then to all of you; tell them that they *should obey your commands and your counsels: everything*.

I bless you in the presence of St. Ignatius.

very aff. in O. L. J. C.

◀ 187 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 135-136)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 27 July 1915

V. R. and dear Fr. Costa,

The news about the House are good. Tell Th. Tamietti to correct [the exams] and give the marks. To Canon Dematteis we will then tell that we had to act in this way out of urgency. For marks on behaviour let them be generous, especially in regard to those to be promoted as we have already decided, leaving low those for whom it is convenient to repeat; about accidental matters each one should be given in accordance to his merit.

In regard to coming to Saint Ignatius' make up three groups, each with his own superior: Fr. Chiomio, Fr. Maletto and you. In this way, it will not make too great an impression in Torino, now that I see from the newspapers that many refugees, especially boys, are being introduced into the city. Among the first to come will be those who come for the feast [of St.

Ignatius]; the others will come on Monday, as early as they can, walking. Let them not bring any kind of clothing, since they will already return on Saturday evening as we have agreed. However, the missionary Sisters will be needed for the meals. For Monday at lunch, though, the Albertine Sisters will take care; speak about this to the Reverend Bursar.

I am now reading on today's *Momento* [a newspaper] that every day *a hundred* boys go to play and remain there all day long at the Salesian oratory [*oratorio*][16]; and *as many* girls go to the Sisters of Don Bosco...; I wouldn't like anything similar happening to us, as they see empty places...

I will be back in Torino Sunday evening but late, so that I will not be able to come to the Institute.

Many good wishes to all of you.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 188 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 144)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 30 July 1915

Dear Fr. Costa,

I am amazed at the fact that you have not yet received my letter, which I sent immediately after receiving yours, together within one to our Bursar. In it, that by now you should have received, I had given you the norms for coming St. Ignatius' and for the examinations.

I am replying only to what is new in your letter. Leave Gallo, Marcellino and Ronco [seminarians] as they are. To Marchina add a mark.

The marks of those of the 2nd year are quite miserable; perhaps we should think of sending some home because of their ineptitude. I can't understand why so many [failed]...

I have also received a postcard of the seminarian Bruno [in the Army], but it doesn't say much.. Tell the three [C. Re and M. and P. Borello] to work, but also, in a nice way, to make known to the Sisters [at the military hospital] their just claims. Fr. Garrone wrote to me a postcard saying that he feels better and hopes to come soon to the Institute.

Many good wishes to all...

very aff. in J. C.

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[16] Oratory [*Oratorio*, in Italian] is a typical institution of Italy; in each parish, it is a place where boys and girls are gathered for recreational, educational and training activities. Don Bosco's oratories are famous, as recalled in this Allamano's letter.

◀ 189 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 167)

To the seminarian Eugenio Valentino Baldi

J. M. J. Torino, 18 August 1915

My dearest in J. C.,

I have been praying for you [in the Army], and now I am pleased with your transfer and your growth as a better person. However, I know that, among soldiers, the moral dangers are serious; and you strive to use all the means to remain upright. The divine presence and the continual recourse to the Most Holy Virgin and to your H. Guardian Angel are the true preservatives, united with a greater attendance at the H. Mass and the H. Sacraments.

By doing so, you will not allow yourself to weaken, with the real danger of become mundane and loosing your vocation. Recommend yourself to St. Daniel, who remained unharmed in the midst of lions... It is better to stay alone, not speaking too much, and believed to be a misanthrope, rather than pleasing your fellow-soldiers... You expect your great promotions from the Lord.

Together with this letter I am sending you 15 Liras; however I desire that you do not smoke without any real need, and do not seat at table with people who are richer than we are.

I am praying for you and I bless you. very aff.

◀ 190 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 168)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. Torino, 20 August 1915

Dear Fr. Costa,

Here everything is all right. I decided to begin the Spiritual Exercises on the evening of the 8th of September; in this way they will be good also for the two people who are to be Ordained. I sent home [for a quick visit] the seminarians Borello Oreste and Camisassi, and Giacomino. The new students already accepted are 12. The Lord will sustain our Institute.

My good wishes to all. very aff. in J. C.

P. S. If you think of letting go home for a few hours the seminarians Perino and Merlo P[ich], you may do so. They should return next Saturday, unless we decide otherwise.
Walks lasting a full day: you may do 2 a week.

If I send Giacomino and Davide [a seminarian and a Brother] on Sunday, Antonio [a Brother] should still return on that evening. Even if they do not come because they go to De Luca, Antonio should still come back.

◀ 191 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 172)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J Torino, 23 August 1915

Dear Fr. Costa,

I hope that your health is better; pray St. Ignatius to obtain for you a full healing, so that you may better consecrate yourself to the good of our dear young people. We are waiting for you on Saturday, toward evening; the Bursar of the Consolata Shrine will come there before; you will hand over to him everything, including the breakages. Here everybody is all right, and this evening they will go to Rivoli for the walk you have already done.

I have already accepted 13 boys; I will tell them to come on 20th September, after the [Spiritual] Exercises, which will begin on 8th September, so that will serve also for those to be Ordained.

Today Br. Davide will come to you; he will come back together with you on Saturday. I let Giacomino go home since last Saturday evening: he is not yet back; but he will remain in Torino.

Many good wishes to all, and pray to St. Ignatius for our special needs.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 192 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 173)

To Fr. Giovanni Battista Rolfo

Torino, after the 25th of August 1915

Dear Fr. Rolfo,

It was also my desire that you should change place. It was necessary for the good of our missions. So it is not due to any lack of trust in you: absolutely not. In your new place, with God's help, you will do good.

Courage: *infirma elegit Deus* [God chose weak things], and you will become a saint. I bless you every day, and I recommend you to our Consolata.

◀ 193 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 174)

To Fr. Costanzo Cagnolo

J. M. J. Torino, 28 August 1915

Dear Fr. Cagnolo,

The news you have been giving me in several letters about the Seminary console me greatly. The Seminary is indeed very important for the future of the Vicariate, and it should be the apple of our eyes. You are quite lucky for having been chosen to form these first students. Strive by means of your example and by their formation to make them penetrate the highness of Priesthood and, consequently, all the necessary virtues in order to reach it.

I replied to their letter in a simple way, and I will do so willingly any other time.

I am glad to hear that Monsignor has given you the dear Fr. Sales to help you. United in spirit, make many saints of your dear seminarians, according to Monsignor's directives. Our V. Rector recommends to you to collect all the memories of such a foundation and of the lives of each student before and during their training. These are the simple things and sayings that make our magazine appreciated.

Tell Fr. Sales that we have received several of his writings, which are enjoyed by our Seminarians, and will also be enjoyed by the public. Greet him and tell him that I will write to him soon.

May our Most Holy Consolata bless you. very aff. in J. C.

◀ 194 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 176)

To Fr. Francesco Gamberutti

J. M. J. Torino, 29 August 1915

R[ev] and dearest Fr. Gamberutti,

It is a long time since I should and wanted to write to you and to your good young people [the chiefs' sons]. There is no need to tell you how pleased I was with the two nice letters and their delicate feelings. I will willingly write some other times... You should be consoled by the good you are carrying out in this mission: it is of the greatest importance.

As in the past, you will also find disappointments and lack of proper response; but don't get discouraged: a lot of good is being done and it will remain. Keep going with courage; and I pray to the M. H. Consolata to obtain for you patience, prudence and all the necessary virtues in order to become a holy missionary and to carry out well and with the greatest fruit your present work.

Monsignor likes you and places a lot of trust in you; forget then all pains and shadows. Let's work *in Domino* and only for Him.

I heartily bless you. very aff. in J. C.

◀ 195 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 202)

To Fr. Luigi Rosso

Torino, after 5th September 1915

Dear Fr. Rosso,

I rarely receive letters from you. It is true that also I cannot reply too much; but they are very welcome. I hope that all of you in the Meru area are continuing working with a good spirit, especially those who had a longer formation in our Mother-House.

Remember to think and work always in the presence of God.

I bless all of you, very aff.

◀ 196 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 203)

To Fr. Giuseppe Maletto

Torino, 6 September 1915

On behalf of God I assure you that all your Ordinations, and particularly the Priestly Ordination, were valid and licit, *nullis rebus obstantibus*, that is *in spite of any reason and doubt to the contrary, past, present and future.* And I order you on behalf of God to believe this, as I have written now, with the certainty of faith, even in regard to the eternal salvation of yours and other people's souls.

◀ 197 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 204)

To the seminarian Domenico Spinello

uncertain date

Courage and confidence in God. No matter the cost, I want to become a saint...; soon and always at work. Every victory attracts a favour from God and the peace of the heart. Defeated, I repeat the fight.

The M. H. Mary Consolata will help you.

◀ 198 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 209-210)

To Fr. Angelo Dal Canton

Torino, 25 September 1915

Dear Dal Canton,

I have received news about you twice: the first, dated 20th June (from Burgi); the other dated 17th July (from Abara of Sidamo); and then another one, dated 7th August (from Abara of Sidamo). You can imagine our sorrow, knowing your situation [in jail] and separated from your dear Brother [Anselmo Jeantet, who had also been arrested, later]. We have been doubling our prayers to the M. H. Consolata, so that She may console you, strengthen you, and free you soon from such a great distress.

Even before now, we have been making moves: we approached the Queen Mother and the Duchess of Aosta. She intervened energetically with the Foreign Ministry that she called to an audience; she obtained immediate action: she telegraphed immediately to Count Colli, and wrote peremptory orders. As you see we have not been sleeping; and that is what Mgr. Perlo has been doing from Kenya; I hope that, by now, things are getting settled. I would like to send you money but, fearing that they would not reach you, I entrusted this to Monsignor. Anyway, if you can, even by means of telegram, let me know your present situation, your needs, and a safe way to help you.

Let our anxiety comfort you, together with the prayers that are done for you in our Institute, at the Consolata Shrine and by many good people. The Lord will give you, like in the past, the strength and constancy of the Apostles and Martyrs; and how many merits will be yours! Besides our dear Consolata, we recommend all good results to St. Michael, the Archangel, protector of the Church and of the nations, to whom I recommended you by a special vow; you too invoke his help and make him your special patron.

Courage then in the Lord, and let my daily paternal blessing comfort you.

Your very aff. in J. C.

◀ 199 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 211-212)

To the seminarian Eugenio Valentino Baldi

J. M. J. Torino, 8 October 1915

Dear Baldi,

My first word is one of pardon, as O. L. Jesus Christ has already told you. Absolute silence of confidence and true perpetual forgetfulness. Courage:

surgam [I will rise]...; *ecce dixi nunc coepi* [I said now I begin]. Let's thank the Lord for not having gone any lower...

The Lord had suggested to me that letter, and my fears... the due cautions...

Remedy immediately: a lot of prayer, frequent and sincere Confession, flight, flight, flight... *Nec Davide sanctior, nec Sansone fortior, nec Salomone sapientior* [Not holier than David, nor stronger than Samson, nor wiser than Salomon]. Let life be: hard penance and preservation.

Write to me soon to console me; may the M. H. Consolata assist you, and I will pray to Her many times a day.

You should have received the pack containing clothes for the winter... I bless you as always... very aff. in J. C.

◀ 200 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 213)

To the deacon Giovanni Mauro

J. M. J. Torino, 8 October 1915

Dear Mauro,

On God's behalf, I am telling you to obey and go ahead. The circumstances themselves will make graces abound for you and all your needs. There is also the obligation to study and, during the [Spiritual] Exercises you will prepare yourself for the S. Ceremonies [of Priestly Ordination]. This is also what I am telling Garrone.

Think of God's will and of His Greater Glory, and go ahead and obey, I am telling you again, and you will be happy. Obey absolutely, without any condition, and be happy about the Superiors' trust.

I bless both of you in the presence of our M. H. Consolata.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 201 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 214-215)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero

J. M. J. Torino, 8 October 1915

Dear Fr. Ferrero,

I am writing these few lines in a hurry, so that you animate Mauro to receive the grace I announced to him. Try to see him, or at least write to him, so that he may go ahead surely *in Domino*, and not act as a boy. He

will learn what is strictly necessary for the S. Ceremonies, and that's enough; he will do this during his Exercises, which will take place at Udine, where our Lazarists' of Torino have a House, to whom he has already been vividly recommended.

Therefore, *command him in everything* on my behalf.

I cannot reply now to your dearest letters; I am praying for you and for all: courage.

You will soon give me news of Mauro and Garrone; they must understand that this is a very special grace, therefore Jesus will do everything himself. In confidence, pay attention that there may be *no condition*, but that he [Mauro] may receive out of obedience, according to *my will*.

I bless all of you.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 202 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 218-219)

To Sr. Margherita Demaria

Hurray J. M. J. Torino, 15 October 1915

Rev. Sister Margherita,

I have received your letters up to the 15th, and I thank you for them. I desire that you continue to keep me up to date, both about the general situation and about each particular Sister. And this in a simple way, without any fear of exaggerating, or making people loose the superiors' esteem. I know how *to take things with a grain of salt*, taking into consideration the inevitable little evils and the different temperaments. However, from your last letter, I can see good will in all of them, and a desire to repair the past miseries. You be a mother to them, always strong but benign, and raise always their morale. The Lord will do the rest by means of His grace at the opportune time.

It seems to me that the distribution in the Stations has been done well, and also the fact of not having given the title of "assistant" to Sister Paolina and Sister Serafina. The functions form the persons, if they have the ability and the will; you guide them and keep informed of everything. It is convenient to respect seniority when there is the ability and there aren't others more suitable, according to the Sisters themselves. Make sure that each one employs all her ability in carrying out the work entrusted to her; in this way we shall see also the formation for the future.

The Rev V. Rector has already written to you about Sister Filomena [to remain in the kitchen at the Farm]; act according to his orders and let's hope for the best.

Seniority comes from the first profession, and the number of years will be accounted not from the departure for Africa, but from five years before the first vows.

We are sending you a number of books that you asked for; if you need any others feel free to write.

And now courage for you and for all of you, keeping always in mind the purpose for which you are there, and the reward that is awaiting for you in Paradise. May the Lord bless you, as well as our dearest Mother, the Consolata; may she assist and console you...

Very aff. in the Lord

N. B. Our Sisters of Lanzo[17] do not use the title of "assistant" to indicate the Sister placed at the head of any religious House. We shall study and decide about it; for the time being let's not use it.

◀ 203 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 222)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

J. M. J. Torino, 18 October 1915

Rev. and dearest Fr. Gays,

While I am writing a few lines to various missionaries, I don't want to forget you and so I reply to your letters. I was happy to hear of your work, together with Fr. Bellani, in order to begin and boost the formation of Catechists also at Meru. This work, together with the formation of seminarians, is certainly greatly useful for our missions. I, therefore, often pray to the Lord to give you the strength and the grace to take care of them with the whole of your heart.

There will be deceptions and deficiencies; however the Lord does not reward the results, but the work we do for Him. Another mission of yours, as the first missionary, is to bring about, with all your authority, the union and the good spirit among our missionaries. As the fields of our Apostolate are widening with the consequent distances, a diminution of that unity of minds and hearts, which forms the good of our Institute, may arise. Some selfishness could come in and the love and interest of the common body weaken.

You, as an elder, and well aware of the superiors' intentions, work to bring about this harmony. Insist particularly on the spirit of faith, obedience and poverty. Times are critical, and if the Lord is faithfully served, will not miss to give you what is necessary, but He will certainly not grant you what is not really needed. You continue to be the first helper of Mgr. Perlo and of Mgr. Barlassina, so that they may carry on with fortitude

[17] The Vincentian Sisters working at the Consolata Shrine and "Convitto".

and prudence their difficults offices, and the two sister Missions may help one another to succeed.

Praying to our dear Consolata for many graces and consolations, I am glad to call myself very aff. in J. C. of you my dearest one.

◀ 204 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 224-225)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero

J. M. J. Torino, 23 October 1915

Dearest Fr. Ferrero,

I receive and read with true enjoyment your long letters. My first feeling is one of pain, especially for you my dearest, who are so very delicate both spiritually and bodily. I beg our dear Consolata to grant all of you strength and grace, and a quick return to the sheepfold.

From your letter and from the Lieutenant [Millino, who prased our missionaries] who went to the Institute, we heard of Fr. Cavallo's sickness. I can't describe to you our pain, and how much we would like to help him. You do all you can both for his body and for his soul, and write if you need anything. Your money could be useful on such an occasion. We still have here with us the good Sciolla [a seminarian in the Army], who has obtained seven more free days. If you too could make some trip!...

To Sciolla I gave the due admonitions, without compromising anybody, just talking about the reasons for the evil; on his return he will be more prudent and discreet.

Regarding Garrone and Mauro [deacons], let's wait till Sciolla returns there, and then obtain for them about twenty free days, during which they could come to Torino, and with the testimonials from Treviso, they could be Ordained here among us; let's hope. I am glad to hear that they are serene and ready to obey; in the meantime they will prepare their hearts for the great grace.

Thank on my behalf that Venerable Vicar [the Parish Priest of Felettis di Bicinicco] who is so kind with all of you. Let me know how we could recompense him by means of money or gifts. I have thought of sending him some coffee; if he does not have Mass intentions, I could send him some, even of 2.5 Liras; anyhow, give him some already now of 3.00 Liras. Tell me what you think.

Past experience should make all of you prudent and without fear *in Domino*, and only doing no more than what is your duty. Let the admonition given to Fr. Cavallo be good for all of you.

Here at the Institute we think about you and pray for you, and everybody is longing for your return. Also in Africa they are remembering you. Here

the seminarians Gallea and Sandrone were rejected once again [for military service]; the seminarians Negri and Vercelletti are to be checked again next Summer; the Subdeacon Spinello, Br. Davide and the seminarian Capello were declared good. Soon Spinello, and maybe also Gallea, will receive the Orders of Diaconate and Priesthood.

The Lord has sent us two seminarians, from Novara and from Saluzzo, and many students: *Deo gratias*.

And now, my dear sons in the Lord, I fatherly bless you, letting you understand the great love for you that is in my heart as well as in the hearts of the Rev. Vice-Rector and of all your confreres.

The M. H. Consolata will assist you, so that you will gain many merits, and She will bring you back healthy and prosperous to our dear Community. To this purpose, during this Novena, we shall put pressure on God's Throne, through the intercession of all the Saints. Greet all of you;

very aff. in O. L. J. C.

◀ 205 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 230)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero

Torino, 2 November 1915

My dearest,

Thank you for your dearest letter and suave comfort. The Lord afflicts and consoles us [for Fr. Meineri's death, in Torino] as we trust to have in Heaven a protector for the Mission of Kaffa as we have Manzon [who had died] for Kenya. Courage *in Domino* to all your companions, evermore dearer to our Institute.

On the 7th Sacred Ordination. Also Spinello. I received the money[18]...

◀ 206 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 232-238)

To Mgr. Gaudenzio Barlassina

Torino, 3 November 1915

Dear Monsignor,

We have recived your dear letter of 12th September and we rejoiced at seeing that it was not one of your very rare and short letters, but that you

[18] Received by the people in the Army, even if he did not want them…

started more amply to tell us clearly your thinking, as you shall have to do often from now on, because it will be mostly from you that we will know about the situation of your future missions.

Coming now to the contents of your letter, we tell you that you have no reason to let us understand your disappointment in regard to the fact that, as you were in Torino, we did not inform you minutely of what was being projected and then realized by Fr. Dalcanton and Companions [two Brothers, attempted to enter into Ethiopia from Kenya].

Having realized that the steps taken in Rome by our Vice Rector, as well as the ones that you and your brother [a Bishop] took in order to facilitate your entry into Kaffa had failed, we wrote repeatedly to Mgr. Perlo asking him to search for a possible way of entering from there and, if there was one, to carry it out at any cost. He first replied to us that he really did not know how to do such a thing. After a long time that it had been attempted, we came to know about the expedition of Fr. Dalcanton who, we were told, was hoping to arrive at Mojale by the feast of the Immaculate [Conception], and a short time later at Burgi; however he arrived there several months later, that is a long time after you had departed for Africa.

We always kept you informed of the very little we knew about that expedition while you were here; in Africa you could have asked information from Mgr. Perlo. In regard to giving you norms for your future going... it was impossible for us to do so, as we did not know the place and the kind of life possible there; we understood these things only from the letters written to us by Fr. Dalcanton: the first on 20th of June of this year, and the other one the following August. Consequently, in order to have norms both for the journey and for the residence there, you could and should have turned to Mgr. Perlo who, since a long time, is fully aware of our views for Kenya and, as much as possible, also for Kaffa. And you should consider yourself fortunate in having such a guide and support, since you too, as well as all of us here, could see the resourcefulness and rightness of views he had shown in the almost creation of the Kenya Mission.

It is necessary, therefore, to forget the little gossiping, that have perhaps been increased by the usual malcontents, capable only of criticizing and not of doing – doing good certainly – and lean trustfully on what he will tell you *now and in the future*, because we are sure that he has a unique purpose: the success of Kaffa as well as that of Kenya, for your good and for the salvation of souls. Therefore, instead of withdrawing in order to avoid him, you should look for all opportunities to approach him, talk with him, and treasure all the good norms he may give you, and we know will willingly give you, in regard to your near and far future.

We are well aware that what many people do not approve of him is the firmness that he shows when demanding moderation and order in regard to expenses, but this was indeed one of the secrets that brought about the success of the Kenya missions, besides being a duty for all of you, due to the vow and virtue of poverty, on which I hope to write within a

short time an appropriate circular letter. Material preparation, and do not let Monsignor think about it.

Concerning the matter of Fr. Luigi [his younger brother], we feel that you did not do well when you opposed his going to Mogadishu. It was elementary politics that neither you nor Mgr. Perlo should have gone, and that these steps should be taken by a person almost *extraneous* and *inferior* to the two of you, so that, in case it would not succeed, the two of you would not be humbled nor compromised. On the other hand, it was sure that, due to his knowledge of languages, his keenness of brain, and tenacity of execution, he was the most suitable person to carry out these *soundings*, and it would have been good if he had gone there.

This going of his to Somalia, however, had not been decided by us, who had not even been informed (and we could not have been), as well as his trip to Addis [that did not take place], which had an only a political purpose, we could say, that is to find out at the Abyssinian Court and from Count Colli about the possibility of obtaining an explicit and ample entry permit for you. He had then not been assigned, at least for the time being, as a member of your missions.

However, this does not mean that you could refuse him, if assigned there, because it is certain that the Superiors of Torino have the power to assign a member of our Institute to one or another Vicariate, and the Vicars could not refuse him. In fact, if a Vicar refuses a member, and the other Vicar does the same, what could we do with such a member: dismiss him? But such an expulsion cannot take place, except for very serious canonical reasons.

The Superior General not only can demand that a Vicar should accept in his missions one or another member, but can also entrust him with a special office, independently from the Apostolic Vicar, for instance, as apostolic visitor, procurator or something similar. We have no intention of making use of this right for the time being, but we want to inform you that we have written to Mgr. Perlo telling him that, if things went that way and he might think that, in time to come, a visit of Fr. Luigi to Addis could be necessary or very useful, he should send him on our behalf: always *for the time being* for that merely political purpose indicated above.

And, as we are speaking about Fr. Luigi, we would like to tell you that the criticisms you are mentioning of him, that are circulating in our Istitute, are not new to us: it is a general rule that he who accomplishes some work is criticized by those who know nothing about it and are not aware of the Superiors' directives. This is what happened: he was supposed to be firm in regard to expenses, and to set up a proper arrangement for various offices, his and other people's, in our Institute, and he was supposed to do this without taking into account the susceptibilities of people, who were complaining because he was meddling in their functions.

However, it is a fact that the arrangement he set up in our Mother House has been providential and, if even now everything proceeds properly, we must recognize his merit: his organizing ability is excellent; and the one of

his brother, Mgr. Perlo, is even greater. By saying this, we do not mean that he is free from defects: he has his own, like each one of us, and we warned him repeatedly; and we felt that he really tried to emend himself, so that we had no doubts about admitting him to perpetual profession.

Don't deceive yourself into thinking that you will succeed in pleasing everybody - the man who will please everybody, a proverb says, is not born yet - unless you let everything go to pieces... with the consequent dissolution of religious discipline and the rapid decadence of the institution itself. Then you may perhaps please people, but you will have to face a very serious responsibility in front of God; Sir 7:6 says: *noli fieri iudex, nisi valeas virtute irrompere iniquitates* [do not become a judge, if you do not have the power to stamp out injustice]. In a community there is nothing more deleterious than a Superior aiming at making it easy for everybody and yielding to everything, because he fears the criticisms of his subjects. Such a community is lost.

We have already told you that we did not give you any definite and precise norms for your apostolate, because we do not know sufficiently that environment. At that time we had told you a word that we believed (and we believe even more now after the letters from Fr. Dalcanton) should synthesize all your plan of action in those areas: carry out your apostolate according to the Massaia's system. It is a system totally different than the one followed in Kenya, but that it is absolutely to be followed in the Kaffa region, where a tough and disorderly government does not guarantee the safety of people or of possessions; extorsions, thefts and unjustified persecutions are everyday's happenings... and the present imprisonment of our two people there are proof of this [Fr. Dalcanton and Bro. Jeantet].

In such conditions it is impossible to get established solidly and peacefully: one must be like a bird on a branch, always ready to be deprived of everything and move somewhere else... without any possibility of expressing one's own reasons. Furthermore, if those people realize that you are rich, the desire to steal and deprive you of everything will arise in them, certain that they will not be punished, or that the punishment will always be postponed by means of chicanery... till it will be fully eluded. This is the condition of the place where you have to go and, consequently, you have to plan since now the system of your apostolate in regard to such a situation.

The first thing to do then is to give up any idea of the great agricultural, industrial and commercial plants attempted in Kenya. A hut, like those of the local people, even if larger, healthier and cleaner, and nothing more as a living place. No great cultivation, no industrial venture, no animal breeding, no coffee trading, nor the trading in any other earth's produce (and this is neither on your own, nor united with others, as Fr. Dalcanton would like to do): only a vegetable garden sufficient for the needs of each mission.

The beginning of your apostolate will take place, like in Kenya, by taking care of the sick, but not by means of European medicines (which we will no longer be able to send you, because any export form Italy has been forbidden); you shall have to make use of those empirical treatments,

prepared by means of vegetables that you shall have to prepare locally, making use especially of purgatives that usually are the best medicine for the local people who, eating rough foods, experience difficulty in digesting them, and always benefit from purgatives; Massaia himself was always doing only this. European medicines are only for you and never for the local people, until we shall tell you to change the system.

Never give help to needy people, because you will be opening a door which you will never know how to close. Regarding the apostolate, be content for a long time with explaining and inculcating the fundamental truths of our faith *Deum esse et remuneratorem*... [that God exists and rewards], whose knowledge is sufficient in case of need to save a soul. A norm that is a must, to be followed till new orders, is not to attempt the conversion of those who are already Christians, Coptic or Abyssinian; even if they ask you, you should not accept them, but refuse *always* in a nice way. It may seem to you that this is hard and cruel, but it must be done, considering the great inconveniences that will take place by acting otherwise.

The example of Massaia and those who succeeded him in the Kaffa region shows that all the persecutions they had to suffer were caused by the conversion of Coptic Christians, and this because of the Abyssinian priests, who were jealous at seeing their followers taken away. Let them alone, then, and work only with the pagans, while waiting for better times.

The above norms shall have to be taken into account when preparing your caravan, as well as the amount of money necessary for your needs.

Regarding the preparation of the caravan, it will be necessary that you and your two companions [Fr. Giovanni Toselli and Fr. Delfino Bianciotto] will become personally involved, and not wait for Mgr. Perlo to do everything. Certainly, you shall have to depend on him in regard to the quantity of supplies, and the means of transport, since he is aware of our intentions concerning the expenses that our Institute can afford for the new Mission.

In a letter of his, he hinted at almost 50 thousand liras for such an expedition, and we were scared; we immediately telegraphed to him to reduce quite a lot such a figure, because that would mean ruining our Institute, and the Institute, we should never forget it, is essential for the Missions, as it must provide and send personnel to the Missions. If things cannot be done according to the planned amplitude, narrow them down as much as necessary but, please, let's not ruin the Institute. You just have to look at the yearly offerings collected through our Magazine and you will see that they do not reach 80 thousand, of which 18 thousand are needed for the printing and mailing of the magazine...

And then in the Institute we have 140 people to support... with the present high cost of things... a matter that makes us study day and night... without considering taxes on buildings, etc., etc. It would be good if those of the usual legendary song of the [inexhaustible] *well* [of the offerings]... should stop singing it, and you know to whom I am referring. These things should be considered when preparing and providing for the caravan... and in regard to future expenses, after you will be there, take with you a small amount... and

then you know that there is a way of sending you by instalments by means of the agents of the British government who go and come from Moiale.

We repeat our recommendation: once you are there, try to save as much as possible... because if that mission, due to local conditions, should require too excessive expenditures, we would be forced to take you away from there... You know that this is what the Piemontese Capuchins did with the Massaia who, eventually managed to somehow support himself by means of subsidies from France, and therefore his missions became part of the French Capuchins.

These are only conjectures, made just to mention them, but that we are the first to believe that they will never become true; indeed, we have firm confidence that you will succeed in establishing yourselves there, and that your Prefecture, with time, will be able to spiritually compete with the one of Kenya. Get down to work then with great courage and even with greater confidence in God.

By having proposed you as the Prefect of such a difficult Mission, we showed our great trust in you; and we believe that, by the help of God's grace, you will succeed in this enterprise. You must not allow the first difficulties or the miseries of men to discourage you. The Lord has said that he will protect the one who trusts in Him alone, and attributes to Him every good result: *Protegam eum quoniam cognovit Nomen meum* [I will protect him for he has known my Name]. We are praying; and the dear Fr. Meineri who offered himself as a Victim for Kaffa, from Paradise will plead for your cause. We have also vowed to dedicate one of the first Mission Stations to St. Michael the Archangel, so that he may deliver those areas from the many devils who possess them.

This reply to your letter has been fully planned by me and the V. Rector: in it you will find our thoughts and desires. Try to follow them, and the M. H. Consolata will bless your work.

I tell you again to write often to us, at length and with details, and tell us what you will do, your ideas, your proposals; we will reply to you and advise you. The common purpose is only one: to do good, the greater good for the only glory of God.

I bless you together with your companions.

◀ 207 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 257-258)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero and confreres in the army

Hurray J. M. J. Torino, 6 December 1915

My dearest Frs. Ferrero, Mauro, Garrone
and seminarians Occelli and Sciolla,

The beautiful Feast if the Immaculate Conception is coming soon, and how much I would desire to spend it, as in the past years, with my dear sons! You would be in a clearer and more consoling atmosphere, and we

would not be suffering because of your being away. Only a few of us are left, somehow like *beaten dogs*; there is no more way of arousing some laughter and joy. Patience for you and for us, *expectantes beatam spem* [awaiting our blessed hope] ... Courage *in Domino*, who may console us and fill our hearts with joy.

To comfort us and to make up for your absence, we shall give the habit to 15 young seminarians (4th and 3rd year); in this way it will seem to us to see a good old number of missionaries. We will pray for you, for those of the 2111 [camp hospital], and for all our poor people. May the Immaculate [Conception] grant you constancy and an always greater abomination in regard to everything that is less than honest and pure, and confirm you every day more in your H. Vocation.

You shall receive more news from your brothers here, and for me be happy to know that I love you, bless you and pray for you.

At the Feast of our Protector, St. Francis Xavier, I recommended to imitate him in this regard: *Totus erat Dei, totus proximi, totus sui* [He was all of God, all of neighbour, all of himself]. May this be so for all of you.

Many good wishes in the Lord to all of you.

very aff.

◀ 208 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 259-260)

To Sister Margherita Demaria

H. J. M. J. Torino, 10 December 1915

Dear Sister Margherita,

I thank you for your long letter and for all the news you give me, even if painful. Continue to write telling me the good and the bad, without fear of paining me. Write at the presence of God and not under the impression of sorrow; I will be able to evaluate things, and make the necessary arrangements for the greater good.

Truly, the vicissitudes of two [Sisters Filomena Moresco and Caterina Morello] have just ended, and now we have two more who are doing even worse [Teresa Grosso and Cecilia Pachner]. These, as elderly Sisters, should be edifying the younger ones; instead, they are giving bad example. In dealing with them we shall use charity and patience; however, if they will not improve, I will not allow them to go on. It is not required that after five years all of them should take the Oath; I have the faculty of prolonging the time indefinitely, and even to repatriate them.

Besides their bad example, what pains me is your suffering. I order you to keep your place peacefully and firmly, without allowing any dispute or observation to the contrary. If they turn to Monsignor, at the right time you

shall also speak. In the meantime, without believing their words, you hold firm according to my orders until Monsignor himself may intervene by means of words or letter directed personally to you. I want to hope that, after reading my letters, which you will read and then seal and give to them, they will improve. [...].

In the meantime you take care of your health. You are there to direct everything, especially in the moral area, and not just to work. The daily solicitude consumes our strength; therefore, by obedience, take good care of yourself in regard to rest, food and all the rest. You are fortunate in having various good and reliable Sisters, like Sister Costanza [Golzio]; make good use of them and sustain them in their labours.

To this purpose ask Monsignor for a certain amount of money, as the V. Rector will write to you, which you will use for stamps, intimate expenses for you and the Sisters, etc. You will keep track of how they have been used and, in case, give an account to me. I will write to Monsignor about this; you simply ask as "according to Sisters' needs".

As soon as possible, we shall send you some Sisters to help you; we hope they will have a better spirit of obedience, humility and simplicity; in this way you will be sustained and helped.

On the other hand think that, in front of God, there will always be miseries in this world; and we should not get discouraged; by means of patience we shall overcome all difficulties, and God will bless our sacrifices.

I desire that with time you would write to me describing minutely the timetable and every action of the day, of the week, and of the month at your place and in all other [mission] Stations, as well as any practice preserved from the Mother House, or introduced there. It is necessary for everything to have my approval and my blessing.

For the year 1916, as a protector, I gave the missionaries St. Francis of Assisi, as a model of *poverty*. I do the same for you; inform all Sisters; to all of them and particularly to you I am sending every day my H. Blessing.

Very aff. in O. L. J. C. as a father

◀ 209 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 262-263)

To Sister Teresa Grosso

Torino, 10 December 1915

Dear Sister Teresa,

It is sometime now that from various people I am receiving news about your behaviour in your Mission. I am thinking in front of God how it could happen that, after the good desires shown here in the Mother House to mend your ways and become a saint, after such a short time, you have

forgotten your resolutions, and the many warnings I gave all of you and particularly to you. I wish to hope that this change of yours be the effect of the different climate, and of the kinds of work entrusted to you.

Let's come to the main points:

1) Worldly behaviour unsuitable for a religious, both as a person and in dealing with the missionary men and the local people, and a rather vulgar way of speaking;

2) pride that makes you dominate your Sisters and all others, not submitting to others appointed by obedience;

3) disobedience and also insolence in regard to those placed by God to direct and command, instead of admiring their patience and accepting and desiring their corrections; woe to the person who saddens and makes weep the superiors placed by God to guide us, and even worse if she denigrates them by means of low words and calumnies;

4) lack of charity with everybody and particular friendship with a few, so as to break one another's head.

5) To disregard your Sister superior and turn to and receive orders from Monsignor, presenting to him things your own way, as well as the fake injustices. This simply means to want to obey only your way, and not to those whom I appointed to command you.

I don't want to speak about calumnies…

Think well, my dear Sister Teresa: in this way you cannot go ahead and, if you do not recover your senses, you will end up loosing your vocation and everything else, and you will force me to take some hard decisions which, however, I will take…

Recover your senses, and think seriously of your present situation in front of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament; do not attribute the cause of evil to others, but to yourself.

Sometimes your mother comes to me and, since I always give her good news of you and of your life, she goes away all consoled… Let the day that I should change never come…; no, I hope and trust. Recover.

Think of the sanctity of your vocation and, at any cost, decide to repair the evil and the scandals, and set yourself to obey the person God gave you as a Superior, consoling her by means of your new life.

If your present work were part of your problem, let me know and I will ask that they may give you another one. However, anywhere think ot the *ad quid venisti* [for what purpose you came], which I repeated to all of you many times.

I feel saddened, and only your prompt and stable reformation will give me comfort. I bless you.

I had been hoping a lot from you and I still do not want to believe that I was wrong.

Recover.

◀ 210 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 265)

To Sister Cecilia Pachner

H. J. M. J. Torino, 10 December, 1915

Dear Sister Cecilia,

I was told that you have been healed of the deseases that troubled you for a long time, and I thanked the M. H. Consolata for it. At the present, taking care of the duties entrusted to you by your R[ev]. Superior, strive to respond always better to your precious vocation.

I recommend to you that you to follow strictly obedience and the common rule in everything, thus accomplishing the will and the desires of your Superior, who is acting on my behalf and, therefore, on God's behalf. Remember that time should always be used totally and well, which means...

◀ 211 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 273-274)

To Monsignor Filippo Perlo

Torino, before 28 December 1915

While I am striving through all possible means to infuse the true spirit to our Missionary Sisters here in the Mother House, I am pained to hear from various parts that some of them in Africa are not corresponding to my expectations. I am not speaking about past sicknesses with the annexed moral miseries, nor about mistakes or inexperience that are getting straightened out, but about certain hard-headed people who show little religious spirit, little activity when working and, particularly, lack of respect and submissiveness to their superior, and to the very superiors of the missionary men.

I fear that these Sisters may have had a wrong formation, as it happened to our missionaries under Fr. Borio. It is not worth narrating the sorrowful story. However, some missionary Sisters, not having overcome their wicked inclination, and not being penetrated by ours and God's spirit, which is a spirit of Faith, humility, obedience, charity, etc., when tested, they showed that they are still as they were in the world, as you may have already realized yourself. For the time being, let's not speak of others: neither Sister Teresa nor Sister Cecilia behave like missionary Sisters.

Reflecting upon the behavioiur of our Sisters in the Missions, I am not satisfied by the conduct of some of them. I am not speaking about diseases, even serious ones that happened together with moral miseries, of which, thanks be to God, they seemed to have healed, neither of other inevitable

weaknesses proper to women due to changes of climate or occupations. What pains me is the lack of religious or even only Christian spirit in some of them.

From various parts I heard about Sister Teresa's behaviour. This Sister, who in the world had led a rather dissipated life as a carter, when she came to us, she seemed to have absorbed our spirit and, in a way, it was true, due to the ardour of her strong will. But because of the short time of her formation and, unfortunately, a formation more external than internal, due to the person who was directing the community, she did not give any solid foundation to her virtues, especially in regard to humility and obedience. And the proof of this is the fact that she unwillingly accepted the new superior, appointed by me. She seemed to have recovered but, once in Africa, she goes back to the previous insubordination, bringing about the superior's sorrow and giving bad example to the Sisters, the missionary men and the local people themselves.

The authority of Y[our] E[xcellency] is necessary, in order to make her bend and acknowledge her own faults. I know that she has already had some strong arguments with Sister Crescentina [of he Vincentian Sisters] who, as a consequence, had to be removed from the store. It is my intention that Sister Teresa should be sent to another [mission] station, not as the first, but as subject to others. She needs such a humiliation, in order to recover some sense of direction in her life, and also in order to detach her from Sister Cecilia [...]

Sister Margherita is probably not yet gifted with all the qualities of a superior, but she is the most suitable at the present time, and I intend that she should be respected and obeyed by all. I know that she trusts you: help her spiritually and materially, advising and correcting her, and obliging all Sisters to turn only to her for all permissions and external directions. Grant her also, at her request, some money, so that she may be able to buy some things suitable for women, of which she will keep track privately, without writing them down, in the common register.

Y. E. writing to me should tell me what you think and believe could be good in regard to the Sisters' behaviour, also as a help with the formation of their aspirants here in the Mother House.

◀ 212 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 293-294)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero

J. M. J. Torino, 14 February 1916

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

I have received your letters and postcards and I thank you for them. Instead of the bad resolution to write less after the arrival there of our dear Occelli, go back to the old habit of writing often and, when possible, long letters.

Although I am not always able to reply to all of them, I will enjoy hearing from you, and I will share your few joys and your many sorrows. In any case I will reply to you at the H. Altar, when visiting Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and our dear Consolata; and every evening I will continue to bless you in a fatherly way. Don't think that I had any special things to tell you at your departure: certainly, I could have had some, but they could be summarized in this: *courage in Domino; I am pleased with your good spirit; I plead with the M. H. Consolata for your quick and definitive return.*

You have done a brotherly work with Capello [a seminarian in the Army], who later wrote to me; let's pray for him.

The Ven[erable] Vicar [the Parish Priest of Felettis di Bicinninco (Udine)] wrote to me a nice letter: besides thanking for the gifts, he shows a great affection for you.

On Wednesday Occelli and Savino will leave us again [they had been on leave]: it is like a thorn in our heart; but let God's Holy Will be done. Fr. Mauro wrote to me and I will reply to him. He tells me about the order by the Archbishop of Udine to wear the clerical habit for the H. Mass. We are trying to find the way of sending at least one for him and his companion [who?]. If you, too, need one, let us know.

I replied to the Chaplain [of the military hospital] telling him that it is impossible to send any of our Sisters there; I looked for others, but I did not find any. Patience.

I am just hearing at this moment that a long letter of yours has arrived at our Institute. If a reply is needed, we shall provide by means of Occelli.

Many good wishes *in Domino*, and the H. Blessing of the M. H. Consolata and of your very aff. in J. C.

◀ 213 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 296)

To Sister Lucia Monti

Torino, after 14 February 1916

Dear Sister Lucia [in Kenya],

As soon as we received the sad news, the whole community felt sorrowful, and we prayed for your good father. I asked that a Mass be celebrated immediately for his dear soul. You, even before now, have certainly prayed for his soul, according to my intention.

I replied to your brother. In regard to the possessions left by your father, tell him to see me. Be sure that we shall take care of things in a good way and peacefully. You shall write to me and tell me whether the amount left to you seems right, and whether there is nothing for your mother.

Take courage, and lift up your eyes to Paradise.

I bless you and, together with you all the others...

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 302-303)

To the missionaries in the Army (in Italy)

Torino, 1 March 1916

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

My sacred duty, as your superior, and the fatherly affection I nourish for you are leading me to remind you of what I told you at your departure and later on orally or by writing. Receive my directives with religious spirit, and practise them faithfully. By so doing, you will preserve intact your high vocation among the dangers of the world.

1. You are always bound by obedience to your Superiors, whom you must contact for directives and advice. Those who are far from Torino "*epistolarum commercium instituant, ac, quantum fieri potest, sedulo prosequantur*" [should establish epistolary correspondence and, as much as possible, persevere with it diligently] (Decree by the S. C. of Religious, 1 January 1911). In your letters you should give an account to your superiors "*de vitae ratione et conditione, de singulis mutationibus suae stationis*" [of your way and condition of life, and of all changes of station] (Ibid.). Therefore, write frequently and with confidence, and do not take any important decision without first consulting them.

2. Those who are permanently or temporarily in Torino, every time that they are free and are allowed to leave their quarters or Hospital should go directly to the Mother-House and stay there till the end of their permit, joining their confreres in the community practices.

3. When out of Torino, a good religious should long for his dear Institute as for his own home and family; he should be happy to obtain temporary permits for Torino and spend in our Mother-House all the time granted to him. The Sacred Congregation quoted above, speaking about people with definitive permits, says, "*recto tramite ad suas quisque religiosas domus tenetur*" [each one is bound to return directly to his religious house].

4. In every place you may be, choose a worthy priest as your confessor and director, better if he is one indicated by his Bishop, and go to him every week for confession. You should inform your superiors of his name and address (Ibid.). When you leave the place, you should ask a report on your behaviour and participation in the Holy Sacraments, to present to your superiors.

5. If happily some of you are together or near one another, the superiors will appoint a leader to direct you, and you will listen to him. He will have to give a report about the life and behaviour of his companions.

6. If in the town where you are, there is a Seminary or good religious House, following an arrangement between us and their Rector, you will go there as you would go to our Institute, to participate in their prayers and studies. (Ibid.)

7. According to the advice of the above quoted Congregation, "*ea semper modestia et cautela conversentur, quae decet religious viros*" [they should

always practice that modesty and caution which is proper to religious men]; therefore, abstain from smoking, public entertainments, dangerous conversations and readings, from every danger of sin (Ibid.), and prefer the company of good priests and seminarians.

8. When time and occupations allow you, take up the studies proper to our Institute. However, each one of you should make a special effort to be faithful to your prayers, make some meditation, never omit your examinations of conscience, possibly celebrate the Holy Mass or participate in it and, when you go out, visit the Blessed Sacrament.

9. Our Institute takes special care of its far-away sons, and makes sure that they have all that is necessary and, possibly, convenient. As far as they are concerned, though, the missionaries, remembering that they are religious, should be frugal in their expenses, now and then give an account to the House of what they receive and what they spend, and send to the House anything left over.

Finally, it should be a commitment of all of you to sanctify yourselves even while living in the world, so that on the happy day of your return you will not be among those who "*ad secularia remigrabunt, vel quod longe peius, religiosam repetent domum, cum periculo alios contaminandi*" [will go back to a secular life or, even much worse, will return to their religious house, but with the danger of contaminating others] (Ibid.): quod Deus avertat! [let God not allow this to happen!].

At the feet of our Most Holy Consolata, I bless you.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 215 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 308)

To Fr. Luigi Rosso

Torino, about 9 March 1916

V. R. and dear Fr. Rosso,

The R. Fr. Pautasso [the Parish Priest of Piana di San Raffaele] came personally to bring me the letter; and imagine the pain I and the Community felt. We prayed for your dear brother [who died in a military hospital] and also for your father. You take courage *in Domino,* and reply to your father, consoling him, and to Fr. Pautasso to thank him.

Would God wish that the news be wrong, as it happened to others in the same little town...; that he may be only a prisoner. For this reason, I'll wait a few days to post this letter...

Regarding family's things, being your father all right, there is nothing to worry about; in the meantime, I will speak to your father, and we shall see. Courage...; I bless you

◀ 216 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 316)

To Fr. Giovanni Mauro

J. M. J. Torino, 18 March 1916

Dear Fr. Mauro,

I reply briefly to your dear letters. I am glad about the fact that the Seminary Rector [Mgr. Angelo Morello] and Mgr. Bishop [Bishop Francesco Isola, Bishop of Portogruaro (Venezia)] accepted you in their Seminary. Gratefully accept to sleep and also to eat there. However, tell them that your superiors, as it is right, intend to meet all the expenses for food and lodging. Charity is gracious; but there is also justice. There you shall find good company, besides the first and essential presence of Jesus.

It seems to me, therefore, that it is better for you to continue working in your present occupation, that is not bundersome, and not try to go back to the 211 [military hospital]. I send you also a note for the Rev. Rector.

For the feast of St. Joseph, you will spiritually be with us, and I will bless you in a fatherly way. *In Domino,* very aff.

