

St. Gaspar's Letters

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2101

November 28, 1830

To a Cardinal

Christus dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine Suo¹

Your Eminence

I inconvenience you with this letter of mine in order to carry out an act of charity which I was charged with this past September in Ancona. The objective is not one of great moment and will especially be strengthened in importance through the mediation of your most reverend Eminence.

I am writing from our House in Albano where I have withdrawn to make my customary Retreat in preparation for the feast of our dear Saint, the great Xavier. Pray for me and have others do so too. As I kiss the sacred purple, I have the honor, most reverend Eminence, of asserting once again, with esteem and veneration, that I am

Your most humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Albano, November 28, 1830

2102

December 1, 1830

Fr. Ambrogio Gregorj

Loreto

Christus dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine Suo²

Venerable Father Ambrogio

In obedience to you, I am sending a response to your most esteemed letter of the 22nd of this past November.

I, too, must confess that the status of the soul, concerning whom you went into detail, is truly deplorable. In any case, prayer and industrious occupation in the ministry give room for

¹ Christ loved us and washed us in his blood.

² Christ loved us and washed us in his blood.

hope. I am struck by that text of the prophet that says: *Vitam et misericordiam tribuisti mihi*.³ God preserves the life of the religious about whom you speak; so, *ideo vivit ut corrigatur*.⁴ Yes, let us place our hope in the merits of the Divine Blood, a most efficacious devotion, in order to wipe out every last hardened sinner. Another text that I select for consideration is that "*impius cum in profundum venerit, contemnet*".⁵ That "*contemnet*" is not verified in the soul. Rather, more needful are enthusiastic words of encouragement. Here, in my judgment, are a few, along with some reflections.

1... It is necessary, from the very beginning, to encourage that soul to have hope and especially based on the text: *Non dico tibi septies, sed septuagies septies*,⁶ along with the reflection that Jesus sweat his Blood in the garden because of his suffering in foreseeing so many souls, through their own fault, being lost. Therefore, courage and let us quench the thirst of Jesus who is parched for souls.

2. I would urge the making of a spiritual Retreat, and if there is not time available for this, I offer our Mission and Retreat House in the Archbishopric of Cammerino, more precisely in Pievetorina, not too far from Tolentino. There, in Retreat, the soul will come to experience that wonderful operation which is our desire. So, all that will be required is that you secretly, and in my name, send word to the President of that House in Pievetorina, Missionary Father Pietro de Victoriis, that a certain individual, *in genere*,⁷ will be arriving, to whom you recommend that they give encouragement. That's all. If that person is unable to withdraw for a Retreat, either to Pievetorina or somewhere else, then, in that case, it will be necessary for him to make a Retreat in his own home, assisted by your charity and zeal, and at that time, he should make a general confession.

3. Furthermore, I would advise that he should return to his own Institute, even though he is old. At least, in so far as it is a question of the soul, he must have this desire and make an appeal to his Superiors. There should be an investigation as to whether the causes of the Brief have been justifiably drawn up, whether truly canonical, whether they are fabrications, whether they are still to be sustained etc. etc.

4. It is necessary that, for a bit of time yet, he should have this sort of arrangement for facing the future. Each day he should render an account of his status, the means that he is using. With this prescription, joined with the practice of reading from the book: "*Apparecchio alla*

³ He gave me life and mercy.

⁴ Therefore he lives to be corrected.

⁵ When an impious person comes to something profound, he will despise it.

⁶ I do not say seven times, but seventy times seven times.

⁷ In the genus.

morte" by Blessed Liguori, with the recitation of the Chaplet of the Divine Blood, I am hopeful that, with the intercession of most holy Mary and St. Francis Xavier, there will be verified in this soul: "*Ipsi vicerunt draconem propter Sanguinem Agni*".⁸ With esteem and respect, I remain, in Jesus Christ crucified

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare Can. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

House in Albano, December 1, 1830

If necessary, write to "Rome".

2103

December 3, 1830

To the Missionaries of the Most Precious Blood

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Circular letter of December 3, 1830⁹

The works of God are like the mustard seed which, when thrown into the ground, continues to grow in such a way that it very soon become a robust plant which spreads its branches out in a marvelous way and sets its roots deeply into the bowels of the earth. O my beloved confreres in Jesus Christ, that also is what our holy Institute is. From year to year and from its beginnings up to our own time, it has demonstrated that greater perfection and way of life that is to result in the pursuit of the ever greater glory of the Lord. Our Brothers were lacking in the more conventional vesture in keeping with the idea of an Institute. If, at the beginning, it was not possible to give attention to their views, it is time now that we put a final touch to what is dependent upon our action, always maintaining the desire of obtaining extended blessings from God upon all of us in the spiritual and temporal way of life followed in our holy foundation.

Consequently, the Brothers are to have a vesture both for summer and winter made of material fitting for them *ad instar*¹⁰ Missionaries. Therefore, they will wear a cincture, and ecclesiastical style hat, however, without a ribbon on it, but at most, if necessary, a black cord, and nothing more. The hairstyle likewise shall be similar to the ecclesiastical one. Their vesture

⁸ They conquered the dragon because of the blood of the Lamb.

⁹ This Circular letter, as also the following one, was written and signed in the handwriting of Fr. Camillo Rossi, but undoubtedly it is St. Gaspar's work. In a notation placed on the fourth page, it says that this Circular of December 3, 1830 is to be joined also to the following one dealing with the short cloak. We are reproducing the texts of these Circulars especially because of the importance they have in understanding the later correspondence with Fr. Innocenzo Betti.

¹⁰ After the fashion of.

will differ from that of the Missionary in the things that follow. They are forbidden to have the use of buckles of any type and to be content to lace their shoes with a modest cord of flosssilk. Furthermore, they are never to use the supercollar, or white material. which ecclesiastics are accustomed to place over their collars. Finally, there remains forbidden, and expressly prohibited, the use of the biretta, using, if necessary, for health's sake, a skullcap *ad instar* other Institutes, consequently forbidding the use of small, black birettas etc. If a skullcap is needed for the wintertime, it is to be of heavy cloth, and in the summertime, of bunting. They should never be made to cover the ears. We say nothing about the crucifix, since this is something of a private nature for the Missionary alone.

Each community, at the earliest possible time, is to carry out this directive, revising if possible either in part or altogether, the vesture which our Brothersinservice now have. If it is not possible to make this change, or if the Houses do not have the means for handling what has just been stated, it will be tolerated but they are to make known when that change in gesture has occurred. Every bit of clothing that our Brothers have had for some time, and torn, should be worn out, working in the House, always keeping in mind that the smocks with sleeves and other similar articles of wear are to still remain for expressly exclusive use. May the grace and the love of Jesus Christ our Lord be always with us.

Praise and thanksgiving be evermore to Jesus
who with his Blood has saved us.

Camillo Rossi, Miss.
Pro Secr. Gen.

2104

December 3, 1830

To the Missionaries of the Most Precious Blood

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

This letter, which is to be read along with the Circular on the vesture of the Brothers, makes known that the winter longcloak must be black and have a similar muffler as ours, made of durable cloth; it is to have sleeves, just as is the practice in other Institutes. This has been decided by the very reverend Canon del Bufalo, our Director General: 1. to distinguish our Brothers from the Missionaries; 2. as a convenience for our Brothers themselves. It is to be noted here, however, that they must first wear out the longcloaks that they have. So, this article goes into effect with the new urgent needs.

Camillo Rossi, Miss.
Pro Secr. Gen.

2105

December 16, 1830

Fr. Antonio Ricci

Sanginesio

*Christus dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine Suo*¹¹

Venerable Canon

I cannot repeat sufficiently how grateful I am and what consolation I experienced upon receiving your most esteemed letter. May God be blessed, who infuses so much zeal into your heart, as you regulate the pious organization which are the mystical hedges around the vineyard of the Lord. Two thoughts, therefore, should be of comfort to us. First of all, that the Lord rewards *secundum laborem. et non secundum fructum*: "*Honestavit illum in laboribus*".¹² Secondly, that *ubi sunt duo vel tres congregati in nomine meo ibi sum ego in medio eorum*.¹³ Then, too, how comforting is that other statement: "*Volo pater ut ubi ego sum, illic sit et minister meus*".¹⁴ Called as we are to the holy ministry, what will we not do so that souls will come to love Jesus who *dilexit nos et lavit nos in Sanguine suo*?¹⁵

Indeed, what is needed is to reanimate the union of the priests, getting together each month and thus sharing with each other the holy ministry. Miserable thing that I am, I shall pray to our most lovable Redeemer. Likewise, it would be good for the Sacconi to arrange for themselves a shift of Retreats and at that same time, if it can be worked out, to have the members of the Oratory join them. If one of our members should be needed, I shall see to sending him upon any request from the most reverend archbishop.

Finally, do not cease praying for me, as I shall not fail to do the same for you. Do so especially during the recurring mysteries for which I sincerely wish you an abundant granting of blessings. In a particular way, the devotion to the Divine Blood should be our weaponry in humiliating the devil. *Ipsi vicerunt draconem propter Sanguinem Agni*.¹⁶ So, always try to do all you can to diffuse this devotion, in behalf of the needs of holy Mother Church. In many churches throughout various areas, they are successively promoting the sanctification of the month through acts of adoration of the Divine Blood, so that, in this manner, they stimulate a perpetual cult to the price of our redemption.

Take good care of yourself for the benefit of the people there, and may your piety become

¹¹ Christ loved us and washed us in his blood.

¹² According to the labor, not according to the fruit: He honored him in his labors.

¹³ Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in their midst.

¹⁴ I wish, Father, that where I am, there also may be my minister.

¹⁵ He loved us and washed us in his blood.

¹⁶ They conquered the dragon because of the blood of the Lamb.

evermore ardent, especially in favor of that region there. *Gratia Dei nobiscum*.¹⁷ While kissing your hand, I remain, with esteem and respect

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare Can. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Rome, December 16, 1830

2106

December 16, 1830

Fr. Francesco Paradisi

Montalto

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Most esteemed Canon

Pardon me if I have delayed in answering your very kind letter. Indeed, return whenever you wish to the Institute. Every House is at your disposal. With regret did I learn of your difficulties from which I am hopeful that you will continue to recover. In the meantime, during your sojourn there, stimulate zealously the pious organizations and, in particular, the association of the great St. Francis Xavier.

You are acting very correctly in procuring in the meantime the settlement of your canonry so that you can return without a worry. It seems to me that the coadjutor might be able to obtain that for you. Then you will have to get a dispensation from residence. You can figure it out better. Still, it cannot be denied that our times are quite critical. So, how are we to placate God? By promoting evermore the doing of good work. Thus, the urgency of the apostolate is growing as well as the work of our Institute. You are sharp enough on your own to acknowledge this obvious truth. The order of your bishop cannot ever contemplate the situation of one who dedicates himself to an Institute; and also, that the inconvenience costs very little.

The suffering that you experienced during the recent Missions, rather than afflict you, should be the source of consolation. Later on, you will be able to attend to the internal problems. The complaints of the domestics are not to be overly estimated. Think only of the response that Jesus gave when the most holy Mary and St. Joseph said: *dolentes quaerebamus te ... Nesciebatis in his quae Patris mei sunt oportet me esse?*¹⁸

A thousand, thousand blessing on you during the recurring mysteries.

Pray for me and have others do so too. With all my heart and with esteem, I renew myself as

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

¹⁷ The grace of God be with us.

¹⁸ We sought you sorrowing ... Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?

Mis. Ap.
Rome, December 16, 1830

2107

December 17, 1830
Msgr. Nicola Mattei
Archbishop of Camerino
Camerino

*Christus dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine Suo*¹⁹

Venerable Monsignor²⁰

When I had already asked Fr. de Victoriis to give you my respects and religious greetings for the imminent very holy mysteries, he informed me of your very kind letter for which I am altogether obliged to you. I learned of the good achieved in the Retreat for your seminarians and ordinands and I wholeheartedly give thanks to the Almighty *a quo bona cuncta procedunt*.²¹ Likewise, I am deeply obliged to you for the kindness you have shown in informing me of the other Retreats to be given at your Conservatory. That information is what God wills, at least for the timebeing, since the projects of the ministry are such and so numerous that one House has to come to the aid of the other. Eventually, with an increase in the number of foundations, in temporal means as well as the number of our membership, which even now adds up to a respectable number, the scheduling of good works will be considerably much easier.

You, my Monsignor, are one of the Fathers of our Society; so, continue to do all you can to assist it, govern it, spread it abroad, as I am assured you will do in your very distinct zeal. With regard to the affairs of Pievetorina, I would like you to have Fr. de Victoriis transcribe the things that I suggested to him on my last visit to our Mission House. I am hopeful that your most reverend excellency will go along with that. Rarely will I inconvenience you with my most humble letters because I am quite aware of the many grave problems and tasks that you bear. At the same time, you are not unaware of how intimate and affectionate my esteem remains for you. At the present time, the need for devotion to the Divine Blood increases as does the Institute's work, which fills in for the deficiency of vocations to the religious life with vows, etc., etc.. I kiss your hands and with total homage, I remain

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rome, December 17, 1830

¹⁹ Christ loved us and washed us in his blood.

²⁰ Xeroxed copy.

²¹ From whom all good things come.

P.S. Please, I ask you to extend my thanks and respects, along with my holy Christmas greetings, to the excellent Father Ugo Galloppini.

2108

December 18, 1830
Fr. Raffaele Rosati
Albano

Hail to the Blood of Jesus Christ

Most esteemed Father Raffaele

I am hereby sending a reply to your very kind letter. I, too, would like to know about the writing of Biamonti. I have asked Father Camillo to write to Father Beniamino Romani in order to find out where this work is being sold. So, contact Father Camillo Rossi about it, and as soon as he gets a reply let me know, and it will be taken care of.

At the earliest possibility, I shall provide the a Kempis as well as the devotee of most holy Mary by Segneri.

Pray for me a lot and have others do so too. With esteem and respect, I am and will constantly be

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rome, December 18, 1830

2109

December 18, 1830
Mother Maria Nazzarena De Castris
Piperno

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Very reverend Mother

Here I am sending a reply to your letter and extending to you my sincerest wishes for every happiness with the recurring mysteries, while I am certain also of your charity in recommending me often to God.

You should not at all, be surprised that I must, at times, delay our letterexchange. It happens because of circumstances that are so very often unforeseen.

I am presently in need of special prayers because of a Retreat that I must give for the feast of Christmas, as well as for so many problems awaiting me at my desk. Pray that God will give me the strength, both physical and moral; even more so, that while I am concerned about others, I do not become forgetful of myself. God gives me a strong desire to pray, but then I cannot find the time to do that as much as I would like. You supply for me.

