

# CORRESPONDENCE

of saint Michael Garicoïts

(sixth period 1859)

## THE SPIRIT OF THE WORK

St Michael Garicoits has turned sixty; already suffering from impaired health, he foresaw his death. In charge of a growing Community, he is with all his intelligence and expansive sensibility recognised as a man of holiness. During 1859 his correspondence is also important by the number (50 letters) as well as by the profundity of his thought. Many facts are recorded; but one feels that he concerns himself particularly with the works so as to establish the spirit which must animate them.

In this he recalls some stages of his life; his youth at Ibarre, his situation at the Major Seminary at Betharram<sup>1</sup>; he recalls some episodes in the foundation of the Society of the Sacred Heart; his retreat at Toulouse and the co-operation of Mgr d'Arbou.<sup>2</sup> His role as chaplain at Igon is now greatly reduced.<sup>3</sup> More noticeable is that which he assumes among his religious, both as director<sup>4</sup> and as leader; he commands<sup>5</sup>, and when necessary he imposes authority<sup>6</sup>.

St Michael is convinced that the works of the Apostolate depend before everything else on the spirit which animates them. He becomes less involved in teaching.

The effort, the methods, the plans of organization are in no way neglected. He insists on perfect management and a progressive adaptation to circumstances in the primary School at Orthez, and in the Colleges of Moncade and Oloron<sup>7</sup>. He watches over the health and reputation of each of the teachers with great solicitude, to give their pupils the best formation possible, and to create a climate which will bring out the best in them.<sup>8</sup>

All that, however, is not the essential point. The vitality of the divine work comes from the spirit which draws along the workers, the instruments of God. The founder of Betharram breathes his own spirit into his religious, which is the Spirit of Christ, the apostolic spirit.

This has, at first sight, a negative aspect. An apostle is one who is sent by God. He does not take action without a sign from Providence. As in creation, the development of a divine enterprise requires 'some providential signs'<sup>9</sup>. Growth is at this price: 'What are the works which are succeeding?'

'They are the ones which do not forestall Providence, but follow it faithfully, according to the scope of God's will and God's grace'<sup>10</sup>.

The most carefully arranged modifications, if they are against traditions, are adventurous innovations.

'It is in the nature of things to grow, to prosper, by the same means which have brought them to birth.'<sup>11</sup>

The success of yesterday points out the way for tomorrow. 'It is not necessary to destroy what God seems to be blessing'<sup>12</sup>.

It is better to work in depth than in breadth., 'to draw from what one has, to develop a little the good one has, to make the best of small numbers by taking more care of them'<sup>13</sup>.

In this positive way the apostolic spirit finds its perfection in the religious spirit. In the first

place is the love of the Society and its apostolate which God has fashioned: the Society of the Sacred Heart. There would be no point in loving it if we did not 'strive against the weaknesses and abuses which infiltrate into every human association, that fails to combat in ourselves and outside ourselves by being faithful to God's grace within the limits of our position'<sup>14</sup>.

'We must not fail to see the work of God in the Community, no less than in persons and things, and even if they seem hideous; it must not prevent her children from seeing ....it as the Church of God'<sup>15</sup>.

The virtues which consecrate the religious and make apostles are love and obedience. Without obedience there is no point in the apostolate. It places the ambassador of God at the orders of God. Let him have above all 'a high appreciation of the will of God and a constant devotion to fulfil it'<sup>16</sup>. His action becomes irresistible. The difficulties and obstacles 'count for little for an apostle.'<sup>17</sup> and God 'becomes his assistant'<sup>18</sup> St Michael had the happiness of realising these dispositions in the heart of his chosen disciple, Didace Barbe. He congratulated him for it and predicted the growth of his American Mission. 'This work will succeed, for without neglecting anything to make yourself more and more fit to develop it, you never had either the arrogance, or the misfortune to substitute your ways for divine ways.'<sup>19</sup>.

'Obedience is the unique means of establishing and welcoming the Kingdom of God.' One understands from that, the insistence of the founder of Betharram who wishes to inspire all members of the Society of the Sacred Heart with the devotion of the Rule: 'Be guided by the rules and the superiors.. Show yourselves obedient and men of the Community.'<sup>20</sup>.

This obedience, far from reducing it, will develop one's personal-ity. It will eliminate the fetters of egoism, favour the initiatives of grace in an explosion of love. The program will consist in 'exercising the immensity of love within the limits of one's position'.<sup>21</sup> For a religious apostle, the ideal is 'to be and to show oneself a perfect auxiliary of Jesus, obedient; never an embarrassment, an obstacle to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.'<sup>22</sup>.

From then the works in America began to grow, St Michael expressed his joy; their organiser, Didace Barbe, had started on a 'good foundation'<sup>23</sup>. On the other hand, when one of the houses of Orthez was going through a painful crisis, he wrote this directive; 'Moncade will not be ruined by lack of personnel, but by the lack of a religious spirit...It is precisely the lack of obedience and devotion to the will of God which paralyzes and ruins this work.'<sup>24</sup>.

He began two themes which were dear to him; love of the cross and the formation of Superiors. To the first he devoted some letters<sup>25</sup>.

He was held back by lack of head teachers in the schools up to his death. In the Society of the Sacred Heart, the Superior must be before all else, united to God 'to whom he binds himself by prayer, persuaded that it is God who governs and who directs everything',<sup>26</sup> united also to the founder, whom he represents and upholds: 'Understand and translate my ideas and wishes'<sup>27</sup>. He had a well defined role: 'See that people and things conform to the rules,<sup>28</sup> strive against abuses and disorders<sup>29</sup>. The right method which relies on as much force as kindness, is summed up in these words; 'suaviter in modo, fortiter in re.' 'It is necessary to take complete authority<sup>30</sup> from the start.' This authority is best realised 'by the best possible procedures , and the most fatherly care.'<sup>31</sup> the superior must win the trust of all: 'You will love everyone in the way you love yourself'<sup>32</sup>.

The Correspondence bears witness that he practiced to perfection what he preached in governing his Community.

174. - To Jean Baptiste Ducos<sup>33</sup>

Towards 1859

My Dear Friend,

I will very willingly pray for you and get others to do so, either at Igon or Betharram, so that the good Lord will continue to give you the necessary strength to continue to be a worthy labourer in his vineyard.

Pray also for us, that the the good Lord will enlighten our hearts with the light of the Holy Spirit **recta sapere et de eius semper consolatione gaudere**<sup>34</sup>.

All yours in OLJC

Garicoits.

175. - To Victor Paradis<sup>35</sup>

1859

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Keep the peace with everyone, particularly with your local Superior. This should not pose any problem, unless you listen to certain promptings of your conscience, which seem to convince you that you are doing your duty when these are clearly, in my opinion, temptations of the devil. This is very difficult for you to see because of your inexperience, but you will begin to see things clearly for yourself with the help of prayer, experience and the enlightened counselling of your superiors, even of your local superior. In normal everyday cases you should consult him, putting into practice the six points in the leaflet<sup>36</sup> I am sending you; you should also consult us in extraordinary cases, still putting into practice the same six points and being even more ready to follow the seventh.<sup>37</sup> Amen.

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176. - To Didace Barbe<sup>38</sup>, superior of the College of St Joseph

1859

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If you could have these Irishmen<sup>39</sup> teaching and training some teachers here, on the spot, would this not be providential? I think I would receive them gladly, here, if they presented themselves.

These days, it is not for us to despise Englishmen or Spaniards.

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177. - To Victor Paradis<sup>40</sup>

1859

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You have a serious fault which, in my opinion, is not only being inconsistent and yet wishing to take on everything<sup>41</sup> of which you do not seem to be aware. In other words, you have neither a sufficiently exalted understanding of the Will of God, nor enough commitment to accomplish it, thinking it needs replacing by your own wilful notions as seen by their fruits: you lose heart, if your Superiors interfere with your plans; in short, you are lost<sup>42</sup> from the moment they touch the idol that you have created from what should be the work of God. That is what you will avoid when you know and really understand that you have to leave God for God, joyfully, to conform to his Will alone..... When God wills something, you cling to it because God wants it, the way God wants it, and as far as God wants it.

You can see from this there is nothing better than to consult your local superior,<sup>43</sup> who is the one to judge and is responsible for your conduct; you have told me nothing to suggest that he is not, in ordinary circumstances, the faithful channel for you of God's Will. Moreover, heaven and earth will pass away<sup>44</sup>; but the truth, the necessity of this teaching, applicable to you, will never pass away.

Hang on to what I have said. Now is the time.

Asking God for this grace over this matter. All yours in OL. Garicoits.

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## 178. - To Victor Paradis

1859

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This job<sup>45</sup> is ordinary relief work given to assistant priests, both in what you do and how you do it. It follows that, in this respect, you should do all your Superior wishes in the way he wants it done, according to the rules which you should obey in everything that is not obviously sinful. So, you can give up this work if he wishes you to, because there would then obviously be no sin in that, whereas it does not seem to me that there would be something obviously wrong in leaving you troubled, discouraged, prone to grumbling about it and as a result doing yourself great harm in front of everyone who witness your sadness and dis-tress, instead of behaving as expected of a religious.

In short, do everything that your Superior orders and allows in this matter, no more and no less, and God will bless you. I am writing to M. X.<sup>46</sup>.. so that with God's help he will arrange what you must do and put your mind at rest.

Without obeying your local Superior, you cannot do anything about the subject on which you are consulting me.

This means I shall not be the one to reply to you, he will give you your answer on this matter.....

## 179. - To Pierre Vignau<sup>47</sup>, Superior of St Aloyius Gonzaga

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1859

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Permit M Paradis without any restrictions;

1 To minister to the soldiers provided that it does not conflict with his work at the orphanage<sup>48</sup> and conforms to our rules.

2 To spend three quarters of an hour to an hour every day at the hospital<sup>49</sup> among the soldiers outside their recreation and meal times.

3 Please give him a reasonable supply of medals, books and other small objects of devotion. Tell him to ask you for them.

4 Require all the letters he writes and receives to be submitted to you. You will not need to read the letters of direction which you will easily recognise either by the address or the signature, etc...

Explain this to M Paradis when insisting on the rule of a socius<sup>50</sup>, taking care to see that the rule is also observed by the others. Sort this confusion out as quickly as you can, and generally calm everybody down, by your own example.

## 180. - To Victor Paradis

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1859

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So do not be discouraged! Be fully occupied in doing all that the good Lord asks of you, renouncing once and for all these concerns for unusual kinds of work, with health, with causing unnecessary embarrassment, and show yourself an entirely obedient man of the Community. Certainly you will find M X..<sup>51</sup> very kind and understanding if you show that you are faithful to the rule, content and happy to do the will of God.

Be careful to humble yourself,<sup>52</sup> not making a fool of yourself by listening to the suggestions, very obviously coming from your enemy, by spreading them around you, to the point of making yourself impossible to work with, and incapable of doing your work. How the devil must have laughed while you were grieving the Holy Spirit and your Superiors!

So listen to your best friend. You will understand one day. Take action while there is time. And know that you will bear the fruits that God wants and that these fruits will last. I beg you, no more sulking or complaints. They can only ruin body and soul.

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181. - To Canon Etchegaray<sup>53</sup>

Betharram 22nd February 1859

FVD

My dear Friend

This morning, I received a letter from Fr Minvielle<sup>54</sup> asking me to find a preacher for the pupils' retreat. He is upset that you cannot give it. Everyone recognises your particular aptitude for this ministry and also the blessings which the Lord has conferred on the retreats and missions that you have already given. Besides you know how short we are of apostolic workers, especially men who can preach in French. Look again to see if you could take four or five days leave of absence to give this retreat.

On a different subject, my dear friend, I must tell you the truth, and as you well know I speak with all sincerity: in my opinion your situation is not held in accordance with the rules. You should and I think, you wish to respond to the plans of God's Providence for you, and once again I am firmly convinced that you are not doing so. For a long time you have had the opportunity to understand. I am happy to believe that in the end you will seize and embrace the truth.

For my part, I am ready to do all in my power to hasten that moment for which I pray with all my heart<sup>55</sup>.

Garicoits. Priest.

182. - To Pierre Barbe<sup>56</sup>, Superior of the College of Moncade

Betharram March 1859

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I hear that Fr Serres<sup>57</sup> has been confined to his room for some days. It seems to me that with the best will in the world, you cannot provide the same care for our beloved invalid as he could get here. My opinion is that you should sent him here and take care that he is not upset by the journey. Consult the doctor about it, and then tell Fr Serres of my decision.

I hope that Our Lady whom he loves so much will give him strength and come to his aid. Amen. Amen.

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183. - To Fr Serres<sup>58</sup>

[March 1859]

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You can imagine my feelings when I received your letter. Following your good example, I too must resign myself to the Will of God which is evident in this harsh weather. I beg him with all my heart to hasten on the milder days of Spring, so that it comes quickly, for in the condition where you are, I cannot imagine you being without pain. I am sure that you can be cared for much better here than there. It is a matter of conscience for me and for you to neglect nothing and do everything in our power, then let whatever the good Lord wants happen.

The little preparations you asked for are in hand. So, on the first fine day, come over here, not just for twenty francs, as you have suggested, but spend forty or even sixty francs,<sup>59</sup> if necessary.

Looking forward to seeing you, Yours affectionately<sup>60</sup>

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## 184. - To Didace Barbé, Superior of the College of St Joseph

[March 1859]

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There is no doubt that it would be very nice to have your own Church, but how could it be done in such a big town where there are already so many churches? I think that the few difficulties or problems that arise because of the present situation should matter little to apostles; besides it strikes me that this situation is better for auxiliaries, whereas the other idea of building seems to me quite out of the question. Before doing anything else, continue to do as much good as possible wherever you might be.<sup>61</sup>

The field appears vast enough and promising enough to attract God's blessings. Any change must be indicated by some providential sign, as would happen if the project suggested by the Bishop of Buenos Aires were to be adopted --- an idea I find attractive. I believe the Bishop of Bayonne would agree.

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185. - To Canon Etchegaray<sup>62</sup>

Betharram 23rd March 1859

My Dear Friend

I am compelled in conscience in view of your irregular and impossible situation to send you, occasione data,<sup>63</sup> where, I believe, in God's Name, your ministry will be most useful.

On the other hand, encouraged by your last letter and by all the things I know have happened to you, I asked the Bishop on my last trip to Bayonne to authorise me to recall

you to Betharram, where I am convinced God wants you to be. I believe there is not the slightest doubt that this is the right move, viewing it reasonably and conscientiously. His Grace told me that he was in full agreement and I could arrange matters for you towards the end of Lent.

Be ready to leave for Nay or St Palais. You are requested to go to these two places for a fortnight. I will give you information in due course about your departure.

I am just about to write to the Mother Superior of St Ursula's to tell her of this decision so she can be thinking about arranging your replacement.

Euge, serve boni et fidelis intra in gaudium Domini tui<sup>64</sup> et erit gaudium maximum inter fratres<sup>65</sup>, be assured of this.

All yours in JCOL

Garicoits, Priest

## 186. - To Mother St Victor, Superior of the Ursulines

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[23rd March 1859]

Madam Superior

As I have already had the pleasure of saying to you. Fr Etchegaray is leaving a great gap in the missions where God is spreading abundant blessings on his work, and I seriously believe God wants him there. I have not, therefore, hesitated to recall him to Betharram, naturally with the authorisation of the Bishop. I am just writing to him about it

I thought I should give you notice of this, so that during these two weeks, you might consider how to obtain from his Grace a chaplain of his choice.

I am very respectfully, your very humble and obedient servant.

Garicoits Priest.

## 187. - To Br John<sup>66</sup>

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5th April 1859

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I praise your apostolic spirit and your good will. I pray that God twill preserve you and increase both those qualities for his greater glory. However, I have not forgotten the obstacles I noticed in you even when were doing so much good and which you should have used as a means of growing in holiness and as a witness to your faith.<sup>67</sup>

Without doubt, you have been truly inspired, you have given proof of a sincere heart in leaving the world and embracing the Religious life. In that, the Lord showed wonderful generosity to you, and even to your family, whom the Lord appeared to draw after you to serve him in the Religious Life.<sup>68</sup> I must say that in spite of such obstacles within your family, by making use of them, they have turned out to be humble, grateful for their vocation, devoted, firm and steadfast in all they do.

What you did not do here and what I dearly want you to do where you are now, is to let the awareness of your faults fill you with humility, and gratefulness for your vocation, and



have respect and love for the members and things belonging to the Community, and above all, for the Will of God that is so easy for you to know and accomplish in everything and for everything. Something that must encourage you to deal with your faults is to remember what happened either maybe here or at Pau, or at Orthez, not so much at Asson. You know very well that in spite of your good points and aptitudes, in all those places, you were shocking and unbearable. At one time, I did not know what to do with you; no one wanted you. Why? Instead of being there to do God's Will, which you were supposed to be doing, you were only interested in anything that was not your business. As a result, you were quite carried away with ideas alien to our way of thinking, fanciful schemes, etc., up in the clouds. Everything for which you were employed was forgotten, delayed and generally in disorder, so it looked as though you were incapable of performing the simplest task, especially at Pau. What a mess! Wretchedly paralysed by worthless things! What a calamity if that were still the case or that it should happen again!