◀ 217 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 318)

To Fr. Giovanni Battista Rolfo

Torino, after 29 March 1916

Dear Fr. Rolfo,

Be at peace regarding the change, that had to be implemented uniquely for the general system (wanted by the Founder). God will bless you also there; in the meantime God's will be done. I think it will be good, when you write to your sister-in-law, to thank her for the care she takes of the two sick people [a brother and a sister]. I pray for many graces for you and I bless you.

◀ 218 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 319)

To Fr. Lorenzo Sales

Torino, first months of 1916

My dear,

Despite our misery, Paradise and even more Eternal Love is both for me and for you. I renew my writing at the presence of our Consolata: obey

blindly and do not think any further. God loves you and you love him without any fear. Courage... Write many *chips*[19]. I bless you.

◀ 219 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 320)

To the seminarian Giuseppe Nepote Fus

Torino, end of March - beginning of April 1916

Dear seminarian Nepote,

Here is one more son, to whom I write a few lines as I do with the others. Son of the M. H. Consolata, I entrust your good Mother with the task of sustaining you, consoling you, and preserving you for the Holy Missions.

I pray to her so that she may free you from any wordly influence, and make you evermore stronger both spiritually and bodily: *Si Deus mecum quis contra me?* [If God is with me, who shall be against me?].

Courage and my blessing.

◀ 220 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 322)

To the seminarian Eugenio Valentino Baldi

J. M. J. Torino, 6 April 1916

Dear seminarian Baldi,

Your letter consoled me, because of the good spirit you are showing and the will of following the norms that alone will keep you firm in your H. Vocation.

Regarding the testimony required, the one of the R. Chaplain [the military Chaplain] is sufficient, as well as the attendance at the Church of Our Lady of Graces [the Parish Priest]. It would certainly be a good thing if, at least occasionally, you could retire to a religious or at least clerical environment. I don't intend to deprive you of the necessary break for the walk, but take it with good companions and with some visits to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

The Lord does not fail to grant His Graces to those who humbly and fervently ask for them; and I hope that you will return with your good old sentiments strengthened.

I bless you and pray to our M. H. Consolata for you. very aff. in J. C.

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[19] Here the Founder refers to a nice theatrical sketch, written by Fr Sales, entitled: *The sweet potato chip.*

◀ 221 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 325)

To Fr. Giovanni Mauro

J. M. J. Torino, 13 April 1916

Dear Fr. Mauro,

You are asking me for an advice and a permission, and I do not have all the data required in order to give it to you. It seems to me that you have a comfortable place that does not require too much work and allows you to live as a priest. You know the kind of life you have led and your companions are still leading. You cannot go with the two Borello's [Mario and Giovanni], because they belong to a different Company. You could only return to the 211 [military hospital]; and they are afraid, as they wrote to me, to be exchanged with others who are withdrawn from the front.

Try to walk during your free time; in this way you will not suffer for having to remain at the desk after eating. At any rate, I let you free to decide, after having consulted the Seminary Rector.

Be joyful *in Domino*, and by means of prayers try to accelerate the day of your return to our dear Institute. I bless you. very aff. in J. C.

◀ 222 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 333-334)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero
and the seminarian Ottavio Occelli

J. M. J. Torino, 16 May 1916

My dearest Fr. Ferrero and seminarian Occelli,

I have recived your *confidential* letters addressed to me, and I was consoled by your good spirit. I always knew that Our Lady would assist and console you, as I pray to her to do several times a day. The other letters of yours are affectionately read in our Community meetings and they do good to the people who are remaining, We, too, are courageously carrying our cross, hoping for a not far peace that will bring together once again our dear Community.

Regarding food, I intend that you take all possible care of yourselves, especially you, good Occelli; if you need money, just write to me; Divine Providence will provide. Poor Capello pains me. After a long silence nothwithstading my invitations he wrote a few vague air-letters; than he came to Torino for St. Joseph, but he was quite cold. Exhorted to wake up and think *coram Deo* [in front of God] about his life, he finally wrote to me telling me that he had decided to follow the military life and renounce the

clerical and religious life. I replied to him in a fatherly way, inviting him to live at least as a good layman. Since that time I heard nothing more, except something from the seminarian Botta [another one in the Army].

Unhappy man! Being things as they are, all of you, even those of 211, should leave him alone, and treat him like any other soldier. Lat's pray for his soul. You, Fr. Ferrero, inform of this all your confreres. Having reacted badly to your loving kindness is a bad sign. Who could ever be that companion with whom he is going...; perhaps also a former seminarian?

I recommend him to the M. H. Consolata; you do the same, but let him be far away, so that he may not do any evil to you.

Regarding all the rest, keep going *in Domino* with my fatherly Blessing.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 223 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 338)

To the seminarian Eugenio Valentino Baldi

Torino, 7 June 1916

Dear Baldi,

Your last letter consoled me... How many prayers I have been offering for you, and how many blessings I sent you from the presence of our Consolata, so that your vocation could be preserved. I have been fearing, and during the last year several times I have had doubts about your morality, or at least about your religious and clerical spirit.

I am consoled by knowing that finally you go to the Lazarist Fathers..., and that once again you find it sweet being alone with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament... Possibly avoid the company of laymen, not only the bad ones, but also those too worldly. - Courage in the S. Heart of Jesus: *Tuta requies in visceribus Salvatoris* [There is sure rest in the heart of the Saviour] (St. Augustine). I bless you. - give my regards to the good Fathers.

◀ 224 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 342)

To Sister Maria degli Angeli Vassallo di Castiglione

H. J. M. J. M. H. Consolata, 17 June 1916

Dear Sister Maria,

I am glad to hear that you are peaceful and well taken care of. I hope that the Consolata, to whom we pray so much, will act Herself as a doctor, and heal

you without any operation. If then, in God's judgement, an operation was needed, we pray it will be a small one followed by perfect healing.

I will not be able to come to visit you soon, because of the tremendous amount of work I have to take care of in these days; I am sending you often my Blessing.

Give my best regards to the Professor and to the good Dominican Sisters.

In the Lord very aff.

◀ 225 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 344)

To Fr. Giovanni Mauro

Torino, before 20 June 1916

Dear Fr. Mauro,

From far, celebrate the feast of our dear Consolata and ask her for constancy in your pains and for any most necessary grace. We here think about you often, together with all our dear confreres who are far away.

I bless you.

◀ 226 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 348)

To the seminarian Eugenio Valentino Baldi

Torino, 30 June 1916

Dear Baldi,

Your news console me much. There was fear, yes there was fear, because of natural inconstancy and your liveliness. Be faithful to your prayers, far from worldly companions... *Esto fortis in fide* [Be strong in faith].

Happy are you, if you remain fervent against dangerous occasions... I bless you.

◀ 227 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 351)

To Fr. Francesco Rossi

J. M. J. Torino, 6 July 1916

V. R. and dear Fr. Rossi,

After proper advice and having recommended your case to the Lord, I reach the absolute decision not to allow you to take the perpetual profession. At the end of the five-year period, therefore, you will be free and will go back to your Diocese.

Considering that there is a war going on, I allow Monsignor Vicar to keep you there till the end of it, as one of his Priests, provided you behave well and don't tell anybody about this.

The decision was taken not only for the good of the Missions and of the Institute, but also considering what is better for you; resign yourself to God's will, without any useless insistence. *In Domino* very aff.

◀ 228 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 357)

To Fr. Umberto Costa
and the community of the Mother-House

J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 10 July 1916

Dear Fr. Costa and dearest missionaries,

The Lord allowed that our dear Institute would be affected once again by a "temptation".[20] You have rightly increased your prayers begging the M. H. Consolata that *si fieri potest, transeat calix iste* [if possible, remove this cup].

In the meantime, following the *precise directives and orders* of the Rev. Vice-Rector, you do all that is humanly possible for you. Our good God will draw also from this what is for our greater good.

I recommend to you peace and tranquillity, following the ordinary way of life, as if nothing had happened. This is a sign of the good spirit which you should be able to witness during difficult times. Speak little about these things. Since I cannot be there with you, I will be present in spirit while, at the feet of St. Ignatius, I ask for the graces needed in order to make *de temptatione proventum* [profit from the trial].

I bless you in a fatherly way, jointly with the good Sisters, to whom also I address my words. very aff. in J. C.

◀ 229 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 359)

To the seminarian Eugenio Valentino Baldi

St. Ignatius', 11 July 1916

Dear seminarian Baldi,

I am glad to hear that are steadfast in your prayers at any cost, and in going to the good Lazarist Fathers, whom you shall greet and thank on my behalf.

[20] "Temptation", that is the requisition of the Mother-House, to be used as a military hospital.

Take the necessary care of yourself, especially regarding food; turn to Fr. Ferrero and he will give you the money needed; then you will give an account to him.

Doing everything *coram Domino* [at the Lord's presence], no evil will happen to you. *Esto fortis in propositis* [Be strong in your resolutions].
I bless you very aff. in J. C.

◀ 230 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 360)

To Sister Maria degli Angeli Vassallo di Castiglione

St. Ignatius', 11 July 1916

R[ev] and dear Sister Maria,

The news that soon you will have to be operated in a way consoles me, because it will soon remove from all of us the anxieties and the abnormal situation of the present [a community without the superior].

I pray to the Lord that He may direct everything according to His Holy Will and our greater good. Take courage; the M. H. Consolata will assit you. Regarding the [Dominican] Sisters, let me take care of them.

◀ 231 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 362-363)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 14 July 1916

Dear Fr. Costa,

We are at the end of the Holy [Spiritual] Exercises; and my soul is full of holy consolation.

I could observe 80 priests, really aware of what they were doing. Perhaps in 36 years I have never observed so much seriousness and silence. I was thinking of our dear missionaries, ad was saying within myself: strict silence is not only proper to them. Two excellent preachers helped very much. Let the good God and St. Ignatius be thanked.

Regarding myself, having placed the Institute and all the present pains in the presence of Jesus, Mary, and St. Ignatius, I tried to make my annual Exercises in the best possible way. In your precious "entertainments" [spiritual readings and conversations] ponder on the words: *memorare novissima tua* [remember your last things]; but with simplicity and humility...

I am glad about the good spirit and the examinations' results. If there will not be any new needs, I will remain here till after the Exercises of the

lay people and, before the end of the month, I will return to Torino and remain there.

The Lord gives preference to His Congregation, that has been his work since the beginning, and nothing will happen to us that were not foreseen *ab aeterno* [since eternity], wanted or permitted by Him for our good and his greater Glory. Let's rest in *manibus Eius* [His hands]. On the other hand, as the Rev. V. Rector wrote to me, it seems that the clouds [military requisition] are gradually disappearing, and we hope for good weather. If we could obtain the release of Fr. Chiomio and Fr. Maletto [in the Army]! Write a letter directly to me. Courage!

Many good wishes to all of you... pray for your, very aff. in O. L. J. C.

P. S. 1. I have written to Fr. Ferrero, and to the seminarians Baldi and Occelli...; soon I will write or send a simple postcard to all our soldiers.
2. I am just receiving now your letter and I thank you for all the news. I am praying for Chiomio and Maletto; it would really be a really unexpected grace; a pledge of the many that the M . H. Consolata wants to give us.

If I have time I will write a few lines to [Seminarian *follows and a name rubbed off*].

It seems really strange; encourage him; tell him to forget and, if he wants, let him go to confession wherever he wants.

◀ 232 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 364-365)

To the missionary Sisters of the Mother-House

H. J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 14 July 1916

Dearest Missionary Sisters,

From this H[oly] Mountain I am thinking of you; and I am glad about your prayers and your many little sacrifices, to obtain the grace, we need. How greatly acceptable to the Lord must have been your night triduum... and how many blessings it must have drawn onto your Institute and onto each one of you. You have certainly prayed also for the healing of your Vice-Superior, so that the M. H. Consolata may strengthen her in her sufferings, and that she may return to you healthy and strong. You have certainly recommended to the Lord also me and these H. Exercises; and they really proceeded well and with great profit for souls. For everything let us give thanks the Lord...

Remember that the best consolation you can give me consists in knowing that you are in a saintly way joyful *in Domino*, obedient, and full of mutual charity in your thoughts, words and actions. This is the sermon we just heard from that holy priest, Fr. Paleari.

I pray for you often in the presence of St. Ignatius, so that he may obtain for you the grace to tend ardently to perfection, and especially to do everything *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam* [for the greater glory of God].

I bless you,

very aff. in O. L. J. C.

◀ 233 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 379)

To Fr. Giovanni Mauro

Torino, 5 August 1916

Dear Fr. Mauro,

Keep writing to us, even if I am not always able to reply; then I recommend you more intensely to the Lord. Take courage and be joyful, thinking that you have a better place than the others [office work]. The future is in God's hands; you, however, try to speed up our common desire by means of visits to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Prayer is all powerful.

I bless you.

◀ 234 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 380)

To Sister Maria degli Angeli Vassallo di Castiglione

H. J. M. J Torino, 8 August 1916

Canon G. ALLAMANO

is happy about the fact that the R. and dear Sister Maria has happily arrived at her family home. Together with the Sisters he prays for a full and not far healing so that she may come again and remain steadily in our dear Institute. Yesterday nine Sisters have left for St. Ignatius, where they will stay for about fifteen days.

Many good wishes to your good father and sisters and the blessing of your very aff. in J. C.

◀ 235 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 382)

To Fr. Giuseppe Gallea

H. J. M. J Torino, 11 August 1916

Canon G. ALLAMANO

Blesses R. Fr. Gallea, the good seminarians, and the dear young people, and prays to the M. H. Virgin Assumed into Paradise that she may sanctify them, so that on a beautiful day all of us may be united as her crown [they are at St. Ignatius'].

On the back side:

Dear Fr. Gallea,

Thank you for your letter and the good news. You have the R. V. Rector to direct and advise you. *In Domino*

◀ 236 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 383-384)

To Sister Maria degli Angeli Vassallo di Castiglione

H. J. M. J. Torino, 14 August 1916

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

I think of giving you a gift for the Feast of tomorrow [the Assumption] by means of these few lines of mine [she is at her home].

They are all about Paradise where, especially in this Solemnity, we have to fix our thoughts and also our eyes. We are not yet as holy as St. Stanislaus Kostka, to deserve to soon be present at the annual Feast of the Crowning of our dear Mother. But such a day will arrive also for us; in the meantime let's prepare ourselves by means of an always greater detachment from everything and from ourselves.

This is what I have been telling the Sisters in the past days.

I hope that the country and the good company may have already relieved and bettered you. We have to be patient, and make use of the means offered by God. The Sisters know about your being there, and I told them what was appropriate about your sickness. For the time being, I thought it were not good for them to write to you, in order not to disturb your treatments; however, the Sister Assistant [Chiara Strapazzon] and the Sister Bursar [Luigia Mazzia] will soon write to you.

Sister Chiara is at St. Ignatius' together with the nine professed Sisters who are those mostly in need of that climate. After fifteen days they will come back and others will go together with Sister Bursar. They are all going for a walk almost every morning and, once a week, they go to Rivoli. They

work and study, and they tell me they cannot find any time to be idle. They are praying for you and for your total healing.

I am glad to hear that you can receive often Jesus in Holy Communion; in regard to fasting, do as you can, following the directives of the Archpriest [Fr. Cristoforo Gastaldi]. About the rest, we live by Faith and in the S. Heart of Jesus.

Many good wishes to your father and sisters, imploring on you and on all the Blessing of our dear Consolata. very aff. in J. M. J

◀ 237 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 386)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

Torino, 27 August 1916

Dear Fr. Costa,

I hope that everything is proceeding well at St. Ignatius' and that you, in a special way, will try to gain strength in view of the ever-increasing future works that are waiting for you. St. Ignatius will help all of you.

In the Mother-House everything is proceeding regularly. We have lost the help of Fr. Chiomio who has left for we don't know where [military service]. He wrote from Novara as he was passing by. Let's pray for him and for all our dear soldiers. Since there are the solemn votive Forty Hours of the City, they will all come for three days for the Visit; this morning they served and participated in the solemn Mass and Procession.

I bless you in the presence of our dear Consolata.

very aff. in O. L. J. C.

◀ 238 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 388)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero
and the seminarian Ottavio Occelli

J. M. J. Torino, 28 August 1916

My dearest,

As soon as I received your postcard, I went to the Altar of our dear Mother to entrust to Her your needs and your pains. I am sure that She will comfort and help you, as She has always done. In the meantime you entrust yourselves to God who will not allow you to be pained more than you can bear, and will give you strength, as he did to the martyrs, to suffer with fortitude and even with joy what will be for His glory and His will.

Courage then, sustained by our prayers; keep going *in Domino,* day by day, hour by hour. The many prayers and sacrifices we offer will finally obtain as soon as possible the end of our trials, and the blessed day of your return to our dear Institute will come. Fiat, Fiat [Let it be, Let it be]...

I bless you with all my heart, very aff. in J. C.

◀ 239 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 382)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. Torino, 2 September 1916

Dear Fr. Costa,

Yesterday I received your letter, dated 30th August.

My indisposition [migraine] was a small thing; it just prevented me from celebrating the H. Mass on Sunday. Now I am all right. All right about the way things are there.

Th. Gunetti [the Bursar of the Shrine] says that you should leave there any washing; he will take care of it. He will come there on Wednesday and take care of everything.

If you have no wood for the kitchen buy it from Peru [the guardian of the Shrine]. Patience about the little key [of Can. G. Camisassa]. Come back on Thursday by 10.45 a.m.; they will wait you for lunch. So the Sisters will not have to delay to tidy up [the house].

Make sure that everything should be settled on time, because last year I experienced difficulties in finding various things. If you do not know where to put things, place everything in my room.

If, on the way back, you would like to go to greet your mother, do it; you can come to Torino in the evening.

Blessing

◀ 240 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 395)

To Fr. Giovanni Chiomio

3 September 1916

Dear Fr. Chiomio,

I have just received your letter addressed to me and to our students; I'll have it read this evening. All of us, and I in a particular way, suffered because of your sudden departure for an unknown destination; I had been

suffering from migraine for a few days and, because of this, last Sunday I had to omit the celebration of the H. Mass.

The Lord wanted to make me participate in your sorrow for having had to omit some in the past, and then perhaps also in the future... However, Jesus is good and He may come into our hearts, even more than spiritually, as it happened to certain Saints; He will certainly recompense us for our hunger by means of a double or even greater ration in other Masses.

In everything see God's H. Will Who will console you and draw good even out of evil.

I bless you.

◀ 241 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 396)

To the seminarian Eugenio Valentino Baldi

Torino, 4 September 1916

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

I hope that you will always have certain dispositions that, after many fears, have consoled me greatly. Courage and lift up your mind.

Jesus is not wanting; we may be wanting if we abandon our fervour. Courage.

I bless you with all my heart.

◀ 242 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 402)

To Maria Consolata Vajra

H. J. M. J. Torino, 18 September 1916

Dear young lady[21],

You may come to see us any weekday, provided you inform us beforehand. I think that the V. R. Fr. Vottero [Rector of the female orphanage of Saluzzo] has already told you what I wrote to him in regard to the interests.

May our M. H. Consolata bless you.

[21] Maria Consolata Vajra, aspiring missionary, became a Consolata missionary sister, with the name of Sister Gertrude.

◀ 243 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 404)

To Fr. Giovanni Chiomio

Torino, 21 September 1916

Dear Fr. Chiomio,

The Lord will sustain you in your hardships; take courage in Him. We are praying. The clerical habit does not seem convenient there; do without it. Concerning the altar, we shall try our best to prepare it for the next time you come to Torino.

Your postcard is illegible; try to write more clearly, also with fewer things.

Keep going according to God's H. Will, and everything will tale place for our good and for His glory.

I bless you with all my heart.

◀ 244 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 405-406)

To Sister Maria degli Angeli Vassallo di Castiglione

H. J. M. J Torino, 21 September 1916

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

I thank our dear Consolata and our Venerable [Joseph Cafasso] for the betterment of your health, which we hope will continue and reach a full healing. In order to have a sure norm when advising you, last week I went purposely to Doctor Boccasso. I told him about my worry in regard to so much slowness and indecision of your treatment and asked him to tell me the whole truth about your case. He told me he was still uncertain in regard to the need for an operation; and told me that he still held a great hope that the grapes and the fresh autumn airs of your hills will help.

When I told him that we would have liked to have you back soon in our Community, he told me that, before this, he would have liked, in consultation with your local Doctor [who?], to have a medical examination done, then he would have given me his opinion. Being things the way they are, I don't know what to decide regarding your and our desire to have you back among us. We are also having some problems because we had to relinquish to whole ground floor and the refectory to the students of the Isabella Institute for their use, and soon will begin the works for the new arrangements; then we shall look for a way to have less confusion.

For the time being we are not yet considering any new taking of the religious habit; and, after too many trials, we are sending Virginia [an aspirant from Legnano (Milano)] back home. Soon four Sisters will make

their Profession. For the rest we are in God's hands, who is trying us in many ways, also by asking us for the sacrifices of new students of ours for the war. But *fiat voluntas Dei* [may God's will be done].

Feel free to go to visit your aunt [who?], and also to go to Moretta [her hometown]. What is important is that, when you return here, the old symptons would not come back; but also in regard to this *fiat* [let it be]!

Many good wishes to your father and sisters. I bless you,

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 245 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 409-410)

To Fr. Lorenzo Sales

J. M. J.

Torino, 24 September 1916
B. V. M. of the Mercedes

Dearest Fr. Sales,

If before I used to bless you collectively and particularly, after receiving your letter, I started blessing you even more frequently; this is how you gained! Keep encouraging yourself and remain firm on *my words* which I repeat to you absolutely every morning.

I heard from Fr. Cagnolo that some students [of Nyeri seminary] have left; don't be surprised; in fact, when doubtful, after some serious test, don't hesitate to dismiss those who are not called or do not respond to the H. Vocation. I expect to see many more of them to go. About Vincenzo [Karogo] the R. V. Rector was expecting it because he realized he was not steady. If many students are running away from us, so that people who don't understand the meaning of the "Junior Seminary" are criticizing this, such a thing is more than likely to happen there, where the devil must be fighting atrociously against the Seminary, and the youths are not so steady. I usually say that at any departure I pray a "*Te Deum*" [(We praise) You God]. Always remember: it is better to be few, but good.

Tell all these things to the dear Fr. Cagnolo ad apologize to him on my behalf for not writing also to him; you stole all my time. I am sending him a letter for the students.

Regarding writing for God's glory on your initiative, I am telling you that both the *patatina* and the *Luisi* were a real hit. Find some other similar events that are characteristic and instructive[22].

Finally, I am recommending to you to write to me, now and then, some long letters about what can help me to do good to everybody. This is my

[22] Descriptions of events published on "La Consolata" magazine; Cf. also letter no. 218, to Fr. Sales.

only intention for the little amount of life that the good God still allows me here on earth, where thorns are not missing, especially in these times, but *omnia cooperantur in bonum* [everything works for the good]... ; *nec facio animam meam pretiosiorem quam me, dummodo* [I do not account my life as more precious than myself, if only]...

I bless you, Fr. Cagnolo, all the dear students [seminarians] and all those at the Farm... very aff. in O. L. J. C.

◀ 246 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 417)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

Torino, 27 September 1916

Dear Fr. Costa,

I am pleased with your excellent sentiments that are comforming to God's designs for your own and other people's sanctification. Let nothing disturb you. *Etsi castra consistant adversum me, non timebo* [Though a host encamp against me, my heart shall not fear]... *Dummodo consummem cursum meum et ministerium quod accepi a Domino Jesu* [If only I may accomplish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus]...

Here are the 164 Liras I have received today from Borra; I think it is what was due to the carrier. I have written to him [that is Fr. G. B. Borra].

I have already told you that I think it is better not to have any examinations now; we shall find a reason for it; so tomorrow they will be peaceful in view of the [Spiritual] Exercises. It would be good to examine tomorrow morning Ruetta, Garrone, Mauro and Olivero and all the others who failed the examination... so that we may decide for the various classes. I am now wrting to the seminarian Re and to Fr. Maletto.

◀ 247 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 419)

To Fr. Giuseppe Maletto

J. M. J. Torino, 27 September 1916

Dear Fr. Maletto,

Finally! That's what I and the Rev. Prefect [Fr. Costa] exclaimed when we received your first letter. I am not reproaching you;[23] a letter and a postcard!

[23] Fr. Maletto was in the Army as a Chaplain in a Hospital.

I am glad, not about your toothache which will soon disappear, but about the relative tranquillity of which you may make good use. We could send you wine for the H. Mass, but I think it is better to celebrate it most of the time in the Parish. Go there also for the Feasts to help the Parish Priest [Fr. Giovanni Barazzoni, parish priest of St. Leonardo]; the reason of an extra Mass does not hold; it is charity and a duty to help the Parish Priest, for whom it is certainly quite hard to celebrate two Masses [the strict fast of the time!], besides all the rest of the work he has to do. In this way you will render some help in exchange for the kindness he uses in your regard.

Accept gratefully his charity, without taking advantage of it. If it will be convenient to tip the sacristans, do so. I have already sent 12 Liras to the Th. Tamietti [at the Consolata Shrine, now in the Army]. I do not remember the name the good Parish Priest, but you thank him on my behalf; tomorrow I shall send him a kilo of coffee as a gift.

Next month I shall make sure that the two issues of the magazine will be sent [for the two of them]. Regarding the Mass offerings, do as you have written; if the Parish Priest needs them, celebrate according to his intentions and accept any offering he gives you. My usual offering is two Liras; but, I repeat, accept from the Parish Priest whatever he gives you.

I am pleased with your promise to come to Torino soon. Deo gratias. In the meantime do not hesitate to buy food, wine and anything you may need with spiritual freedom. If you need money, let me know.

Regarding your studies, be at peace; we are in accordance with the Superiors.

Take courage; I bless you and pray for

your very aff. in J. C.

◀ 248 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 424)

To Fr. Giovanni Chiomio

Torino, after 12 October 1916

Dear Fr. Chiomio,

I have just received your letter of 12th October. I am consoled by the fact that you are fairly well and resigned to what God has allowed. Behave the way you have described to me, but in a simple and lovable way; it is better to use the Italian language with those who can speak it. As far as the “tu” [familiar pronoun] is concerned, don’t behave oddly, but do as most people do. *Soli Deo esto familiaris* [Be familiar only with God]; in this way you will avoid troubles and sorrows.

The Lord will assist you in everything: *protegam eum quoniam cognovit Nomen meum* [I will protect him because he knows my Name]. We have looked for the portable Altar; they promised to give it to us, but they have not done it yet. I think you already know the names of the young men who have been admitted to take the clerical habit. Four of them will be repeating:

Ruetta, Garrone, Mauro and Olivero; they are lazy; in fact I will be sending Ruetta home because in the past days he has been stealing. Miseries... For the time being, Subdeacon Sandrone and the seminarian Richetta are acting as assistants. The seminarian Sales had desired to be left free.

I bless you. If you need money, etc. write.

◀ 249 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 426)

To Fr. Giuseppe Maletto

Torino, after 26 October 1916

Dear Fr. Maletto,

I had just sealed my letter, when I received your two letters of 23rd and 26th of October. You must get loose once and for all, and the Lord is giving you a chance to do so now; come on...

Going back to the authority to hear confessions, I assure you that *you have it for all people without any exception*, soldiers and people in general; whether there are other confessors or not, and begin right away. Obey absolutely also... it is a matter of salvation of souls...

Regarding the coffee, feel free to do as you like.

Forget about the paten, short cope, etc.; one does what he can; same thing about the wax and all the rest. Regarding the wine, since it is difficult for us to send it to you, ask the Parish Priest [of Pallanza, Fr. G. Barazzoni] for it, even if you have to pay; celebrate the Mass wherever it is easier for you to do so, possibly helping also the parish priest. Try to have more confidence in him. I will have gloves sent to you and you make use of them.

If I were the helper [of the hospital chaplain] I would take care of all the expenses of the Chapel. For the time being, do things as you can and, if nobody takes care, you pay for them. Briefly, I let you free in everything and, when doubtful, do what you like best, and keep going.

You are rather obstinate regarding these things; keep going more freely; this is God's will... I bless you.

◀ 250 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 428)

To Fr. Giovanni Chiomio

Torino, after 26 October 1916

Dear Fr. Chiomio,

You will probably like to hear news about our dear Junior Seminary, if you have not yet heard of it. Those who passed their exams and were admitted to

the 5th year have received the clerical habit and, together with two who were added, became 9 seminarians, philosophy students. Ruetta, after some trials, was sent home, as he has been stealing from his companions. We are also watching carefully others (2) because of matters of morality.

The new people this year are difficult, and three of them have already gone back home. All the others are going on as usual, except Crespi[24] who has become a Brother.

You are asking me if you may speak piedmontese and use the "tu"? Don't behave oddly; if most people do so, you do the same; and behave properly without affectation. Courage and patience *in Domino*.

We always remember you and pray for you...

I bless you.

◀ 251 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 430)

To Fr. Giovanni Mauro

Torino, before 29 October 1916

Dear Fr. Mauro,

Trust yourself in the S. Heart of Jesus. You have always been favoured; I hope you will continue to be so. If there is any danger of leaving, turn to the good Bishop [Mgr. Francesco Isola, Bishop of Portogruaro (Venezia)]; He will find a way to keep you there.

Remember the anniversary of Fr. Meineri.

I bless you.

◀ 252 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 435)

To Fr. Giovanni Chiomio

Torino, 18 November 1916

Dear Fr. Chiomio,

I don't like your silence, and it makes me fear... Write more often. We remember you often and pray a lot for you, so that the M. H. Consolata may sustain and console you.

I have proposed to the Captain [Casagrande di Omegna (Novara)] of the seminarian Re to take you as their Chaplain, but it seems that this could not be obtained. We shall see for the future. Keep writing to Facta [a

[24] Felice Crespi, who entered as a seminarian, but after four years he decided to become a Brother and remained a Broher up to his death in 1980.

parliamentarian from Pinerolo], reminding him of his promises; if they want, those People can do it, and they will end up satisfying you.

We see many things happening. I painfully inform you that also Fr. Dolza was declared fit [for military service] ... *Fiat voluntas Dei* [Let's God's will be done].

In the meantime you take courage *in Domino*, and remember that we are with you and pray for you.

I bless you, aff.

P. S. I am receiving at this very moment your letter, and I am pleased with the good news. Keep going with courage, and may God bless you.

◀ 253 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 437)

To Fr. Giovanni Mauro

Torino, after 18 November 1916

Dear Fr. Mauro,

I am glad, and I almost envy (on behalf of the others) your position. You can have a regular life, be familiar with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, and enjoy the goodness of those worthy Superiors [Mgr. A. Morello, Rector of the Seminary, and Bishop F. Isola, Bishop of Portogruaro]. Let's thank the Lord for this. Keep up, and may this trial serve to make you strong.

Our dear Fr. Dolza has been declared fit [for military service]: patience.

I bless you.

◀ 254 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 440)

To Fr. Domenico Spinello

Torino, end of November 1916

Dear Fr. Spinello,

I have received your material report; make also the spiritual one. You will forgive me if I fear for you, for your present situation, for your spirit, for the fact that something too human and worldly may infiltrate into you. Strive, my dear, to preserve yourself pious and upright *coram Domino* [in God's presence], and don't worry about the others. Remember my past admonitions and put them into practice. In your letters speak about everything frankly. Be humble in order to preserve chastity.

I bless you, and I join the greetings of your Very Reverend Uncle [G. B. Spinello, Bursar of the Torino Seminary].

◀ 255 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 442)

To Fr. Giuseppe Maletto

Torino, end of November-beginning of December 1916

Dear Fr. Maletto,

Continue to hear Confessions and, with ease, to preach and to celebrate the H. Benediction as you can; Jesus is satisfied even by being treated poorly.

Go to thank the Reverend Ursuline Sisters [of Pallanza] for the wine; they may perhaps give you also something else.

Next week, the Superior of our missionary Sisters [Sister Maria degli Angeli] will go to the Cenacle Sisters [Sisters of Nostra Signora del Ritiro al Cenacolo] at *Intra* to convalesce; it would be good if you could go and visit her some day; those good Sisters could also help you in regard to the Chapel [the Chapel of the military hospital was rather poor] and to yourself [chilblain]. For all the rest, cast all your pains and doubts into the lake [Lago Maggiore]: *mergam vos, ne mergar a vobis* [I will immerse you, so as not to be immersed by you]. We are waiting for you.

My blessing.

◀ 256 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 443-444)

To Sister Maria degli Angeli Vassallo di Castiglione

H. J. M. J. Torino, 5 December 1916

Dearest Sister Maria,

I have recived first you postcard and then your letter. I am pleased with the ongoing improvement of your health, and with he fact that the mild airs of that place are helping your convalescence. This should be your intent: to use all possible means in order to recover fully and permanently. I understand well your pains; but it is Jesus himself who allowed such a long trial, and certainly for your greater good and the good of the Institute. The *fiat* [let it be] should be your ongoing short prayer.

We have a great need for blessings upon our Institute and our poor soldiers! They will take away Fr. Dolza [he was eventually exempted]; also Carlo [Br. Carlo Gilardi] was declared fit; also my servant is already in the army. How many woes and miseries... Let the good Lord be merciful to us!... Besides my already too many occupations, I had to be testifying during many days at the [Beatification] Process of Ven. Don Bosco...

Therefore, I definitively wish you since now a good feast of the Blessed [Maria degli Angeli], waiting to give you a gift during my H. Mass. Last Sunday I spoke clearly about you to our Sisters, and I think that they had been satisfied. They have always been praying for you; and they will write to you. The V. Rector wishes you a prompt healing.

Courage in the Lord and pray for
your very aff. in J. C.

P. S. My best regards to the R. Sister Superior [mother Maria Ivaldi of the Sisters of Our Lady of Retirement], and many good wishes to your Sister [of the above Sisters]; may they pray for us.

◀ 257 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 449-452)

To the missionary men in Africa

Torino, 8 December 1916

My dearest missionaries,

Your congratulations on the occasion of my having been confirmed as Superior of our Institute on the one hand console and encourage me, as a proof of your good spirit and good heart, and for this I thank you; on the other hand, however, they do not prevent me from desiring and praying that the time you will be able to govern yourselves will come soon, without needing us any longer. This desire is not new; it has been mine for a long time.

In fact, two years ago, as it seemed to me that this could take place, I explicitly asked Card. Gotti [Prefect of the S. Congregation of Propaganda Fide], may he rest in peace, about it, telling him how our Institute was going on, both in the Mother-House and in Africa, and pointing out my particular reasons for asking to be exempted from my burdensome office. After having patiently and indulgently listened to what I said, he answered, «It is not a praiseworthy praxis for a founder to resign during his life-time...

In your case, it would also be seriously detrimental to the Missions, from which the best people would be taken to constitute the governing body here. Would you have the courage to damage the work that has cost you so much?». And he concluded by commanding me to forget that idea and continue, together with our Vice-Superior, as in the past.

I had to accept, as I am accepting now, only because God's will seem to be such; but we certainly feel all the burden and responsibility involved in it. For this reason, besides physical energy, we need special help from the Lord, and you should contribute to obtain it with your prayers and especially with your faithful response to your great vocation.

Such a response will consist in your constant and ever more exact observance of our Constitutions and of what is asked of you by obedience; in your growing in zeal and laboriousness as the ambit of your apostolate is broadening, for the good of many souls in need of your work; and in a special way in your careful and almost scrupulous practice of a virtue on which your advancing in perfection depends very much. I am speaking of *poverty*, which I already proposed to you as a special virtue for this year, and which I feel inspired to propose to you again for the coming year.

The sacrifices and privations we all have to face now because of the extraordinary and unprecedented rise in price of what is indispensable for life, somehow forces us to practise poverty; but we know that we can gain merits from these privations if we accept them with Christian resignation, and even much more if, going beyond the inevitable privations, we impose others on ourselves, so as to progress ever more in perfection.

This is what you will do, both through your exact observance of the vow and your rising to the highest degree of the virtue. This is what I hope and I ask of you as a great collective act of the penances our Holy Father has been inculcating so much to obtain the end of this war, which is becoming ever more unbearable each day.

About the vow and virtue of poverty, which is also one of the three great religious vows, it seems to me that, so far, we have been rather careless and, therefore, there are many things to be corrected and properly arranged. This has certainly not happened because of lack of good will, but rather because of an imperfect knowledge of your duties in this matter. For this reason, I thought of presenting to you some notes and reflections about it, strictly consistent with the principles of Theology and Canon Law. I desire that you read them in common every time that, during 1917, you will have your monthly Retreat; and, later, you should read them once a year, during your Spiritual Exercises.

To begin well such an important action, it is necessary to first make a diligent examination of conscience on your past, to find whatever you may have done that is not in agreement with the demands of poverty. To this purpose, I am inviting you to particularly examine yourselves on the following areas:

1. Whether during your living in our Mother-House, and especially when you were departing for Africa, you took or you were given by confreres, without due permission, things belonging to the Community;

2. Whether you received money or things from people, not related to you within the fourth degree, or also from relatives within the fourth degree who made you understand that they were giving them to you for the Institute or for the Missions: if this happened without my knowledge and without my permission, it was against poverty;

3. Regarding other things (books, clothing, tools, etc.) that you received from me or from the Vice-Superior, you must take it as a rule that only your personal clothes and your Breviary were given each one of you for exclusive

use: all other things, even if given to an individual, in our intention were also given for the use of the Community. For this reason, I used to recommend you -- what unfortunately was not always done -- to put on them the stamp of the Institute and, later, to report to Bishop Perlo the things and the permissions I granted you; and it was also for this reason that, some time ago, I asked you to send me a complete list of the books you had.

Now, to definitively define this matter, I establish that

1. If you still have any of the things given you in the various ways mentioned in Nos. 1, 2, and 3 above (except personal clothing and Breviary), each one of you should prepare a detailed and complete list and send it to me within the first semester of 1917. The missionaries who are outside the Vicariate of Kenya, for the time being should send to me, by the same time, only a list of the things mentioned above which they have with themselves; after their return to the Vicariate, they will complete the list and send it to me within the first trimester.

2. All the permissions in matters of poverty which you received from me or from the Vice-Superior should be put in writing, specifically by each one of you, and sent to me within the first semester of 1917. Whoever, within these six months, does not send to me the above-mentioned lists of things and of permissions received, will not be allowed to lawfully keep the things listed and make use of the permissions received. Whoever, instead, sends to me the two lists mentioned above, will be allowed to keep the things and use the permissions during the second semester of 1917, but not beyond, unless he receives a confirmation from me.

3. About the money of which you preserve possession according to our Constitutions, I wish to make clear that the very fact that I send it to you, or allow your relatives to send it, does not include the permission to make use of it. For such a permission, considering your difficulty in contacting me, I prefer that, from now on, you ask Bishop Perlo (or Mgr. Barlassina for Kaffa), who are now empowered to grant it to you any time that the Superior's permission is required.

Now, what remains for me to do is to exhort you with all my heart to set out generously on the way of the sacrifices and privations demanded by poverty; I think that you should not find it too difficult if you recall the generosity with which you offered yourselves to God when you committed yourselves up to martyrdom to the missionary apostolate.

Our very sweet and powerful Patroness will certainly obtain for you the supernatural help required to bear with the bloodless martyrdom of yourselves which consists in a faithful observance of your Vows and Rules. She will console you with an abundance of spiritual fruits in your apostolic toiling and, above all, She will efficaciously sustain and help you to reach the high degrees of perfection. May She always bless all of you as I pray

Yours very aff. in J. and M.

◀ 258 ▶

Small treatise on poverty (for missionary men)

[For the full text, cf. LETTERE, VII, 454-467)

◀ 259 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 469-471)

To the missionary Sisters in Kenya

Torino, 8 December 1916

My dear Missionary Sisters,

For the year that is now ending I had proposed to you *poverty* as a special virtue to practice, following the example of the great model, St. Francis of Assisi. Among the reasons that led me to propose this virtue, there was the need to adapt to the shortages we would have to face, because of the economic hardships, that we were beginning to experience, as well as you there. Now these hardships, rather than diminishing have been increasing so much that the practice of poverty has become a real need, and that is why I feel inspired to propose it again as a special virtue for the year 1917.

However, it is not the need as such that should urge you to practice this virtue; it is mostly the obligation you undertook when you consecrated yourselves to the Institute by an oath, and the duty of striving for perfection in this and and the other virtues that is proper to your state as religious. I hope, therefore, that all of you will make of the practice of this virtue a very special commitment for the coming year, and I ask you to do this as a common practice of the penances that the H. Father continues to stress in order to obtain from the Lord the longed-for peace.

The vow and virtue of poverty carry such demands that even among the most observant Communities at times abuses and freedom in this regard may seep through; so that this may not happen to you, I thought of proposing to you some notes and reflections to make you see clearly the obligations deriving from poverty. It is therefore my desire that the enclosed Circular should be read as spiritual reading – with only you present – everytime that, during 1917, you will practice the monthly exercise of the Good death [monthly retreat]; later on you shall do this only once a year, during the Spiritual Exercises.

And to start well in a matter so important, I desire

1) that you check wether among the things you possess there are any, either taken by you, or given you by your Sisters, or by any other person, without my knowledge, or the knowlege or of your V[ice] Superior General, and without our permission.

2) In order to remove any pain or doubt in this regard, each one of you shall make a full and very detailed list of all the things she is using, personal things, books and any other thing you may have with you, and within three months after having received this letter, will present it to the V. (Sister) Superior Gen.

3) To the above list you shall add a list of any particular permissions I have given you, to keep and use books or any other thing; as well as permissions in regard to food, drinks and any other thing belonging to the Community gtven you by the V. (Sister) Superior General in Africa.

To her I confirm the assignment to examine all the above permission – even those given by me – and either confirm or remove them, uniquely in view of your good and the good spirit that should flourish in the Community. As far as you are concerned, I recommend that you should be holily indifferent regarding the permissions your V. (Sister) Superior Gen. will give you or remove, according to Article 35 of your Constitutions.

From now on, when you receive money or any other thing from your relatives or from any other person, no matter how much it is, you should give it to your V. (Sister) Superior Gen. and wait for her permission, if she will give it to you, before using it for yourselves. However, I would like to remind you of the art. 29 of your Constitutions, according to which, if it is something considerable, not even your V. Sup. Gen. can give you permission to make use of it.

I would also like to add that also regarding money or any other thing that I send you, or I allow other persons to send you, it does not mean that you have permission to make use of it; you still need the permission of your V. Superior Gen. as I have told you above.

Now all I have to do is to exhort you with all my fatherly affection to want to profit from the teachings and norms of the Circular, and to conform yourselves to it with a great generosity of heart, aspiring to reach the highest degrees of the virtue of poverty. And you will not find it difficult to do this if you remember the generosity that moved you to dedicate yourselves to the apostolate, ready also to undergo martyrdom. May our M. H. Mother and Patron help you always and bless your fatigues, as a confirmation of the blessing that

Your very aff. father and Superior is giving you.

◀ 260 ▶

Small treatise on poverty (for missionary Sisters)

[For the full text, cf. LETTERE, VII, 472-484)

◀ 261 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 491)

To Mgr. Filippo Perlo

J. M. J. Torino, 14 December 1916

Dearest Monsignor,

I am sending you a short treatise on H. Poverty, prepared with great diligence. I have been thinking for a long time about preparing some norms for our missionaries in regard to this very important subject, on which largely depends the good spirit in our Missions. At the beginning somebody may find it rather difficult to adapt to it; but it is obligatory to do so, and to do it without waiting. You be firm on this, gently and strongly.

Our M. H. Consolata will bless you and reward all of you for the sacrifices required. Let St. Francis of Assisi, whom I am proposing to you again as a Patron for the year 1917, be your model in regard to this virtue, which has been his favourite, and by means of which he and his friars did and still do so much good.

I am pleased with the work in the Hospitals[25]...

From the Altar of our Patroness, I bless you.

Very aff. in O. L. J. C.

◀ 262 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 493-494)

To Sister Margherita Demaria

H. J. M. J. Torino, 14 December 1916

Dear Sister Margherita,

I am sending you a Circular concerning Holy Poverty. Each Sister, especially if a missionary one, will become perfect in proportion to how much she loves this virtue and faithfully observe her H. Vow. The subject is rather difficult to be well understood but, meditating attentively and continually on it, you will succeed in achieving a proper idea for its practice. In any doubt, turn to Monsignor. The Sisters should know from their Constitutions that their poverty is total, not like the one of the missionary men; therefore they have to follow thweir own Circular, not the one of the men.

I was glad to hear the good news given me in your letter of 16th of May. Certain little miseries in regard to health or something else are inevitable in this world, and help all of you to become saint.

[25] Fathers and Sisters working in the War Hospitals in favour of the Kenya people…

I am glad about the good performed in the [War] Hospitals. This Work will attract God's blessings upon all of us [see above].

In the Mother-House everything is proceeding well with seriousness and good will. The professed, the novices and the postulants are increasing. We are waiting for the calm of the seas to send you many helpers. Sister Maria degli Angeli, having successfully undergone an important operation, is at present convalescing at Intra [Lago Maggiore], and I hope she will come back to our House in the coming spring.

In your letter you are asking me about the Mass to be celebrated on the occasion of parents' death. I think it is better to let us do this ourselves, here in Torino, so that it will be celebrated at the earliest. You shall take care of the other prayers.

Courage all of you in the Lord; with mind and heart aiming at the unique purpose to become saint and to save the greatest number of souls.

I bless all of you, and you in a particular way... Very aff. in O. L. J. C.

P. S. I repeat: for the year 1917 the Patron Saint will be St. Francis of Assisi.

◀ 263 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 498-499)

To Sister Maria degli Angeli Vassallo di Castiglione

H. J. M. J. Torino, 3 January 1917

Dear Sister Maria,

Finally, I have a few minutes to reply to your dearest letter. I thank the Lord for your near perfect healing, by the extraction of the last point... I think that it would be good for you to remain there during these cold days, taking advantage of all the cares of those good Sisters [Suore di N. S. del Ritiro al Cenacolo]; later on, of you think it convenient, I have no problem with letting you go to visit your Dad and console him a bit.

Regarding the doubt you mentioned, you have solved it well. Theologically we would say: One should not act under the influence of a practical doubt. When doubtful, as the law is uncertain and therefore not binding, I can act as I think best according to freedom; and so I do not intend to sin and I don't sin. I will have the lectures on medicine sent to you. Study but without prejudicing your full recovery.

For this year I have proposed again St. Francis of Assisi as the Patron Saint, especially regarding poverty, detachment and love for God. Pray to him.

Here in the Community there is nothing new besides what the Sisters wrote to you. Sister Albina went for some time to Lucerna to stay with her sisters, who are Sisters of St. Joseph, in order to recover from complete anemia; pray for her. May the Lord strengthen us during these stormy times and may He make us saints, capable of accepting every event from God's Holy Hand.

Thank those good Sisters [of St. Joseph] for all the good care they are taking of you, as well as those of the Institute [Suore di N. S. del Ritiro al Cenacolo] especially the R. Superior. Tell them to pray for us, so that we may respond fully to God's graces.

I bless you heartily and pray for your perfection. Very aff. in O. L. J. C.

