

St. Gaspar's Letters

1851 - 1900

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1851

November 29, 1828
Fr. Innocenzo Saverio Betti
Roma per Benevento

Hail to the Precious Blood of J.C.

Esteemed Canon

Even though I am on retreat, I am sending you, nevertheless, an answer to your letter. Included in this packet, always subject to your correction, is the history of B. Liguori. He will be the glory of the Kingdom, etc., etc. There is a certain similarity to the Congregation of the Missionaries. I believe that the Pious Workers are well known throughout the Kingdom. It seems to me that the Oratorians are attracting some notice; item, the Passionists, etc. *In fine*,¹ the Community has the fullest canonical approval ... the Clergy living together, etc. If you think it is a good idea, I shall add another bit of clarification for Sig. Rivera. I want you to know, furthermore, that the Bishop of Aquila has already made an effort to obtain that objective. He had them write to me that he had not given up hope. Is there to be a Reform? Then, these are the means to be used. We can never overemphasize this, urging people to make use of these means, etc.

In your Chronicles, do not forget the concise information on our Confreres who have died, both Missionaries and Brothers, beginning with Albertini. Whenever you wish to have a folio on him covering all that I can tell you, all you have to do is send me a reminder. At the same time, you might contact Msgr. Muccioli who also knows a lot about him.

Burn mine.

Fontana liked the picture and he really had a good laugh. I am very sorry about your discomforts. How are you at present? A bit of advice. It is your duty to let me know where you can enjoy better health. I will then require you to discharge in obedience my order to go there. The Institute is not lacking the ability to supply a capable person to assume your duties there. If your health will be the same anywhere, then, at least do not work *ultra vires*,² for this is not the Will of God. As for the extra tasks that I keep giving you, I expect you to handle them, too, *iuxta vires*.³

I have learned about the Treasurer's response. However, have courage, and trust in God. I hope that you sent along the Cardinal's letter. It will be helpful to the cause. But, the Datary of Cardinal Pacca should be notified, and that only through his nephew, only for the record. Who knows, perhaps the two Eminences might even help out with their own personal contributions, etc., etc.

That matter about Archbishop Catolini is probably gossip. He is now in Rome.

I do not understand your interpretation of the "*dormitaverunt qui ascenderunt equos ... fallax equus ad salutem*".⁴ I would interpret it in this way, that⁵ whoever hands himself over to human grandeurs is asleep *ut plurimum*⁶ with regard to the things of God, and consequently "*fallax equus ad*

¹ In the end.

² Beyond one's strength.

³ According to one's strength.

⁴ They have dreamed who mounted horses ... the horse is unreliable for salvation.

⁵ In the original, one reads "*ci*", but it is certainly a slip of the pen, due to the haste with which this present letter was written. Notice, later, how the Saint concludes the letter.

⁶ That the most.

salutem, etc."⁷ Now I ask: how is that applicable to the House of Studies? Furthermore, with respect to the works of God, I could produce texts, some that you already recognize, to stun even the very dear Canon Betti. In doing the works of God, it is fitting to cut oneself off for a time from the ordinary. Meanwhile, tell me approximately when you will be able to settle young men there and whether you have thought about the cost for room and board that will be charged, at the most reasonable rate, so that the House does not lose, nor at the same time does it gain. That will vary with the different localities. Later, God will give us S. Angelo, for example, for a Retreat House, and there in the House of Retreats, etc.: one goes at it as needed. I hope that I am making myself clear. Let us apply *debito modo*⁸ the "*quod fac, fac cito*" and I might say even: *citissime*.⁹

What a nuisance this Canon Del Bufalo is. Here is the temptation! Look.. *Venite, opprimamus virum iustum: contrarius est enim operibus nostris*.¹⁰ That is a trick of the devil. In particular, for the original companions, etc. I would like at least to have the House of Studies opened on the feast day of *Auxilium Christianorum*. I shall not send Lipparelli right now. You, however, will be the President of the House as well as of the House of Studies; - Lipparelli, the local Superior (school) and Prefect of the Church; - Aloysi, Vice-Superior; Rosati, Director of Retreats. This is the new line-up. I say nothing about Silvestri, since I am appointing him for Lipparelli in the Province, etc. If seven resident students cannot be accommodated, it does not matter: there will be six of them.

Cav. Rivera¹¹ was entirely in support of Albertini. He knew him ... he was acquainted with the Paolotte Nun, etc. Would that in Naples, God would ... *Utinam*¹² ... how many sins would be taken away!

At the same time, when Lipparelli comes, I will be sending a new Brother there too. I shall send Marcello elsewhere, for he seems to be the older. What is he skilled in doing?

What beautiful prophecies do you have now? Let us hear them.

I am awaiting the exact and well-digested summary of the Circulars.

With regard to the young man who is twenty years old, I cannot admit him since he is incapable of handling the Philosophy and Theology. The senior House of Studies has no more room; the Mission Houses and Houses of Studies, in order. You can remove all the papers relating to this case. In the meantime, I shall have the regulations for the House of Studies prepared, and you will have them in due time.

I was intending to prepare a list of instructions concerning Nuns for our men who are beginning to work in the Monasteries. In that way, they will not have to do too much reading on the subject. What do you have to say to that? If you think that I should tear it up, all I need is a word from you and it will be obeyed. Be frank with me.

Rodriguez and De Sales speak highly of Community life, as do all the Founders in general. These are the things that require a more concrete effort rather than formal attention, so to speak. You work on it, at your leisure.

I am happy to hear of the success of the Retreat given by Rosati to the Seminarians.

You are correct in saying that my desire is to be in Giano and live the life of a simple porter.

⁷ The horse is unreliable for salvation.

⁸ In due manner.

⁹ *Quod fac, fac cito*. Because of his haste, he quotes inexactly the text of John XIII, 27: "*Quod facis, fac citius*".

¹⁰ Come, let us oppress the just man; for he is against our deeds.

¹¹ Cf. Additional Biographical Data: Rivera, Cav. Lelio.

¹² Would that.

I realize, however, that *ad magna praemia perveniri non potest nisi per magnos labores*.¹³ It is a grace that God can be served by such inept creatures. So, *Deo gratias*.¹⁴ Either Giano or Rimini, ... may our will always be what God reveals to us.

I have at hand the Treasurer's letter in which he states that he does not want to get involved in the matter. Give him a pep-talk; tell him to be cautious about *pusillanimitate spiritus*.¹⁵ Tell him, furthermore, that just as a regular religious, who wants to leave, first takes care of providing for his patrimony, so also, and with greater facility, someone belonging to our Institute; also, that the intentions of the Canons will be fulfilled, etc., etc. For that reason, conclude by telling him that it is the will of God that you, Monsignor, should give it thought, for what God is awaiting from your charity is only at the beginning stages;¹⁶ all of this will redound to your greater merit in the sight of God.

With respect to the building repairs, tell the Monsignor Treasurer to send, in the meantime, whatever he can of his own possessions, and that the Master should grant this assistance *saltem*¹⁷ because it is a question of restoring a Convent; and if we do not merit it personally, then the Work of God that we are doing does merit it.

Gratia Dei nobiscum.¹⁸

G. C. d. B.

Rimini, November 29, 1828¹⁹

I do not have time to re-read this. *Errata corrige*.²⁰

1852

December 3, 1828

Mr. Casmillo Possenti

Fabriano

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable Camillo

Now that our Retreat in preparation for the feast of the great Xavier has been completed. I am sending a reply to your very dear and most esteemed letter of the 21st of this past November. *Dominus retribuet pro me* for so many favors that you are kind enough to do for me. Also, read what is in my heart, namely, the sincere sentiments of gratitude and of affectionate respect for your most worthy personage for whom I wish, especially during the celebration of the upcoming mysteries, the

¹³ It is not possible to arrive at great rewards except through great labors.

¹⁴ Thanks to God.

¹⁵ Cowardliness of spirit.

¹⁶ Cf. Gsparian History and Trivia: Patrimony, Ecclesiastical.

¹⁷ At least.

¹⁸ The grace of God be with us.

¹⁹ From the postal markings it appears that this letter left from the city of Rimini and passed through Naples on November 29, 1828. As usual, subtracting six or eight days, one can assign it to the 21 or 23 of November. The Saint mentions at the beginning that he is writing during the Retreat. As a matter of fact, it occupied the ten days preceding the feast of S. Francis Xavier, December 3. We read in the "*Dilucidazioni e Ricordi pratici sulla nostra regola*", dictated by the Founder: "Our Retreat will begin in our Communities on the evening of the 21st of November with just the Introduction, and will come to an end on the evening of the 30th of the same month: hence, on the 1st day of December we can be occupied in readying the church and everything else for the feast" (*Scritti del Fondat.*, Vol. XII, f. 175, *tergo*, n. 13).

²⁰ Correct the errors.

most abundant and copious blessings of sweetness. In a letter, it is not always that easy to express adequately what is felt in the interior of one's soul. Above all, may our holy union in the adorable Heart of Jesus be evermore intimate, strong and elevated so as to promote even more the greater glory of God. So, do not cease working to the fullest of your capacity (and indeed you assure me of your zeal) in behalf of that most important devotion to the Divine Blood.

Presently, I am attempting to promote the perpetual cult to the most Precious Blood, and whatever else can be accordingly done by private devotees, seeking to find in various localities 12 churches who would divide among themselves the months of the year, consecrating each month to the Divine Blood, and using that book which, as far as I can recall, was first printed there in that city, so very dear to me. Through prayer and with time, who knows whether you will not attain the accomplishment of this good work. The thought occurs to me that you bear the name of a saint who was very deeply devoted to the Divine Blood. And, oh, what a need exists in our days for apostolic activity!

During these days, I shall be leaving for Faenza for a clergy Retreat and whatever other good work I will be able to do. Necessarily, I will have to be back here before Christmas. Accompany me with many prayers and particularly have the Capuchin nuns there do the same. Likewise, a special *Ave Maria* in a certain little chapel dedicated to the most holy Mary there that has so many votive gifts evident.

However, you should continue sending your letters here to Rimini, for your letters are always so very dear to me, and in that way we can continue forward with our correspondence to the glory of God. I have received exactly the printed materials along with the two reams of paper and it seems to me (unless I am mistaken) that 25 *baiocchi* were given to the man who delivered them. I see that a third ream of stationery will be needed for this House, so, at the earliest opportunity, please send it.

In the meanwhile, you should be receiving 20 *scudi* from Rome. From this amount, subtract all that is due to you, including the cost of that third ream of stationery. With whatever is left over, have as many copies of the usual Chaplets printed as can be covered by that sum. The difference of a few *paoli*, more or less, that might be needed for the printing, will be something that we can come to an agreement on later. But see that they are printed with the greatest possible care. Later we can determine where they are to be sent. This you will learn as we continue our correspondence.

I would like the printer, on his own, to promote the organization of the Life of St. Xavier, which I would like to shorten, with the help of the Saint, in my own way. God will bless him for this work.

It appears that I have nothing more to say to you except that you should pray for me and have others do so too, so that God will, one day, grant us the everlasting, inseparable union with him in holy Paradise, the only goal of our desires. With esteem, respect and endless gratitude, I remain, in Jesus Christ crucified

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspere C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

House in Rimini, December 3, 1828

P.S. You are the practical man. While wanting to visit Loreto and yet pass through Fabriano, how can I arrange an itinerary such as that? I still do not know when I can be traveling, but, in the meantime, that information will be useful for regulating my actions etc. etc.