What can be done to prevent it? Well, you can let yourself be guided by the rules and by your Superiors like a baton or a corp<sup>69</sup> se. Use all your enthusiasm within the confines of your duties; just occupy yourself with doing them well, so fulfilling the Will of God. Repeat these words; 'Do what God wants, how He wants it and because he wants it.'

Then you will be holy and make a lot of other people holy. It is what God expects of you and what I ask Him for every day. Let him be holy, let him be the means of making many saints.

Garicoits. Priest.

## 188. - To Didace Barbe, Superior of the College of St Joseph

Betharram 5th April 1859

Br Jeantin<sup>70</sup> will run the workshop for mending shoes very ably and train apprentices as needed; all in all, he will be very useful in catering for our own needs and that of the pupils. On the other hand, though he is excellent at his trade, religious and kindly, he has a mind of his own and can be a little eccentric and uncouth.... You must try to get the best out of him with your accustomed kindness.

You know M Souverbielle<sup>71</sup>. He likes and respects you. I believe he would be a great help. You know what he is like; that imagination of his needs to be reined in and directed. He has talents and zeal, but lacks experience. You can help him to acquire it.

M Dulong<sup>72</sup> possesses excellent qualities; ability, faith, good health, good personality, a little stubborn, but he is so casual! He has already made good progress.... if pushed and directed he could very likely make even more.

M Serres<sup>73</sup> is also very valuable, but he would also benefit from close supervision. He is very capable of being formed.

M Pommès<sup>74</sup> is of medium ability, has good health, a good personality, likes to be useful, everyone liked him over here. So 'euge, serve boni et fidelis!<sup>75</sup> You will like them all, and behave towards them in such a way that they will like you, filled with the spirit of our rules, and always relying on the rule so you will always be in the right, you must try to form them and make them walk in its spirit of their own accord. God will not fail to do the rest<sup>76</sup>.

As for Br John, it is quite simple. He must learn and practice the rules which teach him to exercise boundless charity within the limits of his position, without concerning himself with other people's business, especially in matters of administration<sup>77</sup>.

In regard to Fr Larrouy I was afraid that his blunt language and his wild ideas might have discouraged you on this occasion<sup>78</sup>. I gather from his letter that, on the whole, although he does not spell it out, he preferred you to everybody else. Listen to him and make the best of what he has to offer and regard his eccentricities as too trivial to worry about.

The behaviour of Monsignor<sup>79</sup> concerning yourself is easy to understand. You are foreigners, accepted just as auxiliaries who only want to work and ask for nothing in return. Let them mistrust you, for no matter how long! What do you expect? It is the quarantine of the isolation ward, it is the triduum<sup>80</sup> that must be endured in privation.(Mt 15;32) in order to follow Our Lord Jesus Christ. What we should be making ourselves say is not; 'They don't want us,' 'They don't trust us', etc., but 'en avant!' (Go forward) God has made known His plan. Go forward! Whatever the Good God wants will happen.' Let that be your watchword, straight from the heart, nothing else but that. Faith and our own experience dictate this for our own special plan of action. So go forward.

In the same spirit as yourselves in Buenos Aires, Fr Guimon<sup>81</sup> and I offered ourselves to Mgr d'Arbou<sup>82</sup> in 1832 to form a Society of priests at Betharram. His grace had accepted us purely as priests of his diocese<sup>83</sup>.

They are costing me over a thousand francs a year, but someone has to look after the house(at Betharram).' Then we were struck with the same unpleasant thought as you are now: 'They don't want us, they don't trust us!' An idea that could very easily arise, especially in our regard, concerning those who have not got a Mission to keep them busy<sup>84</sup>.

Later when Mgr Lacroix had accepted us, given us so much encouragement, then given us the Constitution you know and a little later started Holy Cross<sup>85</sup> etc... how much more did we have to do then? Precisely what you should be doing there today.

I see with indescribable joy that you have naturally seen things in this spirit. Only that twenty four hours of trouble have been a bit too much. Happily the Holy Spirit has dispelled the eclipse.

Anyway try to make all your Company enter into this spirit, sharing with them moreover a lot of what you feel about the temptations around you, things that take your attention, etc.

Because you know, Frs Guimon<sup>86</sup>, Harbustan<sup>87</sup> and Sardoy<sup>47</sup> are particularly able to see things the right way. The same goes for Fr Larrouy. In case of anything further, obedience will make up for it. Above all, do not put up with individualism. *do not let an argumentative spirit get the upper hand*<sup>88</sup>.

Read, make notes, meditate on the lectures of Fr Felix during Lent.<sup>89</sup> Great prominence is given there to obedience, even great enough to honour kings and it will ensure that everyone can march ahead in safety.

Needless to say, I cannot entirely approve of your way of acting concerning the Chapel.<sup>90</sup> It is better to move little by little, wishing for the required extension rather than instigating it a priori. Follow. Do not overtake.....

### 189. - To Didace Barbe, Superior of the College of St Joseph

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1859

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I can only repeat what I have said to you already. As much as I would like to agree with Fr X<sup>91</sup>, it would be wrong for me to countenance the very idea of building a French Church in a district where there are already so many churches.

May God enlighten us and give us 'recta sapere et de Spiritu Sancti consolatione gaudere'<sup>92</sup>.

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### 190. - To Madam Aphalo<sup>93</sup>

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Igon 7th April 1859

FVD

In accordance with your intentions, I will have prayers said at Betharram and at Igon and tomorrow the Mass you requested, I shall also celebrate Mass at Betharram.

The letter that you kindly sent reminds me so much of the old people and brings back happy memories as well as my failing to take a lively interest in the Aphalo family. So, I will make it my duty to pray for you every day to Jesus and Mary that the Son and Mother will protect you and my dear fellow-student at College<sup>94</sup> down to the family grandchildren etc...

I have the honour of signing myself most respectfully, Madam, your devoted servant and fellow-countryman...

Garicoits, priest.

### 191. - To Canon Etchegaray<sup>95</sup>

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Betharram April 11th 1859

My dear friend,

I have just paved the way for you with the Parish Priest of Nay. Go to see him as quickly as possible: Quam pulchri! I pray that the Good Lord will continue to spread his most abundant blessings on you and your ministry.

Yours in OLJC

Garicoits. Priest.

## 192. - To Canon Etchegaray

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Betharram 15 April 1859

My dear friend,

I received your letter with deepest satisfaction. I am very happy to see that you replied without delay or without reservation to the Voice of God: therefore he will be with you as your most powerful aid. He will bless you in all your endeavours.

I will not, however, pretend there is no fatigue resulting from two missions following on without a break and coming in the wake of so many previous tasks: therefore, I want to see an end to it all very soon, so that you can come to take a rest, which you greatly need. Meanwhile, we are praying for you 'ut venias, cum exultatione portans manipulos multos'<sup>96</sup>.

Apart from this, I am awaiting a reply from Fr Larrabure<sup>97</sup> to let you know if and when you need to leave for Saint Palais.

Garicoits. Priest.

## 193. - To a priest of the Sacred Heart

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[May 1859]

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*Spe gaudentes, in tribulatione patientes*<sup>98</sup>.

Let us live up to these sentiments! Because tribulations are found everywhere, the present life being no exception, even in Communities divinely instituted and perfectly governed. Look at the Church, for example. Wherever you look, whether to societies or to individuals, life will bring its trials.

In the hope of gaining eternal life, we must, whether we like it or not, put up with this fleeting and mortal life. We must resign ourselves courageously to these misfortunes, inspired with the Divine gift of a joyful heart, while waiting faithfully for the fulfilment of the great promise of eternal bliss, made to us by God, : *spe gaudentes, in tribulatione patientes*<sup>99</sup>.

It is the only way leading to eternal life which Our Lord has revealed and chosen for the predestined. *Quam pauci inveniunt eam*<sup>100</sup>.

May the Good Lord enable us to find it and march along that road, *quae retro sunt obliscentes*<sup>101</sup>....*exultantes ut gigantes ad currendam viam.... inhiantes in dies propinquantes, ad hanc nostram unicam felicitatem aeternam eiusque potiundae desiderio ardentis*<sup>102</sup>. Amen! Amen! ...

This is all I can say about your letter which troubles me very much on your account, bearing in mind my affection for you.

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194. - To Jean Espagnolle<sup>103</sup>

[May 1859?]

I cannot help but praise your openness of heart. It is an excellent quality and also a precious gift from God.

However, I suggest that another time you should not fail in your duty, due to some human consideration, whatever it may be. These are matters one should point out to whoever is responsible, as they arise.

An important observation, a very important one indeed, is that all the evils to which you refer are very well known and obvious, they should be opposed publicly and individually by grace, the commandments of God, our rules, and our constant efforts. Moreover, you must not be surprised; you find these kinds of evils everywhere, in the best regulated societies. Their cause is found in the corruption of men's hearts<sup>104</sup>.

For each and every one of us, the best remedy against these kinds of evil, as well as being our duty, is to fight them in our own hearts and in the hearts of others by simply living our lives and showing well and truly what we are<sup>105</sup>; this should be seen by our fidelity to all that is offered in the grace of our vocation and our due position, while respecting with equal fidelity our individual limits as regards grace, our vocation, and our position.

**Hoc fac et vives et vivere facies multos alios<sup>106</sup>.**

That is all I am suggesting to you. First and foremost, always keep before your eyes God, in whose service you are, and his Will,<sup>107</sup> so well expressed by our form of life, and then put it into practice or at least strive to always accomplish this eternally adorable Will according to the measure of grace you receive and in accordance with your situation. You are able to understand, appreciate, and manage to do this and you should do it more effectively than many others. May you thoroughly understand this task.

Garicoits. Priest.

## 195. - To Pierre Barbe, Superior of the College of Moncade

Betharram, 16 May 1859

FVD

My dear friend,

1. I am still having difficulty in providing you with a cook. It seems that Br Damian<sup>108</sup> is needed at Moncade. If you can get a good woman of canonical age; you could, I think, have the Bishop's former cook who is, I believe, at Pau. Let me know what you think. I will look into it.
2. Tell me also how many pupils there are at your fee paying school, how many have left Moncade or who would have been at Moncade if you were not charging fees; tell me the honest truth. Between you and me, is it true that the number of pupils at Moncade has gone down because your fee paying school has started etc.etc.?
3. Try to get a watch for M Miro<sup>109</sup> if he needs one and then behave towards him informally

and openly, giving advice and correction when needed. I believe he is very well disposed to learn. You have a plant here that is a lot more promising than it looks. Although he is shy and sensitive, I commend him particularly to your care.

All yours in JCOL

Garicoits. Priests.

## 196. - To Jean Espagnolle<sup>110</sup>

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Betharram 27th May 1859

F.V.D.

My dear friend

Other engagements and real problems have made it difficult to write back to you; I did not understand too well what you are saying, nor knowing how to reply to such enigmatic questions, so I have delayed in answering your request. Just now, I have summarised your last letter, I am going to speak frankly and once again fulfil my duty in conscience which I thought I had already done several times before<sup>111</sup>. Please God, this time, I may happily be more successful than I was previously.

An indiscreet or, at least, a thoughtless zeal has always made things difficult for you at Oloron, Orthez and Betharram; in spite of all your efforts of trying to hide the misery which you have quite wilfully and most inopportunistically created for yourself. However, everyone notices it, and that does harm because one finds anger where there should be peace and calm.

Do you think that there could ever be such a thing as perfect government in this world? Truly, this is impossible. Without any contradiction, the most perfect one is the government of the Church, since it is divine. Nevertheless, there are abuses and disorders in the Church whose government has been founded by Our Lord and is aided by the Holy Spirit in a special way! What does the Pope do?<sup>112</sup> He puts up with all those evils which it is impossible to root out, he endures all those that it would be imprudent to attack, he destroys what can be destroyed, but he does it with patience and proverbial slowness. This reserve of wisdom, knowledge and experience never lets him rush into things. He only advances in reforms very tentatively, so to speak. He leaves to God the timing and the outcome, and he considers above all, which way the wind of the Holy Spirit may be blowing.

So, my dear friend, drive away all those dreams of reform and perfection; be patient and leave things to God, to the Superiors and to time. I ask you to do this for your own peace of mind, for your own happiness and for the good of the Society and the Church. Then you will understand that lasting good will only come about slowly and imperceptibly;<sup>113</sup> this is a general rule both in the ways of grace and in the order of nature. Realise once more that heaven is not down here on earth. Down here is the place of trouble and a place for patience.

Each one of us must see himself, like Our Saviour, as sent to endure the Cross of his vocation and his position. Each one must apply these words to himself; 'As my Father sent me (to endure) so I am sending you (to endure)<sup>114</sup>.' You ought to understand and expect this. Be certain that you will always suffer some abuse and have disorder around you, whatever your position. Do not be under any illusions about that.

.....

So how should you behave?

It is quite simple. Within the limits of your responsibilities, do all that you can to forestall these abuses and these disorders. If, in spite of all your efforts, they do happen, correct them when it is right to do so. Then, keep completely calm, as if all was working perfectly well. That is what faith and wisdom teach. That is all God wishes. He wants nothing more.

Read, reflect and put these words into practice; not only will you be happy, you will also be idoneus, expeditus, et benedictus Cordis Christi minister.<sup>115</sup> Fiat Fiat. Hoc fac et vives.<sup>116</sup> Then what God wants will certainly come to pass!

.....

## 197. - To Pierre Barbe, Superior of the College of Moncade

[June 1859]

.....

I have no fresh news of M X.<sup>117</sup>.. There is no sacrifice I feel I would not make to obtain his cure. He is so precious to us! Oh! if only he were able to rise above his extreme sensitivity<sup>118</sup> and find peace purely and simply in doing the Will of God. I have no doubt that the real remedy lies there; the best of all for his complete cure, the one and only effective remedy; not that I want to neglect others in the measure that God gives me the grace to know.

.....

## 198. - To Canon Echegaray

Igon 13th June 1859

FVD

My very dear friend

I am so sorry that you did not find the good and saintly Bishop alive for whom we mourn. God be praised for everything! I shall be with you in spirit at the funeral of this venerable prelate,<sup>119</sup> but we have to perform the last rites for our good Sister Superior of the House at Igon. She gave her beautiful soul back to God last night. Her funeral will take place at the same time tomorrow morning. You can easily understand that I must be there.

You will have no doubt heard that it is Sr Trophime<sup>120</sup> that the Good Lord has taken from us. One more saint in heaven! I have just written to her brother to tell him the news and persuade him not to come to the funeral, on account of his health. We are also threatened with the imminent loss of this excellent peacemaker; such a fine Christian.

Once more, as always, may God bless you in every way.

Garicoits. Priest.

P.S. Please give my good wishes to Fr Dhers<sup>121</sup>. etc.etc.

## 199. - To a priest of the Sacred Heart

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Betharram 23rd June 1859

My dear friend

Do not worry about those concerns of yours. We will deal with them the next time we go to Pau. Meanwhile, you have every-thing to gain and nothing to lose by obeying. Firstly you have all the merit of obedience and most importantly, you will keep the merit of charity along with patience and self-control.

See how good the Lord is in providing us with the opportunity of reaping treasures in heaven, even in things which seem contrary to our good intentions. Long live the Will of God!<sup>12281</sup>

All yours inOLJC

Garicoits Priest.

## 200. - To Michael Fradin<sup>123</sup>, Superior of the Daughters of the Cross

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Before April 1859

I am asking you, Fr Superior, if you would be good enough to look over these points dealt with in the Analecta<sup>124</sup> and see if there is some way of putting the matter straight for me. It would be so nice and so consoling! I was happy to pick out those points from the Analecta; I will continue to study the subject, as well as the precious volume you kindly send me --- at least, that is if the good Lord keeps us at peace<sup>12584</sup> and allows enough time for it.

It would be very good of you if you could draw up a plan of induction for Fr Mouthes<sup>126</sup> at Igon. His dispositions are good, and he has the right intentions etc.

I am very respectfully yours, Fr Superior. in JCOL

Garicoits. Priest.



## 201. - To Daughter of the Cross

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Betharram 13th July 1859

Dear Sister

You can certainly speak with complete openness to Fr Mouthes<sup>127</sup> about all your problems of conscience. But, with him as with everyone else, you must avoid exaggerations springing from your imagination. What is the use of reporting impressions to your confessors that you do not wish to entertain and which are entirely contrary to your nature, which terrify you, to the point that if someone suggested them to you, you would run a mile. For instance, suppose someone suggested you should leave the Congregation.

So once again, in confession, do not mention such things<sup>128</sup> which are merely temptations, burdens rather than faults. Confine yourself to owning up to anything you can swear is a mortal sin; that you can positively swear you committed while your con-science was telling you it was a mortal sin. If you do not keep to this rule, you will talk nonsense.

Hold fast to this rule, and I will take full responsibility for everything. And so, I hope from time to time, I shall be able once more to give you some general absolutions. Remain, then, an obedient, serene and a faithful Daughter of the Cross.