◀ 264 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 501)

To Sister Albina Granero

H. J. M. J. Torino, 27 January 1917

Dear Sister Albina,

I had somebody speak to Commendator Lanza, Gen. Director of the "Ospedali Mauriziani"; he replied that he cannot lower the daily charge of Liras 2.50, that had already been lowered as a favour. If you don't have enough money, write to the Sister Bursar [Luigia Mazzia] and she will send it to you. The Director also told me that the place where you are is a real Hospital and not a pension; therefore he would like to see you leaving it.

I had asked him to admit there also for a short time your sister, Sister Secondina, to convalesce. You should know that she has been in our Infirmary for a long time because of her usual erysipelas; and she never heals; or once healed, it starts again; the doctors say that she should change place. Mr. Lanza did not want to accept her.

Admitting that you are certainly unfit to return to Torino and that your sister needs some homey atmosphere, I think that both of you could retire to your brothers' home at Bricherasio to recover. Speak about this to your Religious sisters [Istituto Suore di S. Giuseppe di Bricherasio (Pinerolo)], and reply to me soon.

I bless you, very aff. in J. C.

◀ 265 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 503)

To Fr. Giuseppe Maletto

Torino, beginning of February 1917

Dear Fr. Maletto,

I have just received your letter, dated 30 January. May the Lord sustain you, as you are working for Him with purity of intention, besides need and duty. You already know my intentions regarding everything.

Coming back [from the Army], bring with you an absolute peace and tranquillity: it would certainly be a great grace. I will send the coffee as soon at it arrives from Africa. Pray...

I bless you.

◀ 266 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 507-508)

To Sister Maria degli Angeli Vassallo di Castiglione

H. J. M. J. Torino, 3 February 1917

R. Sister Maria,

I am replying, even if late, to your letters dated 6th and 16th of January; there is always more to do than what we can do...

I am pleased with your almost perfect recovery; however make sure that you take all care so that the wound may be healed; to this purpose I often recommend you to our dear Consolata. I do not think it is right that the Monastery [Suore di N. S. del Ritiro al Cenacolo], rather poor, should keep you gratis; we shall have to compensate it by means of gifts or, even better, by a proper amount of money. You would also feel freer, in case you would ask for some special food that might be more suitable to your prompt a full recovery. Reflect on this and then write to me or to your Dad about it. If you need any kind of clothing etc., write about it to Sister Bursar.

The good Sister Albina has returned in much better condition; but she will go to Bricherasio [their hometown] to keep company to Sister Secondina, who after a long sickness by *erysipelas* does not seem to heal. Some good homey atmospheres will do good to both of them. They will probably leave at the beginning of next week; regarding everything else, the Community is proceeding quite well.

The news from Africa is good, except some little disease among the 14 [Sisters, out of 19] working in the [War] Hospitals among the local people. They are working very well. Deo gratias! I will find the book you told me about.

This shattered world invites us to a greater union with God and to appease His anger. The most troubled ones are our poor Seminarians and Priests [in the Army]; let's pray so that the H. Peace may come soon...

Entrust us to the fervent prayers of those good Sisters; I will remember them to our M. H. Consolata. Give my best regards to the R. Superiors.

May the Lord bless you...

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 267 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 511-512)

To Sister Maria degli Angeli Vassallo di Castiglione

H. J. M. J. Torino, 14 February 1917

R. Sister Mary,

I am replying immediately to your letter, so as not let you be perplexed. I had been thinking that you would remain in that holy place till a complete recovery and a full healing of the wound, together with the disappearing of the cold weather, which here is still very intense. Then you would come to celebrate the Feast of St. Joseph here in the Institute, and then, in order to please your good father and you family, you would go to Moretta [their hometown] for a few days. If this plan of mine seems right to you, let me know; otherwise feel free to let me know your opinion.

In the meantime make use of all possible means to recover perfectly. To this end, freedom of spirit and total abandonment to God will help, knowing that we cannot offend God unless willingly and with one's certainty: you will understand... And now I want to make you aware of a new trial, to which the Lord wanted to subject our Institute. The part occupied by the students and partly by the seminarians was requisitioned for the soldiers.

We too love our Country: and to the many sacrifices of people and money we joined the bother of having to concentrate in a small place many people. So, the Sisters were restricted and the classrooms and other places taken away from them; and any small place is being used in order to sleep, study, etc. All of us have been working intensely, even on Sunday, in order to let free for Monday the required place. Let God's permission take place! Our dear Communities are peaceful and, as true missionaries, ready for anything.

Pray and don't worry about us. I am praying to our dear Consolata to bring about soon your recovery and an end to your exile. Best regards to the Sister Superior.

I bless you, very aff. in J. C.

P. S. This year, we will celebrate with fervour the month of St. Joseph, beginning on 17th February. Join us, and pray by means of the Sorrows and Joys of the Saint [a traditional prayer].

◀ 268 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 517-518)

To Fr. Giovanni Battista Rolfo

J. M. J. Torino, 28 February 1917

Dear Fr. Rolfo,

I am taking advantage of your sister-in-law's letter, to add a few words of mine. I hope that you are enjoying good health, both bodily and spiritually. Having overcome the first few difficulties of the new place, you will continue to do good as you have been doing before.

Keep going *in Domino*, remembering that God helps and *humilia respicit* [regards the humble], and *qui confidit in Domino non minorabitur* [he who has confidence in the Lord will not be confused]. Your sister-in-law recommended Lucrezia [Fr. Rolfo's sister] of Carignano. I told her that I needed instructions from the Theologian [Fr. Rolfo], and for the time being I could not give her the money deposited in the amount of 91.55 Liras.

These I am still keeping, as I am waiting for a reply from you. Afterward Lucrezia came to me in order to obtain the admission of her blind daughter to some Hospice. I exhorted her to persist in asking the Carignano Hospice. She did not ask me for money, and I didn't give her any, because I noticed that she was well dressed and with a *nice overcoat*. I had a chance to speak about her with Theol. Board [Parish Priest of the hometown of Fr. Rolfo], who told me that she is insatiable: the more she has, the more she spends; and her brothers could help her if necessary. At any rate, apparently she needs help; if you want me to help her, let me know; in the meantime I keep the money.

Miseries of this world; smaller than many others that are weighing on us because of the war, among them the many dear members of ours who were recruited by the Army, and the occupation of part of our Institute.

Pray and make people pray for peace. I bless you together with all those who are there with you, in O. L. J. C. very aff.

◀ 269 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 519)

To Fr. Domenico Spinello

Torino, first months of 1917

Dear Fr. Spinello,

Your frequent and spiritual letters are a real consolation to me. *Majorem non habeo gratiam quam ut videam filios meos in veritate ambulare* [No greater joy can I have than this, to hear that my children follow the truth].

Yes, the spirit of prayer and mortification, united to deep humility, will strengthen you and sustain you in all dangers. Everywhere there is Jesus and His grace: that is what I wish for you and I pray...

I bless you.

◀ 270 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 520)

To Fr. Giovanni Mauro

Torino, after 3 March 1917

Dear Fr. Mauro,

I have received this morning your letter; and I thank the Lord who is maintaining your place etc. Be firm in celebrating well the H. Mass without minding others, omitting, or shortening only what is allowed, e. g., the Memento ["Remembrance" of the living and the dead]. May St. Joseph bless you.

◀ 271 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 521)

To the seminarians Mario and Giovanni Borello

Torino, after 3 March 1917

Dear Mario and Giovanni,

Your letters are always welcome because of the news you give me about you and your confreres. You can no longer carry out the previous office of "visitors", yet you are stll doing something. Keep doing it [as Infirmarians with wounded soldiers]. In regard to the rest, courage *in Domino* in this evil world; sustain each other; and don't mind the evil unless it is in order to abhor it more and more.

Take care of your health, especially you, Mario. Spend what is necessary and *convenient*; at your request I will send you money.

Keep going... The M. H. Consolata will protect you; and St. Joseph will take care of the rest. I bless you wholeheartedly...

◀ 272 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 523)

To Fr. Giovanni Chiomio

Torino, 10 March 1917

Dear Fr. Chiomio,

Your last letters arrived and they are always welcome. The Lord sustains you, and you can also do some good, at least by means of your example.

Keep going till the Lord will be pleased to console us [end of the war]. I commend you to St. Joseph. I bless you.

◀ 273 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 524)

To Sister Maria degli Angeli Vassallo di Castiglione

Torino, before 15 March 1917

Dear Sister Maria,

I am pleased with your recovery. Feel free to come for St. Joseph, e. g., the 16th or 17th of this month. I don't think it is inconvenient to come on your own; inform us of the time of your arrival, so that they may come to meet you.

I will make somebody look for the Life by the Barrà [a book], and I will have it sent to you.

So, we'll see you soon.

◀ 274 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 526)

To Fr. Giuseppe Maletto

Torino, after 19 March 1917

Dear Fr. Maletto,

Hurrah St. Joseph, your and mine Protector; you will have celebrated the Feast doing some good in holy peace. Regarding the rest, let God's H. Will be accomplished in us...

Continue there the work of your sanctification, but smoothly for the greater good of you and of souls,

I bless you.

◀ 275 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 527)

To Fr. Domenico Spinello

Torino, after 21 March 1917

Dear Fr. Spinello,

I was glad to hear about your visit to Occelli [a seminarian in the Army] and the truly brotherly comforts given him (as he wrote to me); in the same way I am sorry for what happened to you [not clear]. Take courage and place everything at the feet of the Cross, to obtain some merit. If you need money, just write to me. We pray for you to our dear Consolata. Celebrate

Easter as best as you can, like St. Ermenegildo [who did not want to receive Communion from an eretical Bishop].

I bless you wholeheartedly.

◀ 276 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 528-529)

To Brother Carlo Gilardi

22 March 1917

Dear Br. Carlo,

I am replying to your letter, in which you say you are ready to do anything. In order to preserve your religious vocation and properly respond to it, you must observe in a special way the following norms:

1. Obey heartily your Superiors and practice our Rules; ask all required permission, both in the House and to go out; without a previous permission, don't go to any private home, not even the one of your sisters.
2. In consequence of your oath of poverty, you should be satisfied with what the Community can provide in regard to food, clothes, house etc.; in the meantime you should use well the time for the works proper to Brothers according to the orders and desires of the superiors.
3. As an elder, you should give good example to the confreres regarding prayer, familiar conversations and anything else.

May the Lord help you to understand the beauty of a religious life spent fervently, and the consolation you will experience at the time of death.

I bless you.

◀ 277 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 540)

To the seminarian Giuseppe Nepote Fus

Torino, after 6 April 1917

Dear Seminarian Nepote,

Let my fatherly Blessing reach you as a consolation and support, being as you are far from the Institute [in the Army]. Courage; keep going with good spirit, aiming at Africa.

◀ 278 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 542)

To Fr. Giovanni Chiomio

Torino, 14 April 1917

Dear Fr. Chiomio,

Thorns are not lacking in my life, but in everything there is Jesus... Courage also to you, who are preparing to be an apostle.

I bless you.

◀ 279 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 543)

To Fr. Vittorio Sandrone

J. M. J. Torino, 15 April 1917

Dear Fr. Sandrone,

Fr. Gallea informed me immediately about the death of your dear mother; and as I had already prayed before for her, now I am commending her to the M. H. Consolata, and I will continue to do so, so that you and your dear family may be consoled.

Encourage everyone; let them be comforted by the holy memories of hers. From Paradise she will be even more of a mother for you... They are praying for her also in our Institute. Remain there [at home] according to need and convenience.

I bless you, very aff.

◀ 280 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 544)

To the seminarian Eugenio Valentino Baldi

Torino, 22 April 1917

Dear Baldi,

Your last letter gave me the dear news of your courage, after you had opened up to your confessor. Yes, don't get lost in useless things or worse. The M. H. Consolata will assist you bodily and spiritually, if you consecrate yourself to Her with all generosity. At present how fleeting and of little value this life seems!

Only a total abandonment to God and a total consecration to Him, and not *carni et sanguini* [to flesh and blood], will make you strong and ready to accept what God will arrange for your eternal good.

Courage, I bless you... If you need anything, just write.

◀ 281 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 545)

To Fr. Giuseppe Aimo-Boot

J. M. J. Torino, 1 May 1917

Dear Fr. Aimo-Boot,

The sorrowful news of the death of your dear mother will not be so new to you.

She has always been sickly and, since some time now, as I was told, hear health had been. The Lord was preparing her for Paradise. You take courage; I have already taken care of consoling your family. As soon as I was told, I have been praying for her, and we have been praying in our Institute.

Your sacrifice will have saved her good soul from Purgatory. Courage. May our M. H. Consolata comfort you and bless you.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 282 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 550)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. Torino, 16 May 1917

Dear Fr. Costa,

I have received your letter and I am pleased with your improvement [he is sick at home at Ciriè, Torino]. I think that, in order to stabilize it, you should still remain at home the whole of next week; you wll come back for Pentecost. However, I wouldn't want that the sickness of your good Vicar [Mgr. G. Camossetti] would tire you out and make almost useless this time of rest. As far as we are concerned, what comes first is charity in your regard and in regard to our Institute, while there are two Assistant Parish-Priests and another Parish [Th. E. Giacchetti].

Therefore I desire that you do not hear Confessions, nor celebrate High Masses, especially if late during the day. And, if the Vicar's health is worsening [Mgr. G. Camossetti], and in Torino they say that he is dying, you should be satisfied with short visits, and not consider spending hours or whole nights. Think of the purpose of your "exile", and don't cut the treatment in half, reasoning by means of your head and not of your heart.

Have a good Feast of the Ascension and the Novena to the H. Spirit. Many good wishes to your family, very aff. in J. C.

◀ 283 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 552)

To Fr. Giovanni Chiomio

Torino, about 18 May 1917

Dear Fr. Chiomio.

I have received your letter. Keep going patiently and profitably. Make the Novena to the H. Spirit for you, for us and for your dear students, who have woken up, as shown by the last examinations.

Let's pray to the M. H. Consolata... I bless you.

◀ 284 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 555)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. Torino, 22 May 1917

Dear Fr. Costa,

The good God will give you back to us healthy and stronger after the sacrifice of so many days; and you will be very welcome next Saturday.

You will thank also on behalf of the Institute and of mine your good parents for their charity towards our Community. If you reasonably feel that they will not be offended, I think you should give them the small offering of 50 Liras, as it is not right that in these sad times you should enjoy the sweat of others... Make use of the remaining time to get even better.

Give my best regards and wishes for a prompt and perfect healing to the very ven. Mgr. Vicar. *In Domino* very aff.

◀ 285 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 559)

To Fr. Giovanni Mauro

Torino, beginning of June 1917

Dear Fr. Mauro,

Today I have received your last letter addressed to the Rev. Prefect. Courage! Let's hope that you may still remain there [at Portogruaro], otherwise: *Fiat* [(Let God's will) be done]: *Domini est terra* [The earth is the Lord's].

Regarding the [Divine] Office, be at peace, and do only what you can, without worrying. I bless you often.

◀ 286 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 560)

To the seminarian Mario Botta

Torino, June 1917

Dear Botta, we always await eagerly news of you and of dear Goletto [in Albania, together with Goletto]. Courage! The M. H. Consolata will preserve your H. Vocation. I bless you.

◀ 287 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 562)

To Fr. Giuseppe Maletto

Torino, after 14 June 1917

Dear Fr. Maletto. I think you already heard from your confreres about what happened to dear Occelli [reported as missing in action, eventually taken to Austria]; what about the others who are also at the front? Let's pray. Keep going with courage and following the usual norms, so that you may come back as renewed in spirit. - I bless you wholeheartedly.

◀ 288 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 5666-567)

To all Consolata missionaries

Torino, 28 June 1917

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

Our Lord wanted to test our Institute, as well as many other Communities, by asking of us a victim from among those who are in the Army. Our dear seminarian Eugenio Baldi, who was seriously wounded during a battle on the Vodice on the 14th of this month, has died in a small military hospital. In spite of various attempts of mine, I haven't succeeded in finding out the circumstances of his sufferings and death. O. L. Consolata must have certainly consoled him in his sufferings and, as a good Mother, received his good soul and led it into paradise. In his last letter from the front, he told me, "*I don't know whether, when you receive this letter, I will still be alive; on my knees, I ask your holy blessing*".

And he has certainly been receiving my fatherly blessing every day, even several times each day...

This is not the right time to eulogize our dear confrere, his frank and amiable character, his enthusiasm for his future apostolate, for which the good Lord wanted to reward his desire.

It is, rather, our dear duty to pray for his blessed soul, so that it may soon be united in Heaven with our dear Fr. Manzon and Fr. Meineri, in order to be our heavenly protectors. To this purpose, our confreres who are priests will offer, as soon as possible, a Holy Mass, and all of us will offer our H. Communion and the H. Rosary for his soul for nine days.

This departing of our dear seminarian should serve to shake up and to inspire with fervour everybody, so as to respond ever better to our holy vocation.

Our good confrere, on 17 February wrote to me: "*I am becoming aware that my being away from our dear Institute, being far from my very dear companions, in continuous contact with the world, everything contributes to diminish, to cool off my spirit! I am afraid that my character, weak and yet quite impulsive, may be bent by the mentality of the world, and that my vocation may be ruined...*".

Poor Baldi. Fortunately, he recognized in time the dangers that were surrounding him. This is a serious lesson for all... Woe to the one who abandons his fervour and becomes lukewarm in his spirit of faith and interior life. Anyone who starts failing in his prayers and does not feel repugnance for the world will soon give in to its mentality and then fall miserably... This is what our dear Baldi is telling us: *defunctus adhuc loquitur* [even if dead, he still speaks]. Listen to him.

I bless you and invoke on all of you the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

very aff.

◀ 289 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 573)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 13 July 1917

Dear Fr. Costa,

It is five days that I am on this Holy Mountain, in perfect solitude; like a bird circling around Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, who is at the centre. During my rest, especially a mental one, I cannot forget our dear Institute and all missionaries as well as the aspirants. I pray for each one and I don't forget our soldiers in their dangers.

Tell our dear young men that St. Ignatius is waiting for them, full of merits gained by means of the heavy studies of this month. To each of them could be applied the saying: *Non coronabitur nisi qui legitime certaverit* [(An athlete) is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules]. And have you composed and transmitted to the Rev. Vice-Rector the short biography of our dear Baldi?

On the second of my days here, Carlo [former Brother] came for a short visit; he is like the wandering Jew; an unhappy man!...

You have courage in carrying your cross till the Lord will want it: *sufficit tibi gratia D. N. J. C.* [the grace of O. L. J. C. is enough for you].

Many good wishes to all of you and my paternal Blessing. *In Domino*

◀ 290 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 575)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 15 July 1917

Dear Fr. Costa,

You should have received my letter yesterday as I have received yours. Good in regard to the news.

Tell dear Manfredi that this is a trial coming from the Lord; let him take courage, live by our spirit, study the little he can: the essential parts, and at the proper time he will be our priest and missionary: *infirma elegit Deus* [God chose what is weak]. If Fr. Spinello must go back before my return (perhaps about the 28 of this month), he could come up one day to St. Ignatius', accompanied by Fr Dolza or somebody else.

Good about the pilgrimage to the S. Heart [Shrine of the S. Heart]: Pray.

Many good wishes to all, and the blessing of St. Ignatius.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 291 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 579-580)

To Sisters Maria degli Angeli Vassallo di Castiglione and Luigia Mazzia

H. J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 16 July 1917

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

I am writing to both of you, Superior and Bursar [L. Mazzia], because what I will say concerns both of you; and what concerns the good of the Institute is greatly important for you as well as for the good Assistant [Chiara Strapazzon]. I am pleased with the good general state of the Community, regarding both prayer and studies.

I hear that all of you have been affected by a slight cold; be careful regarding cold air, especially at night, and when you have been perspiring, both in the House and at Rivoli. You should also watch and see wether

someone has caught the slight illness, for having slept without the mattress. We are already worrying regarding the three Granero sisters [Albina, Amalia and Dorotea], because often one or the other is sickly. Perhaps the Josephite Sisters, who already had two of their sisters, did not accept the others for this reason. Anyway, Sr. Amalia should be taken care of and, after making use of the homey and simple remedies, if she does not recover, she should be taken to Doctor Ariotti [surgeon, benefactor of the Institute]. A good sweat or steam bath should take care of her.

Regarding Sister Raffaella [Gerbore, she died at Mpanga (Tanzania) in 1929], it is really necessary to take her to Prof. Battistini [Ferdinando] for a visit, and so make an end of hers and ours worries. It is necessary to tell the Doctor the whole story wth all records, etc. This is urgent; as it is urgent that Sister Beatrice [Damiani, younger sister of Br. Carlo] be cured, and so we will be certain about all three of them; but for her it will be sufficient to see Doctor Ariotti.

In Giuditta's [Quartero, she was not accepted] case a test should be made, in order to see whether the problem depends only on a bad habit; otherwise she should be taken again to Prof. Boccasso [G. B. Boccasso, who was also teaching medicine in the Institue]. Also Sister Ferdinanda [Maria Gatti, who eventually made a great career in the Institute] should do well to choose as her special mortification to correct her behaviour.

It is not right to ask your Dad to cover the expense for the specific remedy suggested to you by our Bursar; for necessary things, like this one, there is Providence.

In regard to the Sisters you should never get tired to examine them, correct them, even strongly. St. Francis of Sales says that the superiors should be able to suspect; and I add that they never suspect enough; this is in order to avoid evil consequences. There are three of you [as Consolata Sisters] and you should often get together to confer with one another.

The attempt at stealing at our Consolata Shrine certainly pained me; let the Sisters know about it so that some amendment be carried out by us, who are sons and daughters, by means of individual prayer and mortifications. It is also a lesson for us, so that we may be shaken up and become more active; because, as the Rev. V. Rector wrote to me, ot was Our Lady who defended herself, not the sacristan who, woken up by the bell, went back to sleep; nor the others who, for a long time, let the alarm system not functioning. Let the seriousness of the fact urge everybody to greater commitment and vigilance, but continuous and minute...!

Tell Sister Bursar [the House Bursar] not to do more than she can do; to gage her strength not only her will; and to think once and for all about recovering by means of material and spiritual remedies.

I am almost reaching the length of your letters; even if, by ageing, may bad handwriting increases as well as my little will to write. You, who are young, write much to me.

My health is proceeding well, and this perfect solitude restores me from the many occupations of the year. I would like to say that I am trying to forget everything and everybody in order to think only of myself; but it is not true: that blessed Institute, as well as all the members, both men and women, is always here, in order to be offered during my visits to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and to St. Ignatius. That's enough; I bless you.

very aff. in O. L. J. C.

◀ 292 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 584-585)

To Fr. Umberto Costa

J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 25 July 1917

Dear Fr. Costa,

You have probably already returned from Costigliole, where you have been for the sad function [a Requiem Mass], that certainly must have pleased his good father... I have not yet received letters from Fr. Dolza in regard to the requisition of the unfinished building [the new Mother-House for the Consolata Sisters]. As I send this letter of mine to Lanzo, I will probably receive the one of Fr. Dolza. Well, we are in God's hands: *Ipsi cura est de nobis* [he is looking after us]. We must make them understand that we are working to build the house because we need it; in any case, suspend the works till my return.

Here, my dear, we are not dealing with an *amalekite*; it seems to me that it is rather like the cases of holy Job. On the same day I am reading on the *Il Momento* [newspaper] about the call to the army of men with hernia, etc.; a short time later I read the letter brought by the two [a seminarian E. Manfredi and a priest Fr. Spinello] and come to know about the torpedoing [of a ship carrying material for Kenya]; and at half past one Fr. Dolza arrives and tells me about the *"Inquisition"*.[26] What pained me more was the first news [the torpedoing]. Well, I was not so worried but, as Job did, I said: *Dominus dedit... Sit nomen Domini benedictum* [the Lord gave (and the Lord has taken away); blessed be the name of the Lord]. Always ahead *in Domino*: *Cum infirmor, tunc potens sum* [when I am weak, then I am strong].

Let me add something else; as it happened at the Consolata Shrine in Torino, it seems that also here at St. Ignatius' there was an attempt at stealing, because we found the large door half-opened, with the lock screws damaged; this happened on Sunday during lunch. But it was nothing.

The Th. Gunetti will come to St. Ignatius Saturday morning and will remain here till you arrive. Either you or Fr. Gallea shall have to go together

[26] "*Inquisition"*: the inspection of the unfinished Sisters' house.

with him to arrange for the carrier, etc. Tell Fr. Dolza to be at the Consolata Shrine Saturday evening; I shall arrive there sometime after seven p.m.

Many good wishes to all, and I'll see you soon, very aff. in J. C.

◀ 293 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 588)

To Brother Giacomo Ronco

Torino, before August 1917

Dear Giacomino,

Courage..., be faithful to all your devotions while you have so much time [a Brother in the Army]; let's thank the Lord. I bless you.

◀ 294 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 589)

To the seminarian Giuseppe Nepote Fus

Torino, beginning of August 1917

Dear seminarian Nepote,

I am glad to know that you are more and more in a situation less dangerous; I think that this is the work of our and your M. H. Consolata. Our good Mother will continue to protect you both spiritually and bodily as I ask her to do.

Courage... I bless you.

◀ 295 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 596-597)

To Mgr. Filippo Perlo

J. M. J. Torino, 20 August 1917

Dearest Monsignor,

I am joining this note to the letter of the V. Rector. In the year 1918, 12 missionaries, who are in Africa, should make their Perpetual Profession; their names are given below [not found].

Besides the application of each one of them, your judgement on everyone of them is required, so that I know how to reply to them. Indeed it would be convenient and right if, at least once a year, you should write to me saying what you think about everyone of them.

Regarding the above people, I don't know how they lived during the five years, whether they gave witness to a life of good religious and worthy missionaries. In a particular way, I would like to have news about Fr. Benedetto; his removal from various places and lately from the [War] Hospitals worries me. I am doubting: is it stubbornness or inconstancy?

Many good wishes *in Domino,* very aff.

◀ 296 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 598)

To Brother Giacomo Gaidano

Torino, 20 August 1917

And you, dear Giacomo, think often about the purpose for which you left everything: to become a saint. By means of this thought and of God's presence, you will be peaceful and happy in the midst of any work. The day of your Professsion will soon arrive and I have been informing Monsignor about it. Courage, and don't fear temptations.

I bless as if you were present in front of me, desiring to infuse, by means of the blessing of our Consolata, all that a father desires for you *in Domino*.

Greet all the Priests and Brothers who are there with you.

In J. C. very aff.

◀ 297 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 600)

To Brother Aquilino Caneparo

Torino, 20 August 1917

Dearest Br. Aquilino,

In your letter of June 25th , you write to me consoling words in regard to your love for perfection and I am pleased with. Keep going with this spirit and you will obtain a hundredfold and eternal life.

I liked your frankness when you speak about the *change of wording of Nos. 20 and 21* [concerning the vow of poverty]. You should know that since we presented our Constitutions to the H. See in 1909, we were told about the need for that change; and I at once wrote to all of you, and I know that such a letter of mine had arrived to you and all of you had been informed about it.

On the other hand, the diversity consists in a reasonable permission, which is absolutely necessary for the essence of the vow, without which, as

Rome said, the vow cannot be understood. Therefore, I think that when you became a religious you implicitly accepted it, and esplicitly so when you made your perpetual vows in April 1910.

From past experience, then, you may see that, in regard to you, I did not change arrangements for your particular interests, and you have always been asking for the required permission. You, however, don't speak with others about this problem of yours, in order not to bring about unreasonable uneasiness.

In the meantime I bless you.

◀ 298 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 604)

To Sister Chiara Strapazzon

H. J. M. J. Torino, 25 August 1917

R. Sister Chiara,

I felt it was better for you to remain there [at Rivoli with a group of Sisters] a little longer. You continue doing what you have been doing in the first fortnight. Go and pray much on the occasion of the Forty Hours' Devotion; we need it.

If you go back to the Shrine of the Lakes [at Avigliana (Torino)], thank on my behalf that good Salesian Priest; try to find out his name.

Many good wishes to all of you and my paternal Blessing, to you in a particular way... very aff.

◀ 299 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 605)

To Fr. Giuseppe Gallea

J. M. J Torino, 1 September 1917

Dearest Fr. Gallea,

I am pleased with the good news you sent me, especially the one concerning the solemn reparation to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament [Fr. Gallea is at St. Ignatius'].

It was really opportune, considering the amount of evil committed on those days in Torino, especially in the Church of St. Bernardino [in Torino], where some wretched people stole everything including the Blessed Sacrament.

Go on with spirit of faith, saintly joyful, till the end, that is, till Friday.

Fr. Dolza will not come; the Th. Guninetti will come in the middle of the week. Set everything properly at their place, handing in to him the list of breakages.

I bless you while waiting for you. very aff. in J. C.

◀ 300 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 605)

To Sister Margherita Demaria

H. J. M. J. Torino, 7 September 1917

Dear Sister Margherita,

We have received your letters, particularly the one No. 26, addressed to me. The news of the great amount of good brought about by the Sisters in the [War] Hospitals and the many souls the are saving console me. Deo gratias! May the Lord sustain them and make them holy. I am sorry to hear that you health is not so good and yet you have to work harder, due to lack of personnel. Take good care of yourself and be satisfied with doing what you can; when the war is ended, others will come to help.

In regard to the H. Perpetual Vows, it is my intention not to admit the Sisters before having *certain* and *minute* information concerning each one of them. As this is impossible because of the war, they shall have to wait to make their Profession until I will consider what will be the the proper time. Indeed, in agreement with the Ecclesiastical authority,

I am studying whether it wouldn't be better to renew the vows only for a certain amount of time, e. g., for another five-year period. Therefore, you will tell the Sisters not to be in a hurry to become true and holy missionaries, rather than aspiring to take perpetual vows. They will have the same merits and, furthermore, they will perform the superiors' obedience. Naturally this will not be the case in regard to you and a few others; but a decision shall have to be taken in regard to all.

For the time being there is no need of telling all this to the Sisters; it will be enough to tell them individually about the possibility of a delay.

In the meantime you start immediately to prepare for me a detailed report in regard to those who have to take their profession. You will point out the good things as well as the bad ones, the profit or no profit achieved in these years; their temperaments and whether they corrected them or not; the serious hope for a good future. You must write everything, even your doubts; and you shall add your judgement, etc. etc. Make two copies of it (using the typewriter) in case one gets lost on the sea. Do not show to anybody this report, and send it directly to me.

Keep going, in the Lord and with the Blessing I bestow wholeheartedly first on you and then on all the others... In J. C.

◀ 301 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 614)

To Fr. Giovanni Mauro

Torino, after 7 September 1917

Dear Fr. Mauro: The dear Michele [a brother of Fr. Mauro] is good and industrious; I hope he will become a good Brother. About Marco [another brother who had left] the Rev. Prefect should have already written to you: you don't worry. In the midst of sufferings let's thank the Lord for the fact that you are far from dangers. Let's pray for the confreres who are at the front and for our Institute. Our M. H. Consolata will assist us.

◀ 302 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 616)

To Fr. Giovanni Chiomio

Torino, September 1917

Dear Fr. Chiomio: I enjoy knowing that you are always strong in God's H. Will; keep going always, and *omnia cooperantur in bonum* [in everything God works for the good]. Only remaining firm in the holy ecclesiastical spirit, you will overcome all trials. [...]. Let's pray.

Many blessings from our dear Consolata.

◀ 303 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 617)

To Fr. Domenico Spinello

Torino, after 1 October 1917

Dear Fr. Spinello. I don't know anymore where to write!... [He is in the Army]. Many are the confreres who do it; and *well*. Courage in the meantime, helping also, on occasion, those who need comfort and spirit you may meet on your way. I bless you.

◀ 304 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 619)

To Fr. Gaudenzio Panelatti

Torino, 5 October 1917

Dearest Fr. Panelatti,

I was very pleased with the two letters of yours, in which you give me consoling news about the great good you bring about in those [War] Hospitals [in Tanzania]. May the good Lord comfort and sustain you for the salvation of many souls. Offer up what you have to suffer, because of fevers and fatigues, for the conversion of many unhappy people.

Encourage the good Sisters [Srs. Irene Stefani, and Cristina Morescu], whom our Sisters here greet with the desire to come soon to be with them and help them.

You continue to console me by means of your frequent letters, while I bless you wholeheartedly in the presence of our M. H. Consolata.

In the Lord very aff.

◀ 305 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 627)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero

uncertain date

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

I have received your nice report on the vicissitudes of the Chapel[27]. Your companions read it with interest and were pained by it... I thank you for... [money], but I order you take good care of yourselves first.

May the M. H. Consolata bless you and sustain your good spirit.

◀ 306 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 628)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero

uncertain date

Dear Fr. Ferrero,

You already understand my heart, and I yours. Nothing less than your frequent news consoles me. Pray for a quick end [of the war]. I bless you

[27] Something went wrong with vestments, etc.

◀ 307 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 629)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero

Torino, before 24 October 1917

Dear Fr. Ferrero. Ibant gaudentes..., quoniam digni habiti sunt pro Nomine Jesu... [They left (the presence of the council) rejoicing that they were counted worthy (to suffer) for the Name of Jesus]. Courage, and I am praying much the M. H. Consolata [he had been punished].

May the Lord sustain you and may everything turn out to His Greater Glory... Mr. Blengini [?] came to bring another 2000 Liras. I bless you

◀ 308 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 630)

To the seminarian Giuseppe Nepote Fus

Torino, before 24 October 1917

Dear Nepote,

As I was pained by the news that you had to be transferred..., so I was even more consoled by your last letter[28] [in the Army, the transfer did not take place]. Our dear Consolata wanted only the sacrifice of the will, and that was enough. Deo gratias! Especially for the spiritual aspect.

Courage *in spe* [in hope]... I bless you always and pray for you. If you need money or anything else, feel free to write to me.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 309 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 633)

To the seminarian Giuseppe Goletto

Torino, November 1917

Dear Goletto, During the month of November think about making your Purgatory, and freeing many souls [he is in the Army in Macedonia (Grecia)]. In this way you will have some comfort and gain some merits.

Courage, I bless you

[28] In the Army, the transfer did not take place.

◀ 310 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 633)

To Sister Giuseppina Battaglia

H. J. M. J. Torino, 26 November 1917

Dear Sister Giuseppina,

We are eager for news of you. The Rev. Sister Superior [Suor Maria degli Angeli] replied to your letter also on my behalf; since then we never received anything else. The Sisters here remember you often and hope for your recovery. In the meantime accept gratefully the more than maternal cares that that your dear parents and brothers and sisters lavish on you. May the Virgin of Mondovì and our Consolata comfort you and bring about your healing soon.

Many good wishes to your Family, and regards to the Rev. Parish Priest.

In the Lord very aff.

◀ 311 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 663)

To Fr. Lorenzo Sales

J. M. J. 6 Dicember 1917

My dearest,

I have already written to Monsignor in regard to what you write to me, and naturally *affirmative* [agreeing, about helping out in the War Hospitals]. Now, after prayer and reflection, I reply to you in the same way.

I would like to tell you many things, that cannot be expressed by writing, but all of them could be summarized by *permane* [remain steady]... The Lord will help you personally, and you follow absolutely my directives that, in spite of what you write to me, I confirm, and confirm... We should not escape from the occasions of overcoming ourselves, but by God's grace and by humiliating ourselves at the end we shall win.

I shall wait better times for some long letters of yours; in the meantime let's pray for the good spirit of all and let's hope *in Domino*.

Courage and keep going accompanied by my more than daily Blessing.

Our M. H. Consolata loves you and blesses you. *In Domino* very aff.

◀ 312 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 676)

To the seminarian Giuseppe Nepote Fus

Torino, before 25 December 1917

Dear Nepote: We have been worrying about your vicissitudes [the rout of Caporetto]; then, our M. H. Mother consoled us. Keep going as a missionary...: *Capillus de capite vestro non peribit* [not a hair of your head will perish]. Our Patron Saint for the year 1918 will be Blessed Cottolengo, as a teacher of trust in Divine Providence. I bless you...

◀ 313 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 677)

To the seminarian Giuseppe Bertolino

Torino, before 25 December 1917

Dear Bertolino: May the M. H. Consolata assist you and fill you with fervour for the ecclesiastical spirit... I pray for you.

The Patron Saint for the year 1918 (will be) Blessed Cottolengo.

◀ 314 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 678)

To Fr. Giovanni Chiomio

Torino, before 25 December 1917

Dear Fr. Chiomio; Pains, tribulations, and labours for all of you . I participated vividly in your life...

May the Lord derive good from it... I was consoled by the fact that our dear Consolata defended all of you. The day of your return will come, and we hope it will be soon... Let's pray and bend our head to God's H. Will. Have Nice Feasts [Christmas].

I bless you wholeheartedly.

◀ 315 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 680)

To Fr. Giuseppe Maletto

Torino, after 25 December 1917

Dear Fr. Maletto: there is no more room [on the paper he was using]; I will tell you only to proceed smoothly *in Domino*, so as to make a habit of it.

I bless you.

◀ 316 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VII, 683)

To the seminarian Giuseppe Goletto

uncertain date [1917]

Dear Seminarian Goletto. Many pieces of news have already been given you by your confreres. I only advise you to make sure that they keep you as a true infirmarian, because, according to the superiors-doctors of Torino, it is your right. All the rest *in Domino,* and as in the past He helped you in the midst of many vicissitudes, He will sustain you till the end, in order to be reserved for the Missions of Africa. Long for them and they will come.

It is always time *coram Deo* [in front of God]... I bless you.

◀ 317 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 10-11)

To Sister Giuseppina Battaglia

Torino, 4 January 1918

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

I thank you for having thought about me at the beginning of the new year. This means that you have thanked the Lord for the many blessings received in the past and have renewed your intention to become a saint, a great saint and soon so. This is what I and the whole Institute have decided on the first day.

I have offered to our dear Consolata all these intentions and, therefore, also yours.

As a Patron Saint for the new year, I assigned the newly beatified Cottolengo, proposing him as a model of trust and confidence in God, not

only in regard to temporal matters, but even more in regard to spiritual ones. Here is the dear Blessed [a holy card] for you.

I am convinced of your affection for our Institute, where you came freely, and lived wholeheartedly for several years. This is a proof of your will to conform to its spirit and, as much as you can, to the rules of our dear Community. It cannot be any different for you who, without loosing the natural affection and gratitude for your worthy parents and relatives [she was at home], are yearning for the day, when restored to health, you will come back to the Holy Walls: where your Sisters are waiting for you, in order to be formed together into apostolic virtues by means of perfect charity.

The day after tomorrow we shall celebrate our main Feast [Epiphany], and we will think of you in the midst of our holy joy, even if there will be some sadness, because of the times [war].

May the Lord bless you together with your good family...

Very aff. in the S. Heart of Jesus

◀ 318 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 24)

To Fr. Giuseppe Gallea

Torino, 18 January 1918

Dear Fr. Gallea,

I have tried to call you several times: at 1.30 p.m., at 3 p.m. and again at 3.30, but... no answer [the Bursar of the Mother-House]. Try to see whether your phone is in working conditions.

Due to the bad weather, I am not coming this evening: you collect the writings of everybody on the Prefect [Fr. Costa who had died], seal them in an envelope in the presence of all, and tomorrow morning you shall send them to me.

Tell immediately Fr. Dolza or Fr. Albertone, to write on my behalf a letter to the soldiers and, where Fr. Meineri is mentioned, to add *the seminarian Baldi.*

Try to phone me; I am at home the whole evening.

I bless you.

◀ 319 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 26-27)

To the missionaries in Italy, especially those in the Army

Jesus, Mary, Joseph

Torino, 18 January 1918

Circular No. 3

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

A very serious loss has affected our Institute. Our dear and venerated Prefect, Fr. Costa, has departed from us for Paradise on Wednesday at 8.00 a.m., after a very short illness. Only last Saturday he experienced a neuralgia in his face, which was treated with the normal medicines prescribed by our doctor, and he continued to fulfil his duties. On Tuesday at 9.00 a.m., he celebrated the Holy Mass, which was destined to be his viaticum towards eternity. He went to rest a little at about 3.00 p.m., fell asleep, and never woke up, never gave any sign of recognition, because of cerebral congestion.

Assisted with love and care by some confreres and some Sisters, by Th. Gunetti and Canon Baravalle of the Consolata Shrine, he died in my arms at 8.00 a.m. last Wednesday, the 16th of this month. He was only 32 years old; his health has never been very good, but because of his strong will-power, with constancy and ardour, he has been directing our Community (in the Mother-House) to whom he had totally dedicated himself.

You certainly understand our sorrow...! After so many trials, to which the Lord allowed our Institute to undergo in these last years, especially your being taken away from us, we were not expecting such a very painful one. However, *Justus es, Domine, et rectum judicium tuum!* [You are just, Lord, and your judgement is right!]. All our Institute belongs to the Lord, from its beginnings and always, and the Lord favoured it with many graces, even special ones. Has he, perhaps, wanted to punish us, with such a serious loss, for our lack of response? I do not think so, and I am convinced of this; because, in spite of human weaknesses, all of you are behaving with religious spirit, even among greater dangers, and you are striving to live as worthy aspirants for the H. Missions.

The good Lord must have found him ripe for Paradise, and wanted to reward one who has been his faithful and prudent servant who in a few years *explevit tempora multa* [fulfilled a long time]. He was taken to Heaven, so that, together with our dear Fathers Manzon and Meineri and the seminarian Baldi, we would have another powerful guardian. He knew very well the many needs of our Family and, therefore, will intercede at God's throne and obtain for us the comfort and the graces that are necessary to our Institute in order to continue journeying in a holy way to

the perfection to which it is called. Aware of how weak I and our Vice-Rector are in bearing our heavy burden, he will obtain from the Most Holy Virgin Mary the strength and grace needed in order not to succumb, and will give all of you a docile heart to help us carry out our tasks, and will console us with your perfect obedience to our desires.

At the moment, I cannot go on speaking to you about the virtues of our well-beloved confrere which, on the other hand, you also have known and appreciated. What I want to do is to invite you to pray for him, according to our Constitutions, remembering him in your H. Masses and Communions, and offering for his eternal rest the H. Rosary for nine days.

May our dear Consolata console you, as I implore at the presence of her altar

very aff. in O. L. J. C.

◀ 320 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 29-31)

To all Consolata Missionaries in Africa
(Fathers, Brothers, and Sisters)

Justus es Domine et rectum judicium tuum. *Ps. CXVIII, 137.*
[You are just, Lord, and your judgement is right. Ps. 118, 137]

JESUS, MARIA, JOSEPH

Torino, 18 January 1918

My dearest missionaries in O. L. J. C.,

A very serious loss has affected our Institute. Our dear and very pious Prefect, Fr. Costa, has departed from us for Paradise on Wednesday at 8.00 o'clock, after a very short illness. Only last Saturday he experienced a neuralgia in his face, which was treated with the normal medicines prescribed by our doctor, and he continued to fulfil his duties. On Tuesday at 9.00 a.m., he celebrated the Holy Mass, which was destined to be his viaticum towards eternity. He went to rest a little at about 3.00 p.m., fell asleep, and never woke up again, never gave any sign of recognition, because of cerebral congestion.

Assisted with love and care by some confreres and some Sisters, he died in my arms at 8.00 a.m. last Wednesday, 16th of this month. He was only 32 years old; his health has never been very good, but because of his strong willpower, with constancy and ardour, he has been directing our Community (in the Mother-House) to which he had totally dedicated himself.

You certainly understand our sorrow...! After so many trials to which Lord allowed our Institute to undergo in these last years, especially the many members taken for the Army, we were not expecting such a very

painful one. However, *Justus es, Domine, et rectum judicium tuum!* [You are just, Lord, and your judgement is right!].

All our Institute belongs to the Lord, from its beginnings and always, and the Lord favoured it with many graces, even special ones. Has he, perhaps, wanted to punish us, with such a serious loss, for our lack of response? I do not think so, and I am convinced of this; because, despite human weaknesses, all of you are behaving with religious spirit and zeal for the old and new works of the apostolate, and also those in the Army, even among greater dangers, are striving to live as worthy aspirants for the H. Missions.

The good Lord must have found him ripe for Paradise, and wanted to reward one who has been his faithful and prudent servant who in a few years *explevit tempora multa* [fulfilled a long time]. He was taken to Heaven, so that, together with our dear Fathers Manzon and Meineri and the seminarian Baldi, we would have another powerful guardian. He knew very well the many needs of our Family and, therefore, will intercede at God's throne and obtain for us the comfort and the graces that are necessary so that all the members of our Institute may continue journeying in a holy way toward the perfection to which they are called. Aware of how weak I and our Vice-Rector are in bearing our heavy burden, he will obtain from the Most Holy Virgin Mary the strength and grace needed in order not to succumb, and will give all of you a *cor docile* [docile heart] to help us carry out our tasks, and will console us with your perfect obedience to our desires.

At the moment, I cannot go on speaking to you about the virtues of our well-beloved confrere which, on the other hand, you also have known and appreciated. What I want to do is to invite you to pray for him, according to our Constitutions, remembering him in your H. Masses and Communions, and offering for his eternal rest the H. Rosary for nine days.

May our dear Consolata console you, as I implore at the presence of Her altar. Your very aff. in O. L. J. C.

◀ 321 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 38)

To Sister Giuseppina Battaglia

Torino, 19 January 1918

H. J. M. J.

CAN. JOSEPH ALLAMANO

thanks dear Sister Giuseppina for her participation in the sorrow of our Institute. For the good Fr. Costa the day of his death was a beautiful day, because it was the prize of all his labours, carried out uniquely for God’s

glory... For us it was a great loss; but it is not so if it is seen through the eyes of Faith... Fiat [Let it be].

Here is a short family letter sent to our soldiers [the Circular above] that will please you, and make you live in the House where your heart is, and where you are awaited when you will have recovered well [she is at her home, sick]. I bless you.

Many good wishes to your Family... very aff. in J. C.

◀ 322 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 47)

To Fr. Giuseppe Gallea

22 January 1918

Dear Fr. Gallea.

Tomorrow you will celebrate the *Settima* [Mass on the seventh day of the death] of the dear Prefect. I think it will be good to celebrate it solemnly, instead of the Communiy Mass, with the participation of the Sisters and general Communion. However, if you feel that it is better to celebrate it sometime later, feel free to do so. However invite the Sisters.

If this bad weather perseveres, there will be no walk. I hope to come this evening.

May the Lord bless you.

◀ 323 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 53)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero

Torino, after 22 January 1918

Dear Fr. Ferrero,

I thank you for your constant participation in our sorrows, and also in mine [he is in the Army]. I wouldn't like to add sadness over sadness: *afflicto ne addas moerorem* [don't increase sadness to somebody afflicted], and you already have enough sorrows of your own. And I assure you that I am living in perfect peace, wholly relying on God's will, and I am still enjoying good health... The M. H. Consolata lives and protects her dear missionaries, and will derive greater good from many miseries.

Courage *in Domino*... I bless you in a particular way

◀ 324 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 64-65)

To Fr. Giovanni Mauro

J. M. J. Torino, 16 February 1918

Dear Fr. Mauro,

Your letters are very pleasing to me; and am I thirsty? for some letters from Fr. Garrone and seminarian Sciolla [all of them are in the Army].