1853

December 4, 1828
Fr. Domenico Colombari
Mercatino

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable Archpriest

Here are the rosaries for the members of the St. Xavier organization. The cost is 16 *baiocchi* each, not including the delivery from Rome, for which nothing is being asked. I am still awaiting the relic and it is my intention to have it get to you quickly. I am always very pleased to learn of the good

work that is being promoted there and I would even like to see it increase to the greater glory of God. How many reasons for consolation this must provide for your soul! A thousand best wishes to the excellent Alessandro. May you both recommend me incessantly to God. While urging you to spread evermore the devotion to the Divine Blood, I remain, with esteem and respect, in Jesus Christ crucified

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Mission and Retreat House in Rimini, December 4, 1828

P. S. Excuse me for not answering your letter immediately.

1854

December 5, 1828
Msgr. Bellisario Cristaldi
Rome

*Christus dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine Suo*²¹

Venerable Monsignor

I am the last one, and I should have been the first, to congratulate your most reverend excellency upon your promotion to the sacred purple.²² That delay was caused by the method of my life which allows time only for those things that are pertinent to the ministry. At this moment, in which I am writing, casually have I been assured of the situation; and, having been deprived for such a long time of seeing your handwriting, I immediately realized the reason for your silence. So, now, please read in the depths of my miserable heart, the exultations that I feel in God for your advancement; the only thing that I can see in it is the foundation for even greater good that can be done for the Lord's Church. I shall not fail to keep you present, in a special way, in my poor prayers, and you can be certain of the enthusiasm with which I shall join with you in offering to the Almighty your sincere wishes, along with my own. I kiss your hands, and, with the fullness of esteem and respect, I remain, most reverend excellency (I do not know whether I am wrong in these titles until the Consistory)

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

²¹ Christ loved us and washed us in his blood.

²² In the secret consistory of December 15, 1828, Leo XII announced publicly the elevation of Msgr. Bellisario Crisaldi to the cardinalate, which he had reserved to himself *in pectore* in the secret consistory of October 2, 1826.

M. Ap.
December 5, 1828

1855

December 6, 1828
Fr. Venanzio Pierangeli
Gagliole

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Most venerable Father Venanzio

In reply to your letter, I say to you that the members cannot absent themselves from the use of the crucifix on their breasts so as to be in conformity with the members who are in Rome. Indeed, that sacred insignia is an object of love. So, try to do what you can to overcome that difficulty. With regard to the limiting of the members to 33, I have nothing to say, since that will depend on the local circumstances. I will see that the necessary materials are sent from Rome, presupposing that the aggregation of the new Confraternity has already been made with the Archconfraternity in Rome. However, would you please inform me of the one to whom I can entrust all of this as your representative in Rome, indeed supplying me with his address so that I can take care of it when the opportunity arises? I am overjoyed because of the good work being done there and I give thanks to the ever lovable God. Do not fail to keep me in your prayers, and, with esteem and respect, consider me as

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

House in Rimini, December 6, 1828

1856

December 6, 1828
Fr. Pietro Butti
Alatri

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Most esteemed Canon

With pleasure did I receive your handwriting before departing for the clergy Retreat in Faenza (keep sending your letters, however, to Rimini). I note in your letter your determined concern for the small building in honor of St. Xavier. The Lord will bless your holy plans.

I regret, however, not having been able to have an audience with the Holy Father. With regard to the petition to Monsignor Cristaldi, as soon as Vizzeri can look into it, I hope that there will be no delay in getting a response to you. He is in constant touch with the Treasurer whom I learned is going to be promoted and therefore, as you can understand, will not have much time for writing letters. He was supposed to have written to me about a number of problems with our Institute and I still have not, up to now, received any reply. Consequently, I would not want, at the present time, to add further tasks for him. So, I shall await the results that you get and thereafter we can figure things out.

With respect to the Masses, you first should determine which ones you can dispose of and then write to me letting me know how many you will need and I will come to an agreement with

you. It would be good that there be time allowed for their fulfillment. The ten *scudi* between me and Father Biagio I will send to you at your request.

I am consoled that the oratory is being revived. Indeed, wherever you can, as you remain in the Province, do everything possible to stimulate this great work.

If collections to be taken up there have been suspended, you might be able to get permission for one for each Lenten preacher.

Printer Contedini is selling copies of the month of June in S. Giovanni della Pigna. In the meanwhile, you will be receiving three copies of it, *gratis*, from me. Just say an *Ave Maria*. Return my special greetings, along with those of Father Biagio, to your wonderful brother, and assure him of our poor prayers.

We shall soon be seeing each other again since I will have to be in Veroli for a clergy Retreat, as the bishop has written to me.

Give my regards to our friends in common, as well as to our patrons, and recommend me to their prayers. With esteem and respect, I remain

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rimini, December 6, 1828

1857

December 6, 1828

Fr. Betti

Roma per Benevento

Hail to the Precious Blood of J.C.

Esteemed Canon

In regard to the letters of identification, I would like to have just one of them, and I would like to have it printed so that it can be used for every purpose. See to it that it is done briefly, concisely and clearly. In that way, we will observe the necessary economy. Have the heading set up in general in the name of the Institute. In that way, it will be useful for all. As an aid to your memory, as well as to save myself in part some work, I am sending you the enclosed. I do not have with me your letter, which you cite patently, nor do I recall it precisely. At any rate, with regard to this observation of mine, which I hope you approve, it will need some modifications.

You probably already know about the promotion of the Most Rev. Treasurer.²³ We shall see whether he remains in office or not.

Never say again that you are the cause for the Institute's slow progress. With the grace of God, you can console yourself: you do whatever you can. Prayers, time and patience. Those sentiments would be more applicable to me.

I am hopeful that the Retreats for this year have been blessed *ubique*²⁴ for the greater glory of God.

With regard to the Mass and Office: the things that are afflicting you are not distractions, but abstraction. The soul is in commerce with the body and therefore, even unwillingly, we suffer. But

²³ Cf. Additional Biographical Data: Cristaldi, Msgr. Bellisario.

²⁴ Wherever.

have courage. Even Abraham was busy chasing away the birds that wanted to pick on the flesh of the Sacrifice. His suffering and concern made him worthy of praise and the acquisition of many merits.

I am leaving for the Retreat for the clergy of Faenza. Prayers for me. Send your letters always to: Rimini.

A thousand blessings on you at the time of these recurring mysteries, and you with all your eminence should take care of my duties and obligations there for this occasion. Pray for me and consider me to be, with esteem and respect

Your humble, devoted, obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

House at Rimini, December 6, 1828²⁵

1858

December 6, 1828

Msgr. Antonio Begni

Bishop of Montefeltro

Pennabilli

*Christus dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine suo*²⁶

Venerable Monsignor

The imminent solemnity of the Holy Nativity reminds me that I should fulfill my precise duties toward your most worthy person by wishing you a copious abundance of blessings from the goodness of our most merciful God. I assure you that I never forget you in my poor prayers, while being certain of an ample reciprocation from your charity. On this occasion I would likewise implore the special assistance of your prayers since, within a few days, I shall have to be in Faenza to conduct the Retreat for the clergy. However, if you need to write to me, you can address your letter to me here in Rimini.

During the recent course of Missions, I was regretful of not having been able to indicate to you the determined interest I have of being of service to you. I was not lacking in the will to do so, but rather in the means of being able to carry out all that I indeed would have desired to do. Still, my companions, with God's grace and your help before God, have accomplished good work there, which I, in my miserable status, would never have achieved. I am, with holy eagerness, concerned about the city of S. Marino where, if I and my companions may not be acceptable, that does not matter; for me, it would be sufficient to have Retreats and Missions promoted. God will supply you with his inspiration so that the devil does not win out there. It would be a good idea to have one of our holy establishments there and, who knows, perhaps your excellent brother would find, at your insistence, a way of bringing that plan to a successful conclusion, working along with your holy designs. The

²⁵ In this letter, in addition to the address to Betti, written by the Saint on the fourth facing of the paper, it also has on the second side another address written by Betti which says: all'Ill'mo Sig., Sig. D. Giov. Merlini, Miss. Segr, Gen'le in S. Paolo Terracina per Albano.

It holds the postal markings of Benevento and Naples, with the date of October 3 18.. (the remainder is illegible). This letter, therefore, was forwarded from Benevento to Albano, during an unknown year: perhaps it was on the occasion when they were making a collection of the writings of the Saint, carried out by Fr. Giovanni Merlini.

²⁶ Christ loved us and washed us in his blood.

package for the nuns there is already on its way through Rome. Let us pray for a happy result.

I kiss your hands, and, with the fullness of esteem, respect and gratitude, I remain

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rimini, December 6, 1828

1859

December 10, 1828

Fr. Innocenzo Betti

Benevento

Hail to the Blood of J.C.

Esteemed Canon

*Laus Deo*²⁷ for the Holy Retreat according to the rule, which I hope will be of particular blessing on all of our men. *Deo gratias*.²⁸

As to that most important matter dealing with Cav. Rivera, I expressly say that you, in behalf of Msgr. Albertini (whom he knew well), should write to him that God wishes to use him in this great undertaking. To ask us in Rome for easily obtained letters of recommendation is not in keeping with simplicity and prudence. Have him convince Sig. Tomassi to accept the plan. See that it is accomplished because of the missions given in the Kingdom by our men. Supply them (*in hoc casu*²⁹) with the printed material produced in Teramo and in Aquila³⁰ (printed matter that you yourself can obtain or even Rivera), *et sic argumentando fit consequens*.³¹ It seems to me that when the Holy Father was questioned on another occasion concerning the establishment of Houses in the Kingdom, he showed good will. We need not be doubtful about that. A single House outside will improve our situation in the Papal States.

Estote prudentes et simplices.³² Seek out some individuals who will shed light on the establishment of a House ..., the Bishop of Ariano, etc. will be helpful. However, to procure letters ourselves on our own behalf ... that does not set at all well with me. If it should require you to make a trip to Naples, do not pass it up. You will see a great good come of it.

But, you may say: our own men *ex se*³³ could write, etc. In my opinion, that is what is

²⁷ Praise to God.

²⁸ Thanks be to God.

²⁹ In this case.

³⁰ A reference to two publications. The one, having the title "*Ragguaglio delle Missioni fatte nella Citta di Teramo e nella Diocesi Aprutina*" (Teramo, Ubaldo Angelli printers, 1823), was compiled by Canon Nicola Palma (cfr. Vol. I, biog. sec., "Palma"); a copy of this is preserved in *Vol. d'Arch. "Notizie del Fondatore"*.

The other, entitled "*Memoria . . . sulle SS. Missioni fatte nella citta di Aquila*" (Naples, V. Di Reale and Sons, 1827), was disseminated by Francesco Garofalo: a copy of it is found in the Cartella d'Archivio n. 14. We know that the Missions at Teramo and in the Diocese were personally directed by St. Gaspar and lasted from November 10, 1822 to January 2, 1823; also, that the Mission at Aquila was directed by Fr. Giovanni Merlini, since the Saint could not be away from Rome due to the service that he was giving to the Congregation of the Propaganda Fide, requested by the Pope. That mission lasted from the 21st of April to the 15th of May, 1826.

