

CORRESPONDENCE

of saint Michael Garicoïts

(New Letters: 630 - 642)

NEW LETTERS Year 1863 Undated Letters

630 - To Didace Barbe Superior of the College of St Joseph

5 January 1863

I wish all of you overseas a happy New Year, a year full of spiritual riches. As the indispensable way forward I wish you to go to the school of our Lord unceasingly.¹

*Sed ut veri veneratores et pii cultores eius mysteriuorum et disciplinorum, nihil falsum sentientes de euis natura humana, nihil indignum de euis deitate, nihil falsum de nostra cuisque libertate, nihil indignum de pleno et supremo eius dominio ac voluntate, procul abigentes terrenarum caliginem rationum, curantes denique ut ab illuminatae fidei oculo mundanae sapientiae fumus abscedat.*² In this way, *abnegantes impietatem et saecularia desideria, sobrie, juste, pie vivent omnes socii,*³ they will root out their bad dispositions; the worldly spirit of reasoning, a carnal spirit and worldly wisdom. *Sobrie,* sobriety, by the practice of moderation, by advice and support, enlightenment and help; *juste,* with justice:

1 towards the superiors whoever they are, through respect and obedience which they deserve.

2 towards equals, by advice and support, enlightenment and help

3 towards inferiors,⁴ by care and discipline per custodiam and disciplinam.

So after fulfilling all these duties of justice towards superiors, equals to inferiors, pie,⁵ with respect, by showing oneself before God and men truly useless servants, et sic in cordibus eorum justitia et iudicium erunt praeparatio sedis Domini, sicque Dominus regnabit et terra exultabit. Amen. Amen.⁶

Insta in illis opportune, importune, in omni patientia, etc,etc.⁷ it is the only remedy to use against upsets and criticisms, and occasionally if scandalous, from our sad humanity, always and every-where the same.

2 I heartily approve the conduct that you have shown in regard to M Larrouy this in the business of the priest sent by the Bishop. The behaviour of M Larrouy has been truly blameworthy. I understand whatever M Sardoy has had to suffer in these circumstances, but you need to take the measures that the same thing will not be repeated.

Let M Larrouy come back to us where he will do very well as a missionary or something else. When you can, I ask you to send him to me, considering the need we have of him, because M Carrerot is bursar at the minor seminary of Oloron. M Perguilhem can scarcely hear confessions any more. I have no doubt that Monsignor will authorise me to recall him. Send a prompt reply to profit by the circumstances.

For you I have only one word to say :Euge! Go forward! quae retro sunt obliviscens,⁸ and you will succeed. What the Lord God wants certainly happen.

All yours

Garicoits

PS I will probably send you a rather good tailor, intelligent, but as yet quite naive. You'll get from him what you can. He appears very attached to the Society. He is a near relative of brother Joannes. I believe I've already spoken to you a little about him.

631 - To Jean Hayet

February 1863

Thank you for the hundred francs that you have sent. I have hastened to have the 50 masses distributed by M Nabarra. I recognized in this gesture the same M Hayet as before. I pray the Lord to preserve him and keep him....

How I used to offer him to you, every day at the altar, and say to the Lord, when thinking of you and of M Espagnolle:

Give them the recta sapere et de Sancti Spiritus consolatione gaudere, ut euae agenda sunt videant et ad implenda quae viderint convalescant⁹ uniquely in their interest.

All yours in the Lord.

Garicoits, Priest.

632 - To Didace Barbe Superior of the College of St Joseph

633 - To Angelin Minvielle, superior of the seminary of Oloron

Betharram 16th March 1863

1 I have sent you a copy of the letter that Monsignor has written to me on the subject of M Lapatz¹⁰. You will see that his Excellency appreciates as we all do the seriousness of M Lapatz's behaviour from the past, as in the case of a recidivist,¹¹ he orders his immediate removal to another house.¹²

I am writing to him a few words...

As for Monsignor I recommend you show him great respect.....

Garicoits

634 - To Jean Hayet

17 March 1863

1 I can only praise the excellent project...

2 I always regret extremists

3 I have not the latest news of M Cathalogne. I know that he is more sick than blamable.....

All yours in the Lord

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635 - To Didace Barbe, superior of the College of St Joseph¹³

22nd of April 1863

1 They have done well to acknowledge you and you must show yourself as superior of Montevideo. You are the superior of all the others there. But as superior you cannot exercise your authority everywhere in each residence, it is necessary that there is a local superior. In fact you are a true provincial, with almost full power, because of the distance of places, on behalf of the superior general. On the other hand you must keep very good contact with him.