Keep writing, even if sometime I may not be able to reply. All of you should continue living according to the spirit of our Institute; and often ask yourselves what I would tell you if I were there with you. Lucky you if, coming back to us soon, as we hope, you will be loaded with merits because of your sacrifices offered to God, and you will have drawn spiritual profit from the very human miseries. Keep always in mind: *I am a missionary, and I want to have all the proper spirit*.

Don't be afraid of the future, and of being removed from the Medical Corps; for the time being there is no danger because they need many people. We are anxiously awaiting for your temporary licence. If you will not be able to come soon, write to your home telling them to send your brother [an aspirant Brother at home for health reasons].

I bless all of you as a father, and I always commend you to our dear Consolata.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 325 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 92)

To Sister Giuseppina Battaglia

H. J. M. J. Torino, 3 March 1918

Reverend Sister Giuseppina,

I was pleased with the good news, and I pray to St. Joseph to bring to completion your recovery. It would certainly be my desire, as well as the desire of your Sisters, to have you here among us on the nice day of St. Joseph. However, you follow the medical doctor's orders and the judgement of your good parents.

I approve your reading the books of St. Teresa; they are very useful in order to be acquire fortitude and spirit of sacrifice: virtues very necessary for a true missionary. In the meantime courage, and live in the world only with your body, while your soul should be where the great grace of vocation had led you.

We shall continue to pray for your brothers, especially for the release from the army of your dear brother Paul [Paul was exempted; the others had to participate].

Also on behalf of the Rev. V. Rector, give our best regards to your good parents and the whole of your family.

I paternally bless you... very aff. in J. C.

◀ 326 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 104-105)

To Sister Giuseppina Battaglia

Torino, 17 April 1918

Dear Sister Giuseppina,

I rejoice at your recovery, and I pray our dear M. H. Consolata to fortify it. What remains to be done now is to come back to the dear nest, where all the Sisters are waiting for you and have found your absence too long. We are waiting for you, so as to be able to start with us the month of May, during which there will be the Spiritual Exercises.

You will thank also on my behalf your good parents and sisters for all they did for you, considering everything as charity toward our Institute.

I bless you... very aff. in J. C.

◀ 327 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 137)

To the missionaries in the Army

Torino, end of May 1918

My very beloved sons in the Lord,

May the affectionate greetings of your Father and Rector be pleasing to you, beloved missionaries in the Army, and may it be an encouragement and comfort among the toils and hardships of military life. I recommend all and each one of you in particular to our Most Holy Consolata, so that, well aware of your vocation, you may preserve entire your apostolic spirit, even while you generously fulfil your duty to our Country.

Be sure to keep always in mind what our Ven. Cafasso used to say about priests: «Every apostle in his behaviour and in his habits must be totally different from the common ways of the other people, because his vocation and his status are so different».

May O. L. Consolata bless and protect you.

Very aff. in the Lord,

◀ 328 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 138-139)

To the missionaries in the Army

Torino, end of May 1918

My dearest missionaries in the army,

Benedictus Deus, qui consolatur nos in omni tribulatione nostra [Blessed be God who consoles us in all our sorrows]. Due to the repeated departures of many of our dear confreres for the military service, our Institute and our Missions had to suffer a lot. The Lord, who had consoled us by the permission to keep some members for the needs of the Mother-House, grants us the return of four older missionaries destined to help our confreres in Kenya and in the Kaffa region [Frs. G. Mauro, G. Chiomio, D. Spinello, and G. Cavallo].

While we thank the civil and military authorities for this special favour, we offer very heartfelt thanks to God who consoles us with this pleasant return, and we pray our dear Consolata that the yearned day may soon come when She will bring back all our brothers to the Institute and to the heart of the Rector.

◀ 329 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 139-140)

To Monsignor Gaudenzio Barlassina

J. M. J. Torino, 10 June 1918

Dearest Monsignor,

I have read and re-read all the letters you wrote to me and to the V. Rector. From them we can see that you are aiming at fortifying your position, while waiting for the spiritual aspect. Our commitment consists in sustaining and helping you by means of our experience. It is with this spirit that you should receive the directive letters of the Rev. V. Rector who, as you well know, has great experience in these things and understands well your worries.

You should keep on mind two things: 1. That Propaganda Fide forbids trading; and we must not and do not want to disobey. The Lord will reward this obedience; therefore, follow the directives of the V. Rector. 2. That you should not get involved in too many “industries”, which are the only ones allowed; but get involved only in a few, that are possible for the time being and rewarding, leaving for the future others that are too expensive and are not convenient, because you are only a few and inexperienced.

Regarding money, you must admit that we never denied what is necessary, according to our means, and that we are dealing with you as we

did with the Kenya Mission, and even better. Only we cannot allow serious expenses for an uncertain result, and for other purposes aleady mentioned to you by the V. Rector. For the time being you have to live rather scantily, even if it means missing some greater advantage.

You write that you feel inspired with what you are doing and you almost appeal to God's tribunal. My dear, the sure way to know God's will is obedience, and not one's own judgement or inspiration. In any case you will never regret even having delayed some progress not wanted by the Superiors. We also care about progress, but with prudence and according to the directives of Propaganda.

Present my congratulations to dear Carlo[29], and my encouragement and blessing to all of you. *In Domino* very aff.

◀ 330 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 147)

To the missionaries in the army

Torino, 16 June 1918

My very beloved sons in the Lord,

Our dear Mother, the Consolata, on the beautiful day of Her feast, as She blesses and consoles all those who pray to Her, will in a special way look at Her dear sons who are striving to bear Her name with honour.

"*Ave spes, consolatio, refugium nostrum, o Maria: Beata tu fidei nostrae: Beata tu animae nostrae: Beata dilectioni nostrae: Beata preconiis et benedictionibus nostris"* [Hail Mary, our hope, our consolation, and our refuge: You are Blessed by our trust, our thoughts, our affections, our praises and our blessings].

◀ 331 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 148
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To Sister Giuseppina Battaglia

Torino, 26 June 1918

Rev. Sister Giuseppina,

Now that the Feasts of our dear Consolata have past, I reply briefly to yout letters. I hope that at present you will feel better both bodily and morally, as I often pray for in my H. Masses. You should not have a gloomy outlook on

[29] Congratulations to Br. Carlo Angrisani, for the oncoming Perpetual Profession.

many things; but proceed with simplicity and trust to God's H. Will. Nobody is uncertain about your dispositions; and the Sisters love you and desire to see you return to our dear Institute healthy and holy. In the meantime strive to be at peace, and make use of all the treatments for a full recovery. This is the purpose of your being away from us among the affection of your family.

The beautiful day of your return will come. Here time goes by very quickly; therefore you feel that we are forgetting you because we do not write so often. Be sure that we are praying for you.

Many good wishes to your parents, to the Very Rev. Parish Priest.

Be in the Lord, very aff.

◀ 332 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 149)

To Fr. Lorenzo Sales

uncertain date

Dear Fr. Sales: you complain because I do not write to you at length [missionary in Kenya]. You know well that my time is always short and it has to be divided among many people and many things. Besides, you already understand my desires and my will. Be faithful to what is written...

◀ 333 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 150)

To Fr. Lorenzo Sales

uncertain date

Dear Fr. Sales,

I write little; but you already have a volume of it. Remember that we are speaking to one another through Jesus; and are always the same words that are confirmed. very aff.

◀ 334 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 151)

To the seminarian Giuseppe Nepote Fus

uncertain date

Dear Nepote. The M. H. Consolata will continue to blesss, comfort and console you, as I pray to her every day. Keep going with the good Spirit, and the Holy Angels, yours and of the Institute, will help you to become holy...

◀ 335 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 154)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero

Torino, 3 July 1918

Dearest Fr. Ferrero,

I don't want to delay replying to your letter received yesterday. First of all I thank you for opening your heart to me, even if you fear to pain me [he is in the Army, experiencing difficulties]. Yes, my dear, I participate vividly in your trials, I suffer for them and I would like to relieve you and free you from them...

As at the moment I can't do anything else, I will pray even more to our dear Mother for you and beg for a spirit of fortitude and the heroism of the martyrs. Trust in M. H. Mary; She will console you and convert sorrow into joy; and will be able to derive good from evil and humiliation. Think that I am close to you and take comfort. Keep writing to me, nevertheless, and always tell me the truth, the whole truth...

Courage...; and think of what I would tell you.

I bless you wholeheartedly, very aff. in J. C.

◀ 336 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 159)

To the missionaries in the Army

Torino, 7 July 1918

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

We are in July: a month that the devotion of the faithful consecrates to the Most Precious Blood of O. L. Jesus Christ. This Divine Blood *emundat nos ab omni peccato* [purifies us from all sins]; the world needs it, as well as each one of us in particular. It strengthens us in the struggles and pains of our life, and by the merits of His Blood we shall save many souls and attain to a blessed Paradise.

Have devotion to It, and recite often the following short prayer:

"Eternal Father, I offer to You the most precious Blood of Jesus Christ as a reparation for my sins and for the needs of our H. Church".

◀ 337 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 168)

To the missionaries in the Army

Torino, before 26 July 1918

My dearest in O. L. Jesus Christ,

You certainly remember the beautiful days spent at the Shrine of St. Ignatius: days of rest for your soul as well as for your body.

Far as you are, know that your brothers, now at the Shrine, remember you and pray for you. You recall the majestic statue of the Saint and the words written under it: *ad majorem Dei gloriam*. You, too, say, "Yes, everything for the glory, the greater glory of God: your thoughts, affections, words, actions, and especially your many sacrifices should be offered to God, so that the Lord may be glorified in your present life and, as a reward of your sufferings, many souls of unbelievers in Africa may be saved".

I bless you.

◀ 338 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 172)

To Sister Maria degli Angeli Vassallo di Castiglione

St. Ignatius', July 1918

V. R. Superior,

I hold the opinion of Sister Assistant [Sr. Chiara strapazzon]. Let's pray and, when I come back, we shall decide [about somebody to be dismissed]. I feel well and am trying to breath in fresh air, so as to be able to take some of it to Torino...

I am praying for you and your intentions to St. Ignatius, and for all the dear Sisters, so that they may have a true spirit of purity of intention and of zeal for the greater *glory of God*.

I bless you, very aff. in J. C.

◀ 339 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 173)

To the missionaries in the Army

St. Ignatius', end of July - beginning of August 1918

The month of August could be called the second month of Mary. On the 15th of this month, we celebrate the *Assumption*, the greatest feast of the M.

H. Virgin: *Inter festivitates eius habet quandam excellentiam* [Among her feasts, it has a certain excellence] (Suarez).

It would be convenient to spend the first fifteen days of the month in preparation, and the other fifteen in thanksgiving. It is a pious practice to pray the Hail Mary 12 times every day to honour the 12 stars with which the M. H. Virgin was crowned in Paradise. They mean the 12 virtues that mostly shone in the B. V. Mary, and in which, as worthy sons, we should imitate.

◀ 340 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 178)

To the seminarian Giulio Peyrani

Torino, 7 August 1918

Dear seminarian Peyrani,

Good with your letters, that all of us desire. Feel free to spend according to the greater need. Regarding the spiritual aspect, keep united with God and He will protect you [he is in the Army].

Your companions and the sudents are at St. Ignatius' and, if they deserve Divine Providence, they will remain there a full month.

Your good father, always generous, has given us maize flour. He also sent a few things for you but, since I cannot send them to you, they will be used by your confreres.

Courage *in Domino,* very aff. in J. C.

◀ 341 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 179)

To Fr. Vittorio Sandrone

J. M. J. Torino, 8 August 1918

Dear Fr. Sandrone,

I received your money order of 50 Liras. I praise your affection for our Institute; the money is quite useful, due to the enormous increase in expenses [he is in the Army in Albania]. However, make sure to sustain you as well as our dear Antonio [a Brother]. Nothing new here, except the fact that Fr. Chiomio is not feeling too well. Almost the whole Community is at St. Ignatius'; and we have to send there everything also the bread. We must be patient.

Courage *in Domino*, I bless both of you

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 342 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 184-185)

To Fr. Pietro Albertone

J. M. J. Torino, 26 August 1918

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

I hope that after the first days of weakness, you have been getting stronger and stronger [he is at Riva di Chieri (Torino) to regain strength]. This is the purpose for which you went to that place. Therefore, in order to achieve fully this intent, I have no problem if you remain there till after the Nativity [8th of September] and also up to the 15th [of September: Our Lady of Sorrows]. In regard to the homilies, about which you are asking me, you may accept them, provided they don't detract from the purpose of your holidays.

You should have received news of the Institute from Fr. Gallea who is still at St. Ignatius'; I had asked him to do so. The Lord loves us and provides for us even during these sad times. It's up to us to deserve His special protection, both for the spiritual and the temporal aspect.

Keep going *in Domino,* to be useful in a better way to you and to the House. I bless you

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 343 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 187)

To Sister Giuseppina Battaglia

Torino, 30 August 1918

Rev. Sister Giuseppina,

On my return from St. Ignatius I found your postcard. From it, it appears that your health is not yet strong enough. Keep making use of all the cares your relatives offer you, and particularly enjoying the refreshing atmosphere of those places. By means of a long letter, you will be able to tell me things more clearly... Courage...

Your Sisters here always remember you and pray for you.

Very dev[oted]

◀ 344 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 188)

To Fr. Giuseppe Gallea

J. M. J. Torino, 2 September 1918

Dear Fr. Gallea,

I have received the letter you wrote to me last Saturday. Little miseries that are caused also by the need to change; therefore, on Friday morning depart. Before that, however, set everything in good order, also in the sacristy and the Church. You will give the list of breakages to the Bursar [Th. Gunetti]. Nobody should take anything away from St. Ignatius'. Go to thank the Parish Priest and give him half a Kg. of coffee.

Fr. Maletto and the seminarian [Lorenzo Maletto] will not come any longer, because their sister has died, and they could not even see her alive; he will come back today or tomorrow.

We shall ask the confessors to come to the Institute on Saturday.

There was a telegram, and then a letter from the Chaplain of the Hosp[ital] of Mondovì, asking Marcellino [Luigi, a seminarian] to go and see his brother, a soldier, ill with *typhoid, a quite serious illness*. I felt there was no need to write to you about it; when you arrive at Torino, we shall decide what to do. I don't see the need for a young boy to go, risking to catch the same illness.

Regarding all the rest, depart from there with the blessing of St. Ignatius. The Bursar will come and I will tell him to suspend the works along the road.

◀ 345 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 190-191)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

Torino, 2 September 1918

Dearest Fr. Gays,

I have received not too long ago two letters of yours, one written in February and the other in May. I thank you for the fine expressions of condolence in regard to the death of Fr. Costa. It certainly was a very serious loss to our Institute, especially in regard to the formation of our young missionaries; for us, elderly people, he was a true support, because his spirit was totally in harmony with our own. But *fiat voluntas Dei* [let God's will be done]: aware of the affection he had for our Institute, he will continue to protect it, and will beg for graces, so that the Institute may accomplish its mission.

Your first letter, that I received some time before the second one, pleased me. However, its contents amazed me. After having thanked the Lord for your great vocation, you start apologizing and asking for pardon. I assure you that I cannot understand. You have always been respectful of me and of the V. Rector, and we have always been praising your spirit of obedience. Mgr. Perlo, in his letters, has always been commending you, beginning from the time you resigned as superior; in fact, Monsignor was totally opposed to your resignation and told me not to accept it. Monsignor also told me that you rose up resolutely against some people who were favouring the formation of a government [of the Institute] telling them that they were ungrateful and foolish.

Also, in everything you have been helping, always according to your strength, the good and the progress of our missions, especially by means of the very important work of the formation of the catechists. Your work, even if operated somehow on the darkness, has been seen by God and has always been appreciated by me and the V. Rector. That's why I encouraged it by means of a letter of mine. Not all people are made to be working by walking; each one should work according to his strength and vocation.

As a conclusion, know that there is nothing for which we must forgive you; indeed, there is a lot for which we have to thank you on God's behalf, for whose honour you spent many years of your life. Indeed, set yourself in a condition of indifference regarding what the Lord might want for your future. As at the beginning perhaps only to you I manifested my heart, telling that, after having founded the Institute, I would have later assisted it as a god-father (and I remember this); these words were printed against my intention on the letter on *Poverty*; and I am thinking about this future.

For the time being I cannot tell you anything more; but let's pray.

With all the blessings of our dear Consolata.

Your very aff. on J. C.

◀ 346 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 193)

To the missionaries in the Army

Torino, 18 September 1918

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

The novena and the month dedicated to the Holy Guardian Angels is approaching; together with St. Bernard, I am exhorting you to cultivate reverence, devotion and confidence in their regard: "*reverentiam pro praesentia, devotionem pro benevolentia, fiduciam pro custodia*" [reverence for their presence, devotion for their benevolence, confidence in their protection].

Pray often to your Guardian Angel; He will sustain you in your temptations and tribulations, and he will bring you back safe and sound to our dear Institute.

◀ 347 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 194)

To Sister Giuseppina Battaglia

Torino, 24 September 1918

Rev. Sister Giuseppina,

The good news given me, first by a postcard and then by a long letter, greatly pleased me. The change in spirit is a grace from God, that will make you strong enough to follow your holy vocation. Pray to your good Guardian Angel during the Novena and throughout the month of October, so that your will may be steady.

In order to complete your bodily healing, I think it is better for you to remain their till after the grape-harvest, according to te desire of your Dad. Indeed I would like that also the doctors would confirm your full recovery. If some little surgery would be required to this purpose, you should have it performed. The Sister Superior [Maria degli Angeli], after the one performed by Prof. Boccasso [G. B. Boccasso, who used to teach medicine to the seminarians, etc.], has always been feeling well.

In the meantime courage and trust in God.

Many good wishes to your family and to the Very Rev. Parish Priest.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 348 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 195)

To Monsignor Filippo Perlo

Torino, 27 September 1918

I would like to remind you of what I had already told you in my last letter, that is, that you should be so good as to send me every now and then some evaluation concerning everyone, especially before their religious profession. Your silence is not sufficient.

This is your duty: it is you who supervises them, sees them and hears them. What could I know after so many years, and by means of individual letters that say nothing, and sometimes not even the truth. This is necessary for me, also in view of future assignments. Even if the mail is controlled [by

the government], you may use the number of their clothes, or something similar. Please, do it: it is your duty.

The two for [next year perpetual] profession: Fr. Maraviglia and Fr. Ciravegna [let me know something about them].

Patron Saint [for 1919]: B[lessed] M. Alacoque

◀ 349 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 196-197)

To the missionaries perpetually professed in 1918

Torino, 27 September 1918

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

Being unable to write to each one of you in particular, I rejoice with all of you who have taken or will take perpetual vows this year. Your good number makes this an exceptional year for our Institute, and serves admirably for its consolidation. I rejoice for your good and for the good of all our Missions.

On the solemn day of your Profession, you have renewed your firm will to live as holy missionaries through the observance of the three vows and of the H. Rules. By doing so, you will live happy in this short life, and will deserve the Paradise proper to Religious-Missionaries.

I place your promises at the feet of our dear Consolata, and I beg Her to bless them.

Once again, together with my spiritual embrace, receive the fatherly blessing of

Your very aff. in J. C.

◀ 350 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 198-199)

To Fr. Angelo Dal Canton
and Br. Anselmo Jeantet

Torino, 27 September 1918

Dearest Fr. Dal Canton, and Br. Anselmo,

I, too, from the Mother-House greet your return [from Southern Ethiopia], in union with the deserved celebrations of the confreres of Nyeri. As a Father, I always remembered you during the four years of your Apostolate, and every evening, without any exception, I have been sending my special Blessing, by means of two signs of the Cross.

The Lord has sustained you both bodily and spiritually; and He will have written in golden letters Fr. Dal Canton's sacrifice of not having anybody to hear his confession.

Your labours have certainly not been useless and, at the proper time, the seeds you have sown will bear fruit. At present restore your strengths both physical and spiritual; and enjoying the company of Monsignor [Perlo] and of the confreres, make ready for whatever God may want of you.

I had received your letters [from Fr. Dal Canton and Br. Anselmo] from Moyale in December 1917, and the one of Br. Anselmo from Nyeri this year. I heard from Monsignor that you are now working in order to complete the building of the Church; that's good: work to prepare a less unworthy House for Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

I have been remembering your good parents [of Fr. Dal Canton] and I have been sending them aid by means of the Parish Priest. When those disorders took place, I wrote to one of your brothers in the army], whose address I knew, and he replied to me saying that your parents were safe and in a safe place. Up to now I didn't hear anything else; but it is my commitment to trace them and help them. Be at peace.

I bless both of you in the presence of our dear Consolata and, together with you, I bless all the priests and Brothers who are there with you

very aff. on J. C.

◀ 351 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 201)

To Sister Margherita Demaria

Torino, 28 September 1918

Rev. Sister Margherita,

I have received your letter, dated 15th July, with all the news, good and bad. It really seems God's will that the Institute be founded on the virtue of humility and not on great achievements.

Physical and moral miseries should not discourage you, not even the defection of the two Sisters. They move to pity and we should pray for them. However, some good had been accomplished, and the Sisters, in their letters, show good spirit, even in the midst of many distractions. Yes, that Nairobi [troubles in the War hospital]...! But it will end soon...

I have received your detailed letter, and that's good; write again in that way at least once a year, using, in these times, the *number* [of their clothes], instead of their names. You will write in a simple way what you feel *in Domino*. Regarding the vows, once the year for which you have renewed them expires, you will renew them for another year until all of you are back from the [War] Hospitals. Only after the end of the war, we shall think about perpetual vows, but only after having lived for some time in our

[mission] stations, and only after an order of mine. This is what I wrote also to Monsignor, and you may remind him of this.

Try to be well and peaceful.

I bless you and, together with you, all the Sisters…

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 352 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 205)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero

Torino, 3 October 1918

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

Your penultimate letter pained me greatly. However, you continue writing to me, telling me also the saddest things; it will be an outlet and a consolation. Certainly, in a situation like these no serious decisions should be taken. At the end, however, do what the Lord inspires you to do, and I will approve it. Rather than continuing such a life, it is better to look for a change; it will not be any worse.

In the meantime, take courage and think that the good Lord sees everything; He will support you in your trials and, at the proper time, will dry *omnem lacrimam* [every tear].

I commend you greatly to our dear Mother and to your H. Guardian Angel.

I did not speak in the Community about that fact.[30]

I bless you wholeheartedly… very aff. in J. C.

◀ 353 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 206-207)

To all missionaries

Torino, 5 October 1918

Requiescite pusillum… [Rest a little…]

My very dear sons in O. L. J. C.,

Our family is again mourning the premature and almost sudden death of the youngest among its members in the Army, our very dear seminarian Costanzo Leinardi.

[30] Probably, an undeserved punishment.

On Thursday, 19 September, toward evening we received a telegram from La Morra informing us of the very serious condition of our beloved confrere. This news, totally unexpected, filled us with worry, and we hurried to send him a telegram promising our prayers and sending to him my fatherly blessing.

But, unfortunately, our response did not reach him on time: on that very evening, the soul of our dear confrere took off for Paradise, strengthened by the grace of the Holy Sacraments and purified by the sacrifice of his Apostolic vocation. In fact, the priest who assisted him and prepared him for death informed me that, during his short illness, he has been speaking about missions often and with fervour, thus showing that he was aspiring to them with all his youthful heart. This transpired also from his pleasant letters, as when he wrote, "*My heart and my thoughts are always yearning to reach and go through the door of our Institute*", and another time, "*Thanks to God, I have remained strong throughout, and my purpose is always firm, my vocation steadfast*". And we, even if deeply suffering for this new loss, have to submit ourselves even more deeply to the holy and fatherly hand of God that is testing us.

However, my very great concern is that all of you may learn well that, in the supreme instant of death, nothing can console and animate you to hope, except the thought of having faithfully responded to the great and high vocation that God gave you: accept, dear sons, this lesson that will serve you a lot in the serious material and moral dangers you have to go through each day.

In the meantime, I recommend to your prayers the soul of our mourned deceased, for whom here in the Mother-House we have already celebrated the prescribed Masses, especially the one on the seventh day. You, too, offer the holy Rosary for nine consecutive days, as well as your holy Communions for the eternal rest of our dear confrere.

May our Lord and O. L. Consolata continue to protect and bless all of you, as with all his heart blesses you

your very aff. *in Domino*

◀ 354 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 210)

To Sister Maria degli Angeli Vassallo di Castiglione

Torino, 15 October 1918

The Sister Bursar [Sr. Luigia Mazzia] came to me and spoke only about herself and her conscience. The kitchen will get settled on its own [instead of talking about the kitchen]. When dealing with the good of the Community, "indifference" should not interfere; it is a duty to speak of everything and clearly, according to supernatural views.

Today is the feast of our Patron Saint, St. Teresa; let's pray to her, so that we, too, may have such a great love for God as to overcome all the miseries of this life.

Good about Sister Camilla [Enrichetta Merlo] and her companions.

This evening, if it is a custom to do so, celebrate the H[oly] Benediction.

Let nothing trouble you; everything goes by. To suffer or to die (St. Teresa).

◀ 355 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 211)

To the missionaries in the Army

J. M. J. Torino, 20 October 1918

My dearest sons *in Domino,*

During the novena and feast of All Saints let us lift up our hearts to Heaven in a special way: *Ingens multitude carorum nos expectat!* [A great multitude of dear people is expecting us!].

Let us rejoice with them and pray to them that they may help us to become saints: even if they are already happy, nonetheless they are anxious that we, too, may join them.

In the meantime let us not forget our deceased people, especially those whom the Lord called to Himself in the last year and, as far as we are concerned, let us make use of all the trials that the Lord sends us in this life to purify ourselves, as St. Catherine of Genova wrote: "The Lord purifies me from my dross by means of sufferings in this world, so that, after my death, I may immediately enjoy eternal happiness".

With fatherly affection I bless you.

◀ 356 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 217)

To Fr. Francesco Gamberutti

Torino, after 31 October 1918

Dear Fr. Gamberutti. After receiving your letter for your sister, Sister Amalia, I took it to the "Suore Bigie" [Grey Sisters] of the Mental Hospital. But they told me that she had departed for Paradise [something written on the margin]. The Lord wanted to reward her, even if at the beginning of her religious life. Let's pray...

I never forgot you; but you never wrote anything concerning the College for the Chiefs' sons [he did not know that it had been closed]. Many desire...

[to know something about it]. Be patient; also for you the day will come when you will see again your good father [who died, assisted by his son in 1922]; he is well and came to see me a few days ago together with your brother-in-law, Mr. Albera.

I bless you.

◀ 357 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 219)

To Fr. Giuseppe Perrachon

J. M. J. Torino, 4 November 1918

Dearest Fr. Perrachon,

The sorrowful news was not new to me, because a few days earlier I had been told that the whole of your family was sick and was asking us to pray to our Consolata for them. After the death of your brother-in-law [from the pandemic influenza], I wrote to your sister so as to console her...

How many deaths caused by the war and many by the epidemic, that now seems to be decreasing. You take courage and write words of consolation to your sister...

I heard that you managed to resist the labours and the climate of Mombasa [in the Carrier Corps' Hospital]: Deo gratias!

At present everything should be ended, and you will go back to work in the Missions. May the Lord bless you together with all your confreres and the Sisters.

Very aff. in J. C.

◀ 358 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 227)

To Fr. Angelo Dal Canton

Torino, November 1918

Dear Fr. Dal Canton: your little town and your family had been hardly hit by the war. From the enclosed letter of your parish-priest, you will get much information. Say your *Fiat* [Let it be] to God's H. Will.[31]

We have prayed and celebrated Masses for them. You, then, write to your father who is anxious to hear from you; he was afraid that you were dead.

Courage *in Domino*... I bless you

[31] The mother and a sister of Fr. Dal Canton had been killed by poison gas.

◀ 359 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 233)

To the missionaries in the Army

Torino, 15 November 1918

My dearest in O. L. Jesus Christ,

Let us say wholeheartedly "DEO GRATIAS" to our Protector of the year, Blessed Cottolengo. The recent events made everybody rejoice [the end of the war], but in a special way they made us rejoice, because we could foresee that soon you may return to our dear Community.

Continue to fulfil your duties well until the end, and in the meantime prepare yourselves through a detachment of your heart from the world and its mentality, to take up again the whole spirit of our Institute.

On that beautiful day, when I may be able to definitively embrace you again, may I see you truly eager for holy discipline and well disposed to a full formation for your apostolate.

I bless you.

◀ 360 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 235-236)

To Sister Giuseppina Battaglia

H. J. M. J. Torino, 22 November 1918

Dear Sister Giuseppina,

I share your sorrow, but at the same time I rejoice. Truly the House of your sanctification and of your glory is here; and you should not find any steady peace anywhere else. But the Lord wanted to test you, so that you may ever more detach yourself from the world and attach yourself to Him. However, the beautiful day will come! Wait for it and desire it, but with a spirit of resignation...

You were told the reasons for the delay by the Rev. V. Rector; there is nothing else. The Sisters here remember you always, desire your presence, and they will write to you a collective letter. They tell me that for them time is no time, so much it escapes them...

Four missionaries will soon leave for Africa; for the time being no Sister though. We are anxiously awaiting the return of our dear confreres we were in the Army...

After the solemnity of the [Immaculate] Conception four of them [Sisters] will receive the religious habit; however, there will be no people attending, not even their relatives, in order to avoid contracting the epidemic, from

which, thanks be to God, so far we have been exempt. You should know that in Torino the epidemic seems to be intensifying once again.

Finally, you be at peace; don't think that your trial is a punishment; indeed, see that it could purify you more and more, and enkindle once again the spirit of your glorious vocation...

It is a few days now that the Rev. V. Rector is resting in bed, due to tiredness and constipation, not for the epidemic, and he sends you his greetings.

Thank your good sister Maddalena for her gracious offering [for a Baptism]; she will be a God-mother.

Many regards to your good parents and the whole of your family and the Very Rev. Parish Priest.

I bless you at the presence of our dear Consolata. In J. M. J. very aff.

◀ 361 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 243)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero

J. M. J. Torino, 30 November 1918

Dearest Fr. Ferrero,

I have received your letters and postcards; we tried to send you what you need, but it was inpossible to do it. Be patient and try to do what you can; if you need any money for it or for anything else, let me know.

In the meantime console yourself because, besides a petition for the early return of all of you sent to the proper authorities, for you we insisted and finally obtained an extraordinary leave for a month. This is what we received yesterday from the Ministry of War. The rest will come later.

Let's thank our dear Mother, and courage till the end.

I bless you, very aff. in J. C.

◀ 362 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 250-251)

To Sister Margherita Demaria

H. J. M. J. Torino, 6 December 1918

Dear Sister Margherita,

Now that peace has finally come, the Sisters will be able to return to the Vicariate and resume their duties. I have written to Monsignor, telling him to have somebody to direct the Spiritual Exercises for them. In this way, purified by the miseries contracted in the world, they will give the whole of

themselves to work for their own sanctification and the salvation of souls. Exhort them on my behalf to a spirit of *blind* obedience and mutual charity. I hope that all of them will come back to fervour. The very example of the Pachner [who had left] will keep them in holy awe.

The Superiors have decided that, before taking perpetual vows, there will be two five-year terms of temporary vows. The decision is for the common good of all; and I am sure that the Sisters will accept it good-heartedly. Therefore, those who have renewed for a year, at the end of it, will take their vows for four years, till the end of the ten-year term.

I wrote to Monsignor about Sister Adele, and I repeat the same thing to you: if she has not recovered well spiritually, at the end of the five-year term she should be dismissed and sent back to Italy. Only if she recovers well and remedies her past, she could be given a test, with vows for a year. The double defection [of the Pachner and the possible one of Sr. Adele] should not pain you too much; God will arise others with good spirit; and we already have many of them in the Mother-House, who are anxious to join you.

May the Lord bless all of you, and particularly you, so that you may have the power and the grace to lead well our dear missionaries in their holy vocation.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 363 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 254)

To the missionaries in the Army

J. M. J. Torino, after 9 December 1918

My dearest sons in the Lord,

In the succession of feasts so dear to our hearts, because they remind us of all the sweetness that always characterized them since we were children, let us strive to live the spirit that animates the H. Church, our Mother.

Every day she presents new spiritual nourishment for us, first on the holy day of Christmas and then on the feasts of the great saints that follow it. Let us also try to be reborn in spirit, *resuscita gratiam quae est in te* [resuscitate the grace that is in you]; let us try to really renew ourselves in the perfume of the virtues that emanates from the cradle of Jesus, so that we may start with new ardour and renewed good will the new year, at the presence of Jesus.

I bless you affectionately;

of all *in Domino*.

◀ 364 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 255)

To Sister Edvige Grosso

12 December 1918

Courage always and you will make it. For the time being perform what is most perfect, especially on some days; later on, we shall see if it were convenient to take a vow of it. I bless you.

◀ 365 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 258)

To Sister Giuseppina Battaglia

H. J. M. J. Torino, 24 December 1918

CAN. GIUSEPPE ALLAMANO

in union with the R. V. Rector on these holy days commends to the Lord the dear Sister Giuseppina, so that the day of her return to the dear Institute, where all are waiting for her, may come soon.

Many good wishes to your Family.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 366 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 273)

To the missionaries in the Army

J. M. J. 1 January 1919

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

We are at the beginning of a new year. Looking back at the past one, let us thank the Lord for the benefits received and the graces he granted us, even in the midst of the trials He allowed us to undergo. From now on, let our life be one of hope, of always new and more abundant blessings on each one of us and in particular on our Institute.

May soon come the beautiful day on which all of us, *cor unum et anima una* [one in heart and mind], may start again to run on the way of our sanctification under the gaze of our Consolata.

B[lessed] M. Mary Alacoque, whose canonization is approaching, will be our Patron Saint for the new year, during which we shall strive to imitate the meekness of the S. Heart of Jesus.

Short prayer: *Jesu, mitis et humilis corde, fac cor nostrum secundum cor tuum* [Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make our heart like yours].

◀ 367 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 275)

To the Fathers Giuseppe Gallea and Pietro Albertone

Torino, 5 January 1919

For the only glory of God

The R. Fr. Gallea is the superior of the House: on him depend all Priests, seminarians, Brothers and students. He can and must speak to all, publicly and privately. It is up to him to grant permissions of the common order, letting the small ones in the hands of his helpers in the various offices.

The R. Fr. Albertone is entrusted with the special task of directing and forming the novices, and to supervise all the seminarians.

Fr. Gallea and Fr. Albertone should meet from time to time, both publicly to give good example, and privately to exchange views in regard to the state of the community and the formation of the single individuals.

God alone!

◀ 368 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 279-280)

To Monsignor Filippo Perlo

Torino, before 25 January 1919

Dear Monsignor,

Many years have already passed since your last return to Italy; and it is convenient, when possible, to return, even for a short time. This is demanded by the duty of the *ad limina [Apostolorum]* visit [to the Apostles and to the Pope] and by the good of our Institute, by the many things to be organized together.

Since I am quite concerned about the consolidation of our Institute, during your permanence here, I would like to obtain the definitive approval of our Institute and of its Constitutions.

To this purpose, unless Fr. Chiomio will depart before, I will send a copy of them, corrected according to past experience, which you could study, and on which all priests could give their opinion. Since all of them should observe their prescriptions, it is proper that all of them could make their remarks. You propose them to each one, and receive their written remarks, which you will bring to Torino when you come.

It is also necessary, especially after the death of Fr. Costa, to have at the earliest, for the good performance of the Mother-House, an elderly missionary to direct it; it seems to me that the most suitable one is Fr. Gays. It would also be necessary to have Fr. Perrachon coming, to settle his family's problems, since his sister, recently a widow, is in serious troubles. I would also like to retain him here in he Mother-House for some time for the need of our Institute. As peace is coming, some priests will be free and various elderly seminarians will be ordained; and we shall send them [to the missions]. It will certainly be a sacrifice for the Vicariate to have two priests removed; yet we must be patient, if we want to form well other missionaries.

Besides Fr. Rossi [to be given back to the Diocese] and the two above, for the time being nobody else should come back to Italy. Fr. Bodino had asked me; but it is not the case. We must proceed according to age; first those who have never come and those who have some special need.

Fr. Prina desires to dedicate the new [mission] station to Our Lady of Trana. I wouldn't have any problem; you see if it were the case.

Of these and many other things has written and will still write to you the Rev. V. Rector; all I have to do now is to rejoice at all the good that is taking place there; and Deo gratias.

Have me *in Domino,* very aff.

◀ 369 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 283)

To the seminarians Attilio Beltramino and Bartolomeo Durando

Torino, 25 January 1919

My dearest in O. L. Jesus Christ.

Following the good information given by your Very Rev. Rector [of the Chieri Seminary (Torino)], I accept you *toto corde* [wholeheartedly] in our Institute. Here you will find a family, whose members love one another, and help one another in being formed for the H. Apostolate.

Regarding the time of your coming, follow the decision of your Rev. Rector [Fr. Attilio Beltramino].

Desiring to embrace you soon, I commend you to our M. H. Consolata so that She may grant you the grace and the spirit of fortitude that will enable you to accomplish the sacrifices inherent in the H. Vocation.

I bless you

very aff. on J. C.

◀ 370 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 291-292)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero

Torino, 10 February 1919

Dear Fr. Ferrero,

We were anxiously waiting for your return to our House when, today, I receive your letter telling me that your month's leave has been delayed. Is it not possible to obtain this very just leave? We are ready to take any possible step. We were waiting for you, in order to send you to Rome and make our voice heard. We had already recurred twice for you alone and we obtained a [positive] reply. The problem must be there [at the War Hospital] and nowhere else. If you see that you will not be able to come soon, write to me immediately and we shall take new steps with the Ministry [of War].

Take great courage and make use of all possible cares. Write, if you need any money. We are sending you what you aked for [what?]. May the M. H. Consolata sustain you...

You should know that also in Africa the epidemic has taken place and Brother Giacomo Gaidano was a victim of it. *Fiat voluntas Dei* [Let God's will be done]: pray for his good soul.

Write to me also about your pains; it will be an outlet with your father.

I bless you wholeheartedly, very aff. in J. C.

◀ 371 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 294)

To Sister Giuseppina Battaglia

Torino, 14 February 1919

Rev. Sister Giuseppina,

From your letter to the R. Superior, I see that your good father and the whole family have well recovered their health. Therefore, your task as an infirmarian has ended, and it is convenient for you to return to the nest of election. It would be good if you could come for the Feast of St. Joseph, if no

problem arises. In the remaining time, try to detach your heart from Mondovì, to give the whole of it to your Spouse-Jesus.

I am sending you some relics and leaflets of our Venerable [Cafasso], so that he may grant you many graces.

For Baptisms of living people, the offering is the same; it is required that they are not given to dying people, and then pray to the Lord that He maintains them alive.

The epidemic took place also in Africa, especially among the local people and we, too, have lost a dear Brother, Giacomo Gaidano, a worthy religious-missionary. *Fiat voluntas Dei!*

Many regards to your good parents; and many Blessings on you and on your brothers and sisters...

In the Lord very aff.

◀ 372 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 297)

To the missionaries in Italy

Torino, 17 February 1919

My dearest in O. L. Jesus Christ,

With deep sorrow, I am again informing you of a departure for Paradise, of a dear confrere, the Rev. Br. Giacomo Gaidano, a professed member and missionary in Kenya for the last seven years. The best eulogy is the one of Bishop Perlo [published on "Da Casa Madre"] which I invite you to meditate on and to copy in your life.

In the meantime, I remind you of the month dedicated to St. Joseph, our special Protector.

Honour this great Saint by means of some daily devotion.

I bless you. Very aff.

◀ 373 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 310-311)

To the missionaries in Kenya

Torino, 3 March 1919

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

Ten years have quickly past since the *Decretum Laudis* was granted by the Holy See to our Institute.

Since that time Our Lord continued to bless our Mother-House and our Missions at all times. Now it seems convenient that, for our stability, we

should apply for the definitive approval of our Institute and Constitutions. I am inviting, therefore, each one of you to examine well our Constitutions, and to send me in writing the observations you think may contribute to your greater sanctification and to the future prosperity of our Missions.

After making a novena to the Holy Spirit and to O. L. Consolata, each one of you, without consulting others, should write whatever his conscience tells him, whatever at the time of his death he may wish he had written. It is not a matter of substantial changes, but of what the new Code [of Canon Law] and your experience require.

Such writings should be given in a sealed envelope to Mgr. Vicar [Bishop Perlo] who will send them to me.

May the Lord bless all of you, as I ask Him to do. very aff. in J. C.

◀ 374 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 312-313)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

Torino, 3 March 1919

Dearest Fr. Gays,

From my last letter you should have understood that I have some plan for you, which has been ripening as time was going by.

The Reverend V. Rector and I are becoming old and, before dying, desire to settle our Institute, providing for its future stability. Certainly, the most important position is the one of the Superior of the Mother-House. You should come to undertake this position, since you were the first one to join and to undergo the first trials. The experience you acquired in the Missions will be very good for the formation of future missionaries...

I am quite confident that you will accept this invitation as a sign of fatherly affection and for the greater glory of God.

I have already informed Mgr. Perlo, with whom you will determine the best time for your repatriation.

May our H. Consolata bless you.

Your very aff. in J. C.

◀ 375 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 314-315)

To the missionaries in Africa

Glorietur frater humilis in exaltatione sua
[Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation] (Jam 1:9)

IN MEMORY
of our
PROFESSED BROTHER
GIACOMO GAIDANO
born at Lingotto (Torino) on 24 March 1889
died at the mission station of Our Lady of Graces of Nyeri (B. E. A.)
on 19 December 1918

R. I. P.[32]

Fuit homo simplex rectus ac timens Deum
[… a blameless and upright man, who fears God] (Job 1:8)

Torino, 4 March 1919

My dearest in the Lord,

The good Lord wanted again a victim among us: this time he chose our dear Brother Giacomo Gaidano. He was a fruit ripe for Paradise, as rightly wrote to me H. E. the Vicar [Mgr. Perlo], and as you may confirm as witnesses of his virtues. For your common edification, I am quoting two parts of his letters, written to me, which show his spirit of faith in his life and work.

On 29th September 1915, he wrote, «In the morning I begin one work and, before it is night, I end up having done ten other ones of different kinds; however, when one works for the Lord, even if he had to do twenty different works, it is always all right; provided that His holy will be done and for His greater glory».

On 28th March 1916, telling me that on the occasion of Karoli's Baptism, he had been left alone at Gaturi mission, he added, «I said I was alone, but that was a terrible blunder; because in our church there was the Blessed Sacrament and, therefore, I was anyhow but alone! I was with no less than the King of kings, and I alone to honour Him. During the day, as I was doing some carpentry work, I was staying willingly near the church so as to be nearer to Our Lord and be able to think of Him, making acts of adoration and of love, in order to compensate for those of my Confreres who had gone to Tuthu».

Let us pray for his beautiful soul that we trust may have already received the crown of the apostles.

Your very aff.

[32] *Requiescat in pace* [Rest in peace].

◀ 376 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 317)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero

J. M. J. Torino, 14 March 1919

Dearest Fr. Ferrero,

I vividly rejoice at the fact that you have obtained your discharge from the army; it marks the end of a long odyssey: Deo gratias! Let's hope also for something in regard to the other confreres [still in the Army]...

It would certainly be my and your desire to come back among us for the Feast of St. Joseph; however, I know that the Rev. V. Rector has written to you informing you that you may be useful to Propaganda [Fide, in Roma]; remain there and offer your sacrifice out of love for God.

Yesterday I received the news of your official appointment as *Procurator*; you will be able to go and thank Mgr. Laurenti [Secretary of the S. Congregation of Propaganda Fide]. Courage *in Domino* and many greetings from all of us.

very aff.

◀ 377 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 365)

To Mgr. Gaudenzio Barlassina
and confreres of Kaffa

18 May 1919

Dearest Mgr. and confreres,

I have received you letters and I rejoice in regard to your willingness to work in such a thorny field, still without any consolations. I thank the Lord for it, and I pray for you every day so that, as now you are practicing the *Euntes ibant et flebant, mittenttes semina sua* [They went away weeping, carrying the seed], you may also be able to say soon: *Venientes autem cum exultatione portantes manipulos suos* [They come back singing carrying their sheaves].

St. Paul and Card. Massaia [tha Apostle of Ethiopia] did not disdain manual works, in order to have the means and a way to achieve their true aim. In the same way you do not get tired nor be ashamed of the kind of life you must lead now. The trial will pass and you shall sing victory.

We remember you, all of you and each one of you, ready to help you with money and with the possible increase of helpers.

And you maintain the true apostolic spirit and the spirit of our Institute, while you learn the local languages and customs.

I bless you wholeheartedly at the presence of our M. H. Consolata.

◀ 378 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 375)

To Fr. Pietro Albertone

Torino, before 1 June 1919

Dear Fr. Albertone [is the Master of Novices]*:* compose the issue for Africa [a little pamphlet to be sent to Africa]. The list of our people who died because of the war, first of all our dear Prefect [Fr. Costa], has been missing: add it in. If you want to include the text of St. Bonaventure, comment it briefly: as Queen of the most beautiful gem of Missionaries: the virginity; of the Apostles: *predicate Evangelium* [preach the Gospel]...; of the martyrs, these are the missionaries on fire, even a slow one...

St. Bonaventure: *Triplex corona legitur in scriptura: una florea, altera stellea, tertia aurea. Prima dicitur florea propter suam speciositatem; Secunda stellea propter suam luminositatem; Tertia aurea propter suam presiositatem et firmitatem. Prima corona datur virginibus, secunda predicantibus, tertia martyribus. (Ex sermonibus).* [In the Scripture we find three kinds of crown: one made of flowers for her beauty, the other made of stars for her brightness, and the third made of gold for her preciousness and steadfastness. The first is said to be made of flowers because of its beauty; the second is said to be made of stars because of its splendour; the third is said to be made of gold because of its preciousness and solidity. The first crown is given to the virgins; the second to the preachers, the third to the martyrs]. (From his sermons).

◀ 379 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 377)

To Fr. Pietro Albertone

J. M. J. uncertain date

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

It is always a pleasure for me to reply to your questions.

Feel free to read the *Confessions* of St. Augustine and, if you think so, also his *Meditations*. The first are in the Seminarians' library; the others I don't know; if you cannot find them, I can buy them for you.

I do not know of any other life of St. Paul, the Apostle, except the one you should also have; I am not aware of any one written by St. Jerome.

I am glad about your plan for the seminarian Mario Borello; try, however, not to appear unusual; it would be good to have such an

important practice quite gradually extended, so as to include others. This should be your life...; we should ask God to grant this grace to everybody.

I allow you to take the vow [to adhere to God's will for everything], without the pain of sin, not even a venial one (for now), with the renewal [formula] composed by our dear Fr. Sales. Everything peacefully and joyfully.

I bless you. very aff. in J. C.

