

## St. Gaspar's Letters

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1201

July 10, 1825  
 Cardinal Luigi Ercolani  
 Rome  
 Your Eminence

I thank you for your recent letter and I understand all that you were pleased to communicate to me in it.

With regard to the problem in S. Ivo, relative to the boundaries of a piece of land or so lying between the two monasteries in Sezze, I understand the dispositions which your most reverend Eminence is going to arrange so as to bring about some results.

I forgot to tell you in my other letters that the monastery has a few pine worktables, if I remember correctly It would be very helpful to put them up for sale so as to extinguish one or the other debt. I asked the most reverend Treasurer about this but he has given me a reply about a lot of other things but said nothing on this matter. If you think it is a good idea, try to use your own most efficacious mediation.

Your most reverend Eminence also should keep before your mind some extraordinary subsidy which you will petition from our Holy Father. I kiss the sacred purple. I recommend myself wholeheartedly to your prayers and I always anxiously await favorable news concerning your health. Most reverend Eminence, I have the honor of declaring once again with esteem and respect that I am

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

*Gaspare C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

Frosinone, July 10, 1825

1202

July 10, 182  
 Tommaso Meloni  
 Convittore  
 S. Felice di Giano

Hail to the Precious Blood of J.C.

My dearest in the Lord

In reply to your most esteemed letter, I say to you that you should not cease removing

those thoughts from your mind. Select a single director upon whom you can depend, according to the advice of De Sales, for in doing this you make him the basis for your peace and tranquility in God. The devil would like to have you at one time make a judgment about this matter in one way and at another time, in another way. You must do nothing else than make an act of humility in the presence of God. Turn your thoughts to Paradise, to the divine loveableness, and nothing more. In short, may I express myself in this way, down with your intellectual rationalizations. Surrender your heart to God, for in this lies everything.

Why get all upset about everything that you see or notice around you externally? Let us think of ourselves and let us preach to others by our good example, excusing our neighbors intentions and thanking God who illuminates us. Let us leave the judging to God in all things. The humble soul recognizes only its own wretchedness.

It is unnecessary, therefore, to get all excited about things that won't come back to your memory. It is sufficient that you remember the basic things. Recall P. Suarez, who through Most Holy Mary received so many blessings on his studies. You, too, should put your trust in the Blessed Virgin Mary and have no fears.

Aridity in prayer is ordained by God so that we might recognize that: *anima nostra, sicut terra sine aqua tibi.*<sup>1</sup> God sees that our intent is to serve him and love him, so as to enjoy him eternally. He, who has begun the work in us, will bring it to perfection. *Qui coepit opus, ipse perficiet consolidabitque.*<sup>2</sup>

Courage, therefore. There will never be a lack of crosses, for we are even crosses to ourselves. Our holy religion, however, is the great balance that shows us how to govern ourselves and make our wills consonant with the supreme will of God.

I have not failed to send two *scudi* per month to your mother. Whenever you yourself need something by way of clothing or anything else, all you have to do is let me know,<sup>3</sup> In the meantime, let us take up our rest in the Hearts of Jesus and Mary; and in them, may I repeat that I am with esteem

*Suo infimo in Xto Servo,*<sup>4</sup>  
G. C. del Bufalo

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<sup>1</sup> Our soul, for you like the earth without water.

<sup>2</sup> He who began the work will complete and will confirm it.

<sup>3</sup> The Saint, in order to assist Meloni's vocation in every possible way, used to help him even in a financial way during the time that he resided in the House of Studies, both by sending a monthly amount to his mother as well as by providing for all his necessities and expenses. Here are the words of Meloni himself, expressed in a letter of July 20, 1838, addressed to Fr. Giovanni Merlini: "There was one last obstacle to be hurdled, namely, that with the little that I had, I was unable to bear the responsibility of an aged mother. So, he took it upon himself to provide everything necessary and he continued thereafter to do so with an exuberant charity, until he finally led me to the status in which I presently find myself, thanks to his most loving attention"

<sup>4</sup> Being your lowest servant in Jesus.

Mis. Ap.

1203

July 10, 1825

Fr. Pasquale De Nardis

Sermoneta

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable Father Pasquale

Through Father Pietro Spina I am sending you these few lines in order to assure you that I received your recent most appreciated letter. I do not have the time now to be lengthy, but you can read everything that lies within my heart. Let us encourage each other evermore toward the pursuit of perfection and let us not cease studying the great book of the Crucifix. From that book, we learn profound humility, indomitable patience and gentle, industrious charity so that we are able to attract souls to his love. Yes, let us pray very much for the reform of our times that is so necessary. Let us try to make everyone see that serving God is sweet and that by word and deed we can stimulate in

each person a love for the holy Cross. With beginners we should adapt the burden in accordance with the strengths of their spirit; by corroborating these interior strengths of spirit, they will begin to make progress. May the life of Jesus Christ always remain fully before our eyes. All of this should serve to enkindle fervor within us reciprocally and assist us in our mutual striving for paradise. Do not fail to keep me incessantly in your prayers, and, while kissing your hands, consider me to be, in Jesus Crucified *qui dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine Suo*<sup>5</sup>

*Suo infimo in Christo servo*<sup>6</sup>

*Gaspare Can. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

House in Frosinone, July 10, 1825

1204

July 10, 1825

Mr. Egidio Catucci

Atri

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Most illustrious sir

I have appointed a person who will contact the new Father General of the Conventuals with regard to what was requested by your confraternity or congregation which you should not

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<sup>5</sup> Who loved us and washed us in his own blood.

<sup>6</sup> Being your lowest servant in Christ.

cease to direct with all the enthusiasm of your soul. Up to now, it has been directed very well for the pursuit of the greater glory of God. I am expecting even more favorable results.

I wrote to the Jesuit Father, Master of Novices in Naples, concerning the renewal of the collegio there. His name is Father Tessandoni;<sup>7</sup> also, Father Provincial Vulliet whom I likewise encouraged to look after this good work. Now, it is up to you to see that this effective action is continued.

Give my best regards to anyone who still remembers me, but in particular to Father Gaetano Pretaroli. Recommending myself to your prayers, with esteem and respect, most venerable Egidio, I remain

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

Mission and Retreat House in Frosinone, July 10, 1825

1205

July 11, 1825

Fr. Vincenzo Ceccacci

Guarcino

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable Vicar

Thank you for your very greatly appreciated letter. I am sending you the package of the aggregation obtained in Rome. Most venerable Canon, pray and have others pray for me, for I am and will constantly be with esteem and respect

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

Frosinone, July 11, 1825

1206

July 15, 1825

Fr. Antonio Loffreda

Sermoneta

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Most esteemed Father Antonio

With pleasure did I read and have others of our men read the beautiful sonnet that you composed to the glories of St. Francis Xavier; that is a devotion that I highly recommend as the

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<sup>7</sup> Elsewhere, the name appears as Tessandini.

one that will infuse into your soul a true and pure zeal for the ever greater glory of the Lord. However, to guard and to increase the holy gifts granted to us by God, let us not cease, my dearest in Jesus Christ, to ground ourselves in holy humility. This virtue is the basis for every good work, the source of every heavenly blessing and the ladder to heaven. We are worth something only because of the aggregate of God's gifts given to us. Let us repeat often: Oh my Lord, *abyssus miseriae, invocat abyssum misericordiae*.<sup>8</sup> These are the words with which the celebrated missionary, Father Segneri, Sr., drew his life to an end. God wants us to cultivate those gifts that he has given to us. So, continue to advance both in your spiritual life as well as in your acquisition of knowledge, since we, as priests, must be *lux mundi et sal terrae*.<sup>9</sup> The Fathers of the Church were holy and learned men. Therefore, the time spent there in our house of studies is the most beautiful time of our lives. I wish that your days, as well as my own, will be days full of merit, virtue and holiness. May Jesus be our delight, our peace, our comfort. I leave you in his Divine Heart, and with esteem and respect, I reaffirm that I am

*Suo infimo in Christo servo*<sup>10</sup>

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

House in Frosinone, July 15, 1825

1207

July 20, 1825

Msgr. Bellisario Cristaldi

Rome

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable Monsignor

May you keep this most humble letter of mine (*in communicatione spiritus*<sup>11</sup>) with the greatest secrecy. Please read the enclosed matter. The person who wrote me this is very, very dear to me. I do not add anything further. Please do me the favor of telling the Holy Father that perhaps he, one day, will realize what he does not presently see. I am not speaking about myself but about the Society. He will weep for having used during an audience a procedure which was not in accordance with God. Only God knows whether I shall survive all of the bitter things that have occurred. I have not lost sight of my conformity to his divine will, for doing his most lovable divine will is my total pursuit.

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<sup>8</sup> The abyss of misery invokes the abyss of mercy.

<sup>9</sup> The light of the world and the salt of the earth.

<sup>10</sup> Being your lowest servant in Christ.

<sup>11</sup> In the communication of the spirit.

However, I am not made of iron or of bronze. To face continuous, baseless rebukes and invectives, without due process, both of my conduct and that of others, is a very bitter chalice to drink. All of this, however, is very little, considering my own demerits. Still, I glory in being a son of the Church and, wretched though I may be, I have not lost my faith. Excuse this outburst of mine which is meant for you alone, for I am besieged with sadness, yet I have not allowed any of this to leak out even to my companions, realizing that the war that is being waged is brought on by the enemy, and in the most despicable way. They referred to a Mission during which I am supposed to have eaten meat on Friday or Saturday. With the help of divine mercy, they will discover what is the real confession of the truth. Have his Holiness question the bishops and the pastors etc.

I am writing from Veroli where I am presently conducting a series of retreats, while at the same time being assailed by a thousand bitter things, all of which have their origin in what has been explained, without saying anything further about temporalities. Nevertheless, the spiritual work being accomplished is immense. It is God who is doing the work. We are nothing more than wretchedness itself. Yet, it is his good will that, with regard to these accusations, the Holy Father should make his judgment and his inaccurate knowledge be given illumination. I pardon the intentions of everyone. My only true regret is the detriment that is being caused to the honor of God. I am the real culprit, so why does he not reprimand me, condemn me? But the ministry ... the Missions ... oh God ... Priests who have left their own homes, their possessions, their small comforts and have joined a society where, except for their daily living, they have nothing more ... how can anyone say they have no spirit? This business about one of our Missionaries in Albano going around requesting silver table settings is truly a hoax. I am wellacquainted with the members who are appointed there and I have checked with them. Oh God, my beloved Monsignor, what utter darkness! We are in very bad times. Nevertheless, we place our trust in God. I am consoled that *cum ipso sum in tribulatione etc.*<sup>12</sup> I shall be awaiting a line or so from you to Frosinone from where I shall have to depart, if you consider it a good idea, to conduct some Missions. The requests are varied in Umbria in the Marche in Benevento in the Kingdom where, if it pleases God, a foundation will be established.

My Monsignor, what can I say or do? Give me your counsel and remember that Monsignor Albertini told me over and over again that after God, I should look for no one else but you with regard to the Society. Also, he said that I should never be fearful because of the extreme trials that the Society would face, for they would be signs that the Society is from God. For a bit of quiet, I would like to withdraw to S. Felice. But, my will does not allow me to do that. Try to find a moment here or there to send me your reply. I do not deserve it, I know, and I am quite aware of my nothingness. Nevertheless, the glory of God, the defense of innocence and of truth are the beautiful causes to be dealt with here.

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<sup>12</sup> I am with him in tribulation.

