

My dear daughter in Jesus Christ

I sympathize with you in your troubles, and I pray our good God to take pity on the poor sister who has come and upset the harmony that was reigning in our house of St. Joseph. Bear like a religious, the unpleasantness that concern you personally; as for the harm that thoughtless acts are doing to the pupils, which I was informed of during my first visit after the holidays; when possible, try to remedy it by training the person who has been led into error by misleading assurances, a susceptible character, etc., etc. Two of my postulants point out prudently how a mistress can be liable to make mistakes when she lets herself go to prejudices, suspicions, sensitiveness, etc. In your position as Mistress General, give Mme (name effaced) to understand that you have to fulfill your duties towards the pupils and mistresses, that you believe you understand those duties and that you are following special indications, provided you by me, as to what concerns my protégés in the Institute of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

For the rest, my dear Child, be brave. Think of the harm you can prevent by showing yourself to be firm. Think of the sufferings of our divine model, and ask that good Jesus for the graces you need to fulfill duties that are some times difficult, but that are entrusted to you in his august name.

Count on St. Joseph, on our divine Mother Mary. Count also a little on your Superiors whose feelings towards you are known to you; they know you also and love you in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Please, say some words of encouragement to my children from Ostend, and to Marie Constance whose salvation is worrying me as you know

Your ever devoted Father in God

C. G. Van Crombrughe

Ghent, 4th April 1862

Tell Madame Superior that the report the two Gentlemen from Melle gave me yesterday, brought me much consolation. I am cherishing the hope that we shall end by coming to an agreement. However, we must continue to pray to St. Joseph, so that, if it is a work of his, he will kindly continue to guide us and lead us to a complete and final success. Before the men, let us not speak too much about it? Let us be very discreet. Inform your Superior of what I am saying here.

My kind regards to Flore, while I await the pleasure of seeing her, which will probably be in Easter week. I hope in fact to come to Alost that week. Meanwhile, do you also, my Child, take courage from the memory of what Jesus Christ did and suffered for us. Nonetheless, and this seriously, I recommend to you great prudence as regards the fast and the penances you might feel inclined to do during these days preceding the Resurrection.