³¹ By thus arguing it becomes appropriate.

³² Be prudent and simple.

³³ Of itself.

lacking: namely, a fully mature spirit. At any rate, if you would like a letter from the Treasurer, write to him for it and urge him to cooperate immediately. Your living in Benevento makes the correspondence both more natural and more convincing.

Do you suppose that I am perhaps fearful of writing on the matter, if you would so wish? No, Canon. The pen does not weigh heavily upon me. But, I do prefer a certain naturalness. The discussion should deal with the Missions given in the Kingdom together with the reactions of the Bishops of the Kingdom. The Bishop of Aaquila will supply Rivera with information of a sort; item, the one at Penne. Whenever I can be of assistance, do not hesitate to call upon me. The Bishop of Gaeta will not be able to contribute much since up to now no Mission has been given in his Diocese during the time he has been in office. In Vallecorsa, one cannot envision as yet any impressive foundation. So, in reference to this matter, contact Merlini. In short, we are dealing here with the cause of religion: let us not leave a stone unturned.

Note that with some difficulty we will obtain letters from the upper echelon of the State. Cristaldi will say: let us set one up first in Sabina, in the Abbacy, etc.³⁴ In short, through Cav. Rivera's efforts, a pathway to good work will be opened up in the Kingdom. The Bishop of (...) has already (...) a request; wherefore, etc., etc., etc., etc. Rivera is (...).³⁵ Cav. Rivera also knows about the Sisters Adorers, etc., etc. He is an acquaintance of Falzacappa.³⁶

With regard to the Chronicles, meanwhile, trace the information concerning our deceased. ask questions, write, etc. etc.; later, we will publish what has been written, etc., etc. Slowly, slowly, of course.

As for the House of Studies, I have in mind to declare a *dilata*,³⁷ until August, since in our Houses of Studies the vacations are had during the time of intense heat, that is, from the middle of July through all of August. On September 1, the scholastic year begins. The present-day complexities demand such a procedure as this, etc. Moreover, because of the lack of space, we still have to come to a decision whether to look for a second locale (even a small house) for the House of Studies, or conduct Retreats first. For this purpose the few rooms available will be adequate. You decide, and in time, let us share our ideas, energetically putting into effect anything that will tend to the good of the Institute as well as that of souls.

With respect to anything further, *satis propter temporis angustias. Ora pro me.*³⁸

G. C. d. B.

Faenza, December 10, 1828 - responde: Rimini³⁹

1860

December 10, 1828
Fr. Raffaella Rosati
Benevento

³⁴ Cf. Additional Biographical Data: Cristaldi, No. 2.

³⁵ The manuscript is deteriorated at this point. Some words are missing: we have indicated these lacunae by means of the dots within the parentheses.

³⁶ Cf. Additional Biographical Data: Falzacappa, Cardinal Gian.

³⁷ *Dilata*. A type of response in use by the Sacred Congregations in Rome. Neither an affirmative nor a negative response can be given on a particular day, to a petition, a proposed doubt, or a recourse. It must be delayed until a later time. It means the decision has been tabled for some reason or other.

³⁸ Enough because of the difficulties of the time. Pray for me.

³⁹ Cf. Gasparian History and Trivia: Naples, Mission House in

Hail to the Blood of Jesus Christ

Most esteemed Father Rafaelle

I appreciated your letter so very much because it was so full of those holy thoughts which we must continually cultivate in order that, through them, we can prepare ourselves for the years of eternity. I wholeheartedly pray that the Lord will increase and ennoble them evermore in your soul and that you will also show an even greater charity towards me in such great need, the heavier the responsibilities become which are heaped upon me, wretched as I am. When you find it necessary to write to me, address your letters to Rimini and please pass this information on to all the other companions.

With pleasure did I learn of your going out on the Mission during which God made use of your services in effecting outstanding things for his greater glory, to which we must incessantly dedicate ourselves. Especially is this true after one has withdrawn for a holy Retreat since, then, one preaches with more enthusiasm of spirit and with greater fruitfulness.

We give thanks to God for the many means that he provides for us to become saints, and, at the same time, to be the sanctifiers of the people.

I do not have the Bible right at hand so that I can locate the text that you asked about. At any rate, here is what I think must be pointed out. The High Priest that is referred to is Jesus who is total love and compassion for us. He is the one who *cognovit figmentum nostrum et recordatus est quoniam pulvis sumus*⁴⁰ (thus spoke the prophet in his prophecies). Oh how greatly valuable for us are the mysteries of the humanity of Jesus Christ as we view our own weaknesses. From him, we learn patience etc. Furthermore, because of the merits of this great High Priest, our humanity, of itself so weak, one day will be called to victory over the squalor of the grave. *Cor meum et caro mea exultaverunt*.⁴¹ Indeed, he is compassionate with our infirmity of soul. See how he brings light to our minds, pious movements to our hearts etc. If we should fall into error, is it not Jesus who welcomes those who are penitent? *Sapientioribus autem me remitto*.⁴² You have no need of such communication of ideas from me.

With regard to aridity and other forms of suffering that are encountered in daily actions, this, I tell you, is the myrrh that is to be offered to the Lord. The greater the suffering that the Lord subjects us to, so much the greater is the merit. Let us always be united to the cross of Jesus, and with esteem I remain

Your humble servant

G. C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Faenza, December 10, 1828

1861

December 19, 1828

Cardinal Bellisario Cristaldi

Rome

⁴⁰ He knew our creation and remembered that we are dust.

⁴¹ My heart and my flesh have exalted.

⁴² However I submit to those who are wiser.

*Christus dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine Suo*⁴³

Your Eminence⁴⁴

I rejoice once again in your promotion and I wish you every blessing of the most merciful God during the recurrent most holy mysteries. I ask you to obtain for me the usual continuation, for the entire upcoming year of 1829, of the faculties which the Holy Father has always been kind enough to confer upon me. The urgency of this matter, overriding any other concern, has led me to inconvenience you at this time which must be, for your most reverend Eminence, extremely busy. Still, I am acquainted with your heart and that is what calms me. I shall await your favorable response in Rimini. I kiss the sacred purple and I beg the charity of your prayers. With profound acknowledgment, gratitude and veneration, I am and will constantly be

Your most humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare Can. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Faenza, December 19, 1828

1862

December 26, 1828

Fr. Buda

Vicar Forane

Meldola

*Christus dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine Suo*⁴⁵

Venerable Canon

I ask that this letter of mine be shared also with Archpriest Brunori, to whom you may extend my greetings, as well as to all the others of my acquaintance there. In accordance with the directives of Monsignor Clarelli, the Mission there will be conducted and will begin on January 2nd around the 22nd hour, Italian time, that is, around 3:00 in the afternoon. It would be a good idea to have one of the men there to be on watch for the arrival of the Missionaries' carriage so that no one will be inconvenienced. At that moment, the festive ringing of the bells should commence. They will announce the coming of the merciful Lord to those people, who are so very, very dear to me.

With the sounding of the bells, the devout procession of the men dressed in their capes will begin, followed by the clergy, and this will stimulate all to receive joyfully the Lord's peaceful visit. Archpriest Brunori will hold in his hands a crucifix which he will then hand over upon the arrival of the Missionaries. After this religious and moving ceremony, the procession will continue toward the church, while singing the praises of God and there the *Veni Creator* will be intoned, signifying the beginning of the Mission. Further details about the schedule to be observed and anything else can be discussed in person. Ten days should be adequate for this Mission. It can serve as a renewal of spirit for the upcoming new year, while begging the Lord to be pleased with us and in particular not forgetting to think about the earthquake recently experienced, by which God would have us seriously consider the status of our souls.

⁴³ Christ loved us and washed us in his blood.

⁴⁴ This is the last of the very interesting letters of St. Gaspar to Cristaldi, gathered together in Vol. XI. St. Gaspar wrote other letters to Cristaldi until the death of the latter which occurred on February 25, 1831, but they were not handed over at the time of the canonical processes, nor have they been discovered up to now.

⁴⁵ Christ loved us and washed us in his blood.

Monsignor Clarelli has written to me that generous individuals will see to the preparation of frugal meals for the Missionaries. If necessary, a collection may be taken up after the sermon, as a pious cause, and this can be agreed upon after meeting together, also exchanging these ideas with Archpriest Brunori. Finally, I am sincerely confident of your industrious charity and well-known zeal, and I have no doubts that all will be completely successful to the greater glory of God and the welfare of souls. The devil will do everything he can since he is the enemy of good itself. However, in a particular way, we the priests must verify that statement : "*ipsi vicerunt draconem propter Sanguinem Agni*".⁴⁶ Do not forget me in your prayers, and with the fullness of esteem and respect, consider me to be,

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare Can. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Rimini, Decembar 26, 1828

P. S. I have already informed Monsignor Clarelli of everything. Any delay at all would be very displeasing to him. Please excuse the mistake I made in writing on the reverse side of this page.

1863

Decembar 26, 1828

Count Giorgio Golfarelli

Forlimpopoli

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable Count

You can imagine how much I would have loved to see you again while passing through Forlimpopoli. But how could I have managed that since the hour was so incompatible, and you surely would not even have gotten out of bed yet. Furthermore, the coachman very openly declared that a stopover there was not at all manageable. As only a passanger on the coach and realizing the sound argument made by the coachman, I was unable to carry out what I really would have liked to do. However, who knows, perhaps the Lord will provide another opportunity.

You disappoint me when you say to me that I have more trust in others than in you. This surely is the confusion that the devil would cause, and I would like you to prove your assertion so that you will realize the candor of what I say to you. By the grace of God, I am not capable of lying. I maintain correspondence with no one else there but you. I used to do that with the now-deceased Briganti, to whom I would write once a year a letter dealing simply with spiritual matters, that is to say, thoughts pertaining to the soul, on the recurrence of the feast of Christmas. This has been carried on also with the others of his family at the precise request of the deceased, though I sometimes lack the time for the correspondence. Therefore, you should not at all use such expressions that are completely alien to the truth. The works of God are often subjected to the irritating interference of the devil and that, at times, confuses even the minds of good people. This is not surprising since he too is endowed with intellect. Just take one glance at the crucifix and that will be sufficient.

The letter of proxy has not as yet been drawn up because the testators of the pious legacy are still living. I hope that they have a long life in order to increase their number of merits for blessed

⁴⁶ They conquered the dragon through the blood of the Lamb.

eternity. It seems to me that you people, or at least Giulio Mazzolini, who was requested to be instructed by you, might be able to take care of this exigency, without making use of others. If Giulio should need the letter of proxy, he will have it immediately. However, if I do not have the letter left for me in Rome, I would need some indication both of your annuity as well as that of Mazzolini who must be interested in the handling of the new reinvestment.

I ask you, with all urgency possible, for your energetic and very well-known charity. The expenses that could arise will be reimbursed upon your request. In fact, at the time of the Mission in Meldola, it will be placed in your hands. It is understood that that expense is our responsibility, otherwise an abuse might enter in. Therefore, I am trusting more in you than in myself. I repeat, insist on the stipulations, otherwise it will be necessary that I make my protests accordingly. You will direct me in the manner to be used, since I am so inexperienced in those procedures. It is not right that our Institute should suffer a loss and that a delay should be the cause of a diminishment of good. I conclude: as long as the Lord grants you life, as also to Mazzolini, you can both, please, be occupied in the requirements for the benefits of the two annuities.

