

Madame Superior Clothilde

I was not aware of your illness nor of the visit the Mme Superior General made to you. I am very pleased to learn from you yourself that you are better and have been encouraged in virtue by the example that Mme your Rev. Mother General left you. I have always noticed that singing, lengthy explanation in class, in general, everything that tires the chest very much, does not suit you. Avoid all excess of that kind, and you will ward off these illnesses; that is worth much more than all the remedies prescribed to cure you which really makes things awkward in your position. I am delighted to learn that you are pleased with your dear Sisters and that the novices give you satisfaction. Carefully cultivate those good dispositions.

I have been very edified by the rectitude your brother uses in his dealings. Being unable to give a letter of recommendation on the simple information you gave me about the relative of Ardoye, I addressed myself to Mr. Désirè. The latter send some information back to me, but without speaking of the morality of the relative. So as not to waste time, I decided to send the recommendation to Waeke, adding to that dispatch that if Mr. Désirè believed his candidate deserved that action on my part, not only because of his capability, but also because of his religious conduct, he could send the letter on to him; that I was relying on his sincerity. A few days later, I had the pleasure of receiving a visit from Mr. Désirè who came to explain things verbally and to bring back my recommendation. I was charmed by such delicacy, and your brother went up very much in my esteem. You understand that all this must remain secret; I have told you for your consolation and also for your instruction.

At the first opportunity that occurs, I shall try to arrange the matter of the reduction of the boarding fees, about which you wrote to me. In less than ten days, you will know the decision of Mr. the Superior at Melle. I hope it will be according to your wishes.

For the good of your children, I will allow them to write to me for Christmas, but I cannot give an assurance that I shall have the leisure to reply to them.

You would do well, my dear daughter, to get yourself the three short works of your Rev. Father Boone: on fashions, on the theater and on bad books. You will find good points in them for your pupils and you will be able to talk about them to the Jesuit Fathers who are willingly follow their sentiments in these sorts of things. You will find them, I think, at Demat, rue de la Batterie, 24, Brussels.

I send you my wishes that the Christmas feasts may obtain fresh heavenly favors for your dear Sisters and all your pupils. You know that, as Superior, you are at the head of the list of recommendations that I unroll before the Lord. No one is more sincerely devoted to you than

Your spiritual Father

C. G. Van Crombrughe

(Not dated)