

17th November 1817

Mr G Van Crombrugghe, in Grammont

My very dear Father

The interest that you are taking in the small establishment that God has given me the grace to found for poor boys would seem to allow me to ask you, in my absence, to arrange the work that I am obliged to have done at the Convent of the Carmelites to make it clean for the school that I want to establish there. This is not, I confess, a glamorous job in the eyes of the world, but it is none the less precious to the eyes of faith: it will give more joy at the moment when the illusions of the earth vanish, than anything which excites the desires of earthly ambition; but I know your disposition in this respect and it would be superfluous of me to wax lyrical about the utility and the excellence of a work which is solely for indigent youth and God's glory. I rely therefore on your goodwill to help my plans and on your knowledge of these sorts of works; you know what I have in mind. Mr Godefroy and Mr Bridart will assist you in everything that they can. They will tell you my rights and my resources. I will only ask you to begin as soon as possible so that all will be ready to receive the children and their good masters in the new year.

Accept, I beg you, the sincere expression of the respect and the filial piety with which I have the honour to be, very dear Father,

Your very devoted and submissive son

Alost, 17th November 1817.

C G Van Crombrugghe, Priest

Please make sure that my dear Mother finds here the assurance of my respectful love and the most tender devotion.