Finally, let us pray to God to look with eyes of mercy upon us. The times are truly unhappy because of the sins of people, as well as the powerful spirit of indifference toward the doing of good. With esteem and respect, consider me to be, in Jesus Christ crucified

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare Can. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Rimini, December 26, 1828

1864

December 27, 1828

Fr. Giovanni Chiodi

Frosinone

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Most. Esteemed Father Giovanni

Our conference in person will not be long in coming. I have not responded to your letter because the work of the ministry has impeded me from doing so. Furthermore, I knew that you were out for the Mission in Marino which I hope will also be blessed by God.⁴⁷

We, at the present time are reading the life of Berchmans in our refectory. Oh how beautiful it is! What a stimulus for us to practice virtue! Your soul, indeed, is very much like a ship being battered by opposing winds. However, Jesus is in the ship and we must be very careful not to lose trust. So, say often and, for now, use the ejaculatory prayer: "*Quare tristis es anima mea? Spera in Deo*".⁴⁸ God permits temptation to despair so that you will exercise your hope and trust.

Tomorrow, the feast of the Holy Innocents, is the day on which St. Francis de Sales died. I shall pray to the Lord that his spirit of gentleness and holy cheerfulness in God will be diffused in your soul, as I desire the same for myself. The salutary fear that you conceive in your soul of

⁴⁷ St. Gaspar addressed this letter to Chiodi "for forwarding, to Fr. Giovanni Merlini, Missionary in S. Paolo di Roma by way of Albano". But then, it was re-addressed to Frosinone where it arrived on January 9th, as is evident from the postal marking.

⁴⁸ Why is my soul sad? Hope in God.

offending God is a holy one: "*Beatus vir, qui timet Dominum*";⁴⁹ however, it must always be accompanied with trust in the goodness of God; thus, how easy it will then be to repeat: "*Abyssus miseriae invocat abyssum misericordiae*".⁵⁰

Likewise, it is not frigidity of soul that you experience with regard to prayer, but rather, an interior suffering while praying. Think about this a bit more. You have the desire for prayer, so the conclusion to be drawn is clear. The ways of the Lord are mysterious, my beloved, and prayer is the schooling in holiness.

How has your health been? Let me know whether you have received your cincture. Later, we will decide on the cost. With esteem and affection, I remain, in Jesus Christ crucified

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

House in Rimini, December 27, 1828

1865

December 27, 1828

Luigi Graziani

Cotignola

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Most esteemed Luigi

I understand everything that you say with regard to the holy Mission. I have already contacted, through a letter of mine, the most reverend bishop who also in person has expressed his total delight in having this good work done; there should be no doubt about this. During Lent, we shall resume our letter-correspondence. Most esteemed Luigi, pray for me. With esteem and respect, I am and will constantly be

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare Can. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Mission and Retreat House in Rimini, December 27, 1828

1866

December 28, 1828

Sister Maria Saveria di S. Agostino

Rome

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Very reverend Mother

It is only your goodness and kindness that has brought me your letter wishing me every blessing from the most merciful God upon the celebration of these recurring most holy mysteries. I am infinitely grateful to you for this, for it demonstrates evidently that you are not forgetful of me in your prayers. Now you can realize in your mind even more clearly what I am able to say to you, namely, how sincerely I keep ever present in my poor prayers your advancement in doing good

⁴⁹ Blessed is the man who fears the Lord.

⁵⁰ The abyss of misery invokes the abyss of mercy.

work. Not only is that true at all times, but especially is it so during these holy days. Therefore, may the Lord grant you the most ardent desire to love him and serve him faithfully; may he root you deeply in the holy virtues of humility and patience; may he make us, in the words of de Sales, irrevocably his own.

In this wretched world, where everything is a pursuit of disillusion, what else should we desire if not the Center of all good, God? St. Francis de Sales used to say, if I came to realize that a single thought of my mind, a single affection of my heart, a single syllable, a single effort of mine, were not entirely for God, I would then not wish to have a mind, a heart or hands. St. Ignatius Loyola used to cry out: O Lord, give me your holy, divine love and I will be thoroughly enriched.

So, let us rejoice, for with each day we draw nearer to heaven, our homeland and our felicitous rest. With Mary the Sorrowful Mother, let us stand at the foot of the Cross which is the ladder to heaven. She will direct us along the way until we reach God's holy mountain. When you have the opportunity, give my greetings to the most reverend bishop of Sanseverino and pay my respects to the Mother Superior, asking her for her prayers along with those of that very beloved Community. In the meantime, with esteem and respect, I remain in Jesus Christ crucified

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Mission and Retreat House in Rimini, December 28, 1828

1867

Msgr. Antonio Begni
Bishop of Montefeltro
Pennabiili

*Christus dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine Suo*⁵¹

Venerable Monsignor

After returning from Faenza, I read with pleasure your most appreciated and very dear letter. *Dominus retribuet pro me in benedictionibus dulcedinis*⁵² for the particular kindness that you show to me, and even more so, for the remembrance of me in your prayers and holy Masses. I sincerely wish, and I pray to the Almighty with a most humble heart, that you, in your industrious charity, will succeed in arranging for at least a Retreat for the clergy and the nuns, starting in Sammarino. These will pave the way for further efforts. *Ego autem in insipientia loquor*.⁵³ God will not fail to give you his holy inspirations. Also, do not fail to take good care of your health which I hope will prosper *ad multos annos*⁵⁴ so that you will have the time to increase your merits for most blessed eternity, the only center of peace and everlasting happiness.

I kiss your hands and with the fullness of esteem, respect and special affection, assuring you that I am and will constantly be, at your beck and call.

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare Can. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

⁵¹ Christ loved us and washed us in his blood.

⁵² The Lord will repay on my behalf with sweet blessings.

⁵³ However I am speaking foolishly.

⁵⁴ For many years.

Mission and Retreat House in Rimini, December 30, 1828

1868

December 30, 1828
Count Giorgio Golfarelli
Forlimpopoli

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable Count

Here are the two *scudi* that you requested of me for the instrument of the reinvestment of the 100 *scudi*. At your convenience, I would like to have a copy, even a simple one, of the reinvestment that is made. If from these two *scudi* there is a *baioccho* or so left over, you could drop them in the alms-box of the oratory of St. Francis Xavier. Asking you for your prayers, I remain, with esteem and respect

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Rimini, December 30, 1828

1869

December 30, 1828
Fr. Buda
Vicar Forane
Meldola

Hail to the most. Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Most esteemed Canon

I confirm the entrance for the Mission for January 2nd. God will take care of everything. Pray for the one who now renews himself, with esteem, respect and special affection, as

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rimini, December 30, 1828

1870

January 2, 1829
Baldassarre Rogaj
Mayor of Vaccareccia

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Most esteemed Baldassarre

I am sending you a belated reply because I have been fully occupied with the ministry. With pleasure did I learn of the continued good work being done there and may praise be given to the Lord. In the ordinary mail-delivery, I am writing to Rome in order to obtain the relics for you. Say a prayer that my efforts will be successful. Let me know if I have forgotten anything. Please give my

best wishes to anyone there who remembers me, and, with esteem, I remain

Your humble servant

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rimini (for forwarding) 2nd of 1823

1871

January 2, 1829

Luigi Fuschi

Norma

Hail to the Blood of Jesus Christ

Most esteemed Luigi

You have probably received the listings in due order, and it seems to me that now we are even. You would be doing me a very great favor if you could supply me with a further number of Masses, and I will be deeply obliged to you. The activities of the ministry have been keeping me still here in Romagna, and oh what an open field it is for giving glory to God and being of assistance to souls! With the recent celebration of the recurring mysteries, I did not forget to keep you, a person very dear to me, in mind at the holy altar, as well as for everything that would be for your good. I am quite sure that in your charity, you likewise have kept in mind my own spiritual good, nor do I doubt that you will continue to do so in the future. With courage, let us continue insisting evermore on the accomplishment of good works. While I always remain ready to be of service to you, consider me to be in Jesus Christ crucified

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspere C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

House in Rimini, 3rd of 1829

1872

January 4, 1829

Mother Maria Nazzarena De Castris

Piperno

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Very reverend Mother

Here I am sending a reply to your most esteemed letter which I continue reading over and over, after having returned from Faenza where God summoned me ... and Oh! what marvelous work is being accomplished in this Province! May you continue to help me with your prayers. Within a very short time, I will have to be returning to Rome. We shall see what the will of God is with regard to our letter-correspondence and other matters. In the meantime, I repeat, offer prayers, in particular for my poor soul.

I observe the peace which God is infusing into your heart through the direction that God is providing for you, despite the miserable instrument that he uses. But would it be somewhat of a surprise if the enemy were to make his entry and seek to implant weeds? That must not in any way upset us, but rather, we must expend even more energy in overcoming him and defeating him. We know very well that we are at war with him and that the devil is like a pirate at sea, who seeks to loot

ships wherever he can find gain. So, even though this mystical ship will have to suffer buffetings, it will maintain its course firmly against the contrary winds of the north, and head securely for the port towards which we must determinedly fix our mind's vision.

You have seen how the wind, at times, agitates certain plants, but the roots keep them very firmly set in the earth. That you have been experiencing a flexing in the branches simply demonstrates the furious agitation that the enemy can produce, but the plant nevertheless is solidly firm. That is why the soul always rises again toward God. Yes, courage; courage is necessary for one to serve God.

Now, you state that the primary reason why you have delayed in sending a reply to my letters is that "you are not able to describe to me what goes on within you, that is to say, to manifest the status of your soul". That is not altogether the case for I note that you say quite enough. It is simply a vain fear that is suggested to your imagination. Your soul is like that plant that is shaken, but still solidly attached to the branch of the mystical trunk of the holy Cross. What I am trying to say is that it is easily shaken. So, you are to be more courageous and fearless. For one to commit a sin, even a venial one, one must indeed first have knowledge of it and then will it. Otherwise, anything beyond that is confusion arising from the fear of offending God as well as a fear arising from the desire to love him, and that desire keeps saying that it is never enough.

I told you that you should seek the sacrament of reconciliation every eight days, but in saying that I do not intend to prevent you from the benefits of absolution on the occasions of gaining plenary indulgences or some other circumstances of your devotion. Please return my respectful greetings to the excellent Canon Giusti, as I recommend myself always to the prayers of everyone.

Now let us take up some of your problems. I am truly moved to compassion by what you tell me and in the entire picture I see an accumulation of crosses for you to bear.

I do not discern in your soul any undue attachment to relatives, to home or to other matters that might retard your advancement in perfection. In fact, I note that all of this is contributing to making the chalice even more bitter for your poor human make-up, while still being very gentle to your soul. Each relative is for you a thorn, and putting them all together forms a mystical crown. Therefore, in your case, you are to change your understanding concerning attachment to relatives, and very profitably apply the saying: "*Si possibile est transeat a me calix iste*".⁵⁵

Learning to walk on thorny ground is quite different than walking on rose petals. The vow of poverty which forbids any undue attachment, any undue desire, does not stand in the way of evangelical charity. Through that holy vow you are poor; you can, in truth, do nothing other than to pray; if you do accomplish something, it is the monastery that does it and always in keeping with your rule. In this, I find nothing out of order. But, do not become disturbed. God is with us, and where our own miserable being falls short, for it really can achieve little or nothing at all of itself, the most lovable God appears.