I give thanks to God for the peace that you are presently enjoying and that Jesus will

become more and more precious in your heart. Praise be given to the Giver of every good gift, who, in Scripture, is called "*princeps pacis*".²² I indeed recognize that these great benefits that God is granting you, will encourage you to an even greater sense of gratitude. God does not fail to look upon each and every creature, but upon you he is truly abundant with his infinite mercies.

Your taciturnity was not the result of manifesting your anxieties or your deficiencies, but from discovering the ways of God, along with his gifts, so that you might come to a realization of what God wishes from you and how you might raise your soul to a more intimate union with him. Now, from your recent letter, you show a beginning, at least in a general and rather sufficient way, of recognizing what infused prayer is, a gift which you are receiving. In this regard, it is not necessary for you to prepare the mystical table of mental prayer, for you will find it already prepared: "*paratur mensa Domini. Edentes et bibentes, surgite principes*".²³ Whoever eats from this table will share in the princely realm of those graces which are granted to us through the love of Jesus; that princely realm is one not subject to changes, but one that is stable, peaceful and, at the same time, glorious.

I am consoled, indeed, by the interior status of your soul with reference to the most holy Eucharist. When one withdraws into this mystical wine cellar, who can number the good effects that will be experienced? There, you are to beseech for me a holy electricity in my poor soul so that, each morning when I celebrate holy Mass, it will be recharged by the most merciful Jesus. Although there are mystical seasons in the soul, nevertheless, in one who loves Jesus, all turns out for the good.

From your mother, who shows concern for her daughters, you will learn the solicitude that religion has for her daughters and, in that way, you will learn to convert everything into food for the soul, imitating the industrious bee, extracting sweetness from flowers.

Furthermore, you are to avert those thoughts that suggest that God does not love you etc. They are temptations. God loves you and has loved you from all eternity. Scold the devil as he deserves, and may the Divine Blood be your source of comfort. In your monastery, to the extent that you are able, always encourage fervor for our devotion, our pious works, etc. At least through prayer, be of help in achieving great fruit in our holy Missions and that "*fructus maneat*".²⁴

With regard to the daily fasting which is a matter of your choice, a bit of prayer.

Yes, let us pray that the Lord will grant us a pope who is entirely of the most Precious Blood and who will elevate, spread and effectively promote our Institute. It is for the pure glory of God that I seek all of this; in all things, may the will of the Lord be done.

Return my respects to the nun Pellegrini and tell her that St. Francis Xavier is not miserly

²² Prince of peace.

²³ The table of the Lord is prepared. Eating and drinking, arise as leaders.

²⁴ That the fruit remain.

about sharing heaven with her. While living here on this earth, he was greatly exalted; then what must be the case in the highest heavens? I am so consoled to see that that nun has this devotion to him. I shall not fail to pray for her and especially because she is a devotee of my great Xavier. I would like that the first nun who is invested there should be given the name "*Francesca Saveria del Preziosissimo Sangue di nostro Signor Gesu Cristo*".

With all my esteem, I am, in Jesus Christ crucified,

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Rome, December 18, 1830

2110

December 21, 1830

Mr. Camillo Possenti

Fabriano

Hail to the Blood of Jesus Christ

Camillo, my dearest in the Lord

Through the mails you will be receiving seven *scudi* of which 6,60 *scudi*, if I am not mistaken, are in payment for the stationery which you were kind enough to indicate to me that it would be delivered here. The few remaining *paoli* you will please retain for future accounts. In the meantime, a thousand, a thousand thanks.

Just what my religious wishes are for the recurring sacrosanct mysteries you can imagine better in your own mind than I could ever express in words. So, read everything that lies within my heart. I am, indeed, sure of your charity in praying a great deal for me, so very, very needful of prayers, as well as for our Institute of holy Missions and Retreats. It is a Society that, in our times, is becoming more and more of interest. Let us be evermore zealous for the great devotion of the most Precious Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. The more furious the storm becomes, the more shall we shout out to the throne of divine mercy. Even though we may be battered, all the more energetically shall we work for the ever greater glory of God.

If I am not mistaken, it is customary to have a Retreat there for Christmas. In Cereto, of course, there is the legacy for a Mission which falls due. May God bless these holy institutions. I shall stand with you at the holy grotto of Bethlehem during these blessed days to which our Church is drawing near. With this in mind, I am and will constantly be

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rome, December 21, 1830

2111

December 23, 1830
 Student Orazio Bracaglia
 Albano

Hail to the Blood of Jesus Christ

Most esteemed Orazio

Thank you and the other students for the kindness shown to me in sending me your religious best wishes for every blessing from the Child Jesus. You can imagine how extensive are my desires for your wellbeing as well as for each and every member of our holy Institute. The Child Jesus invites us to the grotto and teaches us that in order to accomplish good it is necessary to suffer; the Child Jesus presents himself to us between Mary and Joseph, and they are our consolers in all of our activities; the Child Jesus is warmed by the ox and by the donkey; the ox is the symbol of hard work. The acceptance of being scorned, even when doing some good work, is symbolized in the donkey who works and is not cared for. Finally, the infancy of Jesus encourages us to be childlike in spirit and this is to be our delight. Pray and have the others do so too so that, while recalling these basic principles, they should become more firmly fixed in the soul and put into practice through the performance of holy works. In the meantime, I am, with all of my affection and gratitude

Your humble servant

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rome, December 23, 1830

2112

December 27, 1830
 Fr. Valenziano
 Rome

Hail to the Blood of Jesus Christ

Very reverend Father Valenziano²⁵

It will be necessary for you to tell me at what time you will be free; then, immediately, I can write to the most reverend bishop of Veroli. At least, let me know an approximate time. It was judged a right thing to do, namely, to write to you directly by mail so as to learn whether there is any hope of your involvement, as I have no doubt will be so. Likewise, you will be taken care of.

Also I give you my wholehearted thanks for the kindness with which you beseech the Lord for copious, heavenly blessings upon me during these recurring mysteries. You can be certain of my return in kind. Let us always be united in the adorable Heart of Jesus Christ where I am and will constantly be

²⁵ A notation, written in another's handwriting, in the upper right hand margin says: "Dell'Orlogiari".

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant
G. C. del Bufalo
 Mis. Ap.
 House, December 27, 1830

2113

January 1831
 Fr. Innocenzo Betti
 Benevento

Hail to the Blood of J. C.

Esteemed Canon²⁶

Here I am sending you a reply to your letter of December 12, regarding the change in the habit of our Brothers.

From the very beginnings of the Institute, Msgr. Bonanni dressed the now deceased Brother Agostino in the cassock or a long vesture. So, it is not something new for our days. There had always been a desire to follow a practice adapted for an Institute. You yourself, when Benevento was opened up, were aware of its urgency. At first, I was opposed to it in the beginning in order not to plunge the Institute into difficulties, since it was in the stage of development. But, at the present time, because of the rescripts obtained and also the Brief of Pope Leo XII on S. Felice in Giano, the whole aspect of the situation is changed. Then, too, since I perhaps would have to present a picture of the Institute during the next Pontificate, I did not want to falsely state: we have such and such a vesture, if that were not actually the truth. There never is any reason to betray the truth. Also, I did not wish to be reproached for not having drawn up the plans toward the qualification of our group as a true Institute.

So, I am most at ease about the Circular. I have taken into consideration the question of expenses. That is why I did not say that this had to be done immediately, because I did take into consideration the temporalities.²⁷ I have brought a feeling of tranquility to the Brothers, who quite unwillingly had been garbed in the round hat. Aside from this, other multiple difficulties were being raised with regard to our being identified as a true Institute. Finally, I made up the habit from our very own, but adapted it to our Brothers.

The praxis of other Institutes, especially that of the Filippini who do not take vows, gives us support in the matter. In the House, on Missions and in most of their duties, one is not to deny

²⁶ An annotation by Merlini, assigns this letter "to around January of 1831", that is, at the beginning of the controversy. In all probability it was written in Rome where the Saint was located at the time.

²⁷ Here are the words of the Circular on this point: "furthermore, if the Houses do not have the temporal means of carrying out all of the foregoing immediately, they are permitted to bring this about at the time when they replace the habit. Everything that our Brothers have that is old and wearing out, such as it is, let them finish wearing it out in the House".

them their habit, but rather oblige them to a greater reserve. In any situation which would be unseemly or inappropriate, according to the place, it will be left to the judgment of the Congressus to make decisions, in a prudent manner. Since they will not be wearing buckles nor the collar, that already is an indication that they are not ordained. The use of the cincture, together with the other things mentioned, identifies them as belonging to an Institute.

In the summary that I am now revising of the three Circulars in existence in the Archives, I shall add any work that is not in keeping with the habit should be performed in fitting garb, *juxta dicta*.²⁸ Indeed, to put it plainly, it is not the work that makes one deny or oppose the dignity of the habit, but other things: useless chatter ... theaters, etc. We do not object to a poor priest going out shopping for his needs, but we do object to his assuming the responsibilities of running a business.

The wearing of the cassock is used by the clerics who take care of the Sacristy, those that work in the curias, etc. Why should it not be proper for those, who with virtuous celibacy, take up residence in an Institute? What eventually will be put into usage is different from what the Lay Filippini and the Jesuits have, etc. So, the only thing to do is to point that out.

If we consider these matters calmly, we shall come to see that all will tend to perfect everything that the Institute has always desired. Rest assured that no one will disapprove something that should have been done long ago. I add that I did not take advantage of the vacancy of the Papacy, for when I had made my deliberations on this point, the Holy Father was still living. I only wish that he were still alive. The rule already spoke of the Brothers in our churches: therefore, the matters were already initially predisposed.

Please do not attribute to Fr. Biagio or to Fr. Merlini what is imputable only to me. I am ready to give an account of myself to God, as well as to men, if the Lord so wills that I do, for he sees my intentions.²⁹

After carefully examining your most esteemed letter regarding this topic, I have no alternative. It does not please me to write angrily, but only to seek out what is correct, with the grace of God, as well as sound reasoning. Beyond that, I excuse and pardon all, and I go forward.

Finally, as this better form of vesture comes into use gradually, in my judgment this will not change matters, but rather, it will turn things for the better, *sensim sine sensu et quasi aliud*

²⁸ [according to what was said] This summary (or Transunto) of the Circulars was discussed in the footnote in Lett. 1898, Feb. 14, 1829. In the manuscript presently existing in the Archives, there is no trace of the addition envisioned here by the Saint. Perhaps, on second thought, he did not see the advantage of it. On the other hand, in the "Regola per i Fratelli Laici Inservienti" which Merlini had printed in 1861, which certainly reflects the ideas of the Founder, it says: "It is prohibited to all to walk through the house, to go to church, to the sacristy or to the door without being properly attired. It is permissible for them to be without the cassock in the kitchen, in the garden and in other places of casual dress, as well as when they are engaged in other tasks in which the habit would be a hindrance" (pgf. III, p. 12)

²⁹ Cf. Additional Biographical Data: Brothers, Habit of the.

agens.³⁰

Have you read Fr. Galli's letter? In order to understand it, he must have read your letter to me, as soon as he arrived in Benevento. He should have suggested the use of moderation. I repeat, I forgive all. But, I notice that the Lord is subjecting the House at Benevento to a great trial. From now on I should not be reticent any longer, realizing the great responsibility that I have before God for having been silent when I should have spoken. A huge veil is drawn over the intellect, but the heart does not doubt at all the rightness of it all.

Let me say in advance that the Lord disposes things for his own exalted reasons of Providence. If I should say: it is daytime, you would answer: it is night. We are always in a continuous state of opposition, so much so, that it is going on one year that I have been swallowing drafts from a chalice that I never thought would be mine. "*Bonum mihi, quia humiliasti me*".³¹ As Canon Del Bufalo, I deserve even more. But, until the Holy Father, whom God will raise up, relieves me of my duties, it is truly a painful thing to my human nature to be nothing but *in parabolam*³² in this Community. The spirit of religion, however, sweetens all.

This whole series of difficulties began when a year ago I wrote a letter to you in which I said that I would have liked more advancement in the House at Benevento, with reference particularly to the pious associations: for example, an association for the Clergy, etc. Your letter of reply had an entirely new tone when it would have been quite simple to say "these works have been activated ... such and such is still needed ... an effort is being made, while adapting to the place, to work things out in a prudential way, etc." On the occasion of that letter, you mentioned to me that I did not have affection for Benevento and that I did wrong in objecting to the building of the Church etc. I did not even give a reply to this last issue and I could have said with regard to the first problem that it is sufficient for me that God be my judge. With regard to the second, that I am not regretful for having judged that, because of the debt, I would not have done anything. I have had to make similar assessments for two others of our Houses. That is not much.

I was opposed to the contract with Sig. Galassi, and I would have liked to have concluded that matter in another way. Perhaps it will still be done. But, I do not know a thing about it. The affairs that are going on there, about which I used to be informed at one time, are now for me *terra incognita*.³³ I told you about his Eminence Cristaldi's opinion about the situation in Aquila. Your answer was that the Cardinal should worry about that. I am speaking of Cardinal Cristaldi. I had already foreseen what he would give me as an answer, for it was contained in the reply already given by the Secretary of the Council. With regard to the other economical matters, there

³⁰ Gradually without feeling and as if doing something else.

³¹ It is good for me, because you humiliated me.

³² In parable.

³³ Unknown land.

was a discussion during the last Visitation. I have no doubt that you took them into consideration.

Then, you suggested a new program for the association of the Clergy. In all sincerity, I was compelled to remind you of the printed rules for the association of Priests. This was just another one of my crimes. So, you set aside the promotion of that good work because of my opposition to your new method. Another person might have said: "I will handle the matter *meliori modo*".³⁴ I simply do not know, if you continue to proceed in this way, that is, with an insurmountable stubbornness, whether any progress can ever be made. With this, however, I am not refusing you the right of giving an explanation. But, do it in such a way that, when you do have an opposite opinion, you do not allow to happen what actually did happen there.³⁵ We have expressed our gratitude to the Missionaries *in subsidium*.³⁶ We were in disagreement ourselves with the new method, which with a good intention you wished to introduce. Consequently, I made an effort to rectify the basic points. If the priests there in Benevento wanted to give Missions, as is done in Naples, who was there to prevent them from holding their meetings as was done in Naples? *Utinam omnes prophetarent*;³⁷ however, not according to a different Method from the one which I have set down; for we do not want it said, as time goes on, that we want to impose our way of life on them, telling them, Canons and Pastors, etc. etc. who are not members of the Society, how to conduct themselves.

Later, after all that had been discussed, I called Rosati to come to me. You kept him there. Thus, someone learned how to cause opposition, something which a Xavier would not have done nor have taught. It was then that the said member acquired a certain way of acting concerning which I had Fr. Biagio write a letter as a counteraction, because I myself did not want to be exposed to other similar cases. Next, I suggested that Fr. Carlo proceed to our school in Albano. Here again, new difficulties. I called for Fr. Mosconi to bolster the preachers of main sermons by alternating the old timers with the young men: once again I had to sustain a rejection. Likewise, in your place there, something was leaked out, even to one of our men, that should never have happened, even though the matter was of little importance. The course of studies was also criticized by Fr. Carlo, etc.; and, because of my sins, the House of Studies was unable to achieve any success there, etc.