All yours in JCOL

Garicoits. Priest.

## 202. - To Pierre Barbe, Superior of Moncade

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Betharram 21st July 1859

My dear friend

I know you are not short of work. However I am going to add to your labours by making you responsible for a serious enquiry, with special help from Frs Carrerot and Guilhas. Someone has written to tell me that the pupils are not very impressed by certain teacher, even in matters of morality. That is serious.<sup>129</sup> So it needs to be closely investigated.

I pray that God will guide you in this matter. Above all, do all you can to support for Fr Guilhas, who represents the house legally, nevertheless keeping Fr Dartigues aware of the steps you consider need to be taken as a matter of urgency, which I give you permission to take.

Go ahead, then.

All yours in JCOL

Garicoits. Priest.

### 203. - To a teacher at Moncade College

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21st July 1859

.....

State precisely, as far as you are able, the way you came to know these things. Was it a serious complaint, was it by way of consultation and what was the nature of this consultation. How we conduct this affair depends entirely on the origins of this information; and the ways we use to conduct it, could and should be, not just different but sometimes diametrically opposed to what is expected, according to the circumstances in which these things came to be known.

Be calm then and prepare yourself to make your vows when your Superiors wish it.

.....

### 204. - To Sister Salvine<sup>130</sup>, Daughter of the Cross

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Igon 24th July 1859

LSNSJC

My dear sister

I am wondering. I do not know whether, at the time I received your letter, I replied to it, which was certainly my intention on reading such an interesting letter. No matter, repetition will do no harm, whereas I would blame myself for not answering.

Here is the impression I had from reading your letter; the good Lord has loved you very much, since he has given you the grace of correcting certain pernicious faults, like sulking, etc..and that in spite of these nasty temptations you have kept on loving your vocation more and more. I thank God with all my heart for your sentiments for your vocation.

I hope the temptations have gone; in any case, you ought take no notice of them, and you are by no means expected to make them known unless there could be any danger that you might follow them.

Be calm then and prepare yourself to make your vows when your Superiors wish it.

All yours in.....

Garicoits. Priest.

Would you kindly make my excuses to the other Sisters at Tibiran who have also written; in fact, I scarcely know what to say to them. Give them all my greetings and best wishes. Having some time to myself today, I have taken the opportunity to write these few words to you. Tell your companions, if I can be of any help to them, they can write to me and in any case they can pray for me, and you also.

## 205. - To Pierre Barbe, Superior of the College of Moncade

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Igon 24th July 1859

FVD

My dear friend

I do not understand anything about the French class they want to add. Have they not a French class in the preparatory class, the one that had been cancelled at Oloron during the three days of conferences? What more do they want? They are employing three teachers there. Moncade is not threatened with ruin from lack of French or a French class, and not from insufficient Staff<sup>13190</sup> but from lack of discipline and above all, in lacking a spirit of faith and simple obedience. Let them have at Moncade and elsewhere a primary school better run than anywhere else where they are prepared to make a good 6th form better than anywhere else where they can successfully follow a professional course, that is all that is required. All we are getting from there is a lack of understanding, deception, not to mention a spirit of insubordination. as for anything else, as far as I am concerned, I stand by this, I can see it all plainly, away with all this pretence, etc.

Concerning the sensitive issue,<sup>132</sup> look into it, satisfy yourself you have the true facts and, in any case, do what you told me as a precaution. Speak seriously to Messieur Larrousse<sup>133</sup> etc. Get Fr Carrerot to keep a close watch on them.

All yours in JCOL

Garicoits Priest.

PS Fr Serres is in much the same state. It would be cruel to send him, after taking the spa waters into the midst of this fracas after his absence, not to mention a lot of other things...What are you going to do for your little boarding school for the end of term?<sup>134</sup>

## 206. -To Fr Jacques Dartigues<sup>135</sup>

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Betharram 28th July 1859

FVD

My dear friend

There is no problem; do what Mgr said and wrote. There is no time to dither. No doubt, you are aware of the instructions that I have regularly repeated on this subject.

But I am still wondering if it is true that the primary class, namely the French one, has been discontinued. Have you not even this year got three French teachers, like Oloron?

Have a French school; let this primary school be the best run and the best maintained to advance the number of pupils and the number of teachers specialising in French. That is where Moncade should be excelling and not by adverse publicity. Whatever happens, do what Mgr told you and keep calm. Whatever the Good Lord wants will come to pass.

All yours in ...

## 207. - To Fr Jacques Dartigues<sup>136</sup>

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28th July 1859

.....

No doubt, you should do everything that Mgr has told you and will tell you, and without hesitation, as the will of God himself.<sup>137</sup> The best way to make the school successful is to make good use of the means to hand,<sup>138</sup><sup>97</sup> to manage well the little that you have, at first, without moaning about it. On the contrary, profit from this situation to improve the care of the few. This is what Fr Barbe did at Betharram where for some years he had one hundred and fifty pupils, other years seventy, fifty and even twenty six; those years were just as happy as the earlier years, without fear of going bankrupt, or having to close the boarding school because of it.

This is what Fr Barbe still does in Buenos Aires today. Today he has a hundred pupils, a site purchased, a College built; and to reach this situation, he had to believe all was not lost, when he had only five pupils, at another eight, then ten, then twenty, and so on, until now, when he has a hundred pupils-- and always just himself and two teachers<sup>139</sup> to manage the house, and the building of the College and the pupils. A re-enforcement should have arrived there round about today<sup>140</sup>.

That is the spirit which has made our establishments prosper; a negative spirit paralyses and ends up by demolishing and under-mining the house, the building programme, and the pupils. This would scarcely be a fruitful apostolic reinforcement producing enormous fruits.

.....

## 208. - To Pierre Barbe, Superior of the College of Moncade

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Betharram 29th July 1859

FVD

My dear friend

The Bishop has written to me; *'The house at Moncade could not possibly be sustained, if the French class were not as it used to be. Therefore it is essential that things should be re-established on the old footing. Besides we hear strenuous complaints at Orthez, that the day boys are very neglected at the College Primary School, because of measures taken by Fr Barbe, are all in favour of the boarders'*.

Read and see if there is anything in this and if there is anything that needs to be done.

Fr Dartigues has informed me about the Bishop's wish to re-establish the Primary School on its former footing. I have replied that he should do what the bishop has said without beating about the bush and that it was necessary to do these things even better

than before, with the help of the three specialist French teachers; are they still there, this year?

I took particular pains to make him understand that the best way to make a project prosper is not to whinge about it but to make good use of what you have and even profit by having the small number of pupils, so as to care for them better. I added; that was what Fr Barbe did at Betharram, sometimes having 150, sometimes 70, 50 and even as low as 26 for years at a time. At Buenos Aires, when he was on his own, with one or two teachers, he began with 4 or 5 pupils, then 6, 8, 11, 14, 19 and so on, until today there are more than a 100, just 3 running the house, accomplishing the construction of a fine College where he is living as from today, all without getting discouraged, without drawing attention to himself, moaning about small numbers, or any kind of difficulty ---like bankruptcy, etc, etc. 'That', I said in conclusion, 'is the spirit that makes establishments prosper. The opposite spirit paralyses and ends up by demolishing and reducing it to dust. Let us ask the good God to give all our members this apostolic spirit, so rich in abundant fruitfulness.

I am quite happy to make the same recommendation to you and you should vow to redouble your courage and trust in God. I believe that all this is providential for your work. So to respond to the designs of God, neglect nothing, and above all put ourselves in his hands and place all our hopes in Him and believe all will turn out for the best.

All yours in OL

Garicoits

## 209. - To Didace Barbe, Superior of the College of St Joseph

[After July 1859]

.....

I am very pleased about the College; I see that it is an excellent thing to have a co-ordinated plan, clearly understood and with the means of achieving it. I continue to believe that this work will succeed because I am convinced that you have been correctly orientated and because you have neglected nothing you will go forward more effectively, and will never have the insolence, or the regrettable misfortune of substituting your ways of acting in place of the divine ways of action. This would be a serious offence or at the very least a great source of misfortune. Call it crime or misfortune, it is very common among the clergy and even amongst ourselves.

As you have happily steered clear of it yourself, I particularly and most insistently recommend you to do all you can to pre-serve all our members who are in your care to do the same. Oh! yes, **sint homines idonei, expediti et expositi**<sup>141</sup> by the grace of God may they be devoted and bound to it, to obey without delay, without any conditions, and without looking for anything in return, moved by love rather than any other feeling. This will be God's reign among you and in you, in place of the reign of man.

Without doubt, this is the best and I dare say the only way of achieving this happy result, of establishing and maintaining among us God's Reign; with this reign **omnia bona pariter cum illo. Amen. Amen.**<sup>142</sup>

Tell all our members what I have said ...

This has been the subject of this morning's conference, for since Fr Mouthes is chaplain at Igon, I have taken Friday for giving the weekly conference. The first and second rules of the Summary<sup>143</sup> are so appropriate to guide us and direct all our steps. The first is

showing us God, his action in us and the means of helping us to be devoted and effective co-operators instead of being ignavi milites,<sup>144</sup> or what is just as bad, embarrassments<sup>145</sup> or trouble-makers; the second as Suarez<sup>146</sup> interprets it, by clearly setting out our aim, presents in itself a complete understanding of the letter and spirit of our Rules.<sup>147</sup> Your letters have been read with very great interest,<sup>148</sup> as are all which come from South America, you can be sure of that.

.....

## 210. - To Mgr Lacroix, Bishop of Bayonne

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Before August 1859

My Lord

With very great respect, would your Lordship kindly permit me to submit to you a few observations?

First of all, I would like to say that I am a complete stranger to the measures taken to obtain the second option.<sup>149</sup> Far from having played any part in them, I did not agree with them in both form and substance.

In the first place, it was not only right but also necessary that the Superior of the Community took these measures. This seemed evident to me. If each member of the Community tried to ar-range the business of the Community according to his own views, what would become of the Community?

Next, Your Grace, had already refused to accept a similar plan at Mauleon. And if the same thing was not refused at Betharram, it was only conceded with reluctance; and in this house, where, nevertheless, everything happens according to the rules, renouncing the third option would be preferable to causing your Grace a moment's grief.

I think I should say that this way of acting betrays a dangerous mentality when someone believes he can succeed with me rather than with the Bishop, and with the Bishop when they are afraid of obtaining what they want from the local superior.

Concerning our situation, we are overstretched; we need some teachers from outside, etc. And then, why have the classes at Orthez rather than at Betharram the second option,<sup>150</sup> etc. Quid inde? I am doing nothing more than raising these questions and leaving myself to do whatever your Grace wishes. I neither could nor should, nor would I ever wish to prevent anyone from contacting the Bishop; but it is, I believe, only right that I should be heard. Otherwise the burden imposed on me would be unbearable. In everything else, Your Lordship will always find me by the Grace of God, full of respect and obedience.

.....

## 211. - To a Teacher at the College of Moncade<sup>151</sup>

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[August 1859]

.....

It is only due to the absence of the spirit of humility, charity, obedience and self-sacrifice owed out of respect for the Will of God which is causing friction, and paralysing and ruining this work; nothing but the absence of this spirit....

It is all very well to say the opposite...<sup>152</sup>

Sooner or later the truth will emerge; fatigari potest, vinci non potest.<sup>153</sup> Please God, for everybody's sake, this will happen soon and convert the victims of Satan's illusions;<sup>154</sup> and from then on everything will progress under the guidance of God and his worthy and happy instruments, instruments of peace.

How can you expect things to prosper under the guidance of God's instruments who themselves believe they are restricted and unhappy, etc?

I can only pray, weep and pray again; fiat lux, illuminet vultum suum super nos et misereatur nostri ut cognoscamus<sup>155</sup>, etc...

.....

## 212. - To Pierre Barbé, Superior of the College of Moncade

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Betharram 5th August 1859

FVD

My dear friend

If Monsignor had made a decision, that would be the end of it. If I could even guess the Bishop's wishes, I would tell you without hesitation; obey his wishes like those of God himself<sup>156</sup>. But till we get a clearer light on things, I am convinced that you should carry on and conduct your work, the way it is, as best you can<sup>157</sup>. You must not destroy what God seem to have blessed, by supporting what they say, threatens disaster, since the trouble does not come from there and by doing that would solve nothing. Which are the works that succeed? The ones that do not try to precede Providence, but follow it firmly, faithfully and untiringly according to the extent of God's Will and God's Grace, neither more nor less. To precede this<sup>158</sup> even with the finest plans is to build on sand<sup>159</sup>.

In my opinion the house at Moncade would develop if it had freely accepted the original ideas of the Bishop; if, instead of dashing off into unchartered territory, they had confined them-selves to having; 1 a good preparatory course for the primaire; 2 a good course in Greek and Latin grammar, developing up to troisieme inclusively. After that, they should prepare the pupils to follow a course in literature either at Larressore,<sup>160</sup> or at Oloron<sup>161</sup>. Ex abundantia cordis<sup>162</sup>, instead of listening to a wretched spirit of competition, which is quite scandalous and can only bring down God's displeasure, etc.

In short; keep the fee paying school simply in accord with the new arrangements, as if nothing had happened and then whatever God wishes, will happen, be certain of that.

As for Moncade, whatever happens, I am keeping to the wishes of the Bishop. But

let us confine ourselves to saying, not that there will be rhetoric, philosophy, etc... but that there will be a primary school that will be entirely on the old footing. Let us say that and only that, since Mgr is only saying that. Let us be careful not to embroil ourselves and ruin the work of God with our own hands.

All yours in OLJC

Garicoits Priest

PS You will pass this letter on or at least make known my formal will to Fr Serres<sup>163</sup> as soon as he is able to deal with this busi-ness. For the moment I dare not speak to him about these things for fear of undoing the good effect of the waters. In any case do all you can to get the good Fr Dartigues to see things this way, that is to say, who is in charge of these matters. Outside this way of behaving I see only confusion and enemies of good and of the Society. Time will speak louder than me, if, at any price, they want to tempt experience with that spirit of Orthez, which is inexcusable for us, although excusable in some respects for people in the world.

If you happen to see Fr Espagnolle do all you can to help him to get back to himself, to make him listen to religious ideas, reason and common sense.

Euge!

## 213. - To Angelin Minvielle, Superior of the Seminary at Oloron

Betharram 20th August 1859

My dear friend

1 It is already with regret that I am having to impose on our members at Betharram the task of looking after some pupils.<sup>164</sup> The ones that I sent you last year have found the regime at Oloron unbearable to the point of finding themselves shaken in their vocation. Therefore I cannot accept what you demand without going against my conscience. Try to send them back to their parents since they do not want to come here; may God preserve them.

2 I think that the Parish Priest of Jurançon<sup>165</sup> has written to you for a retreat. See to it yourself. I will keep to whatever you decide is needed.

3 Likewise for your teeth.

4 Concerning Fr Hayet<sup>166</sup> if he is in the position to make a gift of his own money, so be it; but by no means would I wish him being exposed to the risk of being deceived or deceiving others.

5 I will try to send a Brother to Fr Lalanne<sup>167</sup> for the refectory.

6 One will set out to you tomorrow.

All yours in OLJC

Garicoits Priest.



214. - To Fr Simeon Fondeville<sup>168</sup>

[October 1858]

My dear Father

I hear that you have said to Abbe Dupont that he ought to give up his studies for the priesthood. I tell you that you both have become puppets of the devil.

I, your Superior, order you to retract this decision; for you have to answer for his soul and the souls that he could save.

Abbe Dupont<sup>169</sup> has been called by God to be a priest.

## 215. - To Auguste Etchecopar

Betharram 31st October 1861 (1859)

*Read and make this letter known, then send it back to me*<sup>170</sup>.

How long are we going to bury ourselves away in a darkness of our own making when we might be enjoying the splendours of the most dazzling daylight? How long do we go on without understanding it is our duty and to our benefit to convince ourselves that we have the power to exercise charity to its utmost limits, all of us within the boundaries of our position, which was destined for us by Providence under the orders of our own Superiors?

For example what could be easier and more important for both Fr Barbe<sup>171</sup> and Fr Cazedapats<sup>172</sup> than to convince themselves deeply of that basic truth, so fruitful and obvious, that they are where God wants them to be, to do what he wishes and in the way he wants it done; that without stepping outside their present boundaries they can practice boundless love, working perfectly towards their salvation and perfection, while employing them-selves wonderfully for the salvation and development, not just of the few or for the many in their charge, but also for all of us and countless others besides aliorum multorum. They need to realise that this is a mission that God has entrusted to them; that with all their might and main they should proclaim before God and men, their respect, their love and their entire commitment to this work, in spite of all the disturbing outcries that may arise, either from outside sources or from within themselves; also everything they do must be a constant and energetic refutation of all this clamour, the sworn enemy of all that is good, the scourge and plague of any society and of real charity; like those remarks so well known at Moncade. *'Fr Serres has no support. They only give him teachers who are useless. They want to ruin his work. The boarding school of the College has ruined Moncade. Every-thing is for Oloron. They would like to see Moncade brought to its knees. It would have been better if Fr Untel had stayed here for the funeral rites of Moncade. It is in debt. They should just close the doors of Moncade next year, if the boarding school below carries on etc.etc*<sup>173</sup>.