So, when the opportunity offers itself for giving sound advice and salutary warnings so that souls will adhere to right actions, this is something that does not irritate the one who loves God. But, be trusting, indeed, in God, for God will free you from these many chains. In those matters that are not in keeping with one who is a religious, they are to be handed over to one who is capable of handling them, while remaining content simply to offer prayers. In this procedure, there is no burden placed on anyone. Anyone living in a monastery is able to provide immense help mainly through

⁵⁵ If it is possible let this chalice pass from me.

prayer. I do not know whether I have made myself quite clear; if I have not, please ask questions.

With regard to the Capuchin nuns in Albano, I would like to know why your vocation there, which you refer to as your first vocation, did not work out. This would provide me with some illumination. Still, I say that it is my belief that fundamentally God wishes to have you there in that community where you are. I do not lose hope that, one day, there will be a life in common there also. To adhere also to the reminders of Monsignor Albertini is most worthwhile. He still continues to speak from his grave.

As for your method, I would like to have your rule, in its entirety. The Venerable Berchmans used to say: *Poenitentia mea vita communis*.⁵⁶ I repeat, I would be in favor of setting up a life in common, and I would make the following distinction: either the rule admits such a thing or it does not. If it does, then let us proceed to set it up, and if it does not, let us adapt ourselves accordingly. Perchance there might be some small abuse arising; this I would never count out, not even in the smallest matters. I could put everything briefly by saying: the common life protects us better, except for certain cases relating to particular providence. For example, the rule could state: "Whoever wishes to fast, let her fast". In that event, for one to pursue what is more perfect would not be an individual act of singularity, but something praiseworthy, except in the case when one's health would not permit it, or some other reason worthy of consideration. Let me know if what I write in some way upsets you.

Also, with regard to my words of direction, let me know when you need further explanations or conciliations. In the meanwhile, follow what is certain and clear. Hold back, if you can, any doubt, safeguarding conscience, until it can be resolved. Have strong aspirations for God and incessantly seek to be with him in holy union. For example, be active in behalf of your monastery and speak with God. May his divine presence be the mystical sea from which you draw your consolations. In a special way, lovingly place yourself in the care of Jesus who has redeemed us at the price of his Blood. When silence is called for in the community, you too should observe it, except in those instances covered by the rule and in which obedience governs the religious. When you have to make an appointment, say that it will be at such and such a time, selecting the time that is most fitting, unless it perhaps can be taken care of through writing. Be indifferent as to the appointments to various positions, not preferring the exercise of one to another. As for your desire, simply say: "The lowest position in community life is even too much for me and more than I deserve". *Ama nesciri, et pro nihilo reputari*.⁵⁷

Continue serving as the economist for the time being, and invoke your Guardian angel to help you in your work; also invoke the Guardian Angel of anyone who is dependent upon you. Always keep your spirit calm and repeat often "*Ecce in pace amaritudo mea amarissima*".⁵⁸ At the birth of Jesus Christ, the angel announced: *In terra pax*.⁵⁹ So, be consoled in recalling that "*Iesum nemo a me tollere potest*".⁶⁰

This is it for now. Pray God that, if he so wills it, there be a meeting so that we can speak more about spiritual direction. Meanwhile, may he bless our letter-correspondence and wonderfully bring about the full comprehension of it. In the matters dealing with the house, give this by way of

⁵⁶ My penance is community life.

⁵⁷ Love to be ignored and to be considered as nothing.

⁵⁸ Behold in peace my most biting bitterness.

⁵⁹ Peace on earth.

⁶⁰ No one can take Jesus from me.

advice: "Avoid arguments." It is ever so much better to come to agreements. Suggest to all: "Have a Retreat each year" and pray for everyone.

With regard to the new administrator,⁶¹ I say that I would have liked the new bishop to be named in order to provide a basic settlement for the situations in that diocese. I am not fortunate enough to be acquainted with the religious that you named. I have no doubt that he is in the process of doing great work. I regret that Terracina and Sonnino no longer have the services of religious or our Missionaries. Say a prayer for those two foundations of ours which our Albertini would like to have reopened, if God so wills it. I too would like that to happen for his pure glory. We shall see what God will dispose in this matter. Here, our Society is doing excellent work, as it does in every other locale. Prayers. Take care of yourself, and, in Jesus Christ crucified, consider me as

*Suo infimo in Christo servo*⁶²

[There is no signature]

4th of 1829

1873

January 5, 1829
D. Domenico Silvestri
Benevento

Hail to the Precious Blood of J.C.

Esteemed D. Domenico

I learned from your last letter about the great success of the Mission in Apice, so, let us praise God *a quo bona cuncta procedunt*.⁶³ I am even more consoled by the notable spread of the devotion to the Divine Blood. We never do enough to see that it is deeply impressed on the hearts of all. I noticed further that the devotion to Xavier has also been widely diffused in the Kingdom. From such good work, we also await those wonderful blessings that we all eagerly desire.

The Indulgences that I mentioned for the services of the Missions are, as a matter of fact, special faculties given to me. You could have the respective Bishops grant the 40 days Indulgence. The Seven Sundays in honor of the Sorrowful Mother might well be propagated too, but you will not be able to assign any Indulgence at all.

With pleasure do I note the solemn opening of our church there. *Laus Deo, Mariae et Xaverio*.⁶⁴

You say: if ever the body of a holy martyr could be obtained (a very difficult thing), it would be for a chapel in the church. In case I cannot get one, would it not also be satisfactory to have a figure of the dead Christ in that place, as you have seen elsewhere, which could be convenient for the services on Good Friday? Think about it, and then suggest it to your uncle.

During the last eight days of Carnival time, tell Canon Betti that arrangements are to be made in Congressus for a House Retreat, a combination of priests and lay people, dividing up the conferences. Oh, what a great good and what a grand example!

In reference to your sermons, study. In another letter of mine you will learn more.

⁶¹ Msgr. Luigi Grati.

⁶² Being his lowest servant in Christ.

⁶³ From whom is every good.

⁶⁴ In regard to the work of restoration for the church of the Missionaries in Benevento, as well as its re-opening to the public, see footnote of Lett. n. 208 of August 2, 1828.

With the desire to write more at length another time, I am with esteem

Your humble servant

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

(Rimini) 5 of 1829

P.S. Try to get Canon Betti to go out on the Missions sometimes, just to get him moving around a bit,⁶⁵ and also see that he gets some exercise after dinner.

1874

January 6, 1829

Giovanni Francesco Palmucci

Offida

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Most esteemed Giovanni Francesco

You have probably received or you will receive my greetings through Father Giovannelli and this reaffirms my continual and incessant remembrance of your most worthy person, *quem diligo in charitate non ficta, in visceribus Jesu Christi*.⁶⁶ If that is so at any time at all, you can imagine what could be said as we observe the most tender solemnities of our holy religion. One of your letters, dated the 28th of this past Decemeber, was forwarded to me from Rome and you can imagine the exultation it produced in my spirit in reading it. In it, I noted your customary charity, and there can be no doubt about that. *Dominus ergo retribuet pro me in benedictionibus dulcedinis*.⁶⁷ I pray that the Lord will increase in us the holy fervor of charity as well as heavenly divine love in order that we can grow in perfection, so exceedingly necessary for us, and also that during these years of time we will be able to prepare ourselves for the eternal years, the only goal of our desires. Oh! what a great thought this is indeed! *Ecce anni transeunt, etc., etc.*⁶⁸

Let us pray particularly for the good work that is so fervently yearned for, namely, the reform, so that souls will turn back to God *in vera cordis compunctione*.⁶⁹ To achieve this end, let us never cease encouraging the pious organizations and that most important devotion to the Divine Blood. Especially should you, in your zeal, promote the great month of June in the church there where you have that marvellous treasure of the famous holy relic. At the opportune time, make whatever arrangements are necessary. The price of our Redemption is deserving of a solemn cult of compensation! Anything beyond this you can read in my heart.

The ministry is still keeping me here in Romagna and I simply cannot tell you just how long that will be. Perhaps, all winter long. I shall see better what the will of God is. As soon as I can get to Rome, I shall go immediately to the Collegio Nazzareno and you can imagine with what concern I shall do so. In the meanwhile, I shall assist Nicolino by sending him an image of the Venerable Berchmans of the Company of Jesus, an angelic young man. Give my warm regards to your wife and very wonderful family. Remember to pray and have others do so too for the one who loves you sincerely in Jesus Christ, and once again, with esteem, respect and very special affection, renews

⁶⁵ Cf. Additional Biographical Data: Silvestri, No. 10.

⁶⁶ Whom I love with unfeigned affection in the heart of Jesus Christ.

⁶⁷ Therefore, the Lord will repay on my behalf in sweet blessings.

⁶⁸ Behold, the years are going by, etc..

⁶⁹ In true compunction of heart.

himself as

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare Can. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

House in Rimini, 6th of 1829

1875

January 9, 1829

Mr. Camillo Possenti

Fabriano

Hail to the Blood of Jesus Christ

My dearest Camillo

I received the ream of stationery, while giving 15 *baiocchi* to the man, if I am not mistaken, and I hope that he was content. If not, you take care of it, subtracting it from what we have set for the printing.

It seems to me that you told me that the chaplets would come to 11 *paoli* per hundred. I mention this because another priest has asked me for this information.

It is now several days since I returned from Faenza where God summoned me. With the recurrence of the celebration of the mysteries, you can well imagine how fervently I remembered your most worthy person as well as all your family. May God accept my offerings that seek to implore from him even more ample blessings of kindness from his divine mercy. So, now let us continue with even more fervor in our spiritual union so that we can be forever irrevocably in the hands of Jesus.

Upon my return, I am intending to make a visit to the shrine in Loreto, then on to Sanseverino and from there to Fabriano. As far as I can recall, this is the itinerary that I should make in order to have the pleasure of seeing you once again and to speak to you about matters pertaining to the glory of the Lord. In the meantime, zealously direct the pious institutions and, in particular, do not forget that very important devotion to the Divine Blood, as well as the month consecrated to the adorable mysteries of our Redemption.

You will be receiving, in my name, six *scudi* through Canon Tarulli. Put them together with whatever remains from the money sent for the chaplets, so that we will be able to have around a thousand more printed. Let me know what is left over or whatever is to be added for the aforementioned printing of a thousand chaplets. If something should be left over, I will use it to have a small flyer printed. I will be sending you a copy of it, after getting your response. Urge the printer, who holds the first place, to use great care in doing this work.

When are we going to found a Mission and Retreat House there? Oh how happy that would make me! Would it not be a good idea for you to remind the present bishop, to whom you will give my best regards, of the intentions of the now-deceased Monsignor Bottaoni? At any rate, God will accept our good intentions.

Let us be united evermore in the Divine Heart, and, with esteem and respect, I remain

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rimini, 9th of 1829

1876

January 12, 1829
Fr. Innocenzo Betti
Roma per Benevento

Hail to the Precious Blood of J.C.