³⁴ In a better way.

³⁵ This is an involved sentence, not easy to comprehend. This "non" could be a pleonasm, and in that case the meaning would be clear: the difference of opinions should not result in "what actually was seen" to happen, that is, the complete neglect of the association of the Clergy. That is what actually happened in Benevento. If, on the other hand, the "non" is significative (and we note that the Saint added it after having written the sentence, cfr. the original), the sense of the sentence would be: the difference of opinion should not prevent "what actually was seen" to work out, namely, the success of the association of the Clergy which experience demonstrated as valid in other places.

³⁶ For support.

³⁷ Would that all would prophesy.

Here, added up together, is the listing of the disagreements between us. Rightly have I had to pray and summon to my assistance every means possible in order to salvage many things. God knows and sees all, *et non mentior*.³⁸ I confess, however, that my heart is full of myrrh, and blessed will I be if I learn how to cultivate it and reap it for blessed eternity.

No sooner has Galli arrived there, and I notice that he too is assuming the style which is altogether characteristic of only that House in Benevento. I confess the truth, I have written what I have had to write, realizing that something has been adopted in that House that elsewhere they have not learned.

I proposed as exemplars Valentini and Merlini, and it is just so. Even though I love and esteem all, I have no others to propose. Up to now, they have been the two champions of the Institute.

What conclusion is to be drawn from this letter of mine? Here it is: do not rupture our unity; give explanations quietly and without agitation; do not get aggravated when everyone does not think along the same lines as you; train the Companions in the way of obedience, and lead them by your example; do not think that others are incapable of giving counsel; look at yourself as well as the Institute there; pray more than ever. Little by little, and with prayer and patience, all will improve when and how God wills. Canon del Bufalo will have more reason to be silent than to speak.

My love for you is always the same, nor have I lost that esteem and respect³⁹ with which, while wishing you every blessing at this time of the recurring mysteries, as well as to extend them to the entire Community, I am

Your humble servant

G. C. d. B.

2114

January 5, 1831

Luigi Fuschi

Norma

Hail to the Divine Blood

Dearest Luigi⁴⁰

Here is the notification of the 100 Masses. The alms of fifteen scudi, if I am not mistaken, you are to give to Canon Fontana, the present Superior in Sermoneta.

I am writing in a hurry. Pray for me and have others do so too. I am constantly

³⁸ And I do not lie.

³⁹ Cf. Gasparian History and Trivia: Esteem and respect.

⁴⁰ The postal marking bears as the date of arrival, January 5th and the place of departure, Rome. Father Fontana was Superior in Sermoneta only in 1831 (December 1830-August 1831); so the year must be 1831.

Your humble servant
G. C. del Bufalo
 Mis. Ap.

2115

January 13, 1831
 Mr. Camillo Possenti
 Fabirano

Hail to the Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable Camillo

On the frontispiece of the little work, you could have them put: "Reprinted under the auspices of the Missionaries of the Archconfraternity of the most Precious Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ". Do not cease urging the printer to use dispatch as well as exactitude in the printing.

A thousand, thousand thanks for so great an act of charity and attention. I have not failed, nor shall I ever fail, to remember you at the holy altar, along with all of your family to whom I extend my very best wishes always for every sweet, blessing from the all merciful God.

I am writing this time with shortness of time. However, you can read the book of my heart. In the meanwhile, I assure you again that I am

*Suo infimo in Christo servo*⁴¹
G. C. del Bufalo
 Mis. Ap.

Rome, 13th of 1831

2116

January 13, 1831
 Fr. Giovanni Chiodi
 Rimini

Hail to the Blood of Jesus Christ

Most esteemed Father Giovanni

Here I am sending a reply to your recent, very dear letters. If, in the Retreat, you found yourself arid and dry, realize that in that condition you ought to have considered, in due fashion, the words: "*In terra deserta et invia...sic in sancto apparui tibi, ut viderem etc.*"⁴² In this condition, the soul is humbled and all appears in confusion; you have suffered in your spirit and have reaped myrrh; yet everything went along quite well. Thus, in preaching to the ordinandi, meditation was not lacking ... oh how good the Lord is! Now you can see how we are the

⁴¹ Being his lowest servant in Christ.

⁴² In a land deserted and impassable ... thus I appeared to you in what is holy in order that I might see etc.

mystical channels through which the mysterious waters of the Lord's graces flow! This is an opportune help. How is that young man doing, upon whom you placed a bit of hope? Out of the grouping of ordinands, it will be necessary to revive the association for the senior clergy. You know what I mean; and should you need further clarification, write to me.

With regard to temptations, repeat: "*Abyssus miseriae, invocat abyssum misericordiae*".⁴³ This is what the great Father Segneri, the elder, used to say. Courage, and disdain. You understand me. With respect to the works of the ministry, if, in your activities, you do not have that feeling of interior accompaniment, do not cease having a desire for it: "*Desiderium pauperum exaudivit Dominus*".⁴⁴

Write in behalf of the Missions in Toscana, having in mind the propagation of our devotion to the Divine Blood etc. Did not the great Xavier write so as to have it introduced in China? So, too, proportionately, let us apply this to ourselves. Hence, in this case, I would decide as pointed out above. In other cases, I would use other methods. That would depend on the times, the places, the circumstances, and above all on the inspirations from God.

I shall consider the results of the Mission in Riparotta instead of the Lenten preaching. You, in that event, will be the Director of it; the archpriest will have no doubts about that. I am still corresponding in order to accelerate the new Missionary there. So, we shall see how this will work out: "*Rogate Dominum*".⁴⁵

The paper, concerning which you wrote to me, dealing with the arrangements for the printed matter, raises in my mind two difficulties. The first is that this will deprive the Congressus of the freedom of the daily schedule. The second is that, if the ceremony is carried out in the Cathedral after the noon meal, then the Institute would have to conduct its function in the morning, as an exceptional situation. The only answer that can be given to these two difficulties is the following ... the Congressus is to check the time period and then set the schedule; after that, in the printed matter, the time for the function in the Cathedral can be set down, but that should be arranged for a different hour. Let me know whether things could be worked out in this way.

*Laus Deo*⁴⁶ for the Retreat in the Oratory.

Let us give thanks to God for the surplus of grain and wine, concerning which I shall say more in another letter of mine. You are supposed to collect 15 *scudi* from Massarella. According to the board payment collected by Ricci, Rimini is getting only 8,76 *scudi*, and since Massarella, before departing, made an accounting, I am inclined to believe that he should be paying 15 *scudi*.

⁴³ The abyss of misery invokes the abyss of mercy.

⁴⁴ The Lord has heard the desire of the poor.

⁴⁵ Ask the Lord.

⁴⁶ Praise to God.

The mistake probably arises from your evaluation of the rate for board with regard to the aforesaid Massarella. Please give a fuller explanation and, in the meantime, I have written to his father.

All the Brothers need not have a change in their vesture at the same time, but rather *iuxta necessitatem renovationis vestium etc.*⁴⁷

I regret learning about the thieves that have been heard. But I cannot approve of the idea of our stripping the church and the altars. Have the sacristan keep watch. Be careful to lock up well; but let us not give the example of what I refer to as something fatal, for reasons which I consider needless to explain. So I would make the following distinctions: "If you wish to move the large cupboard which is in the sacristy into our library housing our archives, presuming that it is placed in a suitable area, *transeat hoc pro nunc.*⁴⁸ Therein you could keep the more precious articles. A sufficiently safe place would be where we usually keep working clothes. It is to be understood that the prefect in charge of the church will use the greatest care to have everything carefully arranged. Likewise, the viceSuperior must be careful to watch over the archives, to set up an index of the books, etc. As for the memorial gifts, they are to be returned to the church and the respective altars and images. They are to be placed there, using the greatest possible prudence, namely, quite out of reach.

But see that every article is in its place and trust then in God and most holy Mary, otherwise even in Loreto they would have to remove everything, along with the chalices in the sacristy etc. These would be excessive means. Still, things could happen ... let us hope that it does not, I repeat; but if it does, we have done everything we could, including prayer. Do not fail to exercise vigilance and shrewdness; but, *servatis servandis.*⁴⁹ Even in Albano, one time, there was a theft, but the memorial gifts were not removed because of that etc. In Rimini, you are hasty in coming to a decision; let us move a bit more slowly. I praise you for your intentions; but God knows what rumors could arise etc. *Est modus in rebus.*⁵⁰ As for the other problems, *ad alias.*⁵¹ With regard to the accounts, let us proceed as follows:

1. What Massarella owes you is to be subtracted from my possessions in that House, and I would like to know how much that comes to. Check the archives, seeing that everything ends up for the benefit of the Institute; as far as I am concerned, in regard to the whole, it will be good to have things handled in this way.

⁴⁷ According to the need for the repair of vestments, etc.

⁴⁸ Let this pass for now.

⁴⁹ Observing what needs to be observed.

⁵⁰ There is method in things.

⁵¹ For another time.

2. You will be receiving through the mails 11 scudi, three of which are to be given to Paoletti for certain Masses that he is applying for me, and eight of those *scudi* in cash are a final payment to Ricci, while assuring the House in Rimini that the compensations received *in temporalibus*⁵² are not few and scanty, etc. but etc. *Satis*.⁵³ Send me your reply. Let me know whether there are other bills etc.

G. C. d. B.

M. Ap.

13th of 1831

2117

January 18, 1831

Luigi Baldi

Meldola

Hail to the Blood of Jesus Christ

Most esteemed Luigi

I owe you a reply; the occupations of the ministry have delayed it up to now. However, I have supplied for it at the holy altar, recommending you in a particular way to God during the recent recurring mysteries of our holy religion. Nor have I ceased nor will I cease praying that an abundance of celestial blessings will be showered upon you. Do not forget to include me in your prayers. In this holy union in charity, I remain, with the fullness of esteem and respect

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Rome, 18th of 1831

2118

January 22, 1831

Bartolomeo Panzini

Albano

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Dearest Bartolomeo

Tell Mrs. Vincenza Vacca that I have sent on the letter that you enclosed and I gave it my recommendation. Cardinal Franzoni has not, as yet, carried out the task that you know about. There is a request for a Mission in Sezze. More about this in another letter, after the return of the Missionaries on Monday, and previous to Father Antonio's⁵⁴ return. With all my love, asking you

⁵² In temporalities.

⁵³ Enough.

⁵⁴ Fr. Antonio Lipparelli

always to keep before your mind: one God, one soul, one eternity, I remain

Affectionately yours

G. C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Rome, the 22nd⁵⁵

Using our carriage, you are to send Marcello along with Giuseppe as far as Sermoneta. The latter will return it to Albano and each will do a little for each other on the trip. The air of Vallecorsa is not suitable to Gaetano who has suffered from a certain coughing which requires him to go to Sermoneta. Marcello, who has always done well in the air of Vallecorsa, will be going there where there is a need for a man who is practiced in our internal way of doing things. I am etc.

2119

January 24, 1831

Msgr. Aannibale Ginnasi

Rome

*Christus dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine Suo*⁵⁶

Venerable Monsignor

The members of the St. Francis Xavier association in S. Maria in Vincis beseech your charity in celebrating the number of 30 Masses at a privileged altar, during this year of 1831. Please favor them with your charity since this is a pious organization that is most deserving of special regard. I seize this opportunity, also, for renewing with fullness, my esteem, respect, gratitude and affection for you.

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

House, 24th of 1831

2120

January 27, 1831

Msgr. Gaetano Bonanni

Bishop of Norcia

Norcia

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable Monsignor

⁵⁵ The year must be 1831 because of the reference to the Mission in Sezze. The address was written by St. Gaspar's niece, Luigia del Bufalo

⁵⁶ Christ loved us and washed us in his blood.

I thank you wholeheartedly for your efforts with the Vicar of Cascia in regard to the 30 *scudi*. I do not know whether the debtor has anything by way of property, or whether it could be paid in instalments. I leave everything to your wisdom and charity.

Let us be in agreement concerning the holy Missions in August. Starting from now, let us recommend them to the Father of mercies.

I think that Canon Pistelli would have been at least a bit content after having acquired a copy of the Life of de Vita. But you handle things as you see best.

I do not lose sight of a Filippino Father for that city, realizing the good work that he can accomplish.

Our substitution for the Scolopi Fathers would not seem to be indicated, because of the connection with the public schools; rather, the Somaschi Fathers, or some other similar Institute.

I have been occupying myself with the Maestre Pie and I see no difficulty in succeeding in this effort. More, later on; and I hope it will be fruitful.

The conclave continues. Several times, his Eminence Cristaldi has fallen ill. Let us pray for this worthy wearer of the purple. In Rome, the sanctified carnival has been adopted in more churches for the entire month of the Sorrowful Mother. I have been selected for Sts. Vincent and Anastasius. Pray a lot for me and always keep me in mind at the holy altar.

Father Luigi Turchi, upon entrance into our Institute, received by way of a miracle the small pension that you know about. I know that he is in Rome, but I have not seen him. His age and the difficulties that he has, would render him fit only for internal duties in our Houses, as was the case with the good Father Luigi Achille, of holy memory. But if you were to realize all the efforts made by our Institute in favor of Turchi, they might suggest, in effect, his dismissal from the Society, to whom he owes so much. At least, I would hope that you would have an additional priest in your diocese, and I would be happy for him to become a Filippino Father in Norcia. He is not lacking in talent, in a good voice and in promptness. With training, he could do a lot of good work. Let all of this be a matter of communication of our ideas. Ultimately, in all things, may the will of God be done. I realize that, since we are *ad instar*⁵⁷ the Filippini Fathers, we cannot oblige Turchi to remain with us. Still, what will he be doing in Rome? I kiss your hands and, with the fullness of affectionate esteem, respect and attachment, I am and will constantly be

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rome, 27th of 1831

2121

January 1831

⁵⁷ After the fashion of.

Fr. Giovanni Merlini
 Fuligno per Giano

Hail to the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Esteemed Fr. Giovanni

The two boxes have arrived in Rome, along with the two mattresses, the 15 copies of the *Direttore Diretto*,⁵⁸ some Novenas to Xavier, additional copies of the rule for the Brothers of S. Xavier. .

Today there departed from Rome a sack with 150 herrings, unless I am mistaken in the number, which I cannot check now because Bartolomeo has sent it on to Albano. Count them, and see to it that they are taken care of, etc. In addition, four blocks of cheese, some dried salted cod, etc. I will send you the bill in another ordinary mail deliver. Furthermore, you will receive another bundle. Inside it there are three other small packages: one for Fumasone, one for De Victoriis and the other for that House. Finally, two pictures, with the picture frame for the large one, which I am sending of St. Xavier. The whole lot has been addressed to you through the Massa deliverycoach, and nothing has to be paid until it reaches Massa; from that point you will take care of it.

