

Your New Year's greetings have pleased me very much, as those you send me, my very dear daughter in Jesus Christ, always do. Accept my thanks, and be convinced that I zealously commend you to Jesus lying in a poor manger.

You know it is impossible for me to write letters in answer to those addressed to me, at the renewal of the year, and what's more for all else, I see myself obliged to put off my correspondence to the middle of January, so I have not sent your note to N. I even thought after mature reflection, that it was better not to send it. I like to think, my dear child, that you will appreciate my motives.

I am pleased with my protégé. Be kind enough to tell her so, and assure her that I will go on giving her proofs of the interest I bear her.

Will you be kind enough to inform Mlle. Colette that I have acquitted myself with pleasure of the promises that I made her, to pray every day for her? We would be ungrateful, myself and all of you, my children of St. Joseph, if we neglected our duties towards a person who so courageously helped me, during the early years of the existence of your religious family, and still preserves a sincere affection for us.

Receive again with my blessing, very dear daughter in Jesus Christ, the expression of my very sincere paternal devotedness.

Ghent, 12 February 1855