

My dear daughter in Jesus Christ

The post that your Superiors have entrusted to you and the experience you have acquired, have allowed me to entrust to you the children that Providence has specially charged me with forming for the modest apostolate to which they are called. You have received from our good God, qualities suited to this kind of work. Be faithful to grace, my Child, and you will contribute towards the development of the dispositions that are to be found in the subjects entrusted to you. So, go forward with confidence, leaning on the powerful arm of your divine Spouse and Lord, Jesus Christ. Those are the opinions and counsels of a Father who knows you and prays for you with all his heart.

Here is what directly concerns my four protégés. I see that you appreciate them at their true value, and that is for me a guarantee that you will render them real services. I am happy to know that you have their confidence to the extent that they open their hearts to you and accept your remedies submissively, applying them bravely to themselves and congratulating themselves that they are drawing great advantages from them. What precedes is for all four, what follows is for each one privately. Try and get them all to believe in my wish to see them happy.

Constance will be grateful to you all her life for the care you are giving her, by teaching her circumcision of the heart. The merits of Jesus Christ will bring it about that she understands you and courageously puts the knife to the root of her weaknesses. Her heart, free from every disordered affection, will leap towards the sole good worthy of a creature destined to love its Creator and possess him eternally.

I am very pleased with her progress in everything, and I thank God for procuring for me the means of being useful to that person.

Eugenie is advancing along the right way. She understands her faults, admits them simply, and draws from them far-reaching lessons. In this way, she is learning to know herself without getting discouraged, and feels the need for the help of God for forming herself. Her last letter gave me a keener sense of pleasure than any other of her letters. It is lovely to hear her tell about her fault with a touching simplicity that is intensely pleasing to the heart of Jesus, her future Spouse, her God and Savior.

In all respects, the letter of Eugenie gave me complete satisfaction. That child keeps her place in my heart. Assure her of that.

You will render great service to Sidonie by confiding to her a few children to supervise. This person needs to form herself to a sweet, peaceful way of doing things. Her zeal would take on a disagreeable manner, it would drive the children away, and her remarks would not be well received.

I am pleased with her letter and her grades.

Flore is recovering. I am full of confidence that her small lapses will turn to her good. She will draw precious teaching from them. Tell her I do not keep the memory of errors caused by lack of experience. Let her be brave and have confidence in you and me. The rest concerning her relationships with her companions will be formed gradually, and by the grace our good God grants to prayer. The faults of 1861 must no longer count with me in 1862.

The letter of Flore pleased me very much.

After assuring my children about the consequences of their faults, and promising them the continuation of my affection, you will give each one, privately also, five francs as a New Year's gift, and the assurance that I shall go on praying for them. I know they are doing that for me.

You know, my dear daughter that I am also praying to acquit myself of that duty towards you.

Your ever devoted Father in Jesus Christ  
C. G. Van Crombrugghe

Ghent, 10th January 1862