The picture of St. Xavier, which you will have to clean, is to be hung in the refectory, where the other St. Xavier is, and the latter is to be sent to Pievetorina for the use of the Missions there. Send it by safe means and addressed to De Victoriis, to whom I have already sent instructions, so that he can have a frame made for it since one is needed. You yourself are to retouch the other picture that I am sending since it is in need of a more delicate modesty: for example, one of the angels requires a bit more covering; then you can hang it where you wish. Let me know that everything *exequatur iuxta dicta*.⁵⁹

I do not doubt that Zapponi is going to come, but in case he does not, inform me of that so that I can readily make provisions for it; but inform me immediately.

I shall say or have others say the 20 Masses and I suppose that you have already formed the intention. Let me know how much time is allowed and what offerings, in order to give you etc. etc. It is understood that they will be fulfilled without Privileged altar. Send an answer promptly.

I shall examine the package on which you have written Santelli and Gonnelli on the outside.

I recall that a certain Bernardino had been there with us; but I know nothing further. It would be worth your while to contact the respective administrators of that House, or the

⁵⁸ "*Direttore Diretto nella guida delle anime alla perfezione*" (Rome, 1825, Lino Contedini printers). This is the title of a short and substantial spiritual treatise that the Founder composed "following in the footsteps of Msgr. Albertini's manuscripts", as he himself affirms. The original copy of the work, all in the Saint's own handwriting, is found in Vol. XIII of the *Writings of the Founder*.

⁵⁹ Let it follow according to what was said.

Economists, to find out, etc. Have Zapponi satisfy the five Bernardino Masses as soon as he arrives. If there are supposed to be six, so be it, since it will be necessary to observe the synodal offering of that time. Deduct those offerings from the account which I will send along with the provisions mentioned above.

Fr. Achille was paid in part, according to an entry signed there by me (cancel it from my account; I donate it). Take care of the rest of the debt with what I was able to collect together with Cristaldi from the R.C.A. As the arrears due to S. Felice and so mark it paid. I still have the documents with me. Let me know whether I should put them in Albano where the will was drawn up or there in Giano. This is why I have retained them up to now. For the time being, it seems that the Achille matter is cleared up. Also it seems to me that I spoke to you about this. There is no doubt that what Betti gave to Achille belongs to that House there. The discrepancy in the number of *Scudi* does not amount to much, because the heirs have given their approval: so, etc. Let me know if I do not make myself clear. Question the former house treasurers who used their own funds, and when you get their replies, write to me and clarify, etc. I do not know much about the situation. And do not rely too much on my signatures because other members of the Society did all the work and I only signed my name, something that at present I do with more caution. Personally, I do not think that they have anything coming. However, to be safe, ask them. I do not have an exact recollection. It is certain that I spent a good deal for Giano, because it was our first House and our attention was focused on it, etc.; later, a Boarding School, various vicissitudes, etc. In a meeting held with Fathers De Victoriis and Fontana I condoned a part. Read the minutes of the meetings of that House, and much will come to light. Look into it, and send me an account of what is coming to me, for my own information and guidance, since I cannot remit anymore. The Lord sees all.

⁶⁰ Inform Canon Petruccioli that the materials have arrived here in Rome; it is satisfactory, etc.

I am sending to Fr. Biagio the page that you sent enclosed to me, so that if it is not needed, it can be burned, etc.

In accordance with what the archbishop determines, you will make a clear and separate file in the Archives, and let it be known to the Sisters. The printed matter for those who are aggregated will not cost too much. Go ahead with it, now that the Sacristy is bringing in a bit of income.

With regard to the method of renting out the fields again, govern yourself as you judge best. I believe that you are speaking of the field near the large Cross, where, etc. May the other one productive too.

As for the holy Carnival there, *hoc anno*,⁶¹ handle it economically, taking into

⁶⁰ The sentence that follows is inserted in the margin of the manuscript, without the usual reference mark.

⁶¹ In this year.

consideration our circumstances. The ceremonial has not as yet been issued: so, etc.

How did that other basket of cheese that I sent happen to end up, at the Passionists? Ask for an explanation from the Massa delivery coach; I think the man's name is Sabbatini etc.

Being aware of your anxieties, I am sending the 12.50 *Scudi* of the Fortini quarterly payments not as yet collected, but which by anticipation falls due on the 24th of this month, unless I am mistaken. With this you can provide the oil, if you can obtain it now legally. In Spoleto, insist.⁶² The 12,50 *Scudi* will arrive in Fuligna postpaid.

With reference to Lent, if the Pope is not selected by that time, how are we to get dispensations? This could be handled only if some kind of Bull would give authority in the event of *Sede Vacante*, etc.⁶³

I do not say that you should oblige the tenants to hand over their tenancy, or to pay up their rent, but I think that according to theology they can be counseled to rid themselves of their burden. Look into the matter, etc. The fields that are rented out should be inspected so that they do not go to ruin from lack of care. If someone were to go to the office to copy the documents (some friend), that would not cost too much. Out of curiosity, find out what it would cost, and also whether any properties have been transferred back to us, etc. In the meantime, keep on working at it as well as you can.

As for the arrears of the Schools, handle things as follows. Write to Luparini and ask: "would it be possible to have an exact account of what the Schools spent, when, etc.?" *Ni fallor*,⁶⁴ you will get the answer: no. File the letters in the Archives, etc. I hope that I have expressed myself clearly.

Did you receive the box containing the small ring for the Madonna, as I mentioned in my other letter?

P. S. Instead of 12.50 *Scudi*, I am sending 20, of which 12.5 are Fortini's, *iuxta dicta*.⁶⁵ One *Scudo* for the Bernardino Masses (it seems that you mentioned about that amount) to be taken care of as above. The remainder is for Fr. Pedini to cover the cost of his trip to Sermoneta for the Lenten series which he will have to make within a short time, and I will write and say when. We are agreed.

The Bishop of Gaeta said to Santarelli: if I knew that my men would not return, I would delegate others to hold the examination; but, if they were to return, etc. At any rate, have Ricci write to Santarelli and say: if I return, gladly will I let them examine me. In the meantime, I

⁶² In the manuscript, at this point, the Saint crossed out completely two lines which are as a result illegible.

⁶³ *Sede vacante*: this is a reference to the period which extends from the death of Pius VIII (November 30, 1830) to the election of Gregory XVI (February 2, 1831). During that time in the Papal States, and especially in Emilia and Umbria, revolutionary movements, which lasted to the first months of 1832, broke out.

⁶⁴ If I am not mistaken.

⁶⁵ In accordance to what has been said.

would say: let him finish the school year. I sent a letter to his father, not knowing what correspondence went on between father and son.

Write to the Bishop, too, if necessary.

P. S. During Lent, you will have to supply *in omnibus*⁶⁶ at the Boarding School, exercising patience in a heroic degree. As for other matters, *ad alias*.⁶⁷
(Rome, January 1831)

2122

January 20, 1831
Fr. Giovanni Merlini
Spoleto per Giano

Hail to the Divine Blood

Esteemed Fr. Giovanni

I would like to know whether Fumasoni's package arrived, also a basket, and last of all the pictures with a sack, etc. Ask for an accounting of them. The trips of the deliverycoaches have been paid for as far as Massa. Tell me: in Rome, who are those Friars of Joseph?

I have already written to you with regard to the money to pay for Fr. Pedini's trip. Fortini has given me the quarterly payment already sent on to you. Read my previous letter. I am writing in a hurry. ...

I have received the copy of the deed of possession. We will give some attention to the answers of Msgr Scerra. Question Fr. Biagio who *erat in loco*,⁶⁸ as well as a certain Fr. Niccolini, Jesuit, whose whereabouts are unknown to me.

Just what is our revenue there from permanent leases? Likewise, one should always investigate the papers of the first contract. Sometimes it states: "notwithstanding any law that might intervene, etc. *et etiam ex facto Principis*".⁶⁹

Rent out the land that belongs to the Poor Souls association for three years, according to Canon Law; you would need special permission for a nine year period. You are required to put up public notices, etc. Also, you must specify the boundaries, the number of plants, of plantings, an annual inspection on our part, and likewise preclude any subletting, etc.; in regard to the Masses, for as many will be celebrated as the income would allow. Or something like that. The archbishop will probably have something to say, etc.

In regard to the House Treasurer's books that are missing there, I know nothing. See who

⁶⁶ In all things.

⁶⁷ For another time.

⁶⁸ He was in the place.

⁶⁹ And also from the fact of the head.

was in charge at that time by checking the Minutes of the House Congressus.

⁷⁰ Could the Treasurer's records that are missing have been filed together with those of other procurators? Try to settle any doubts. How did you make out with Fr. Biagio?

I have understood that matter about my 600 *Scudi*. There is a subsidy of 25 annually from Paolucci, until the House is better off, etc.

The 20 Masses are already taken care of; do not worry about it.

Pedini should get started so that he can have a day or so, etc. I have answered Zapponi in another letter of mine. Send for him, or handle it as you may have arranged *iuxta regulam, etc.*⁷¹ I was almost thinking of saving Spoleto for him, and supply with a letter, hoping to economize a bit, etc.

Pedini, from Giano to Terni, by coach; from Terni to Rome, etc. Let it be known there: he is going to preach the Lenten series; and see that it is included in his travel permit. As for the other matters, *ad alias*.⁷² I am, etc..

Your humble servant

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rome, 20 of 1831

Do not involve me with Fumasoni's room and board. Have his son write to him, etc.

Announce a course of Spiritual Exercises for the House that Zapponi can give, according to our rule, etc.

(On the fourth facing of the sheet, near the address:)

Oh! the requests for Lent! Prayers

2123

February 5, 1831

Msgr. Giuseppe Costantini

Vicar General

Albano

*Christus dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine Suo*⁷³

Venerable Monsignor

⁷⁰ In the manuscripts at this point the three sentences reproduced in this paragraph are inserted in the margin, without the usual sign of reference.

⁷¹ According to the rule, etc.

⁷² For another time.

⁷³ Christ loved us and washed us in his blood.

I am writing this with shortness of time;⁷⁴ but, please read everything that I have in my heart. Very quickly did I have a meeting with Prior Falzacappa concerning the item of Choir. He said to me: "I have not received any letter regarding this; but it will be necessary to adhere to the usual procedures of the Council. From this you see that the most eminent Bishop of Albano is to be contacted, and then he will make his efforts in your behalf." I am hopeful that the Lord will bless this activity, for I have a true desire that his merits be acknowledged. Let us pray to God for each thing for he is a good Father. May it please his mercy to cleanse here below every bit of bitterness for the sake of those objectives which we always adore, and may they all bring us to maturity for our beloved fatherland in heaven, where we shall see verified those words: *Ego ero merces tua magna nimis*.⁷⁵

For my peace of mind, it will be necessary to have a letter from the bishop with regard to the young man from Rieti. More about this later. Give me your orders wherever you wish. I kiss your hands. I am and will constantly be

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rome, February 5, 1831

2124

February 6, 1831

Fr. Giovanni Merlini

Spoletto per Giano

Hail, etc.

Esteemed Fr. Giovanni

For everything, *ad alias*.⁷⁶

See that Pedini does not fail to come.

Prepare one of the rooms along side of Pedini's for Fr. Alessandro Pontoni, who will be the prefect there at the Boarding School; that will give you some relief from sleeping in the Boarding School. Keep your eyes on things in general.

Send me an accounting of what you have received, since three deliveries have been made, etc., of material, etc.

Prepare one of the four rooms used for Retreats for a Missionary who is coming there *ad tempus*⁷⁷ with Pontini. I will explain more in another letter of mine, etc. I am etc.

⁷⁴ Near the address, St. Gaspar added: "with haste".

⁷⁵ I will be your exceedingly great reward.

⁷⁶ For another time.

⁷⁷ In due time.

G. C. d. B.
M. Ap.
(Rome, February 6, 1831)

2125

February 14, 1831
Giovanni De Mattias
Vallecorsa

Hail to the Blood of Jesus Christ

Most esteemed Giovanni

I am writing in this ordinary maildelivery, having given a reply to everything, to the most reverend Bishop Bonanni, bishop of Norcia. As soon as I receive an answer, you will be instructed in everything. In the meantime, prayers. The sacrifice that you are making will call down upon you ample blessings. God rewards everything.

On this occasion, I ask you about the payment of room and board for your son, which is late in being made. Let me know whether you would want to donate oil; but, first, you will have to know the price involved. I have no doubts about your honesty; but it is I who am facing limitations in these miserable times of ours; or, indeed, you might send the money.

Realize that your son is in need of clothing, shoes etc. I shall be awaiting your response; I assure you that if the Institute could do more, it would; but that simply is not possible.

Recommend me to God. With esteem and respect, I remain

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rome, February 14, 1831

P. S. Substantially, your son is getting along well; he could, however, do a bit more. Prayers.

2126

February 22, 1831
Fr. Raffaele Rosati
Bassano

Hail to the Blood of Jesus Christ

Most esteemed Father Raffaele

Working along always with Canon Fontana, see that the Mission can be concluded on the Wednesday *post Dominicam secundam*,⁷⁸ so that on Thursday, you can travel to the Abbey of his Eminence Cristaldi, and, more precisely to the Abbey of San Salvatore Maggiore. Having

⁷⁸ After the Second Sunday.

arrived there, present yourself to the most reverend Vicar General, to whom I shall send information. He is the Rector of the Seminary of San Salvatore. Having gotten all the faculties as well as acquainting yourself with the Synod, writing to me for anything beyond this if necessary, you are to conduct the eight day Retreat, instead of the Lenten series, in the area of Concerviano. There, too, revive the pious organizations set up during Missions, and check to see what printed matter may be needed or anything else. With our coaches, which always come to Rome, I will be able to have them deliver these things there. If necessary, it is understood that you will work things out with the pastor and with Luigi De Angelis, a layman who is very active in working for the glory of God.

You shall take with you Marcello, as Brother in service. After Concerviano, you will proceed to give a triduum *circa*,⁷⁹ in the form of a Retreat, in Cerdomare, a small town within the other Abbey of Farfa, also under the care of Cardinal Cristaldi. For the sake of economical measures in travel arrangements, it might be better to handle Cerdomare before Concerviano, but this is incidental. Note, however, that for Cerdomare, it will be necessary to use the customary contacts with the other Vicar General who resides in Toffia. In this question of travel, you make your own decisions. Canon Fontana is well acquainted with those locales. It would be good to deliver the sermon on Purgatory and the one on the Passion in both places.

