

Malines, 9<sup>th</sup> February 1812.

Deacon at the seminary in Ghent.

My very dear Nephew,

Your letters are always a joy to me, but I am sad to see that you prefer to live in fear than to be consoled by hope: a letter from a layman in Paris to a layman in Ghent in no way diminishes my hope<sup>1</sup>. They know less in Paris than in the provinces about the matter. If my hopes are not finally realised I will at least have enjoyed hope's gentle consolation whilst you will have lived in the sadness of fear. Leave the care of his affairs to the Good Lord and zealously undertake those which He has confided to you in the Sacred Mystery. That, my dear nephew, is the best advice I can give you.

As for the ordination, your vicars-general will no doubt have already received our invitation to send their subjects here for the Sabbatum Sitientes<sup>2</sup> on the 14<sup>th</sup> March, but this time I will be unable to offer you accommodation because the Bishop of Roermond<sup>3</sup> is coming to stay at the seminary with his secretary and his servant so the rooms which I had reserved for my two nephews are taken and I have no others to offer, but Fr Andries would be delighted to receive you both if you can separate yourselves from your companions.

I commend myself greatly to your prayers. My holy daughters pray for you. My health is improving through the discomfort of the sweats which the doctor makes me undergo every night for an hour or two.

I have the honour to be, with particular affection,

My dear nephew,

Your very humble and obedient servant,

*JG Huleu*

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<sup>1</sup> Fr Adolphe Desmet CJ notes that "Huleu lives in an extraordinary illusion, surrounded by the Emperor's creatures".

<sup>2</sup> "Venite, venite sitientes ad aquas Domini", from Isaiah (55:1) and sung on the Saturday of the 4<sup>th</sup> Week of Lent, gave rise to the so-called "Sabbatum sitientes (Saturday of the Thirsty)", in the pre-tridentine liturgy.

<sup>3</sup> Joannes Baron van Velde de Melroy en Sart-Bomal. In fact he wasn't Bishop of Roermond at this time since the Diocese had been suppressed in 1801.