The list of faculties which you had the Holy Father confirm *ad annum*<sup>13</sup> is the same that goes back to the time of the good Father Filippo Fortuna. It was he who, for his own peace of mind, obtained the dispensation concerning the use of oil and milk products on Fridays. I told him that it would not be needed. But, at that time, I was no more than a caretaker in the Missions. He spoke to the Holy Father, Pius VII, about this matter and, with paternal concern the Holy Father took all of us into consideration, and, in order to remove any feelings of scrupulosity, he granted it for all. It seems to me, however, that no one really made use of it, as Canon Muccioli will recall very well (but it is a good idea to keep this between ourselves). I, indeed, can declare before heaven and earth, that I, myself, never made use of this privilege. The present Pontiff saw this article and he made the deletion. When I went to have a meeting with him, he said nothing to me. Monsignor, pray for me who, while recommending myself to your prayers, remains wholeheartedly

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

Veroli, July 20, 1825

1208

July 22, 1825

Msgr. Bellisario Cristaldi

Rome

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable Monsignor

At this moment I have received the enclosed<sup>14</sup> which, if you think it is a good idea, might be read by the Holy Father. I am enclosing it only *propter instantem necassitatem*.<sup>15</sup> Otherwise, oh *quam bonum est praestolari in silentio*.<sup>16</sup> Send your most appreciated letters to Frosinone. Pray for me a lot. I am and will constantly be, with esteem and respect,

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

Veroli, July 22, 1825

1209

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<sup>13</sup> Within a year.

<sup>14</sup> Merlini thinks that this enclosure is a letter written by the bishop of Sora "giving praise to the Institute".

<sup>15</sup> For an urgent necessity.

<sup>16</sup> O how good it is to wait in silence.

July 25, 1825

Msgr. Bellisario Cristaldi  
Rome

*Christus dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine Suo*<sup>17</sup>

Venerable Monsignor

I have just returned from Veroli and I am sending an immediate reply to your most appreciated letter for which I am so obliged to you! I feared that you might not be well since I had not received news from you. I shall come quickly to Rome during these days, as you advise me, and as soon as it becomes possible for me. I humbly pray to God, the Giver of every good gift, that he will bless my steps. Tomorrow I shall begin by the application of holy Mass for this very important intention and, in order to obtain the assistance of very great advocates in heaven, I shall apply it for the holy souls in Purgatory, a devotion that is so close to us. I acknowledge my own insufficiency in handling a matter as grave as this and, from this very moment, I ask for your wellknown charity, most reverend excellency, to beseech the Holy Father to grant me an audience that is convenient and without disturbance to him and, in addition, your own most assiduous recourse to the throne of divine clemency.

Just how deep is my feeling of gratitude to you for so many, many outstanding favors, you yourself can better conceive in your own mind than I could ever indicate to you in words. I trust, through my devotion to the Divine Blood, to Mary most holy and to St. Francis Xavier, as well as in your prayers, that everything will turn out successfully to our mutual consolation. I kiss your hands and, at the foot of Jesus Christ Crucified, I remain, with particular esteem, homage and very special affection,

*Suo infimo in Christo servo*<sup>18</sup>

G. C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

July 25, 1825

1210

July 27, 1825

Msgr. Bellisario Cristaldi  
Rome

*Christus dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine Suo*<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Christ loved us and washed us in his own blood.

<sup>18</sup> Being your lowest servant in Christ.

<sup>19</sup> Christ loved us and washed us in his own blood.

Venerable Monsignor<sup>20</sup>

Yesterday I met with a very pious prelate and he told me that when he spoke to the Holy Father in a favorable manner concerning our Society, the Pope gave him a sort of reply which, from the connotations (although he did not say it outright, it implied the name of Monsignor Benvenuti) one could conclude that Monsignor Benvenuti has a certain opposition to our Society. This conversation came up accidentally without my inviting it any motivation. However, he did ask me to promise that, in the event that I might use this reserved information, I would never reveal the particular source. All this for the sake of the records. The entire province is resounding with the glory of God, and despite that, *videntes non vident*.<sup>21</sup> Full of respect for Monsignor Benvenuti, I realize that there is nothing else to cling to than prayer.

I shall delay my visit with Monsignor Soglia so that, this morning, you can petition an appointment with him for me. I feel that there is an urgency to speed up this matter so that the Pope does not go into audiences speaking ill about our people. So, upon getting in to see the Holy Father, I will not fail to give my thanks to Monsignor Soglia, and, I shall carry out everything else that I spoke of yesterday. If, from your reply, I learn that the audience with the Pope is being delayed, I can go to see Monsignor Soglia tomorrow. I am given to understand that anyone who is suffering from bias can be put in his place by a precautionary word from Monsignor Soglia, persuading the Holy Father with respect to our Society. I shall be awaiting a line or two from you, in your charity, today after the noon meal. With special esteem and respect, I am

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

1211

July 28, 1825

Msgr. Bellisario Cristaldi

Rome

*Christus dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine Suo*<sup>22</sup>

Venerable and most beloved Monsignor

Here I am giving you a report of my visit to the Vatican, where, upon my arrival, I was

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<sup>20</sup> This letter is not dated, but it must be assigned to July 27, 1827 as can be deduced from an examination of its content and a comparison with the letters (n. 1209 and n. 1211) of the 25<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of July, addressed to the same person.

<sup>21</sup> Seeing they do not see.

<sup>22</sup> Christ loved us and washes us in his own blood.

told that Monsignor Soglia was with His Holiness. Their discussion was quite long so I had the time to make my usual meditation. Then, I went into his office with him, and after the topic was introduced by being questioned concerning Canon Betti, gradually and quite peacefully we entered into the matter. I spoke at great length about our Institute and of the good work that it was accomplishing etc. etc. He, on his own, asked me about our title and he confided to me that there were some who had presented papers to him in opposition to that title, but he did not mention their names to me. At this point (I can tell you) I felt a higher strength coming down upon me and so much so that Monsignor Soglia was almost in tears as I delved into the theological motives etc. etc., and, I might say that I, too, without wanting to, also began to weep along with him. Let all of this be kept in secret as a usual communication between ourselves. And, oh how blessed I would be if only I had on a sheet of paper just what I said on this topic for I was afraid that it might be forgotten. I reflected that I should not be forgetful of your very wise directions in which, and I say this with all my heart, I decisively recognize the will of God, especially in the results that follow, with the Lord disposing even more. He admitted to me that he was with the Holy Father when he deleted the title, and everything else related to the question. If the hour had not been so late, I would have come speedily to you in person, but circumstances forced me to supply with this most humble page of mine.

With regard to the audience, he told me that on Saturday he would work things out with you. You manage things as God inspires you to do.

I shall come to inconvenience you next Sunday morning after you have been in church. Indeed, in this regard, pray a lot for me for on the morning of the feast of St. Ignatius, through a rescript, I was ordained priest in the choir of the Fathers of the Mission. I shall offer my Mass on that day for you, to whom I owe so very much. Tomorrow, I shall offer it for Monsignor Soglia so that he will receive great illumination concerning our Society, as I realize that all could be entirely dependent upon him.

If you choose to speak to the Holy Father about me, you might use the occasion for asking him to be kind enough to reduce the number of visits during the Holy Year for gaining the holy indulgences, and then next Sunday you can give me the results. *Oremus ad invicem*.<sup>23</sup> I would appreciate a line from you so that I would know at what time I can come to inconvenience you next Sunday morning.

If your discussion with the Holy Father goes along smoothly, try to ask him for an extraordinary subsidy. I shall pray to God that he will see its urgency, Monsignor Soglia would like me to put all of this in writing. I shall set myself to doing so tomorrow. Tomorrow, at the *Ave Maria* hour, I shall send everything to your most reverend excellency, so that after you have read the material, if you please, you can then pass these pages on to the aforementioned Monsignor, Saturday morning. If it should be required to put in good shape these pages on the Reform that is of such great interest, it will be sufficient for His Holiness just to say the word, as long as you are convinced that it is worthwhile to go into these details. I kiss your hands. With esteem and

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<sup>23</sup> Let us pray for each other.

respect, venerable Monsignor, I am and will constantly be

*Gaspare C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

July 28, 1825

P. S. As for any other matters, more when we see each other in person. Take good care of yourself<sup>24</sup> and pray for me.

1212

July 28, 1825

Msgr. Ottavio Zolio

Bishop of Rimini

Rimini

*Christus dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine Suo*<sup>25</sup>

Venerable Monsignor

With Canon Aloysi returning there, I renew my sentiments of esteem and respect for you, and, most venerable Monsignor, I declare again that I am

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

*Gaspare C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

Rome, July 28, 1825

1213

July 29, 1825

Msgr. Bellisario Cristaldi

Rome

Jesus Mary Joseph

Venerable Monsignor

I am sending you three writings:<sup>26</sup> one regards the general idea of our Institute; the second deals with the title; the third, a few privileges obtained up to now. I recommend this intention to your zeal which will bring you special blessings from the Lord. Pray to the Lord for me; with deep esteem, venerable Monsignor, I am and will constantly be

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

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<sup>24</sup> This is underlined three times.

<sup>25</sup> Christ loved us and washed us in his own blood.

<sup>26</sup>The three writings are the following three compositions sent to Pope Leo XII. Cfr. Merlini, o,c,280.

July 29, 1825

1214

July 29, 1825

Pope Leo XII

General idea of the Society<sup>27</sup>

In these times of upheaval, which it has pleased God to reserve for us, there is a great need for a reform of the people. The Lord, *in misericordia dives*,<sup>28</sup> wished to provide an effective means for curbing the torrent of iniquity and for restoring order in the hearts of the people by furnishing them with helps that are most suitable for the sanctification of their souls and for their continuous and lasting improvement. One such means is the establishing of more Mission and Spiritual Retreat Houses for the secular clergy, to revive in them a sense of dignity, of good example, as well as an eagerness for study and holiness, all of which is in line with the spirit of that ancient discipline in which community living of ecclesiastics was eagerly fostered.

St. Augustine, the Doctor of Grace, treated this matter in a special way. St. Charles Borromeo also followed a program such as this when he founded the Oblates, and the same can be said for St. Philip Neri when he instituted his congregation. The institution that we are discussing here, however, differs from that of the Filippini Fathers only because it adds to their most praiseworthy objectives, the practice of giving Missions and Spiritual Retreats, either by doing their preaching to the people in a very public way as well as (in the Retreats) by a very private approach in the respective Houses that have been founded.

This expansion of good work was not undertaken by the apostle of Rome, St. Philip Neri, for he limited the work of his congregation to those devout programs for which his sacred institute is so wellknown. It differs from that of the Oblates of St. Charles insofar as they are required to assume bonds that hold them in conscience and, as a consequence it is not easy for them to engage in a rapid and necessary propagation of the faith. It likewise differs from the Missionaries of St. Vincent de Paul, because they too are bound by the sacred vows and, abstracting from the apostolate of the Missions and other pious works undertaken by their foundations, they do not have the flexibility to put into practice what shall be described in detail in these pages, not ordinarily making use of a public church for each of the sexes, so that all of the souls are given an equal portion of nourishment of the divine Word through which the faith has been promoted among peoples, and through which we can look forward to a renewal: "*fides ex auditu, auditus autem per verbum Christi*".<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> St. Gaspar's presentation shows signs of corrections made by Cristaldi. Here we are reproducing St. Gaspar's edition.

<sup>28</sup> Rich in mercy.

<sup>29</sup> Faith is from hearing, but hearing is through the word of Christ.

One must now also cast a glance at the foundation of the Liguori Fathers. For the sake of brevity and in order to point out that this congregation in the Papal State does not engage in an extensive propagation, it, too, excludes those programs that make the Society that we are discussing here plausible. The Houses of Study for priests, immediately subject to the Holy See and hence to the respective bishops, began spreading, more or less, having an even much broader idea of the apostolate than the spirit of the nowdeceased Doctor Bartolomeo del Monte and the nowdeceased Marchese Imperiale, particularly with respect to the secular clergy who were devoid of any bond of sacred vows.