Revive the doing of good works and always promote the devotion to the Divine Blood. The pastors are to give the doctrinal instructions as well as to prepare the children for their first Communion, a function of the time and one to be included. If devotional materials are needed, distribute them with discretion, since the Institute is heavily burdened. Make use of the opportunities that are offered in those places. If it is not possible to give the blessing there, for the usual period of 15 days, it should be done at the latest on Thursday, even though I may have said Friday. This slight alteration is also incidental. So, at the latest, the blessing on Thursday, *circa meridiem*;⁸⁰ better, on Wednesday, *juxta dicta*,⁸¹ along with your companions, set up our method there; and since I write something to one person and something to another, in this way, the letters can be shared, and, if doubts arise, I can be asked questions, even using special express mail, if it is something that is inevitable. These adjustments may be called for because of unforeseen circumstances. All of you should carry out things in the spirit of obedience which is always blessed by God.

With regard to Cerdomare, I mentioned a triduum *circa*,⁸² since by the Saturday evening

⁷⁹ Around.

⁸⁰ Around noon.

⁸¹ In accordance with what has been said.

⁸² Around.

ante Dominicam Passionis,⁸³ you will have to be in Frosinone, without passing through Rome. Get information about the route from the Abbacy. If it is shorter by going through Rome, you make your own decision. In that case, have them draw up the itinerary if you are to come into Rome, and then come to my place. However, I feel that it is shorter going by way of Sabina. You figure out the more economical way of cutting expenses as well as saving time, and keep writing to me. But, for sure, on the Saturday *ante Dominicam Passionis*⁸⁴ you must be in Frosinone. That is the reason why it is necessary for you to conclude your ministry there on Wednesday, so as to be on time to fulfill the assignment which I have mentioned.

Father Camillo, in Frosinone, will be sending you to Veroli to give eight days of catechetical instructions to the people, on the subject of Confession and the last one on Communion, in preparation for Easter. I hope that God will shower an abundance of blessings on this work. They will begin on Passion Sunday. You are to avoid anything that is questionable; and your delivery should not have the tone of a sermon, but one that is relaxed, instructive and dignified, in presenting practical cases, as you can well imagine. After Veroli, you will have a bit of rest, and we will take it from there. Please, see that everything is carried out well and fruitfully. In order to accomplish this, we are to be reliant on humility and prayer, gentle reminders for everyone, but especially for us. Marcello will continuously accompany you. In order to be thrifty in expenses, I am writing to Canon Fontana. Find out whether, during the preaching of the Passion, there is a collection taken for the holy places. The Vicars will tell you. Establish well in those areas the pious organizations and see that it is done *ut fructus maneat*.⁸⁵ I would like a time arranged for a Mission in Bassano, and also ask them to pray for me. I am informing both Vicars in the Abbacy of San Salvatore and the Abbacy of Farfa about you. Please note that as soon as you arrive in Toffia or in San Salvatore, the ministry is to begin. For example, it would begin on Friday, terminate on the following Friday morning *ante quartam Dominicam*,⁸⁶ speaking of Concerviano, and then after the noon meal to go on to Cerdoroare and on Wednesday, for example, *post Dominicam Quartam*,⁸⁷ the work there would conclude. In three days, you would proceed to Frosinone *juxta superius dicta*.⁸⁸ In Veroli, there is only the catechetical instruction given after the noon meal; your strength will be reinvigorated. The only task will be the reviving of the nightly Oratory. Have I made myself clear? I hope so. Send me

⁸³ Before Passion Sunday.

⁸⁴ Before Passion Sunday.

⁸⁵ That the fruit remain.

⁸⁶ Before the Fourth Sunday.

⁸⁷ After the Fourth Sunday.

⁸⁸ In accordance with what has been said above.

your reply. I am told that from Bassano there is a route by way of Ponte Felice which leads into the abovementioned Abbacy. You look into it. With esteem, I remain

Your humble servant

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rome, February 22, 1831

P. S. Liguori speaks about the jurisdiction of abbots and their privileges.

The Mission in Castel S. Elia is deferred, just as another one in Nepi. Prayers and courage.

2127

February 26, 1831

Fr. Biagio Valentini⁸⁹

Frosinone per Vallecorsa

Hail to the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Esteemed Father Biagio

It has pleased God to call back to himself our most eminent Cardinal Cristaldi. You will please carry out the funeral rites due to such a great benefactor. In suffrage for his soul, the monthly Mass will continue until further instructions; and with esteem and respect, I am will constantly be

Your humble, devoted, obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Rome, February 26, 1831⁹⁰

2128

February 26, 1831

Fr. Tomasso Meloni

Pieveterina

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

⁸⁹ Cfr. biographical section

⁹⁰ This and the other two letters that follow in the Volume of the originals are handwritten reproductions of a similar Circular Letter which the Saint sent to the Houses of Mission in order to announce the death of Cardinal Cristaldi. However, it was thought opportune to report here only the first one. In the other two the text is identical, except that after words "carry out the funeral rites", there is added "in our church there". The addressees for the other two are Fr. Tommaso Meloni, Missionary in the House at Pievetorina, and Fr. Giovanni Merlini, President of the House at S. Felice of Giano. We shall speak of Meloni in Vol. II, where the letters sent to him by St. Gaspar are located; of Merlini, cfr. biographical section.

Most esteemed Father Tomasso

It has pleased God to call back to himself our most eminent Cardinal Cristaldi. In our church there, you will please carry out the funeral rites which are due to such a great benefactor. In suffrage for his soul, the monthly Mass will continue to be offered until further instructions. With esteem and respect, I am and will constantly be

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Rome, February 26, 1831

2129

February 26, 1831

Fr. Giovanni Merlini

S. Felice in Giano

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Most esteemed Father Giovanni

It has pleased God to call back to himself our most eminent Cardinal Cristaldi. In our church there, you will please carry out the funeral rites which are due to such a great benefactor. In suffrage for his soul, the monthly Mass will continue to be offered until further instructions. With esteem and respect, I am and will constantly be

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Rome, February 26, 1831

2130

February 28, 1831

Fr. Nicola Palma

Napoli per Teramo

Hail to the Blood of Jesus Christ

Esteemed Canon

The Lord grant you ample reward for the box sent to the wonderful Father Giovannelli, a new pledge of your charity and zeal in behalf of the projects of the glory of the Lord. He will repay you a hundredfold and will fill you with blessings because of the great good that you are striving to promote. I will preserve with particular feelings of affection the copy that was sent to me. I will make use of the others in whatever way you wish to indicate; and it will be with much fruit.

As for the 24 copies of the Fridays in honor of the great Xavier, I will adhere to whatever you decide, as the opportunity arises.

I am very sorry to learn of the weakening of your eyes and the loss of teeth; I point out, however, that in you the old saying is verified: "*cum infirmor tunc potens sum*".⁹¹ The human element is indeed weakening, but the spirit is growing stronger, and the mystical teeth used for nourishing the spirit with the fruits of the Cross are strengthened! Oh world, what a great school of disillusionment! Let us remain beneath the shadow of the mystical tree, the holy Cross. *Si me quaeris, ibi me invenies*.⁹² There, in the sweet embrace of Jesus Christ, let us help each other toward our beloved homeland, heaven, the only place of perennial peace and consolation. Whichever of the two of us should enter there first, let him pray for the other who remains an exile and a pilgrim. Oh, that we be granted eternal reunion in heaven. ... Amen. ... Amen.

Saluta amicos nominatim;⁹³ send me good news of yourself often; and although my petition may be a bit inopportune, I would like to ask you to set down in printing the Life of Xavier, stimulating the Workers for the great apostolate; furthermore, in order to instill devotion in everyone, I would like to see it written in a practical way, etc., not too ponderous or let me put it this way, that even a Nun could read it without difficulty. By doing this, your memory will be held in special benediction. With this work you will see how many people you interest in the Holy Missions and, in general, the apostolate. I will close my mortal existence happily if I am given this consolation, dedicating myself to bring about the good of Religion, to rouse the indolent, give courage to the fainthearted, comfort the good, and bring to realization in everyone that *ite, accendite, inflamate omnia*.⁹⁴

Before answering this letter of mine, say a prayer to Xavier; in your own heart listen to the *responsum laboris*.⁹⁵ At the beginning of the book you should place a preface, encouraging in general the Missionaries and Workers in the Evangelical field. It should be done with such unction that the reading of it and the tender shedding of tears will be simultaneous. In the preface, give some idea of the Mission Houses, and do so in such a way that one realizes that among the clergy there are some who have the office of Pastor, Canon, etc. etc., and others who must continue following the steps of apostolic men, applying the Divine Blood to souls, etc., etc., etc.. In writing things such as this, even I myself feel particularly moved.

I must stop writing now, but I do not stop praying for the holy project that we have spoken of. Kissing your hand, I am and will constantly be with affectionate esteem

Your humble, devoted, obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

⁹¹ When I am rather weak then I am strong.

⁹² If you look for me, you will find me there.

⁹³ Greet the friends by name.

⁹⁴ Go, set on fire, inflame everything.

⁹⁵ The answer of the work.

M. Ap.

Rome, February 28, 1831

P.S. In Rome, the Perpetual Devotion to the Divine Blood is being promoted. Twelve churches, successively, month by month, recite the Chaplet or use the book, etc. Courage. *Ipsi vicerunt draconem propter Sanguinem Agni.*⁹⁶ See to it that there, too, etc. What about our Pious Works?

2131

March 1, 1831

Giovanni De Mattias

Vallecorsa

Hail to the Blood of Jesus Christ

Most esteemed Giovanni

The most reverend bishop of Norcia has written to me that now it will be necessary to allow some time because of circumstances; then, he will give advice concerning the execution of the holy plan.

I urge you to take care of the payment of room and board. Also, from the last ten scudi we are to subtract what has to be paid out inevitably for shoes and other small necessities. With this understanding, and also asking you for your prayers, I am and will constantly be, with esteem and respect

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Rome, March 1, 1831

2132

March 1, 1831

Fr. Francesco Paradisi

Montalto

Hail to the Blood of Jesus Christ

Dear Canon

The sickness and death of our excellent most eminent Cristaldi has delayed my answer to your very kind letter. Our House in Rimini is always available for you; in the meantime, God will give you the calm that you desire. You are to be concerned in our Mission House only with internal matters, and no one will bother you about the ministry of giving Missions. Circumstances will, indeed, slow down any determination of temporalities. Prayers. The works of God become marvelously established, marvelously fulfilled, marvelously raised to the heights.

With regard to the image of most holy Mary, I shall see to getting it for ten *scudi*,

⁹⁶ They conquered the dragon because of the blood of the Lamb.

including the frame. However, the case will involved another expenditure, which we will try to restrict as best we can. You make your decision and then write to me immediately. Meanwhile, asking you for your prayers, I remain with esteem

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

Miss. Ap.

Rome, March 1, 1831

2134

March 7, 1831

Msgr. Gregorio Muccioli

Bishop of Agatopoli

Rome

Hail to the Blood of Jesus Christ

Dear Monsignor and most beloved brother

I am enclosing two notifications of enrolments. I ask you to read the explanations in the letters. Furthermore, there is another sheet with the selected aggregators. I point out that inasmuch as the letters allude to me, I am already carrying out the work, and I shall continue corresponding. On the 9th, as you will note, I shall be sending a certification to one of the selected aggregators.

For the day of Retreat in S. Nicola during the current month, it will be necessary for you to ask Archpriest Romarini.

For the month of April, Canon Visconti has taken it upon himself to contact Canon Pellegrini and he will send you a reply.

For the month of May, the fervorino on the Cross and the Retreat will be handled by Canon Visconti.

For the month of July, Canon Vespignani. When you see him, be sure to give him a reminder of this good work.

For the month of August, Canon Mancini. (It will be necessary for one of the brethren to give him a reminder).

For the month of September: Canon Visconti.

For the month of October, Canon Reggi. (He, too, is to be reminded by you).

For the month of December, Canon Giuliani. (Canon Visconti will contact him about this).

For the 14th of September, the fervorino on the Cross, Canon Gonnelli, if he is still in Rome. (One of the brethren will have to give him a reminder etc.)

For the seven day devotion after the month of June, Canon Mancini, who has already been informed. One or the other member will have to remind him of this.

For the fervorinos during the Way of the Cross on Good Friday, Canon Visconti has taken

it upon himself to speak to a certain Father Sturno, with whom I am not acquainted, but I hear that he is quite capable, and then he will send word to you. It would be a good idea to remind Visconti about this commitment. Canon Gonnelli, then, will take care of the Three Hours devotion in the Recluserio. But even here, a reminder is in place etc.

Finally, for the Three Hours agony devotion in S. Nicola, in case I do not find other men to do this, I shall see that one of our Missionaries from Albano handles it; as I see it, the situation may end up in just that way. Asking you for your prayers, I remain

Your humble servant and loving brother

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

March 7, 1831

P. S. If I have overlooked anything, please remind me.

2134

March 12, 1831

Fr. Raffaele Rosati

Castro

Hail to the Blood of Jesus Christ

Most esteemed Father Raffaelle

The Retreat will be concluded next Thursday or, at the latest, on Friday. Work it out with Santarelli who will anticipate his departure on Wednesday. Once you have terminated your ministry there, you are to go to Frosinone. There, you will be contacted by Father Camillo who will give you instructions with regard to Veroli where, on Passion Sunday the holy catechetical lessons will begin. They are to be concluded by Palm Sunday. You will be getting another letter from me in Veroli. With esteem, respect and affection, I am

Your humble servant

G. C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Rome, March 12, 1831

Brother Coppola will be returning to Vallecorsa. See that you are Frosinone by Friday evening at the latest. I recommend to you the Oratory in Veroli. Hence, carry your *sbordone* with you. Take good care of your voice which I hope is in vigorous shape for Veroli. Conclude the work there in such a way that the women will be back in their homes by the *Ave Maria* hour. Rather be short than long.

2135

March 14, 1831

Fr. Giuseppe Maria Vespignani

Rome

Jesus Mary Joseph

Canon del Bufalo, Apostolic Missionary, sends his warm regards to the most worthy Canon Vespignani. I notice that the affair dealing with the Vicar of Ferentillo is no longer under consideration, and, by this time some sort of reply must have been received. Please, I beg you for a response concerning the matter relative to the utensils in S. Paolo of Albano. I would like the situation to be settled from the beginning. Asking you for your prayers and renewing himself as

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

[there is no signature]

March 14, 1831

2136

March 17, 1831

Fr. Carlo Gazola

Benevento

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Rome, March 17, 1831

Dearest and most esteemed Father Carlo

I thank you wholeheartedly for the kind words that you offered to me upon the sorrowful circumstances of the death of the excellent Cardinal Cristaldi. I cannot sufficiently express in words how deeply I have felt his loss. You can imagine that better than I could ever say. He was one of those individuals that I held in very intimate friendship in God, a friendship that was established from the very first years and almost the very beginnings of my life in the ministry. With humility and with all our heart let us adore the dispositions of providence and let us repeat these words: "*Obmutui ... quoniam tu fecisti.*"⁹⁷ Now, pray to God that I will be able to prepare myself for those final moments. May the thought of the grave unite our hearts to the adorable Heart of Jesus Christ. Therein, with the sentiments of esteem, respect and affection, asking you to extend my best wishes to all the community there, I remain

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspere C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rome, March 17, 1831

2137

March 22, 1831

Mother Maria Nazzarena De Castris

Piperno

⁹⁷ I became dumb ... because you acted.