Dear Canon

Why so silent? I am writing in this ordinary mail to inform you that before Lent begins I want Fr. Antonio Liparelli to be there for the success of the Lenten series to the Nuns as well as to put a little life into the other aspects of the ministry, and finally to make arrangements along with you for the House of Studies which is to be opened whenever you say. Add to that that the change in climate ought to be made during the winter, and not otherwise. Realize that Liparelli is to have the honored task of being the Synodal Examiner there. It is good that it be known that he is under your direction and formed by you, etc., etc. I shall send Fr. Antonio with Fr. Filippo Galli as his companion, one who has by now become an old-timer with us, and as of now is very skilled in preaching.

But before I send the two new ones, it would be well if you were to send, without any further notice from me, into the Province, namely to Sermoneta, for the time being, the two Missionaries Fr. Pasquale Aloysi and Fr. Domenico Silvestri. I exempt the latter from the Lenten series, but he will have to pitch in with the other duties; as for the former, that is, Aloysi, because of his advanced age, I would like to assign him to a House that does not have too heavy a burden in the ministry. I am hopeful, therefore, that their arrival will be prompt. You will take care of the temporalities, and inform me as to whom I should send the reimbursement, whether to our own men who are arriving or to the new ones that I shall send there later. In any case, for the time being, provide for whatever is needed by means of a loan, recommending to Aloysi the greatest possible thrift, especially in keeping with the limits set by the rule. No arrangement need be made with the coachman with respect to the return, since it is difficult to determine the time.

If, between the two men named by me and the ones that I am summoning into the Province, you should discover that someone is not pleased, you will exchange him with Rosati, for of the three I am indifferent as to the selection, since I need only two. These two are the two that God sends me. I particularly wish to send Galli with Liparelli because the service given by him to the Institute merits a certain acknowledgment. He is of mature age, he is observant and a worker, with all due respect to the others. Let us be in agreement. I would have sent the two new ones first, but because of the lodgings there (which you will have time now to arrange) I am not doing so. Furthermore, *in circumstantiis*,⁷⁰ I am compelled to do this for other reasons of my own. Since things are under construction there, very little change need be made if the two stay on there. Write to me quickly and give me an answer, for I trust in your loving-kindness and devotion. God sees my reasons for making this necessary change.

Along with Liparelli, I am sending one of our resident students, who is from the Marche, an excellent young man. In order to introduce the correct practice, we need a student there who has been trained by Merlini. However, it will be no burden upon you, for Liparelli will be teaching him, as I have already spoken to him about it. If you were to say to me: "I cannot balance the accounts",

⁷⁰ In the circumstances.

there is a solution for that. I will take care of it for the time being, and later I would receive payment from Benevento, whenever you would be able to reimburse me without inconvenience, always acting in accordance with the rules.

The two rooms in Sermoneta are prepared already for the two that I am expecting. His Excellency will be pleased with this also, because, as long as we are not a large number in the House, it is fitting to balance things out as best we can. Also, looking to Lent, there is even more reason to set up budgets etc. for the House of Studies. Pray for me. Write to me immediately in reference to the three that you are sending me. After Liparelli gets there, perhaps you also will be able to go out at times on the ministry. This, done in moderation, I expect could be most beneficial to you personally in addition to being useful to souls. I kiss your hands, and remain

Your humble servant

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rimini, 12 of 1829

1877

Middle of January 1829

Mother Maria Nazzarena De Castris

Piperno

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Very reverend Mother⁷¹

Here I am sending a reply to your letter. Do not be at all concerned about the re-establishment of our Houses. God brings the times to maturity, as St. Francis de Sales says. We shall do all we can by praying, surrendering ourselves entirely and submissively to the will of the Lord who is our all. In the meantime, anyone who cooperates with our good work will acquire many merits for heaven. I would have been very content to have the Capuchins in Sonnino and the Passionists in Terracina as our substitutes for those were indeed the desires at that time. However, from all indications, neither of them is going to be installed there. So, in that case, what will happen? There will be a diminution of good being done. Everyone now realizes the urgency there is for training those people by providing them with the holy food of the divine word ... still, what can be done? Pray to the Almighty God. You may go ahead and speak of this to Monsignor Grati and to reason things out with him would be to the glory of God. The conclusion that God indeed seeks the re-establishment will come forth as a consequence.

Some caution is necessary with regard to the House in Terracina because of the unfavorable climate. But all of that can be worked out. In my judgment, the Passionists' place could be set up for Retreats and the convent and church of S. Francesco as the Mission House, providing greater utility for souls and for the advancement of the ministry. Likewise, in Sonnino, with the passing of time, a few more rooms could be set up in the church of S. Marco in order to be of more service to souls, and the monastery of the Canne could become the place for Retreats as well as a House of studies for our students of sacred theology. With the cooperation of the people for their own benefit, everything

⁷¹ This letter does not have a date, but it appears to be prior to the letter (n. 1880) written to the same person, dated January 19, 1829, and posterior to the one of January 4th. The "reminders" of St. Maria Maddalena dei Pazzi are quoted in the letters (n. 1877 and n. 1880) of January 15th. Therefore, it is possible to assign this letter to a period around the middle of January 1829.

can be taken care of.

As for the other matters, you are to continue governing yourself in accordance with the instructions given to you by Monsignor Manassi, as well as those things dealing with your superiors, making known whatever is needed for the glory of God. I am referring to those things that pertain to community living.

(there is no signature)

Reminders

from S. Maria Maddalena de Pazzi

1. Value the rule as much as you love God himself.
2. Act as though you alone were asked to observe the rule.
3. If others are remiss, you should supply by your own observance of it.

Thus, S. Maria Maddalena

1878

January 15, 1829
Fr. Innocenzo Betti
Benevento

Hail to the Precious Blood of J.C.

Esteemed Canon

Finally you have written, dated the 7th. Why the delay? Could you not complain about my opposition, as you usually do? On the feast of a Holy Hermit, here I am reviewing your letter, after having recently returned from Faenza.

1) Isn't our correspondence satisfactory? *Parcat tibi Deus*⁷² for such a terrible error: it has annoyed me just being deprived of it.

2) Are you burdening me with too much postal charges? What kind of a new lesson is that? With what gloom did you write your last letter? If you were to write to me with every ordinary mail, you would be doing me a favor and it would be a great gift.

3) You don't have a specific reason? False. There is always one when you take into consideration all the projects of the Community! At least visiting with each other through letter-writing would be reason enough!

4) The only thing that I want to thank you for in particular is the Mass celebrated for me. Notice well that the word only must be taken along with the expression in particular: for this is not the only reason why I am grateful to you. Let us return to the Mass. *Dominus retribuet pro me.*⁷³ A needy soul exults when it receives rich alms. Continue, then, to have others pray, in addition to what you are doing, so that the Lord will grant me the true spirit of sanctity. On God's part, he is lacking in nothing: it is I who am wanting in the development of the great gifts God has given me.

You mention that you do not know how to pray and that your intellect does not take charge. Well, it is a most moving thing for the Heart of God when we prostrate ourselves before him and say: "Lord, *ego sum vir videns paupertatem meam ... pauper sum ego ... miserere mei .. sicut pullus hirundinis sic clamabo, etc.*"⁷⁴ Now that is quite a perfect prayer. The Venerable Alacoque used to say that God prefers the prayer of submission to his will and the prayer of sacrifice than

⁷² May God have mercy on you.

⁷³ The Lord will repay on my behalf.

⁷⁴ I am a man seeing my poverty ... I am poor ... have mercy on me ... I cry aloud like a young swallow, etc..

contemplation itself.

Your intellect doesn't take charge? However, isn't the soul in intimate contact with our humanity which is miserable and weak? In such cases, one suffers, I would say, like an organist who sits down to play and the chords just do not blend harmoniously. He suddenly turns and says: "I cannot play the organ". Well, we do about the same thing; in such cases we say: "Lord ... the organ is out of tune: set it in order; however, if it is your good pleasure that I remain unable to play it, I shall draw this lesson from it for myself: without God I can do nothing. I will repeat this a hundred, a thousand times: and if I am asked: what kind of prayer did you say? I shall answer: ... I have come to realize that I am wretchedness itself, and from this conviction, I form the footstool of the throne of divine mercy.

I see that you are suffering in spirit: I would only wish that you could be persuaded that God is having you reap a large crop of myrrh. *Veni in hortum et messui myrrham.*⁷⁵ Every day a good bundle, so that this saying is verified: *fasciculus myrrhae dilectus meus.*⁷⁶

What would you say of a poor helmsman, faced with contrary winds, wholly concerned about saving the inner part of his ship as well as the exterior, and with the task of bringing it safely to port? He arrives at the port, exhausted and beat. I have worked hard, he says, but I have succeeded in my efforts. That is how it is with the soul: inner concerns, external worries. You come to nightfall and you say: I have labored, but fruitfully. More specifically ... a Brother, for example, comes in and says one thing; the next one has a complaint about something else. Money is running short; natural difficulties, interior troubles. Faced with these mystical waves, the poor soul keeps its eyes riveted on the port of eternal salvation. At one point, you give a bit of good advice, at another, a warning. On the one hand you urge trust in God, on the other, more industry in the works of charity. Finally, you make a self-examination and say: I give thanks to God who has supported me.

What did the Lord allude to when he fell asleep in the boat? Could he perhaps not also have prevented the storm? Of course, he could have. But, he wanted to observe the conduct of his men. May heaven preserve us from that utterance of his: *modice fidei.*⁷⁷ Note, also, what the Lord responded to Martha, namely, *turbaris.*⁷⁸ So, the shortcoming consists in this, that is to say, in anxiety, in uneasiness.

Let us not confuse anxiety with zeal. To act energetically, impressively, courageously, is zeal: at the same time, the interior is fearless, placid, generous, since it is not excited. Let the soul be similar to a rock in the sea, which, even when it is struck continuously, it does not move.

I realize that it is superfluous for me to write such things to you, one who is capable of teaching me. It appeared to me that I was exceeding the bounds by writing of this at such great length. Still, I said to myself: it is always a worthwhile thing to talk about God.

St. Teresa was engaged in prayer yet kept thinking about her monasteries. What do we draw from that by way of conclusion? "Lord, you put such and such a thought in my head, so that I would recommend it to you" ... But, I see everything in a confused way, and the inner eye of the spirit has no illumination.

So, act thusly: open up the darkness of obedience and live in peace. *Dicite justo quoniam*

⁷⁵ I came into the garden and harvested myrrh.

⁷⁶ A bundle of myrrh is my beloved.

⁷⁷ Of little faith.

⁷⁸ You are disturbed.

*bene.*⁷⁹ Alacoque says that the Cross is an immensely precious treasure. One must keep it hidden so that nothing is stolen. What a beautiful thing it is to live on the mount of lovers which is Calvary, says De Sales. At times, one should not fail to make a quick journey to Thabor, but for now, Calvary is our mystical abode. *Ivi est petra, refugium herinacii*⁸⁰ (you correct the spelling; put in the diphthongs where they belong; I just don't know how to do it anymore).

*Nunc ad alia. Laus Deo*⁸¹ that you are working again on the summary of the Circulars, plus the credential letters, plus the prospectus of the Society, etc., plus both internal and external affairs of the House, the extension of good works, the associations, the economic worries, the Retreat Houses, the House of Studies. God has given you that mystical cane and measures etc. etc. *Euge, euge.*⁸²

Another thing. You say that you are preparing living quarters for me. *Palatium meum Vita Communis, secus nihil mihi sapit.*⁸³ (Do you get it!)