Those are the comments which, with their devilish consequences, condemn to sterility and ruin our best conceived and most divine enterprises, especially when God's own agents<sup>174</sup> are themselves the authors and tireless and incorrigible perpetrators of the mischief.

Certainly Fr Leblanc<sup>175</sup> was not one of them, just a supervisor of the sixieme. After

his exile, he was sent to Toulouse in 1830 with just one Brother, both in a state of exhaustion, to pick up the pieces of the Company in France. There, in obscurity, bereft of everything, with scarcely a place to lay his head and eke out a miserable existence, he exercised the Ministry of the Word and Confessions as he was sent to do, in the Rue de l'Inquisition in a house that was falling to bits. (It was the House of St Dominique).

This good religious well understood very quickly the high mission with which he was entrusted. So he devoted himself entirely to his mission for two years, and it was only then that four Fathers and two Brother novices arrived for him. Without doubt, it was because during those two years, doing exactly what I am recommending here, that is being and being seen to be the perfect auxiliaries of Jesus, obedient himself, that he launched in this town the foundation for those works which developed there in an absolutely marvellous way.

No different from that were the numerous instruments that God has used so often in his Church, to found, to lead, to reform or revive so many precious works.

'Insta in his<sup>176</sup> everywhere. May we all, especially Fr Barbe and Fr Cazedapats, be and show ourselves to be, always true auxiliaries, and never a burden or an obstacles to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and their Superiors<sup>177</sup>!!! May God give you this grace.

Garicoits Priest

## 216. - To Mgr Lacroix, Bishop of Bayonne

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[November 1859]

.....

I hope, Monsignor, that before long I shall soon be able to present the report and financial returns of our two houses of Oloron and Orthez along with those of Betharram. I have done everything I can to eliminate the abuses, reduce personnel,<sup>178</sup> simplified things and inspired courage and a measure of commitment. I would like to think that this will not have been all in vain.

.....

## 217. - To Pierre Barbe, Superior of College of Moncade

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[November 1859]

.....

The Bishop's bursar must be completely free to fulfil his duties properly. I say properly because even if needs be, even as bursar, he must in exceptional cases obey you, where your conscience obliges you to set him right or direct him, I hope.

In a friendly way, help him to understand clearly his responsibility and your responsibility.

.....

## 218. - To Pierre Barbe, Superior of Moncade

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Betharram 4th Nov 1859

F.V.D.

My dear friend

1. Things have been decided with Mgr in this way. Fr Lalanne is Superior and will not be involved in teaching. Fr Dartigues will assist Fr Lalanne<sup>179</sup> for the time being. The teachers needed are taken from those who have left with you; everything is under your authority and even under your name, if possible, otherwise under Fr Lalanne's.

Organise immediately this work on this basis, without delay and without any hesitation, let me know on the first day that you put this into effect<sup>180</sup> and whether all on whom you have placed or established this free school are marching in step. Fr Lalanne will be the confessor. etc.

2. Come to an understanding with Fr Serres and the Dames of St Maur<sup>181</sup> to find out whether it would be better if the Archpriest<sup>182</sup> was in charge of the boarders or if Fr Dartigues could continue (I doubt it from his unbelievable eccentricities) or if Fr Lalanne would not do better, etc.etc. Let me know the outcome as soon as possible. Do not dawdle, permit or leave uncorrected any similar eccentricities among those you are criticising. You would lose half your head if you allowed similar things to happen again.

You must take full control from the start above and below<sup>183</sup>. How do you do this? By taking the best and most caring measures possible; but in principle; fortiter, omnia disponens fortiter at suaviter<sup>184</sup>; without any hesitation. All, above and below<sup>185</sup>, must go forward under your actual management, although under the name of Fr Serres or Fr Lalanne. Let everyone understand this, first Fr Serres, and the others, while making arrangements as required for Fr Serres's complete rest. The work of Fr Dartigues at the College will be in the the first class. Fr Lalanne will not have too much work for.....

All yours in OL

Garicoits Priest

## 219. - To Pierre Barbe, Superior of the College of Moncade

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18th Nov 1859

FVD

My dear friend

1. Communicate with both schools. iuxta instituti rationem,<sup>186</sup> as effectively as you can; neglect no means of doing this.
2. In particular, you ought nevertheless to see that Fr Goalihard, without in any way upsetting his dependence on Mgr, does not cease to be a true religious in his service. Let the bursar and Mgr march in step by helping each other, rather than hindering and working against each other<sup>187</sup>. The good Lord does not want that, but Satan does. It is

regrettable that they do not understand this.

3. As you know, I agree with you about the direction of the College. Try to gain the trust of Fr Taret and Fr Guilhas. They have considerable ability. But they lack formation. I believe they are disposed to be. I have been very pleased with the way they have followed any suggestions that I have made to them, on more than one occasion<sup>188</sup>.

Very willingly I give permission to Fr Etchegaray. Fr Goailhard must do nothing in the house without telling you.

## 220. - To a Daughter of the Cross

---

Betharram 21st Nov 1859

LSNSJC

Dear sister

I have heard with much surprise and more sadness that you have left the Convent. Before God and before men this is extreme folly which will affect your temporal and eternal happiness. If you wish to believe me, you will go and it is not yet too late to find your good Superior and tell her before God like the prodigal son; 'I have sinned against heaven and against you.'<sup>189</sup> You will add, with her whose feast<sup>190</sup> we celebrate; 'Here I am! I wish to be from now onwards the servant of the Lord according to your word.'<sup>191</sup>

Please let me know by your good mother, that you have done this, and know that you will bring happiness here not only to yourself but to many others.

Awaiting a reply

I am all yours in OLJC

Garicoits . Priest.

## 221. - To a teacher

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[December 1859]

.....

Be a true auxiliary<sup>192</sup>.

I have witnessed very considerable disorders. I was a teacher, a bursar and in charge of the seminary formally and informally. I informed my Superior; if he dealt with it; all the better; if not; be patient.

You are in no way in charge of your superior, as long as God and the Bishop who put him in this post, keep him there. You have no authority in this matter<sup>193</sup>.

.....

## 222. - To a friend

[December 1859]

.....

I was a teacher, a bursar, and officially in charge of all the Community. However, I was happy to warn Fr Lassalle.<sup>194</sup> If he put things right, so much the better; if not, I had to be patient.

Act like this yourself. Be prudent, be patient, my friend.

.....

## 223. - To Pierre Barbe, Superior of the College of Moncade

Betharram 8th Dec 1859

FVD

- I have heard from Fr Goailard;
- 1 the door keeper brings parcels to Fr Serres
- 2 the teachers ask Fr Serres for permissions
- 3 the pupils go to Fr Serres.
- 4 the visits to Fr Serres room continue, etc.

But from the moment that I told you that these things were decided with the bishop so that all actual administration is confided to you, you are in charge of this, this is your responsibility. How can these disorders continue? Fr Serres is not at Moncade to do this work, except to sign for you on behalf of the University,<sup>195</sup> to look after his health and advise you when you think fit. That is all, when he is well enough to work. Later he will make general inspections and sometimes visits; that is it.

After these instructions I do neither understand your failure to act nor your difficulties. Set the work in hand immediately; then send your door-keeper away and appoint Br Damien as doorkeeper. You can help him restore order concerning those outsiders, etc.etc.

If Fr Serres was not ill, I would forbid him under obedience to receive visits in his room from women or Sisters<sup>196</sup>.

Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re,<sup>197</sup> without delay. May this affair be brought to an end as soon as possible, so that I have the satisfaction of knowing that this disorder no longer persists.

All yours in OLJC

Garicoits Priest.

## 224. - To Fr Jacque Dartigues

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10th-18th Dec 1859

.....

You are having so much embarrassment and such bitter embarrassments when you found you could not avoid an obvious sin, and yet the case was obvious. In fact being unhappy for being embarrassed is the result of being the focus of all kinds of embarrassments!

There are indeed simple and obvious things that you have not understood. So get to work.

Pray and take advice from Fr Barbe, who like myself, am dependant on you, and then God will give you the grace to see and wish for what you do not even suspect to see or to believe or to wish. Then eventually you will become our joy and our crown<sup>198</sup>; this is what I would like with all my heart

.....

## 225. - to Fr Perre Barbé, Superior of the College of Moncade

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Betharram 20th Dec 1859

FVD

My dear friend.

1. Fr Lalanne is entirely under your authority, at your disposition; you can employ him either at Moncade or at the College<sup>199</sup> as you judge him before God to be useful. Moreover, do not feel embarrassed; I would not mind keeping him here; he would be very useful. For that reason I am holding on to him, at least till after the feast. So it would be very easy and convenient to keep him here permanently, unless you think his absence would be more advantageous to you. Tu videris<sup>200</sup>.

2. So send me a report of Moncade, of the College, etc. but a detailed one, based on regular assessments, each teacher with his pupils, in class, in the dining room, on walks, in the chapel, in the dormitories, etc.etc. It will be useful<sup>201</sup>.

3. Take hold of all your instruments to steer the ship above and below<sup>202</sup>, suaviter prudentque certainly, but also fortiter<sup>203</sup>. I am afraid that some imagined impossibilities are paralysing you.

Some movement is needed there, some action from a solid push.<sup>204</sup> Once more, take hold of your world, make it work without disorder.<sup>205</sup> Where do you stand with MM Guilhas, Taret, etc? There is plenty of material, the point is, to use what you have. You have the mission and the grace for this.

All yours in OLJC

Garicoits Priest.

226. - To Fr Jacque Dartigues<sup>206</sup>

20-28 Dec 1859

.....

Must I always repeat the same thing? How many times have I said that you have been indiscreet, my child, that you are worrying yourself about things that do not concern you, as a result you have been shocked and have openly shown less respect for the Community where you should see the work of God and always bear witness to it, without being stopped by certain people and certain things!

These repulsive persons and things that the Church has in its ranks ought not to stop us, his children, from regarding and proclaiming it as the Church of God, as a holy thing; totiusque Ecclesiae suae sanctae.<sup>207</sup> Remember then, what I have said and written; and try to understand it without being influenced by your disordered activity<sup>208</sup>. Pray, think, seek advice from Fr Barbe<sup>209</sup>, show him this letter and the others, if you have them. He will help you to understand them, for I have the misfortune of not being understood by you, as our holy rules are not followed, for example the 1st<sup>210</sup> and 31st<sup>211</sup> of Summary, the 21st<sup>212</sup> of the Common rules and the 19th<sup>213</sup> of Virtutae obedientiae.

Truly, all I am asking, is only that you have understood me, and that you will find, by the grace of God, what I am continually asking from you is not only possible, but is even easy and agreeable: respect, love and devotion for the life of faith, to challenge and sacrifice your personal views however compelling they seem to you.

In this way, my hopes will be realised. You will be my joy and crown because you will be, and will show yourself a man who is capable, detached and open to the hands of God and your superiors whoever they are and, if not from inclination, you will always be led by the spirit of faith.

Write to me as soon as you can.

Garicoits. Priest.

PS What would upset me, would be to see that in spite of all my efforts, especially knowing me as you know me, having understood me in Community and personally, you were to persist in not understanding what you have done through disobedience and in in consequence disobeyed God, in your thoughts, your words, your sufferings, etc. . It may help, if you put yourself in my place; ask yourself what I must have thought and felt; and then consider your behaviour. May God enlighten you! Dominus det recta sapere et de eius semper consolatione gaudere.

## 227. - To Pierre Barbe, Superior of the College of Moncade

20-28th Dec 1859

FVD

My dear friend.

I am sending you a letter that Fr Dartigues sent me with my response. Watch and act without showing any displeasure with Fr Dartigues.

1 Fr Dartigues should be put under your direction and you must guide him like a child; that is what I want<sup>214</sup>!

2 The teacher in charge of quatrieme must be at the College, it seems to me. If you had already sent me the report which I have asked for, I would have seen this business and advised accordingly.

3 Why two directors of the Conference?<sup>215</sup>

4 Viriliter age, tu quoque, et confortetur cor,<sup>216</sup> and no dallying<sup>217</sup>. Really, the thing is worth the trouble.

All yours in OLJC

Garicoits Priest.

PS Read and hide the letter to Fr Dartigues.

228. - To Fr Pierre Barbe<sup>218</sup>,  
Superior of the College of Moncade

Betharram 28th Dec 1859

FVD

My dear friend

What you tell me, proves to me once again that Fr Dartigues<sup>219</sup> needs to be directed like a child and I insist on that always. You must tell him and repeat that his behaviour can only cause endless trouble and so many problems; instead of doing what he is doing, he must continue to do our work like you do in so far as he is able; since it is in the nature of things to go forward, and to prosper by the same means by which it was brought to birth. When I asked Fr Dartigues to work under your direction, I meant to tell him when being responsible for his class and others, not only to act like you, but also to be directed by you, and take his inspiration only from you.

Make sure you are running the College<sup>220</sup> and not your arms;<sup>221</sup> let no one do anything without your permission, in this way good will prosper. Push things forward in this sense, simply and openly, relying on my express will, I add, with the blessing that the Lord has poured on this work through your ministry. Speak frankly to Fr Dartigues saying that you have been authorised to come to a direct understanding with him about this, and that, before God, I wish that things be conducted on this footing, without delay, without any conditions, while being deter-mined not to retreat in face of any sacrifice.

So make sure you understand and convey my instructions and wishes, to put an end to these false manoeuvres, these ridiculous and compromising steps which can only end in scandal, dishonour and contempt for individuals and the Society. In short let Fr Dartigues understand that he must take up your former conduct in the College, which he must accept and pursue under your direction. Once again, this is the true path, and the only one. so speak to Fr Dartigues in my name, and tell him that I never intended anything but this, because the Will of God is there. Let him not fail to return to it, be assured that you have all the authority to act in this matter.

As for Fr Lalanne<sup>222</sup> he is entirely at your service. I have told him to put himself



entirely at your disposition. He has told me without equivocation that he will do that. Support this and Fr Goailhard<sup>223</sup>, at least a little, so that you are more able to give an impetus to everything.

All yours in OLJC

Garicoits Priest.

## 229. - To Pierre Barbe, Superior of the College of Moncade

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Betharram 29th Dec 1859

FVD

My dear friend

It seems that my letter yesterday has sorted out what you have to do to get people moving and to conform things to our rules and to obedience. Stand by these things, act without fear; without any more hesitation; get rid of these manifest disorders, overseeing some things your-self and once the disorder is identified pursue it relentlessly until it completely disappears. So act as I told you yesterday by helping Fr Lalanne, Fr Goailhard and even Fr Serres as much as you think fit. Why should not Fr Guilhas, as a former member of the Society and even Fr Taret, be useful? The Society has every right to expect genuine loyalty on the part of the former, the latter has much ability as I am often told, as well as Fr Serres, when fit.

Fr Dartigues is also good, but needs undoubtedly to be led with fatherly care, just like a child, but without giving him cause to suspect it.<sup>224</sup> He has done much good at Arudy. The essential thing is to help him, after you have in the first place set things in motion. He will not oppose my formal will. Set him on this path and before long all will well.

To see things for yourself, you should sometimes go into the playground with the children, encourage them to do themselves credit by their application to their work, by their obedience to their masters, especially to Fr Dartigues whom you will say represents yourself, etc. Speak to the staff in the Sunday assembly; to foster, above all, good relations between the teaching staff among themselves and the children,<sup>225</sup> making those under you show the same respect to Fr Dartigues as they would to you, etc.

For Holy Communion keep to the rule and encourage all to observe what you know is commonly done here.

Tell everyone that I would be very upset if any were to follow a childish spirit or any other contrary to our rules, which are constantly preached here as absolutely necessary to every member of the Society. As to the small course in natural history, etc. nothing stops you teaching the basics of this science without however clearly going outside the programme and without harming anything which is already being done. In almost all classes there are pupils capable of developing their knowledge by hard work and through gifted children. This will bring credit to the teachers, the pupils and the school. You will recognise this; vg when they have completed the top division in French, with the preparation demanded since Easter, you had the best sixieme, and all things being equal, with those who have made the huitieme, septieme, and those who have made the cinquieme after the last awful, salaried, lazy, and shameful curriculum, etc<sup>226</sup>..

All your in OLJC

Garicoits Priest.

## 230. - To Pierre Barbe, Superior of the College of Moncade

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[End of Dec 1859]

.....

Tell your very interesting pupils<sup>227</sup> that I was very pleased to see, from your information, how much they have profited from the care you have given them and from the efforts that they seem to have made in giving you all kinds of satisfaction by their application and their progress<sup>228</sup>. May they indeed be your crown<sup>229</sup> and joy by their knowledge.

Tell them that, at your request, I am very pleased to give them two free days in the well founded hope of encouraging them to follow your direction<sup>230</sup>, to take a great step forward like giants<sup>231</sup> who forge ahead in their careers corde magno et animo volenti<sup>232</sup>.

.....