Hail to the Divine Blood

The delay of my response has occurred, on my part, as something involuntary, but at the same time as something meritorious for you. Indeed, my correspondence with you is, in no way, a burden, as long as it is pleasing to God to have you draw from it a motive for giving him glory. This is something that you will acknowledge better than I.

I note in you three things: 1. a vivacity of imagination about things suggested; 2. an excessive apprehension, at times; 3. a strong desire to truly love God. Now, that desire causes an examination of those vivid suggestions; however, if this examination were mingled with a bit of gentleness, indeed a very directly applied gentleness, it would not cause at times that excessive apprehension, dejection and gloom. So, why should you fall into that state of dejection? *Quare tristis es anima mea, et quare conturbas me?*⁹⁸ Do not all of our sufferings have their origin in our efforts to be of service to God? Anyone who loves, is fearful; but fear seeks to be made confident; and the sufferings to be alleviated by a viewing of the Crucifix. I conclude, therefore, that you should seek your rest in the Heart of Jesus Christ. He is the ark, he is the asylum, he is the haven of peace. Furthermore, work it out before the most holy Sacrament; read the letters of the great De Sales, for in them you will find nourishment. Spread, extend broadly and promote evermore the devotion to the Divine Blood and you will find peace and tranquility. May steadiness in God govern your soul, elevate it and render it more mature in sanctity. But, do this without anguish, often repeating "*fiducialiter agam et non timebo*".⁹⁹ Jesus will make all of us his own both in time as well as in blessed eternity.

The grace of making the vows will be given to the nun by God. In this, in my wretchedness, I do not approve one's seeking counsel. All is to be decided through prayer. One glance at the rule, at the community, at the postulant, and then make the decision that would be made at the point of death.

With regard to the penitential works, nothing more at this time other than what the Church regulates and your rule enjoins. Let us continue doing all things with great purity of intention. I am

Your humble servant
G. C. del Bufalo
M. Ap.
Rome, March 22¹⁰⁰

2138

Fr. Giuseppe Maria Vespignani

⁹⁸ Why is my soul sad, and why do you disturb me?

⁹⁹ I shall act with confidence and shall not be afraid.

¹⁰⁰ The year is 1831, as is evident from an annotation made, perhaps, by this very same addressee.

Rome

*Christus dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine Suo*¹⁰¹

Venerable Canon¹⁰²

With pleasure did I learn of the election of the excellent Vicar Ricelli. With regard to the affairs dealing with Albano, I recommend at least a copy of the papers sent to you. I do not recall whether you have made those copies for me to place in our archives. This is, more than anything, a matter of some importance. Looking at the situation in itself, how is it possible for anyone to withhold, in good conscience, an income which, by the Bull of Onofrio that was never revoked, belongs to the Institute in charge of S. Paolo in Albano, along with the rights granted by the Cesarini Family etc? Juridically speaking, we could also submit the documentation showing authorization resulting from the rescripts of Pope Pius VII.

But we are all opposed to following that method, for so great is the respect that is due to the most revered Chapter. So, after first entrusting this problem to God, I have placed it in the hands of his Eminence Falzacappa. Whatever may be the reasons the Chapter has for retaining possession, those reasons only give the Chapter a right to collect a compensation and nothing more. However, when the Chapter is allowed to collect what belongs to others, I must honestly confess, I do not know how they can follow that dictate of conscience. This, you know, is *in communicatione spiritus*,¹⁰³ and, safeguarding respect for all, I say: *Si non potes excusare opus, excusa intentionem*.¹⁰⁴ So, you, through suggestions, and using your prudence and charity, should try to make every effort to bring everything to a peaceful solution. This is a matter that pertains to projects relating to the glory of God. But, *dato et non concessio*,¹⁰⁵ are we to consider all of them wrong, and is it not a regretful thing to name chaplains for a place where an Institute is in charge? The nowdeceased Cardinal Cristaldi used to say that the punishment of God is found also in the blindness to which even good people are subjected.

I kiss your hands, and, with esteem, respect and particular affection, I remain

¹⁰¹ Christ loved us and washed us in his blood.

¹⁰² This letter has no addressee nor date. The addressee, nevertheless, must be the Canon of the Lateran Basilica, Fr. Giuseppe Maria Vespignani, as is evident from the letter of March 7, 1831 to Msgr. Gregorio Muccioli in which there is a reference to the preacher for the retreatday for the month of July in S. Nicola in Carcere and he is Canon Vespignani. St. Gaspar, in this letter, reminds the addressee of that appointment. As for the date of this letter, it is quite clear from what is said that the year is 1831, somewhere between the months of March and June. More precisely, perhaps, the letter should be assigned between March 7th (the letter to Muccioli) and March 29th, 1831, (cfr. the letter to Canon Fortini). So, apparently, some time after the letter to Vespignani himself, dated March 14, 1831.

¹⁰³ In the communication of the spirit.

¹⁰⁴ If you cannot excuse the work, excuse the intention.

¹⁰⁵ Given but not conceded.

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

P. S. The day of recollection for a happy death in S. Nicola is always on the last Sunday of the month, after the noon meal. Your turn will be in July. A brief reference to reform could be used, at your choice, and then a meditation. Pray a lot for me.

2139

March 29, 1831

Fr. Vincenzo Fortini¹⁰⁶

Albano

*Christus dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine Suo*¹⁰⁷

Venerable Canon

Although the benefits which, by involuntary mistake the Chapter of S. Giovanni in Laterano is enjoying, belong to S. Paolo in Albano, a peaceful settlement is still pending. at any rate, I have asked Canon Vespignani about the 20 *scudi*, if I am not mistaken, which are due from the chaplains for the church of S. Paolo for oil for the lamps etc. etc. Canon Vespignani has brought to my knowledge that they have been paid to you, and that we are to collect them from you. To tell the truth, in this situation also I find myself in the dark, not knowing how to resolve this question, convinced as I am that I am offending your delicate position. Our Institute, indeed, for no other motive than to give glory to God, seeks to promote good work in that church of S. Paolo, heavily laden with burdens. In no way at all, can it surrender what is to be supplied by the Church, nor can it take on additional aggravations. Hence, if you actually owe that sum of money, you must work out that account with Father Antonio Liparelli, And please remit to him the money that is due. If you, however, have received nothing from the Chapter, please be kind enough to give me that information so that I can then prepare my remonstrances. Excuse me for the inconvenience that I cause you with this most humble letter of mine. With feelings of esteem, respect and veneration, I am and will constantly be

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Rome, March 29, 1831

2140

Pope Gregory XVI

¹⁰⁶ A notation by Fr. Giovanni Merlini says: "A letter of Canon del Bufalo, collected from Ercole Fortini, in which he requests the payment of 20 *scudi* for utensils etc." Another notation, also by Merlini says: "a copy of a letter to Canon Fortini from Canon del Bufalo". Canon Fortini's first name was Vincenzo.

¹⁰⁷ Christ loved us and washed us in his blood.

*Justificati in Sanguine ipsius salvi erimus ab ira per ipsum*¹⁰⁸

SUMMARY¹⁰⁹

of everything that pertains to the pious Institute of Mission and Retreat Houses under the direction of the Missionaries enrolled in the venerable Archconfraternity of the most Precious Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, canonically erected by Pope Pius VII.

PREFACE

In the upheaval of our times, times which God has been pleased to reserve for us, and in the need for reform of the people, the Lord, rich in mercy, has willed to bring forth a powerful means to be used in setting up a rampart against the torrent of iniquities and to provide us, at the same time, with means that are salutary for attaining eternal salvation through the sanctification and the spiritual cultivation of souls. Therefore, in his Providence, he presented to the Roman Pontiff, Pius VII, of holy memory, the plan for instituting Mission and Retreat Houses in order that through these two weapons of apostolic ministry, a war could be waged against sin, as well as to lead back to the Heart of Jesus all those who had strayed.

The Holy Father then selected as his norm the one set down by Benedict XIV for promoting the Archconfraternity of Christian Doctrine which served at that times, as it still does, to encourage the clergy and the people to a revival of giving instructions, something most necessary for knowledge and observance of the holy laws of God.

We are, presently, living in times in which there is urgent need for stimulating the clergy and the people to the yearnedfor reform. The freethinkers, not at all in love with the Catholic religion, are waging a most decisive type of warfare against the Crucifix; and, they would like to

¹⁰⁸ Justified in his blood, we will be saved from wrath through it.

¹⁰⁹ This is a rough copy of a memorandum presented to a Pope. An annotation of Fr. Giovanni Merlini says: "It speaks of the foundation in S. Salvatore e Farfa, left behind by Cristaldi. So, this memorandum was given to Gregory XVI". Cfr. also G. Merlini, o.c., 297, 512513. But when was this Summary given to Gregory XVI? This will be known with certainty when the original one given to the Pope is found. For now, we must be content to assign a tentative date, drawn from the following arguments:

Gregory XVI was elected Pope on February 2, 1831. Herein St. Gaspar, in speaking of the foundations that were already made, stops with the House in Rimini which was opened on August 14, 1824. He says nothing at all about the following one set up in Nepi. The rescript granted for that is dated August 31, 1831 and the House was opened on November 10, 1831. Consequently, this memorandum is certainly prior to August of 1831. In the "Summar5r" mention is made of the nowdeceased Cardinal Cristaldi, who died on February 25, 1831. Furthermore, it is known that towards the middle of April of 1831, Cardinal Odescalchi, upon St. Gaspar's request, spoke to Gregory XVI about the Congregation of the Missionaries of the most Precious Blood and the Pope expressed his lack of esteem for them. It does not appear that this memorandum, with its expositive and serene tone, lacking the air of defense evident in the one to Leo XII (cfr. Epistolario III, nn. 12141216), was presented to Gregory XVI after the middle of April of 1831. Therefore, we maintain that this Summary should be tentatively assigned to the month of March of 1831, and more precisely to a time between the death of Cristaldi (February 25, 1831) and the meeting between Cardinal Odescalchi and Gregory XVI.(circa April 12, 1831).

see everyone become victims of justice through a multiplication of vices and sins. Consequently, it is urgent that zeal for the glory of God, like a spreading fire, must burn in a holy fashion within every soul, and, by calling attention to the glories of the Crucified One, to open the fountains of mercy, thanks to the application of the merits of the Divine Blood which is the thing that will fully placate the justice of the divine, eternal Father: "*Pacificans per Sanguinem Crucis ejus, sive quae in caelis. sive quae in terris sunt. .Ipsi vicerunt draconem propter Sanguinem Agni*".¹¹⁰

Having these basic principles in mind, his Holiness was pleased to erect the Archconfraternity under the august title of the Divine Blood, together with the invocation to most holy Mary, Help of Christians; and, as its special protector, he selected the apostle of the Indies, St. Francis Xavier, so as to provide an exemplar who would stir one from any feelings of languor, who would urge one to the doing of good work, who would encourage one in the face of difficulties and point out, furthermore, the quickest way of promoting the greater glory of God and the sanctification of souls.

Therefore, one can easily note what his plans for the future were and how very well directed they were for the verification of the apostle's words: "*Justificati in Sanguine ipsius salvierimus ab ira per ipsum*".¹¹¹

In addition, the Holy Father wanted the priests, as the primary members of the Archconfraternity, living together in community life after the pattern of the Filippini Fathers, but with a different extension of objectives, to constitute, in the urgent situation of the times, a supporting force for the Catholic religion, reviving in these ministers of the sanctuary, decorum, good example, holiness and study. It was to be similar to the practice of ancient discipline in the Church, emphasizing strongly the idea of the priests living in union. Aligning himself with this same attitude was St. Charles Borromeo when he founded his Oblates. This is likewise true of St. Philip Neri as he instituted his congregation.

It is not necessary here to go into details about how useful this Institute has been in the various Provinces, especially in making it easier for bishops to provide the salutary practice of having Missions, Retreats and other pious works in their respective dioceses; for Pastors who see promoted among their flocks a perennial training in religion; for the clergy themselves, stimulating them to a greater dedication to the apostolate, along with a new growth which training in morality affords in the sacred cloisters; in the development of holy vocations to the religious life of vows. The practical experience which has been realized through this continuous exercise of the ministry confirms these truths.

Finally, adding just a few more things in this preface, it is to be noted that in carrying out these apostolic works of the ministry, we seek to give a cult of compensation to the mysteries of our redemption, so greatly abused by sinners. We wish to awaken in their souls the great idea of the inestimable price of our eternal salvation. ... *Redemisti in Sanguine ... Empti enim estis*

¹¹⁰ Making peace through the blood of his cross whether for what is in heaven or on earth. The conquered the dragon because of the blood of the Lamb.

¹¹¹ Justified in blood, we will be saved from wrath through it.

praetio magno.¹¹² Those who have gone astray are encouraged to have hope for the pardon of the faults that they have committed, *since Christus dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine suo...Quae utilitas in Sanguine meo?*¹¹³ and, finally, this is an opportunity for helping them take notice of the motives which caused a St. Bernard (Ep. 7) to exclaim: *Sanguis Christi ut tuba clamat*;¹¹⁴ and a St. Thomas (Opusc. 158) to say: *Sanguis Christi Clavis Paradisi*.¹¹⁵

St. Catherine of Siena, during the schism of her time, received the inspiration from the Lord that on this devotion depended peace within the Church.

Though overlooking many other things ... there are the documents pertinent to the Office and the Mass of the Divine Blood which urge us to cherish it deeply within our hearts, but at the same time indicate how much our holy Mother Church is concerned about the special cult addressed to the price of our redemption: "*Christus dilexit ecclesiam, tradidit semetipsum pro ea, acquisivit Sanguine Suo*".¹¹⁶ One should read the little work written by the now deceased Monsignor Strambi, outstanding supporter of our Institute and our devotion, so humbly presented in these pages. Likewise, one should check the catalog of indulgences granted by Pope Gregory XIII, confirmed and augmented by Pope Sixtus V in behalf of the Confraternity of the most Precious Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, erected in the church of the Canons Regular of S. Maria del Vado in Ferrara (v.f.n.i).

Then, Pope Leo XII, in addition to what he expresses in his Brief (v. f. n. 2) on the occasion of the installation of the Jesuit Fathers in Spoleto, speaking incidentally of our House in S. Felice in Giano, and aware of the various confraternities erected under our title, granted through the Sacred Congregation of Rites the faculty of a solemn Mass of the Divine Blood on the first Sunday in July. Already when he was the Cardinal Vicar he had canonically erected in the church of *Beata Vergine Maria del Buon Consiglio* in Rome, the pious union of sisters visitators of the sick under the title of the Divine Blood.