In the case of the latter, the Gospel Ministers, adhering to their pious legacies, contemplated the giving of Missions. But in our present foundations, we are taking into consideration, as a whole, everything that could be needed by the pastors in the respective dioceses, so that we can be of immediate help to the urgent needs of the people to effect the reform of their daily lives.

While other institutes, such as the Fathers of the Company of Jesus, have as their primary objective the education of youth, our Mission and Retreat Houses offer whatever is necessary to bring about, with the greatest possible rapidity, the conversion of souls, good example from the growups, and, in short, an apostolate directed towards every sort of grouping of people in the various dioceses which will then evaluate, facilitate and consolidate the education given. There will be no fear that the clergy will fall into a state of inertia, for, excluding the pastors, the canons and other sacred ministers necessary for the respective places, the other clergy will gradually be brought together into a union bonded by dedication to the ministry and they will activate this apostolate which is so very necessary for the greater glory of God. Their own personal affairs will not deter them, since we do not forbid proper ecclesiastical assistance. Nor can being advanced in age make them at times fearful of the fulfillment of their sacred duties, since those who are more vigorous will apply themselves to the giving of Missions and those who are not so strong in health can take care of the internal forum, thus enjoying that peace which the Houses of our foundation can offer. In these Houses, in a special way, the soul is lifted to God in prayer. Also, ignorance, at times, may be the cause of complaints, but even with all that, one moves ahead by the provision of scholarly conferences which, in a way, make up for the past and eventually prepare them for whatever may be relevant.

So, we conclude that in these foundations, already put into motion by the nowdeceased Supreme Pontiff Pope Pius VII, the clergy find a haven and the longedfor reform of the clergy itself is promoted so that they can become a beacon of holiness for the people. The seminaries, in preparing new plants for the Church of Jesus Christ, are effecting a certain graduated scale by which, through mutual assistance, they will bring about a certain equilibrium in the clergy. Eventually, with this mystical growth being supported, they will produce the noble fruit of vocations to the Missions of the Propaganda Fide. The evangelical workers, who will be wellfortified in solid virtue, in adequate learning, in detachment from everything, will go forth. The glory of God will be wondrously promoted. Still completely available to those souls who

prefer the sacred vows will be those other institutes which they can embrace, whichever one they may be called to. However, that step must be the fruit of mature advice and of a true spirit of vocation.

Finally, in our Houses of Study, there is offered a compensation for the present shortage of Regulars insofar as the people will have outside confessors to go to. Furthermore, the bishops are afforded a means whereby, even after the completion of the course of studies in the seminaries, the new priests will have the opportunity to be further developed in their vocation so as to be equipped for parochial work or other areas in the priestly ministry. All of this is merely a general presentation of the idea of our Institute. If necessary, more details can be given at another time.

[The title]

Now, we turn to the question of the title which adorns these foundations, as is evident from various documents, it was the Supreme Pontiff Pius VII who considered it, as a matter of fact, a good idea to take it from the Archconfraternity having the august title of the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ, of the most holy Mary, Help of Christians and assigned to it as special protector the glorious apostle of the Indies, St. Francis Xavier. This title does not present anything novel, since it flows from what we see in the sacred scriptures: "*Redemisti nos Domine in Sanguine tuo, et fecisti nos Deo nostro regum et sacerdotes*".<sup>30</sup> We priests, therefore, are marked with the sacerdotal character in order to apply the divine Blood to souls. It is his Blood that is offered in the divine Sacrifice; it is his Blood that is applied in the sacraments; it is his Blood that is the price of redemption. This is what we can present to the heavenly Father for the reconciliation of sinners.. "*Te ergo quaesumus tuis famulis subveni quos pretioso Sanguine redemisti*".<sup>31</sup> Whereas the devil would like all to be the victims of justice, we ministers of the sanctuary must make known the depths of God's mercy so that *justificati in Sanguine ipsius salvi simus ab ira per ipsum*.<sup>32</sup> In this devotion, we have the treasures of wisdom and holiness; in it we find comfort, peace and salvation.

Indeed, it is an essential devotion in Christianity, venerated by our mother, the Church "*quam acquisivit sanguine suo*".<sup>33</sup> The Mass, the Office of the most Precious Blood are already in practical usage in the church militant. Even from most ancient history, for example, we note that God, indeed, prescribed that the Hebrews in Egypt should taint their doorways with blood so as to be freed from the avenging sword, alluding to that means of eternal salvation by which our

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<sup>30</sup> You have redeemed us, O Lord. In your blood, and you have made us for God a kingdom and priests.

<sup>31</sup> We, therefore, beseech you help your servants whom you have redeemed by your precious blood.

<sup>32</sup> Justified in blood, we will be saved from wrath through it.

<sup>33</sup> Which he acquired by his blood.

souls would be liberated from the slavery of hell. Add to this, what the apostle states: "*si sanguis hircorum et vitulorum inquinatos santificat, quanto magis Sanguis Christi emundabit conscientiam nostram ab operibus mortuis?*"<sup>34</sup> One should read the precious little booklet entitled *Il messe di Giugno* (The month of June) dedicated to the devotion of the mysteries of the Divine Blood. It contains the documents supporting this important devotion. Sufficient for now is to conclude with the words of St. Bernard (Ep. 7): "*Sanguis Christi ut tuba clamat*";<sup>35</sup> or, the words of St. Thomas (Opusc. 15a): "*Sanguis Christi clavis paradisi*".<sup>36</sup>

But, to sum up everything briefly, one must not omit listening to what St. Paul observes in Col. 1: "*Pacificans per Sanguinem suum sive quae in terris sive quae in coelis sunt*". Our times demand that we carry out what is proposed in that quotation. It is, therefore, the divine Blood that will placate the divine eternal Father, that will purify our hearts and will inebriate us with love for Jesus who *dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine suo*.<sup>37</sup>

1215

July 29, 1825  
Pope Leo XII

Respectful observations concerning the Archconfraternity  
of the most Precious Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ

It cannot be denied that the Lord, always rich in mercy, has provided powerful means in every age that are capable of drawing souls to a consideration of the Crucified Lord and thus seeing in them the application of the redemption through his Divine Blood.

Prescinding from the first centuries in the Church, centuries productive of martyrs, in the following epochs which history records for us, we note how one or the other dogma was attacked, how sacred things were subjected to scorn in one or the other part of the Catholic world. In our miserable times, the crisis in the people is a general one, with indescribable perversion of basic principles and of proper living so as to hurl an insult at the redemptive act and, through human malice, to frustrate the application of the merits of Jesus Christ who has redeemed us by the price of his Blood.

Now, Blessed Father, is it not necessary to rekindle apostolic zeal and follow the inspirations of soul that are so favored by God so that we can revive in the memories of these people the inestimable price of our redemption and attempt to stir them to repentance and to

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<sup>34</sup> If the blood of goats and bulls sanctifies those who are defiled, how much more will the blood of Jesus Christ cleanse our consciences from dead works.

<sup>35</sup> The blood of Christ calls out like a trumpet.

<sup>36</sup> The blood of Christ is the key of paradise.

<sup>37</sup> He loved us and washed us in his own blood.

tears? Is it not also a fact that Sacred Scripture itself gives us the steps to take for a reform? *Pacificans per Sanguinem Crucis eius sive quae in coelis sive quae in terris sunt?*<sup>38</sup> Do we ourselves not know that *Christus dilexit ecclesiam tradidit semetipsum pro ea... acquisivit sanguine suo?*<sup>39</sup> Does not Divine Wisdom tell us that *justificati in Sanguine salvi erimus ab ira per ipsum?*<sup>40</sup> It is not sufficient simply to utter the name of the Lord to be saved: *Non qui dixerit Domine Domine hic salvus erit,*<sup>41</sup> but *qui fecerit voluntatem Patris mei hic salvus erit.*<sup>42</sup> Therefore, there are two things that must necessarily be done nowadays. The first is to find a way of placating the Divine Eternal Father; and that we have in the merits of the Divine Blood: *Calicem salutaris accipiam.*<sup>43</sup> The other is to try to find a way of effectively applying those merits to souls, and this can be done particularly through holy Missions and Spiritual Retreats, as well as other pious programs that are proportionately salubrious for our times.

In fact, these are the very same reasons that motivated the holy Pontiff Pius VII to erect the Archconfraternity, bearing this most august title of the Divine Blood. Sinners continue to be horrendously abusive and the Lord, in the transports of his love, keeps crying out: *Quae utilitas in Sanguine meo?*<sup>44</sup> So, is there not anyone who will, through this sacred, solemn cult, procure adoration in compensation, and preach to the people its glories, bringing to their attention that in this devotion we have a compendium of faith itself; that is why, in the consecration of the chalice, we say: "*mysterium fidei*";<sup>45</sup> and, consequently therein lies the salvation of souls.

In fact, it is to this that the prophetic oracles, the predictions, the symbols, the figures, the sacrifices of the old covenant have their focus. As we read in Genesis: *Lavabit in vino stolam suam et in sanguine uvae pallium suum.*<sup>46</sup> The Hebrews were ordered to taint their doorposts with the blood of the lamb in order to be freed from their chastisements in Egypt, a symbol of the liberation of our souls from diabolical servitude... Without saying too much further, what did Moses do for his people? *Accipiens librum aspersionis Sanguine dicens ... hic sanguis testamenti quod mandavit ad vos Deus ... Omnia in sanguine mundantur, et sine sanguinis effusione non fit*

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<sup>38</sup> Making peace through the blood of his cross whether for what is in heaven or on earth.

<sup>39</sup> Christ loved the Church, he gave himself up for it ... he acquired it with his blood.

<sup>40</sup> Justified in blood, we will be saved from wrath through it.

<sup>41</sup> Not the one who says "Lord, Lord" shall be saved.

<sup>42</sup> He who has done the will of my Father will be saved.

<sup>43</sup> I will take the chalice of salvation.

<sup>44</sup> What profit is there in my blood?

<sup>45</sup> The mystery of faith.

<sup>46</sup> He will wash his robe in wine and his mantle in the blood of the grape.

*remissio.*<sup>47</sup> Hear, now, what the apostle says: *Si sanguis hircorum et vitulorum inquinatos santificat, quanto magis Sanguis Jesu Christi emundabit conscientias nostras.*<sup>48</sup>

Without saying everything that could be said, the divine Scriptures are loaded with sacred citations... *Quare rubrum est indumentum tuum ... Vestitus erat veste aspersa sanguine.*<sup>49</sup> One should add only that by means of this devotion the remembrance of our baptism, through which our souls were purged, is revived; we are reminded of penance and the other sacraments. and when asked why, we conclude that it was because: *redemisti in Sanguine fecisti nos Deo nostrum regnum et sacerdotes.*<sup>50</sup>

Other devotions are all means for facilitating Catholic piety, but this devotion is the basis, the sustenance, the essence of all. Other devotions, coming forth at various times, signal a period of time, ever holy, ever praiseworthy, but this devotion of ours is so antique that it goes back to the very moment when Adam sinned; that is why Jesus was called the *agnus occisus a constitutione mundi.*<sup>51</sup> And it was because of this that we were given the means of reproducing, through the public press, the glories of this inestimable treasure of our souls, along with the noble compositions of the Fathers of the Church for the understanding of the sacred text; and especially so, since, in our days, generally speaking, this is not sufficiently known. However, the Lord will regenerate them in the hearts of people!

Indeed, St. Thomas says: *Sanguis Christi clavis paradisi ...*<sup>52</sup> St. John Chrysostom: *Sanguis Christi salus animarum ... bonum aurum Sanguis Christi.*<sup>53</sup> One should read the small work composed by the outstanding member of the Missionaries of the Archconfraternity, that is to say, the nowdeceased bishop Monsignor Strambi who, in giving his final retreats to all the Roman clergy, had them meditate on this very devotion. One could consult with the present bishop of Assisi, wellknown for his theological knowledge, or also the bishop of Nocera, not to mention others, and one will discover the interest that everyone should have in diffusing and spreading the glories of the Archconfraternity of the Divine Blood, glories that already are evident in the establishment of the Mission and Spiritual Retreat Houses under the direction of

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<sup>47</sup> Taking the book he sprinkled it with blood saying ... this is the blood of the testament that God mandated for you. ... All things are purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no remission.