## 231. - To Pierre Barbe, Superior of the College of Moncade

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[1859-1860]

.....

Sursum corda! your letter reminds me of the passage from psalm LXV; imposuisti homines, you have placed men over our heads<sup>233</sup>.....

Two thousand years ago or rather; it was always like that, that one has felt the weight of this burden. But the prophet knew like us the way to bear it; corde magno et animo volenti, hilariter; transvimus per ignem et aquam, et eduxisti nos in refrigerium.

What is to be done? Men are and always will be men. One must try to draw from them the best possible.<sup>234</sup> Pray, tremble, and carry the weight of the day and the labour, with humility, and an entire abandonment to God, in the firm belief that it is he who governs us and who conducts all our doings, and that consequently nothing will be wanting to us; far from that, his blessing will go with us always.

Go forward! As far as the good Lord wants.

.....

<sup>1</sup> 190,221,222

<sup>2</sup> 215, 188

<sup>3</sup> 200, 201, 220

<sup>4</sup> 175, 177, 178,180, 187,194,195,199,213.

<sup>5</sup> 179,191,217,219,221.

<sup>6</sup> 206,

<sup>7</sup> 18195, 212, 216, 217, 223,224,225,227.

<sup>8</sup> 182,183, 191, 202, 219, 227, 228,182, 185, 197.

<sup>9</sup> 184,187

<sup>10</sup> 212

<sup>11</sup> 228.

<sup>12</sup> 212.

<sup>13</sup> 207, 208

<sup>14</sup> 194

<sup>15</sup> 226

<sup>16</sup> 177, 211

<sup>17</sup> 184

<sup>18</sup> 191, 184.

<sup>19</sup> 209.

<sup>20</sup> 180, 187.

<sup>21</sup> 187, 188, 215.

<sup>22</sup> 215

<sup>23</sup> 230

<sup>24</sup> 205, 211.

<sup>25</sup> 193, 196, 198

<sup>26</sup> 224, 231.

<sup>27</sup> 27 228

<sup>28</sup> 223,229

<sup>29</sup> 223, 229

<sup>30</sup> 218, 223, 225.

<sup>31</sup> 218, 229

<sup>32</sup> 188, 219.

<sup>33</sup> Born at Lasseube (BP) 1824. Ordained 1850, Parish priest of Sault-de-Navailles 1851 Became ill 1858. Resigned in 1870.

<sup>34</sup> To be truly wise and ever rejoice in his consolation.

<sup>35</sup> Letter 166

<sup>36</sup> Refers to St Michael's Method for finding out and following the Will of God.

<sup>37</sup> The seventh point is to Obey

<sup>38</sup> Letter 16

<sup>39</sup> 7 A Spanish priest , Don Manuel Erauzquin, gave lessons in Spanish and introduced them to the church of St Jean and enabled them to found a College of 500 pupils at Buenos Aires. In Argentina they received valuable support from Irish priests. At Buenos Aires they were helped by a Fr Fahy. In his Church of La Misericorde they met Fr Sarrote. Let 169. who gave them the Mission to the Basques. At Montivideo they prospered from the good offices of a Fr Kirwan and later Mr Jackson a lay person, became a benefactor for their house, their Church and the College of the Immaculate Conception.

<sup>40</sup> See letter 166

<sup>41</sup> St Michael seems to mean taking control of situations without reference to the Superiors. It seems that a Superior has been blamed for V P 's activities of which he has not been informed. St Michael refers to this as 'a devouring cancer, a monster. It would be more enlightening to know more precisely about the situations...

<sup>42</sup> Alternative translation...You are lost from the moment you start to make a God of the work itself, instead of seeing it as working for God himself

<sup>43</sup> The local Superior was M Vignau. Letter 106.

<sup>44</sup> Mt 24:36

<sup>45</sup> St Michael wrote this letter to him from the residence of St Aloysius Gonzaga at Pau. He wanted to work among the sick and the soldiers in Pau. His Superior who already knew that he had the chaplaincy to the Daughters of the Cross would not permit him to exercise this ministry as much as he wanted

<sup>46</sup> M Vignau

<sup>47</sup> Unedited copy

<sup>48</sup> Orphanage of the Daughters of the Cross.

<sup>49</sup> What is now the hospital in Pau

<sup>50</sup> The rule of 'a socius' based on the Jesuit Commentary (The Summary) of the Rule of St Ignatius Nullus domo egrediatur, nisi quando et cum quo socio superiori visum fuerit. No one can leave the house unless the Superior gives permission.

<sup>51</sup> Pierre Vignau

<sup>52</sup> Gardez-vous de s'aneantir..to understand this word see letter 97.

<sup>53</sup> See letter 130

<sup>54</sup> See letter 143

<sup>55</sup> Canon Etchegaray was living at St Aloysius Gonzaga, Pau, under Fr Vignau. He had refused the post of Vicar General of Aire, and Mgr Hiraboure had asked M Ders a former pupil of St Michael who was chaplain to the Ursulines since 1839 to take up the post. To replace him Canon Etchegaray was named chaplain to St Ursula's and they believed that this nomination had been dictated to please Mgr Hiraboure, who was Canon Etchegaray's cousin and who had been himself chaplain to this community.

In 1859, two years later, St Michael told Canon Etchegaray that his position was irregular and invited him to give up the chaplaincy. Canon Etchegaray respected the advice of the Founder. After receiving this request, he, to his credit, left Pau and returned to Betharram. This recall was immediately attributed to the express will of Mgr Lacroix who saw, not without displeasure that the Bishop of Aire had the pretext to make frequent visits to the Ursuline Convent. These rumours reached St Michael who immediately protested. 'It is a pure calumny there. It was I who believed I was obliged in conscience to withdraw Fr Etchegaray from St Ursula's where he believed himself to be on a perpetual mission and was neglecting the principle work for which he had been sent.'

Fr Etchegaray was replaced in this chaplaincy by one of his former companion. 16 Letter 86

<sup>56</sup> Two were outstanding; Fr Barbe who for 35 years was the back-bone of the establishment and Fr Serres who was its leading spirit. Intelligent, modest, methodical and dynamic with the radiance of a deeply spiritual man, Fr Serres held one's attention. Faithful to the directions of St Michael, his first concern was to give education to all children, to excel in classics and modern languages. In a short time, less than ten years he made Moncade a model school of wide repute.

<sup>57</sup> Official headmaster of the College of Moncade at Orthez. Letter 183

<sup>58</sup> Honore Serres born in Sainte-Suzanne, entered the Society of the Sacred Heart on May 1st 1847, ordained 2nd June 1859 died at Orthez 22nd February 1860. Official Headmaster of the College of Moncade from 1850 For the youth of Orthez, MM Mirande and Plante as dean and mayor obtained teachers that St Michael Garicoits had trained at the College of Our Lady of Betharram. This was their first foundation. He carefully selected teachers who were young, devoted and enthusiastic.

Two were outstanding; Fr Barbe who for 35 years was the back-bone of the establishment and Fr Serres who was its leading spirit. Intelligent, modest, methodical and dynamic with the radiance of a deeply spiritual man, Fr Serres held one's attention. Faithful to the directions of St Michael, his first concern was to give education to all children, to excel in classics and modern languages. In a short time, less than ten years he made Moncade a model school of wide repute. Without being a genius, he belonged to those who achieve success. His presence attracted supporters. Officially he was only the headmaster of the College. In fact, he was the spiritual director of the sub-prefecture.

He was very popular amongst the pupils and amongst the Benedictines and the Sisters of St Maur, the young pupils were also treated to his teaching which their teachers received from him. People in public office from the same impetus, sought his spiritual advice in their business and for their children. The Venerable Fr Cestac in difficult cases sent the Servants of Mary to him. For ten years he was the oracle of the town and the master who made the College a success.

He developed free schooling, supported the work of Fr Cestac. He wrote in 1851; 'Arrived among the Fathers of Moncade. Abbe Serres exclaimed telling me that Providence had certainly brought me to him that day; that he was about to write to me asking me to go to Sainte-Suzanne provided that the Local Council had considered appointing a lady teacher and that it was necessary to ward off the storm in appearing in public and putting into operation the organisation of the Sisters' schools. He suggested that he would depart immediately to Sainte-Suzanne and we immediately went.'

He was a particularly good disciple of St Michael, being formed by his conferences and absorbing his thought. 'One of his conferences,' he said, 'did more good than a long retreat.' He lived in the glow of his life and being formed by his example, developing his teaching, quoting his words.

St Michael loved him in his turn as his letter shows. When he died prematurely St Michael led his mortal remains up the Calvary of Betharram and often climbed to pray at his grave.

Fr Serres had more talent than health. His pastoral zeal consumed his life. He fell ill in the Spring of 1859; St Michael recalled him to be better cared for in Betharram and hasten his recovery. Fr Serres was happy to respond to his solicitude. But the weather was dreadful and all the carriages were lashed by the North winds. St Michael grew impatient. Eventually he arrived. The rest and certain medication revived his strength. St Michael sent him in June to take the waters. In November he returned to Orthez.

Without due care, he took up his normal duties. Within a few weeks, he grew weaker and became exhausted. The doctor ordered absolute rest. A trial for this soul of fire! With the onset of Winter, his illness worsened. In February a sudden attack heralded the end. There was general concern throughout the College and the town.

St Michael rushed there immediately. He lost no time getting to the bedside of his children, each time death contended with them for his affection. He lent forward as though to embrace him. He looked at him with radiant eyes, then he spoke softly. 'Be brave, my friend, be brave! Now you will experience the effect of prayer. Place yourself with trust into the hands of your Holy Mother Mary!' At these words Fr Serres died in peace. One witness spoke of his departure in this way; 'A legion of chosen spirits had committed themselves with ardour to his teachings, surrounded Fr Garicoits, studious, avide for good, the pursuit of success....Fr Serres was the most eminent and best among those who passed away before their prime. He was 35.

<sup>59</sup> St Michael wanted to pay for the most expensive carriage to ease his journey.

<sup>60</sup> This affectionate expression is rarely found in St Michael's letters and shows the place he held in his heart.: je vous embrace de tout mon coeur. See letter 223

<sup>61</sup> Mgr de Esclada did not give, as suggested in the questions, the church and the presbytery of La Merced to the Society. They were at first lodging at the expense of the Government in the Convent of St Francis from Nov 5th to Dec16th 1856. Then they rented a house in order to establish their first residence in South America, near the Poor Clare's Convent and the Chapel of St John where they were welcomed with true Franciscan hospitality and from where they began their ministry. Here they became rightly appreciated for their zeal and goodness. Six years after their arrival when Canon Godoy, chaplain of the Convent, died on Sept 8th 1862, they were given the chaplaincy by the Diocese which confided to them the direction of the Poor Clare's and charge of the Chapel of St John.

Their apostolate among the Basques and the French from the Chapel of the Monastery solved their worries over money. An independent centre would have been preferable. However they wished to build a French Church as M Barbe and his teachers had built the College. The project in question, it seems, was to offer the Society the Parish and Church of Belgrano.

<sup>62</sup> Salvat Etchegaray letter 130

<sup>63</sup> when permission is given

<sup>64</sup> Well done, Good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of the Lord. Mt 25:21

<sup>65</sup> And that joy will be great among all your brothers Lk 15:10. This translation does not agree with modern translations. 'there will be joy among the angels of God over one repentant sinner. Has Fr Meyaa the wrong reference?

<sup>66</sup> Br Joannes Arosteguy was then living at the residence of the College of St Joseph Buenos Aires. L 41

<sup>67</sup> This letter is an example of St Michael's positive psychology; he lists all the positive things that Br Joannes has done in his vocation in the beginning of his letter. . His spirituality embraces good points as well as bad, with a marked preference for the weak points; he indicates how to draw from the defects in his character and shows him how to draw good from evil.

<sup>68</sup> Three of his sisters became Daughters of the Cross. Marie in 1852, Maris in 1855, Marie-Anne in 1859. L 128

<sup>69</sup> These metaphors of perfect obedience according to St Ignatius are hardly used by St Michael, they were severely criticised by other spiritual writers of the time. eg Michelet. These were found in the Jesuit Constitutions. 'Sibi quisque persuadet, quod qui sub obedientia vivunt, se ferri ac regi a divina Providentia per superiores suos sinere debent, perinde ac si cadaver essent, quod quoquoversus ferri ac quacumque ratione tractari se sinit; vel similiter atque senis baculus, qui ubicumque et quacumque in re velit eo uti qui eum manu tenet, ei inservit Part VI ch 1. St Michael tended to use 'instrument or arm instead of corpse and stick or baton.

<sup>70</sup> Fr Barbe had founded the College of St Joseph at Buenos Aires the year before. St Michael sent him help. Br Jeantin Quilhahauquy born 1826 12th August and died 1908 at Irun, Spain.

<sup>71</sup> L 31

<sup>72</sup> August Dulong born at Lubajac 27 Oct 1837, pupil at Notre Dame Betharram, entered the Society 29<sup>th</sup> Oct 1854, ordained in Buenos Aires 20 Dec 1861, assistant to Fr Barbe at St Joseph College, superior of Montevideo 1873 to his death. He left an account of the early years of the Apostolate of our Fathers in S America. General Councillor from 1897 to 1909, died 6 Mar 1919.

<sup>73</sup> Victor Serres from Orthez born 1839 entered the Society 29th October 1854, ordained in 1864, died in 1872. He taught at St Josephs from 1859-1865, then at the College in Montivideo up to his death. He left an account of the pioneering years of the Society in America. 94.

<sup>74</sup> M Pommès born at Baigts (B.P) 9th July 1837, entered the Society 13th October 1857, ordained 21st December 1861 at Buenos Aires, died at Montevideo 14th August 1919. St Michael realised that Fr Pomme was not an intellectual, but was very able and willing. His predictions were accurate in that he was one of the most accomplished workers; his skill in design led him to study architecture; he drew up the plans for the two wings of the College of St Josephs and two Colleges for the Sisters of the Sacred Heart at Buenos Aires and the Maison Neuve at Betharram. He remained a renowned prefect of discipline at St Josephs for many years, Superior of the Seminary of Almagro, and of the residence of Montevideo up to his death. His body was found intact when exhumed ten years later.

<sup>75</sup> Mt 15,23 Well done good and faithful servant

<sup>76</sup> An example of St Michael's reliance on the Holy Spirit working within each soul and realising that each soul must find within itself the desire to do God's Will. His method of formation ultimately relied on the individual's love; their hearts. He established a double reign of love and obedience between the Superior and the members under the guidance and action of God's grace.

<sup>77</sup> No clear reference to the problem but one can see how St Michael wishes to draw the best from each one, in spite of painful issues

<sup>78</sup> See L 157

<sup>79</sup> 37 Bishop Mariano Jose de Escalada, of Buenos Aires nominated in 1854, died in Rome in 1870

<sup>80</sup> 38 This triduum is an allusion to the crowds who spent 3 days with Jesus without food or water in the desert before the multiplication of the loaves drew pity from Jesus's heart; 'I have compassion on this crowd which has been with me for three days. There is an alternative allusion; that of Lazarus in the tomb.

<sup>81</sup> L 66

<sup>82</sup> Etienne-Marie-Bruno d'Arbou born in Toulouse in 1778, ordained priest, professor, then Superior of the Major Seminary at Toulouse 1811, Vicar General in 1819, nominated Bishop on Verdun in 1823, co-adjutor of Archbishop of Toulouse in 1827, nominated bishop of Bayonne in 1830, installed in 1831, resignation in 1837 accepted, retired to Toulouse died in 1858. Although suffering from failing health, he showed great qualities of goodness, modesty, understanding, and priestly dignity. He was broad-minded; even in his brief period in Bayonne he would consecrate around a million to good works. Austere in himself and detached from fame, he on two occasions tried to resign as bishop when growing weaker. When he came to Verdun there was no seminary; he established one in the Bishops Palace and taught in it himself. At Bayonne the seminaries benefited from his very great solicitude. He realised the work began by Mgr d'Astros and concerned himself with the organisation of communal exercises in the Chapel, in the particular examination of conscience and in recreations....Let them apply themselves solely to the work of the seminary'. For the seminarians; 'You will be exacting for all. It is important to have no doubt concerning subjects presented for the subdiaconate...'. By these recommendations, Mgr d'Arbou did not imply any criticism of the Superior of Betharram, but expressed a very high regard for the priesthood. He insisted on the importance of studies for the seminarians and their ability for study; and to choose candidates with care. Those who were not clever enough or were sickly were not accepted Betharram. To this end he applied to the Ministry of Worship for grants in April 1831 and again in August. Through the Seminary he came in contact with St Michael from which grew mutual esteem and affection. He appointed him Rector after Fr Lassalle. His directives to those in authority were; 'Let the Directors be united in the common exercises in the Chapel particularly in the examination of conscience'. When St Michael took charge the numbers dropped to 57. He recommended the bishop to send away 6 theologians. After this, he knew that St Michael understood him and he showed complete confidence in St Michael. He drew up with him and Fr Saint Guily, rector of the Seminary of Bayonne a new course of studies and declared that he would accept any candidate recommended by St Michael and recommended him as a good spiritual director. Over the years their friendship grew. He insisted that St Michael come to Bayonne as confessor for the pastoral retreats on many occasions. He invited Fr Bellocq in 1835 and Fr Castaing in 1837 to consider the spiritual affairs of the Superior of Betharram. He asked St Michael to deal with Fr Paradis of Pontacq who was suffering some mental problems, to stir up Fr Chot-Plassot of Livron, the principle of moral theology; whose priestly ministry he needed. The Diocese of Bayonne owes to Mgr d'Arbou the founding of the Major Seminary, the foundation of the Carmel at Oloron in 1833, the work of Our Lady of Refuge by Fr Cestac in 1836. The Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Betharram owes its existence to him.