2 As for the business of conferences at the chapel for the Basques of Montevideo, it is quite deplorable. Similar measures ought only to be employed very rarely after being discussed with those responsible. It is inexperience, providentially an untenable posture, it will suffice to make the observation to stop repeating similar indiscretions.

3 As to M Larrouy it is certain that his presence here would be very useful for mission work; there is a real need for reorganisation. And we are all seriously busy with it.

I am very consoled with the attitude of M Larrouy, although I expect nothing less from the sensitivity of his conscience. One can pardon those who act like that. I attach so much importance to the American work, to have a perfect understanding with the Bishop of Buenos Aires and the Vicar apostolic so as not in the first place, not cause prejudice, and I believe the more we help him in this way the more heaven will help us.

Garicoits

636 - To Andre Casaubon¹⁴

Some days before his death 14th of May 1863

Write to M Casaubon that I have never been able to understand his self-assurance which has drawn public attention to himself, in a country where it would be so much better to speak the least possible about oneself where he has gained for himself a certain reputation, rightly or wrongly of vanity which is always a disaster.

Let him keep out of the limelight and keep himself out of the way and do his duties as parish priest with a great humility and charity like the Divine Master: factus obediens, etc.... It is the only way to rehabilitate himself before God. From then on, it is less important! Well intentioned people will know the good that he did and rejoice in knowing how it was done.

Why hold the opinion of men, which is so changeable? We cannot understand that someone who is so humble during his retreat with us, then leaves to go about like a braggart which is a very serious fault; a habit to fight against ceaselessly.

His friends are surprised and complain about his self-assurance.

Garicoits

637 - To M. Florent Lapatz

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All yours in the Lord

Garicoits

638 - To M Arnaudet,¹⁵ Parish Priest of Sainte Colome

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The child Poure¹⁶ doesn't want to charge for this invitation. For myself I am not able to oblige anyone to do it. This is all I can say. Unfortunately I have found it strange that they insist on this since we know that the child is here free, with the consent of his mother who had been stuck with him up to this time. This seems to be a mystery.

All yours Lord

Garicoits

639 - To Jean Baptiste Esquerre, and Parish Priest of St Armou¹⁷

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There is no need to worry. This is what happened between the parish priest of Coarrazze and me. Knowing that this good parish priest had come to this area I told him that the mission was taking place at Maspie. I haven't spoken to him about any other mission in this area. I haven't even thought of a mission at Saint Armou. Only while speaking about this region, my young and always old friendship for you have urged me to ask this person if he knew you and spoke to him about you ex abundantia cordis.¹⁸ That is all!

In writing these words I pray with renewed pleasure to assure you of my unalterable friendship and ask you to pray for me sometimes and for our members.

All yours in the Lord

Garicoits, Priest.

640 - To a Daughter of the Cross

Poor Sister

Without doubt you can do nothing by yourself, but you can do all things in Jesus Christ.

You are quite happy; but do not to put too much profit on your happiness.

Glory to God in the highest in peace to all men of goodwill, sinners though they may be.

Sincere wishes, with much respect, your servant.

Garicoits, Priest.

PS I believe that you have already seen Fr Fradin or at least you will soon see him.

641 - To some Sisters

Live in the presence of God and be aware of his presence; pray without ceasing for his help and make acts of abandonment of yourself to the will of God.

May your interior life grow in the knowledge of God, of yourselves, of your duties and of eternal life.

May whatever you do externally will not lose a moment since you must render an account.

Pay continual attention to yourselves; never carry your crucifix without reflection, without imitation of the Divine one crucified. Follow faithfully the inspirations which urge you to make some sacrifice to God, to correct yourself, to be more interior and fervent in your spiritual exercises.

Correct whatever is displeasing to God within yourself and per-haps opposed to your perfection.

You must never be discouraged in spite of your weakness and falls.

Your state of life associates you with the angels, be visible angels. For that let God be always in your mind and in your behaviour.

Never be lacking in silence: the less you speak of creatures, the more God will speak in your heart.