<sup>48</sup> If the blood of goats and bulls sanctifies those who are defiled, how much more will the blood of Jesus Christ cleanse our consciences.

<sup>49</sup> Why is your apparel red? You were clothed in a garment sprinkled with blood.

<sup>50</sup> You have redeemed with blood; you have made us for our God a kingdom and priests.

<sup>51</sup> The lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

<sup>52</sup> The blood of Christ is the key to paradise.

<sup>53</sup> The blood of Christ is the salvation of souls. The blood of Christ is good gold.

its Missionaries; they make available those means for fulfilling its objective ... the glories that are evident in the many, many confraternities erected everywhere in the Catholic world, etc., etc., etc..

How could it ever have been possible for the very respectable bishops, among whom we include his Eminence Sevaroli, to give their consent to the diffusion of this good work if there had been the least disagreement with the principles or the practices of the Church? How could it be that the nowdeceased Pontiff Pius VII should issue a number of briefs for the erection of that Archconfraternity, and the Congregation of Rites should recognize its title by the granting of privileges, in particular, to the Mission and Spiritual Retreat Houses where the clergy have been reclaimed for the apostolate, for pursuing studies, for attaining holiness? Even your Holiness himself, with the revision of the Chaplet for use by that same Archconfraternity, has increased its privileges through the organ of that same Congregation of Rites, and, at the time when you were Cardinal Vicar of Rome, established the women of charity (under the direction of Butirroni) who had this same most august title.

In these miserable times in which we live, one must point this out, how can the procedure of the Roman Curia be subjected to such derision? In fact, it is because of this that evildoers are led to criticize other titles, thus multiplying the number of enemies, while supposing that they are doing something good by suppressing a title which is the glory of redemption. This is the language of truth, and it is a wellknown fact that hell itself trembles at the very mention of "Divine Blood". Furthermore, because of this confusion of mind, one is led to erroneously judge the good people who then disturb the peace of your Holiness' magnanimous heart.

So, in view of the fact that there is nothing involved here which is contrary to good Catholic interpretation, why, then, now change something that has been canonically established? The Pontiffs Paul III and Paul IV, the Pontiff Gregory XIII and Pope Sixtus V (who confirmed it with a brief of May 8, 1586), were these not all men who, in S. Maria in Vado, erected and promoted the same good work which is now being done by the confraternity erected there under the title of the Divine Blood and which presently has the most intimate connection with the Archconfraternity?

Most blessed Father, these are the intrinsic reasons as well as arguments from the history of the Church ... But using such a title would be a case of becoming overly familiar! This was the same difficulty proposed when the Company of Jesus, in particular, emerged. Was it to be given that name, the name of Jesus before which *omne genuflectatur*<sup>54</sup> so that it would be on the lips of everyone and adored by all? And what was the answer given? The religious titles are all very praiseworthy. Any abuse of it would be due to the person who, through his own malice, would beget it, but the Church's intention is a holy one (so says Fr. Suarez in: *De mysteriis vitae Jesu Christi*) insofar as a distinct veneration is shown toward the sacrosanct mysteries of the Savior.

Nor would it be a valid argument for one to say: There will be someone who will abuse

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<sup>54</sup> Let everything bend the knee.

this title, so let us get rid of it. ... Well, there will also be someone who, as a matter of fact, will do the same thing with the name of religion, so therefore. ... Oh my, to what consequences would this not lead. In keeping with the bases and principles explained, we have the establishment of Confraternities of the most holy Trinity, of the most Blessed Sacrament, etc. Finally, it would be good to point out that there is a mandatory that says: Alms for the Confraternity of the most Blessed Sacrament, and so in ours too there should accordingly be a similar provision. But, *transeat*,<sup>55</sup> with regard to this last remark which was produced only to relax the mind of your Beatitude.

We conclude by saying that the adherence to basic principles, the observance of fundamentals, the welfare of our times, the glory given to the Redemption as well as the scorn that hell itself will receive, all demand that your Holiness, rather than derogating and removing this most august title, should be exultant with it and promote it throughout the entire Catholic World with a solemn decree, extending the use of the Mass and the Office of the Price of our Redemption. May what happened to Blessed Giacomo di Bevagna, with regard to the Divine Blood, encourage your soul to do what, in all humility, has been proposed to you for the pure glory of God.

1216

July 29, 1825

Pope Leo XII

Copy of the grant of the privilege for the Divine Office  
and other privileges obtained etc. Petition

Most blessed Father

The Missionaries of the Archconfraternity of the most Precious Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ request etc., for the sake of uniformity in the Divine Office, adapting themselves to the Roman calendar etc.

Rescript

*Ex audientia Sanctissimi die 28 Iulii. Sanctissimus benigne annuit pro gratia in privata Divini Officii recitatione etc.*<sup>56</sup>

Other rescripts obtained from the nowdeceased Pius VII have been omitted and in the installation of the Houses, preserved in the respective curias, as well as other privileges.

Those of the Sacred Rites are reported here.

In behalf of the Confraternity of the Missionary Priests aggregated to the Confraternity under the invocation of the Most Precious Blood, our Holy Father, Pope Leo XII, kindly assenting to the prayers of the priests who devote their efforts to the missions under the

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<sup>55</sup> Let it pass.

<sup>56</sup> From the audience of the 28 July. His Holiness kindly agreed to the favor for the private recitation of the Divine Office, etc.

invocation of the Most Precious Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, with respect to the report to me, signed below, of the Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, has agreed that the Offices of the Mysteries and Instruments of the Lord's Passion can for the future be recited by them annually in a major double rite, safeguarding the rubrics according to the order given below, namely, etc., etc..<sup>57</sup>

Even before this, under the pontificate of Pius VII, there was likewise granted by the Sacred Congregation of Rites the Office and the Mass of the most Precious Blood on the first Sunday in July; and the same is evident in the Decree, namely:

*Sacerdotum Missionariorum Aggregatorum Confraternitati sub invocatione Pretiosissimi Sanguinis Domini Nostri Jesu Christi etc.*<sup>58</sup>

The same is true of another decree relating to the rite or a double of the second class, assigned for December 3rd, the feast of St. Francis Xavier, special protector of the Missions of the Archconfraternity.

Finally, *Sanctissimus Dominus noster*, Pope Leo XII granted, through a decree from that same Congregation and with the same declaration, the privilege of adding to the prayers on semidoubles, that of St. Francis Xavier.

So, the history of the Church of Jesus Christ, of which the Roman Pontiff is the head since he is the vicar of Jesus Christ and successor to St. Peter, calls for the continuation of these privileges and favors for the greater expansion of the Institute which was conceived during the time of exile, wonderfully developed immediately after the exile with great advantage to souls, and, at the same time, to the anger of the devil who has never ceased nor does he now cease from waging a special war against this very expression: "Precious Blood of Jesus Christ".

1217

July 31, 1825  
Fr. Pietro Butti  
Alatri

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable Canon

I have received your letter here in Rome where I am for the Holy Jubilee which I shall

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<sup>57</sup> *Sacerdotum Missionariorum aggregatorum Confraternitati sub invocatione Pretiosissimi Sanguinis Sanctissimus Dominus Noster Leo XII Pontifex Maximus benigne annuendo precibus Sacerdotum qui Missionibus operam navant sub invocatione Pretiosissimi Sanguinis Domini Nostri Jesu Christi ad mei infrascripti Sacrae Rituum Congregationis Secretarii relationem indulsit ut ab iisdem recitari quotannis in posterum valeant Officia Mysteriorum et Instrumentorum Dominicae Passionis ritu duplici maiore servatis tamen rubricis infrascripto ordine, nempe etc. etc.*

<sup>58</sup> To the Confraternity of Missionary Priests aggregated to the Confraternity under the invocation of the Most precious Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ etc

take care of with a saving of time as much as I can.

Fr. Giovanni Merlini has already given me an account of the money that you know about. Whether Fr. Giovanni has or has not received your letter concerning the Masses, I know nothing at all. Please check with him in Frosinone.

I give thanks to God for my good health. I hope that this is just as true for you.

How consoled I am with the article "*Oratorio*". You, who were the first to set the example in that area with regard to the oratory, should encourage the people both in Veroli and in Ferentino and anywhere else where the opportunities arise, etc. etc.

As far as I know, I think that the Confraternity of St. Xavier there has not been canonically erected. Here is what must be done. It is necessary for the most reverend bishop, by means of a rescript, to prepare a petition, having first selected a church and an altar. Then, the chancellor is to ready a letter of procurement to be sent to Monsignor Muccioli, bishop of Agatopoli and President of the aggregations in Rome of the Archconfraternity of the Divine Blood, of which Xavier is the protector. In that letter of procurement he is to ask that a priest be appointed to postulate your aggregation. The cost for the service in the church comes to six *scudi*. I can supply two *scudi*, which is, it seems to me, what I was supposed to give for the oratory there. More than this I cannot do. Pray a lot for me. With all my affection, I am and will constantly be

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

Rome, July 31, 1825

1218

July 31, 1825

Fr. Giovanni Chiodi

Ascoli

Hail to the Blood of Jesus Christ

Dear Father Giovanni

At whatever time you wish to come (although I would ask you to hasten it), I intend to settle you in the Mission House in S. Felice in Giano where Father Biagio Valentini, whom you met during the Missions there, is the superior. Since it is a house of studies, you will be able to complete your qualifications for the ministries. Not lacking will be the opportunity to go to Rome later, and, in regard to the indulgences of the Holy Year, that can be petitioned so that you will be able to gain them in S. Felice in Giano or, perhaps, in 1826. Let me know whether this plan of mine is agreeable to you. Then I will have them prepare a room, etc., etc. and everything will be arranged with regularity. Father Emidio Bellini is acquainted with that locale and he will be able to give you more extensive information. For my own good order, I would appreciate a response from you. Pray to Jesus for me, dear Father Giovanni, and with esteem and respect, I remain

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant  
*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.  
 Rome, July 31, 1825

P. S. Give my greetings to Father Emidio and thank him for the assistance that he gave during the holy Missions. Encourage him to come permanently to our Society, in keeping with Father Giovanelli's direction.

1219

August 4, 1825  
 Mr. Camillo Possenti  
 Fabriano

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable Camillo

I think that the shortage of Chaplets may have been a mistake; it appears that, at most, just a very few are missing and perhaps in counting them some involuntary mistake occurred. But we will not worry about that any more.

Tell Ledi that, if possible, by the 25th of this month, he should be in Pievetorina in order to be on hand for two Missions in the diocese of Norcia, along with a couple of our men.

Please send a quick reply so that I can regulate things. In Jesus Christ Crucified, with esteem and respect, I am

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant  
*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.  
 Rome, August 4, 1825

I believe that we are settled in our accounts.

1220

August 4, 1825  
 Fr. Luigi Cocci  
 Grutti

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

My dearest Father Luigi

I am writing this letter in order to confirm my word concerning our Retreat in Pievetorina.