Another thing. I hear about the great good being done there. However, rest assured that the good that is being done here now in Romagna is also very great and already steps are being taken to establish new Houses. Pray, pray that my own failings and the love of my own comfort may not prove to be an obstacle. At any rate, I am beginning to think about returning, but not so soon, in spite of the thousand things that have to be taken care of.

Another thing. *Laus Deo*⁸⁴ for the solemn opening of the church. Now the House will make even more progress since the Church will draw people. God does not allow himself to be outdone in courtesy. *Centuplum accipies.*⁸⁵ I am told that there was a panegyric, or rather an apostolic encomium, etc. A triduum in honor of B. Di Girolamo in our church? What about the Jesuit Fathers?

Another thing. It is the will of God that you start the Chronicles, *saltem*⁸⁶ in outline form. You should begin with the life of the great Albertini. Get information from the Bishop of Agatopoli, from the Canon Visconti of Rome, and from Locatelli of Terracina. You want to write my life? What is there to write about? Here is what comes to my mind: "*Scribe virum istum sterilem*".⁸⁷ Read about Zedakiah: but no, for we do want to have the throne of glory in our heart, and we do desire to possess the throne of glory; but, as of now, *virum sterilem*. Or too, you might liken me to a bell that rings; it calls others to the temple ..., and you can add to that. I conclude: I would write about what is lacking in me, and how much I must still do to climb the ladder; the rest is just *vox, vox, etc.*⁸⁸ Write about the deceased members, so that those who are still living may not lose sight of those footsteps. As for those who are still living, *postea laudabis,*⁸⁹ when God will have called them to himself. That suggests that you will be a little old man with a very long life, and that is what I desire for you. *Ad multos annos... in senectute bona,*⁹⁰ so that you may be included among those of whom it is written:

⁷⁹ Say to the just that well.

⁸⁰ I went as a rock, a refuge for the wild hares.

⁸¹ Now to something else. Praise God.

⁸² Well done. Well done.

⁸³ My palace is Community Life, otherwise nothing gives me pleasure.

⁸⁴ Praise God.

⁸⁵ You will receive a hundredfold.

⁸⁶ At least.

⁸⁷ Write to that fruitless man.

⁸⁸ Voice, voice, etc..

⁸⁹ Afterwards you will give praise.

⁹⁰ For many years ... a good old age.

"*sapientiam antiquorum etc.*"⁹¹

Another thing. Oh! how Bartolomeo is aching to go to Benevento in order to see you again and also have some nougats. Here, he labors quite a bit. We are around 20 in number.⁹² Oh, what a beautiful refectory! It lacks, however, the *Benedicite*⁹³ of Fr. Betti, who would be the seal and cornerstone of the Community! But, one is not able to have a B. in every House. At one, an M such as Merlini, in another an R, such as Rossi: and so on through the spiritual alphabet.

Another thing. (instead of using numbers, notice the clever phrasing and method! burn my letters) I heard about his Eminence Cristaldi. Keep insisting, and something will come of it.

Another thing. Everything is going well with the chapel and the painting... Excellent idea. You are worthy of having a statue of yourself erected in the center of Benevento, of course, always to the glory of God, and *ad perpetuam memoriam, etc.*⁹⁴ Let me know what I owe for the anniversary of Carboneri.

*Ora pro me etc. assidue precare etc. etc.*⁹⁵

Humble servant

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rimini, 15 of 1829

Quickly take care of the things mentioned in my last letter. Liparelli will give the Lenten series in the morning to the Benedictine nuns, and in the afternoon to the Ursulines, or vice-versa, etc., etc. Speed up the opening of the House of Studies. You are the President of the House and of the House of Studies; Liparelli, the classes. When I find out which three you will send me, and I hope you send them very soon, we will conclude the arrangements there. You then, in due time, will go to Rome: Procurator General, Secretary and Archivist,⁹⁶ and there to make the rounds of Rome, etc. In the meantime, let us move Liparelli up. In time, we will appoint another man with Liparelli, in your place, according to our way of doing things. As for you, *ad maiora*:⁹⁷ perhaps in Naples, to open up the House there (for which I have been in correspondence). For the time being, prayers *a cascare*⁹⁸: What a beautiful expression!

⁹¹ The wisdom of the ancients.

⁹² *Da 20*. A expression which perhaps was in use in the popular jargon of Rome or of Lazio, to mean: around 20, or even beyond 20.

⁹³ The blessing.

⁹⁴ For everlasting remembrance.

⁹⁵ Pray for me, etc.. Offer prayers continuously.

⁹⁶ The abbreviation "*Arch'a*" is generally used by the Saint for "*Archiconfraternita*" referring to that "of the Most Precious Blood", erected in Rome, in S. Nicola in Carcere. Here, however, that interpretation is completely extraneous to the text which is speaking of the offices that the Saint wished to confer on Betti in the Institute. In a parallel passage, in letter n. 231 (Jan. 25, 1829), where the same abbreviation is used, the sense of "*Archivista*" turns out to be even more evident. Furthermore, from the year 1825, in the Circulars of the Visitations, the Saint had called Betti the "Archivist General". (Cfr. *Scr. del Fond.*, Vol. XII, ff. 103-104: copy of the circular; the writing is that of Betti with additional remarks by the Saint.)

⁹⁷ To the greater things.

⁹⁸ *a cascare*, means: I just cannot do any more; I am at the very point of exhaustion. The phrase, which is every expressive, was perhaps used by Betti in the letter that the Saint is answering, and this drives it home; or, more probably, it was coined by himself: whatever the case may be, between the serious and the humorous, he enjoys the well-found expression: ("what a beautiful expression!")

I kiss your hands and feet. *Ave, pater sancte, flos Ginesinus*⁹⁹, *lux Beneventana, etc. etc.*¹⁰⁰
 You have placed a memorial tablet in the new building of Fr. Innocenzo... now I beg you..., pray...
 lest...¹⁰¹

1879

January 15, 1829

Missionary Fr. Giovanni Battista Pedini

Albano

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Father Pedini, dearest in the Lord

With pleasure did I learn of your holy occupations which, indeed, rather than diminishing are increasing to the glory of God. Be courageous, for God will grant you that generosity of heart which Xavier possessed, at least in some proportion: "*Dedit ei latitudinem cordis*".¹⁰² And also, how pleased God is with your good intentions, for these, too, do not go without a reward! *Replet in bonis desiderium tuum*.¹⁰³ Let us now consider ourselves, as I advise that it is a good idea that my letters, which you have already read, should be burned. In that way, after we have died, less difficulties will arrive when they make an investigation of letters. I give thanks to God for the consolation that you are experiencing with your new career in life, and how truly consoled I am in the Lord. Let us exclaim often: oh blessed walls that welcome us! *Ecce quam bonum et quam iucundum etc. haec requies mea etc.*¹⁰⁴ What else can we, wretched creatures, wish for if not that type of life which will render us spiritually dead to everything and which will lead us by the hand to the possession of the highest good? *Quam bonus Dominus*.¹⁰⁵

With regard to your recent Retreat, your resolution to dedicate yourself entirely and irrevocably to the love of the Lord and of the most holy Mary, our beloved mother, is excellent. This holy, divine love is the thing that will beget in you the desire for the salvation of souls: "*Si amas me, pasce oves*".¹⁰⁶ Father Avila says that from celestial love comes the feeding of the flock; likewise, this holy fire of love brings it about that our hearts, detached from created things, are wondrously lifted up to God. We make use of the calm and consoling times to prepare ourselves for times of storm and upheaval, and we will be quite content to stand at one time on Tabor and at another time on Calvary, just as our beloved Jesus would be pleased to have us do. His will will be for us the great balancing scale for every one of our holy undertakings. Here we are now facing a situation. Am I suffering in my prayer? Indeed, the love of God must be put to the test ... and do we not want

⁹⁹ *Ginesinus*: This alludes to Betti's place of origin: S. Ginesio (prov. of Macerata).

¹⁰⁰ Hail, holy Father, flower of S. Ginesio, the light of Benevento, etc.

¹⁰¹ This letter which occupies all four facings of the paper must have been included together with another missive, or even perhaps was wrapped in its own *soprafoglio*, that is, another piece of paper upon which the Saint placed the address. This second hypothesis is the more probable one, and it appears that the "*soprafoglio*" of the present letter is the one that contains, on the inner page, the spiritual reminder transcribed in Scr. n. 17. As a matter of fact, the date of the postal marking placed there (Nap. 1829 - Jan. 22) and the one handwritten in the letter, coincide, keeping in mind the amount required for delivery.

¹⁰² He gave to him the breadth of heart.

¹⁰³ Your desire is fulfilled in good things.

¹⁰⁴ Behold how good and how pleasant etc. ... this is my peace, etc.

¹⁰⁵ How good God is.

¹⁰⁶ If you love me, feed the sheep.

to share in the interior sufferings of Jesus? *Tristis est anima mea.*¹⁰⁷ Is that not the time to gather in the myrrh and present it to our beloved, for it is truly the *fasciculus myrrhae*?¹⁰⁸ Consequently, if you are suffering in times of prayer, offer this suffering to Jesus; would this not be a beautiful offering? Likewise, do not torpor and listlessness provide, in a similar way, for a more profound merit? More worthy of commendation is the helmsman who guides his ship safely against contrary winds. A sick person takes a dose of bitter-tasting medicine; the revulsion that the person sustains thereby turns out to be something helpful. Is this not a sort of mystical winter which is preparing us for a delightful spring? O how gentle is the Lord who, through this method, seeks only our good, through the message of the mysteries of the Cross!

With regard to the pardoning of your sins, have no doubt at all about this, and, as for your past life, live securely in the belief of the benign mercy of a most loving God. Even though we retain things in our memories, that occurs so that we will repent even more and say with the prophet: "*Amplius lava me ab iniquitate mea etc.*"¹⁰⁹

I am delighted very much to learn of your application to hearing the confessions of men, something always to be preferred ... the visits to the prisons ... visits to the hospitals, for these are the seed-ground of all holiness. As for the external direction of the pious organizations, as for your time of studies, including anything else along this line, you would be wise in consulting with our Father Merlini, to whom you will give my greetings as well as to the entire community. In doing your work, never give too much consideration to those small disturbances that arise, remembering that miserable humanity is so fragile! Even in this, God is most wonderful! However, whenever the disturbance is considerable, then we are to adjust ourselves to the will of God.

Furthermore, I thank you for the charity of your prayers and those that you have gotten others to offer. *Dominus retribuet pro me.*¹¹⁰ You can be certain that my need for prayer, both for myself and for the responsibilities that I have, is extreme. I shall not fail to offer suffrages for your aunt who has died and who, now, is enjoying the blessedness of eternity. I hope that she will pray for me in heaven, the only goal of our desires. Postpone your trip to Rome until a better season of the year. After Easter, we will come to some decision. In the meantime, your desire is also acceptable to God. Thank you for your affection and your concern for the Society, *et Dominus benedicet.*¹¹¹ Do not forget to pray for the progress of our Society, which is the Lord's, and indeed, for this intention, offer special prayers.