As a final reflection, note how Vincenzo, Duke of Mantova, erected as an equestrian order in the year 1608, the union of Cavaliers under the title of the Divine Blood. That order was later approved by Paul V as can be seen in the work "*Catalogus ordinum equestrium in imaginibus expositus a P. Philipno Bonanni Societatis Jesu oblatus Clementi XI*".¹¹⁷

¹¹² You have redeemed with blood. ... you were bought at a great price.

¹¹³ Christ loved us and washed us in his blood. ... what usefulness in my blood.

¹¹⁴ The blood of Christ calls out like a trumpet.

¹¹⁵ The blood of Christ is the key of paradise.

¹¹⁶ Christ loved the church, he gave himself up for it and acquired it with his blood.

¹¹⁷ A catalog of equestrian orders set forth in the pictures of P. Philip Bonanni of the Society of Jesus, offered to Clement XI.

HISTORICAL NOTES ABOUT OUR FOUNDATIONS

The first foundation was the one of S. Felice in Giano in the Archdiocese of Spoleto.

The second was in the Province of the Marche, and precisely in Pievetorina, diocese of the Archbishopric of Camerino.

There followed, progressively, the Houses in the Province of Marittima e Campagna, then the ones in Benevento, in Albano. Finally, the nowdeceased Monsignor Marchetti, Archbishop of Ancira, at the time when he was administrator in Rimini, began our foundation in Rimini.

Other foundations are still pending, such as the one in the city of Veroli, and especially in the Kingdom of Naples, where negotiations were initiated by Pope Leo XII. However, because of disturbances of the times, they have been suspended up to now. What is certain, however, is that the administration in Naples has made it known that wherever the communes have the funds for activating a foundation such as this, the court would be agreeable to its being done.

The abovementioned Pope Leo XII ordered that a circular letter be sent out by the bishops in the Papal State, urging the clergy to promote the most rapid propagation of our Institute. He intended to grant us an ample location in Rome, once his other ideas were carried out, where the study of foreign languages would be especially promoted so that workers could then be sent out into the foreign missions. However, while all of this was being negotiated, the Lord called him back to himself.

This oftmentioned Pope knew that Pope Pius VII had given the Institute the locale and the church of S. Clemente in Rome, which later on this aforementioned Pope Leo XII, while promising to provide another suitable place for the Institute, granted it to the Dominican Fathers who were in S. Maria della Pace.

At the present time, we have the hospice of Buon Consiglio, bearing the burden of a Canon of the Archconfraternity of Christian Doctrine, trusting that the Lord will improve the economical circumstances so as to ameliorate the temporal situation of the Institute.

It would be good here to point out that the places that have been assigned to the Institute are convents that have been renounced by Regulars and are legitimately possessed since the Institute has been granted them by the Holy See. Only the locale in Frosinone presents a housing now being converted from a convent; one cannot imagine the type and number of expenditures. Yet, even in this establishment, Pope Leo XII's intentions have been adhered to.

GOVERNMENT IN THE INSTITUTE

1. There is in every House a Missionary with the title of President, overseeing the observance of the rule, and this man is one of the older members in the Institute. Without actually having the government of the House, he only watches carefully that everything proceeds in due fashion. All of the individuals hold a particular deference to him. The President supplies when there is a vacancy in some office in the community until another member has been assigned. He directs the association for priests, the so-called association of the Apostles. This

consists in having a meeting of those priests who wish to have a monthly spiritual conference as well as take part in the apostolic ministries after the pattern of the Union of S. Paolo in Rome, thus providing instructions in prisons, military bases, congregations. When one of the members in the community becomes ill, the President, with the warmest charity, is the principal one to see to the provision of care in whatever may be necessary for that sick person. On the occasion of death, with singular zeal, he is to promote and procure suffrages for the deceased member.

2. There is the Local Superior whose duty it is to see to giving the bellsignals for the daily schedule as well as the fulfillment of community tasks. He has particular care of the Lay Brothers who help in the temporalities of the Institute. With appropriate instructions, he strives to encourage them in the doing of good works, in seeking evangelical perfection. He is also in charge of the sisters of charity who look after the poor who are sick as well as other urgent cases.

3. There is a Vice Superior who supplies in the absence of the Superior. He is responsible for the archives and library. He records the minutes of the community congressi and is the director of the association of the children of Mary. This consists in giving a monthly conference in the schools for girls which are conducted by the Maestre in the church, or carried out, depending on the different locales, in accordance with the directives of the bishops.

4. There is a Director of Missions whose duty it is to handle the correspondence dealing with that branch of the ministry. He also directs the men of the Oratory of St. Francis Xavier, following the method of the Oratorio del Padre Caravita in Rome.

5. There is a Director of Retreats for anyone applying for a Retreat. He adheres to the usual method laid down by St. Ignatius Loyola in the giving of the Retreat. He is in charge of the association of S. Luigi on feastdays and during vacations in order to provide moral instructions to the young boys.

6. There is the Prefect of the church and the sacristy. He presides over the sacred rites and ceremonies. He, too, works with the association of S. Luigi.

7. There is the Economist who handles temporal matters. This man, likewise, assists in the association of S. Luigi Gonzaga.

On the occasion of giving a Mission, one House comes to the help of the other, depending on how close they are to each other. The Missionaries who are not scheduled for Missions or those who during that year have been relieved of any office or burden, supply by taking care of the chores in the community. When the President in charge of observance of the rule is not there, the one who is next in precedence supplies.

Every month and even more often, there is to be a Congressus of the community in which they discuss whatever is needed for the efficient execution of things. In case there are doubts, recourse is to be had with the Director General of the Institute.

With these pages we intend only to give a general picture of the Institute, reserving any further clarifications that may be needed or requested. The substantial picture (which is the matter of interest here) is completely described and identified, as can also be noted from the following.

Each Mission House maintains complete correspondence with the primary House in Rome (which, for the time being, is in Albano since in Rome we have only that hospice which is considered united to the family in Albano).

Every year a summary of the most important events in the ministry are sent in for the Cronaca and are recorded in the archives, verifying the text *ecce quam bonum, et quam jucundum habitare fratres in unum*.¹¹⁸ That communication is urgent for making necessary changes either in the speakers or in a change of climate, as well as to cooperate, *a suo tempo*,¹¹⁹ in spreading the glory of the Lord even into foreign lands.

(Pope Leo XII, through the Propaganda, made use of one of our men to give Missions, precisely to the island of S. Maura. That member has recently been called by God to eternity).

The Institute is immediately subject to the Holy See and to the respective bishops, following the norm observed by the Filippini Fathers.

The Director General, either himself or through another Missionary of his selection, visits the Mission Houses each year so as to always maintain through this communication that holy harmony which is the very soul of the ministry, as well as to provide, in due fashion, the things that are needed for their respective contentment.

When his office is vacant, in the meantime, the President of the House in Rome (for now the one in Albano) will fill in.

Meanwhile, each House makes its choices for the new election. The vote is decided from the container by secret ballot; the paper is then signed by each individual in that community. Those documents then are opened in the presence of all the members in the primary House, having included their own choice, and a majority in the votes is to be sought. If the voting comes out even, the President, who has in the meanwhile filled in, gives the decisive vote. If the President himself is involved in an even vote, the individual next in the line of responsibility has the decisive vote.

Any member of the clergy who wishes to dedicate himself to the Institute is required to produce his qualifications to the primary House; the most accurate information about that person is to be gotten from the respective dioceses and bishops. He will undergo a period of experimentation for one year of probation to allow him time to make a better deliberation. Each individual will have to renounce whatever upright career he has and be content to live a life in community and apostolic work. Upon his death, he will be master of making his last will and testament, disposing of whatever he may have owned *de proprio*,¹²⁰ just as he was master of them when alive.

¹¹⁸ Behold how good and how pleasant that brothers live in unity.

¹¹⁹ From his time.

¹²⁰ About one's own.

THE MISSIONARY' S METHOD OF LIFE

When the alarm rings in the morning, he is to apply himself in his own room to private mental prayer. Later, each in turn will celebrate the first Mass, while another of the Missionaries recites with the people the Chaplet of the Divine Blood. Then, the other Masses will be said.

Continuous silence is to be observed and, when necessary (except during recreation time) he should speak *submissa voce*,¹²¹ and with *pauca verba*.¹²² Since the community members are responsible for the retreatants, it is required that this regulation be observed, but also for other reasons.

On Fridays and feastdays, the confessional is a common responsibility; on ferial days, each man will assist in turn. The men are to be taken care of during free hours, inasmuch as possible. At a time which is to be determined in Congressus, there are to be days for studyconferences, alternating days for Dogma, Moral, and Sacred Scripture. On Fridays, however Liturgy and Asceticism are the topics. Any member of the clergy, situated within our respective locales, who wishes to attend, is not to be forbidden.

Never should any member go out alone, but always with a priestcompanion or a lay Brother; never is a member to go to dinner outside the House, nor visit private houses, except in the case of having to hear the confession of a sick person. Thus, solitary roads should be selected when taking a walk for a bit of relaxation, etc. (see folio n. 6).

Fifteen minutes before noon, the bell for the examination of conscience rings and each one will review how he has spent the morning. At noon, at the sound of the bell, he is to proceed to the chapel for the *Angelus Domini* and then to the dining room where, each in turn, does the spiritual reading which is never to be omitted.

After the noon meal, there is the recreation period after which the bell is rung for a period of rest, and he is to go, in silence, to his room. At another signal, each is to attend to his respective tasks in keeping with the schedule of the day, either for visits to the hospital or for traveling etc.

At night, he is to be present for the Oratory of the men, following the method set up by the Oratory of Father Caravita in Rome.

Before supper, there is a meditation in common for the community. During supper, there is likewise to be reading. After a period of recreation, he is to go to chapel for an examination of conscience and the customary prayers.

For Missions, the system of the Jesuit Fathers, recently published in Rome, is to be used.

Whoever wishes to make a temporal donation to the benefit of the Mission Houses may do so, but never to individual members. Likewise, during Missions, gifts are not to be accepted, not even alms for Masses.

¹²¹ In a subdued voice.

¹²² With few words.

SACRED FUNCTIONS WHICH THE INSTITUTE PROMOTES

The sacred functions of each day have been described above. The weekly functions are the following: on Thursdays, the adoration of the most Blessed Sacrament in memory of the institution of that divine mystery. Each Missionary, in turn, is asked to direct this tender exercise. On Fridays, there is the public *Via Crucis*. On Saturdays, an example from the life of most holy Mary is presented. On Sundays, there is the urban Mission. Thus, it is that our churches offer the idea of a continuous urban Mission, providing a continual and shared cultivation of the people. This ministration is of such an importance that it is a special grace of the Lord who has called us to it.

Every month, spiritual conferences are to be held for the various groups and congregations on the days that are determined by the Congressus of the community, as well as the day of recollection in preparation for a happy death, together with a general communion in the church.

Every year, public retreats are made available for the people, just as our community itself makes its Retreat during the Novena in preparation for the feast of St. Francis Xavier. At that time, no other assignment in the ministry is made, except for the holy Mass and the Office. *Attende tibi.*¹²³

Anything else pertinent to the apostolic ministry can easily be deduced from the basic principles established.

ECCLESIASTICAL HOUSE FOR THEOLOGICAL STUDIES FOR YOUNG MEN WHO ARE DEDICATING THEMSELVES TO THE MINISTRY OF GIVING MISSIONS

Pope Leo XII wished to have us activate in some of our Houses, ecclesiastical Houses of study for young men who both in age and in their studies are being called to the ministry of giving Missions.

The spiritual regulations are substantially those drawn up by St. Charles Borromeo for his Oblates. The regulations governing the studies present the following method: Both in Dogma and Moral a distinction is made as to what is theoretical, either from unshakeable principles or from the decisions made by the Church, which reproves error and classifies the different propositions in just accordance with what sacred theology manifests. An historical reference is made to other opinions, adducing the reasons for them *hinc inde*,¹²⁴ so that the young men will come from these courses of study with an exact understanding of the ideas as well as with a level sense of judgment.

In the field of oratory, the young men are given training in the basics of preaching, following the pattern that is so laudably practiced by other sacred Institutes and especially by the

¹²³ Attend to yourself.

¹²⁴ Here, there.

Fathers of the Company of Jesus.

This Institute was promoted by the nowdeceased Monsignor Albertini, bishop of Terracina, Sezze and Piperno, a very close associate of Pius VII, and one who died a saintly death. The basic notions of our Society date back to this man.

One who cooperated very much in this effort is the present bishop of Norcia, Monsignor Gaetano Bonanni, who was the first Superior of our House in S. Felice in Giano and who worked with distinctive zeal to establish its basic plans from the very beginning. Monsignor Strambi, of holy memory, was one of its outstanding supporters and the Institute is deeply indebted to him for the indefatigable concern that this holy prelate showed. Monsignor Marchetti, Archbishop of Ancira, once he had learned about our Society in Rome, founded a Mission and Retreat House in Rimini at the time that he was administrator of the church there. He displayed the most tender affection for our Society just as did the nowdeceased Cardinal Cristaldi who, in his last will and testament, left some Missions to be carried out in the Abbacy of Farfa and that of San Salvatore. He named our Institute for the execution of those Missions.

In our Houses, we observe the *clausura*, following the pattern of Regulars and also like the Regulars we have the Common Roman Calendar for all our Missionaries through a privilege granted by Pope Pius VII.

God has begun this Society, *ipse perficiet, consolidabitque*.¹²⁵ That our Institute was born among thorns, and among thorns has been spread abroad, is a sign that this Society is the Lord's. *Signa apostolatus in multa patientia*.¹²⁶

By the grace of the Lord, the workers have shown their vocation decisively, especially by exposing their very lives to danger in the past battles with brigandry in the Province of Marittima and Campagna.¹²⁷

As for anything further dealing with the ministry, we can draw up a listing of the Missions that have been given up to now, but always keeping in mind this text: "*Cum feceritis haec omnia. dicite: servi inutiles sumus*".¹²⁸

The glory of God, the welfare of souls, the desire of the bishops and the people for our Institute, the urgencies of the time, and seeing priests detached from their families and every other external attraction, applying themselves totally to apostolic work in answer to the continual requests made by pastors, while still remaining lovers of withdrawal, of study, of prayer, all of these reasons form the total beautiful design of this picture which, through the Providence of

¹²⁵ He himself will bring to completion and confirm.

¹²⁶ Signs of the apostolate in much patience.

¹²⁷ A couple of lines here have been crossed out; in them he mentions the sending of a member of the Institute into the foreign Missions, to the island of S. Maura.

¹²⁸ When you have done all these things say: we are useless servants.

