

Malines, 25th May 1809

At Fr de Sambucy's house in Amiens

My very dear Nephew,

I see with great pleasure that your retreat has been a source of blessings from heaven. I have no doubt that its fruits will be abundant your whole life long. Fill yourself more and more with the sense of your own nothingness and with a contemplation of the wholeness of your God; God seeks out hearts which are nothing in order to fill them with His wholeness. Nothing more fully honours the grace of God than a humble, gentle and tranquil recognition of our own wretchedness.

After mature reflection it seems to me that the Good Lord would be happy for you to do your philosophy in Amiens. You will profit more from it and the children¹, as well as Charlotte, will profit from your presence.

I cannot tell you much more this time as the Seminary retreat and the arrival of the new Archbishop leave me little free time. I have been confirmed as Vicar General and I think we will have a good Archbishop: he has not yet taken possession but I hope he will be able to do so soon.²

My niece de Scheppere writes that her son will receive the sub-diaconate on Saturday so we are praying for him. I pray a good deal for you and for Charlotte: please pray for me.

In sincere friendship,

Your very humble servant,

JG Huleu

PS You will already know that my sister Agnes in Alost has had the last sacraments. I commend her also to your prayers.

¹ Choir boys, or altar boys, of the cathedral for whom Van Crombrughe was responsible.

² In fact he never did and left in 1815.