Thanks to him St Michael was able to follow the call of Providence; he gave his approval for his mission, he placed him in possession of the cradle of his foundation, the Monastery and the Sanctuary of Notre Dame de Betharram, he permitted some of his clergy to enter into the new religious community. Although a little uncertain in the beginning of its success, he supported the attempt with his advice and resources; on the 22nd November 1834 he gave them the privileges accorded to the Missioners of Hasparren; he visited them often. He gave this advice on such an occasion on 4th June 1837:

'..I continue to think that we should not make Betharram do what is normally done but use them for Missions; since clergy in this ministry can only do it for a limited time; it could become too taxing on their health, but the ministry of the Chapel can become for them a retreat which continues to use their zeal. So when it is a question of an establishment and a body, this must not be dictated by the needs of the moment; one must examine the end, the overall picture, and support it, in spite of difficulties which time will overcome.'

Mgr d'Arbou continued to take an interest in the work of Betharram in his retirement at Toulouse. He visited it and spoke with the religious like a Father to his children. Before he died he bequeathed to them his episcopal chapel. (Mercier Des Rochette; Mgr D'arbou in Societe des lettres de Bayonee).

<sup>83</sup> 41Nev41 The date of the foundation of the Society of the Sacred Heart was established with a certain leeway. The Decree of Approbation from Rome dates from 1832. The celebration of the first centenary was in 1935 indicates 1835. the tradition seems to be the 8th September on the Feast of the Birth of Our Lady.

Various events have given rise to different dates. The foundation of the community was not an instant phenomenon within a fixed space of time, it was rather a kind of gradual creation. In his first retreat at Toulouse under the direction of Pere Le Blanc sj, St Michael became aware of his mission. The Society was conceived in his mind and heart.; in 1832. In that year the foundation took another step; the founder submitted his idea to Mgr D'Arbou. One could also assign the arrival of the first companions of the founder as the date of the foundation, 31st August 1834 for Fr Chirou, January 1835 for Fr Larrouy, 13th July for Fr Fondeville, 14th July for Fr Perguilhem. This gives good reason for 1835; it was in effect in October of that year the foundation took shape; the little community was formed into a religious Society, adopted the rule of the the Priests of the Adoration of Hasparren, elected St Michael as Superior and promised obedience and poverty.

On the Feast of the Birthday of Our Lady it was solemnly celebrated in the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Betharram, when Mgr Lacroix, six years after, in 1841 gave St Michael and companions the Constitutions that he had drawn up for the Society of the Auxiliary Priests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a title chosen for the new religious family. It was not on the Feast of Our Lady on the 8th September that he signed the Constitutions but on the 9th, and St Michael and companions made annual vows during the Mass with Mgr on the 10th. Tradition has gathered these different events together and commemorates them on the 8th September, the Feast of Our Lady's Birthday; nevertheless, we also had our period of 'isolation in the Lazaret', our triduum. His Grace used to say to Mgr Laurence;

<sup>84</sup> Bertand-Severe Laurence became the Bishop of Lourdes during the Apparitions to Bernadette and later made Lourdes a place of pilgrimage. L385

<sup>85</sup> The Society of Higher Studies at Oloron

<sup>86</sup> Simon Guimon

<sup>87</sup> Jean Baptiste Harbustan

<sup>88</sup> The words he uses the 'esprit parlementaire' which reflects the Church's position on free debate as found under Pius IX.

<sup>89</sup> Lent at NotreDame

<sup>90</sup> About this Church at Buenos Aires

<sup>91</sup> 50 Seems to refer to Fr Guimon who had written to St Michael. 'We have another regret which is not doing enough good. We need a Church, a House and a College of our own...We will have them, God willing.' L184

<sup>92</sup> 'to be truly wise and ever rejoice in the Holy Spirit's consolation.'

<sup>93</sup> Madame Aphalo belonged to his home Parish of Saint Just-Ibarre. He recalls the faith of the old people. L17. Her daughter was in the Convent at Ustaritz..

<sup>94</sup> Marc Aphalo born in 1795 was at school with St Michael in Saint-Palais

<sup>95</sup> L130. He was a very effective missionary; very highly thought of by St Michael

<sup>96</sup> May they come with joy bearing an abundant harvest

<sup>97</sup> Jaque Larrabure, Parish priest, born at St Jean Pied de Port 1807, ordained 1834, Dean of the Cathedral 1834, Parish Priest of St Palais from 1846-1859.

<sup>98</sup> Rom 12;12 Be joyful in hope, persevering in hardship.

<sup>99</sup> Rom 12;12 Be joyful in hope, persevering in hardship.

<sup>100</sup> Mt 7;14 How few find

<sup>101</sup> Ps 18;6' delighting like a champion in the course to run, striving for the desirable day, of our one eternal delight, burning with the desire to achieve it.'

<sup>102</sup> St Michael's scriptural quotes are not always in agreement with the present translations; bible scholarship has altered some of these texts. I have used the Jerusalem bible where possible and translated the rest from Fr Micayaa 9 Phil. 3; 13 forgetting all that lies behind me

<sup>103</sup> Jean Espagnolle born at Ferrieres HP in 1828 began his studies in 1842 at N D de Betharram. He was one of the pupils that St Michael had to sent to the school in the presbytery of the Parish Priest at Eaux Bonnes when his College at Betharram was threatened with closure by the University of Pau. After this, he went to the College at St Palais. He entered the Society in 1844, taught at Orthez from 1849 to 1853, was ordained on the 21st May in 1853. He became Master of Novices from 1854 to 1857 at Betharram; in 1857 taught rhetoric at the seminary of Oloron; in 1860 was appointed curate at Arudy. He left for Paris where he became a diocesan priest; was appointed to N D de Loretto. He was a member of the Historical Studies of Paris. Intelligent and hard working, he wrote several works; La Clef du vieux Francais, Origine de notre vieille langue, L'origine du Francais (3 Volumes) and le Dictionnaire Etymologique.

<sup>104</sup> L 193,195

<sup>105</sup> This principle St Michael often repeated with the following rhyme:

Etre ce qu'on est	To be is what you are
Etre bien ce qu'on est, chose importante!	To be indeed what you are is the important thing
C'est tout!	That is everything
tout le reste, c'est pure vanite	All the rest is pure vanity
Etre pretre.	To be a priest
Etre pretre de Betharram,	To be a priest of Betharram
Etre cela et etre bien cela!	To be that and just that!
Superieur de cette communaute, suis-je bien cela?	Superior of this community, am I just that?
Etre ce qu'on est	To be what you are.
Etre bien ce qu'on est, chose importante,	To be indeed what you are, is the important thing,
infiniment importante!	infinitely important!
C'est tout!	That is everything
Et tout le reste n'est rien; c'est une pure vanite	Everything else is nothing, just pure vanity
Etre homme	To be a man
Etre Chretien,	To be a Christian
Etre pretre, pretre de Betharram,	To be a priest, a priest of Betharram,
superieur de cette communaute,	Superior of this community
etre tout cela,	To be just that
etre bien tout cela,	To be truly just that
Vous comprenez que cela, c'est tout pour moi!	You understand just that it is everything for me!
Si je venais aujourd'hui a mourir,	If I were to die today
Si j'etais bien tout cela!	If I was in truth just that
Si je n'etais pas cela, et bien cela!	If I was not that, just that!
Quand meme je serais tout le reste,	Even if I was everything else,
Vanite, malheur!	Would be vanity and disaster
Que me servira d'avoir ete tout le reste?	What good will everything else do me?
Quelle conclusion pratique?	What is the practical conclusion?
abnegation de tout le reste	Self sacrifice for everything else
Et s'efforcer sans retard, sans reserve, sans retour,	To do one's utmost without delay, without reservation, and without reward
a etre ce que je suis,	to be what I am
et ce que nous sommes	and what we are.

(Cahier No 3 no. 432 of St Michael)



<sup>106</sup> Do this and have life, and you will give it to many others.

<sup>107</sup> St Michael expresses the fundamental idea of Cardinal Berulle, a Master of the French school of Spirituality, who places God at the centre of the spiritual life. 'It is first necessary to look to God and not to oneself.'

Following him, the founder wrote; 'To have God in sight before all and always' L278 and 'Have God and his adorable will always before your eyes, in the first place and before everything else.' L 426. Always from the first moment and with all your heart have God and the law of love that he has engraved in your souls.' L241.

This principle often returned to his lips in the pulpit and in the confessional. In a conference he said; 'We ought to have God who is our end always before us.' Pensee p 108, Doct. spir. p292

<sup>108</sup> Br Damien Forsans of Sallespisse(B-P) 1823-1894

<sup>109</sup> Jean-Marie Miro born at Ferrieres (H-P) 1838, pupil of Notre Dame in 1853 entered the Society 25th August 1856, ordained 21st September 1864, teacher in the primary school at Orthez from 1858-1860, at Moncade from 1860- 1863 and from 1872-1877, at Betharram from 1863-1872; in 1877 he became chaplain to the Daughters of the Cross at Pau; in 1886 chaplain to Saint Louis de Gonzague, and then 1879 vice postulator of the cause of St Michael Garicoits and of Venerable Fr Cestac; died at Anglet 8th May 1916., buried in the cemetery of the Servants of Marie at Anglet.

<sup>110</sup> L194

<sup>111</sup> L 194

<sup>112</sup> This was the current view of the Church in regard to the Pope's power and authority which extended to his rule of the Papal States. What had St Michael in mind? Was he referring to the treatment of the Popes by Napoleon or making a general statement. This view was the traditional and loyal view, but more visionary voices had already spoken about the Popes temporal power. Had St Michael read Laménais and *L'Avenir* which considered the Papal States an evil for the Church? At this time, it was forbidden to read Laménais' writings and *L'Avenir* in certain Dioceses. Even if, with hindsight, we may not agree historically with his example, his advice is still sound and shows his concern and his experience.

<sup>113</sup> One finds similar thoughts expressed by St Vincent de Paul.' It seems that the affairs of God are achieved little by little, almost imperceptibly, and that his spirit is not violent and tempestuous.'

<sup>114</sup> This interpretation from St John 20,21 is based on Christian tradition. St Gregory said; 'The elect, the true Apostles, were not sent for the joys of this world but as the Lord himself was sent to suffer in the world. Just as the Son was loved by the Father, and yet was sent to suffer, so the disciples are loved by the Lord who are sent to suffer in the world.' (Hom 26 in Evang). The Imitation of Christ puts these words on the lips of Jesus; 'I have said to my well beloved disciples; I love you as my Father has loved me. So I am sending them, not to enjoy, but to undertake great battles, not to gain honours, but to suffer indignities.' Book 3, ch 20v5.

<sup>115</sup> 73,28 Suitable, unhampered and blessed ministers of the Heart of Christ. L266

<sup>116</sup> 74 Lk 10. Do this and you will live

<sup>117</sup> Fr Serres

<sup>118</sup> It would be useful to know what St Michael means about 'his extreme sensitivity'.

<sup>119</sup> Prosper-Michel Arnaud Hiraboure, bishop of Aire. Born at Bayonne 7th October 1805. Pupil of St Leon like St Michael; professor with him at the Minor Seminary of Larressore; ordained June 13th 1829; he remained as professor of rhetoric; 22nd July 1832 curate of St Andre de Bayonne; 23rd August 1834 chaplain to the Ursulines of Pau; 18th January 1839, Vicar General of Mgr Lacroix and in 1852 20th March Archpriest of St Martin at Pau; while in Pau, Napoleon was impressed when he welcomed him on behalf of the town; by decree on 16th December 1856 he recommended him as Bishop of Aire; consecrated at Auch 8th March 1857 by Mgr Salinis and Mgr Laurence; he was about to be Bishop of Avignon when a fall during his pastoral visit brought about his death in 1859. He was endowed with many natural gifts; after brilliant secondary studies, he was professor of rhetoric at Larressore, highly esteemed by pupils as a teacher and spiritual director; good writer and excellent orator. He was in great demand among the Churches and Convents of Pau and Bayonne. He enjoyed this ministry; he was confessor to the Sisters of Loretto, Ursulines, Daughters of the Cross; in the Diocese of Aire he was a popular Bishop by his approachableness, his kindness and consideration. Fr Cestac said that he was 'greatly loved.'

There was a great friendship between St Michael Garicoits and Monsignor Hiraboure. It began at Bayonne where both frequented the school of St Leon and continued in the seminary of Larressore, where they were teachers up to 1824; the years and their charges only made it stronger; Monsieur Hiraboure had chosen St Michael as his spiritual director; he often recounts his enlightening remarks. The founder of Betharram found in him a solid support for his initiatives from the founding of the College of Notre Dame. After St Michael had overcome his first difficulties, Monsieur Hiraboure influenced some of the Christian families in journalism in the Memorial of Pau to support him; from the 7th of November 1840, 10 years before the passing of the Falloux law, Mgr Hiraboure, with all the authority that gave him his title of Vicar general, urged St Michael to open the secondary course. 'Monsignor,' he wrote to him, 'will see with pleasure the execution of the plan for the establishment of the Latin class under the direction of Abbe Gaye. He will permit him to leave his ministry and to go to Lestelle to work there in concert with you for the good of the youth.'

Before his consecration Monsieur Hiraboure retired to the convent of the Daughters of the Cross at Igon to make a retreat under the direction of St Michael. He took this task seriously; and on occasions he did not fail to make some observations. When he received the news of his death, he exclaimed; 'Ah! My God I was going to write to him to warn him that he was stepping outside his path by neglecting the administration of his diocese while giving missions; Monsignor Hiraboure was capable of accepting the advice of his friend for like him he was seeking holiness.'

<sup>120</sup> Eugenie Poey from Boeil-Bezing (B-P) born April 1821 died 1859.

<sup>121</sup> Canon Dhers born at Sauveterre in 1804 pupil of St Michael at the Seminary of Betharram, ordained in 1829, curate at St Jacques at Pau, Vicar General of Mgr Hiraboure from 1857 to 1859, died in 1879

<sup>122</sup> This letter shows the difference between that age and the present. The Superior takes control of everything. Social conditions may have had some bearing on this attitude. A century later these remarks would have a ring of insincerity about them.

<sup>123</sup> L416

<sup>124</sup> Ecclesiastical review where it declared that the same priest could not be chaplain and confessor to the same convent. St Michael who was chaplain at Igon fulfilled both roles and had tried to arrange for another director for the sisters. He appointed Fr Mouthes but the Sister General asked for St Michael's return. A reply from Rome persuaded him to continue with both.

<sup>125</sup> 2nd May 1859 France and Italy declared war against Austria, The War of Austrian Succession. The victory at Solferino on June 24th gave hope for peace. It was signed at Villafranca on 11th July.

<sup>126</sup> Jean Mouthes born at Pontacq March 1815, ordained in 1840, curate at Boeil-Bezing, entered the Society 1st February 1859, chaplain at Igon in 1859, Consellor General from 1863 to his death in 1877.

<sup>127</sup> He was appointed chaplain of Igon by St Michael to replace him.

<sup>128</sup> On this theme see L97,102, 116,123,124,131,201,202,etc.

<sup>129</sup> St Michael shows watchfulness and vigilance in matters which affected the moral standard of the school and the protection of pupils. In an era where some States enacted draconian laws against offenders and where the Church has had to draw up its own policy against child abuse and for child protection, it is heartening to see how St Michael was not only aware but took measures to safeguard and protect the school and the children. It would be interesting to know exactly what was being referred to. L 203 reveals that another teacher is the source of the information and shows how St Michael was seeking precise information before taking any action, as well as relying on further information from the two priests. There seems to be a hint of involving the law.

<sup>130</sup> Born Louise Saint-Pastous, 17th July 1834 at Andrest (H-P) entered the Daughters of the Cross 24th July 1854, Superior of the house at Lezat(Ariege) 1862, of Trie from 1879 to 1888, Bagneres from 1888 to 1895 where she died 31st December. As St Michael says quite a number from this convent have written to him but he sends a letter, maybe a second to the Superior and information for the other Sisters.

<sup>131</sup> The number on the staff at Moncade was 9 teachers and 3 brothers, against 12 the year before, and 16 at Oloron.

<sup>132</sup> L 203

<sup>133</sup> Some pupils had complained about him to another member of the staff.

<sup>134</sup> This shows St Michael's concern for individual needs and especially the sick. Not clear what St Michael is referring to at the end of the term.