Would you be able to get permission for only two Missions in Monsignor Bonanni's diocese? Since it deals with Umbria, and hence nearby, I would hope that your answer is yes. Make every effort. This would take place on the 25th of this month. Send your answer quickly, and, asking you for your prayers, I remain with esteem

Your humble servant  
*G. C. del Bufalo*  
 M. Ap.  
 Rome, August 4<sup>59</sup>

1221

August 4, 1825  
 Msgr. Bellisario Cristaldi  
 Rome

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable Monsignor

A short while ago, I received a letter from S. Felice in Giano in which I am told that we are going to lose the arrear payments and we will be left with the debts and expenses incurred. Would you be able to encourage Father Mannucci to present a memorandum of those debts to the Holy Father or, since it is not a matter of asking a favor, to treat it *ex officio* in the next audience. We have put the place back on its feet again etc. So, I submit to your wisdom in deciding what is to be done. We are left only with God's protection and, after God, with yours, which will always be accompanied by divine blessings.

Two Jesuit Fathers went to S. Felice along with Monsignor Scerra and representatives from the schools. They were shown every sign of welcome possible by our men who were not lacking in cordiality, but they do not cease being difficult. Everything took place harmoniously and they returned to Spoleto quite edified by the good work etc.

To the note I sent this morning, as well as to this one, if you find it possible, please send me your reaction and you will be doing me a tremendous favor. Oh how happy I would be if God would give you the inspiration and would allow your participation in the next audience, so as to speak to the Holy Father about us. What else can I do but pray? With deep obligation to you and with affection, most reverend excellency, I am

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant  
*G. C. del Bufalo*  
 M. Ap.  
 August 4, 1825

1222

August 5, 1825  
 Msgr. Bellisario Cristaldi  
 Rome

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<sup>59</sup> The year is 1825, deduced from a comparison with other letters (n. 1100 and n. 1242) written to him on April 17, 1825 and September 2, 1825.

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable and most beloved Monsignor

This morning I went to the Vatican and I recommended myself unworthily to our most beloved Mother for a successful outcome. However, I waited for Monsignor Soglia in vain. While I was hoping to speak with him, the Holy Father came into St. Peter's, and, since it was noontime, every effort was useless. I supplied with a respectful note which I wrote in Monsignor Soglia's office and I also enclosed a printed resume of our rule, along with a page of information calculated to bring to his attention the correct concept of our Society, which is God's. This is all that I wished to tell you, and, most reverend excellency, asking you for many and incessant prayers, with the fulness of esteem and respect, I remain

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

*Gaspare C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

August 5, 1825

1223

August 9, 1825

Mr. Giovanni Francesco Palmucci

Offida

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Most illustrious sir

*Laus Deo*<sup>60</sup> that I again have seen your handwriting! *Secundum hominem*,<sup>61</sup> I am very sorry to learn of the suffering you have experienced recently with the loss of your innocent son. But, speaking spiritually, do we not have a reason for joy insofar as the Lord has called him to himself in order to remove him from the miseries of this exile? His will is for us everything. You have probably said: *Dominus dedit, Dominus abstulit, sit nomen Domini benedictum*.<sup>62</sup>

As for your other two children, you can be sure that you are most capable of educating them. It is a grace of the Lord. As for their training, is there not some priest or you most worthy father-in-law? I do not know whether the Jesuits in Naples can admit them or not. Indeed, if you have come to the decision to send them away for training, then I find very plausible the advice of the most reverend bishop, to whom you will give my best regards at your first opportunity. Through prayer, God will clarify the problem. Also, the timely reflection of your uncle presents as preferable the choice of placing them with the Jesuits in Naples. You did a very good thing in seeking instructions from Naples which can elucidate the matter even more. I am convinced that

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<sup>60</sup> Praise God.

<sup>61</sup> Humanly speaking.

<sup>62</sup> The Lord gave, the Lord took away; may the name of the Lord be blessed.

everything will turn out successfully.

I am most exultant with the progress of the pious organizations in that area. *Dominus retribuet in benedictionibus dulcedinis* <sup>63</sup> for the one who is the special promotor. Keep insisting on the approval of your rule.

With pleasure, too, did I learn of the good work that is being accomplished there by Canon Tarulli, and I never doubted that. When the opportunity arises, give him my best wishes. Return my greetings to the excellent Father Giovannelli. Take care of yourself and serve God without sadness. Pray for me, and with esteem, I am and will constantly be.

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

Rome, August 9, 1825

1224

August 9, 1825

Father Bucciarelli  
Veroli

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable Father

I am here in Rome for the Holy Jubilee. Please pray for me.

My companions, the Missionaries who are in Sonnino, have written to me concerning a nun for that monastery there. She is not lacking in the dowry, and other expenses. However, she is 28 years old. Please see whether she can be admitted there. Have no doubts about her qualifications as well as about her health. I shall be awaiting your reply in detail.

I take this opportunity, venerable Father, to ask you for your incessant prayers, and, with esteem and respect, to renew myself as

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

Rome, August 9, 1825

1225

August 13, 1825

Msgr. Gregorio Muccioli  
Bishop of Agatopoli  
Rome

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

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<sup>63</sup> The Lord will repay you with sweet blessings.

Venerable Monsignor and most beloved brother

In reply to your very dear letter I say that you should settle things as you see best with regard to the aggregation in Veroli. As soon as everything is completed, I myself will send you the money for the expense incurred.

It is quite true that the blessing of the vestment can be a matter for the brethren, but, as far as I can recall, Monsignor Albertini used to bless habits of black serge just like the one used by my sisterinlaw. So, I fully agree that for each particular case a ritual with the appropriate formula should be had. Therefore, you should try to put together this mixture of prayers, so to speak, as best you can. With total affection and esteem, most venerable Monsignor, I remain

Your humble, devoted, obliged servant and brother

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

August 13, 1825

P. S. Camillo Agostini will inform you if, by the feast of the Stigmata, the Confraternity erected in Atri, in the Kingdom, has been aggregated.

1226

August 13, 1826

Msgr. Bellisario Cristaldi

Rome

*Christus dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine Suo*<sup>64</sup>

Venerable Monsignor

Father Biagio Valentini urges me to recommend to you a petition to obtain a confirmation of a certain rescript concerning which he has written directly to you, relative to the obligations of Masses in that sanctuary of S. Felice in Giano. So, I beg you to present it this morning, which will also give you the opportunity to make known our affection for the Holy Father. On the feast of the Assumption, ten years will be completed since the opening of the House in S. Felice, the fruit of your zeal and that of the excellent lawyer Paolucci. Oh, I wholeheartedly beseech Mary most holy to bless me and the Society on that occasion. I shall apply my Mass on the feast of the Assumption for your soul, asking that your tender love for Jesus will be evermore increased and for all those helps that are necessary for you to fulfill the work that has been begun and entrusted to you by the Lord. If the Holy Father should find it convenient, you might speak to him of the usual extraordinary subsidy which, if at all times it was of pressing need, now, that my expenses from day to day grow larger, you can imagine how even more urgent this matter is for me. God watches over you. He will bless your words.

Pray very, very much for me, and, since on the feast of the Assumption, St. Stanislaus departed heavenward, I shall ask this great saint to be my mediator so that I will obtain the

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<sup>64</sup> Christ loved us and washed us in his own blood.

desired admission to the presence of his Holiness.

With full affection and esteem, I am and will constantly be

*Suo infimo in Christo servo*<sup>65</sup>

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

August 13, 1825

1227

August 17, 1825

Msgr. Bellisario Cristaldi

Rome

*Christus dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine Suo*<sup>66</sup>

Venerable Monsignor

Enclosed are the various appointments for the ministry in keeping with the requests: Benevento, Rimini, Umbria, Marca, Kingdom of Naples. Benevento could offer the possibility of a closer lettercorrespondence with the bishops of the Kingdom with reference to foundations, as well as to arrange other Missions for the Kingdom. Rimini: that foundation will give strength to the ministry, and since there are requests made for other dioceses in Romagna, in this way that province, which I believe is in great need, will be given a bit of attention. The Missions in the Marca would support those that have already been given and would be useful for the foundation in Pievetorina. Then, information concerning the glory of God in Umbria should get to the attention of the Holy Father, especially of Spoleto, where, because of that question of arrear payments we have not been too welcome, as though, by seeking to collect that money, we had done some uncalledfor act.

In November, I expect to be in the area of S. Salvatore Maggiore at his Eminence Ercolani's seminary, if God will preserve him until that time etc. I have made my selections in keeping with the desires of the Holy Father, and have thus directed my other companiongroups, one of which is still laboring in the vast dioceses of Penne and Atri. I say nothing about the Province of Marittima and Campagna where I, too, would gladly return to carry out the ministry, if it would so please the Lord. I felt that I should give this information so as to show, in keeping with your advice, that the everlovable will of the Lord is made clearly manifest.

Today at the 21st hour, I shall have the pleasure of seeing you again. Miserable thing that I am, I recommended, at this morning's Mass, the audience which you will have with our Holy Father.

And since your conclusions were truly convincing in the totality of your apologetical

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<sup>65</sup> Bring your lowest servant in Christ.

<sup>66</sup> Christ loved us and washed us in his own blood.

discourse with the Holy Father, then, do not cease indicating to him, if you think it is a good thing, my very, very deep concern: Assure him that everyone in the Society will always be praying for his Holiness, and, add anything else that the Lord inspires in you. As the opportunity offers itself, you might include that you yourself have read letters and reports in which praise was given to our ministry; these are the letters which I, content only that the good work be known by God, would never have sent to you if the urgency of the situation did not demand it. I kiss your hands. With the fulness of esteem and respectful affection, most reverend excellency, asking you for incessant prayers, I am and will always be

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

August 17, 1825

P. S. Take care of yourself and do not overwork. You might also mention to the Holy Father that you yourself are acquainted with many of the members of our Society etc. Even though you do not need these reminders, nevertheless, in order not to repeat what I have haphazardly written, I shall leave this letter just as it is.

1228

August 1718, 1825

Msgr. Bellisario Cristaldi

Rome

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable Monsignor

Even though I am fully resigned to accept peacefully the crosses that God sends me, still, to bring peace to my soul which cannot help but be disturbed, I put together the enclosed memorandum<sup>67</sup> which I submit for your scrutiny. Although I am sending it on to you, next Friday morning<sup>68</sup> we shall discuss it in person, along with another matter which I did not have time to tell you about during our last meeting because of the disturbance and confusion in which I am presently engulfed. I said nothing else to the Holy Father than that, with his blessing, I would like to continue in the ministry; he said. ... Well, are you always to remain a missionary? I answered what I could, indicating to him the extreme consolation that I have in being in the Society, and I then recommended it to him again. However, I confess that I noticed that my response to him did not go down so well, since he interrupted me and went on to something else.

Oh how close to my heart is our Institute! Miserable thing that I am, I pray that God will

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<sup>67</sup> Cfr. the following letter.

<sup>68</sup> This letter does not have a date, but it certainly comes after the preceding one addressed to the same person and follows, by a day or so, the audience with Leo XII which took place on August 15th. The Friday that he refers to here is probably August 19th. Hence, this letter is assigned the 17th or 18th of August.

be propitious toward me. You must help me both with your prayers and with your counsel. I find myself confronted with a great responsibility both toward my beloved companions as well as to so many other things that in every regard have been accomplished up to now with divine grace and with your most efficacious mediation. In that letter, I wrote that another member could be selected who would direct the Institute, thus allowing the Holy Father the opportunity of appointing whomever he judged best to preside over the Society, since I fear that it is my own inadequacy that retards ever greater blessings. I simply do not know what else I can do. It seems to me that a very clear discussion with the Holy Father in regard to how much our Society means to you, would, in my opinion, be reason to expect victory. May God bring it about that what I said to him will have made an impression. I asked the Holy Father whether he had read the reports that were submitted to him previously, and I noted that he had perhaps mislaid them. I asked him whether he would like new ones prepared, and he gave me neither a yes nor a no reply. Excuse me if I have annoyed you. Recommend me often to God, and consider me as

Your humble servant

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

1229

August 1718, 1825

Pope Leo XII

Most blessed Father

Canon Gaspare del Bufalo, Apostolic missionary and most humble petitioner of your Holiness, for the sake of peace of mind, makes bold to suggest the following.

