

No address

Very dear Father and Mother

This morning I went to Bishop's House where I had the happiness of being introduced to His Eminence and his Vicar General (the French one) and another Clergyman who I took to be Fr Martens. His Eminence told me that all things considered he would prefer that I returned to Mondidier because, he said, you will learn better French there than here and I wish you to apply yourself to it greatly, not only to be able to speak it and to write it, but even to be able preach in this language, if God gives you the grace to persevere. But I add, he said, that you will still have to come to me if I ask you. I answered him that I would always consider myself happy to be able to be at his command. I asked him then what I should do if I immediately drew a low number<sup>1</sup>. He explained that in this case someone should write to him from Grammont so that he could write to the Ministry of Religion if necessary. First he told me to come to him, but then that it was not necessary. For myself, my dear Parents, I believe that it would be better for you to send my letter to Matante's; they will be able to forward it via my cousin Bernard and you will then know what you will have to do pending the Minister's answer. You can remain calm; if you write to me when you hear that the lottery is to be drawn I be able, maybe, to help you by writing myself to His Eminence. I offered my services there and then to His Eminence; he asked me who my superior was, and I told him, and he gave me a letter for him. Then he gave me a small exhortation advising me to benefit from the lessons of our masters in both virtue and knowledge since it is all in God's order. So, dear Parents, not having anything to tell you that my brother Jean cannot easily tell you, I embrace you cordially and recommend myself to your prayers.

Your very devoted son

*C Van Crombrughe*

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<sup>1</sup> In the conscription lottery.