

My dear daughter in Jesus Christ

I am very pleased to find again those sentiments of confidence and submission that I have known you to have for many years, and that have drawn down graces on you and on the house of Coloma, in more or less crucial circumstances. Always preserve those pious dispositions and you will always have to congratulate yourself on them. Experience has strengthened you in the conviction that the good of the Institute and that of each member of that dear family are the sole objects of my vigils, my sacrifices and all my efforts. I can admit it, my dear daughter, in that you do me justice. I have no other interest and no other aims than the prosperity of the Children of Mary and Joseph, in the way traced out for them, in the service of the Holy Church.

I approve of the precautionary measures you have taken in conjunction with your sisters of the council. One must avoid giving rise to any kind of anxiety. The calm of the religious must be scrupulously preserved. I have had the happiness of finding it in all our houses on my last visitation. The peace of the Lord reigns in them; they are not the least in the world worried about the chapter meeting. I was really edified by that. They commend the matter to God and are silent.

In order to preserve these happy dispositions, from this moment no members of the Institute will go to Coloma before the closing of the chapter, except the Superiors and the delegates, who, in the terms of the Constitution, have to accompany them to the chapter. No pupil may be at the Mother House from the beginning of the retreat of the Ladies until after the closure of the same. The dignity of the Institute requires these precautions.

You will be kind enough to inform the Madame Superior General of this, and take the steps necessary to see that the Superiors are informed of it in good time, throughout whole Institute.

A further reason that puts us under an obligation to avoid journeys by our Ladies from now until the return of the pupils after the holidays, is the obligatory movement of the Superiors and delegates; more than twenty Ladies on their outward and return journeys will be seen on the railways, because of the chapter. Adding to them those who, as in ordinary years, will be changing convents, the number of Ladies of Mary who will be traveling in September will be considerable this year.

A final reflection, my dear daughter in Jesus Christ, the Superiors as well as the religious charged with electing the delegates, seemed to me to understand the great responsibility of the acts they are called upon to perform according to their Constitutions. They are praying and abstaining from talking among themselves about what concerns the persons. I can tell you that no Superior has consulted me about what it will be fitting for her to do at the chapter, as regards the continuation of Mme Olympiade or on the choice of a Superior General. One, or perhaps two ordinary religious have put a few questions to me about the choice of delegates. So you see that what you are worrying about is only of slight importance. You must let divine Providence act and pray. The result will be what pleases our good God and for the greater good of the family of which you are a member and which you love sincerely, as you tell me you do, and as I believe you do.

With a very good heart, I give you my blessing

Your Father in Jesus Christ

C. G. Van Crombrugghe

Ghent, 10th August 1858

I am reopening a letter in order to answer a question contained in the remarks you sent me yesterday. One may not do anything that is wrong. One may not nominate a delegate of the Convent of the Immaculate Conception.