God, is being presented today. May praise and honor be given to him. Amen.

2141

April 5, 1831

Fr. Pietro Spina

Frosinone per Vallecorsa¹²⁹

Hail to the Blood of J. C.

Esteemed D. Pietro

I would not recommend using the roads through the Kingdom to get to Terracina, but rather, go from Vallecorsa to Sonnino, and from there to Terracina. If you need a Lay Brother to go to Sonnino in order to accompany our belongings from there, and to be brought and entrusted to Fr. Camillo Rossi, make use of Coppola; after he has completed his task, he will return to Vallecorsa. In Terracina you should deal effectively with the Sig. Milizia affair. Fr. Biagio will give you instructions about it. From Terracina go by boat¹³⁰ to Sermoneta for the Friday after the Sunday *in Albis*. There, on Saturday, you will find a mount to get you to Albano by Saturday night, before the Second Sunday. Having arrived in Albano, you will say Mass at the time that they will give you *in loco*.¹³¹ In that way, you can be in Rome early in the morning of the Second Sunday, ready to travel for the beginning of the Mission in Nepi,¹³² on that same Second Sunday *post Pascha*,¹³³ the one following the Sunday *in Albis*.

In making this trip, arrange everything methodically. When necessary, get the previous advice of Fr. Biagio with whom you will come to an agreement as to the expenses, etc. At that time we shall speak together. Take along with you whatever you might need. Also, recalling what I said on the matter in a preceding letter of mine from Albano, I now add that I think it would be a good idea to have your listing of faculties confirmed for hearing confessions in the respective dioceses. But, in regard to this, we still have time to speak in person. If it should be necessary, you could still leave after the meal on the Sunday *in Albis*, if you should have to be there earlier, etc., etc..

I remind you of the notifications of the Masses, for it is urgent that I have them prepared

¹²⁹ On the posterior halfsheet for this letter (one of the few left in their proper place), near the address, the good D. Pietro wrote, along with a few notes of accounting, an oratorical passage on S. Fr. Xavier. Furthermore, in other areas alongside the address, you can see lists of objects and names noted there by Spina (perhaps as reminders of what he had written already or was supposed to write about his response), plus numbers, oratorical phrases and other things.

¹³⁰ Cf. Gasparian History and Trivia: Sandalo

¹³¹ In the place.

¹³² Cf. *Gasparian History and Trivia: Nepi (mission)*

¹³³ After Easter.

with the greatest care. Asking you for your prayers, consider me, in the meantime, as

Your humble, devoted, obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rome, April 5, 1831

P. S. Remember to speak to Archpriest Sanguigni about the Hospice and give him my best regards.¹³⁴ To whom am I to have recourse? I am speaking about Serrroneta.

P. S. If it is necessary, get help with the Masses, etc. I have received the package containing the sermons.

P. S. Make a note of everything, and give all details. Bring along your vestment with you to Rome.

2142

April 6, 1831

Student Orazio Bracaglia

Albano

Hail to the Blood of Jesus Christ

My dearest in Jesus Christ

If, in my recent letter, I dealt with everything that I was able to learn from you, it was due to my desire for your own true good. It is quite true that some young people had noted that you were not pleased with the method of schooling. Concerning that, I would like you to tell me just what it is that does not please you, so that we can reason things out together. From Frosinone, someone wrote to me that you were going to return home. But this probably was a mistake. In short, from everything that has occurred, I have noticed a certain coldness, which I must not adulate. However, that does not change anything. We are human beings and not angels. So, be courageous, as I assure you that these diabolical acts of confusion, rather than alter vocations, should confirm them, through the use of proper means. May the Venerable Berchmans be your exemplar, keeping in mind also that the motives for exercising virtue are not to be overlooked. Your conclusion ought always to be: "I must belong to the Institute". One's vocation is to be decided *ab intrinseco*, and not *ab extrinseco*. Do not burden your imagination with believing other reports about you, since there are none.

As for external activity, I too realize that this is a physical matter; but your Superior, wishing for your own good, thought that it was something flowing either from a spirit of melancholy or from other feelings of hypochondria. That is my full explanation to you. So, be tranquil, do not be upset and move forward with your career, for I assure you that I am always with you in your efforts to achieve the true good. The discussion about the room and board payment was dealt with by me in reply to your previous letter in which you mentioned that you

¹³⁴ Cf. Gasparian History and Trivia: Sermoneta (Hospice and Church of S. Giuseppe)

were considering a return home. Well, in regard to this question, no further remarks are necessary, and I can, in all truth, tell you that temporalities is the last thing in my mind. Such is the trust that God inspires in me for your very loving cooperation.

Thus, whatever has occurred in the past is to be completely forgotten, and, if I have been at fault, then with this letter of mine, it is my intention to retract it, and express to you my desire to see you as another Xavier dedicated to the welfare of souls. In the meantime, I ask you for the charity of your prayers so that I will be able to deal with the great and only concern, that of eternal salvation.

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rome, April 6, 1831

2143

April 7, 1831

Giovanni Calvi

Sora

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Most esteemed Giovanni

How pleased I was to see your handwriting again and to get news of you. I am consoled by the position you have as Prior of your Confraternity upon whom I always wish the greatest blessings. Now let us discuss the Retreat. Without reflecting on the time in which your Retreat would be held there, I have taken on work with the Sacconi in Rome. Until after the feast of the Sacred Heart, I will not be free since they will be handled at the same time. Were it not for this accidental occurrence, you can be sure that I would have certainly come there. If your Retreat were scheduled for another time, I would willingly come for such a great work. But you need not change your rule, for I shall select one of our members who is very capable. Along with a Brother as a companion, he will come to Sora. The two safe carriages should be in Frosinone on the night of June 2nd so that they can travel on the 3rd, thus arriving on time for the opening of the Retreat. I would appreciate a line or so of reply from you. Asking you to recommend me to the Lord, while I also extend my respects to all the members there, and particularly to Mrs. Carrara and to Canon Silvestri, I remain and will constantly be, with esteem and respect

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspere C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Rome, April 7, 1831

2144

April 8, 1831
Fr. Raffaele Rosati
San Salvatore Maggiore

Hail to the Blood of Jesus Christ

Most esteemed Father Raffaelle

With regard to the *Capo Liceat*¹³⁵ and the cases for the Penitentiary, I shall see to them during these days. In the meanwhile, begin the ministry. I am surprised about what you told me with respect to the faculties, for when I was with the Cardinal, he said he would write everything to the two Vicars. The Cardinal is outside of Rome and is in Albano. Have no doubt that I will look into all of this. In the meantime, since I am certain that the Cardinal had authorized me to send Missionaries there is not the slightest difficulty that you are able to preach and hear confessions, but abstaining from giving absolution for reserved sins, in which case it cannot be denied that a very special mention must be made in that regard as well as for the very special mention of things identified in the synods. These must be considered individually. However, for hearing confessions only, without using the faculties for reserved sins, there is no doubt at all in this case and you can begin the ministry. I am in a hurry, but I await another letter from you.

Your humble servant

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

April 8, 1831

2145

April 9, 1831
Fr. Francesco Paradisi
Montalto

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Dear Canon

Here I am sending a reply to your most esteemed letter. Indeed, you may return to the House in Rimini and hasten your return. We are to do everything, serving God day by day, and, with the help of divine grace, to do whatever we can. As for the rest "*Jacta curam tuam Domino: in manibus eius sortes meae*".¹³⁶ However, if you prefer to go either to Pievetorina or to S. Felice in Giano, just say the word. Meanwhile, set your things in order and verify those words: *Hilarem*

¹³⁵ It is allowed for a leader.

¹³⁶ Cast your troubles on the Lord: in his hands is my fortune.

*datorem diligit Deus.*¹³⁷

With regard to the image, I had already taken the measurements. Presently, I am delaying any further move until I get your information. So, why should this good work be suspended? I would hope that with 12 scudi thereabouts everything could be covered, including the frame.

Finally, do not cease praying for me and have others do so too. I am and will constantly be, with esteem and respect

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare Can. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Rome, April 9, 1831

2146

April 9, 1831

Fr. Domenico Costantini

Poggio Mirteto

*Christus dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine Suo*¹³⁸

Venerable Archpriest

In keeping with the information sent to me by his Eminence Giustiniani, a Missionary will be arriving there along with his Brother companion, to give the Retreat in Bocchignano and Cerdomare. As for the faculties, would you please take care of everything since the Cardinal is presently in Albano and not feeling well. I have had this understanding with Corazza. Please supply the Missionary with the use of the synodal regulations *in vigore*.¹³⁹ If I can or if I am obliged to do something here in Rome with regard to this matter, let me know.

I would like to know if the Missionary has arrived, since I will have to write to him. Likewise, if the opportunity arises for some man coming to Rome, I would be pleased to see him in order to give him a small package of devotional materials for the Missionary. Pray a great deal for me as I renew my feelings of esteem and respect. I am and will constantly be

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Rome, April 9, 1831

2147

April 17, 1831

To a Canon Rome

¹³⁷ God loves a cheerful giver.

¹³⁸ Christ loved us and washed us in his blood.

¹³⁹ In vigor.

Venerable Canon ¹⁴⁰

Please excuse the inconvenience of the enclosed matter, handed over to me by one of my companions in the ministry. Not too long ago he was engaged in doing a bit of good work in Vallecorsa. You would not believe the intensity of tears that were shed in asking him for a successful outcome of the matter being requested. Not knowing what exactly to do in handling this good work, I suddenly thought of your most worthy personage, for surely you could do something which would, at least, be helpful in lessening to some degree the pain that is being felt, even though it might not be possible to have the full favor granted. Indeed, if the matter is not altogether hopeful, the Lord will nevertheless accept your good intentions to assist, with this good work, those who are afflicted. I seize this opportunity likewise to renew my feelings of esteem, respect and affection for you. With that, I am and will constantly be

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspere Can. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

House, April 17, 1831

2148

April 19, 1831

Fr. Raffaele Rosati

San Salvatore Maggiore

Hail to the Blood of Jesus Christ

Rome, April 19, 1831

Most esteemed Father Raffaelle

I have not succeeded in getting the cases from the Penitentiary without a few regularities, especially now with a shortage of time. So, do whatever you can until those faculties get to you. as for anything further, it will be sufficient for the penitent to say to which confessor the brief of the Penitentiary is to be given, if necessary, and all should be done in keeping with theology. The practice does not require the penitent to give his/her name, but only use NN. However, it is required that you give the name of the confessor whom that person is to contact. He is to inform the penitent in the confessional, telling him/her that a brief will be coming.

Once you have completed your work in Vallecupola, be kind enough to go immediately to Nepi to give a helping hand to our men there who are conducting a Mission.¹⁴¹ The footman who will be accompanying you will take the place of a Brother, and you are to send Marcello either to Rome with a travel sheet indicating where he is coming from, or, if you shorten the route and cut down on expenses, he can be sent to Frosinone. You make your own decision, but

¹⁴⁰ This letter does not have an addressee. In the upper left hand corner, there is written: "Souvenir a petition from Giovanna Tornese and Anna Pisa Nardone".

¹⁴¹ A few words follow that have been canceled out, and are not legible.

send word to me quickly, also indicating to me when you will be arriving *in Nepi*. The communes, however, which you have been assisting, are to spend as much as they would have spent for sending you and Marcello back to our residence. Any additional costs will be balanced out by me. I would, however, like to hope that the expenses would be at least in some way mutually shared. I think that it will cost the same to go from Vallecupola to *Nepi*, as to come to Rome, or to the Province. I repeat, after Vallecupola, Marcello is to return. You are to go on to Nepi where I shall be counting on you for that next Sunday, the third Sunday after Easter, according to my calculations. In general, come sooner if possible, but without harming the good work to be done in Vallecupola as well as an exact assistance in hearing confessions. I am etc.

Your humble servant

G. C. del Bufalo

P. S. If it turns out to be more economical to take Marcello also to Nepi, you make the decision. I shall be awaiting your answer. From Nepi, a letter to Bassiano¹⁴² in order to revive the good work there, to learn about the pious works etc.

2149

April 23, 1831
Fr. Pietro Butti
Alatri

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Most esteemed Canon

I was very pleased by your recent letter of the 9th of this month. I note the spirit of the Lord with which you are always enlivened to promote evermore the glory of the Lord and I never cease being consoled by it in God. I have reflected on your question, and very humbly I point out the following:

1. Founders of apostolic societies have reserved to others the occupations of bonds with monasteries, since one is not ordinarily able to accomplish both good works. It is a different matter to be giving a Retreat, being extraordinary confessor etc.

2. The obligations in justice with reference to you require both time and exemption from other bonds. The explanation of Sacred Scripture demands special studies; it is necessary to be released from choir duty; your occupations with the ministry are not few. How, then, can one have, at the same time, a duty that retards obligations in justice, which lessen those relating to public training?

3. People, nowadays (for in my opinion the castigations of God have not come to an end) need guides; by saying this, I do not mean to imply that, in this matter, nuns are not also needed, but rather extraordinary gifts ... *pluribus intentus. minor est ad singula sensus*.¹⁴³

¹⁴² This is how it appears in the original, but it must be Bassano, in the diocese of Sutri where Rosati had been conducting a Mission. Cfr. the letter to this same person, dated February 22, 1831.

¹⁴³ Intent on many things, the mind is less attentive to individual matters.

4. The present urgency with regard to the monastery will require that you make yourself available *ad tempus et donec*;¹⁴⁴ but have a clear and stable picture ... here you have the sick ones ... here those that are dying ... here the novices ... here the new ones to be professed ...; then, who is going to guide and look after the matters pertaining to your primary apostolate? I would say that you should find someone else in another diocese, one who is capable, and that you yourself should then withdraw later for a month's stay in the Community and on extraordinary occasions to make yourself available for good work with those souls; but that bond ...

These are my thoughts which I submit for your consideration. You weigh them with God's illumination at the foot of the Cross. I know well my inadequacies when it comes to giving advice, especially to one who could well be giving me advice. At any rate, the purpose of this humble letter of mine is the exchange of ideas. I recommend to your zeal the work of the Oratory which draws so many away from the taverns, from conversations etc. Pray for me and have others do so too since I am most needful of prayers. I kiss your hands, and, with esteem and respect, I am and will constantly be

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Rome, April 23, 1831

2150

April 24, 1832

Fr. Carlo Gazola

Benevento

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Most esteemed Canon

I understand all that you were kind enough to indicate to me in your recent very much appreciated letter. Nothing else remains for me to do than simply exclaim: "*Repleat (Dominus) in bonis desiderium tuum*".¹⁴⁵ In my wretchedness, I will not fail to pray to God for a successful outcome to what you have proposed. Finally, assured of the charity of your prayers, I am and will constantly be

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare Can. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Rome, April 24, 1831

¹⁴⁴ For a time and until.

¹⁴⁵ May (the Lord) fill your desire with good things.