In the recent audience, which your Holiness deigned to grant him as a distinct grace and favor, while he was asking for an apostolic blessing on the Society, he intended only to strengthen the apostolic ministry using the holy means that our religion provides for us. However, noting that your Holiness was planning perhaps to remove him from the career which he has assumed, he now petitions you to allow him to quietly remain in its fulfillment. It would be quite sufficient for the petitioner to remain as an individual member of the Institute so that he can continue to promote the awakening of enthusiasm among the clergy as well as priestly decorum. He is completely ready to surrender the direction of the Society to whomever you may judge opportune and capable for achieving its advancement. Kissing your foot, he does not cease begging for the help of your prayers; that etc.

1230

August 20, 1825

Fr. Giacomo Giorgi

Albano

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Dear Father Giacomo

With this letter I am asking you to transfer to Frosinone, to take charge of the ministry of the holy Missions, after which you will return to your residence. While asking you to recommend me to God, venerable Father Giacomo, consider me to be with esteem and respect, in Christ Jesus crucified

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

Rome, August 20, 1825

1231

August 21, 1825

Fr. Giovanni Chiodi

Ascoli

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Most illustrious Father Giovanni

My suggestion of Giano was caused by my wish to save you expenses and also because that House is properly equipped for preparing you for the ministries. It seems to me that this suggestion should not alter the procedure which you are planning to adopt for asking for a release *ad tempus*.<sup>69</sup> You also mention that you are going to the Holy House in Loreto and would like also to visit other places and thus would need two months. If, afterwards, you would like to come to Rome, you do whatever you think best. But in Rome all we have is the hospice of *Buon Consiglio*, a place formerly occupied by the Jesuit Fathers. Set your plans for gaining the indulgences of the Holy Year in Giano, since I intend to obtain them for that sanctuary. I shall be there in S. Felice toward the end of this month or the beginning of September. I shall expect to see you there, or you can write to me using the address: Fuligno per S. Felice in Giano.

Tell Bellini that if he would like to come with me on the Missions, he should go to Pievetorina at the beginning of September, but not beyond the 2nd or 3rd; or he should write to me there. I am not able to be of help to the bishop there. You know that vocations demand courage and firmness. A missionary once respectfully said to his bishop: if I were to assume the vows ... there are censures which impede my admission ... if I were to take on a parish, for example, in a different diocese, the bishop there would have reason to protest, but I do wish to withdraw, etc.

Vocations come from God. You should seek the help of the excellent Father Giovannelli. You are aware of what S. Luigi Gonzaga did etc. Certainly it is better to depart first from Ascoli in a somewhat prudent manner etc. Anything else will be handled by letter, with the help of Father Giovannelli to whom you will give my heartfelt greetings. I cannot be involved, etc. With esteem and affection, consider me to be in Jesus Christ crucified

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<sup>69</sup> At the time.

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

Rome, August 21, 1825

P. S. Greeting to Bellini.

1232

August 21, 1825

Fr. Francesco Antonio Tulli

Penne

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable Canon

Enclosed is the document for enrolling people in the Divine Blood. You will be receiving the other faculties later. On your own, you can get instructions from the archpriest concerning the rule that is to be observed, etc., etc.. Perhaps you already have this information, and, if you think it is a good idea, you can tell him that, and thus you will have assistance in the propagation of this very important devotion.

Many good wishes and thanks to the most reverend bishop. Tell him that I received his recent letter to which I will not be sending a reply since there did not seem to be a particular reason for doing so. In order to speed things up with regard to the Mission House in that area, you might suggest to him that he prepare a petition to the Holy Father to make contact with the Nuncio etc., apprising him of the great work that is done by and the particular need there is for the Institute of Missions and Retreats that are promoted by the Missionaries of the Archconfraternity of the Divine Blood etc. Send that petition to me in Rome and I will see that it is presented.

With respect to the matter concerning which the most reverend bishop wrote to the Penitentiary (you might tell him) that I am very hopeful and that he should write again to the ProDatary.

It seems that I have nothing more to say now, except to ask that you pray and have others pray for me. I am and will constantly be ready to serve you at any command.

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

Rome, August 21, 1825

I shall send a document also to the deacon in Ortona, etc. Please forgive me for writing in a hurry, etc.

1233

August 21, 1825

Msgr. Francesco Luigi Piervisani  
Bishop of Nocera  
Nocera

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable Monsignor<sup>70</sup>

Oh how thankful I am to you for the assistance you are giving to the ministry of the excellent Father Antonio Pascucci. In a very particular way do I owe you my deepest gratitude. You cannot imagine the number of requests that have been coming from everywhere. After your recent second letter to me, I received the booklets you sent and for this, also, *Dominus retribuet pro me*.<sup>71</sup> Do not forget to send me the package when the opportunity arises. Oh! would that everyone would profit from all of this... blessed would we be.

I have written enthusiastically to our Monsignor Bonanni with regard to the Retreat for the clergy of your area, and I am very hopeful, especially since I stressed to him how much we are indebted to you. Who knows, perhaps I may be passing through Furlo on the way to the Missions in Romagna and, on that occasion, what a delight it will be for me to visit with you again. If that does come about, I believe that it might be toward the beginning of September.

My Monsignor, pray a lot for me, a most wretched one, *ut vitam adipiscar aeternam*.<sup>72</sup> When you have the chance, give my best regards to the most reverend bishop of Assisi, such a holy man, especially because of the patience he shows during his chronic illness. Take good care of yourself, too, and most venerable Monsignor, I am ready to serve you at the least word from you. With the fulness of esteem and respect, as well as with particular affection, I remain

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

Rome, August 21, 1825

1234

August 22, 1825  
To a Deacon of Ortona

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Dear Deacon

Canon Tulli of the city of Penne has written to me<sup>73</sup> to send you a certificate for enrolling

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<sup>70</sup>This is a photocopy of the original letter, preserved in the episcopal archives of Nocera Umbra.

<sup>71</sup> The Lord will repay in my behalf.

<sup>72</sup> That I may acquire eternal life.

<sup>73</sup> Cfr. the letter (n. 1232) to Fr. Francesco Antonio Tulli, dated August 21, 1825.

people in the very important devotion to the Divine Blood. I am promptly carrying out what I was asked to do, asking you, however, to use the faculty only after you have been ordained in the priesthood. I am sure that you will inform yourself of the method to be observed in enrolling people, that is to say, that you must keep a book alphabetically listing the men enrolled and another for women, and that once a year you will send a listing of the enrolees to Rome, until there is established in your area a permanent Union which will be aggregated to the Archconfraternity in Rome to which you, in the meantime, will ascribe. The faculties that are being communicated to you are for both men and women. If you should need further clarification, please write to me. Meanwhile, promote the public recitation of the Chaplet, using the booklet that I am enclosing with this letter.

Pray for me, dear Deacon, and with esteem and respect, I remain

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

*Gaspare C. del Bufalo*

Mis. Ap.

Rome, August 22, 1825

1235

August 24, 1825

Pope Leo XII

Most blessed Father<sup>74</sup>

The secular priests, Missionaries of the Mission and Retreat House under the title of the most Precious Blood and most humble petitioners to your Holiness, declare that they came into possession of the church and the convent of S. Agostino in Pievetorina, Archdiocese of Cammerino, on December 9, 1819. The benefits granted to the Augustinians who formerly inhabited that convent were assigned to the petitioners, along with the concurring fruits and backpayments, by the fulfillment of the obligations attached thereto. Among those obligations was the offering of 25 Masses annually. From the day of possession by the petitioners, and every since, they have satisfied the obligations, offering 135 Masses, distributing them throughout the year, and in most instances offered at a privileged altar. A statement of reduction, posted in the sacristy, and a copy of which we are enclosing with this petition, defines the obligations, the days and the altars. However, the latter are no longer in existence since the church was revamped by the Passionist Fathers who used to reside here. Remaining are only three altars, namely, of S. Agostino, of the Madonna and of St. Francis Xavier, but on this altar there was no image.

An investigation was made in the archiepiscopal chancery of Cammerino to locate the indult of reduction that the statement refers to, as well as to see whether it was still valid, but nothing was found. The petitioning priests, therefore, request your Holiness to send this petition

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<sup>74</sup> On the fourth side of this letter, in Fr. Giovanni Merlini's handwriting, this notation is found: "Rescript of the reduction *in perpetuo* of the Masses incumbent on the income of the Mission and Retreat House in Pievetorina". Cfr. the letter to Fr. Francesco Antonio Tulli, dated August 21, 1825.

to his excellency, the most revered Archbishop of Cammerino, with the proper and necessary faculties to examine and adjust everything, along with the faculty to renew the indult of reduction, to absolve from the Masses that were not satisfied before the petitioners took possession as well as afterwards, and to be able to collect arrear funds, since that pious House has a scarcity of income, etc.; in this way they can have peace of conscience. That, with your favor etc.<sup>75</sup>

The table of perpetual Masses in the Church of Saint Augustine of Plebe-taurina to be celebrated after the reduction made by indult of Pope Innocent XIII, of happy memory, on September 10, 1723.

Eighteen Masses on the altar of Saint Charles for the soul of a certain Mr. Francis Cafanassi.

Five Masses at the altar of Saint Nicholas for the soul of a certain Mr. Augustine Bartolini.

Four Masses any year, indeed one any first and second year, but two the third year, of which one must be celebrated on the feast of Saint Anthony Abbot, the other one the feast of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino for the souls of the Clarini, as requested by the document in the year of salvation 1725.<sup>76</sup>

## 1236

August 27, 1825  
Mr. Camillo Possenti  
Fabriano

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable Camillo

A couple of lines in a hurry, in order to inform you that at the beginning of September I shall be in Pievetorina, but only passing through. In order to see each other, if God so inspires you, it would be necessary for you to be there on the evening of the 2nd of September and not after that. I am writing this to you in order to be obedient to you. Recommend me to God, venerable Camillo, and, in the meantime, with esteem and respect, I am

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

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<sup>75</sup> Up to this point, the handwriting is that of St. Gaspar. Then, the pontifical rescript *iuxta preces* follows, bearing the date August 24, 1825.

<sup>76</sup> *Tabella Missarum perpetuarum in Ecclesia S Augustini de Plebetaurina celebrandarum post reductionem factam indulto felicis recordationis Innocentii PP XIII sub die 10 Sestembris 1723.*

*Missae decem et octo in altari S. Caroli pro anima cuiusdam domini Francisci Cafanassi*

*Missae quinque ad altare S Nicolai pro anima cuiusdam domini Augustini Bartolini.*

*Missae quatuor anno, una videlicet quolibet primo et secundo anno, duo vero in anno tertio, quarum una celebranda est in festo S. Antoni Abbatis, altera autem in festo S. Nicolai de Tolentino pro animabus de Clarinis, ut ex testamento rogato anno reparatae salutis 1725.*

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

Rome, August 25, 1825

Also, show this letter of mine to the superior of the House there, etc.

1237

August 27, 1825

Msgr. Gregorio Muccioli

Bishop of Agatopoli

Rome

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable Monsignor and beloved brother

I am sending you a few pages the I have recovered. The one that is in our Albertini's handwriting I would like to have returned to me. Tomorrow Father Francesco Gemelli will take care of a day of retreat in S. Nicola, not having reflected that I am assigned both to Tor' de' Specchi and the group from the Pianto. Canon Betti has had to leave for Frosinone since tomorrow is the feast day of S. Agostino, the titular of our church.

The men of the organization of St. Xavier in Velletri have charged me to give you their greetings. Next Monday, at *summo mane*,<sup>77</sup> they will be in S. Nicola. It would be a good idea to have the members there receive them at the door. In fact, they told me that if they do not find a chaplain in Velletri, they would like to have one of the priests assigned to the service of the church of S. Nicola to be on hand, and that, if necessary, they would reimburse him for the help that he offers during their visit etc. Indeed, even Giacomo, the cleric, might be able to go.