◀ 380 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 380-381)

To Brother Angelo Marchina

Torino, 5 June 1919

Dear Angelo,

The news that you made your [final] profession brought me true consolation, and relieved me of the pain given me by your penultimate letter. The Lord wanted to try you by means of internal and external pains; but He held you steady at the time of your fall. Thank Him, and perhaps I, too, cooperated by means of my prayers and blessings. Certainly, we are not yet in Paradise, but in a valley of tears, and you must not get discouraged by certain miseries, both yours and of others. The Lord allows them to keep us humble and wholly confident in Him, and to give us the possibility of gaining some merits. Each one of us should practice charity and tolerance, aiming at becoming holy by not observing other people's defects, but only our own.

I am recommending this to you in a special way, as I am aware of your sensitive and rather proud temperament. Do not be afraid of those temptations; tell the Lord that you don't want them and go ahead peacefully. I am also recommending to you to be discreet with those who are working with you; don't expect too much of them, don't displease them; indeed, instruct them with whole charity for the good of our Institute[33]. You have understood me!

Your younger brother went home for some time, since he had become very weak; at the moment he is all right and would like to come back, but I told him to wait till he is fully recovered. He is good and becoming ever more serious. You dad came to take him home and really loves him. When you write to your father thank him and show him that you continue to love him.

Greet all and each one of the Brothers who, among the missionaries, are my favourites. Tell them that I received their letters, lately those of dear Aquilino [Caneparo], Luigi [Bezzone] e Tommaso [Demarchi]; I hope I will be able to reply to them.

[33] Brother was in charge of the Mission Printing Press of Nyeri.

I bless you wholeheartedly and pray thay you may be joyful *in Domino*, and I pray for many graces for you and all your companions.

Have me as your very aff. in J. M. J.

◀ 381 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 382-383)

To Sister Margherita Demaria

Torino, 5 June 1919

V. R. and dear Sister Margherita,

I have received your letters, and among them the one of February 13th that was giving me news of Sister Adele[34] and Sister Caterina. I was consoled by the news of the first and pained by that of the second. We must lift up our hearts to God and ponder on everything at His presence. Sustain the first so that she may rise well, and be able to draw profit from the past evil in order to rise to greater perfection. Encourage her also on my behalf and tell her that my pains and tears had a part in her awakening and fervour, which I want to be constant, and that I bless her wholeheartedly.

In regard to the second, I don't know what to tell you; perhaps her behaviour is a family vice. After a brother of hers, a seminarian, left our Institute [on 20th of May 1915], another one also left because, instead of progressing in virtue, he was regressing, full of pride, etc. [he left the Institute in 1919]. You do not sustain too much this Sister; if she persists in her behaviour, let her come back [to Italy]; however make her understand the seriousness of such a step in front of God.

On May 25th the Pachner has arrived in Torino; I knew it from her father; naturally she has all the reasons for the step undertaken... Poor unhappy woman! She complains that she had not been cured of deafness in one of her ears. The fact is that already here in Torino she was not hearing properly, as I had noticed, and as Sr. Maria degli Angeli confirms. Let's pray for her.

You take courage always desiring what is perfect, but pitying and tolerating human miseries, always working to diminish them. On the other hand, do not get discouraged regarding your failings; the Lord who has entrusted you with task of directing our dear Sisters will sustain and enlighten you, in order to achieve good results; He will make up for your weakness: Courage...

In the Mother-House everything is going on well; there are more than fifty [postulants] and there are many applications. There were ten or twelve ready to depart, but it was not possible, because of lack of places on the

[34] Sister Adele Cullino; she left the Institute in 1929; Sister Caterina Gemello died at Kaheti (pneumonia) in 1922.

steamship; among them there was also Sister Maria degli Angeli; they will come as soon as possible. We have Sr. Amalia [Granero] at the Cottolengo [Hospital]: it is a case of tuberculosis and she will not heal without a miracle. Sr. Luigia [Mazzia], the Bursar, last year and again this year underwent a painful and serious operation; however, everything went well and she is now convalescing at Rivoli.

Ahead courageously *in Domino*; tell all of them not to get lost in little miseries; the only purpose of our life is to become saints, even among miseries. I invoke on each and all of you the gifts of the Holy Spirit, especially the one of Christian, religious and apostolic fortitude.

I bless you at the presence of our dear Consolata.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 382 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 390)

To Fr. Giuseppe Gallea

Torino, 12 June 1919

Dear Fr. Gallea,

Starting tomorrow, as we begin the Novena of our Venerable [Cafasso], make everybody pray everyday three times the Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be, in order to obtain the healing of a Deaf-Mute lady.

◀ 383 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 400-401)

To Fr. Luigi Rosso

J. M. J. Torino, 2 July 1919

Dear Fr. Rosso,

I received a letter of yours while you were still in the [War] Hospitals [in Kenya]; in it you were speaking about the Sisters' behaviour, but not clearly enough. You should have referred to Monsignor [Perlo] so that he could remedy the situation, or you should have written to me but giving more details.

In another letter, dated 1st January, you tell me about the horrors due to famine in your area. I sympathize with you; but in God's plans you had the occasion of saving many souls.

I am now coming to your third letter, dated 3rd April. I tell you right away that your writing is probably inspired by one who is trying by this means to disturb our Institute and Missions. But they are God's work, and even a

certain Fr. Balbo [Giovanni] cannot do anything against them. Be careful, my dear, not to lose the spirit and merits of the Apostolate. Remember your companion, the holy Fr. Costa, who from Paradise is assisting you so that you may be with him after the many labours of the Apostolate.

Regarding the vow of poverty, I repeat what I had already written to all of you after 1909. In the 1st provisional diocesan Rules, even if aware of the fact that, according to moral theology, poverty cannot go along with the *free* administration of goods, I felt that, as the H. See had made an exception in regard to the *possession* of goods kept by the individual members of the Priests of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity [of St. Vincent de Paul], it could have allowed the free administration not *quoad omnia* [not to all goods], but only for the family goods; it was for this that I included such a freedom in our Rules; but with the preliminary placed at the very top of our very Rules to be ready to conform not only to the commands but also to the simple directives of the H. See.

In 1909, when we presented our Rules to Rome to obtain the *Decretum Laudis* [Decree of Approval], this was allowed provided that we removed the words *free administration* and substituted with dependence on Superiors, which leads back to the general principle that poverty cannot exist without dependence on Superiors in regard to the administration of any kind of goods.

All this was communicated to Mgr. Perlo before he went back to Africa in 1909-1910; then I wrote to Africa asking that all of you should be informed about it; also the Very Rev. V. Rector Can. Camisassa repeated the same thing to you on the occasion of the Conferences of 1911, when he was in Africa. Therefore you cannot say that you did not know, nor call it a *snare*, especially because at that time you were at Nyeri, and you took the final oath two years later, that is, in December 1913. It was only the explanation given by the Circular on poverty that alarmed some people, but unfairly, because the oath has always been taken with full preventive acceptance of all the decisions of the H. See, something compulsory for every religious. On the other hand, all this agitation, confined to only one or two people, is unreasonable because it does not remove the power to administrate, but only obliges to ask the superiors for a preventive permission which, if reasonable, is never denied, as it has happened up to now.

Feel free to exchange this information with those who need it, especially Fr. Balbo. Furthermore, you have good sense and spirit, so as not to get lost and be deviated from your holy vocation.

In the same letter you complain because you do not receive letters from your parents. It is your fault, because you write to them too rarely. A short time ago your father came to me, all upset, saying that he did not have any longer a son. I calmed him down and told him that I would write to you about it, etc.

I close blessing you and asking the Lord to grant you the graces necessary for a holy Apostolate.

Have me *in Domino,* very aff.

◀ 384 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 403)

To Fr. Giuseppe Gallea

St. Ignatius', after 2 July 1919

Dearest Fr Gallea,

Before leaving Torino I experienced a pain that I am now explaining to you. I was told that the Seminarians have spread the idea that, this year, when they will go to St. Ignatius', they would not go any more to Lanzo to take and carry the provisions, but that a horse and a cart would be provided for this. I know nothing of all this, nor do I know on what this idea is founded.

What pains me mostly is the aversion that this unfounded rumor will bring about in regard to those walks, that in the past were undertaken as a duty and heartily. This was also a way of preparing for working in the Missioins, a real need for poor people as we are. Speak about it to the Rev. V. Rector in regard to finding a way to correct and eliminate this insubordination.

◀ 385 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 408-409)

To Fr. Giuseppe Gallea

J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 10 July 1919

Dear Fr. Gallea,

I have received your letter and the good spirit of the priests, seminarians, Brothers and the dear young people consoles me. On this H. Mountain, during the S. Exercises, the need to form holy and real missionaries is really felt. This is my ongoing prayer at the feet of St. Ignatius. It is for this unique purpose that you entered in that holy house; to this should be uniquely directed all common and individual efforts, the intentions, the works and the studies. Woe to those who allow tepidity to take hold of them, or get discouraged by some little miseries of their own or of others, inevitable for human nature. In order to meet the requirements of the holy vocation, I will alwas repeat it, we need energy in us and above us; God's grace will do the rest and even more. Courage...

All right in regard to the change [of task] between the seminarians Sperta [sacristan] and Nepote [organist]. Be firm with the sending back of Crovetto [sent back to his family in 1919]. Zallio's behaviour [sent back to his Parish, in 1919] proves that we must choose honest families, being satisfied with a few [if necessary].

Truly we should have written to Can. Mercandino [the Parish Priest of Zallio]. It is convenient to satisfy him, and you write to him on my behalf, apologizing and telling him that we shall try him again; but his tutor should pay, as he promised, a certain amount that you will arrange with the Rev. V. Rector and write to him. But isn't he the one who continues to wet his bed? This is something serious; tell it also to the V. Rector. About the way of paying, let's think about it and we shall see.

Reply also to the father of Stacul [who became a missionary and worked in Tanzania till 1993]; tell him that, as an exception, we shall send him on the 8th of August.

Soon, perhaps this week, H. E. Mgr. Bonzano will come to Torino. He will come to visit you; tell Fr. Albertone [teacher of English] to prepare for him a speech in *good English*; let him go to the V. Rector to arrange for the subject matter. I will remain here perhaps for another week, unless Mgr. Bonzano arrives before; in this case I will come down [to Torino].

Tell everybody to be joyful *in Domino* and to love greatly O. L. Jesus Christ and the dear M. H. Mother Mary.

I bless you

very aff. in J. M. J.

◀ 386 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 411)

To Sister Maria degli Angeli Vassallo di Castiglione

H. J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 10 July 1919

R. Sister Maria,

I confirm your resolutions, and I place them at the feet of St. Ignatius. Courage, the Lord will add what is missing, and by the help of His Grace you will become a holy and true missionary.

The dear Sisters will certainly pray for me and for the greater fruit of these Spiritual Exercises. They are proceeding excellently, only they are too short: they will already end on Saturday morning. I will still remain here for a few days to complete my Exercises, and to breathe this fresh air, that is so good both materially and for the spirit.

You must confer with the Rev. V. Rector about everything. You did well with Sister G. [Giuseppina Battaglia just returned in the Community] and, suavely but firmly, keep her on the right track that she greatly promised to follow. We must live by the spirit, and detach ourselves from everybody, everything, and most of all from ourselves.

I bless you.

Very aff. in J. C.

◀ 387 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 412)

To Fr. Giuseppe Gallea

J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 12 July 1919

Dear Fr. Gallea,

I received the enclosed letter from Brother Davide [returned from Albania; now working at the Main Military Hospital of Torino, still in the Army]. Read it in order to know how to act and see the result. It would be painful to see somebody sowing discouragement; we would be again at the beginning with these blessed Brothers. Don't tell him that I sent you his letters. They are miseries that now and then must be dissipated.

In regard to the coming of Mgr. Bonzano, tell the Sister Superior to ask the Sister who better knows English to compose a little speech; if necessary, Fr. Albertone could correct it.

Many good wishes and I'll see you soon.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 388 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 413)

To Fr. Giuseppe Gallea

J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 14 July 1919

Dearest Fr. Gallea,

I receive this other letter from the seminarian Ciatti [he was in the Army, in Torino waiting to be released]. See if there is anything to correct in regard to the seminarians' words. Certain things should not be said, even as a joke. I understand that the soldiers will not give much importance to such things; perhaps because I, too, spoke to them about food; but I mentioned only the afternoon snack while they were at lunch and at supper; and I spoke only to them on their own.

They are little miseries to be foiled for the consolation of the poor soldiers who, seing their companions peacefully at home, feel even more the weight of their service in the Army. At least those who have been freed [from the service] should continue to feel gratitude for the benefit received and would respond to it by giving the whole of themselves to perfection!

The seminarian Nebbia [still in the Army at Alessandria] wrote to me when I was still in Torino; it seems to me that he was left with only 5 Liras; send to him 15 Liras.

I am waiting the Rev. V. Rector for this evening; we shall come back at the latest on Friday.

Many blessings to all of you

very aff.

◀ 389 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 416)

To the seminarian Gabriele Quaglia

J. M. J. Torino, 23 July 1919

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

Let's say together *Deo gratias*, and also your good mother should say it. When the Lord chooses a son to make of him his Priest, He gives the family a sign of predilection, and will grant it many graces, also temporal ones. How much more He will bless his relatives when they consent to the divine call to the Apostolate!

Tell your mother that the good God woll console her during her life and especially at the moment of her death, and will give her a special prize in Paradise[35].

You take courage, and do not mind what people who do not reason according to the light of Faith may say.

Our Institute will welcome you wholeheartedly.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 390 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 428)

To Sister Chiara Strapazzon

H. J. M. J. Torino, 9 August 1919

CAN. GIUSEPPE ALLAMANO

presents to the Rev. Assistant Sister Chiara his best wishes in the Lord [for her name-day] and, blessing her together wil all the dear Sisters who are at Rivoli, begs from the Lord the virtue of a real Apostolate for all of them.

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[35] Fr. Gabriele Quaglia went first to Kaffa, then in 1936 he was sent to Mozambique; he died at Johannesburg Hospital in 1956].

◀ 391 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 450-451)

To Fr. Lorenzo Sales

J. M. J. Torino, 16 September 1919

Dearest Fr. Sales,

I was very pleased by your confidential letter. Nobody, not even the Rev. V. Rector read it, nor got wind of it. Continue in this way, but explaining even more at length, and in regard to everything that may be good for our missions and our Institute. You will speak also of personal matters, as much as it is prudently done by means of a letter.

You write *justly* in regard to God's permission for the lesser good; you should not get discouraged; but pray and use all influence, at least by means of example, in order to contribute to the best. So, you have done by informing me of the common opinion on the "Consolatine" [Consolata Sisters] and preaching the Spiritual Exercises to them. I make use of your notes for the good of the Sisters of the Mother-House, especially for the instruction of those who will be departing soon for the missions. Understood that they should not notice where they come from.

I am coming to you now. As far as going to Kaffa *transeat* [it could be]; but not the solitude [Trappist]: many devils, as it happened to St. Anthony, would surround you. *Permane in vocatione, qua vocatus es* [Remain in the vocation, in which you were called], which is above all others, because is the one followed by O. L. J. C. See: Fr. Savio [Giovanni Battista Savio], gone to the Carthusians in Spain, for the war he enrolled as an *ardito* [daring]; he did heroic actions... and gained medals for them. Now he is working as a farm worker in the Castelnuovo area, although he has not yet left the clerical habit and the H. Mass!

You are damaging our Missions? It is not true; at any rate keep going *in Domino;* at any time say the *nunc coepi* [now I start] and follow the norms I gave you.

You were removed from the Junior Seminary, and you must go around the world; all right, that will be the best for you and for the missions. You can learn and see many things, about which you can write for our magazine, knowing that the short articles of Fr. Sales are highly appreciated. There are no more talks about America; rather, some day you will take over from the V. Rector the editing of our magazine.

And now a news that will pain you; but you shouldn't be alarmed. Your brother Giuseppe, our seminarian, is at home, due to illness. I do not hide from you the fact that it is also a *moral* illness, and for this reason, also for the good of our Institute, after many trials he had to leave. It is a trial that, I hope, will cease: this is mine as well as his hope. In the meantime he is studying and, helped by me, will take the examination of junior high and high school.

Don't be distressed: it is an aberration that will go away and peace and the previous vocation, which is always dear to him, will take its place. He will write to you: and you don't discourage him any more, but console and animate him to pray, to trust in Our Lady, and to *will strongly*.

See, my dear, how many thorns surround my head, the head of an old man; pray to the good God to sustain and perfect me. You be a consolation of mine, in spite of your miseries.

That's enough. I renew my old writing... I bless you at the presence of our M. H. Consolata. very aff. in O. L. J. C.

◀ 392 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 453)

To Monsignor Filippo Perlo

To Mgr. Perlo[36] 17 September 1919

Doubtful about the sending of the corrected Constitutions; in the Circular for the individuals, I did not promised it; probably I will send them to Monsignor [Perlo]. Therefore do not call the Brothers. Aquilino shall have to return [to Italy] and with the risk?

It is impossible to assemble the General Council now; after our death [it could be done]. Free travelling tickets for Perrachon and Aquilino, I will not retain the one [Fr. Perrachon] – Patience in regard to the coming of new [missionaries].

[Missionaries] wearing military uniforms [not acceptable] – Congratulations to [those who received] the "Commenda d'Italia" and also to those who were not awarded it.

Printed letters [about the revision of the Constitutions?] not convenient. Parish Priests and Assistant Parish Priests [I wonder...].

◀ 393 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 463)

To Fr. Giiuseppe Gallea

Torino, before 30 September 1919

Dear Fr. Gallea,

The young Sperta [the brother of Fr. Lorenzo Sperta; he eventually left in 1925] is coming with his mother, weeps, ask for pardon, promises...

Shall we try once again? The Consolata inspires me to try once again... the last trial. Re-accept him.

[36] This is only a rough draft of a letter to Mgr. Perlo: the letter itself was never found.

◀ 394 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 475)

To Fr. Giovanni Chiomio

Torino, after 18 October 1919

V. R. Fr. Chiomio

Dear Fr. Chiomio; Keep going *in Domino* courageously; the first difficulties will disappear [in Kenya].

I bless you wholeheartedly.

◀ 395 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 476)

To Brother Angelo Marchina

Torino, after 1 November 1919

Dear Angelo,

I am pleased with your nice works; see that every syllable you compose[37] [Brother was responsible for the Nyeri Printing Press] be an act of love for God and a spiritual Communion. The Lord will thus help you to fight impatience and any temptation. The thought of dying is good, but I want it to take place after many years of working for souls: *Opera enim eorum sequuntur illos* [their deeds follow them]. Courage!

The dear Pacifico [his brother] is now well, is studying and willingly striving for perfection. At the end of the the year he will go to philosophy and begin to ware the H. [clerical] Habit. He will be a good missionary; the holy soul of your mother is helping him from Heaven. Be at peace: I will take care of everything, and nothing else will be required from home.

Tell many good things to each Brother, assuring them that they are always my dear ones, and that I bless them all.

◀ 396 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 481)

To Sister Giuseppina Battaglia

Torino, after 15 November 1919

I approve your three resolutions, which could be summed up into one: *Attende tibi* [Take heed to yourself]. I placed them at the presence of our dear Patroness: I bless them.

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[37] Brother was responsible for the Nyeri Printing Press.

◀ 397 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 493-494)

To Sister Margherita Demaria

Torino, 30 November 1919

V. R. Sister Margherita,

Finally, ten Sisters are coming to your help. They are all people of good will, and you already know them. You will have to support them especially at the beginning and encourage them. With such a number [of Sisters] you will be relieved from your material occupations and take more care of your spirit and of the Sisters' spirit as well. This is the first purpose of a Superior, and I intend that you apply yourself mainly, by means of example and words, to direct all of them to the observance of the Rules and the practice of virtues. I know that in some of them there is a spirit of dissipation, criticism and little mutual charity. Make this intention of mine known to Monsignor, so that, instead of being involved with material works at the farm, you may perform frequent and quite long visits to all [mission] station where there are our Sisters.

You probably already know about my desire to make you come back [to Italy] among us; but this will be only after Monsignor returns there from Italy, that is in the Autumn of 1920. During this time you will think about who will be able to replace you as a Superior. It seems to us that Sr. Agnese [Gallo] could be good: besides seniority she has good spirit; before that time God will enlighten us. It is good that, for the time being, Sister Maria degli Angeli[38] [superior of the Mother-House up to the time of her leaving for the mission] goes back to be a simple Sister; the Lord will think about the future. She has good spirit and she will influence everyone by means of her good example.

I need to have sure news about the Sisters, especially Sister Adele [Cullino] and Sister Caterina [Gemello].

Other news will be given to you orally by Sister Maria. We hope to send soon six more Sisters [Luigia Mazzia, Giovannina Beltramo, Giustina Lanza, Modesta Badariotti, Ottavia Gariglio, and Anna Chiattone: the will leave on 20th of February 1920], so that you will be able to perform greater good without neglecting your own sanctification.

May the Lord bless all of you and you in a particular way.

very aff. in O. L. J. C.

[38] Superior of the Mother-House up to the time of her leaving for the mission.

◀ 398 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 496)

To Fr. Pietro Albertone

Torino, 8 December 1919

1. I approve and bless your fraternal Union for your whole life with the purpose of helping, sanctifying and and confirm one another during your life.

2. I approve your common little rule, and the changes that the future may inspire as necessary or useful for the purpose.

3. I approve the two vows: *to adhere to the M. H. Will of God, and to carry it out in the most perfect way, and absolute poverty*, to be renewed every year on the feats of the Immaculate Conception.

The Superiors will definitely have the power to suspend or annul them. Observe them with looseness, and without penalty.

4. Memento [Remember]: *ad quid venisti?* [why have you come?]. *Unum est necessarium. Deum time...; hoc est omnis homo* [One thing is necessary. Fear God...; this is the whole duty of man]. *Omnia arbitror ut stercora, ut Christum lucrifaciam* [I count all things as excrement, so that I may gain Christ]. *Mihi adhaerere Deo, Christus est; mori autem lucrum* [For me to adhere to God is Christ; to die is gain]. *Praeterit figura huius mundi* [The figure of this world is passing away]. *Christo confixus sum Cruci* [I have been crucified with Christ]. *Dummodo Christus honorificetur* [Provided that Christ is honoured]. *Adimpleo ea quae desunt passioni Christi* [I complete what is lacking in the passion of Christ]. *Non ego, sed gratia Dei mecum* [Not I but the grace of God with me]. Etc. Etc.

The day of the Solemnity of the M. H. Immaculate Mary

◀ 399 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 511)

To Sister Chiara Strapazzon

Torino, about 20 December 1919

Don’t give any money to the lady teacher Villa; we shall pay her at the end of the course.

◀ 400 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 525)

To Sister Chiara Strapazzon

Torino, uncertain date [1919]

Dear Sister Chiara,

You did well to reply to Sister Luigia [Mazzia, who was leaving for the missions] as you did. It is my intention that life should be lived seriously, without wasting time. To many people who were insisting I replied negatively, then I tolerated some little thing improvised there and then. Therefore, don't do anything.

Courage and blessings

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 401 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 529)

To the seminarian Guglielmo Airaldi

J. M. J. Torino, 5 January 1920

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

I thank you for your confidences *in Domino*. Be peaceful and have a good Feast [the Epiphany]. Pray that the Lord may enlighten you and the Superiors so as to know well and carry out God's H. Will.

We shall talk with one another at the earliest; but be at peace. Our dear M. H. Consolata will help us to achieve the best.

I bless you wholeheartedly. Do not speak about this with anybody, and I will keep your secret.

Courage. very aff. on J. C.

◀ 402 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 532)

To Sister Clementina Cristino

Torino, first days of January 1920

My dear in O. L. J. C.,

I bless your resolutions, and let the new year be for you *the year of sanctification*. Therefore, merciless war to vainglory, readiness for any humiliation, and regarding yourself as the least one in the House.

Regarding Sr. Luigia [Mazzia: some problem between the two of them], be better than before in order not to dishearten her; indeed, help her to become a saint.

Wishing the best for our Feast [Epiphany]...

◀ 403 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 543)

To Fr. Luigi Rosso

J. M. J. Torino, 17 January 1920

Dear Fr. Rosso,

I have received your letter and I tell you immediatetly that it has consoled me. Not that I had doubts about your good will and perseverance in your holy vocation but, in my mind, there was some cloud in regard to your good spirit. I am glad about the sentiments you manifest, not so much in regard to my person, but especially in regard to our Institute. Up to now, there has been too much talking about me, and all of you must be persuaded that, during the short time I will still have to live, I intend to settle definitively everything; I will be happy to see your regular course.

I would be happy if you, as an elder, would be elected by your confreres to come to the Conferences we shall hold here within this year [he came and wenr back on 20th of January 1921]. If not, I will make you come back later on, so that you may see again your old parents.

Since we are writing a biography of the mourned Fr. Costa, you would do well by sending to me all his letters and any note you may still remember about his life, especially during the junior high school years.

May the M. H. Consolata bless you, as I pray to Her to do. Have me *in Domino,* very aff.

◀ 404 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 544-545)

To Fr. Giovanni Balbo

J. M. J. Torino, 18 January 1920

Dear Fr. Balbo,

I don't deny your affection for my poor person; and I also believe that I never failed to deserve it.

I accepted you in our Institute as a seminarian and I always treated you as a very dear son, trying to enrich you by virtue and science. And it is for

this reason that your behaviour there pained me very much, as well as your instigating your companions in order to attract them to a party according to your old ideas. I remember well what you said on a certain day at the Consolatina when, having been admonished, you burst out saying: *The time will come, when we will be commanding*.

You should have known that, it is already sometime now, I had truly desired to constitute a regular government of our Institute; and this would have already existed if the proper Authorities and our special circumstances had allowed it. Why set yourself up as a judge, and take inconsiderate and strange steps? It would have been better and more prudent if, moved by true zeal, you would have turned to me; instead in this regard, as well as in everything else, you have always been sparing with letters and confidences. Only if you had not been listened to, you could have taken other ways, however never the one of insubordination.

I know only now from you that you did not feel opportune to sign that protestation of obedience because, when I received the letters, I did not read them, I did not count them, nor did I read the signatures.

But that's enough of past things. I accept your *formal reconciliation*, which will remove any misunderstanding between the two of us in the future.

I pray that the Lord may confirm your resolution to observe the Constitutions and a true obedience, so that your life may be meritorious with God, profitable to the Missions and consoling to the Superiors.

At the presence of our M. H. Consolata I bless you...

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 405 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 564)

To Sister Giuseppina Battaglia

Torino, 3 February 1920

Dear Sister Giuseppina,

I am pleased with your excellent and constant dispositions. You will become a saint by means of small internal and external mortifications. For the time being God wants from you only the mortifications that are proper to the Community.

Courage, and God will sanctify you.

In the letter I have received this morning, you write that you receive all people without any fear; tell the Superior about it.

For the time being don't go to visit your aunt, because she is already in a *comatose* state, unable to speak. Feel free to write to her; and let's pray for her.

My blessing.

◀ 406 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 576)

To Sister Giuseppina Battaglia

Torino, 20 February 1920

Dear Sister Giuseppina,

The Lord, to Whom you have given and for Whom you have sacrificed everything, is inviting you to some practice. Your brother Andrea has telephoned to me from Mondovì saying that this morning, at your home, your soldier brother has died; I think that he said his name was Franceschino [Francesco Battaglia, died on 20th of February 1920].

They will bury him on Sunday; they beg that I let you go. For various reasons, I agreed. He said to telephone to your cousins Pallieri (Pharmacy) who will attend the funeral and accompany you there.

You will leave tomorrow afternoon and come back on Monday.

Take courage, let's pray, and Fiat [Let (God's will) be (done)]...

◀ 407 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 577)

To Sister Margherita Demaria

H. J. M. J. Torino, 20 February 1920

Dear Sister Margherita,

You already know all or almost all the Sisters who have arrived, or are now arriving in the Mission. They are all women of good will, although some of them may be a bit childish. I hope they will relieve you from your fatigue, so that you will be able to be more involved in the spiritual aspect.

You should initiate Sister Agnese [Gallo, into your work], so that she may be suitable to substitute you when, after ther return of Mgr. Perlo from Italy, you shall have to come back to the Mother-House.

Towards Sister Maria degli Angeli, who worked so much among us [in Italy], use some consideration; however, no preferences. Generally in regard to offices at the head of [mission] stations, without worrying too much about seniority, prefer Sisters of good spirit and prudent.

For your information, know that I have not asked Sr. Luigia [Mazzia] to tell you anything; Therefore don't pay attention to anything she may tell you *on behalf* and according to *the spirit* and the *desires* of "Padre"[39]. Sister Maria [degli Angeli] may tell you something about this...

[39] "Padre"[Father], without the article *the*, as the Sisters usually called our Founder.

Let Sister Giovannina [Beltramo, she died at Nyeri in 1978], after some rest, make her Spiritual Exercises and renew her vows for another five-year period. Since now, I remind you that nobody may take perpetual vows without my explicit agreement. You, then, will give me your opinion about all of them, especially Sister Adele [Cullino].

You will already know about your brother who has been appointed parish priest [Fr. Giuseppe Demaria, who died at Envie in 1943], I don't remember the place; this will console your mother.

Many good wishes *in Domino*, and my special Blessing...

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 408 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 579-580)

To the missionary Sisters in Kenya

H. J. M. J. Torino, 20 February 1920

My dearest Consolata Missionary Sisters,

With the two groups of Sisters arriving there, you will certainly be waiting for a word of reply to the various letters you have been sending me in the past years, together with an opinion of mine about your behaviour. As it is impossible for me now to write to each one of you in particular, I am replying to all of you in general; let each one of you take this letter as addressed to herself.

I praise your Apostolic work in the Vicariate, and in other places during the war. The Lord blessed your hard work by saving many souls. We thank God and our M. H. Consolata who accompanied and protected you during the whole of that time.

Together with my congratulations I add a mention of the defects that took place during your permanence in the Missions, so that those who failed may correct themselves. I heard of complaints about the obedience, charity and spirit of sacrifice of some of you. Not all of you and not always were sufficiently respectful of the Superiors; not all of you consoled them by means of blind obedience; indeed, some grew into the bad habit of complaining and criticizing even in public their directives.

Regarding mutual charity there is also need for correction: not envying the place or the good of the others, putting up mutually with the others' physical or moral defects, forgiving generously the little unkindness and practising the charity of correcting one another. I also heard that some of you are somehow egoistic, so that they do not willingly help the Sisters who are involved in menial and hard works, thinking only about themselves and their comforts, even to the detriment of holy poverty.

My dear daughters, do not forget the reason for which you joined the Institute and went to the Missions, and the resolutions you undertook in the Mother-House before departing. Reflect on the words of O. L. Jesus Christ, that each one will receive her own reward according to one's work and toil, accomplished out of love for God.

The one who is writing to you is a loving father who always worries about your profit in religious perfection, because he wants you to be holy religious and missionary Sisters. He wishes that you be especially obedient in heart and mind, full of charity in works, words and thoughts, and zealous workers in everything.

May the Lord bless you, as I, in His Name, imparts His holy blessing to all and each one of you in particular, as if you were here before me.

Yours very aff. in J. C.

◀ 409 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 597)

To Sister Orsola Martino

after 19 March 1920

Wish that everything be orderly out of love for poverty; therefore correct in a sisterly way, and supply to the defects of the others.

Moreover, everything *out of love for God*.

◀ 410 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 610-611)

To Sister Margherita Demaria

Torino, 24 May 1920

V. R. Sister Margherita,

I am replying to your letters of March and April (Nos. 31 – 32).

It is also my wish that you may soon have your Regulations or Directory. Study the one of the Mother-House, asking Sister Maria [degli Angeli] to help you.

1. Following *No. 6* of the Constitutions, you must always comply with the order of *seniority* of *profession* and not of departure or the position one is holding. So, the first ones will be the *Superior* and her *Assistant* [Sr. Agnese Gallo]. Besides these two titles, no one else should be given it, not even to the Sisters at the head of the Stations.

In regard to the single offices what should be considered is not seniority but *suitability*; and at the head of the Stations should be elected the most prudent ones. Then it is also necessary to often change the post of the

Sisters, even those at the head of Stations, placing them in lower posts and under younger Sisters, who perhaps had been subjected to them.

This is the method to be adopted prudently at the earliest time, without paying attention to the individual susceptibilities; this is what the well regulated Congregations do. Such is your duty that you will communicate to Monsignor, as it is up to you to dispose of the Sisters following the orders of the Sup. Gen.

2. *No. 48*. Advise to give up the fruit, provided there is sufficiency of something else. The act of accusation in community[40] should be observed only when it is possible for the Sisters to be alone, and there are at least four of them. Insist on asking mutual forgiveness every evening for the failings in charity and for the bad examples given during the day.

3. *No. 49*. Regarding permissions obtained from a confessor, it is not necessary to ask for renewal from other new confessors, unless circumstances have changed. You will permit and privately counsel special bodily penances according to the health and the spirit of each one. The practices of the discipline and of the cilice help to correct and perfect oneself. The discipline is preferable when possible. The use of the cilice should last only a few hours, once or twice a week, and not after taking food. For you in particular are sufficient the material and moral penances of your office.

4. *No. 55*. By the name of *Ordinary* is clearly meant only the Apostolic Vicar or Prefect [Mgr. Perlo], and not the confessor.

5. The Sisters' hairstyle should not be freely chosen, but regulated by the Superior or her Assistant, according to suitable times and the Sisters' need. The religious headgear ["cuffia"] should be worn when sick and when there are braids; otherwise allow freedom of choise unless you see any special inconvenience.

Forbid the Sisters from the ordinary reading of newspapers.

May the Lord bless my good daughters who, with mind and heart, will observe the above-mentioned norms. very aff. in J. C.

◀ 411 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 613)

To Sister Maria degli Angeli Vassallo di Castiglione

Torino, 24 May 1920

Dearest Sister Maria degli Angeli,

You are certainly waiting for a few words of mine in reply to the letters you wrote to me during your journey toward the Missions. Together with you I thank the Lord who has led all of you safe and sound to the place you have been desiring for a long time. When you have a chance, greet all your companions and thank them for their letters.

[40] It was the so-called "Friday practice".

At the moment I am praying that the Lord may grant all of you the constancy needed for overcoming the first trials and the moral and physical illnesses of the first times. Sustain yourselves by means of principles of living faith and of holy love for God. If the Lord is with you, nothing will be able to sadden you too much... Courage...

I am expecting from you frequent and confidential letters. In any case practice what you think I would tell you, if I were there, each time. It is my Angel who takes my thoughts to you. Be of help to the dear Superior...

very aff. on J. C.

◀ 412 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 618)

To Sister Giuseppina Battaglia

Torino, before 20 June 1920

Dear Sister Giuseppina,

am pleased with your victories over your temperament. Keep working on yourself; and with the help of the Holy Spirit, you will succeed with time in sanctifying yourself. It takes constancy; and don't get discouraged when you fail, but soon renew your promise and start going again...

For the time being it is enough the resolution without the vow [to always do the most perfect] till the M. H. Conception [8 December].

May Jesus lives in your heart.

◀ 413 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 626-627)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

J. M. J. Ignatius', 4 July 1920

V. R. and dearest Fr. Gays,

I am at St. Ignatius' not for the Spiritual Exercises of others, but mine. I still do not know how long I will stay and when I will return to Torino.
For any need turn to the Rev. V. Rector at Torino or at Rivoli.

I am thinking of the dear seminarian Perino [sick by TB contracted in the Army] who, I think, is still unwell. You order all the necessary treatment, without troubling him by isolating him from the others. I am saying this because he had told me that he was also ready to do this for the good of his companions. But while saying this, you could notice that he was paining; and I do not think it is necessary.

He should not study and take short and frequent walks. When he will be free from the visits to the military Hospital [he was still bound to military service!], he could go to Ciriè [his hometown], if he desires it, and in this case he could give his home the money he receives from the Hospital.

I am saying if he desires it, because when I offered him this proposal he did not answer me. He should go for a visit to Doctor Nicola [Beniamino, the Community doctor] to see if he might need the treatment of bathing in sea-water. In such a case, we could apply for him, as well as for the seminarian Beltramino, to the Salesians of Alassio, who have a house there purposely for such a kind of bathing. About this you could speak or write to Can. Baravalle, to whom I had already mentioned something.

And this kind of bathing would be good also for you, for your arthritis; speak to the doctor about this. In such a case you could accompany the two seminarians.

The examinations will be all right, and also the health in general. If those who have been admitted arrive welcome them *in Domino*.

Here I am praying for everyone, and I am asking St. Ignatius to welcome them when, within a short time, they will be coming here.

Many good wishes and my blessing to everybody.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 414 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 628-629)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 9 July 1920

V. R. and dearest in J. C.,

Thank you for the detailed news about our dear Institute. There will always be little miseries, better if they are only bodily ones.

In regard to the seminarian Perino, your opinion is all right; I hope however for some grace from our Consolata or from St. Ignatius. You and the seminarian Beltramino should delay going there, because the cold we are suffering here is also overflowing into the coast; at the moment it seems inopportune to go there.

As I already told you, speak to Can. Baravalle about finding some place. Besides the Salesians, the Cottolengo also has a suitable place, where also Fr. Paleari [a teacher] should have gone; I don't know whether the Father [of the Cottolengo: Giovanni Battista Ribero] will accept you…

It is not convenient for our Institute to take an active and direct part in Diocesan matters, unless they are dealing with Missions, or all the other Institutes, like the Lazarists, Salesians, etc. are taking part… We are for Africa.

Many good wishes to all, as I am praying for all of you and for much good spirit: *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam* [For the Greater Glory of God].

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 415 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 630)

To Sister Chiara Strapazzon

H. J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 9 July 1920

Rev. and dearest in O. L. J. C.,

The day before yesterday I received your letter together with the one of the directress of novices and the one of Sister.

I am glad to hear that the Community is proceeding well and with good spirit. I have entrusted St. Ignatius to take good care of you, as I have to think of myself during the Holy Spiritual Exercises.

Here the weather is cold and it is raining several times during the day and during the night. As a consequence, there is perfect solitude, and nobody comes to disturb us.

If they desire it, feel free to give the *pagliano* [a concoction] to the two Sisters; it is strong and I don't know whether it will be good for Sister Albina [Granero]...

Send Penna Maria to the dentist: in regard to Sister Elizabetta [Pellerino], she should have money of her own, because the expense will quite high. However there is no hurry, since we still have to decide about her vocation.

Keep going in the Lord with the help of the Holy Angels. I bless all of you wholeheartedly. very aff. in J. C.

◀ 416 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 642-643)

To Sister Costantina Mattalia

H. J. M. J. Torino, 5 August 1920

Rev. Sister Bursar,

I have received your letter, and so has the Very Rev. Vice-Rector. I am glad to hear that all of you are peaceful without worrying. St. Teresa used to say *Let nothing upset you*; calmly, everything can be done. Also remaining in the house, you may breath fresh air, both material and spiritual [they were at St. Ignatius']. The Doctor told me to tell you not to get to upset. You have already heard about the death of the postulant Celeste [Buzzi; she died

four hours later] she died as a saint, not yearning for anything except the accomplishment of God's will... She will pray for us.

The other sick Sisters are doing better, and are on the way to healing.

Be united, and the work will feel lighter. Also in the house it is possible to work.

I bless all of you and you pray St. Ignatius

for your very aff.

◀ 417 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 645)

To Monsignor Filippo Perlo

10 August 1920

My dearest Monsignor,

As it is impossible to you to come to Italy, against our expectations and the promise conveyed to me by Fr. Gays, it is useless for the time being to send the two delegates, whose names I don't know. Fr. Toselli [Giovanni], delegated by Mgr. Barlassina and the Kaffa missionaries, cannot remain here any longer and, during the month of September, will return to Kaffa.

Furthermore, I do not intend to postpone any longer the application to Propaganda for the definitive approval of our Institute and its Constitutions. I have all the letters, or almost all, containing your opinions on them, which I will take into consideration when preparing the notes I will append to them.

Thus, my main mission for the good of our dear Institute will be accomplished. *In Domino*

very aff.

◀ 418 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 647)

To the seminarian Luigi Massa

J. M. J. Torino, 10 August 1920

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

I am sorry to hear about your habitual weakness. Take courage: it will decrease as the hot weather decreases. Our M. H. Consolata, who wanted you as Her favourite son, will make you heal, so that you will be able to make Her known and loved by many people who still do not know Her.

Don't allow melancholy to oppress you, and sustain yourself as the doctor wants [who?]. Our Sisters are getting better; but a postulant went to

Paradise and we buried her a few days ago. I know that your companions are thinking of you and would like to have you with them at St. Ignatius'.

Many good wishes to your good father and the whole of your family.

I bless you, very aff.

◀ 419 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 653)

To Fr. Giuseppe Gallea

Torino, 18 August 1920

Dear Fr. Gallea,

I have been very pleased with the nice Feast [the Assumption] you celebrated at St. Ignatius'. The M. H. Mary must have been pleased, and She must have granted many graces to the Congregation and to all Her sons. Also we, in Torino, did the best we could. If we are not deeply devoted to Our Lady, who else should be?

I have read the letter of the seminarian Bertolino, and I think it is better to wait till after the ordinations: if he comes [here], I will arrange a doctor's visit, hoping to find a doctor [summer holidays]. The Rev. V. Rector will write to you in regard to the change of the Brothers; you could still keep Davide [Balbiano] there; Michele [who eventually left] e Marco [Mauro; first in the Army, then in Tanzania till 1973] will be enough for the work of the shipments.

He will also tell you to send to Torino the seminarian Nebbia (inform Fr. Ferrero of this) and the seminarian Ciardo [Giovanni]: they are needed here.

The recently arrived Sisters will have already told you about my slight indisposition; but now it has passed. Deo Gratias!

Keep going with souls and body... I bless you.

very aff. on J. C.

◀ 420 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 655)

To the seminarian Giulio Peyrani

J. M. J. Torino, 18 August 1920

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

I am glad to hear about your improvement and that you are already convalescing. Now it is convenient to continue taking good care of yourself, and therefore to continue remaining at home till you are fully healed. Thank very much your good father and your relatives for all they have been doing

for you. Sorry to hear about your mother who had to go to Saint Vincent to take care of her health: let's hope she will come back fully healed.

Your present mission consists in prayer more than in works; your good example will obtain the rest.

In regard to H. Communion and H. Mass, do what you can; for the rest, many spiritual Communions and union with God.

At St. Ignatius' they had a greaty celebration [for the Assumption]; here in Torino we did all we could. May the Lord bless you and all your family.

Have me *in Domino* very aff.

◀ 421 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 656-657)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero

J. M. J. Torino, 23 August 1920

My dearest Fr. Ferrero,

From the two letters of yours I understand the correctness of your behaviour in regard to the Novices [procurator and Master of Novices]. Pray for them; speak to them individually, and don't allow their temperaments, their reluctance to discipline and their unwillingness to fight and conquer themselves wear you out.

The Lord is very patient with us, and only after many graces we give in. Courage, and always kindness with everybody. We leave the future in God's hands, Whose Holy Will we shall accomplish.

In regard to the seminarian Nebbia [in charge of shipments], it is all right as it is; we hope for a more intense work.

Pray for me and, at the feet of St. Ignatius'; say every day 3 *Glory be* according to my intentions. I bless you and the Novices...

Very aff. in J. C.

◀ 422 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 658)

To Sister Chiara Strapazzon

H. J. M. J. Torino, 23 August 1920

Rev. Sister Chiara,

I hope that there everything is proceeding well. There is St. Ignatius and the Guardian Angels at work [they are at St. Ignatius'].

In regard to Sister Gertrudethere is no hurry; however, it would be good if she could come back together with Fr. Gallea or somebody else.

Concerning the rest, you try *out of obedience* to gain a *fund* of health for yourself.

Here there is nothing special. The sick Sisters are getting better and better. Many blessings to all of you...

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 423 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 659)

To Sister Giuseppina Battaglia

Torino, August 1920

Be peaceful and joyful. God's will and nothing else. When the Lord will want you in the Mission, you will go and everything will be all right. Let people think what they want; we: *oculi mei semper ad Dominum* [my eyes are ever toward the Lord].

To your good father, who was telling me that you have a craving to leave [for the Missions], I told that you were not craving, but ready to obey the Superiors' orders. He added that, if you knew that you had to wait more than two years, you would not have joined [the Congregation]; I told him that this was not the case; but that you were at peace.

On the other hand don't worry, we look at things with another spirit; and God will bless you.

◀ 424 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 664)

To Sister Maddalena Audisio

uncertain date

I am glad to hear that you have healed from your serious sickness [she is in Kenya]. As a sign of gratitude, you should become a saint by means of true charity and all the other religious virtues.

I bless you together with the other Sisters who are with you.

◀ 425 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 665)

To Sister Maddalena Audisio

Torino, after 19 September 1920

Dear Sister Maddalena. I am pleased with your present health condition. Keep going always according to the good spirit and obedience. Live by faith and courage. To Sister Teresa [Grosso], to whom I am unable to write now, you will tell all that I have told you.

I bless both of you together with all the other Sisters at the [Nyeri] Farm.

◀ 426 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 666)

To Fr. Gioachino Cravero

J. M. J. Torino, 7 October 1920

Dear Fr. Cravero,

I feel the need to express my contentment in regard to your good spirit and your work in composing and printing many things useful for the salvation of the local people.[41]

This is a real apostolate, and on Judgement Day it will be worth as much and more than any the other apostolate. Continue working without getting bored. Encourage always the dear Angelo [Marchina, a Brother working with Fr. Cravero] in this work so good for souls.

I have received your gift [a Kiswahili-Kikuyu dictionary] and both Mgr. Vicar and I and everyone else found it excellent. The Rev. V. Rector is willing to provide you with anything that may be necessary or useful for your mission.

By imitating you, also here in the Mother-House we will set up a real typography, and we shall print our magazine and other material; in this way somebody will learn and come to help you and Angelo. Since you are already preparing the [local Liturgical] Calendar amost perfectly, I will not ask any longer the R. Fr. Grogno [Agostino, a specialist] to compose it. Send several copies of it to us.

Our Protectors for 1921 will be the H. Martyrs of Uganda; Fr. Perrachon will bring to you copies of their life. Virtue: Spirit of faith, that is, living and practical faith.

I bless wholeheartedly you and all those who are with you there.

your very aff. in J. C.

[41] He is in charge of the Nyeri Printing Press.

◀ 427 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 668-669)

To Brother Angelo Marchina

H. J. M. J. Torino, 7 October 1920

Dearest Brother Angelo,

I have received your various letters and, noticing in all of them your good spirit and also some joy and contentement of your situation, I was very pleased and thanked our M. H. Consolata.

Dear Angelo, you do well to desire Paradise, but according the God's Will and not in order to save labours, trials and temptations. Paradise will be more beautiful after the trials and the labours. See, I am almost 70 years old and, although I was desiring since my seminary days to go there [in Heaven], I am still here and I don't want anything else except God's H. Will.

The Lord is giving you the good will and the ability to print many good books and leaflets that will do a lot of good to the souls; be happy about it, and continue with this real apostolate till your old age. Remember St. Teresa's saying: *let nothing trouble you: everything has an end!*

The dear Fr. Perrachon will help you with spiritual matters; he told me many good things about you and he likes you…

I am sorry to tell you that our dear Pacifico [Angelo's brother] is again at home for reasons of health, even after many good treatments provided to him in the Community. However I am not abandoning him and in the past few days I have sent him 100 Liras so that your grandmother could take care of him. He is so good and studious, and I wrote to him that I am already considering him among the seminarians. Pray that the Lord may console him and heal him so that he may go to the missions. I am sending you the last letter he wrote to me. Be tranquil in his regards, because, to me, he is more than a son.