<sup>135</sup> Jacques Dartigues born at Coarrazze 24th May 1824, pupil of Notre Dame de Betharram, ordained on June 14th 1851, entered the Society of Holy Cross at Oloron the same year; in 1855 appointed curate at Arudy up to his entry into the Society in 1857; in 1859 he is at the primary school and College of Moncade at Orthez; bursar in 1862, headmaster of the local school at Orthez; in 1873 chaplain to the Servants of Mary at Anglet; in 1877 he succeeded Fr Barbe as Superior of the College of Moncade; in 1885 he resigned to become chaplain to the Daughters of the Cross at Igon; died 29th May 1902. He knew St Michael from childhood at Coarrazze and at Betharram in the College, St Michael was his confessor; when he was a pupil at the major seminary at Bayonne he liked to put himself under St Michael's direction at Betharram during the holidays. St Michael remained his director until he died. He always felt the need for a spiritual guide; he was a dedicated and valued worker and was loved everywhere he went. He was discrete, reserved and modest with a great affection for the young and succeeded with them. Through his goodness and simple example, he attracted excellent vocations among the young.

He was among those who exerted a powerful influence in the Society through his solid piety, obedience, his relentless work and endless devotion. Apart from St Michael and Fr Barbe, he was one of those who contributed to the establishment and success of all the works at Orthez.

<sup>136</sup> This letter as already noted is in the Pensee and written on the same day as 206.

<sup>137</sup> All members of the Society of the Sacred Heart at this time made a vow of obedience to their Bishop.

<sup>138</sup> St Michael always taught his members to profit from the situation even if it seemed well below expectation. L187

<sup>139</sup> Fr Barbe had only Fr Magendie and Br Joannes in March 1859 to help him.

<sup>140</sup> St Michael sent a second team of Missionaries in 1859; one priest, Carmel Souverbielle, three scholastics; Auguste Dulong, Pierre Pommes, Victor Serres and Brother Jeantin Quilhahauquy. They embarked from Bayonne on 18th April on the General Excelmans and arrived at Buenos Aires on 11th July after a stop for 15 days at Montivideo. L188.

<sup>141</sup> May they be men who are ready for anything, unhampered by anything, and ready to obey authority.

<sup>142</sup> 'With Him all things work out well' seems to relate to Wis 7:11. 'In her company all good things come to me.'

<sup>143</sup> After his second retreat at Toulouse the last one under the direction of Father Le Blanc in 1837 to 1838, St Michael had to adopt for his first companions the rules which had been elaborated in following the early Constitutions of the Society of Jesus. At first Monsignor La Croix had approved them provisionally on the 6th October 1838: a second time the 9th September 1841 he had authorised the observances for more 'spiritual conduct' only, and in what did not interfere with the constitutions of the Auxiliary Priests of the Sacred Heart that he was about to update.

These rules which express Saint Michael's ideal of the religious life applied in the light of the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and their best interpreters; he modified these on several occasions to better adapt them to the religious and their work according to the circumstances and the lessons of experience. Apart from 1849 for the residences which were founded in Europe and in America some secretaries transcribed copies which carried the signatures of Bishop Lacroix. The museum of the College of St Jose Buenos Aires has a copy signed by the Bishop. The founder gave a copy of the Thesaurus of the Society of Jesus which includes the spiritual exercises, the directory and the industries of Father Aquaviva, a summary of the Constitutions to the priests of the Society of the Sacred Heart, at least, during their annual retreat. Under this title is found a selection of the principal passages of the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus in the form of the articles of law which go back to St Ignatius but which were edited after his death by Fr Lainez. The actual text below is from 1580.

<sup>144</sup> lazy soldiers

<sup>145</sup> 'Paquets' a special vocabulary of St Michael meaning someone causing embarrassment

<sup>146</sup> The First Rule; the principle and foundation of all Christian and Religious life. He explained with great care, with much insistence, this First Rule in his weekly spiritual conferences. It is the echo of one of these conferences, perhaps even one which he speaks of here that we can find in his Pensees. - page 110, 137, 188, 284. 329 in the Spiritual Doctrine p. 145, 150, 271, 332, 341. See letters 219, 226..

The First Rule. Although we should trust in the supreme wisdom and goodness of God, our Creator and Saviour who deigned to begin this little society, he will protect it, direct it and advance it in his holy service. On our part the interior law of charity and love that the Holy Spirit engraves on our hearts will contribute to it more effectively than all external constitutions, nevertheless because the sweet economy of divine providence requires the co-operation of his creatures and that the Vicar of our Lord has so established it and the examples of the Saints and reason itself teach it to us in the Lord, we have judged necessary to write these Constitutions which will help us to march in the way of the Lord. Of all the commentaries on the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus this was the one most studied by St Michael Garicoits.

<sup>147</sup> St Michael in his spiritual conferences often explains the value and importance of this second rule which directs the religious of the Sacred Heart in the interior life and apostolate. See Pensees page 241, 269, 324, 327 and Spiritual Doctrine page 209, 329, 331. It is often recalled in this correspondence. See letters 226, 257, 293.

The Second Rule; the end of this Society is not only to work for the salvation and perfection of one's soul by the grace of God, but also with that same grace to devote oneself without reservation to the salvation and perfection of one's neighbour.

<sup>148</sup> The correspondence of the Missionaries from South America had often the honour of being the text for the main talk to the community.

<sup>149</sup> The College at Orthez had tried to create a complete cycle of classes for the year 1858-1859. Does this refer to measures in creating a secondary school? L108. 212. 249. 296.

<sup>150</sup> The courses created in 1847 did not go beyond 4th for ten years. It was in 1856 under the Headship of Romain Bourdenne that Rhetoric was added.

<sup>151</sup> *There does not seem to be any evidence as to who this teacher is.*

<sup>152</sup> Several letters refer to this situation indirectly. L 195,207,209

<sup>153</sup> One can fight it, but not conquer it.

<sup>154</sup> The presence of Satan was spoken about in this age more than in the present in regard to a person's actions and ways of thinking. St Michael realised that illusions or ideas that oppose what is good, ultimately come from the evil one. Perhaps this can give us food for thought?

<sup>155</sup> Let there be light, may his face shine on us and may he have mercy on us so that we may understand...

<sup>156</sup> In agreement with the Bishop St Michael had to organise the primary school at Orthez, below as they used to say, a little boarding school, above, at Moncade where they thought that this boarding school was adversely affecting the Secondary College; they wanted it closed. St Michael did not accept the reasons for its closure, and stood behind the orders of his Bishop.

<sup>157</sup> Added in this letter by probably Fr Barbe; 'It had been decided after mature consideration and after conferring with the Bishop over three days.'

<sup>158</sup> Avec les plus beaux plans a priori, an expression that St Michael took from St Francis de Sales. L69

<sup>159</sup> St Michael was a realist, basing his judgements on experience and also on judging the appropriate time; the gift of wisdom

<sup>160</sup> In his native village of Larressore, Fr Jean Daguerre founded in 1733 a minor seminary for the Diocese of Bayonne, also missionary group of priests; in 1879 he added a course of philosophy and theology and received students from the major seminary which the Bishop Mgr d'Arche in 1774 wished to protect from the Jansenist influence of their professors, the Fathers of Christian Doctrine. te

<sup>161</sup> The Revolution dispersed the students and professors and the house was taken. In 1820 Mgr d'Astros regained it and turned it into a Minor Seminary for the Basque Country, having been restored by Fr Capdevielle, the Superior, L25. It continued to prosper with his successors. St Michael lived there from 1821 to January 1824 as prefect of discipline, teacher and bursar, then over by the State.

<sup>162</sup> From the abundance of his heart

<sup>163</sup> Honore Serres, Headmaster of the College of Moncade L183

<sup>164</sup> There were some pupils there who were wanting to join the Society but were upset by Fr Minvielle's demands. They had either been sent home or were about to be. The exact nature of these grievances is not mentioned.

<sup>165</sup> M. Camos born at Benejac in 1818 died in 1865.

<sup>166</sup> Jean Hayet L 95

<sup>167</sup> Jean Lalanne born in March 1812 at Lahourcade, ordained in 1840, curate at Casteide-Cami at Cescau, member of the Society for Higher Studies in 1845, entered the Society of the Sacred Heart 25th October 1855, bursar to the Seminary at Oloron from 1855 to 1858, teacher in the same school, spiritual director at Orthez from 1860 to 1861. Died at Betharram 12th June 1861.

<sup>168</sup> The letter has been dictated from memory and this explains the vocabulary which lacks careful thought which would normally characterise the style of St Michael Garicoits. It was dictated by Canon Dominic Dupont. (see letter 326) in the process of beatification. This was the occasion. His brother Andre in minor orders at the seminary of Bayonne wished to give up his vocation. For three months he stayed at Betharram in search of a favourable decision. St Michael who was his director refused always saying 'You are a puppet of devil. God wishes that you be a priest. Decided and obstinate in his design the seminarist went to Father Fondeville who very quickly solved his case according to his wishes. Andre Dupont hastened to give the news to his brother Dominic, who was at Nay. He ran to Igon to show the letter of Andre to him. St Michael who reading it cried out; 'Poor child, he is the puppet of the devil.' And taking a sheet of paper, added Dominic, he wrote under my eyes to Father who had made the decision in these terms. My dear Father, I learn etc.

Pierre Simeon Fondeville born in Bruges (B-P) the 5th January 1805, ordained 13 June 1829 at first a Diocesan Missionary, then on the First January 1830 served at Labatmale 15th January 1832 at Asson, joined St Michael on the 13th July 1835 at first bursar of the newborn society, chaplain of Notre Dame de Betharram, Councillor general from 24 September 1863 to 22nd December 1872, the date of his death.

Already the history of Fr Fondeville was before everything else as confessor of St Michael Garicoits. But he is also after a long contact with his soul the admirer and friend; he would say of the founder it was more than a treasure that Monsignor Loison had left in diocese when leaving this earth. He however claimed the title and one cannot deny this priest who was for 35 years chaplain of a century of a virgin as the worker of Notre Dame de Betharram. The Queen of heaven had carefully prepared him so that from his birth he was consecrated to Notre Dame of Betharram. At five years of age he made his first pilgrimage there and renewed it each year. He was a good child since 1815 at the bedside of his father whose paralysis had brought to an end his medical career. When the village teacher to whom he was confided in rare moments taught him the rudiments and took him very far. When at 17 he presented himself to the minor seminary of St Pe he was admitted into a third year and earned himself a good position.

<sup>169</sup> Andrew Dupont born at Nay in 1836 a pupil of Notre Dame de Betharram, at the major seminary from 1850 to 1853, ordained priest 6th July 1862, where he assisted his brother and priest Dominique at the Collge of St Joseph Nay, honorary canon in 1908, died July 1908.

He was at first an altar server of St Michael Garicoits when he used to celebrate Mass at the monastery of the Dominican sisters at Nay. After his secondary studies he entered the major seminary and Bayonne and on the 18th September 1858 received by tonsure and Minor Orders. Then he began for him a long spiritual crisis. Up to this date he let himself be carried along joyfully towards the priesthood. From this moment he began to have doubts. Having consulted his director at the major seminary and the Rector himself who tried to reassure him. They encouraged him to carry on. More and more persistent this strange force took hold of him to turn him and aside from his path. He searched for a confessor who would tell him to leave but in vain. After two years of confusion he accepted to spend some time at Betharram. He submitted his case to St Michael. He prayed, listened, reflected, and requested that the young cleric convey to him at length and in writing the reasons which turned him from the priestly life. This report he gave to his bishop, Monsignor Lacroix. His opinion was given after some time, now that it was confirmed by the Bishop's authority he fulfilled with energy his duty of director.

Before hearing the Abbe Dupont he posed his conditions. Will you promise me that you will enter into holy orders? I am not promising this.

Without that I will not permit you to go to confession. Why? You are in a disposition of mortal sin. Today were you will leave the priest-hood, you would be going very much against the will of God. Embarrassed Andre Dupont had to leave without confession. He went to Father Fondeville who was very accommodating. But at the receipt of this letter from the Saints which is really a summary, Father Fondeville went to his penitent and told him; 'I am no longer concerning myself with you'. Always in search of a favourable decision, the seminarist went to make a retreat at Pau with the Jesuits. His desires were not accepted. At Mauleon on 30th April 1861 he became suddenly freed from these desires. He hastened to engage himself on 25th May 1861 into Sacred Orders. St Michael Garicoits went to Bayonne on 6th July 1862, he was present at his priestly ordination. After the ceremony he embraced the new priest said; 'How I have prayed for you! Now you are there'. Letter 326.

<sup>170</sup> St Michael used this letter in different forms over a period of years to different destinations, possibly from 1859-61. 123.

The style of the first paragraph seems somewhat different, suggesting that it is taken from some literary source.

<sup>171</sup> L 86

<sup>172</sup> Jean-Pierre Cazedepats born at Etsaut (B-P) on 24th October 1834, pupil of N-D de Betharram from 1848 to 1852, entered the Society September 1852, ordained October 1859, professor at Betharram from 1852-55, at Orthez from 1859 to 1862, Headmaster of the College of Moncade from 1862 to 1863, died 24th November 1903. He was an outstanding teacher whose sermons were models of style. His brother Jean born 20th June 1830, entered the Society 19th September 1852, ordained December 1861, chaplain at Sarrance where he died in 1871.

<sup>173</sup> This letter clearly shows what St Michael had to endure from the staff in Moncade. This letter goes to one of his most trusted and respected members. St Michael was being faithful to the Bishop's wishes against a tide of protest. His concern is abiding by the Will of God and urging others to remain firm in their responsibilities in obeying the bishop. The type of criticisms reveals much that has been alluded to in other letters and is invaluable to the modern reader.

<sup>174</sup> Auxiliary Priests of the Sacred Heart. L221

<sup>175</sup> Michael Leblanc born on 25th February 1793 died 28th December 1873. Father Leblanc is before everything else the messenger of God for St Michael Garicoits to fix and guarantee his vision of founder after which he directed and supported him in the ways of Providence in whatever he did. This eminent Jesuit was one of the artisans of the renewal in re-establishing the Society of Jesus in France. Over a period of a dozen years he established four prosperous houses in different parts of France without any other strength than obedience and his vow of poverty.

He was born in the Department of La Manche in the little village of St Amand near Torigny sur Vire. His studies only began after his first communion at 12 years of age. A retired teacher in the area gave him his first lessons. With his legendary Norman wisdom he quickly caught up the time he had lost. At the College of Coutances, he gained in 1812 the honour of receiving the diploma of bachelor from the hands of the principle of the University. This success enabled him to enter the major seminary. There his teacher of philosophy was Monsieur Roger who was one of the companions in exile of Father Varin who as a member of the Institute of the Fathers of the Faith prepared the restoration of the Jesuits in France. At a time when Orders were being allowed into France, he perceived in this young cleric the makings of a future Jesuit. He directed him towards the noviciate of the Society of Jesus in Paris. When he completed his theological studies Father Leblanc was professed on 15 October 1815 and ordained at Poitiers on 20 December 1817. His masters had formed his soul for the apostolate. He was already from 1817 a teacher of the 7th and 6th classes at the minor seminary of Montmorillon. He was appointed Minister at first and in 1820 Superior. For his Tertianship he returned to Paris in 1825. Soon after he was placed at the head of the House of Blamont, a small section of the great establishment of St Acheul. In 1827 he assisted Father Debrosse who organised the College of Billom. He was chased from there by the laws of June 1828. After a brief exile, he re-entered France, founded the residents of Clermont Ferrand.

He did not remain there long. On the eve of the revolution of July when he was about to be installed in the arch diocese on 14 December 1830, Monsignor d'Astros urged them to bring back the Jesuits to Toulouse. The same demand was made, repeated even by his predecessor, Cardinal Clermont Tonnerre. It now came from a friend. The Superiors of the Society believed there was no-one better to answer this mission than to send Father Michel Leblanc.

He left with a brother and lived wretchedly in the dilapidated convent of St Dominic which was scarcely habitable, in Rue de l'Inquisition. The circumstances were quite unfavourable. The revolution of July had aroused everywhere in the country a strong wave of anti-clericalism. At Toulouse eight Masonic lodges directed the attacks. The functionaries of the town were chosen from these Liberal characters. The municipality displayed its hostility against religion. The clergy were affected by this and were subjected to violence and abuse. The faithful deserted the Church and the practice of the sacraments diminished dramatically.

It was in this troubled situation that Father Leblanc began his preaching and his apostolate. By an astonishing disposition of Providence his success was immediate and extraordinary. Two years after his arrival his renown was already well established. At the hotel where he had put up before his retreat, St Michael called to ask for his address but before he had finished his sentence he was surprised to hear this reply; 'Are you are asking for this saint...?.. -

In less than eight years this good religious through his ministry had established in this town the foundations of works which have developed in a truly astounding manner. In 1838 he was in Paris, in 1839 after surmounting all difficulties, he founded the residence of Quimper, 1842 lead him to Poitiers with Father Varlet the old teacher of rhetoric of Lamartine to establish a house there. In 1847 he passed to Brugelette, and to the seminary of Blois in 1853 as prefect and spiritual director. With the same function he came back to Poitiers in 1854 for the foundation of the colleges of St Vincent de Paul and St Joseph. It was there that he ended his days, tottering on his walking stick and isolated from the world by a growing deafness.