Furthermore, they would appreciate having a few words of encouragement there in S. Nicola. You, in the name of the Society, could ask the present pastor.

While recommending that you look into the Lovatti matter, consider me to be, in Jesus Christ crucified,

Your humble servant and loving brother

*G. C. del Bufalo*

Mis. Ap.

August 27, 1825

Thank you for the copies of the method etc. Do not forget about the writings of Bettini etc:

1238

August 28, 1825

Fr. Giovanni Mimmi

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<sup>77</sup> Very early in the morning.

Acquasparta

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable Prior

Perhaps next Tuesday, at some time or other, I shall be passing through Acquasparta, and, depending on the hour, if I should have to stay over night, please try to arrange a place at my expense, since I do not wish to burden you and remembering the old saying: *Honesta ab amicis petamus*.<sup>78</sup> Have two good saddlehorses prepared, with good saddles, so that we can go on quickly to S. Felice, since I need to hurry the trip. In person, we shall discuss the Mission. Pray a lot for me, and, dear Prior, with esteem and respect, I remain

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

*Gaspere C. del Bufalo*

Mis. Ap.

Rome, August 28, 1825

1239

September 1, 1825

Fr. Luigi Cocci

Grutti

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable Father

I am writing this letter to ask you to consider what will be said to you in person by the bearer of this letter of mine with regard to the Holy Year in Rome. All of our men are out on the Missions; Fr. Biagio is not able to leave the shrine; you, who eventually are to be in Rome according to what you have written to me, could satisfy our mutual desires by adjusting your mode of travel for that trip as well as that of the brethren. Recommend me often to God, and, with esteem and respect, consider me to be

Your humble servant

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

S. Felice, September 1, 1825

1240

September 1, 1825

Pope Leo XII

Most blessed Father

I feel that it is my duty to humbly place before the eyes of your Holiness a few letters relating to the good work that is being promoted by the Missionaries of the Archconfraternity of

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<sup>78</sup> Let us make honorable requests from friends.

the most Precious Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, so that you will come to know even better the truth of things that pertain to the glory of the Lord.

The holy Missions and Retreats, as well as other pious works, which are currently being accomplished by the Society, are surely the principle bases for the reform. Whereas other institutes cultivate young people, the apostolate which our ministry is providing takes care of the needs of the people in general and outstanding good example is given by grownups, who have been educated, to the young people who comprise the future most concerned objective of our loving mother, the Church.

Herein lies the glory of the priesthood, instituted for applying the price of redemption to souls, so that the Divine Blood will not have been shed in vain, due to our own fault, as we note in the Holy Scriptures: "*Quae utilitas in Sanguine meo? ... Sanguis Jesu Christi emundabit conscientias nostras ab operibus mortuis*".<sup>79</sup>

I am writing this page most humbly from our House of S. Felice in Giano where we have one of our houses of study for priests, namely, for those young men who have already completed their seminary courses and now, in silence and holy recollection of spirit, are preparing themselves for the ministries in the Church and for various fields of the apostolate, in keeping with the most lovable will of God. I cannot tell you, most blessed Father, what a reason for joy such a beautiful undertaking brings with it.

May your Holiness not cease to bless and protect this holy institute in which I pray incessantly that God will allow me to complete the short number of days that remain for me in this miserable world. While kissing your most holy feet, I have the consolation of declaring my profound obeisance to and veneration of your Beatitude.

Your most humble, devoted and obliged servant and subject

*Gaspare Canonico del Bufalo*

Missionario Apostolico

Mission and Retreat House in S. Felice in Giano September 1, 1825

1241

September 1, 1825

Msgr. Bellisario Cristaldi

Rome

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

S. Felice in Giano, September 1<sup>80</sup>

Venerable Monsignor

Before leaving this place of solitude that is so very dear to me, allow me to write to you

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<sup>79</sup> What profit is there in my blood? The blood of Jesus Christ will cleanse our consciences of dead works.

<sup>80</sup> The year is 1825.

about those things that are pressing for the glory of God, which we must incessantly promote. When one is out in the ministry, one is necessarily forced to be brief.

1. In accordance with our fundamental principles to make use of all means for defending God's Society from diabolical attacks, I am enclosing a packet of papers which, if you think it is a good idea, you could have his Holiness read, pointing out to him that we did not preserve a lot of documents which might have been very opportune for this present situation. Never would I have imagined that such troubles could have arisen. But, then, recalling the statements of our Monsignor Albertini, I reflected that he would often say to me: "You will suffer a great deal, but from it all you will come back with a victory". And, on another occasion, he assured me that you would be the promotor and defender of the Institute and that this was the will of God. So, I pray to the Lord that he will give you courage to speak out in holy liberty to the Holy Father, without perplexity of spirit, so as to win him over to our side.

You probably have received already the only copies of the printings for the Mission in Ascoli and Teramo. In Rome, I spoke with Monsignor Marchetti and I warmly urged him to speak in favor of our Society. I did the same with Monsignor Filonardi, but I did not go into details, since prudence demands that we keep things to ourselves. I spoke to him so convincingly that he ended up by saying: "This is really the basis for reform. ... I thank God for having come to know about the spirit of such a holy institute". Various people have been asking for a prospectus of the Society and I am doing everything I can to avoid scrupulosity for my lack of providing it. Oh, if I had the means of doing so, I would immediately have a description of the Institute printed and I would see that copies of it would be circulated everywhere. But, even in this regard, God humbles us, and may he nevertheless be blessed.

With regard to the extraordinary subsidy, here is how I had to use it because of pure and precise necessity. I paid off 50 *scudi* of debts that were burdening the community of S. Felice in a particular way; another 50 *scudi* were used to extinguish the debts in Pievetorina; part of the remainder was spent for devotional materials to be distributed as much as possible during our Missions; part was laid out for the repair of some damage that occurred in the S. Felice building, and part was spent to cover the exorbitant costs for mail services, which I note cannot be lessened when one considers the Missions and other pious works that are taken on, the dealings with Rome, the Sacred Penitentiary etc. etc. My desire would be to get rid of all of the debts that the Institute has, namely, those of the construction of the House in Albano, those of the deceased Achille and the 200 *scudi* needed for the building in Frosinone etc.

If Cardinal Galeffi, whom I have urged, were not so timid, by this time the matters in Albano would all have been settled. But, God distributes his gifts as he wishes. One plan, it seems to me, would be very opportune, and you might speak to the Holy Father about it. Within a short while, the Cesarini family will terminate its administration of the abbey of S. Paolo in Albano. So, if it were possible for us to enjoy this benefit for a period of three years, all the debts could be removed, the provision of funds for what is pressing would come to an end, and there would be the receipt of some sort of annuity for the House in Albano. In that event, with that

rescript, everyone would be at ease and would breathe freely again. The artisans in Albano say that they wish to draw the benefits of the area *ad tempus*.<sup>81</sup> I, myself, simply do not know what to do. *Ad impossibile nemo tenetur*.<sup>82</sup> It was a mistake to make the computation first, before the work was concluded. At any rate, God will provide. I shall not cease praying and have others do so too.

With respect to the Province, I can scarcely maintain the Houses which are facing more and more worries and cares. All of the members see and come in physical contact with the economical difficulties, and are witnesses to it. We do manage to provide each House with food, bed linens, clothing for the Brothers, care in times of sickness, services in the Church etc. etc.

Each of us realizes that if we were not helped by the saying of Masses for the Society, etc. we would not be making progress. We do not make begging appeals, for it is prudent to act so. Therefore, the plan for the abbey of S. Paolo would be, I repeat, a great relief for us, and the Treasury would not experience discomfort, since it would be an ecclesiastical support that could not have been used in a better way. I give thanks to God for the spiritual good work that our Society is achieving everywhere; this gives consolation to my poor spirit.

2. In my opinion, after reflecting quietly in my mind, my meeting with the Holy Father, in some way, seemed to have gone along quite well, having brought the situation out into the open air etc. and surely God must have illumined the Holy Father to better discern the importance of our Institute. Now, if one seeks not to overlook the reason for the success of our aim, we can say: *Deo autem gratias qui dedit nobis victoriam per Dominum Jesum Christum*.<sup>83</sup>

3. It seems that I should say to you that when you make an investigation of your papers, you should note whether my second presentation of papers concerning the Regulars etc. really got into the hands of his Holiness, for he indicated to me an interest in being informed etc. Remind His Holiness about true asylum in our churches in behalf of the extirpation of brigandry; an asylum which is not simply reduced to a verbal compliment to the bishop, but one *ut erat antea* etc.<sup>84</sup> I ask you to preserve our rescript dealing with our foundations in the Province.

4. Finally, I am intending not to return ever to Rome, or, if I do return, not to go to the Holy Father in person; that, because, in one's own case, someone else must act as apologist; also, I do not like to go through all those antechambers etc. etc. giving them the chance to say what is not so. *Ama*

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<sup>81</sup> At the time.

<sup>82</sup> No one is held to the impossible.

<sup>83</sup> But thanks to God, who gave us victory through the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>84</sup> As it was previously, etc.

*nesciri, et pro nihilo reputari.*<sup>85</sup> I do not care to hear about dignities, positions, nor any other embarrassing thing. I love the Missions, the ministry etc. You, in particular, must help me with your prayers. When I return to the Province of Campagna, I shall pass through the walls. This is what I am planning to do, and I pray that it will be blessed by God. O what holy solitude here in S. Felice etc.

I shall be expecting to receive your very appreciated letters in Mesola, so do not deprive me of them, and grant me this sole comfort which I have in this world of always having news of you. On the feast of the Nativity, I shall offer the Mass for the Holy Father and for you. I kiss your hands. With esteem, respect and very special affection, most reverend excellency, I am and will constantly be

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

S. Felice in Giano, September 1<sup>86</sup>

P. S. You, who have read many pages that I have submitted to you at various times and have come to know personally many of our members, can say quite a bit to the Holy Father. The spirit of the Lord will descend upon you etc. That is my hope. Do not forget about the garden f or Rimini and a small subsidy in Marca for Pievetorina. Oh how many obligations I have to you! *Dominus retribuet pro me, etc.*<sup>87</sup> Look after the matter in Benevento.

When the Holy Father told me that the Liguori Fathers have a small allowance etc., I replied that they too must subsist, and that having the means even to undertake construction is a sign that God is providing and, in fact, that the Kingdom is giving help etc. Excuse me if I have written lengthily, but my love for the Society, which I would like to solidify with the shedding of my own blood, as well as the fact that I foresee that I will not be having another opportunity for expressing myself so fully, all of this has led me to come to this decision. I point out, with regard to my intention of not including Rome for me, that this is something which is just between you and me. I desire that the Institute be spoken of as well as our companions, and, insofar as possible, nothing be said about me. I speak to you with open heart.

I repeat, *ama nesciri et ero nihilo reputari, etc.*<sup>88</sup>

1242

September 2, 1825

Fr. Luigi Cocci

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<sup>85</sup> Love to be ignored and to be considered as nothing.

<sup>86</sup>The year is 1825.

<sup>87</sup> The Lord will repay on my behalf, etc.

<sup>88</sup> Love to be ignored and to be considered as nothing.

Grutti

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable Father Luigi

Thank you for your good dispositions. With regard to the retreat in Pievetorina, called for by the rule, I point out that it will begin one day earlier, and so I advise you from this moment to take the time to provide for a mount for which you will be reimbursed there. Let us agree on this.