Congratulations on the nice story you sent to him; we shall publish it on our magazine. Courage and continue to do a lot of good; yours is a real apostolate.

I bless you… very aff. in J. C.

◀ 428 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 670)

To Sister Margherita Demaria

H. J. M. J. Torino, 8 October 1920

Rev. Sister Margherita,

By means of dear Fr. Perrachon who is returning [to Kenya], I am sending you, even if hurriedly, a few lines to tell you and the recently

arrived Sisters that I am pleased with the good spirit they are preserving in spite of the physical and moral difficulties of the beginnings.

I hope for a betterment on the part of all after my latest admonitions. Insist on [removing] criticism of the superiors, the missionaries [men] and the other Sisters. I want that this malignant herb be eradicated, and that each one should take care of herself, in order to become a saint by means of holy charity.

Many good wishes and my fatherly blessing to all of you.

very aff. in J. C.

P. S. Our Holy Protectors for 1921 will be the Ugandan Martyrs; the virtue: living and practical faith, that is, the spirit of Faith.

◀ 429 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 683)

To Fr. Giovanni Chiomio

Torino, after 21 November 1920

Dear Fr. Chiomio: I know that God is giving you the grace and strength to proceed with doing good. Sustain also your brothers; be the consoler and support of all, especially the young ones (Albertone, Maletto, etc.) and of the Brothers. To be able to march straight in the midst of miseries is a virtue: firm in the good spirit...

I bless you, very aff.

◀ 430 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 707)

To Fr. Francesco Gamberutti

Torino, 14 December 1920

Dearest Father Gamberutti,

I have received your letter, and I thank you for your good heart. However let's leave everything up to God's H. Will. I certainly desire to see you before going to Paradise and, I hope, not within a long time. In this way you will see again your old father and the other relatives.

In the meantime proceed with the good you are accomplishing in your important [Mission] Station, also in the midst of difficulties. The M. H. Consolata blesses you and counts as her own all you do for Her Glory.

I, too, bless you wholeheartedly as a father...

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 431 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 708)

To Fr. Giacomo Cavallo

J. M. J. Torino 15 December 1920

Dear Fr. Cavallo.

We were very pleased to receive your writings. They do good to our young people and then to the public.

We have sent your letter to the Mondovì Seminary. Carry on with this work of real Apostolate. I am glad about the good you are doing there [in Tanganyika]; do not ever get discouraged; the Lord blesses and will bless even more at the proper time. I will soon send you the books you desire...

Here everybody remembers you and pray for all of you.

I bless you... very aff. in J. C.

◀ 432 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 709-710)

To Sister Margherita Demaria

H. J. M. J. (to be used by all of you) Torino, 15 December 1920

Rev. Sister Margherita,

I reply briefly to your letter, dated 14 August, and in this way also to the one of April 1919.

First of all, I am pleased with the improvement that you tell me is now existing among the Sisters. For the most part, this is certainly an effect of your repeated visits to the individual Stations. Keep doing so and retain this as something necessary for making criticisms and little attritions stop and recalling the Sisters to the *Ad quid venisti* [For what purpose have you come]. Without diminishing the elderly, I hope that the new ones will remain steady on the spirit that was implanted in them in the Mother-House.

Coming now to reply to your questions, it would certainly be necessary to compile at the earliest a Rule or Directory for the Mission places. Following the scheme of the one prepared for the Mother-House, start working on it, asking the help of some more suitable Sisters. Monsignor will complete it, and I will be able to approve it. In the meantime I do not think it is convenient to choose a spiritual director besides the confessor, nor that small notes be written to him. For the time being, in extraordinary cases, you may allow it after having consulted Monsignor. By the name of Ordinary is meant the Apostolic Vicar or the Apostolic Prefect [Mgr. Perlo] , not the confessor, as I think I have already told you.

In regard to No. *49* of the Constitutions: a permission obtained from a confessor persists also when another confessor comes. In regard to the "penances" advised by the Superior, prefer the spiritual ones to the bodily ones, like abstaining from criticizing, from curiosity, from the desire to excel. After these come the bodily ones that are performed by punctually executing the rules and the directives of the Superiors.

True holiness, and therefore the mortification that is a means to achieve it, consists in the full and cordial fulfilment of one's own duties. In regard to food, the best mortification consists in being satisfied with what Providence sends, without grumbling or desiring something else. We eat only in order to live, or as our Card. Richelmy says, in order to stay alive. The means of discipline and the cilices, etc. should not be despised, but should be used with moderation, so as not to damage the health, and only if they really help the spirit. Possibly omit to eat fruit on Friday evening. In regard to the "chapter of faults" ["pratica del venerdì"], when it is not possible to do it on your own, be satisfied to do it the way it can be done, even only by apologizing to a companion who had been offended, or might have been scandalized.

There should be uniformity also in regard to hairstyle and the religious headgear ["cuffia"] at night, also because of cleanliness. Similarly in regard to the ironing of clothes, the discarding of things, etc.

Forbid the reading of newspapers; let some good book be read and commented upon, as it is done in the Mother-House.

And now, as you have already done, study each Sister, correct them maternally and also firmly, so that, fallen, they may get up again; correct their habitual defects so that they be more suitable for their perpetual profession. Work especially on Sister Adele [Cullino], Teresa [Grosso], Caterina [Gemello].

May the Lord sustain you and grant you a lot of patience.

I bless all of you and pray for all.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 433 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 728-729)

To Fr. Pietro Albertone

J. M. J. Torino, 24 December 1920

Dear Fr. Albertone,

Your letters are sad and...; not only to me but, what I would not like, also to those of our Institute. You rightly write that also St. Paul had similar trials; pray to the Holy Apostle and imitate him *Etsi consistant castra adversus me, non timebit cor meum* [Though a host encamp against me, my heart shall not fear].

Do not ask God to end soon this life, but to be able to work *ad multis annos* [for many years]. Nor should the miseries of some brother discourage you; pray; don't let you be dragged along... and possibly correct them in a brotherly way, at least by your example. You should understand me even without details. It is up to you, who have understood the spirit of our Institute to help maintaining it so that the young people may not be disconcerted by certain talks or words. Enough; understand me.

I have sent your letters to your aunt, the Nun.

Mr. Marietti accomplished his duty: he printed well the small book [about the Eucharist] and sent me *150* copies of it, still to be bound, without cover, including five sent to you. Then I sent to you *40* copies.

If you have a chance to sede the R. Fr. Spinello, tell him that I thank him for what he did, and that he be *vir Dei* [a man of God].

Many good wishes to all, and *sursum corda* [lift up your hearts] ...

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 434 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 731)

To Fr. Giovanni Chiomio

Torino, after 26 December 1920

Dear Fr. Chiomio. Always courage *in Domino*, preserving and propagating the good spirit among the confreres. First you saints, then the good to the local people: O. L. Jesus Christ in everything...

I bless you wholeheartedly

◀ 435 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, VIII, 742)

To Sister Enrichetta Quaglio

uncertain date [1920?]

Dear Sister Enrichetta,

I was please with the good news that your Superior gave me about your good spirit, constant desire to strive for perfection and for the duties proper to a religious. Keep going and give good example also to your dear Sisters.

I bless you, and pray for all of you to our M. H. Consolata.

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 30-31)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

J. M. J. Roma, 26 February 1921

Dearest Fr. Gays,

We have arrived safely in Rome with a three-hour delay. The good Daughters of St. Joseph waited for us and welcomed us with holy cordiality [Fr. Gays is the superior of the Mother-House]. We celebrated the H. Mass in their Chapel and spent the Thursday in visiting the Postulator [of Ven. Cafasso's cause] Mgr. Virili, Card. Cagliero [for the beatification of Ven. Cafasso], Card Valfrè [the "Oblati" were giving troubles for the Consolata Shrine] and the Countess Ledòchowska [a benefactor of the Missions]. Only on Friday then, we could visit St. Peter's [Basilica] and then the Chamber-Master of His Holiness]. We applied for a private visit to the Holy Father, to take place on Sunday after the Function [the reading of the decree]. Instead, yesterday evening we received the invitation for the audience with the H. Father to take place today at 11.00 am. The H. Father received us immediately and entertained us for thirty-two minutes. We are pleased with the Goodness of Benedict XV in regard to the Consolata, the Convitto, and the Missionaries.

Yesterday we went also to see Baron De Giura [Giovanni, official of the Foreign Ministry] who welcomed us cordially (Fr. Ferrero knows him) and, without any problem, granted us the reduction for our return by train. Yesterday evening we went to see Card. Bisleti [Gaetano] who oversees the Cafasso's Cause. In the meantime everybody was asking for tickets fot tomorrow's Function;[42] we will be led into the Vatican by Count Sterbini [Vatican official], and there the Chamber-Master will welcome us and lead us to a special place near the H. Father's throne.

When you will receive this letter, everything will be fulfilled, and I hope in the best way.

On Monday, if we reveive the printed copies of the Constitutions, we will go to Propaganda. We will still have many things to do, but then we shall return. Tell everybody to pray and to be good, so that God may bless us in all we do.

Yesterday I received your dear letter.

Many good wishes *in Domino* and the Blessing of the H. Father.

very aff. in J. C.

[42] Function: the reading of the decree regarding the heroic quality of Ven. Cafasso's virtues.

◀ 437 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 33)

To Sister Geltrude Vajra

Torino, after 6 March 1921

God is giving you the chance to become humble, especially in your thoughts. Keep going with good intention, and don't worry about praises or blames: God alone. Courage, I bless you.

◀ 438 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 54)

To the seminarian Lorenzo Bessone

Torino, after 19 March 1921

Take courage; Jesus and M. H. Mary can and want to make you a holy missionary. Turn to them with your prayers; shake yourself up when you feel weak: You will make it…: *Docebo iniquos* [I will teach transgressors (your ways)]…

◀ 439 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 55)

To Sister Emilia Tempo

Torino, after 19 March 1921

Despise fickleness, and be firm in following the Superiors' will. Confessions are always well done, renewing (in general) the sorrow for past sins. Think about God not about yourself.

I bless you.

◀ 440 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 57)

To Sister Giuseppina Battaglia

Rivoli, 15 April 1921

Dear Sister Giuseppina,

Don't say that you are hopeless; at least, together with St. Philip, say that you are hopeless in regard to yourself, in order to place all your confidence in God.

You can clearly see that, beginning with the Superior [Sr. Chiara Strapazzon], all the other Sisters love you, and sympathize with you in regard to your pains.

And these are more imaginary than real. If your head is assailed by stories, disregard them; place good and bad in the S. Heart. And your resolution to be strong and to have Devotion to the Holy Spirit? Take up again your resolution and everything will go away.

Courage, then, without thinking about the past and the future. *God loves you*. I bless you
very aff. in J. C.

◀ 441 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 58)

To Fr. Lorenzo Sales

J. M. J. Torino, 22 April 1921

Dearest Fr. Sales,

I hope that this letter of mine will reach you while you are still in Bologna [for mission animation]. I wish you a lot of good and many graces for our Missions. Since I know that some young people there desire information about our Institute, as a certain Seminarian Montanari wrote to me in these days, prudently and with the Superiors' [of the pontifical major seminary] approval, you may speak about it. However be careful not to enthuse them poetically. Tell them clearly the real nature of the Institute, its discipline, and the spirit on which it is founded.

Gather information from the Superiors about the moral and physical qualities of the postulants, as it is printed on the sheet, I sent to Montanari. I think that, in any way, they should first come to Torino, and be seen also by our medical doctors. We go slowly when it comes to accept people not coming from Northern Italy; however I believe that the Bologna area is still a good land. It would be my idea to let them complete there the present year.

You will visit the the Shrine of St. Luca, of St Caterina da Bologna, etc...; pray for us.

We have just received the information Mgr. Perlo has arrived at Napoli and that, tomorrow or the day after, the ship will be in Genova.

Many good wishes and thanks to those worthy Superiors.

In Domino very aff.

◀ 442 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 71-72)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero

J. M. J. Consolata Shrine, 7 May 1921

Dear Fr. Ferrero,

I cannot let you suffer in this way. You, as a generous man, have probably already offered to Jesus your pain; now strive to forget the bad impression…

I do not remember that Fr. Gays had told me those words [regarding the writing of Fr. Costa's biography]; unless I had not been paying attention. Certainly, the biography of Fr. Costa is with me, and I lent it only to Fr. Rosso [they had been together as seminarians], so that he could revise it and, as a companion of all the Junior High School courses, could enrich it by means of his remembrances.

There is, therefore, no matter of erasing etc. Regarding your affection for Fr. Occelli [who ended up in Brazil], you deserve only praise…

Be then at peace in the S. Heart, and place in It the whole bitterness of your heart.

I am waiting for you at the Consolata Shrine… very aff. in J. C.

◀ 443 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 78)

To Sister Edvige Grosso

25 May 1921

Courage always. Jesus will help you in your temptations and you will not fall. When tempted, place yourself in the S. Heart and be at peace. Eat simply what you feel like, and sustain yourself on your work. Don't worry about being impatient, but try to regain calm soon. In everything have confidence and obey the Rev. V. Rector. I bless you.

◀ 444 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 94)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

J. M. J. Torino, 30 June 1921

Dearest Father Gays,

I have received your letter dated 25th of this month. I am glad to hear that the weather is good [he is at the *Cottolengo marine colony*]; try to get the best of it for yourself and for the good of our dear Institute.

Yours is certainly a great mission, on which depends almost all the best of our Apostolate. Let us pray.

The seminarian Revetria [he left in 1922] came to me, repeating all he had written to you. I felt it was good to give him your letter. I certainly have little hope for him, seeing how obstinate he is regarding his decision to leave. He promised to keep quiet; in the meantime he will take the examinations and wait for your return. It seems to me that he is lacking in firmness, and then that persistent *weakness* that has been going on for years, and never really overcome...; in short my opinion would be to let him go home, where he will decide together with his parents and confessors.

I will reply or make somebody do so to the seminarian Marcellino [Luigi].

The celebration of the H. Ordinations was really solemn, somebody will write to you about it. Also the Feast of St. Paul went well; to the nice entertainment were present also the Rev. V. Rector and Monsignor [Perlo].

Tomorrow I will go to St. Ignatius' where I will pray for your health.
You also pray for me. Greet your good companions.
In Domino very aff.

N. B. A a rule, weigh your letters before sending them; I still had to pay 26 "soldi" for your last letter [insufficient postage].

◀ 445 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 99)

To Fr. Giuseppe Gallea

J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 5 July 1921

Dear Fr. Gallea,

I thank you for the good news about the Institute, about which I am always eager to know. All right regarding the distribution of the examinations [end of year] and of the works. These will increase, due to the next departure [four missionaries, and four missionary Sisters], but by means of God's help and the good will of all, everything will be accomplished. To the dearest men and Sisters who will be leaving I will write myself giving them encouragements and advice. The Lord will assist you, and everything will be all right. Encourage them.

Do as we have agreed upon in regard to their going home [to greet their parents]. Nobody else [should go], like the seminarian Arneodo, unless it will be really necessary; speak about it with the Rev. V. Rector.

Here work and ongoing concern are not lacking, especially because I don't have any experienced people with me. But God is helping me and I still have enough strength to carry on the whole work. Deo gratias!

Tell our young men that I bless them and that they be of good spirit and that, as a reward, I am waiting for them here at St. Ignatius'.

Have me *in Domino* very aff.

◀ 446 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 101-102)

To Fr. Enrico Manfredi and the seminarians
Luigi Massa, Bernardo Perino and Mario Nebbia

J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 8 July 1921

My dearest in O. L. J. C.
Fr. Manfredi and seminarians Massa, Perino and Nebbia,

As St. Ignatius in the name of God and of the Church sent to Mission St. Francis Xavier and his companions, in the same authority, from this Shrine dedicated to such great Saint, I send the four of you to Africa.[43]

Jesus will be with you and will assist you everywhere: *Ecce Ego vobiscum sum* [Lo, I am with you]. Don't worry about your weakness and lack of experience; He tells you: *Ego sum, nolite timere* [it is I; have no fear]. Under the wings of obedience, you will have a good journey; your health will be strengthened and, after a pause in your studies, you will take them up again so that you, the seminarians, will reach the desired goal of Priesthood.

This is God's H. Will in your regard and a proof of the Superiors' affection for you: they don't spare anything in order to make you strong and suitable missionaries.

As I will be unable to be present at your departure and to bless you solemnly, I will be present in spirit and send you my fatherly Blessing, which swill make strong as you depart from the Mother-House and from your dear confreres.

To you. dear Fr. Manfredi, I send a special blessing that should enable you to guide your companions, and to lead them *cum pace et gaudio* [in peace and joy] to the promised land.

Once you arrive in the field you have been desiring for many years, kiss that land which you will water with your sweat, and renew the resolution to become holy missionaries.

You will greet the Very Rev. Vicar General of Kenya, Fr. Gabriele Perlo [Mgr. Perlo's brother], and all the missionaries, who are already venerable because of their many labours undertaken for the good of the local people. Tell them that in the Mother-House we think of them and pray for them.

[43] Fr. Manfredi, and all the others had lung sickness; he remained in Kenya the whole of his life till 1977; the others had different experiences.

And now, entrusting you to the motherhood of our dear Patroness, the M. H. Consolata, I bless you in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...

In J. M. J. very aff.

◀ 447 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 103-104)

To the Sisters Costantina Mattalia, Raffaella Gerbore, Secondina Granero and Rosalia Carrera)

H. J. M. J St. Ignatius, 8 July 1921

Reverend Missionary Sisters:
Costantina, Raffaella, Secondina and Rosalia,

Here it is for you the happy day, for a long time desired. Feel free to he happy abouy it, and heartily thank the Lord for it [Sr, Costantina Mattalia, died at Nyeri in 1977; Sr. Raffaella Gerbore, worked in Kenya, Somalia and Tanzania, she died at Mpanga (Tanzania) in 1929; Sr. Secondina Granero who died in Kenya in 1955; Sr. Rosalia Carrera who died in Kenya in 1978]. You will feel pain in deatching yourselves from this holy House, remembering the great good received and all the graces the Lord granted you. But listening to God's voice who is calling you, as he called Abraham, be strong and ready for your departure. Many Sisters have already preceded you, and others will follow you.

Without repeating now the many teachings I imparted to you in many years, I remind you only to maintain your spirit always high: *God alone, in everything and always*. In this way you will overcome all difficulties; you will rise immediately from your momentary discouragements, and will strive to sacrifice yourselves in order to console Jesus who is thirsting for souls.

Your life will go by, even a long one, and then the Paradise of the Apostles! Happy you if you will correspond to the aims of God and of the Superiors! We will meet again in Heaven, where *semper cum Domino erimus* [we shall always be with the Lord].

We will assist you during your journey with our prayers and we will not forget you when you will be in the Mission. When you arrive, there greet on my behalf the worthy Sister Superior [Margherita Demaria] and all the other Sisters and tell them that I am pleased with all of them because I know that they are people of good and constant will. Depart then with courage, blessed by our Patroness, the M. H. Consolata, and by your very affectionate Superior and Father

◀ 448 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 106)

To Fr. Lorenzo Sales

J.M. J. St. Ignatius', 13 July 1921

Dear Fr. Sales,

I am pleased with the good that is being done by means of the slides. Deo gratias for Carignano [conference with slides]. Feel free to go to Sommariva, where your mother told me that Giuseppino [his brother] is vividly desiring to see you. It is a duty to go, also in order to honour our benefactor the Theol. Dominici [he died at Racconigi in 1950]; you will be representing me.

At the feet of St. Ignatius' I bless you and I ask for you and for me some of the spirit this Saint: a spirit of fortitude and living faith in God alone. You, too, remember me to Jesus so that *I may accomplish my day in Domino.*

Your brother told me that he did well in his examinations. Now he is tired and not in good health. Let's hope.

Your very aff. in O. L. J. C.

◀ 449 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 107)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero

J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 13 July 1921

Dear Fr. Ferrero,

I have prayed for you at the feet of St. Ignatius, and I greatly hope for the intercession of such a great Saint who bore pains and tribulations greater than yours and mine. Courage to you and to me…

I am glad that you go to your home-place when you feel right. On that occasion you will give the offering for the *scholarship* on the same amount as the one of Giaveno, counting also those who are in Africa. We shall see later whether we should tell the seminarians or not. If you go before my return, ask the Rev. V. Rector for the money; I will be back on Saturday 23rd.

Ask the V. R. Fr. Brizio [a priest at the Consolata Shrine] for the certificate of Ordinations that he had kept in order to have it signed by the two Canons [who?] and then take it to the Curia.

Keep going; after the trials the Lord will give us many consolations. And then Paradise will repay everything with interest.

Pray for your very aff. in O. L. J. C.

◀ 450 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 109)

To Sister Chiara Strapazzon

H. J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 13 July 1921

Rev. Sister Chiara,

Thank you for the good news about our dear Community, that all are of one heart and soul *in Domino*. This is for me the greatest desirable consolation. I pray for all of you, also individually, so that you may really become saints.

I am glad to hear that those who departed have been strong; the Lord will protect them. During their journey you pray as usual, or say one *Salve* (Hail Holy Queen), (or Ave Maris Stella (Hail Star of the Sea) and the *Angele Dei* (Angel of God).

I will be back at the latest on Saturday 23rd. In regard to Sr. Giuseppina [who is sick], consult the Rev. V. Rector.

Many thanks also for the fruit…

I bless all of you at the feet of St. Ignatius, very aff. in J. C.

◀ 451 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 116-117)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

J. M. J Torino, 5 August 1921

Dearest Fr. Gays,

From the last three letters of yours I learnt the good news with real satisfaction. The essential thing is that in everybody there be good and constant will. I hope that the little illnesses will be left at St. Ignatius'; and that in the coming [school] year everybody will comply with their duty. Patience in regard to the decision of the Piccola Casa [about the Cottolengo Colony]; the seminarian Sestero [Ottavio] and the other one [Attilio Beltramino] must watch not to go beyond the number of days allowed [out of the Novitiate], in order not to need special dispensations: something quite troublesome in Roma. You could also invite there, for the Assumption, the seminarian Bisio [Giovanni Battista], who, I think, is expecting the invitation.

Yesterday I received a letter from a seminarian of the Bologna area, Montanari [Gustavo], who has already been accepted. He will come to Torino today or tomorrow; when there will be a chance, I will send him there to St. Ignatius'. There you will try to do the best you can, by making

use also of my rooms and, if necessary, the one of the Cardinal, and laying mattresses on the floor.

Start thinking, as I am doing together with Fr. Gallea, about the time when the Brothers and the Sisters should return [to Torino]. Brother Davide [Balbiano], if possible, should remain there till the end, because, according to Doctor Quarelli [Giovanni Gustavo] is the one who needs it most, while, he said, Giuseppe [Antonio Benedetto] is not sick, and Alfonso [Angelo Caffo] slightly so. This to help you decide properly!

Thank everybody: students, postulants, novices, professed members, etc. for their nice letters. I am glad to hear that they are grateful to the Lord for the great benefit they are enjoying, and that they are showing by facts their gratitude, by trying to live in perfect charity among themselves and obedience.

This year they also have the presence of the S. Heart [a statue] who came triumphally to them, to pour on them His Graces and Blessings. After Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, their heart should turn to the S. Heart with short prayers: *Cor Jesu flagrans*... [Heart of Jesus ardent ...]. How much love for God and for the poor unbelievers will come to them! See that they are well prepared for the great solemnity of the Assumption, for which, I hope, Monsignor [Perlo] should come there.

As far as I am concerned, I will see whether it will be possible for me to come, because it is already a few days that I am retired in my room because my usual headaches [migraine]. MayGod's H. Will be accomplished in everything and always.

Now I am coming to you: You write: *I don't feel at ease; I would like to tell you many things, but I know that you do not like to hear about them, and this is grieving me.*

I don't understand these enigmatic words... It seems to me that up to now I have been totally trusting you as a superior and a confident person, I have been acting according to your desires, at time also sacrificing my views... How can you say that I don't like hearing from you! Because of this and out of my special esteem and affection for you I called you to direct our Institute [the Mother-House]. Things seem to be going fairly well... In short, take courage and, if it is melancholy or pains, place them in the S. Heart and keep going. If it is a matter of something else, write to me about it confidently and at length, and we shall look for remedies. I am thanking the good God, because even in the midst of greater and intinate pains, He sustains my old age, so tha I may *consummare cursum meum* [accomplish my course]. Come on, write everything to me clearly...

Many good wishes and my fatherly Blessing to all of you.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 452 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 119-120)

To Sister Chiara Strapazzon and Sisters

H. J. M. J. Torino, 5 August 1921

Rev. Superior and dear Sisters,

Your spiritual and physical wellbeing consoles me; not onkly because you will not loose anything spiritually, but also because the greater vigour of physical strength will make your spirit of faith, mutual charity and perfect sincerity more alive. The S. Heart of Jesus, who was so kind as to come and be placed solemnly on that mountain [they are at St. Ignatius'], will help St. Ignatius to form you properly into his apostolic spirit.

Certainly work abounds; but, if it is performed together and out of love for God, will still let you time for some walks; and then good and fresh air can be enjoyed even remaining in the house. It will be difficult for me to be able to come back to St. Ignatius', due to my many commitments; and then even here the weather seems to become cooler and at the moment I feel well. We shall arrange for the change of the Sisters, and at the proper time I will inform you.

You then [Sister Chiara] should proceed peacefully in your office. There will always be miseries and do not think you will be able to overcome all of them. We should not come to terms with defects, but correct them by means of a word, a look, a silence, and also by waiting for several of them to be corrected at the proper time. It is God who works, and He has a lot of patience with us.

I thank all of you for the good raspberries and bilberries; but from now on eat them yourselves.

Many good wishes and my Blessing to each and all of you.

Yours very aff. in J. C.

◀ 453 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 121)

To Fr. Luigi Santa

Torino, 5 August 1921

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

I was expecting a different reply from your Bishop. Since, when I spoke to him, the only reason he gave me for delaying his agreement was the fear that you were not sufficiently firm in your decision [to join our Institute]; it will be convenient to delay and accept the offices that Monsignor will entrust to you.

In the meantime pray that the Lord may confirm his grace, and, at any possible chance, renew your request. In this way the Bishop will see that your will is firm and persevering. The grace will come, and I will pray the M. H. Consolata for it.

Be in good heart and pray for. Your very aff. in J. C.

◀ 454 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 124)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

before 13 August 1921

Dear Fr. Gays,

I can't write much. I received your letters and well.

If the brother of seminarian Montanari [Gustavo] will come on Saturday, offer him food. Mr. Prina [Marco], the father of [Giuseppe and Nazareno] usually comes for the Assumption; but he goes to eat at the hotel; however you may offer him coffee, as well as to the mother of Deacon Merlo-Pick. To the Rocciamelone [3538 metres] only the 1st class robust are allowed to go...

Many good wishes.

◀ 455 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 125)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

Torino, before 16 August 1921

Dear Fr. Gays,

1. I don't think it is convenient for the seminarian Maletto [Lorenzo] to go home: 1) He needs the whole treatment of the mountain till the end; 2) the Parish Priest, Fr. Gioana [Giovanni Battista], told me that it would not be convenient for him to stay too long at home; 3) he is young, and he would have to converse with his sister-in-law!... let his brother do this; 4) last year he gave private lessons; so what's the use of the countryside.

He has such a small heart. We need that, coming back to Torino, he should feel well, and also that he sould forget some fancies.

2. The same thing applies to the seminarian Moriondo [Bartolomeo], because as a seminarian he cannot substitute Fr. Re [who had gone to Kenya]; and then there are expenses and dissipations. His mother is not expecting him; at the most he could go later from Torino.

After consulting Fr. Gallea, it seems that it would be best to change the Sisters and the Brothers on the 20th; in this way the others, remaining till September 15th, will have the same length of holidays. Inform the Sister Superior [Sr. Chiara Strapazzon] about this.

The Parish Priest of Nole came to me; he told me that the boy of his parish, on his return from St. Ignatius', hurt a foot; I told him to see that he is well and then he could go back to St. Ignatius'.

◀ 456 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 129)

To Fr. Tommaso Gay

J. M. J. Torino, 17 August 1921

Dear Fr. Gays,

I am glad about the Feasts well solemnized. The M. H. Virgin will repay them by means of many graces.

I do not intend to reproach something past but, in order to preserve the right traditions, no Priest or lay person should ever be admitted to the community meals. This is what the well ordered Congregations do. We have always observed this rule. Similarly, I think that the feasts in honour of the Sister Superior [Sr. Chiara Strapazzon], both in Church and at the meal, were not proper. The seminarians should not know the names of the Sisters; the separation is never sufficient, so that in Africa there should then be the greatest possible separation.

Brother Michele [Mauro who was at home for health reasons] wrote to me fifteen days ago, and told me that he is still following the treatment of eggs and milk, as he was supposed to do. I told him to try do without it for fifteen days; if he felt well, to come back [to St. Ignatius']. This is what all the "invalids", except Brother Davide [Balbiano] should do after August.

Regarding that Cross [to be erected on some peak] do not do anything. Can. Gunetti [Remigio, Bursar at the Consolata Shrine] told me that the Vicar of Lanzo has already formed a committee to this purpose, due to the rather heavy expenses needed, and he will take care of it together with the people of the near little towns.

Many good wishes and blessing to all of you. very aff. in J. C.

◀ 457 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 133-134)

To Sister Margherita Demaria

H. J. M. J. Torino, 1 September 1921

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

It is time for me to write to you and reply to your last letter. In it you told me that it seems to you that Monsignor is not quite satisfied with our Sisters. During the various times we spoke about this, he showed that he

was happy about all of them in general and especially with the majority of them. About you he speaks well; and he finds it difficult to let you come to Italy. And to tell you everything *in Domino*, he only told me that you show some predilection for the young ones and for those who court you. No matter what, it is good for you to know this impression so as to remove any pretext for ill humour.

Monsignor desires that I myself should appoint the Sisters to head the [Mission] stations. I will do it, but I will allow you to modify the list if you feel that there is something wrong. I will certainly not appoint to such places Sister Candida [Sandretto] and Sister Antonina [Tessari]. I cannot understand whether Sister Agnese[44] would be suitable to substitute for you while you will come to Italy. I feel it would be premature to have Sr. Maria [degli Angeli] as a Superior. In regard to Sister Luigia [previous Bursar of the Mother-House], she should be somehow controlled, but do not humiliate her, as she has virtue and talent to work well.

I was pleased to hear that Sister Caterina [Gemello] and Sister Teresa [Grosso] are showing that they want to improve; try to help them overcome themselves by showing them esteem and affection. You have already seen nine Cottolengo Sisters leaving, and later there will be others doing so, perhaps up to the last one. I am telling this to you *in all confidence*. We shall send as many as possible of our own but, for the time being, we will not be able to substitute for all the Cottolengo Sisters. Some [mission] stations will be left with only the priests; where there will be Sisters, they will be no less than four or *at least three of them*. This is what I have already ordered to Monsignor.

As I have already written to you a previous time, keep collecting material suitable for composing a Directory for the Mission places. As the time for perpetual vows is approaching, I need your opinion on each one of them. Keep visiting often the Stations, adjusting everywhere the little miseries, and animating all of them to strive for the perfection of their status.

I bless and recommend to our dear Consolata all of you. very aff. in J. C.

◀ 458 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 135)

To Sister Agnese Gallo

H. J. M. J. Torino, 3 September 1921

Dearest Sister Agnese,

It is a long time that I have been intending to write to you, to praise your good spirit and your activity as the Superior's Assistant, as well as your work

[44] Sister Agnese Gallo: in 1919 superior of the *Mary Immaculate Sisters*; in 1925 superior of the Mother-House and vice-Superior General.; she died at Kevote in 1955.

and patience with the new Congregation of the local Sisters [the Mary Immaculate Sisters]. Due to this, I think you may be rather tired...

Courage in the Lord, and keep going always ahead, without neglecting your health. Never get discouraged in the midst of difficulties; but continue to perform your duty calmly and meekly. God will supply to your deficiencies. It is important a total agreement with your Superior, not omitting to make your observations when convenient for the common good.

I bless you and pray for you.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 459 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 138)

To the Mother-House community on holidays at St. Ignatius'

J. M. J. Torino, 7 September 1921

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

Also on this beautiful Feast of the Nativity of the B. V. Mary I cannot come to St. Ignatius'. From Torino I will be assisting to your Congress or "Crociata", and I bless you with the whole of my heart. *Energy* in everything is a sign of vocation to the Apostolate, and you are giving a proof of it in such meetings, to which everyone strives to give his best contribution, no matter how small it may be. Courage...

Well, your long holidays are approaching their end. In the last week remaining, be ever more fervent and obedient. St. Ignatius must have been happy about you; anyhow, in the remaining days make up for any defects, so that you will be returning to Torino with your hands full of St. Ignatius' graces.

Desiring to see you soon, I bless you.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 460 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 140)

To Sister Maria degli Angeli Vassallo di Castiglione

H. J. M. J Torino, 7 September 1921

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

I have recived your letters and finally I am able to reply. You have done well to tell me how you see things; it helped me to confer with Monsignor. I desire, and since this is my duty, I demand that you live according to the spirit I infused into you, a spirit of faith, charity, and delicacy.

I think that you must have experienced some moral disease; you must take courage and strive, by means of words and even more of example, to gather and comprise all of them [Sisters] in the will to perfect themselves. On the other hand, in this world it is not convenient to be scandalized by anything; we must do as much as we can so that everything may proceed well.

Your relatives are complaining because you write rarely. Try to satisfy them, especially your old father. Your brother wrote to me and told me about the sale of a farmhouse; since he did not have your procuration, he stood in for you. I replied to him that we have such a procuration, as I had already written to your sister, and I could have sent it to him. He added that your part would be 42 thousand liras, if I remember well, and these would be used for some business in Sardinia, and that your father would be beneficiary of the usufruct. This is just to inform you; however, there is nothing to do about it.

Courage then, and keep your eyes always toward the Lord.

I bless you, and together with you all the dear Sisters, especially those who are living with you.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 461 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 147)

To Sister Giuseppina Battaglia

Torino, 1 October 1921

Never get discouraged; but always renew your resolutions. Don't think too much about the future. Strive to become a saint in the Mother-House...

Ask Jesus for charity-humility and total trust *in Him alone*...

◀ 462 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 148-150)

To the Consolata missionaries

J. M. J. Torino, 15 October 1921

My dearest in O. L. Jesus Christ,

Another great trial has affected our Institute and our Missions. The Rev. Brother Michele Cavigliasso [working at Nyeri Farm] has left us for Paradise. But what mostly grieves us is the fact that his unexpected death took place without any assistance that any of his Confreres could give him.

A telegram, followed by a long letter from Fr. Fassino [Antonio] informed me that our dear brother died on 21 August, drowned after falling into a large pond. I am not telling you any detail of this accident, because you probably already know them better than I.

After having already lost two Brothers, Giacomo [Gaidano] and Umberto [Arossa], we were not expecting this so soon; while our good Michele, in the strength of his 42 years, was all dedicated to the great work of the Farm.

All we can do is to bow our head to God's Holy Will, whose judgement is unfathomable but always full of mercy. The good Lord wanted to reward in Heaven the 14 years of work in the Missions of our blessed Brother, and offer us a lesson on the uncertainty about the time and way of our death. "*Estote parati, quia qua hora non putatis, Filius hominis veniet*" [You must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour]. Our dear Michele, when in obedience to his Superior left the house at about 10 o'clock, certainly did not expect to be back only two days later as a cold corpse... Good for him that he always lived as a fervent religious and zealous missionary, so that death was not unexpected for him, as it found him ready for God's call!

You used to see him always peaceful and happy, dedicated to the works assigned to him by obedience. When advised or corrected, he did not look for excuses; in his humility he used to say, “I know that I am poor and good for nothing: *in peccatis concepit me mater mea!* [in sin did my mother conceive me!]”. He drew this religious virtue from his devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. He spent in church all the time he had at his disposal.

Two days before dying, somebody wrote to me, that he said that if he had a full day at his disposal, he would have spent the whole of it in front of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. And he added, “If a time comes when I am not able to work any longer, I will spend all my time in adoring the Blessed Sacrament”.

Here it is where Holy missionaries like St. Francis Xavier are formed! Somebody complains about not finding in the Missions all the aids to perfection that are available in the Mother-House. Turn often full of trust to Jesus, and He will supply everything. He will enlighten and comfort you: "*accedite et illuminamini; venite ad me omnes qui laboratis*" [look to him and be radiant; come to me all you who labour].

The sudden death of our dear Brother should make us think of our death. When and how shall we die? At that time will we be well prepared, or will we yearn for some more time to better prepare ourselves for God's judgement? "*Oh, si daretur hora!*" [Oh, that we could be given an hour!]. Truly a religious missionary should always be ready for the great passing. Unfortunately, it is not always so. After having performed the great sacrifices of detaching themselves from everybody and everything when they left for the Missions, some people allow their hearts to get attached to little things which prevent a greater perfection and will bother them at the time of death. Examine yourselves every day in order see whether you live

in perfect agreement with your holy vows, and in regard to the virtues of charity and humility.

Let us live, my dear sons, as perfectly as we can, so as to be always ready to die. And this not only in order not to go to hell, a terrible thing for a missionary, even if still possible, but also in order to avoid as much as possible the sufferings of Purgatory. And this is not enough. We should live as perfectly as we can in order to enjoy greater glory in Paradise; and if, as much as possible, in order to live peacefully and to enjoy peace of soul at the moment of our death.

The plenary indulgence of our Venerable [Cafasso] will apply also in the case of sudden death, but will our dispositions allow us to acquire it? You know that no sin, even the smallest, is pardoned if there is no sorrow and resolution to improve. Shall we satisfy these conditions at that time, if we never strive to correct our many weaknesses and habitual small failings?

Sometimes in religious Communities you can hear somebody complaining that there is no longer the spirit of the foundation... Instead of these useless complaints and instead of asking perfection from the others, each one should seriously strive to achieve perfection himself. If everybody did that, the good spirit would be back in the whole Community.

I conclude, recommending to you to strive for your own sanctification. Each one must give an account of himself, and not of others. I must give an account of my duty to offer you the means of becoming holy missionaries, and you of the way you use these means. All of you, thinking of the "*ad quid venisti*" [why did you come here], should not get lost in useless questions that will make you waste time and prevent you from achieving your aim, which is your sanctification and the conversion on non-believers.

Our Lady Consolata will assist you so that you will deserve good rewards. From here, I continue to pray our dear Mother for you, and I ask for you the spirit of fortitude and the heroism of the martyrs. Entrust yourselves to the arms of the M. H. Mary; She will console you and will change your sorrows into joys. Think of me as being near you, and comfort yourselves. Courage, then, sustained by our prayers; *avanti in Domino* [go ahead in the Lord], day by day, hour by hour.

At the feet of Our Lady Consolata I wholeheartedly bless you, and I am happy to call myself your very aff. in O. L. Jesus Christ

◀ 463 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 161)

To Sister Emilia Tempo

Torino, after 6 November 1921

You need greater simplicity and trust in God, without examining too much your thoughts. Go ahead simply and God will bless your humility.

I bless you; be at peace.

◀ 464 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 180-182)

To Monsignor Filippo Perlo

Torino, 21 November 1921

Dearest Monsignor,

Since you have never come to ask for my feelings about the Missions and their personnel, even if I could have done this easily during all this time, I feel it is my duty to express in writing my impressions and intentions in regard to the good of the personnel and of the Missions.

There is a general complaint that in Africa the fundamental point of our Constitutions, that is to strive first of all for the sanctification of the personnel working in the Missions, is rather neglected, and that you aim almost uniquely at making the personnel efficient by overloading them with work, and then letting them do what they can in regard to the running of the Stations, to the detriment of the vow of poverty. Some people also say that you are not a father, but a general and that you are not sufficiently concerned about their spiritual situation, and that some particular needs of theirs are not taken care of at the right time and place, making them wait for things strictly needed, even after they ask for them several times.

Something that pains me, as it did many missionaries, and that with time could be damaging the Missions, is to know that there are frequent disputes both with Government representatives or private people about contracts and works. I do not know whether the situation has become worse due to Fr. Luigi's character [the younger brother of Mgr. Perlo]; but certainly, this inconvenience has always been present. I feel that there should be more sincerity and prudence in dealing both with the government and private people and that there should be more concern about the good reputation of the Institute and of its members.

They also say that it has often been happening that, especially at the farm, people had to work during feast days, also doing things not absolutely urgent; I instead am keen to remind you that the feast days should be days of rest and prayer.

Fr. Luigi [Perlo] should not have anything to do in regard to the missionaries and missionary Sisters of the Missions, because they find him too hard; and it should not be said that the Perlo "firm" is dominating.

So that what happened with the Cottolengo Sisters should not happen with our Sisters, they should be dealt with in a better way by the missionaries [men]; they should be helped to live as true religious according to their Rules, always depending and following the directives of their V. Superior [Sr. Margherita Demarie], conforming to the norms given them by their Superior of Torino. The change from one Station to another should be first approved by their V. Superior general for Africa [Sr.

Margherita Demarie]; the election to the office of Assistant for the various Houses should be agreed by the Superior of Torino.

It is my precise will that no European unrelated personnel should be allowed to live with, work with or take meals with missionaries, Brothers and Sisters; this is what I have already written also to Mgr. Barlassina for the Kaffa mission.

Regarding Fr. Rossi [Francesco], I repeat what I have already written several times in the past, that I don't think he sould be admitted to perpetual profession. If he insists on wanting to remain in the Mission places, remaining however bound to vows as the missionaries, you should ask separately and secretly the opinion of the more elderly missionaries, in order to find out whether his presence may turn out to be detrimental to the good running of the missions, and then keep him or not according to the information you received, which should be written and then transmitted to me by each of the people you consulted.

Due to the insistence of Propaganda in requiring personnel for Iringa [Tanzania], it would be good if you, as soon as you arrive [they left with Br. Davide on 24th of November], could send there two more people, providing them with all that is necessary, as you have probably already done for the others. I think that Fr. Spinello [Domenico] and Fr. Albertone [Pietro] could be sent there.

Here are the main things I felt it was my duty to tell you, considering the good of our Institute and of our Missions, and the full report of my life that, within a short time, I shall have to present to God's tribunal. Please, don't take offence at what I said, and *in Domino*

◀ 465 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 204-205)

To Monsignor Gaudenzio Barlassina

J. M. J. Torino, 18 December 1921

Dearest Monsignor,

I am replying to you letter dated 15th November.

It is right to expect that the news of the death of our confreres should reach everybody as soon as possible. The Rev. V. Rector told you about the death of our lamented Brother Michele. We, too, received the news late, due to the fact that Mgr. Perlo was not there. If that kind of antipathy and grumbling toward Kenya that exists in some of you could cease, many things would be better and you would receive much more brotherly news. You should be grateful to Kenya because it is by means of their profits that we can help you with your needs. You should understand that we do not have a well of gold here, and what we acquire by means of a lot of work and many solicitudes is just enough to maintain the great family of the Mother-House, and Deo Gratias.

Let these miseries cease and hug one another as brothers.

I do not think it is yet opportune to open a Seminary, or even only a regular group of young people to prepare for Priesthood. Besides the required expenses which we could not sustain at the moment, you are still too few priests, and I absolutely forbid that to this purpose other people should be invited or accepted, who later on could cause damages to our Mission.

For the time being, your task is to collect and see that the many strayed and perverted people become good Catholics; this is already much in order to respond properly to your duties. Furthermore, you have to work materially in order to become stable and provide enough for your living.

Fr. Goletto [Giuseppe] should have never written that letter; to no missionary, even less to a seminarian. I kept it and I am writing to him to admonish him. However, it is always true that in Abyssinia a woman is more dangerous than elsewhere and it is easy to understand that the dangers are greater if she is kept in the house.

Therefore, I forbid once again to do so. Our men are young; and then it is not good to pretend what is not true, and should not be true; to appear to be married! What will be the effect of this in the future when they will find out it was only an unworthy fiction? They will believe it, and you will lose all kind of esteem. *Non* ever *sunt facienda mala, ut veniant,* in your intention, *bona* [you should never do evil so that good may come]. Let's walk along the right path, indicated to us by God and by healthy morals.

I think I have replied to all your questions.

Now receive wholeheartedly the newcomers: Fr. Borello Mario and Fr. Occelli [Ottavio]; they are excellent people, of good ecclesial and religious spirit; well guided and supported by you will do much good.

In the office of Propaganda, they are working at revising our Constitutions in view of theirs and of our Institute's final approval. Pray that in this as well as in everything else God's H. Will may be done. At the proper time I will write to you in regard to the convocation of the Chapter.

May the M. H. Consolata support and enlighten you. I bless all of you

◀ 466 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 210)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

J. M. J. Torino, 20 December 1921

CAN. GIUSEPPE ALLAMANO

wishes *toto corde* [wholeheartedly] to you my dearest Happy Feasts [St. Thomas (at that time it was celebrated on 21st of November) and Chrismas], asking our M. H. Consolata to grant you health, graces and strength so that

you may carry out well the delicate and very important office that the Lord has entrusted to you. Deo gratias!

◀ 467 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 212)

To Fr. Francesco Cagliero

23 December 1921

Dearest Fr. Cagliero,

In conformity with the directives of the new Code of Canon Law, the Religious missionaries should have a Superior representing the Superior General (Canon 296, par. 2). This was lately confirmed to me by S. Propaganda [Fide]. After having prayed, I decided to elect you to this important office for the Kenya Vicariate. I am confident that you will accept this obedience, and will carry it out for the good of the spirit of our missionaries. I will write about this to Mgr. Perlo so that he may inform all Consolata missionaries in Kenya.

May our M. H. Consolata bless you.

very aff. in O. L. J. C.

P. S. will write soon in order to convoke the General Chapter and the elections in accordance with the approved Constitutions, and I will ask you to visit [the missions] and receive the votes for the elections of the two delegates. You will be excluded because you shall already have to come as the local Superior.

◀ 468 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 213-214)

To Monsignor Filippo Perlo

24 December 1921

Dear Monsignor,

Coming back from Rome, our Fr. Ferrero [Maurizio Domenico, the Procurator] brought me good news, as the Rev. V. Rector has already written to you.

We were also asked to elect a local Superior, according to Canon 296, par. 2 of the Code of Canon Law.

I have elected *in Domino* the R. Fr. Cagliero [Francesco, Superior for the Vicariate of Kenya] Please, inform all missionaries about this.

Since there is the possibility that Fr. Dal Canton [Angelo], coming to Italy this Spring, might not want to return to Africa, it is necessary that he

should take care of his mistakes, by giving you all that he possesses. In order to make him return, I had to give him his ticket.

May the Christmas Feasts bring many blessings to you and to all the Missions. very aff. in J. C.