In appearance he had a bald head and a grey beard. He was energetic and with a kindly, upright and prudent character. He worked with a firm zeal and was ready to adapt proves this. In 1828 after 10 years of separation he consented to make a short visit to his family. As soon as his 10 brothers and sisters with their relatives came from six and eight places. In the early morning they were at their family home but he to the great disappointment of all, he remained in his room in prayer. At Poitiers and at Toulouse he had the reputation of a great director of souls. In the colleges of the Society his direction especially among the pupils of the Society of Mary gained solid missionary vocation. His Superiors knew his gifts. They confided to him the charge of admonitor and spiritual director for more than 26 years. According to a plan of St Ignatius the Admonitor of the Father Rector is chosen for his prudence and by the grace of God the guide and the support of the superior of the residence. The spiritual director of a community is there to give each religious an example. To such men of discernment and men of God is reserved this work of light and of holiness.

Such was the good Father Leblanc to whom St Michael addressed himself on two other occasions.

The first meeting was around the 31st July 1831 and the second 27 May 1833 between the nomination of Father Carrerot to Parish Priest of Limendous, where the Superior of a major seminary was passing on his return to Toulouse and when Mgr d'Arbou refused Fr Chirou to enter Betharram

For several years from 1828 St Michael Garicoits was struggling in his soul with a serious problem of direction. A woman of common-sense that he respected, Sister Marie Perpetua, Superior of the convent of Igon urged him to create a religious community for men on the model of the Daughters of the Cross. Her foundress, St Elizabeth Bicher des Ages who was for him as St Teresa was for St John of the Cross assured him that it was a good mission at Providence reserved for him. Even more during his Mass or in thanksgiving and also on several occasions God made him feel that this project was in accord with his wishes. If he hesitated still without undertaking anything it was that doubts came to him occasionally in his desire for perfection in his desire for the religious life, he wondered whether his place was not in the Society of Jesus which attracted him.

<sup>176</sup> Set up these things

<sup>177</sup> Agents, co-workers, implies what St Michael envisaged in being an 'auxiliary' of the Sacred Heart

<sup>178</sup> For the school year of 1859-60 the teaching staff at Oloron remained almost the same as the preceding year; but the College of Orthez was reduced from 12 to 9.

<sup>179</sup> St Michael Garicoits did not finish this letter because he had to leave it for other duties. The last sentence is unfinished. But he asked one of his assistants, Father Chirou to complete it. This was done by the following letter.

F V D Pau 4th November

Dear friend,

The Superior has given me this letter addressed to you with the charge of explaining it. You must yourself take charge of the teachers of Moncade, appoint those of the College, in conjunction with Father Serres. Father Lalanne is in charge of the direction of the college having as assistant Father Dartigues, naturally taching the most advanced class. With the proviso that everything is under your management. Father Lalanne is confessor to the children.

This is what I understand; we are at the door of the confessional and before their Blessed Sacrament exposed etc etc.

I am going to Larreule, in the Canton Arzacq,with Father Pourtou.

Betharram has already this morning 90 pupils.

Try to draw yourself everyone for their best, and pray much for the couriers. All yours in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Chirou, priest.

A thousand greetings to Father Serres etc etc and to Father Goailard

The illness of Fr Serres obliged St Michael to replace him with Fr Lalanne and re-organise Orthez. Fr Barbe was in charge of the College as headmaster and let Fr Lalanne be in charge of the Primary School as headmaster

<sup>180</sup>. Like all achievers, St Michael wants things once decided to be put into effect immediately.' Go forward !(en avant). Start things moving! (Imprimez le mouvement!) Give it a push! (donnez del'elan!); such were his orders to those who were leaders.L218

<sup>181</sup> The Dames of St Maur or the Sisters of charitable Instruction of the Infant Jesus were founded by Fr Barre in Rouen in 1666. Established in Paris in the Rue St Maur. they came to Orthez in 1854 at the request of the Archpriest and Madam Laprade, opening a house for the education of girls. The house lacked resources and without the devotion and discrete generosity of the priests of the College of Moncade, it would have been difficult to maintain. This was due especially to Frs Barbe and Serres.

<sup>182</sup> Fr Mirande

<sup>183</sup> Above referred to the College of Moncade and below to the Primary School in the lower part of the town of Orthez. College of Moncade fee paying and primary school free

<sup>184</sup>.Firm,in all things be firm and gentle, favourite motto of St Michael.

<sup>185</sup> Referring to both schools

<sup>186</sup> according to the rules of the Institute

<sup>187</sup> Here was another problem nothing new in any relationship; the amount and the use of money.

<sup>188</sup> Formation. These observations of St Michael show that he was continually aware of not only the need for formation, but of the dispositions necessary before it began. He noted the response of these two priests as a sign of a suitable disposition. On the other hand he was worried about Fr Goailhard's. Today counselling is very popular, but not so popular is a counsellor's need for supervision. In the past Superiors were expected to do this which St Michael did. In the course of time its importance has largely been forgotten with unfortunate results.

<sup>189</sup> Lk 15; 18,21

<sup>190</sup> The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin. November 21st.

<sup>191</sup> Lk 1;38 L 221

<sup>192</sup> . The priest had this title; Auxiliaries of the Sacred Heart. The recipient may have been Fr Goailhard.

<sup>193</sup> Fr Barbe would be the Superior. L222 Could be a variant of L221

<sup>194</sup> Procope Lassalle was born in 1751at Sainte Pe de Bigorre from a family of 15 children.. After studies in the Benedictine Abbey he entered in 1767 the Society of the Priests of Christian Doctrine of Toulouse. First he was teacher of literature at the College of Lesquille, then of theology at the seminary of Gimont and Condom, he was rector of the College of Villefranche de Rouergue up to the Revolution in 1789. He refused the oath of loyalty to the State and withdrew to Sainte Claire de Villefranche and St Catherine de Rodez. On February 24th he regained his freedom. after the Concordat in 1802 he was given a pension 266fr.66c. In 1804 the Bishop of bayonne received him into his diocese and appointed him director of the pilgrimages of the shrine of Our Lady of betharram. From this time he became very devoted to Betharram. From 1806 he began the restoration of the Calvary already begun by Fr Joseph Sempe in 1801. In 1808 he acquired the monastery of the ancient chaplains with its surroundings, where he began a minor Seminary which was transformed in 1812 into the major Seminary. He built the second story and repaired the facade of the Virgin. In recognition Mgr Loison on 26th November 1818 named him honorary canon of the Cathedral, Mgr d'Astros his successor kept him on as Superior at Betharram in spite of his age and feebleness.

These honours made Fr lassle even more generous. In 1822 he bought the Benedictine Abbey of St Pe de Bigorre where the future Bishop of Lourdes Mgr Laurent placed the minor Seminary of his diocese. In 1825 at Igon then in 1828 at sainte Pe he gave a house to the Daughters of the Cross for a residence and a school.

Before the Revolution he was a very respected teacher. Under the Reign of Terror he had been an heroic confessor of the Faith. Under the Empire and the restoration even if he had lost his prestige and authority in the Seminary at Betharram, he merits the title of a servant of the Church and a benefactor to the country. He died July 5th 1831.

<sup>195</sup> Fr Serres because of his degrees was alone recognised by the educational authorities as headmaster of the College. This shows that St Michael was not above bending the law and that the conflict of authority may have had some bearing on Fr Serres professional status and St Michael's directives which may have come from the Bishop. It seems there was a conflict in wielding authority and possibly confusion over responsibilities for Fr Goailhard and Fr Barbe, referred to in previous letters.

<sup>196</sup> . One notes the exclusion of women from all quarters of a male religious house which continued up to Vatican II.

<sup>197</sup> See L 219

<sup>198</sup> This gives us a glimpse of St Michael's advice to an inexperienced young priest. What is the sin and what are the embarrassing situations he has brought upon himself? The superior is the one who is responsible for his direction and correction. 'Get to work' St Michael believed that one's progress is in one's own hands in co-operating with God; one's natural abilities are the means of overcoming difficulties which the power of grace will transform. L225 over Thes 2;20 Phil 4;1 150

<sup>199</sup> The Primary school of Orthez was in the buildings of the old town College whose name it retained.

<sup>200</sup> It is up to you

<sup>201</sup> This seems to be an end of year review.

<sup>202</sup> The metaphor of steering a ship with the members as the instruments of God....a well known figure of the Church applied to the Community.

<sup>203</sup> L218 A feature of St Michael's direction was that he directed with care and prudence and yet with firmness in going forward.

<sup>204</sup> There seems a lack of drive and a tendency to stand still which St Michael urges Fr B to change. He intimates that fear lies behind this inaction and possibly a lack of faith. 'Imagined impossibilities' can only be overcome by a bold move, a push, a thrust from being open to the Holy Spirit. He regrets the failure to grasp situations by failing to utilise the qualities of those working with him. He urges trust in the grace of one's vocation; what we would call today launching into collaborative ministry.

<sup>205</sup> employer le sans payer.. This is Bearnais meaning losing time, procrastinating, being silly.

<sup>206</sup> Fr Dartigues L206. He took over the headship of the school which Fr Lalanne had quickly abandoned. He succeeded Fr Pierre Barbe whose methods and example he failed to implement effectively. His manner was disorganised.

<sup>207</sup> To all his holy Church. Taken from the Mass; the suscipiat.

<sup>208</sup> Fr Meyiaa thinks this refers to activism without the input of faith in which St Michael laments. Action for its own sake does not aspire to holiness. He sees our apostolate and our actions as primarily the work of God. He often said; 'Let God act. You can do nothing by yourselves.' DS345.59 'It is for Him to act, we receive his action.' Summ. Object. 2 & 41. The principal role is God's 'acting in us interiorly, working there all good things.'. DS 359 Our task is; 'each with the grace of God must be the author of his conversion and of his advancement in virtue.' DS 359. Our efforts are needed 'God wants to be served ...' Our efforts will bear no fruit if there is no faith....'We intervene with our weaknesses and our delusions.' DS280 'One risks retarding the grace of God instead of advancing it.' 'You should never have the arrogance nor the misfortune of substituting your action in place of God's.' L209 Experience and faith showed him to be on guard against disordered activity; l'activite desordonnee.

<sup>209</sup> The first rule of the Summary of the Constitutions L209

<sup>210</sup> Nec tamen idcirco vetamini, si quid forte vobis occurrat a Superioris sententia diversum, idque vobis, consulto suppliciter Domino, exponendum videatur, quominus id ad Superiorem referre possitis. Verum in hac re, ne vos amor vestri iudiciumque decipiat, illa cautio est adhibenda ut animo sitis et ante post relationem aequissimo, non solum quod pertinet ad eam

<sup>211</sup> It is very important and extremely necessary to advance in virtue. Let everyone give themselves to perfect obedience recognising their superior whoever he is as the one who takes the place of Jesus Christ, our Lord, by having inner respect and love for him. And that not only in their exterior execution of whatever he commands, they obey him entirely, promptly, courageously, with the required humility and without excuse in whatever things both difficult and contrary to one's inclinations he orders, but let them try also to have an inner resignation and a real sense of sacrifice of their own will and judgments while conforming in all things their will and their judgement with what the Superior wishes and judges, except in matters of sin; while proposing the will and the judgement of the superior as rule for one's will and judgement in order to become more conformed to the primary and sovereign rule of all good will and all well regulated judgments which is nothing less than the goodness and the eternal wisdom of God. 31st Rule of the Summary Expediit in primis ad profectum, et valde necessarium est, ut omnes perfectae obedientiae se dedant, Superiorem, quicumque ille sit, loco Christi Domini nostri agnoscentes, et interna reverentia et amore eum prosequentes. Nec solum in executione externa eorum quae injungit integre, prompte, fortiter et cum humilitate debita, sine excusationibus obediant, licet difficilia et secundam sensualitatem repugnata jubeat; verum etiam conetur interius resignationem et veram abnegationem propriae voluntatis et iudicii habere, voluntatem ac iudicium suum cum eo quod Superior vult et sentit, in omnibus peccatum non cerneretur. Omnino conformantes, proposita sibi voluntate ac iudicio Superioris pro regula suae voluntatis ac iudicii, quo exactius conformentur rem



<sup>212</sup> Let no one inform himself through curiosity of what the Superiors ought to do in the administration, and not to speak about it by making possible conjectures; but let each be concerned with himself and his duty, awaiting the hand of God in whatever must be regulated in regard to himself and to others.

Quae a Superioribus circa administrationem agenda sunt, nemo curiose ab aliis exquirat, aut conjecturam faciendo, de iis sermonem misceat; sed unusquisque, sibi ac muneri suo attendens, quidquid de se atque aliis constituendum erit, tamquam de manu Dei expectet.

<sup>213</sup> Text no. 19 on the letter on obedience ..If some quite different sentiment presents itself to your mind, different to that of the superior, and that after having consulted our Lord in prayer it seems to you that you should make it known, you can do it. But for fear that self love and particular feelings may deceive you, it is proposed to take this precaution; before conveying your feeling, and after having done it, you hold yourself in complete equanimity of Spirit, being quite disposed not only to undertake all or to leave what was considered, but yet to approve and to regard as best whatever the Superior determines.

Nec tamen idcirco vetamini, si quid forte vobis occurrat a Superioris sententia diversum, idque vobis, consulto suppliciter Domino, exponendum videatur, quominus id ad Superiorem referre possitis. Verum in hac re, ne vos amor vestri, iudiciumque decipiat, illa cautio est adhibenda ut animo sitis et ante relationem aequissimo, non solum quod pertinet ad eam rem de qua agitur vel suscipiendam vel deponendam; sed etiam ad approbandam rectiusque putandum quidquid Superiore placuerit.

<sup>214</sup> This is not the kind of professional language one would find in education today, but the idea seems to suggest Fr Barbe as mentor to help Fr Dartigues to avoid inappropriate behaviour as headmaster since he was not qualified for this post.

<sup>215</sup> Not clear what this refers to, unless to meetings between the two schools for planning. Not clear whether the two directors are the headmasters. St Michael does not seem to think their presence necessary.

<sup>216</sup> Ps 30.25. 'Act like a man, and your heart will be strengthened.' Jerusalem 'Be brave, take heart, all who put your hope in Yahweh.'

<sup>217</sup> This seems to refer to implementing the Bishop's directives as expressed by St Michael. He uses gnougnou, local dialect which may sound humorous which has been rendered as 'dallying'.

<sup>218</sup> Fr Barbe was Superior of both Communities at Orthez, the primary school and College.

<sup>219</sup> . Fr Dartigues was the deputy of the College at Orthez.L206

<sup>220</sup> The College seems to have some control over the primary school where Fr Dartigues succeeded Fr Barbe.

<sup>221</sup> This means his assistants

<sup>222</sup> Jean Lalanne was headmaster of the College.

<sup>223</sup> Fr Goailhard was bursar of Orthez. L278

<sup>224</sup> Although patriarchal, it shows his personal concern for each member; not without its value today.

<sup>225</sup> Basic Christian priorities of St Michael in fostering good relations between staff and children as a priority in the Sunday meeting.

<sup>226</sup> St Michael's pursuit of academic excellence in creating an educational structure.

<sup>227</sup> In 1859 scarcely two years after its foundation, there were already 116 pupils, 70 dayboys and 46 boarders following 3 courses; the youngest class divided into 3 sections, the middle class with two sections, the senior class of 17 pupils. In 1860 they were divided into 6 classes; of 4 sections and two sections of Latin.

<sup>228</sup> Their progress was notable; 101 gained top marks in September, and 151 in December.

<sup>229</sup> Phil 4;1

<sup>230</sup> s'orienter is a particular meaning used by St Michael which means that they will turn towards God.

<sup>231</sup> Ps 19;6 exultavit ut gigas ad currendam viam. He rejoiced like giant running his course.

<sup>232</sup> with great heart and a willing spirit230231

<sup>233</sup> At the start of the School Year 1859-60 he received presumably from he Bishop the request to re organise the work in the two schools of Orthez. The difficulties discouraged him, St Michael tries to encourage him with words from Scripture....Sursum corda Lift up your hearts..It is interesting to note that St Michael always encourages those in difficulty to act with joy in their hearts....Imposuisti...Ps 66. God you have put us to the test refined us like silver, let us fall into the net; you have put a heavy strain upon our backs, let men ride over our heads...There seems to some difficult characters to move.

He makes the point that others have had to bear such burdens..The words of the prophet often come to him; to open one's heart to this situation..Corde magno.2Mac 1;3..and a call for military courage Transimus..We have walked through fire and water, and you have led us into a place of refreshment. Ps 66;12. The modern translation is; ' but now the ordeal by fire and water is over, you have led us out to breathe again.'

<sup>234</sup> These qualities are those of our charism....humility, abandonment to God in the belief that he has charge of everything and that one not lack in anything and in the end gain his blessing... This is the reason for perseverance and hope in pursuing God's works....