As for presenting yourself to the Holy Father, do that too. However, I would say nothing about the unprecedented bishop etc. All that I would explain is: 1, the advice given to you by Monsignor Strambi; 2. your decisive vocation to the Society; 3. the great work that the Institute is doing. You understand me; 4, speak of the probity of the workers with whom you are associating and acquiring good practice in the ministry; finally, conclude by saying that you should be provided with another ecclesiastical support in place of that of curate which is concerned with only a few souls, and that you can easily find someone else to whom to entrust it, especially since the seminary is preparing new plants for the sanctuary. With the Holy Father giving his approval to all of this, the bishop will not be able to be in opposition, and that is very, very clear. It will be sufficient to say to him: "Along with the Holy Father, I have come to realize even more that God is calling me etc."

Pray a lot for me, venerable Father Luigi, and I recommend the enclosed matter. With esteem and respect, believe me to be in Jesus Christ

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

S. Felice, September 2, 1825

P.S. Oh what a wonderful house of studies for priests that we have here in S. Felice etc.

1243

September 4, 1825

Fr. Giovanni Mimmi

Acquasparta

Dear Prior

Your reply to my letter, which is being forwarded to you, should be addressed to S. Felice in Giano. In a hurry, I am

Your humble servant

*G. C. del Bufalo*

Mis. Ap.

S. Felice, September 2, 1825

1244

September 6, 1825

Msgr. Bellisario Cristaldi  
Rome

*Christus dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine Suo*<sup>89</sup>

Venerable Monsignor

Oh how lovable God is! Enclosed is a document to be presented to the Holy Father. Speak to him with that apostolic freedom which is so entirely characteristic of you, the one who comes to the defense of God's Society. I shall not cease praying for this most important objective. I find it necessary to ask you to return to me certain documents that I have sent you so that they can be preserved in our General Archives. In Jesus Christ crucified, *qui suo nos redemit Sanguine*,<sup>90</sup> asking you for your prayers, most reverend excellency, with esteem, respect and constant gratitude, I remain

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

Fuligno for S. Felice in Giano (for safe forwarding) September 6, 1825.

1245

September 7, 1825

Msgr. Bellisario Cristaldi  
Rome

Hail to the Blood of Jesus Christ

Dear Monsignor

Very quickly and almost miraculously, so to speak, I received your very dear letter which informs me of the delay for the Mission in Mesola, which, without further thought, cannot be held until next spring, if we are still alive. Within a short time, it will be the period of harvest; as a consequence, in those areas, with which I have become acquainted because of the Missions conducted in the diocese of Comacchio, it will not be an easy task to get there. The coachmen simply do not know how to handle the coach when the wheels become so deeply sunken in the earth. Even on horseback, for someone who is timid, it would be difficult traveling, etc. *Voluntas Dei in omnibus*.<sup>91</sup>

I, too, have written to his eminence, the most reverend Archbishop of Ferrara as soon as I learned of his appointment. The devil probably misdirected my letter. We laugh to the glory of God, and, in the meantime, I have canceled my contract with the coachman. The Lord will take care of that deficit too.

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<sup>89</sup> Christ loved us and washed us in his own blood.

<sup>90</sup> Who redeemed us by his own blood.

<sup>91</sup> The will of God in all things.

The requests coming in from both Umbria and the Marca are multiple. Time may be unavailable, but not the will to go there. Address your most appreciated letters, for the sake of safe forwarding, to Fuligno for S. Felice in Giano, during the time that I am in Umbria. I would like to have news of your state of health. *Oremus ad invicem*, etc..<sup>92</sup> I add that I do not know why your packages to Frosinone cannot be paid for at the post office; in Fuligno, that is done. Full of esteem, respect and gratitude, and asking you for your prayers, I declare once again that I am

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

September 7, 1825

1246

September 1825

Pope Leo XII

Most blessed Father<sup>93</sup>

The Missionaries, residents of the House of S. Felice in Giano, in the diocese of Spoleto, devotedly make the following request. Pope Pius VII, of glorious memory, granting to the schools of Spoleto the benefits for the sanctuary of S. Felice, placed on those schools the obligation of contributing an annual pension to the aforementioned sanctuary, so that they would be able to maintain that spacious building and, at the same time to fulfill the obligations of assigned Masses, and to incessantly promote the sacred cult of the Lord. At first, the Passionist Fathers were installed in S. Felice, and gradually, after the recent upheaval, this sacred retreat was renounced by the aforementioned reverend Fathers and the present occupants, the Missionaries, took their place.

However, since the schools were obliged to contribute a sum of money to this sanctuary to cover arrear payments from the aforementioned fund, and since the locale was in most urgent need of being restored, Pope Pius VII thus ordered that the schools should balance out the shares with that very sanctuary and, at the same time, he obliged the Missionaries to refurbish the place, as indeed they actually have done, namely, to renew the sacred utensils, to put in order the pious legacies incumbent on them by the oftmentioned pension. So far, all of their efforts for settling things to the advantage of the church of S. Felice have been frustrated. They, therefore, have

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<sup>92</sup> Let us pray for one another, etc.

<sup>93</sup> This petition, which is not dated, was found among the writings to Cristaldi of 1825. St. Gaspar was in S. Felice in Giano at the beginning of September of 1825 and from the end of October on. It seems preferable to assign this to the beginning of September since in this petition there is no mention of Jesuits, whereas that does appear later, as, for example, in the letter (n. 1275) of November 11, 1825 to Cristaldi. St. Gaspar reminds him of certain petitions relating to Giano: one is surely this one; another refers to the legacies of Masses (Cfr. a copy dated December 9, 1825). Finally, in the Cristaldi collection of letters, this petition follows the letter (n. 1245) of September 7, 1825.

recourse to your Holiness to please grant them a compensation, to the extent that you feel would be expedient, to bring to a conclusion the situation which has just been described; that etc.

In behalf of the Missionaries resident in S. Felice di Giano.

1247

September 9, 1825

Fr. Ferdinando Gigliozzi

Fontana

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable Canon

The occupations of the ministry have delayed my lettercorrespondence. Therefore, I inform you that your altar is quite fit for being designated as the one for our most important devotion. Since that belongs to your family, it is probable that no other congregation has been erected there, as I suppose. So, a petition should be prepared for the bishop of Sora, and in it you are to ask that the Pious Union of the Divine Blood, for men and women, be erected. The bishop will then ready the rescript. Later, the chancellor (who is already aware of this since he has handled other aggregations) will send a letter of procurement addressed to Monsignor Muccioli, the President of the Archconfraternity in Rome in which he will ask that a person be appointed to postulate the aggregation in the name of the people of Fontana. When everything has been completed, everything will be granted. I do not know whether I have made myself sufficiently clear. Send all of these papers to me in Frosinone; I will see to the execution of everything. Let us be in agreement.

I shall try to send you a few booklets. Any priest who would be interested in propagating this great work needs only drop a word to me. In the meantime, see that the Chaplet is recited publicly as often as possible. If I have forgotten anything, please give me a reminder. Pray a lot, a whole lot for me. With particular esteem, respect and veneration, I remain

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

*Gaspare Can. del Bufalo*

Mis. Ap.

Cannara, September 9, 1825

1248

September 10, 1825

Msgr. Bellisario Cristaldi

Rome

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable and most beloved Monsignor

I have received one of your letters, bringing me consolation, as I continue wishing always to have news of your health for which I pray incessantly as well as for everything else that

involves you. I was unable to stay on in S. Felice because Vicar Modestini of Cannara, in consultation with the most reverend bishop of Assisi, has asked me to go to Cannara to set up the bases for one of our foundations in the diocese of Assisi. In order to allow me a certain opportune convenience to do so, he has warmly invited me to give an eight day retreat to the nuns, while another of my companions will be conducting the exercises for the people of S. Vitale, diocese of Assisi. All praise to the Almighty for whose glory we must untiringly work. I cannot tell you how many requests for the ministry have been arriving from everywhere.

In the meantime, Monsignor Bonanni wishes to be distinct, and therefore I am going to his diocese where you should address your always most welcome letters, sending them for safe forwarding to Cammerino for Pievetorina, until I give you further notice. While in Giano, I was yearning to return, by other routes, to the diocese of Todi, besides the great work that is also being done in Giano where outsiders have been coming from every possible direction. Before departing, I had to hear the confessions of quite a number of people who had come from certain mountainous areas of the diocese of Orvieto. My heart is there in Giano; I would like to retire to that place as soon as possible to make my own retreat. The Madonna del Fosco is my delight and my spirit gets a special anointing when I visit that sanctuary. Our primary house of studies is located there and I must go there to write many things before I die, and, at the same time, to direct the entire Society from this first House of ours.

The Province of Campagna is wellprovided for. The city of Cervia has made application for a Mission this coming Lent, and there is, indeed, very much to be done everywhere.

Oh how often I think of you to whom I owe so very much! I also think that it must be the source of great consolation to your spirit to realize all the good work that is being accomplished. Praise for all of this to God, whom we must love tenderly and perfectly. You, for the love of God, must prevent me, always and energetically, from making any alteration in my way of life through which I must come face to face with death. This will be the greatest favor you can do for me, and I will thank you, not only now but for all eternity. Be assured that this is the will of God. St. Francis Xavier, Blessed Leonard, the Fathers Segneri, Pinamonti, Baldinucci, all died as good soldiers with their weapons still in their hands. I do not cease praying also for the Holy Father, asking God to grant him great illumination with regard to our Society for which all spiritual souls exalt.

Kissing your hands, most reverend excellency, with esteem, with respect and with very special affection, I am, in Jesus Christ

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

Cannara, September 10, 1825

P. S. My Monsignor, please do me a favor, that is, end the evening audiences one hour earlier. Try to see how discreet this suggestion is. This is the will of God. S. Teresa wanted to have at least six hours of rest, to refresh the energies of the poor human flesh. May the Lord

make us saints.

1249

September 10, 1825  
 Msgr. Gregorio Muccioli  
 Bishop of Agatopoli  
 Roma

Hail to the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

My venerable Monsignor and loving brother

Enclosed is the memorandum for Mr. Agostini, whom you will greet warmly for me. Please obtain the List of Indulgences and Privileges, and send everything to Severini so that he can inform me about it.

Make it clear to Mr. Lovatti that we need that receipt. That is all for now.

Pray a lot for me. Your letters, to my house.

I am and will constantly be with all affection  
 of you, my venerable Monsignor

Humble, devoted, obliged servant and loving brother

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

Cannara,<sup>94</sup> September 10, 1825

1250

September 11, 1825  
 Luigia del Bufalo  
 Rome

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Dearest niece

In reply to your letter, I say that you should address your letters to: "Camerino per Pievetorina" during the time that I am out conducting a Mission, and that will be the center for my mail until I tell you otherwise.

Tell Contedini that he should try to restrict the printing in such a way that nothing will be left over, since the one who is responsible for the expense wishes to pay only for the little booklet. Everything can be worked out. Give my greetings to Father Giuseppe and to everyone else, and send me your reply that the printing is exact, clear and very correct, and, if necessary, that Contedini should suspend things and write to me directly.

I shall send you more beautiful letters on another occasion.

Tell Cencio that I know about Canon Ottaviani and that I would like to know whether the

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<sup>94</sup> *Cannara*: cf. Geographical Data.

Missionary has gone on to Albano or not. Tell Canon Ottaviani that with regard to the priest in Sinigaglia, as far as I can now recall, I have not received any letter, and add that he speak to him about the 60 *baiocchi* that he knows about. Ask him also to inform Father Anacleto Giliucci that I do not go along with those favors. He will understand.

I sent to Foligno for the package but, up to now, nothing has arrived. I think that it would be better to send everything through the maildelivery, unless we can be quite sure of the safeness of using the Treasurer's stamp, and that we would not have to meet the expense.

Pray for me as I give you my blessing.

Your loving uncle

*G. C. del Bufalo*

M. Ap.

Cannara, September 11, 1825