

Malines, 2nd April 1812

Deacon, at his parents' house in Grammont

My very dear Nephew,

I have received both your letter and to reply to the first, I can assure you that I made the same wishes for your happiness and blessings during the holy days of Easter. As for the second I can completely reassure you because not only have I not had to stay in bed for many years, but also few winters have been as kind to me as this last, as I think I have already told you. I don't therefore understand the report that M. Le Grand has given you. Certainly the ordination days were those which made me suffer the most during the winter, and my nephew Van Den Hende can tell you how I have been. Certainly if my colleague, Fr Forgeur, was not so ill that he cannot write or sign his name I would already be on holiday in the neighbouring towns, and if he is not better next week I think I shall not delay further as long as I am certain that you will not be here, which would give me great pleasure. If you are not coming soon I hope you will be here at Pentecost with your cousin Van Den Hende. My pleasure will be at its greatest when I see you both ordained priest in the seminary chapel. I hope that the Fr President will have followed my advice in asking Rome for a dispensation for your age as we do for our candidates¹. As for M. Le Grand's request for a room with a fireplace it is something which I only grant to those among the infirm who have waited a long time for the privilege and who have shown by their conduct that they deserve it. Nothing is distributed here on recommendation: I adhere strictly to the principles of distributive justice. There are few rooms with fireplaces and many are in poor condition. He will therefore have to wait his turn and justice will be done. Before receiving your letter, and through the discussions I have had with "M.M. Les grands"² I know their principles which you are talking about.

I truly wish that Van Den Hende will pursue the resolution which he has made, and your encouragement will greatly help. Greet him for me, please, and believe me always to be, in the sentiments which you already know to be mine,

Your very humble and affectionate servant and uncle,

JG Huleu

¹ Van Crombrughe was too young to be ordained priest without a dispensation.

² Meaning unclear.