◀ 469 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 221)

To the seminarian Pietro Borello

1921

Notwithstanding any kind of past, you will become a holy missionary, if you don't get discouraged. Pray always, even when you feel cold about it. Turn often to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and to the M. H. Mary. When tempted, place yourself into the Sacred Heart, and be peaceful: *Etsi consistant castra adversum me non timebit cor meum* [Though a host encamp against me, my heart shall not fear]. Courage.

I bless you.

◀ 470 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 222)

To the seminarian Giuseppe Moncallero

uncertain date

Courage; the Lord who has called you will give all the necessary graces.[45] Every morning resolve to want to win, both in regard to being fervent in your prayers, as well as in regard to general charity towards everybody. Jesus blesses every well performed act of obedience. I bless you.

◀ 471 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 223)

To Sister Giuseppina Battaglia

Torino, December 1921

Let's take everything from God's hands. The fact that your Dad did not reply does not mean anything; he had no reason to get offended by all the

[45] G. Moncallero left as a priest in 1938 and became a big Monsignor in the Vatican.

good words you told him. At any rate, let the M. H. Consolata provide; and you remain peaceful, ready, if necessary, to repeat in a nice way the *non possumus* [we cannot]: I cannot renounce...

I bless you and think about other things. very aff. in O. L. J. C.

◀ 472 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 224)

To Sister Giuseppina Battaglia

uncertain date

You should never get discouraged; the Holy Spirit will work in you gradually. The fact of the Superior [Sr. Chiara Strapazzon] is nothing; why should you get upset? It was delicate on her side, and you obey her. Resolution: strength. I bless you.

◀ 473 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 226)

To Sister Giuseppina Battaglia

uncertain date

1. Enjoy your present peace, receiving it from the Lord and preparing to be strong in the future when the star will disappear. 2. I approve your resolurion. 3. Ask for nothing, refuse nothing. 4. Constancy.

◀ 474 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 233)

To Sister Clementina Cristino

uncertain date

Yours is a true opening of your heart. Knowing yourself is a grace from God. If Jesus grants you this grace, he will grant you also the one of correcting and sanctifying yourself. Your awe for Africa is good; but be sure that God will sustain you and you will be a good and holy missionary.

Confidence and surrender, and love for Jesus.

◀ 475 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 234)

To Sister Clementina Cristino

uncertain date

I am pleased with the openness of your heart: this is good for you and for your future. We have to fly high and sanctify ourselves. Make serious resolution in this regard, and keep going straight in the midst of little miseries that are found everywhere and in any kind of life. That it might correspond with my vocation, and that's enough! The Lord helps generous souls: let nothing trouble you: everything has an end: God alone.

◀ 476 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 235)

To Sister Clementina Cristino

uncertain date

Don't worry about your passion; by despising them, these feelings will go away. This fight is a good preparation for the Misssion. Say often: *God alone - Deus meus et omnia* [my God and my all]. Courage.

◀ 477 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 236)

To Sister Clementina Cristino

uncertain date

Be at peace: I believe I have already replied to everything with my previous letter. Courage, keep going, even in the midst of our miseries.

◀ 478 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 237)

To Sister Clementina Cristino

uncertain date

Be at peace: it is not bad to manifest your own ideas, provided you are then ready to do God's will. Courage.

◀ 479 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 238)

To Sister Clementina Cristino

uncertain date

Your temperament is generosity: make sure it is stable by means of God's grace, without worrying too much about your defects and failings, which will help to keep you humble and charitable. I bless you.

◀ 480 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 239)

To Sister Clementina Cristino

uncertain date

Good, be calm, without fears. Obtain from the Sisters what you can without any fuss; besides Jesus is with you and He will help you now and in future. I bless you.

◀ 481 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 244)

To Monsignor Gaudenzio Barlassina

A Mons. Barlassina

Torino, 5 January 1922

Next Spring I intend to assemble here in Torino the first General Chapter of our Congregation in order to elect the Council and and to arrange what is prescribed by our Constitutions.

To this purpose two missionaries from every Mission, delegated by the professed Missionaries, should participate, (with perpetual vows? no: I wrote so).

It would be convenient that one of them be Fr. Olivero [Luigi] who, having left for Africa 14 years ago, never returned. He should come as soon as possible, in order to see his old and sickly parents, who are very eager to see him, and I promised them that I would fulfil their desire.

I would desire that you would be the other representative, so that you would represent also the Superior of the Mission; and by your presence we would clarify a number of things concerning Kaffa and the arrangement of the Prefecture. So, send immediately Fr. Olivero, and you will come in a few

months when I call you by means of a telegram; I will do so also for Kenya. Therefore, be ready in order to be able to leave as soon as you receive my telegram, so that you will come at the same time; you will remain here the shortest possible time.

Many good wishes and my Blessing to all, very aff. in J. C.

◀ 482 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 268)

To Sister Chiara Strapazzon

H. J. M. J. 15 February 1922

R. Sister Chiara,

I hope that the Lord may restore you to health soon for your good and for the good of all. However, have a lot of patience in the Lord.

The good Fr. Barbero[46] will not come any longer; in his place will come a certain Fr. Appendino [Vittorio, who died at Favria Canavese in 1944], an excellent priest and a confessor of other Sisters. He will come every Friday and every Saturday at 2 pm. You be ready and before offer him some coffee. See that there is a "berretta" [or tricorno].

He will start next *Friday*.

It would be good to write a letter to Fr. Barbero, thanking him for all the good done for so many years to many missionary Sisters, etc.

Have courage... very aff. in J. C.

◀ 483 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 278)

To Sister Emilia Tempo

Torino, 23 February 1922

The vow of the most perfect without sin does not make you sin when there are no sins; and not even make your sins more serious. If you observe perfection, good; if not, there is nothing. Go on like this without any fuss.

[46] Barbero Agostino Efisio, involved in the Process of Ven. Cafasso.

◀ 484 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 281)

To Fr. Giovanni Mauro

J. M. J. Torino, 25 February 1922

Dearest Fr. Mauro,

Some time ago I received your letter, with all your pains; and I was not amazed, since I knew well your temperament. I did not have time to reply, and I was hoping that some elderly Father would urge you on. At any rate you did well, by following the advice of the Rev. Vicar Fr. Gabriele [Perlo, the brother of Mgr. Perlo].

Forget all worries and take your perpetual vows as soon as possible. This is my precise advice and the obedience I am asking of you. Afterwards you will be at peace and happy. There are miseries everywhere, also in the Mission; we must take courage and think about becoming holy.

So, keep going *in Domino*; I bless you.

yours very aff.

◀ 485 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 295-297)[47]

To the missionary priests in Kenya

before 11 March 1922

Our Missionary Institute had its official beginning on 29 January 1901, with the Archbishop of Turin's approval. You know well how much it has been blessed by our Lord and by our dear Consolata; your growth in number and the many works you accomplished in 20 years for the salvation of many non-Christians who embraced the Faith are a proof of such blessings. Through the benevolent backing of the Supreme Pontiffs Pius X and Benedict XV, and the guidance of the Cardinals Gotti and Van Rossum [the Prefects of Propaganda], we obtained the *Decretum Laudis* which made us directly subject to the S. Propaganda and an Institute *Juris Pontificii* (of pontifical right).

Through decisions of the H. See, Kenya became first a Mission and then a Vicariate; later the Prefecture of Kaffa was assigned to us, and soon Iringa will also be. For all this, we give glory and honour to God alone who sustained the Superiors through all their cares and toils; we give thanks also to our Patroness, O. L. Consolata, who maternally protected us, and we

[47] This letter, without date and signature, was never sent to Kenya. In its place, the more concise letter dated 31 March 1922 (see below) was sent.

praise all our dear missionaries (Fathers, Brothers and Sisters) who with true apostolic spirit worked and are still working, toiling and sweating.

I believe that, being things as they are now, the time has come to properly arrange a regular government of our Congregation and to provide it with all that is necessary for consolidating it spiritually and materially.

The Very Rev. V. Rector and I are already elderly and rather worn out so as to take care of a Community that continues to grow in personnel and apostolic works.

You know that we already tried twice to offer our resignations to Propaganda, but by obedience we were asked to continue our work. At present, however, as you have grown in number, some younger members can take the place of the older ones who may have to leave their work and come to the Mother-House to direct the Institute by forming the Council.

We do not intend to abandon you before our death; we will continue to help you with advice and material means.

We are very concerned, for the greater glory of God and the salvation of unbelievers, that this Institute may not decrease its process of growth, but continue in ever better ways, preserving that spirit which we have been striving to instil into you throughout many years.

The occurrence of the 3rd Centenary of the foundation of Propaganda will animate clergy and faithful to missionary cooperation, and will increase in us the zeal for the salvation of souls of unbelievers. This year we hope to obtain the definitive approval of our Institute and Constitutions for its perennial stability.

As soon as this is done, I will call from Africa the members of our Chapter for its first General meeting. Those who must participate are the following: the Ordinary [Bishop] or his representative, the local delegate Superior, and two missionary priests with perpetual vows to be elected by all the professed priests, including those in Iringa.

I believe you have already been informed that I have appointed our dear Fr. Cagliero [Francesco] as delegate Superior for the Vicariate of Kenya. As soon as he receives this letter, he will send it to all those who have to vote. Then he will receive by confidential letters the names of the two missionary priests elected, and will inform you of the results, so that everyone may suggest to the two elected priests the matters he feels should be considered at the General Chapter for the good of our Institute and Missions.

I would like to remind you that in the past elections for our Constitutions the greater number of votes went to Fathers Rolfo [Giovanni Battista] and [Domenico] Gillio. Leaving to each of you full freedom, I cannot refrain from saying that I think it would be convenient to elect the same two Fathers, also because they are older and have never returned to Italy since their departure for Africa.

Once the people elected are informed by telegram to depart for Italy, prayers should be offered in all mission stations to invoke on our Chapter the light of the Holy Spirit and the Blessing of the M. H. Consolata.

To this purpose, you shall pray in common the *Veni Creator* [Come, Creator (Spirit)] and three times the Hail Mary.

Trusting that everything will turn out to be for God's glory and the good of our Institute, I bless you.

◀ 486 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 301)

To Sister Geltrude Vajra

Torino, 13 March 1922

You will have to keep uprooting your defects, especially in regard to humility [she is still in Italy]. By God's grace and by your perseverance in renewing your resolutions, you will be ready for your anticipated departure for the missions.

I bless you.

◀ 487 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 303)

To Sister Clementina Cristino

Torino, before 15 March 1922

Dear Sister Clementina. There is no doubt that in the middle of March you will take your vows for another five years. Pray to the Lord that he may fill the gaps of your preparation, and trust in the One who *humilibus dat gratiam* [gives grace to the humble].

Then do not pay attention to some fears that the devil raises, in order to remove from your peace and serenity. Neither I nor the Rev. V. Rector have changed our opinion about you; neither we willingly have showed any discontent about your behaviour.

Shrug your shoulders; and keep going *in Domino*. Listen to me.

I bless you, very aff. in J. C.

◀ 488 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 304)

To Sister Emilia Tempo

Torino, after 18 March 1922

To know you is a grace; take the step: never get discouraged [she is in Italy, asking to make some special penance]; instead renew your resolutions and, helped by God's Blessing, you, too, will succeed in becoming holy.

◀ 489 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 305)

To the seminarian Lorenzo Bessone

Torino, after 19 March 1922

The Lord will sustain you on all occasions if you will trust in Him and pray much[48] [he is answering the wishes for his name's day].

Ahead with courage.

◀ 490 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 311-312)

To the missionary priests in Iringa

Torino, 25 March 1922

My dearest Fathers
Panelatti [Gaudenzio], Vignoli [Domenico], Ciravegna [Giovanni], Albertone [Pietro], Spinello [Domenico],

I would have liked to answer your various letters before now, but I have always been waiting for the so-often-promised and never-done official establishment of the Prefecture of Iringa. The Decree has not yet arrived, but I recently heard that it could come within a rather short time.

In the meantime, I am ever more desiring that our Institute may begin to stand on its own, with the regime and organization described by our Constitutions at Nos. 52 and 74. To this purpose I intend to convoke a General Chapter as soon as possible, with the participation of the people indicated by No. 54 of our Constitutions. Among these, there are "two perpetually professed missionaries from each Mission, elected by all the Missionary priests residing in that particular Mission".

For the time being, your Mission is still the one of Kenya. It will then be up to the Superior General elected by the General Chapter to designate the missionaries who will remain in Iringa, or go to Kenya, or to Kaffa. Therefore, I am inviting you to designate as soon as possible two elderly missionaries who will come as your delegates to the General Chapter, when I will inform them. Having chosen them according to the Lord's inspiration, each one of you will send the two names, in a sealed envelope, to Fr. Cagliero [Francesco], who has been appointed by me as the *Superior of Mission* for the Kenya Vicariate and, as such, shall have to participate in the Chapter.

[48] Allamano is answering the wishes for his name's day.

The choice of the two names is totally free; however, I dare suggesting to prefer elderly missionaries who have never returned to Italy. At the last year's elections, the majority of votes went to Fathers Rolfo [Giovanni Battista] and Gillio [Domenico], who have never returned to Italy. But, I repeat, you are free to choose; just do it *coram Deo* [in God's presence] and only for the greater good of our Institute.

May our M. H. Consolata confirm you in the work you are doing for the good of those souls; and I bless you with all my heart.

very aff. in J. C.

N. B. Copies of this letter should be made and sent to each missionary in Iringa.

◀ 491 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 321-322)

To the missionary priests in Kenya

Torino, 31 March 1922

Dear Father

As the Lord in his goodness wanted to keep me alive so that I could see the present consoling development of our Institute and its missionary work, I feel that the time has now come to provide for a greater stability of our Institute by establishing its regime and organization according to what is indicated in the second part of our Constitutions. To this purpose I intend to convoke as soon as possible a General Chapter, according to No. 54 of our Constitutions.

This article prescribes that "two perpetually professed missionaries for each Mission, elected by all the missionary priests residing in that Mission" should participate. Therefore, with this letter I invite you to designate as soon as possible two elderly missionaries from Kenya, so that they may participate as your delegates, together with Fr. Cagliero [Francesco], who must come as Superior of the Mission.

They will take part in the election of the Superior General and the four Councillors, because I and Can. Camisassa do not intend to accept to be elected to any of these positions. Your election of the two delegates is totally free; however, I dare mention that it would be convenient to prefer two elderly missionaries who have never returned from the Missions, as you did last year when you elected with a great majority the Fathers Rolfo [Giovanni Battista] and Gillio [Domenico].

Once you have made your choice as the Lord inspires you and having in mind our Institute's greater good, you will send the two names in a sealed envelope to Fr. Cagliero [Francesco] who, after counting the

votes, will inform you of the two names that obtained the highest number of votes; if two missionaries receive the same number of votes, the older one will remain elected.

May our M. H. Consolata strengthen you in the work you are carrying out for the good of souls; and I bless you with all my heart.

Very aff. in J. and M.

◀ 492 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 322-323)

To the missionary priests in Kaffa

Torino, 31 March 1922

Dear Father

As the Lord in his goodness has willed to keep me alive so that I could see the present consoling development of our Institute and its missionary work, I feel that the time has come to provide for a greater stability of our Institute by establishing its regime and organization according to what is indicated by the second part of our Constitutions. To this purpose I intend to convoke as soon as possible a General Chapter, according to No. 54 of our Constitutions.

This article prescribes that "two perpetually professed missionaries for each Mission, elected by all the missionary priests residing in that Mission" should participate. Therefore, with this letter I invite you to designate as soon as possible two elderly missionaries from Kaffa, so that they may participate in the Chapter as your delegates.

They will take part in the election of the Superior General and the four Councillors, because I and Can. Camisassa do not intend to accept to be elected to any of these positions. Your election of the two delegates is totally free; however, I dare mention that it would be convenient to give a preference to Fr. Olivero [Luigi], who has been in the Mission for a long time.

Once you have made your choice as the Lord inspires you and having in mind our Institute's greater good, you will send the two names in a sealed envelope to Mgr. Barlassina who, after counting the votes, will inform you of the two names that obtained the highest number of votes; if two missionaries receive the same number of votes, the older one will remain elected.

May our M. H. Consolata strengthen you in the work you are carrying out for the good of souls; and I bless you with all my heart.

Very aff. in J. and M.

◀ 493 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 325-326)

To Monsignor Filippo Perlo

6 April 1922

Dearest Monsignor,

You are well aware of my great desire to give the finishing touches to our Institute while I am still alive. To this purpose I intend to convoke the General Chapter during the Summer of this year. From Roma (see Propaganda's letter dated 4 May 1921) I was told that it would be convenient for you to participate in it; but I do not know whether this will be possible. Certainly Fr. Cagliero [Francesco] and the two elected representatives shall have to come. Jointly here there are the inviting Circulars for the designation of the two delegates. You will kindly send them to each missionary; Fr. Cagliero will then collect the votes and inform me about the two names.

By means of a telegram, I will ask you to *send the delegates to the Chapter*, and I require that they come together with Fr. Cagliero as soon as possible by the first departing steamers.

I have already informed the missionaries in Iringa that, since they belong to the Kenya Mission, they shoul send their votes to you.

Let us pray so that everything may turn out well for the good of our Institute and for the greater glory of God. *In Domino*

◀ 494 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 344-345)

To the Fathers in the Apostolic Prefecture of Iringa

Torino, 29 April 1922

My dearest Fathers in Iringa,

Finally, the Case of Iringa has come to an end. After years of waiting, our Holy Father Pius XI, in one of the first Acts of his Pontificate, with a "Brief" dated 3 March 1922, has constituted the Apostolic Prefecture of Iringa and has entrusted it to our Institute. In the past few days, I received from Rome the news about it and the relevant Documents.

As we are doing here in the Mother-House, you too rejoice and thank the Lord for it. Now you may truly say that you have from God the vocation to work fruitfully in that region.

You might desire to know who will be your Apostolic Prefect, but I do not yet know myself. I have not yet been told from Rome who will be appointed.

As soon as I know, I will write to you. In the meantime you prepare your mind and heart to receive him as sent by God for your good and the good of your people there.

May the Lord bless you and confirm you in mutual charity and unity of spirit.

Have me as your very aff. *in Domino*

◀ 495 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 352)

To Brother Giuseppe Antonio Benedetto

Torino, before 5 May 1922

The Lord will assist you in Africa; you must be strong at your departure, and even more there where, at the beginning, like everybody else, you will to some degree, suffer, both morally and physically.

Be generous with God, pray much and be charitable and patient.

I bless you.

◀ 496 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 365)

To Monsignor Filippo Perlo

Torino, 18 May 1922

As you will see from the united letter addressed to Fr. Cagliero [Francesco], finally the S[acred] Propaganda has formally established th Prefecture of Iringa and, by a Decree dated 10 May, elected Fr. Cagliero as its Prefect. Please, give him the letter, and help him by means of advice and, at the proper time, assist him in any need, both for himself and for the Prefecture.

Today, by means of a letter, I will inform the Fathers in Iringa; you, please, inform Fr. Laane [the apostolic administrator] about this, asking him to be so kind as to continue being a Father to those missionaries until the new Prefect will arrive there.

I hope I will be able to send you, within a short time, the telegram for the convocation of the Chapter.

I think that everything is going on well in the Vicariate and I am eager for news about everything and everybody.

Have me *in Domino*

very aff.

◀ 497 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 366)

To Monsignor Francesco Cagliero

Torino, 18 May 1922

Dear Fr. Cagliero,

S[acred] Propaganda, that by means of a Brief signed by Pope Pius XI and dated 3rd March, entrusted to our Institute the Prefecture of Iringa, by a decree dated 10th of May elected you as the Apostolic Prefect of the Prefecture.

I am sure you will bend your head to God's H. Will, manifested by the Superiors' voice. Trust in the Lord who, when appointing somebody to some office, gives him all the graces needed to fulfil its duties. Based on this trust, be at peace and obey. While I congratulate you, I bless you.

When you will come to Torino, within a short time, as I have written to you, we shall make arrangements for everything. very aff, in J. C.

◀ 498 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 367-368)

To the Fathers in the Apostolic Prefecture of Iringa

18 May 1922

I have been waiting some days to send you this letter as I was hoping to be able to give you the good news. Now I have received the official communication that the S. Propaganda has appointed Fr. Francesco Cagliero as your Apostolic Prefect. Deo gratias!

You know him and appreciate him because of his special talents, true piety and pastoral zeal. He will first come to Italy and then to you. Rejoice with him and promise to help him with the burdensome office that God has entrusted to him.

I bless you and pray for courage from the Lord. very aff. in J. C.

◀ 499 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 380-381)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

Torino, 22 June 1922

Dearest Fr. Gays,

I have received your dearest letter and your precious note for the Feast of our Patroness. As I was beginning to reply to you this morning, I received

your voluminous papers. After reading and meditating on them, I will reply to you. I thank you for your increasing paternal affection for our Institute.

Now I will tell you has been happening after your departure. After Brother Antonio [Pettiti] and the young Orlanda [Eugenio] had left, the student Falco [Giuseppe] was expelled because of unmentionable and scandalous behaviour... I also had to tell the seminarian Previtera [Francesco, director of the Choir] and the other people who like music to abandon any plan for special music.

The first one [Previtera], even without any fault, was forbidden by R. Can. Boccardo [Luigi] to go to the Institute of the blind in order to be taught. When we shall meet, I will explain better. It was Providence, that is inviting our seminarians to a more serious kind of life, as it has been practiced for many years for the good of the spirit. It seems to me that, during the past year, a spirit of levity, unhealthy curiosity, dissipation and love for novelty has been entering our House. This is what is not done by the Jesuits, etc. who demand from their young people a life of study and recollection, without allowing them to leave their House, except for serious reasons. I am to be blamed for having too maternally given in to their desires; I will go back to the right way.

Last Sunday I went to the Institute and saw a box of books to be sent to St. Ignatius'. I examined them, and many of them did not seem convenient to me, like the De Amicis, Bonomelli, etc., and I forbade to send them there. There are so many good books, written in good language, educational and of good Christian spirit, like the Stoppani, Cantù, etc.: sending to our seminarians and young people dangerous readings, like the *Quo vadis* [where are you going], or at least readings not suitable for religious formation! When you come back, you will see.

This evening, while I was at the Institute, Fr. Merlo-Pich came to tell me what you wrote to him about Giuseppino [a young Brother who left in 1925]. I did not find convenient that he should undertake the examination with the other students, especially because he does not feel ready to do it without a proper knowledge of grammar, as it is usual for our young people. It is better for him to continue studying during the Summer and, in the Autumn, we shall see how much he improved and then we shall decide.

Forgive me for speaking clearly out of love for our Institute; for these and other things you should consult his V. [Vice] Director, who is Fr. Ferrero [Maurizio Domenico] and not others. This is what is demanded by the order and the good way. And while I am writing, don't feel offended if I tell you that you do not make sufficient use of the people in charge of the various areas of the House; that everything should converge on the Superior and that he should know about it is all right; but that the others should be only automaton without any power is wrong. Each one should work according to his duty and, provided that what is good is done, there should be no susceptibilities of authority. I see in everybody a certain dislike of the House and I don't know how it will end up.

I would have liked to say these things to you face to face; but I could not do it because of my much work. Don't be offended, because it is my duty; and I cannot not say or do what for the time being is till my duty.

May the Lord bless all of us, and may the M.H. Consolata be the bearer of lights, comforts and consolations.

Have me *in Domino,* very aff.

◀ 500 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 388)

To Fr. Giuseppe Gallea

J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 3 July 1922

Dear Fr. Gallea,

I thank you for the good news of our dear people in regard to studies and discipline. Nothing is so pleasing to me as to know that God is pleased with our Institute that should be a seedbed of perfection and apostles. [...]

Courage and some of St. Ignatius' spirit to all.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 501 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 390)

To Sister Chiara Strapazzon and all Sisters

H. J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 8 July 1922

R. Superior and good Sisters,

The Spiritual Exercises for eighty Priests have ended and, thanks be to God, with regularity and hope for much fruit. Your prayers have helped for the good results and for sustaining my weak strength, which did not weaken but increased. Now I am beginning my own Exercises; and you continue to pray for me.

Although away from you, I remember you before the Lord and before St. Ignatius. These days of exile will pass, and I am eager to come back among you. At the feet of the great Saint [Ignatius] one feels the need for a great purity of intention and spirit of sacrifice in order to save many souls.

These are the graces that I beg every day for you from the great Saint.

Be at peace in the Lord.

I bless you. very aff. in J. C.

◀ 502 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 393-394)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

St. Ignatius', 13 July 1922

Dear Father Gays,

The Rev. V. Rector is feeling better; but he still needs a long and troublesome treatment. Let's continue to pray for his precious and somehow necessary preservation.

A very consoling news, if you have not yet heard of it, about our Ven. Cafasso. All four doctors concluded that the two miracles were real. This means that they will now enter into the various Congregations, and the *Antipreparatoria* [the first Congregation] has already been fixed for October. Deo gratias. In order to thank our H. Consolata, last Saturday all the members of the House went on a pilgirimage to the Shrine.

You write to me about the decree concerning the examinations accessible to former soldiers. I knew of it and meditated on it; and I concluded that ours should not take advantage of it. Nobody desires it because it would delay their going to the Mission. Besides, the sad story of Seminarians and Priests who have left Seminaries or Religious Institutes warns us not to put our people in danger of defecting. We have to train good religious and apostles and not professionals who, during university studies will at the least loose the right spirit.

If the Lord will see that certificated doctors are needed, He will send them to us, as Bd. Ancina [Giovanni Giovenale] and St. Anthony Maria Zaccaria did. Because of these and other reasons I told Fr. Sciolla [Francesco] to forget about going to England [to study medicine]. It is true that we urged the seminarian Arneodo [Enrico] to take the two exams; but this was convenient, and would also be a test on his vocation that is not yet certain.

In conclusion, I prayed and asked for advice, and I concluded that our people should not take it; I informed the people concerned and I know that all of them were pleased.

I am at St. Ignatius' doing the Spiritual Exercises on my own; then I will follow the ones of the Lay people, and then I will go back to Torino. You complete your thermal treatment, so that when you are back in Torino you may work with all your strength for the good of our Institute. I pray to St. Ignatius to bless you. Have me *in Domino,* very aff.

◀ 503 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 417)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero

J. M. J. Torino, 31 July 1922

Dear Fr. Ferrero,

These miseries and those more spiritual pain me. [Fr. Ferrero was at St. Ignatius' in charge of the students and seminarians]. Certainly, the newly arrived will certainly not be edified. Try to attenuate the scandal, by tolerating what you cannot allow. In regard to the change of time for practising English I would have no objection to have it in the evening, so that in the morning you would have more time for an earlier and longer walk. It should not seem that you give in to their complaints; but that, after having manifested to me their desire, you obtained permission to do so. However, be firm in regard to study and work.

Concerning the Community Mass it is not convenient to take it in turn; it would be better if you would celebrate it. St Ignatius will fix everything: courage.

Read the attached letter and, if you feel it is opportune, read it to all.

I bless you. very aff. in J. C.

◀ 504 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 418-419)

To the community at St. Ignatius'

J. M.J. Torino, Feast of St. Ignatius
[31 July 1922]

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

Even if your Rev. Vice-Superior [Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero] writes to me good things about you and your observance, my duty and the affection I have for you compel me to have some doubts, not in general about all of you, but about some professed and novices, whose character I know well.

I have been hoping that, after the many means used to make you advance in perfection, all of you would have made a greater profit in Holy obedience and spirit of sacrifice, especially in order to obtain the miracle of healing of our venerated V. Rector [J. Camisassa]. Everybody should be committed to make many daily sacrifices without grumbling and complaining. Remember the fact of Moses' sister.

I regret the fact that, it is some time now, a very bad spirit of judging everything, and especially the Superiors, has entered our House. Woe to you, if the murmurings, that were not present in the past, do not cease. Let

the guilty ones confess them and, at the feet of St. Ignatius, make a firm resolution to mend themselves and correct one another fraternally.

I request that the letter of St. Ignatius on obedience be read in front of the whole community; I am sending you a copy of it.

Certain of your good will, I paternally bless you, and I am *in Domino*
your very aff. in J. C.

◀ 505 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 427)

To Sister Chiara Strapazzon

H. J. M. J. Torino, 10 August1922

Dearest Sister Chiara,

I was pleased with the good news given me by you and by the other Sisters [she is at St. Ignatius' with a group of Sisters]. Certainly there is work, buth the healthy air will restore the strength of all, especially of you and of some other Sisters.

Concerning the next group, you will tell me your opinion and then we shall decide. The postulants and the novices are at Rivoli since last Monday; taking care the Rev. V. Rector [who is sick] there are Sister Michelina [Abbà], Sister Marcellina [Bianchi] and Sister Emerenziana [Tealdi], and they are doing an excellent job. Before the 20th we shall see what we can do.

I replied to the young lady of St. Ilario Ligure: I told her to get ready and come without worrying about that misery that is no obstacle [Sr. Zaveria Pasqualini]. To the other one [unknown] I do not think it is convenient to reply.

In regard to the food, do as you were doing in Torino.

Better news of the Rev. V. Rector: there has certainly been a prodigious improvement: but there still remain some dangers. All of you pray and become good.

You have courage and make use of all the necessary treatments.

I bless all of you, very aff. in J. C.

I wish you a Good Feast ["onomastico", name's day] and pray for you

◀ 506 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 434)

To the seminarians on holidays at St. Ignatius'

Torino, before 15 August 1922

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

I have read rather quickly your compositions. I found some good material in them, but not as much as I expected. Many of you did not keep

to the theme, and most of you did not exhaust it. You were supposed to compose a little talk about Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Learn to write plainly, like Pellico [Silvio] in "Le Mie Prigioni" and Fr. Cesari [Antonio][49] in all his classical writings: no bombastic style, nor inopportune profane quotes. It is clear that you need frequent exercises during the year; it will be convenient to do it.

Celebrate well the Solemnity of the Assumption; I will be with you in spirit. I bless you

◀ 507 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 435-436)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero
and to all missionaries on holidays at St. Ignatius'

J. M. J. Torino, 19 August 1922

Dear Fr. Ferrero and all my sons and daughters,

Our Venerated V. Rector expired last night in the arms of the Lord.

The Lord and our M. H. Consolata did not want to listen to our prayers, but wanted to crown him because of the many good works accomplished throughout his life.

Let's say our *Fia*t [let it be] in the midst of our sorrow and also as a suffrage for him. Pray... we shall have a special Protector in Paradise.

This evening all of you should come back to Torino after having locked well the house and all the rooms and the other areas. The burial will probably take place on Monday morning. I bless you

◀ 508 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 446)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero

J. M. J. Torino, 24 August 1922

Dear Fr. Ferrero,

Go ahead and send the letter to Mgr. Bonzano [Giovanni, Apostolic Delegate in USA]. I am glad that all of you are well; it is a grace from God

[49] Silvio Pellico (1789-1854), Italian writer, was imprisoned, when freed he lived in Torino; his most famous book was "Le mie prigioni" [My Prisons].
Antonio Cesari (1760-1828), priest, linguist, writer and man of letters, translated into Italian the *Imitation of Christ.*

that you personally are no longer suffering so much; it is the dear V. Rector who is helping you; he used to like you a lot. Ahead spiritually.

Thank you for the honey that I have shared with our dear people at the Institute. Make the Novena [to obtain rain] and pray.

I bless you wholeheartedly; let's live with faith and for eternity. I am doing well in spite of...

In Domino, very aff.

◀ 509 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 447)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

J. M. J. Torino, 24 August 1922

Dear Fr Gays,

I hope that everything is going on well there [at St. Ignatius'] and that our dear Seminarians are all good. May our dear V. Rector bless them.

I am doing well and am living resigned and trusting in God and our M. H. Consolata.

Keep going all of you for your sanctification.

I bless you

◀ 510 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 448-449)

To all missionaries (Fathers, Brothers and Sisters

J. M. J Torino, 26 August 1922

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

My hand is shaking, my heart aching, and my eyes shedding bitter tears as I am writing this short letter to you.

Our dear Vice-Rector and Vice-Superior is no longer among us, and we will see him again only in Paradise. He died peacefully in the Lord on the evening of the 18th of this month, having received all religious comforts and most loving cares. What a loss to our Shrine and even more to our Institute and Missions!

We felt that his presence was necessary, and prayed to our M. H. Consolata to prolong his life for some more time. Many, including myself, have offered our life so that the one who was so dear to us would be preserved. The M. H. Consolata did not think she should grant our common prayer...

He was ripe for Heaven... He had completed his holy and laborious life; he could say with St. Paul: *Cursum consummavi...; in reliquo reposita est mihi corona justitiae* [I have finished the race...; henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness]. Say together with me the *fiat* to the inscrutable will of God; and let it be for the eternal rest of his beautiful soul.

In the midst of our great sorrow, the expressions of appreciation and affection that the whole of Torino offered for Him, so humble and unknown to many, consoled us. His burial was a triumph.

He was living for you and for our Missions; he spent his last day thinking and speaking about our Institute. His last words, which he called his last will and testament, were about unity between the men and women Consolata Missionaries.

Pray for him, and also for me, who am very distressed, and who in the name of the M. H. Consolata blesses you.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 511 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 450)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

Torino, 26 August 1922

Dear Fr. Gays,

The day after tomorrow (Monday) celebrate the Seventh Day Memorial of our very desired Vice-Superior.

Many blessings to all... aff.

◀ 512 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 455)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero

J. M. J. Torino, 2 September 1922

Dear Fr. Ferrero,

Thank you for the good news. What was collected during the Novena shall have to be given to Can. Gunetti [the Bursar at the Consolata Shrine]. What came from Tortore [a village] you may keep.

As soon as the Rev. Superior [Fr. Gays] comes back, please come to Torino definitively. I need you in order to revise all the papers of the dear V. Rector, and also in order to help this poor old man to whom the Lord is

giving more and more work. I am waiting for you then; I have already told the Superior [Fr. Gays] about this.

May the Lord bless you and all our dear missionaries.

In Domino, aff.

◀ 513 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 482-483)

To Monsignor Filippo Perlo

Torino, 28 October 1922

Dearest Monsignor,

I am sending you the statements of accounts that I found in my registers, the ones of the Institutes and those of the lamented V. Rector. From these you can deduct the offerings we received from the Ledockoscka [a benefactor of the Institute, founder of St. Peter Claver Sodality] and from the Propagation [of the Faith].

The Lord is blessing us; the people coming to our Institute are many: we have 74 seminarians, 11 priests and 13 Brothers, plus about 30 students [this is the situation in Torino]. The expenses for their maintenance are very high, and during the three-month period Aug.-Oct. they were over 100,000 Liras, which I did not have. To these should be added the heavy expenses needed to complete the Sisters' house, the little house of the Chapter and of those coming back from Africa. I am saying this so that everybody should come to our help. And this, for the time being, can be done only by Kenya, because the Kaffa still needs new aids, and Iringa needs everything for their beginning. Therefore, I beg you to send us money, taking it from any account you can, even by selling our funds, of which I keep a note, or sending them back to me so that I can make use of them when necessary.

You should still have something at the "Credito Italiano" [a Bank]: send a *cheque* together with the document we need to withdraw the inheritance of the V. Rector. Please send immediately to Fr. Panelatti [Gaudenzio, Superior in Iringa] at least 30,000 francs that he needs badly.

From now on you should please help us as much as you can, so that we should not be forced to close the door to many, since the offerings we receive from the faithful are no longer sufficient for the food and the journeys; and I have almost exausted all my money. The coffee you send is no longer sufficient. I think we should postpone the expenses for the new churches [in Kenya].

Within a few days, on 6th November, I will summon our first Chapter; we shall consider and discuss all the spiritual and material needs of the Missions and of the Institute; and then I will retire in order to live in peace the last days of my worn-out life.

I ordered that they send you the plans you required, some of which the V. Rector should have already sent to you. Please, know that from now on we will no longer be able to take care of such serious things.

The Padre [Superior] of the "Piccola Casa" [Cottolengo] is always stubborn; as soon as the V. Rector had been buried, he sent Sister Scolastica to tell me that, on his proximate journey to Rome, he would have talked about the total sending back of his Sisters. I told him to feel fre to do so, but to mention also our impossibility of doing so, and of our intention to do it as soon as possible. By now, the Sister [Superior], perhaps out of need, is totally agreeing with the Padre; she protested saying that she was no longer concerned and asked me to tell you not to write to her any longer.

I have ordered reports of Baptism also from Kaffa and from Iringa.

The three Seminarians who are there [Luigi Massa, M. Nebbia and Perino Bernardo] keep pestering me as if their Priesthood be necessary for the life of Kenya; you, please, follow the instructions that had been given to Fr. Cravero [Francesco] and make use of all your faculties that, according to them, are very ample.

May the Lord assist us and bless us... very aff. in J. C.

Admit to perpetual vows Fr. Borello Giovanni and others if there are any; the Brothers beginning with Giuseppe [Benedetto] only after they completed their two five-years period.

◀ 514 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 508)

To Brother Angelo Marchina

J. M. J. Torino, 18 November 1922

Dearest Angelo,

Your letter dated 20th August pained me greatly; but after Fr. Gillio [Domenico, delegate to the Chpter] came I was consoled by hearing of your changed attitudes. In the meantime I have been praying for you and I have commended you to our dear V. Rector, so that from Paradise he wouldn't allow that, after so many sacrifices, you would lose so miserably your vocation.

Even now I am telling you "courage", and I vividly exhort you to persevere there, where your presence is necessary [in charge of Nyeri Printing Press]. Persevere constantly, not thinking only about the sacrifices and defects of the others, but also about your own, and about the reward that is waiting for you as a holy and strong missionary: *Merces tua magna nimis* [your reward shall be very great]. These are certainly the words that your good and dear mother is telling you from Heaven.

As if you were here I embrace and bless you, together with all my dear Brothers.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 515 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 541)

To Fr. Domenico Spinello

J. M. J. Torino, 7 December 1922

Dearest Father Spinello,

Congratulations for the grace of perpetual vows that the Lord granted you [he is in Iringa, Tanzania]. Due to this action you remain totally consecrated to God and to our dear Institute. Due to this consecration, the Lord will increase his grace, so that you will be able to do much good to you and to all souls. I bless you wholeheartedly.

In the meantime all of you keep going *viriliter* [in a strong way]; soon your Apostolic Prefect [Mgr. Francesco Cagliero] will come and, before him, two excellent confreres, two good Brothers and six Sisters. You will be relieved.

When you have a chance, give my best regards to your colleagues Panelatti [Gaudenzio], Vignoli [Domenico], Ciravegna [Giovanni] and Cavallo [Giacomo].

Pray for
your aff. in J. C.

◀ 516 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 565)

To Fr. Luigi Rosso

J. M. J. Torino, 21 December 1922

Dear Fr. Rosso,

Our Chapter members elected you as a *councillor*; and I am pleased [he is at Fort Hall (Kenya)]. The good of our Institute wants this, and you must pray to the Lord to help you so that you must have the gifts necessary for its greater good. Do not write to me words of humility or like things, but only feelings of submission to God's will.

The Lord will bless you and I am blessing you.

Many good wishes…
very aff. in J. C.

◀ 517 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 576)

To the seminarian Pietro Borello

1922

Walk with simplicity, and think that Jesus loves you in spite of your miseries and defects. Be constant in desiring and working for your sanctification. I bless you

◀ 518 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 577)

To Brother Giuseppe Antonio Benedetto

uncertain date

Dear Antonio, the Lord has loved you and still loves you [he is in Kenya]. Pray much even by forcing yourself; afterwards Jesus will make you happy. Without praying well and much, you will never be able to improve and become a saint.

I know that you have already improved much your temperament; continue to obey *heartily in everything and to all* Superiors. If you fail, immediately humble yourself and ask for pardon. Set an example to your companions. Courage: Jesus and the M. H. Consolata will help you to become a saint. I bless you…

◀ 519 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 580)

To the seminarian Gabriele Quaglia

uncertain date

This misery [a light stammer] is not an obstacle to your vocation. Strive to overcome it, by practicing to speak slowly and almost syllabifying.

Later, if necessary, you can see a specialist. Be at peace… I bless you.

◀ 520 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 581)

To the seminarian Gabriele Quaglia

uncertain date

Despise all temptations of pride. Say often: *God alone*, and then keep going…

Let's pray for your younger brother [Pietro, who will also become a Consolata missionary]; now don't think too much about him; just commend him to his Guardian Angel.

◀ 521 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/1, 583)

To Sister Chiara Strapazzon

uncertain date

R. Sister Chiara.

I approve your sacrifice made out of love for perfection; however, since the world does not understand and so that people may not say that the religious loose their heart, write to your home and to the Lady [probably the one who informed her].

It is a little mortification.

I have prayed for the deceased [relatives of Sr. Chiara].

◀ 522 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/2, 38-39)

To Fr. Francesco Gamberutti

J. M. J. Torino, 29 January 1923

Dear Father,

I have received your express letter just now[50] [Fr. Gamberutti is the General Representative of the Institute].

I am glad about your visit to the H. Father; we shall wait patiently in regard to the delay in approving our Constitutions. You could not do anything more. The Very Em[inent] Card. Bonzano will help us; you however, in a nice way, remind him that together with this approval we are also waiting for the *definitive* approval of our Institute.

We have always been asking for it, and we have always been told that in regard to the definitive approval of the Institute there was no problem at all; they would have given it at any time.

Card. Bonzano will do this for us.

I think that it will be good for you to go back to Mgr. Pecorari [sub-secretary of Propaganda] just out of kindness and then he will help us. You

[50] Fr. Gamberutti was the General Representative of the Institute.

then come back to Torino on Thursday, after having revered and thanked Card. Bonzano, Mgr. Cerrati [Michele], etc.

This morning they sent you two letters; just ignore them.

Many good wishes *in Domino*

very aff.

◀ 523 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/2, 40-41)

To the missionary Sisters in Kenya

H. J. M. J. Torino, 4 February 1923

My dearest daughters in O. L. J. C.,

I am sending back to you your R, Superior Sister Margherita [Demaria], although she could be of great help to me here in the Mother-House. I know that you appreciate her and love her, and she deserves it; and I do not feel I can deprive you of such great comfort so that you can progress in the way you are doing. She talked at length to me about all of you and each one of you, and she expressed praises and commendations for almost all of you.

Listen to her and obey her, also in order to console her considering the great burden she is carrying.

I am giving her Fr. Gillio [Domenico, the new Superior in Kenya] as a support and a counsellor, having elected him as my representative in Kenya.

I congratulate in a special way the elderly Sisters, the first ones, who placed the foundation of life in the Mission. The Lord sustained you in the many bodily and spiritual trials. Faithful to your vocation, the good Sister Caterina [Gemello] has already achieved her reward; you. too, will do so at the proper time, according to the labours sustained and the spirit that characterizes your work now and in the future. As a proof of my happiness, I admit all the Elderly Sisters [who were there since 1913] to the *H. perpetual Vows*, that you will take at a time to be arranged with your Sister Superior [Margherita Demaria].

This will be a new incentive for you to always better restart your missionary life; and your example will inspire all the others to become worthy of God's graces. You complain about my not writing enough; you are right, but what can I do? After the departure of our dear V. Rector, I am loaded with concerns, which, due to my poor health, wear me out; and, if it weren't for your sake, would make me desire more vividly the rest of Paradise. But God's H. Will may be done.

In the meantime, courage joined to faith and energy; your recompense will be *magna nimis* - very great.

With all my affection I bless you; and I certainly do not need to ask you to pray and make sacrifices also for me...

Your very aff. in J. C.

◀ 524 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/2, 119-122)

To the missionaries

Torino, 20 June 1923

Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam [For the Greater Glory of God]

My dearest sons in O. L. J. C.,

I am presenting to you the book of our Constitutions, revised and corrected according to the new Code of Canon Law, and approved by the Sacred Congregation *de Propaganda Fide, ad experimentum* for a period of ten years; after this - or even in a much shorter time - they will be definitively approved.

I am inviting you above all to lift up with me fervent actions of thanksgiving to our Lord and to the M. H. Consolata for all the favours granted to our Institute since its beginnings til the present time.

You know well that I undertook this work [the foundation of the Institute], moved only by God's will, and only for His greater glory, the sanctification of the members of the Institute, and the salvation of unbelievers.

You also know that our beginnings were humble and subjected to various trials. The plan for the foundation, presented since 1891 to Cardinal [Giovanni] Simeoni, Prefect of the S. C. *de Propaganda Fide* and approved by him, could not be realized at that time because of many difficulties; and for ten years nothing more was done. Only in 1900, when such difficulties ceased to exist and more favourable circumstances arose, we submitted to the Bishops of the Sub-Alpine Region, gathered for an Inter-Provincial Council at the Consolata Shrine, the old plan which obtained the unanimous approval of the Very Ecc. Prelates. After this, we immediately went ahead with the work; and on 29 January 1901 the Consolata Institute for Foreign Missions was canonically established by a Decree of the Very Em. Cardinal A. Richelmy, our very beloved Archbishop. In the history of our Institute, this is the official date of its birth, to be remembered every year with heartfelt gratitude to God.

Five months later, on 18 June 1901, the small house in “Corso Duca di Genova” opened its doors to the first small group of Consolata Missionaries. They were only a few; and when, on 8th May 1902, the first departure for Kenya took place, our small Mother-House remained without sons and deserted. In humility, obscurity, and among contradictions, the Institute was laying its solid foundations, so that, at the proper time, it could emerge and grow as a giant.

Since that time, every new year marked a step forward in its organization and development. In a very consoling way the missionary vocations among priests, seminarians, and lay people multiplied, not only within the Dioceses of Piedmont, but also outside, so that we had to renounce our

original project to open the Institute only to Clergy from Piedmont; new and ever more numerous departures of people for the Missions took place, while many others were preparing themselves in our Mother-House. In 1905 (14 September), our first apostolic field of Kenya, already flourishing, was established as an Independent Mission; four years later, on 28 June 1909, it was raised to the rank of Apostolic Vicariate.

In 1909, after an unusual short time since its foundation, our Institute was granted the *Decretum Laudis* [Decree of Approval] which, among other things, approved - and I am pleased to remind you of this now - our method of evangelization with the following words: «A characteristic of these Missions is the fact that the Missionaries do not confine themselves to introduce our religion... but, together with the splendour of our faith, they take to those people the light of development, teaching them new methods of agriculture, breeding of cattle and other animals, the most usual arts and crafts...». In 1910 we inaugurated the grand new building of our Mother-House, which had become necessary because of the always increasing number of aspirants and, in the same year, there was the foundation of our sibling Institute of the Consolata Missionary Sisters. In 1913 a second field of apostolic work was entrusted to our Institute, the Prefecture of Kaffa; and in 1922 a third one, the Prefecture of Iringa.

Therefore, twenty years after its foundation, our Institute could rightly be considered adult. It was time to give it a definitive organization. Our very beloved Vice-Rector, Can. Giacomo Camisassa and myself, thinking that we were no longer needed and also because old and tired, felt that we could no longer bear the responsibility and the heavy burden of the Institute's government, and decided to resign from our positions as Superior and Vice-Superior, even if continuing to be your protectors and benefactors. To this purpose we convoked the first General Chapter and, in the meantime, our Constitutions started being examined in order to improve them according to our experience and the requirements of the new Canon Law.