Do you want to make God's name holy, let him reign within you? Pay attention to the presence of the Holy Trinity.

The memory of God's presence will fill you with fervour, recollection, consolation, fear of displeasing the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit.

No more interior or exterior dissipation.

Do not pray while working if you cannot pay attention to God's grandeur, your lowliness and your needs.

642 - To M Salvandi

Dear E...

One year has passed over our heads, you are happy with what you have fulfilled so well.

Let us hope that in all the pursuits of your youth, you will never go against your conscience. You will find there the best thing in this world, the satisfaction that shows respect for others, and the security that gives you your own self-esteem.

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¹ This text is in the Pensees p374. Copy of Letter Vol 2 L390 with significant changes

St Michael reflects on the Jesuit constitutions. As a man of his time he sees the confrontation of good and evil from the perspectives of the Church's problems in the Europe of that time: souls who sleep by following a path of sin and perdition, unless Christ raise them up and draws them to himself along the path of grace and salvation. The option is either the Reign of man in the school of the devil or the Reign of God in the school of the Lord.

² But as true worshippers and devout observers of his mysteries and teachings, believe nothing false about his human nature, nothing unworthy of his divinity; nothing false about our freedom, nothing unworthy of his full and sovereign dominion and will, by taking care to be enlightened by the eyes of faith. Put far from you the confusion of worldly wisdom. (St Leo Sermon 7 on Christmas.)

In this Latin phrase, St Michael inserts some words of St Leo, which struck him in a sermon from the breviary: "On this day of the Nativity, dearest beloved, the true adorer is also the devoted worshipper, who neither feels anything unseemly about the incarnation of the Lord, nor anything unworthy of the Godhood..... when therefore, we approach to understand the mystery of the Nativity of Christ, his birth through the virgin Mother, let us cast aside, the confusion of rationalism, and by the light of faith take away the smoke of worldly wisdom." (Sermon VII De Nativitate Domini)

³ By renouncing impiety and the lusts of the world, the members of the society will live accordingly in sobriety, justice, piety.

⁴ This was common term in the class structures of the day which could refer to any more who was doing a less important or academic job or being under their authority. The class structure was superiors, equals, inferiors.

⁵ pie with respect

⁶ and so with justice in their hearts and preparing for the judgement seat of the Lord, so the Lord will reign and be exulted on earth

⁷ put this into practice in season and out of season with all patience.

⁸ The forgetful are left behind

⁹ may they be always truly wise and ever rejoice in his consolation, and by acting in this way, may see and recover fulfil what they see.

¹⁰ Letter to MGR Lacroix dated the 12th of March 1863 has been kept: "you have done well to tell me about M Lapatz Junior, since I have seriously put to him what seriousness, piety and respect for the rule's require of a teacher and of a religious. He appeared to understand this well enough and promised to be obedient and more careful in the future concerning what he has been seriously criticised about. In this affair, I believed that it is better to send him to Oloron, in order to avoid an angry confrontations in the house of education. It is right that he humble himself and ask pardon from M Minvielle. If he is still unwilling to change, what I hope for him will not take place, to transfer him into another house. Francis Bishop of Bayonne."

¹¹ recidivist is a canonical term meaning someone who refuses to change or an habitual sinner.

¹² M Lapatz has been disobedient. In January 1823, the very Reverend Father Etchecopar in the course of his visit to Oloron had forbidden him to receive a pupil in his room, the pupil has been threatened with expulsion

¹³ St Michael was in bed ill when he dictated this letter to Fr Etchecopar. Prior to this he had been ill for 3 weeks

¹⁴ He did not remain at the Monastery of Fontgombault and returned to parish ministry.

¹⁵ Arnaudet in 1811 at Rebenacq Pyr Atl. Ordained in 1835, curate at Arudy in 1836, at Gurmencou in 1838, ministering at Montestrucq in 1840, at Sainte Colome from 1842 to 1879.

¹⁶ Pupil at the College of Betharram

¹⁷ Jean Baptiste Esquerre, born in 1805 at Accous, pupil of St Michael Garicoits at the seminary of Betharram, ordained 24th of March 1834, curate of Sainte Jacque at Pau in 1834, then parish priest of St Armou from 1837 to 1872.

¹⁸ as a friend