

Malines, 18th April 1808

Pupil at Mr Mollier's¹ boarding school in Montdidier.

My very dear Nephew,

I was very edified by your letter of the 10th. I see that you still don't know about your exemption from military service. Your father has already told me about it, and you will, thus, see that the King of kings is calling you to another militia, one that is more demanding but more glorious and more praiseworthy. You will be rescuing souls from the claws of fierce lions, fighting ignorance and vice firstly in yourself then in others. Fr Sellier provides you with an example of this, and this example shows you the remarkable victories that the grace of the priesthood wins over hell. Encouraged by this example you should offer yourself to Jesus Christ to fight under the standard of the Holy Cross against all the enemies of your salvation, and seize every opportunity to do good to your neighbours, be sympathetic to all their suffering, pray for sinners, and study in order to gain the necessary knowledge for the direction of souls. Thus our Saviour will see in you a zealous servant of the thing that he most cherishes, the holy Church. Never forget these fine words of Saint Gregory: nullum est tate sacrificium quale est zelus animarum. It follows that the true way of pleasing God and being sure of everlasting salvation is to live only for your neighbour so as to bring him to God. You can judge now whether I was right to thank the Good Lord who inspired a love for his suffering servants in you; pursue this path, my dear nephew, and it will reveal all the blessings of heaven to you. I will commend you to my holy daughters who are of the same mind.

I wish you, my dear nephew, and your brother, a happy Easter. I hope that your retreat will have given you an increasing knowledge of the reasons which oblige us to live more and more in that justice which the Lord won for us through torment and ignominy. He has destroyed the kingdom of evil for us so let us not return to what has only caused us wretchedness. Let us live with Him so that when we leave this mortal life we do so in order to we fall asleep to waken to everlasting life.

With your letter I received one from Grammont which informs me of the death in childbirth of the wife of Mr François Spitaels on the 12th of this month.

I commend myself to your prayers and to those of your brother, and I have the honour of being, in esteem and friendship,

My dear nephew,

Your very humble and obedient servant,

JG Huleu

¹ Layman named Principal at Montdidier after the expulsion of the Fathers of the Faith.