Our Lord, in the inscrutable designs of his Will, which is always good and holy even when it affects us harshly, at the very eve of our Chapter, on 18 August 1922, called to himself our greatly mourned Vice-Rector, depriving our Institute of its most valid support, and leaving me and you in dismay. Even if weeping, we pronounced our *fiat* to God's Will, but we still feel, even at the present, a sense of great loss; we certainly cannot forget him and all that he did for our Institute, for which he sacrificed the whole of his precious and holy life up to his last breath. However, if our dear Vice-Rector could not participate in our First Chapter here on earth, he could certainly assist from Heaven, guiding the steps of the Chapter's members who, in various meetings, considered all the articles of our Constitutions, formulated a first outline of Directory, and elected the Superior General and Council, thus providing our Institute with an organization that will certainly lead to its consolidation and development.

Then the S. C. *de Propaganda Fide*, by a Decree dated 27th February of this year, approved our Constitutions, as I already mentioned; they are the ones I am now presenting to you.

Receive them, my dearest, not from my hands but, with lively faith, from the hands of Our Lord and of the M. H. Consolata who called you to this Institute. I can assure you that every single rule, and I do not hesitate to say every single word was an object of serious study, long consideration, and especially much prayer. Receive them with simplicity, not hazarding any unfavourable judgement on any point; not distinguishing between one rule and another because of greater or lesser importance: this would be harmful and would damage the whole book of the Constitutions and the spirit that must inspire you to observe them.

Receive them with a firm will to observe them until death with the greatest possible perfection, remembering that the more perfectly you observe them, the more peaceful and happy you will be at the moment of death; they constitute a second Gospel, whose every word is sacred, and on which you will be judged, no longer as simple Christians but as religious and Consolata Missionaries; on their observance will infallibly depend all the spiritual profit of each one of you, the persevering of the good spirit in our Institute, and God's blessings on your work.

Your very aff. in O. L. J. C.

◀ 525 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/2, 123-124)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

Torino, 21 June 1923

Dear Fr. Gays,

You could not have saddened me more on the Feast of our Consolata. I sympathize with your susceptibility and, as you wrote to me *on the 15th of this month*, with an inconsiderate fear.

You should consider before God that, if I proceeded to quickly dismiss a postulant, I did it out of real urgency, since it was a matter of very serious morality that started to become known in the Community, causing an immense damage to the common good. You should thank the Lord together with me for having thus freed us from the contagion.

When we will talk about it, you will understand. In the meantime, I refuse any kind of resignation; I only ask you to, please, make sure not to tell anybody about it.

A bit of humility and God’s spirit and everything will be settled.

On Monday I have to go to St. Ignatius'; you, please, be so good as to allow me to enjoy the quietness prescribed to me by my doctor. It would even be better if you told me immediately that your letter is retracted.

May the M. H. Consolata console us and, for Her glory, keep us above certain miseries. very aff. in J. C.

◀ 526 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/2, 130)

To Fr. Giuseppe Gallea

St. Ignatius', 27 June 1923

Dear Fr. Gallea,

I received this morning the letter here enclosed. I think that the seminariam Marcellino [a philosophy student] is still in the Institute, even if I had told somebody to tell him to go back to his home.

If we could reason using only our heart, it would be pleasing to re-accept him at least in the next Fall. But to retake him and admit to the vows a sick person who will need medical care the whole of his life: this cannot be done; therefore I had dismissed him with the only hope to have him back truly healed, as a seminarian or a priest, and then commend him to the Bishop of Cuneo. It would be necessary to know if he has no other illness than appendicitis; in such a case he could undergo the operation this Fall and then see whether he will heal properly. You speak about this with his Superiors [Fr. Gays, etc.] and then decide what can be done; in any case let him go to his home till this Fall.

Pray for me during these long days of "exile". Next to St. Ignatius, I bless you.

◀ 527 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/2, 134)

To the Fathers Domenico Spinello and Francesco Sciolla

St. Ignatius', 10 July 1923

Dearest Fathers Spinello and Sciolla,

Forgive me for being forced to write to both of you together, while I would have liked to have enough time to send a long letter to each one of you [they are in Iringa, Tanzania].

I read about the feasts you had for the newcomers, both men and women; and I was consoled.

It would be my vivid desire to send some Sisters also to you, but I do not know how soon this could be done.

Do what you can, and God will be satisfied.

You Fr. Sciolla will take your perpetual vows.

I bless you wholeheartedly. very aff. in J. C.

◀ 528 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/2, 135)

To Fr. Giacomo Cavallo

St. Ignatius', 10 July 1923

Dear Fr. Cavallo,

I must write a couple of lines also to you, to congratulate you for the great good you are doing; and you are also helping the weak. May the Lord bless you, and you continue to work according to this spirit.

Pray also for me, who am always asking the Lord to grant you the *Spiritum rectum* [the right Spirit] and tranquillity in the S. Heart of Jesus *out of obedience to me*.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 529 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/2, 136)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero

J. M. J. St. Ignatius', 12 July 1923

Dear Fr. Ferrero,

Your letter was very dear to me because I could see that you are fully trusting God's H. Will. I do not know what kind of trials you have had; but courage always: God is with you. Remember the *Fili non te frangrant* [Son, don't let (the works) break you]. It seems to me that the thought of death has penetrated you too much; think rather of the Paradise that is reserved for those who have abandoned everything in order to save souls. The dear Albertone [Pietro, who has been seriously ill] perhaps is also sad, and so you afflict one another.

You did well to write for our magazine; keep doing so; Fr. Sales [Lorenzo] is very happy about it.

Understand what I would still like to tell you; but for the time being it is enough. When I will be in Paradise, and this will be soon, I will pray for you, not so that you may also come, but so that you prepare for it yourself, full of merits.

Courage *in Domino* and receive my fatherly Blessing which I am sending to you every evening. *In Domino*.

very aff.

◀ 530 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/2, 164)

To Sister Chiara Strapazzon

H. J. M. J. Torino, 9 August 1923

Dear Sister Chiara,

I, too, participate in your Feast ["onomastico" (name's day)] and I wish you a good one *toto corde* [wholeheartedly]. The responsibility with which I feel burdened in regard to the formation of our Sisters, is partly yours.

When I think of the effects that will take place in the Missions, this thought urges me to desire that our Sisters be suitable and perfect in everything. May God help us.

I bless you and all the Sisters, and I pray for all.

P. S. The two Sisters you desire cannot be sent; try to arrange things among yourselves, perhaps by sacrificing the walks; the healthy air that we cannot enjoy in Torino should be sufficient.

◀ 531 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/2, 169-170

To Fr. Domenico Gillio

Torino, 18 August 1923

Dearest Fr. Gillio[51],

I have received your letter, and I ask you to write often and minutely. Today you have certainly remembered our dear V. Rector!

Regarding good Father Re [Carlo], repeat to him on my behalf what you have already told him: not to act as a boy, because later he shall have to regret it.

Regarding the objections [concerning the vow of poverty], already made and solved at other times.

[51] Fr. Domenico Gillio is the delegate superior of all Consolata missionaries, both men and women, in Kenya.

I will reply by means of an official decision. I would like to know who are these meddlers: whether the old ones, like Fr. Balbo [Giovanni], or others. We are certainly religious, like the Vincentians; and it is ignorant anyone who does not consider the oath taken before God equivalent to the real vow; check the D'Annibale [a famous moral theologian]. The addition of having to be authorized when using one's own goods goes back to the first approval of our Constitutions, without which Rome would not have approved them; then I wrote to Mgr. Perlo, who told all missionaries about it, and so I did myself here in Torino. To grant these small permissions is up to you [Fr. Gillio].

Then I desire that you act in regard to all and each of our Sisters, as it is prescribed for the missionary men; you represent me also before the Sister Superior and the individual Sisters. I will take care myself of the case of Fr. Mauro [Giovanni].

In Kenya, in various missionaries, men and women, there is a certain bad mood that should be removed. It is not so in Kaffa and in Iringa. Try to find out the reasons for it and do all you can to restore peace in everybody. I pray for this and bless you. Be prudent but firm with your duties.

May the M. H. Consolata bless all of you and you in a special way; so that in everything God's H. Will may be done.

very aff. in O. L. J. C.

◀ 532 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/2, 174-175)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

J. M. J. Torino, 22 August 1923

Dear Fr. Gays,

I am pleased with the good news of all. May the Lord bless them, so that they may grow in good spirit and discipline.

Today we have been hoping for the greatly desired rain, but very little of it came; would it come for you there that you need it so badly!

Yesterday Tibaldeschi [Cesare] came to me. He is a serious person and I hope he will succeed: we agreed that he will come to try after the 15th of September. He would like to become a priest and quit the medical studies; but we shall think about this at the proper time.

The seminarian Bosca writes that he would like to go home, as you have already told me; we could let him go for a short time.

To the Priest of Saluzzo [Lorenzo Gaudissard] I wrote that he should arrange with his Bishop the time for the Spiritual Exercises; his brother [Giovanni] could also come earlier.

In regard to the boys [the newcomers], I postponed any arrangement to the first days of September. I was told that we can take only ten of them; we shall make our choice.

Let those from Riva come and then we shall see. The one from Barge is not convenient: he has no father and no mother. One from Bene came, sent by our Fr. Borra [Giovanni]; it seems to me that the one who has a vocation is not he but his mother.

The seminarian Favaro [Bartolomeo] presented one from Poirino. You keep a list, and I will keep mine; then we shall decide.

Make a good provision of good health, in order to be able to work during the next year. The young people should be grateful for the great grace they are receiving; and may St. Ignatius be pleased.

I bless all of you wholeheartedly... very aff.

◀ 533 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/2, 645)

To Fr. Tommaso Gays

Torino, before 23 September 1923

Dear Fr. Gays,

I admit the six among the Seminarians.

If you feel it right, in regard to my Feast [50th Anniversary of Ordination], I would grant an indulgence, unique, not to be repeated. According to the Code [of Canon Law] I would admit to the Novitiate all the Priests and Seminarian postulants, as well as the Brothers.

If you feel it right, you may inform the people concerned before the Spiritual Exercises.

I would come but because of the sick [at the Mother-House], I cannot make it. very aff.

◀ 534 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/2, 653-654)

To all Consolata missionaries (Fathers, Brothers, Sisters)

Torino, 1 October 1923

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

With a heart full of inner consolation, I celebrated the Fiftieth Anniversary of my Sacred Ordination to Priesthood. This was for me a singular grace which, humanly speaking, I could not expect; only God's goodness deigned to grant it to me. My usually weak health, the many

solicitudes in the many situations of my life often wore me out; yet, the Lord kept me alive to this day in preference to other companions of mine who were more robust and better than I.

As I prepared to the Feast with the H. Spiritual Exercises, I had time to remember the many graces that the good Lord has granted me in the past fifty years. First of all the practically continuous celebration of the H. Mass with all the graces they bestow upon those who celebrate them well. Then many other spiritual and temporal graces that cannot be counted: *Enumera stellas, si potes* [Count the stars if you can].

How many responsibilities burdened me! But it was God who so willed, and his grace was with me: *Gratia Dei mecum* [the grace of God that is with me]. He wanted me Spiritual Director in the Seminary, then Rector of the "Convitto Ecclesiastico" [Pastoral Institute] and, later on, an instrument for your sanctification and, through you, for the salvation of many souls of unbelievers.

If in my place there were a saint, how much better he would have done and more merits gained!

What consoles me, however, is the fact that I always strove to do God's will, expressed by my Superiors. If the Lord blessed the many works I undertook, so much as to arise admiration at times, my secret was to look for God alone and His Holy Will, manifested to me by my Superiors. This was and is my consolation in life, and will be my confidence at God's Tribunal. I do not think it is pride to propose myself to you as an example and model of obedience. Believe me: *Vir obediens loquetur victoriam* [An obedient man will speak of victory].

Having finished with common satisfaction the Feasts, and having thanked the Lord and our dear Mother, I must thank all those who wanted to participate. I have already sent my humble thanksgiving to the Supreme Pontiff, Pius XI, for the "Brief" he sent me, in which he praised my person too much. I am thanking the Very Em. Cardinals who sent me very kind letters. In a particular way I thanked Card. Van Rossum, Prefect of Propaganda and our direct Superior. He, not only wanted to congratulate me and you, but with a very gentle thought he took this occasion to grant us the definitive approval of our Constitutions: a great grace which seals the stability of our Institute.

To you, my dear sons and daughters, who have showed me so much affection in these days, I say *Deo gratias* and I beg for you from the M. H. Consolata a total response to your high vocation.

What shall I say to all of you who are in our three African Missions? Missionary Fathers, Brothers, and Sisters, Seminarians, local Sisters and Catechumens, you have cooperated to my feast with public celebrations and prayers for me, and sent me many common and personal letters to express your best wishes.

I thank all of you: I remembered all of you in my Golden Jubilee Mass.

I attribute to you the fact that I did not die during last winter and I reached the beautiful day with sufficient health. Your prayers and your

apostolic sacrifices obtained this grace for me. Continue to pray, so that in me and in you God's H. Will be done. I am sorry I will not be able to answer all your lovely letters; nonetheless you write to me: if I am not able to write, I will commend your needs to the Lord. I will make use of your Guardian Angels to carry to you my thoughts and desires. On the other hand, take courage in your difficulties; never forget the purpose for which you are there, and the *magna nimis* [very great] reward that is waiting for you, after a few years, in the beautiful Paradise.

I paternally bless you at the feet of our Patroness.

Very aff. in J. C.

◀ 535 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/2, 672-673)

To Fr. Francesco Gamberutti

J. M. J. Torino, 28 October 1923

Dear Fr. Gamberutti,

I am sorry to hear that you are still unwell; see some good doctor and carry out the treatment that he will prescribe [he is the General Procurator of the Institute].

I have received this letter and also the previous one; I did not reply because I was waiting, in order to give you some surer news about Somalia. You should know that H. E. Mr. De Vecchi, who has been elected as governor of Somalia, invited me to his house in order to speak to me. I went together with Fr. Gays. He wanted us to accept the Prefecture as soon as possible. He was speaking on behalf of the Minister to whom he would have told my reply. In fact he went to Rome that very evening (19th October) and on his return he asked me if he could come and see me; bu so far he has not yet come.

So that you know, I did not show much enthusiasm, but also no opposition to the proposal. I set the following conditions:
1). That he tried again with the Trinitarians treating them well. 2) We would not be able to go there before a full year has gone by; he wants six months, but I told him that it was impossible. 3) Full freedom in everything matched with prudence. 4) Help from the Government: one *million* [Liras] to start with, and then *half a million* every year up to a time to be fixed.
He did not wonder about these conditions; perhaps by now he has already spoken with Roma [the Ministry], and he may be ready to reply.
After our conversation, if there were different conditions, I will inform you. Let this be your norm when going to the Ministry [of the Colonies]. At Propaganda, if they speak to you about it, tell them that we will not make any move without an order from them, especially because we do not want to oust the Trinitarians. In regard to the *million*, don't say anything to

anybody, unless at the Ministry they talk to you about it. Also, in this we search only for God's Will.

Thank you for your writing about the Oblates [the previous Guardians of the Consolata Shrine]. Really, they have not written according to our desire and the scheme given them; patience, it will be useful for something. You thank the Minister [L. Federzoni], giving him a hint of our dissatisfaction.

Well done in regard to the "Chiesetta di S. Giuseppe" [the little church of St. Joseph, patron of the Pious Workers]; you work and we pray to St. Joseph that he might want us there.

About my dispensation [from the obligation to the Canons' Prayers], do what you can; approach Mgr. Carisio [in charge of dispensations] in order to know what you can do.

Work on the "Ente Morale" [to establish the *Collegio Internazionale della Consolata per le Missioni Estere* as a Board] to obtain it soon and *without expenses* of conveyance, at least for our Institute.

Here there is nothing new. May our Consolata heal and bless you in all your tasks.

If you need any coffee for others, just write.

very aff.

◀ 536 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/2, 688-689)

To Fr. Angelo Dal Canton

Torino, 19 November 1923

V. R. and dearest Fr. Dal Canton,

My behaviour in your regard was inspired by paternal charity, and by my duty as a superior, according to the Code of C. L. and to our Constitutions. To this purpose I wrote to you and I had other people speak to you inviting you to return; I offered you any place you wanted in our three Missions; I proposed to you also the Mother-House, where I assured you all the treatments necessary and convenient for your health.

In the meantime I asked you to tell me the reasons that motivated you to take this step, telling you that I wouldn't have refused a commendation for S. P. [Sacred Propaganda]. Now then, after having deserted the Institute for various years, and continuing with your plan of leaving it, all I can do is to recommend you to S. Propaganda, so that it may grant you *a true secularization* according to Canon 638 of the Code.

This is what I intend to do with this letter or in any other way you may desire.

May the Lord bless you as your aff. is praying to Him to do.

(cf. LETTERE, IX/2, 693-694)

To Fr. Francesco Gamberutti

J. M. J. Torino, 25 November 1923

Dear Fr. Gamberutti,

Yesterday evening I have received your registered-express letter, and Deo gratias for the dispensation you obtained for me [from the Canons' choir].

That is done; our Consolata will provide consolation for us in regard to the other thornier matters which for us are necessary; be patient and constant *usque in finem* [till the end]. It is all right to press for a Cult Fund for the Oblates [the previous guardian of the Consolata Shrine]; but remember to obtain, if possible, some kind of decree that will serve for the future. In this regard you should also work in order to obtain the exemption from the transfer fees. May Our Lady bless your troubles so that we may be ready as soon as we obtain the Decree. I think that you must work there [in Roma]; while we shall do all we can here.

I believe that *here* they will not grant us anything without Roma.

Regarding Somalia, you don't tell me what De Vecchi [the governor of Italian Somalia] may have obtained from Propaganda; and what Federzoni [the Minister for Colonies] and his Ministry may expect from us. Do not mention the proposal of a *superior* Somalia if they intend to try again with the Trinitarians. Only if they don't, you can mention our project, which we still plan to work out in details regarding place, limitations, etc. in agreement with Propaganda. At any rate, we will not be able to accept it until a year from now.

The new Prefecture could be constituted by the part occupied now by the Trinitarians and by other areas belonging to the Capuchins up to Kaffa and to Kenya. However, if you see them peaceful, it is better to keep quiet for the time being hoping for the future.

If you feel it convenient, you could also visit the Trinitarians in Roma, and tell them what we have done for them. Perhaps it is good to inform them in regard to what they already know, or they will come to know.

C. Baravalle thanks you for what you have done for him [in regard to the Canons's Choir]: so do the Superiors of the Convitto in regard to the Oblates [who were in charge of the Consolata Shrine].

Take great care of your health; if you need anything just write. Fr. Rosso [Luigi, the 3rd Counsellor] will arrive in Torino on Tuesday.

Many blessings.

very aff. in J. C.

P. S. I am receiving now (26th morning) your card. Deo gratias also for this, and for the Bull received [concerning Can. Baravalle]. We are also hopeful for the other greater *desiderata* [the things mentioned above] and pray.

In Domino

◀ 538 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/2, 702-703)

To the missionaries

Torino, [after 30 November] 1923

Our Institute, like any other Religious Institute, is governed by its own Constitutions, and a Directory or a set of Regulations.

The Constitutions, after a needed time of experiment, are definitively approved by the Holy See; this grace was benignly granted also to us by the Sacred Congregation of *Propaganda Fide* on 7 September 1923. Here is the "magna carta" (Charter) according to which, like a second Gospel, we have to form our religious missionary life. God will bless us and our works in as much as we study and cordially put them into practice.

Away, therefore, with those doubts that a few of you raised, especially in regard to the vow of poverty. The question was relevant only to those who took perpetual vows before the *Decretum Laudis*, i. e., before 28 December 1909.

In granting us that provisional approval, the Holy See compelled us to add that permission must be asked in order to use personal goods, as the Vincentian Fathers had to do. I then immediately informed the people in our Mother-House, and wrote about it to the missionaries in Africa. I can state this with all certainty before God; later on I confirmed this to you, especially with the visit of our mourned Vice-Rector.

This should have been sufficient; but in order to absolutely remove any doubt, I consulted in this regard the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda and I received the answer given at the end of this letter (as an attachment).

Our Directory then, prescribed after our Constitutions, was compiled by our General Chapter, and I am proposing it to you to experiment it. Receive it with a good spirit, and help your Superiors to complete it according to the needs of each Mission. It is like a complement and explanation of the Constitutions, and it must be observed as a second means for your sanctification and the one of the souls of unbelievers.

United in good spirit, I bless you.

◀ 539 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/2, 708)

To Sister Giuseppina Battaglia

H. J. M. J. 3 December 1923

Dear Sister Giuseppina,

You could'nt give me a better gift than your letter that tells me that you are at peace with your vocation.

Your good Guardian Angel wanted to spare me the pain of knowing that you were a bit disturbed. See, I did not receive that letter and, going through all your letters, I could not find that one. It was better that way.

In the meantime "courage" in the inevitable trials of life, and a look at Paradise that is awaiting *Sister* Giuseppina as a missionary and nothing else.

Remember: sin and melancholy out of my home. And then you have the good Fr. Perrachon. Therefore keep going...

Your good father keeps remembering us; he will send us chestnuts and to you, by a proximate expedition, chocolate, etc. Your brother Andrea, the engineer, came to visit me.

May the Lotd bless you and, together with you, the dear *Sister Maria* [degli Angeli], etc. I bless you paternally. Pray for

your very aff.

◀ 540 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/2, 715)

To Fr. Francesco Gamberutti

J. M. J Torino, 6 December 1923

Dear Father,

I have received the letter of Baron Monti concerning the Cult Fund, and that's all right. Thank him on my behalf. Is is then sufficient, even if a bit obscure, the declaration of the Datary Congregation [concerning Can. Baravalle].

All right with the Card. Laurenti [Prefect of the Congregation of Religious]; we shall see what to do.

I am sending you the letter for Card. Bonzano [attached to this]; take it to him together with our greetings. After receiving an affirmative answer, as we hope, ask Propaganda what we should do and you do it.

The Lord is helping us and all our Causes are proceeding well; let's pray especially for the "Ente",[52] etc.... Courage and the blessing of our Consolata.

[52] The Institute as "Ente Morale" (Moral body, Non-profit organization)

◀ 541 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, IX/2, 727)

To Sister Serafina Drudi

1923

Dear Sister Serafina,

It is time to reply to your letter.

Keep going with courage, doing God's H. Will and everything else out of love for Jesus. Tell this to all the other Sisters: Sr. Giuseppina [Battaglia], Sister…

I bless all of you.

◀ 542 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 33)

To Sister Adelaide Marinoni

Torino, before 7 February 1924

Carry out obedience and God will supply to your defects. Courage in the Lord who can make use also of miserable people to give Him Glory. I bless you.

◀ 543 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 34)

To Sister Adelaide Marinoni

uncertain date

You have to overcome yourself in everything, and do this out of love for God and in order to acquire humility. Conquer repugnance if you want to have virtue and merit.

◀ 544 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 65)

To the seminarian Pietro Borello

Torino, after 19 March 1924

Since the Lord does not allow me to be often alone with you, let the pious and prudent Fr. Nepote [his Novice Master] supply: I approve him…

◀ 545 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 66)

To the postulant Giuseppina Rossi

after 19 March 1924

Read and meditate on the novena to the S. Heart by Fr. Borgo[53], the 2nd point of the 3rd day: *Life of sacrifice*. That's enough to make a saint.
Courage.

◀ 546 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 67)

To the postulant Giuseppina Rossi

uncertain date

It is convenient to work at your correction and perfection. It is an ongoing and long work; but Jesus will help you. Be generous with God, and He will give you many graces.

◀ 547 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 88)

To Monsignor Giuseppe Perrachon

Torino, 29 June 1924

Dearest and Rev. Monsignor,

Even if a bit late I wish to congratulate you. I had been waiting for Mgr. Perlo in order to know the details of this promotion [Apostolic Administrator of the Kenya Vicariate]. I have been thanking the Lord and our M. H. Consolata.

They are the Ones who wanted this; and you bow your head to their Holy Will. I pray that the Lord may grant you the spirit of wisdom that you will need. United to the dear Fr. Gillio and in communion of spirit endeavour to bring about holy peace and the practice of all religious and apostolic virtues among all missionaries (men and women). Try to deserve the praise that the Church applies to St. Charles Borromeo: *Illum pastoralis sollicitudo gloriosum reddidit* [the pastoral solicitude made him glorious].

[53] Novena in preparation to the Feast of the Sacred Heart.

Intending to write to you more at length as soon as I can, I bless you paternally and, together with you, all the missionaries, Priests, Brothers and the dear Sisters.

Very aff. in J. C.

P. S. It is convenient also for us, as an Institute, as a Vicariate and Prefecture to address to the Holy Father a Postulatory letter for the beatification of Pope Pius X, who was our benefactor. I will do it.

◀ 548 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 114-116)

To the delegate superiors of Kenya, Kaffa, and Iringa

Torino, Mother-House, 5 August 1924

By means of this letter we are authorizing you to admit to perpetual profession on the oncoming feast of the Immaculate Conception – 8 December 1924 – the Consolata Sisters listed below and we delegate you also to assist to the profession provided you comply with the following:

a) At the beginning of the month of October of this year, i.e., two months before the above- mentioned date, you should give the Ordinary of the Vicariate [.....] the list of the Reverend Sisters to be admitted to perpetual profession, for the required canonical examination: only those approved by the Ordinary may be admitted to the profession.

b) Provide for previous Spiritual Exercises of ten days, grouping the Sisters according to convenience, and possibly with suitable preachers, and definitely with special confessors.

c) The Profession Formula must be the one here attached, pronounced in front of the Blessed Sacrament exposed, holding a candle in the left hand, and the right hand on the Holy Gospels.

d) If you feel in conscience that for some of these Sisters there are serious difficulties in regard to perpetual profession, inform immediately the Superiors [of Kenya, Kaffa, aand Iringa], specifying and amply giving the reasons for it. However, while waiting for instructions, the procedure given above should be followed, especially what concerns the Ordinary's examination.

e) The difficulties should really be very serious, because any Sister who is not admitted to perpetual profession now, must be immediately dismissed from the Institute: the Code [of Canon Law] does not allow any other temporary professions besides those already made, which definitively expire on 8 December 1924.

◀ 549 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 119)

To Brother Bartolomeo Liberini

H. J. M. J. Torino, 7 August 1924

My dear Bartolomeo,

I have received your two letters, and I am pleased to know that you are well and that your return pleased your relatives and especially consoled your good mother: enjoy her for some time, before separating again from her and perhaps for ever.

During this season, there is no way of going back to Africa; we shall have to wait for better times; in November or December.

Your companions are at St. Ignatius' and at Giaveno [some were at Giaveno for their holidays]; when you come back, you will go with them so as to gain healthwise.

Give my best regards to your dear mother and relatives; ask them to pray for me.

I remember well the V. R. Fr. Morelli, whom I received as a refugee in the Convitto. If you see him, give him my greetings and tell him that I am commending him to the M. H. Consolata, and to pray for me.

Many paternal blessings on my dear Bartolomeo

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 550 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 121)

To Sister Chiara Strapazzon

H. J. M. J. Torino, 8 August 1924

CAN. GIUSEPPE ALLAMANO

prays for the R. Superior Sister Chiara on the day of her "Onomastico"; may the Lord grant her many spiritual and also material graces in order to her own sanctification and the good of the dear Community. Let's pray.

◀ 551 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 125)

To the Mother-House community
on holidays at St. Ignatius'

Rivoli, 26 August 1924

May your little Congress at St. Ignatius be welcomed, and may it bring an increase of apostolic spirit to our dear missionaries.

Everybody should take a lively and cordial part in it.

I bless you.

◀ 552 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 126-127)

To Sister Giuseppina Battaglia

Torino, 28 August 1924

My dearest Sister Giuseppina,

I am pleased with the openness of your heart, as it is a matter of great importance.

To leave the Institute, to abandon the Missions after so many years of a true vocation and also of many special graces received from God: don't you think it is a terrible temptation from the devil, who wants to take you away from peace and from the way God wants of you, so as to lead you to unhappiness in this life and for eternity? Listen to me who, as you know, has always loved you as a true father. *Permane in vocatione qua vocata es* [Remain in the vocation in which you have been called].

Even if an Angel would come and tell you something different, do not believe him, but remain firm, obeying your superiors. Mgr. Perrachon and Mgr. Perlo, to whom you secretly revealed your situation, beseech you not to take such a step; indeed they are certain you will not do so.

Defeat the devil and his temptations, by preparing to take perpetual vows, as they will soon invite you to take. By means of this you will acquire peace and the certainty of being on the way to Paradise. I, old and next to death as I am, don't have any greater comfort than knowing that I am where the good Lord wanted me to be; remember that I used to say this in the Mother-House.

Courage, then; and I, while I am living here and from Paradise where hope to go, will assist you be means of my prayers, so as to obtain for you final perseverance in your vocation. In the meantime take advantage of the saintly advice of Mgr. Perrachon, to whom I am commending you by means of a letter. Pray as Jesus did, who *factus in agonia prolixius orabat* [being in an agony he prayed more earnestly]. The turmoil will pass and soon you

will write giving me good news, that I am certainly expecting. Take perpetual vows.

At the feet of our M. H. Consolata I bless you, and Mgr. Perlo joins me in blessing you.

In Corde Jesu [in the Heart of Jesus] very aff.

◀ 553 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 135)

To Sister Emilia Tempo

Torino, 4 October 1924

Jesus, my spouse, will be my support, my whole consolation, and my eternal reward. Absolute trust in God.

◀ 554 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 141)

To Sister Margherita Demaria

Torino, 13 October 1924

Rev. Sister Margherita,

I have received your letter dated 9th September. I was very glad to hear that Sister Adele [Cullino] has come back to her senses; and I hope the same thing will happen to Sister Luigia [Mazzia] and the few others who needs it. I pray for all of them. I think that at this time we cannot send them back and we can hope for their correction. Tell them that I forget everything past and that they should strive seriously to practice virtues.

Some other Sisters will come to replace those that Monsignor [Perlo] has destined for Somalia. Among them there is Sister Elisabetta [Pellerino], who might give you some little problems, but she is good and works well in tailoring. Here she was strangely attached to her Superior [Sr. Chiara Strapazzon], so as to bother her all day long. She should be kept busy and should not be listened to in regard to her doubts: let's hope.

Many good wishes to all and my Blessing.

very aff.

◀ 555 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 143)

To Sister Maria degli Angeli Vassallo di Castiglione

Torino, 13 October 1924

Dear Sister Maria,

I will reply to you another time, because now there is a departure for Kenya. I would just like to inform you that soon you will be told that you have been appointed to Somalia. Offer the sacrifice to the Lord.

I bless you.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 556 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 156)

To the missionary Sisters of the Apostolic Prefecture of Iringa

Torino, 10 November 1924

Rev. and dearest in O. L. J. C,.

May these few lines take to you my wishes for many heavenly blessings on you and on all your work. I never forget you at the feet of our dear Consolata, and I pray that She may assist you, console you, and make your labours fruitful.

Take this letter as it it were written personally to each one of you; I can do no more than this.

I bless you in the Lord, and believe me as always

Your very aff. in J. C.

◀ 557 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 176)

To all the novices (men and women) at Pianezza

Torino, 29 November 1924

My dear Novices,

Not being able to be with you physically, I am coming to you in spirit. We will do together our beautiful Novena [of the Immaculate Conception].

We shall praise our dear Mother and strive to imitate her virtues. The Angels and the Saints proclaim her all holy and immaculate; and we shall

repeat often in these days, *Blessed be [the Holy and Immaculate conception on the B. V. Mary, Mother of God], [Oh, Mary, conceived [without sin pray for us who turn to you].* We shall study the preciousness of God's grace, with which, more than any other favour, God wanted to fill his Mother: "*Gratia plena*" [full of grace].

Following Her example, we shall treasure divine Grace, striving to preserve and increase it in us, by avoiding all sins, even venial ones, and possibly our daily failings, and again by doing our actions with the greatest possible perfection, both external and internal. In this way we shall make this dear Novena well, and shall deserve the Blessings of M. H. Mary.

I bless you.

Your very aff. in O. L. J. C.

◀ 558 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 208)

To all the novices (men and women) at Pianezza

Torino, [before 6 January] 1925

CAN. GIUSEPPE ALLAMANO

blesses all his dear Novices and prays for many divine stars, i.e., many holy inspirations, on their heads [for the Epiphany].

◀ 559 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 245)

To Monsignor Filippo Perlo

Torino, 25 February 1925

Dear Monsignor,[54]

I have heard that you have accepted as a candidate for Brotherhood, a certain Mercandino [Giovanni, entered in 1925, an left in 1926] 18 year old, and that he should join today.

A good gentleman came to tell me that his parents are not really good, and that the young man is not an exemplary one. I know that he was proposed by Fr. Corino [Alfonso Maria, a friar]. You shall have to watch him carefully and to test him properly.

[54] Mgr. Perlo at this time is the Vice-Superior General and he resides in Torino.

◀ 560 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 246)

To Fr. Maurizio Domenico Ferrero

Torino, February 1925

CAN. GIUSEPPE ALLAMANO

has received your letters, especially the one of the “Angelo-Bello” [for the magazine], and the other ones. He thanks you and prays for you and for all the others...

◀ 561 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 283)

To Sister Clementine Cristino

Torino, after 3 May 1925

To all the Sisters of Iringa my affectionate remembrance and my prayer by the Consolata and B. [Blessed] Cafasso.

◀ 562 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 284-285)

To all missionaries (Fathers, Brothers and Sisters)

Torino, 11 May 1925

My dearest sons and daughters in O. L. J. C.,

I feel the need to open my heart to you, full as it is of deep consolation for the solemn Beatification of our Fr. Cafasso. You know how much I have longed for this day, and how much I have done to make it possible. At last, after thirty years of cares and work, I could see it, and in the fullness of my joy I must manifest my feelings to you who are my crown and have always shared all my sorrows and my joys.

On the 3rd May I had the privilege of going to Rome and, there, I could enjoy some truly heavenly Feasts as only in St. Peter's and in our H. Church may be relished. The H. Father [Pius XI], as well as all the Cardinals ad Prelates were very good to me.

There is no need to tell you that I remembered all of you in that solemn moment when the Papal Decree was proclaimed and the large painting of

our new Blessed was unveiled. I heartily entrusted to him our Institute and implored for all of you the graces that you need and are useful for your greater sanctification and for the conversion of unbelievers. Blessed Joseph Cafasso is the Patron saint of the "Convitto" [Pastoral Institute], of which he was a Co-founder, and is the model of all pious people, especially of the clergy; but he is also our special Protector and, as you say, "your Uncle".

As such, you must honour him and imitate his virtues. In Heaven, he will act as a powerful intercessor for all your needs and, as zealous for the salvation of souls as he was, he will help you with your work in the Holy Missions.

I will send you some Sacred Pictures which you will place in your little churches; you shall celebrate his Feasts and his Office [23rd of June], and you will offer him homage often during the year. By means of this, I believe I have provided you with a great means of perfection, and that I have partially fulfilled my Mission in your regard.

Pray to him also for me, so that He may obtain for me the grace to finish well my career and, when the time comes, to reach him in the beautiful Paradise.

I wholeheartedly bless you. very aff. in J. C.

◀ 563 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 305-307)

To the missionaries

Torino, 31 May 1925

CIRCULAR LETTER[55]
FROM THE VENERABLE FOUNDER
CONCERNING THE DEFINITIVE ARRANGEMENT OF THE INSTITUTE

My dearest Sons in O. L. J. C.,

As each one of you can see with his own eyes, the Lord blessed in a very special way this Institute, which he had inspired, strengthening it and extending it beyond any human expectation. For this let us raise up our humble thanksgiving and be grateful to him by making ourselves ever more worthy of the high vocation which, in his goodness, he wanted to grant us.

Our Institute, however, like any other organism, had to go through various stages, determined and characterized by the environment in which it was born and developed; by its primary aims: at first more limited but then broadened by the will of the Supreme Authority itself; and

[55] This Circular Letter, printed in the printing house of the Mother House, consists of the letter of Joseph Allamano (in italics) with two attached documents, which have as their object the remediation of irregularities concerning the juridical evolution of the Institute, religious vows, and consequent legal situation of the members of the Institute.

also by the common desire to make it become a moral body more perfect for our sanctification, more suitable for evangelization, and more appropriate for missionary life. Having so gradually developed and strengthened itself, it seems to us that now, through God's grace, it has achieved the best and definitive form.

We reached this point with great benefit for our Institute; and this is an evident proof of Divine Providence's predilection. However, due to various changes, a situation resulted in which doubts arose in some people, uncertainties in others, and even some inevitable irregularities in our common life. It was absolutely convenient to eliminate all these things for our tranquillity in regard to the past, regularity and certainty in regard to the future, so as to avoid the possibility of repetition.

To this purpose, having discussed this broadly and at length with our Council, and having consulted several older missionaries and learned specialists, following the directives and norms of the Supreme Authority, we decided to present to it an ample memorandum in this regard, copy of which is attached to this letter. Benevolently received and examined, and then summarized in the form here attached, what we petitioned was "benigne et pro gratia" [benignly and as a grace] fully granted by H. H. Pope Pius XI, gloriously reigning, on 5th February of this year.

As I communicate this consoling news to you, which marks a new blessing of God on our Institute and a happy date in its history - and as a consequence of it - in agreement with the Supreme Authority, I am addressing each and all members of our Institute: after having fervently prayed our Patroness, the Consolata, and having implored the special assistance of the Holy Spirit, each one should communicate to me what follows:

a) whether, not having taken any vow (first group of the memorandum to Propaganda), he would like to take them; or, having taken the vows, they were doubtful or incomplete (second group of the above-mentioned memorandum), and he intends to renew them; in both of these cases the vows have to be taken or renewed according to the form, purport and modalities of the present Constitutions. There is no need to undergo any previous novitiate, and the present seniority remains, as from clause 3 of the Summary of the Sacred Congregation de Propaganda Fide 296/25. In this way, one becomes fully and formally a member of our Institute in its present form of a Congregation of Pontifical Rights with simple vows (third group of the above-mentioned memorandum).

b) whether, instead, he would like to remain a member of our Institute, in his present form, without taking or renewing the vows, making use of the benign concession of the Supreme Pontiff. In this case, he would enjoy the privileges "pro gratia" [as a grace] accorded; however, he remains fully and firmly obliged to observe that form of oath or vows he had taken in his time, as from clause 3 of the above-mentioned Summary of Propaganda. It must be noted that this particular existing situation has a provisional character, i.e., is limited to the length of life of the members who are in these

particular conditions and want to remain in them. However, for people who, besides aspiring to religious perfection because of their vocation, for quite several years have been striving for it by persevering sacrifice, it does not evidently constitute a perfect dedication to God, neither it can be so rich in merit and sublime graces as the Lord usually grants to a "cheerful giver", who intends to totally consecrate himself to His service.

To allow to each member of our Institute the greatest freedom in choosing what to do, each one should answer in a separate letter, sent to me personally, or to any member of our Council, as a Registered Letter. If somebody has any doubt or desires more explanations before making any decision in this regard, let him with all confidence and freedom ask me or anyone of the Major Superiors, keeping in mind, in making his decision, exclusively what is good for his souls and for his personal sanctification; only out of this, on the other hand, our Institute will receive sure benefits, and the people, for whose salvation we consecrated ourselves to our Institute, will receive a greater abundance of divine grace.

Imploring on each of you, in this Holy Year, Heaven's choicest blessings and the special protection of our new Blessed [Cafasso], in whose imitation I vividly encourage you, I greet you with all my heart.

◀ 564 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 377)

To the community of missionaries
on holidays at St. Ignatius'

Rivoli, [before 29 August] 1925

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

I can see how vividly you desire my presence with you for the solemnity of the M. H. Mary [the Nativity]. This would also be all my delight. I have been doing it for many years!... And I am really *lost* without you... But, my dear people, the years are going by and my weakness is increasing... and one cannot do any longer as he would like.

Let all of us, you and I, make this sacrifice in honour of our dear Mother. However, I will be with you in spirit since Saturday, in order to honour St. John the Baptist [the Beheading]; and then I will be living there with my heart, and you will feel my presence!...

I have been hoping to send Monsignor on my behalf but, because of serious commitments undertaken previously, he cannot come. What can you do? Have great Feasts on your own, and pray for us. I know that you are practising all my advice, and are living in a holy way: this is the dearest reward for all my love for you.

I bless you. Your very aff. in J. C.

◀ 565 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 393)

To Sister Maria degli Angeli Vassallo di Castiglione

Torino, 11 September 1925

Dear Sister Maria,

Not having time to reply to you directly, I start doing it by means of Sister Emilia [Tempo]. You are certainly practising obedience, since being where you are [religious Superior in Somalia] was none of your doing.

Therefore, the good and the bad is all permitted by God, and according to His will. He will sustain you in any situation and will grant you the grace to perform the good he wants from you.

Courage, therefore, and my frequent paternal Blessing.

◀ 566 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 406)

To the missionaries in the house of Pederobba

Torino, 15 September 1925

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

I received your letters and the feelings of the dear young men whom I hope to know sometime. Beginning now, I bless you and them and I entrust all of you to our Consolata. Continue vigorously your work; the Lord will bless you, and you will not miss anything in your mission.

I welcome your acceptance of our Rules; you will be happy because of it.

Thank the Rev. Parish Priest and obey him in everything; in this way God's Blessing will be with you.

I bless you with all my heart.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 567 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 443)

To Sister Margherita Demaria

Torino, 6 October 1925

Dear Sister Margherita,

As I cannot write much and to all of you, I am just sending a few lines to you for all of you. Tell each one of them that I remember all of them,

especially in my prayers, and that I exhort them to alwys have courage, to overcome the little miseries, that will help them to do much good for Paradise, and also to live *in Domino* this life.

Have patience if they are stealing Sisters from you; the greater good wants this; a bit at the time we will fill the empty places; we have many vocations. I bless all of you; pray

very aff.

◀ 568 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 445)

To Sister Maria degli Angeli Vassallo di Castiglione

Torino, 7 October 1925

Dear Sister Maria,

As it has been written to you, take courage and God will sustain you; however you do well to tell me such things [the Sisters' situation in Somalia]. I also spoke about them with Mgr. Perlo, and I hope that things will get better.

◀ 569 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 447)

To Sister Giuseppina Battaglia

Torino, 8 October 1925

At least a word to dear Sister Giuseppina. As a consequence of my prayers for you, I think you are at peace *in Domino*. Continue in this way to do God's will and God will console you.

I bless you.

◀ 570 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 461-462)

To Fr. Domenico Gillio

Torino, 3 November 1925

Rev. and dearest Fr. Gillio,

I thank you for your letter and all its details. After receiving all the replies, we shall write according to the needs and to your requests.

Regarding Brother Oreste, we felt that it was better not to grant his request, in order not to open this door to many fancies. The Council, however, gave in to the request of Brother Angelo Marchina who, first from Africa and now from Torino, has been insisting on changing Class [from Botherhood to Priesthood] and consequently I gave him the clerical cassock. We felt that, after 14 years of real work, he has become more suitable for ecclesiastical studies, and he would not get discouraged to the point of leaving the Institute and damaging the Printing Press [of Nyeri]. Now the change of Class is simplified by the renewal of the H. Vows, so that we do not need to ask any dispensation from Roma. I warned him about his tough and overbearing temperament, and I imposed on him to continue to direct the Printing Press; he could be helped and substituted by Brother Marco during the time that you and Mgr. Perrachon will set apart for his studies. To help him with these summary studies you could ask R. Fr. Cravero or somebody else.

I am glad to hear about the general good spirit. Later on we shall reply to your various questions. We shall do all we can in order to strengthen Kenya: little by little you shall be satisfied.

May the Lord bless you as I wholeheartedly bless you and all the missionaries (men and women).

very aff. in O. L. J. C.

P. S. Many have already replied to the letter [the Circular letter of 31 May], but not all; urge everybody to do so as soon as possible.

◀ 571 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 469)

To Monsignor Giuseppe Perrachon

Torino, 8 November 1925

Rev. and Dearest Mgr. Perrachon,

Thank you for the good news of the Vicariate; I always pray the M.H. Consolata to bless it. I hoped that the dear Fr. Cravero is all right, as well as Sister Giuseppina. Fr. Balbo is coming back; during the time he spent with us he showed good spirit, together with a great desire to come back to his dear Meru.

Brother Angelo will come back as a seminarian; I have already written about it to Fr. Gillio, and I do not want to repeat things; you may know from him all the various news.

My Blessing.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 572 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 470)

To Sister Margherita Demaria

Torino, 8 November 1925

V. R. and dearest Sister Margherita,

Some time ago Sister Agnese and Sister Enrichetta have arrived; they have come at the right time, one of them to substitute the Superior, Sr. Chiara, who is very unwell and needy of a milder climate during the winter, hoping that, God willing, she will recover. The other one to be the directress of the many novices we have.

We are doing all we can to prepare new Sisters for you, and they will come but it takes time; be patient till the last Vincentian Sisters will return; unfortunately, we shall have to take from you the Sisters needed for the Mother-House and for the other Missions. It is the Lord who is urging us, and we must make a virtue of necessity. Within some time, we hope not very long, we will settle every place.

For the rest, be patient with empty-headed people, and try to make the best use of them. Have courage, and receive my affectionate greeting for you and for all the Sisters.

very aff. in J. C.

◀ 573 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 471)

To Sister Chiara Strapazzon

Torino, before 10 November 1925

Be strong in the trial; the Consolata will accompany you and help you. “Padre” [the Founder] thinks of you every day.

◀ 574 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 485)

To Sister Chiara Strapazzon

Torino, 26 November 1925

Dear Sister Chiara – I think that you have already rested to some extent and already settled. You must start immediately the treatment and never omit it until the time God will give back your health.

The essential thing is to always accomplish God's holy Will. I pray for you to our dear Consolata, and you offer some sacrifice for me.

I bless you, and I bless all of you.

◀ 575 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 502)

To Sister Chiara Strapazzon

Torino, 10 December 1925

I make mine all that Sister Emilia wrote to you, especially what concerns your health. Our Blessed [Cafasso] has not said his last word yet and we always hope for a complete recovery; several times a day I go the altar of the Blessed [to pray for you]. Courage, confidence and trust in God.

Happy Feasts [Christmas, New Year, Epiphany].

◀ 576 ▶

(cf. LETTERE, X, 504)

To the Subdeacon Domenico Basso

J. M. J. Torino, 11 December 1925

Dear Fr. Basso,

I vividly congratulate you on the Ordinations you have received, and I pray to the Lord to prepare you for the future ones. I also congratulate you on the good running of the little "Collegio" [at Pederobba]. May you and your companion have the constance and the prudence to direct it well, and God will bless you.

Happy Feasts to the dear Archpriest, the good Fr. Borello, and all the good young people.



"Keep writing to us, even if I am not always able to reply; then I recommend you more intensely to the Lord. Take courage and be joyful"…

(***Letter to Fr. Giovanni Mauro,*** **5 August 1916**)

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