

Madame Superior

I thank you with all my heart for the wishes you sent me for the New Year. Above all I appreciate all the prayers you offered for me during the great and consoling solemnities we have been celebrating. It is, indeed, in a double relationship that we help each other. From your infancy, I have shown the way to Heaven in the visits I made to you at the convent of Nouveau Bois, as your uncle; and for many years it has been in a more elevated capacity, it is as a Father in Jesus Christ that I find myself connected with you. Be convinced, my dear niece, that I will always try to help you as a relative and, above all, my dear daughter in God, count also on always having in me a devoted Father.

Your letter gave me great pleasure whatever the feelings it seems to have inspired you with because of the carelessness in style that you had noticed in it. Be certain that I always recognize the heart that has dictated what you wrote to me.

Please, be the interpreter of my sentiments to my nieces. Give them all some praise and encouragement, according to the good you were able to tell me about them in your last letter.

They will understand that, my eye requiring precautions, it is not possible for me to write directly to each of my nieces and then in addition to my nephews at Grammont and Melle.

I give you, my dear daughter and all my nieces at Coloma, my blessing, and I pray Jesus Christ our Savior to add his to it.

Your spiritual Father

C. G. Van Crombrughe

20th January 1862