I have already given your greetings to Archdeacon Rubertini, for whom you would be doing something most pleasing to God if you would write to him from time to time for his benefit. The book that you have selected for your meditations at the present time, which I hope will be very productive, is an excellent one. Do not fail to communicate to me your most relevant and most frequent thoughts. Meanwhile, permit me to include here the following three reminders which you could bring to the attention of the community. They are those of S. Maria Maddalena de Pazzi:

1. Value the rule as much as you love God himself.
2. Act as though you alone were asked to observe the rule.
3. If others are remiss (*quod absit*) you should supply by your own observance of it.

¹⁰⁷ My soul is sad.

¹⁰⁸ Bundle of myrrh.

¹⁰⁹ Wash me more fully from my iniquities, etc.

¹¹⁰ The Lord will repay on my behalf.

¹¹¹ And the Lord will bless.

*Sum tuus ex corde in Corde Jesu Christi crucifixi*¹¹²

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rimini, 15th of 1829

1880

January 19, 1829

Mother Maria Nazzarena De Castris

Piperno

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Very reverend Mother

I am replying immediately in order not to delay our good work. What you wrote to me concerning the reestablishment of the two houses of Terracina and Sonnino is truly an illumination from God, obtained for you through the prayers of the deceased, holy bishops Albertini and Manassi. You may speak of it or have it discussed, without revealing that I have written to you about it. I love the doing of good and I love its being discussed (relative to the matter entrusted to me) by whoever you consider fit and as you judge to be proper. Indeed, to see those poor people without the assistance of these Institutes arouses pity in me. Truly, those dioceses are very dear to my heart and I am sincerely interested in them. Is the reform to come about? Well, the two great means for that, or at least the principle ones, are: "Missions and Retreats". How much good work was being done; that new nursery for young priests was being set in order. Did we deserve that treatment, after having exposed our very lives to a thousand dangers because of the brigandry?

I pardon everyone, I am compassionate toward all and I know that to suffer is a grace. I am not complaining. All I am doing is pointing out the motives through which the heart of the new administrator might be tenderly moved. God knows what expenses were sustained and the sacrifices that were made by us even in temporal matters! All right then! Once brigandry was brought to an end, I was in the process of establishing our communities in good fashion, after having lived in hospices because of the brigandry. Now I see that young plant being uprooted and the earth made barren inasmuch as that area is now being abandoned. May God do with me and with the entire Institute whatever he wishes. The only thing I desire is his glory. And, if our being further humbled will bring glory to him, I say, Lord I am ready. Your favor to me would be the support you give to my wretchedness. May you be helpful to me in praying that my demerits do not hold off an abundant supply of his divine mercy. I shall pray that God will give effectiveness to your words as well as a profound penetration so that, once again, his divine glory will be joyfully promoted: "The divine Blood will be victorious". God is summoning us there; if the administrator will go along with the reestablishment and will support the Institute, then that triumphant song against Lucifer can be sung: *Ipsi vicerunt draconem propter Sanguinem Agni.*¹¹³

With regard to other matters mentioned in your letter, I point out that your sufferings are disposed for you by God in order to refine you in the doing of good work; inner fears, external oppositions. It seems to me that I can compare your soul to a ship that is out on the open sea, being

¹¹² I am yours from the heart in the heart of Jesus Christ crucified.

¹¹³ They conquered the dragon through the blood of the Lamb.

battered by contrary winds; however, Jesus is there, pleased to see you as you labor to weave a beautiful crown for heaven. It is no surprise that our humanity should be resentful; the helmsman, likewise, cannot help but *feel* the bashing of opposing winds.

In this way, we, too, begin to realize how miserable our present pilgrimage can be and how urgently we hope to reach the port! A bit of practical application. Someone has no esteem of us, and looks upon us as a nothing, or, the esteem that is shown is not a true one as we would like to see ... so what does the soul do in that situation? It should say: "O Lord, I thank you that things do not occur as I myself would have them". Self-love dies and we rise to a higher level of sanctity Is virtue not recognized in this?... We should say: Lord, is this not a lesson whereby I can practice that virtue which I do not recognize; do not virtuous people believe this? We are, in fact, wretched in the presence of God. "All right then! let us exclaim ... exercise patience, abnegation of self and in a humble spirit let us be led to practice the things that we desire to see in ourselves". At times it would be helpful to say: "Pray that I may become just as you desire me to be." In performing acts such as these, which are to be done toward the one who is involved, we intend to do them to God himself. I should say, between me and those individuals, there is God. God, in whose immensity we exist, is the one who commands me to do this; that alone is sufficient: "*Exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutare meo*".¹¹⁴

Our humanity fights it; but, in any case, this repugnance will allow us to reap a beautiful cluster of myrrh: "*Veni in hortum et messui myrrham*".¹¹⁵ Thus, we will not present ourselves before God empty-handed. Finally, in regard to community-living: as a rule, we are to attend to the directives of the administrator, Monsignor Grati; then, a decision can be made. In the meantime, during this year, even during Carnival time, remain alone. Since you will have other reasons for suffering, it will not be necessary to add devotional fastings. That is set for this year alone. But, only when you have the possibility, be in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament and pray a great deal for me, the most wretched of all. Substantially, this is all for the time being. In Jesus Christ crucified, consider be as

Your humble servant

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rimini, 19th of 1829

Read my letters, then burn them.

1881

January 22, 1829

Giovanni Francesco Palmucci

Offida

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Dearest in the Lord, Giovanni Francesco

A priest of Ortona, an aggregator to the Divine Blood, writes to me and sends the listing of the enrollees in this most important devotion. I suppose that the enrollees are all from Ortona, for otherwise it would be necessary that there be a notation of the parish and the diocese to which the

¹¹⁴ My spirit rejoiced in God my savior.

¹¹⁵ I came to the garden and harvested myrrh.

enrollees, who have presented themselves to him, belong, as he exercises the canonical act in his place of jurisdiction. If this priest is not an acquaintance of yours, in the vicinity of the Kingdom where you are located, see that this man becomes known. His handwriting is not very clear, but it appears that he has signed his name as "Fr. Gregorio Barlini", if I am not mistaken. I am trusting in your kindness to do me this favor.

One more thing. As for the month of the Divine Blood, it would be good, with respect to the preaching, to work this out with Father Giovannelli in such a way that one of our Missionaries would not be overlooked or someone else whom you would consider apt, after consultation with Monsignor Cappelletti. The preaching should be divided so as to include Ascoli and Offida. Say a prayer over this. I believe that there is a need to stimulate interest in this practice. God brings two things to my mind. First, to promote the perpetual cult to the Divine Blood by seeking out in that area 12 churches who would observe, in a holy way, the months of the year in succession, with the continuous recitation of the Chaplet; what I say here in reference to the public recitation holds also for the private recitation by individuals. Second, to propagate the preaching of the month of June in keeping with the practice that is observed in Rome.

Finally, tell Father Giovannelli that he should be insistent with the pious organizations in Teramo and in Penne in the Kingdom, and also that, when the opportunity occurs, he should extend my greetings to Canon Palma in Teramo. Furthermore, do not forget the idea of a foundation of ours either in Ascoli or in Offida. What a blessing it would be to have a Mission and Retreat House, along with a House of studies, together with the other pious organizations that we have there. Pray, likewise, for there appears to be hope for a foundation of ours in Naples.

Temporal means needed to set up a foundation

1. A collection, taken up once, with which one can, for example, establish an annuity, or a fund can be arranged; 2. Lenten preaching (from a platform, however) in the place where the foundation is set up, so that the income becomes part of the endowment, a pious legacy without harm to anyone at all, or the obligation of Masses which would be *ad libitum*;¹¹⁶ 3. with permission, etc. some nearby commune which would like to have, instead of the Lenten preaching, a Retreat each year or a Mission every third year; 4. residue funds from pious places.

I, myself, do not know why I have written the above. I felt a sort of holy desire, which, possibly will not go without a reward. With esteem, respect and very special affection, I remain, in Jesus Christ crucified

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rimini, 22nd of 1829

1882

January 22, 1829

Msgr. Antonio Begni
Bishop of Montefeltro
Pennabilli

¹¹⁶ At [your] wish.

*Christus dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine Suo*¹¹⁷

Venerable Monsignor

In reply to your most appreciated letter, here is what occurs to me to point out to you. Have no doubts that the member who will be coming to Macerata Feltria will do great work, with God's grace and the help of your prayers. He is a man endowed by God with those qualities necessary for the ministry. Within a short time, he will be arriving, along with other companions, here to this pious Mission and Retreat House.

I do not hesitate for a moment to recommend again to his Eminence Cristaldi the matter of those nuns there (upon whose prayers I am very reliant). Let us pray to the Lord for a successful outcome. However, it is always a good thing to have a representative in Rome who will continue to urge the issue.

With regard to Monte Cerignone, I shall write to the very worthy archpriest and he can make his decision as he judges best in the Lord. In the meantime, I would like to have precise information, since the spring will present quite a broad field of activity in the ministry here in this Province. However, whatever pertains to the welfare of your flock will always be a preferred situation to the extent that lies within my power.

Finally, do not fail to pray, and have others do so also, for me who am so very needful of the charity of your prayers. While kissing your hands, I am and will constantly be, with the fullness of esteem and respect

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare Can. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Rimini, 22nd of 1829

1883

January 22, 1829

Luigi Fuschi

Norma

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Most esteemed Luigi

I thank you wholeheartedly for the 50 Masses. *Dominus retribuet pro me.*¹¹⁸ Whenever you have any, or will be able to have some, you would do me a great favor in sending them to me. In time, I will return a notification to you.

With regard to the well-known matter, I feel inspired to suggest to you a conditional vow; and what is it? To have sermons preached every year during the month of June, consecrated to the adoration of the Divine Blood, by setting up a fund in accordance with the method that you deem best, including the ceremonies to be carried out, again as you consider best in the Lord. At least, this could be done by using the devotion contained in the booklet which has been printed already. On the first Sunday in July, there will be the exposition of the wood of the Cross and the feast in honor of the Divine Blood, just as is done in Rome. The month is computed from the first Sunday in July, or in other words, the 30 days that precede that feast day. On some morning or other, after your

¹¹⁷ Christ loved us and washed us in his blood.

¹¹⁸ The Lord will repay on my behalf.

devotions, you, along with your wife, must do this good work. Say a prayer over this and then make your decision as the Lord inspires you to do. Until the matter is ultimately achieved, you will not be obligated since this would be a conditional vow. Indeed, I would advise that on Fridays, you keep two candles burning before a blessed crucifix.

Finally, do not fail to be insistent with the pious organizations, for God will fill you with every consolation. Pray, and have others pray, for me, who remains, with esteem, respect and very special affection

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Mission and Retreat House in Rimini, 22nd of 1829

1884

January 25, 1829

Fr. Innocenzo Betti

Roma per Benevento¹¹⁹

Hail to the Precious Blood of J.C.

Dear Canon

I notice that your letter of January 18 was written with a certain anguish of spirit: I would like to think that I am wrong. But I do compassionate with you: "*tribulatio et angustia invenerunt me; multae tribulationes iustorum* but, *ex his omnibus eripiet Dominus*".¹²⁰ So, be courageous in his holy love which causes all things in us to be in a state of balance.

A sad letter (keep this between us) from our own Fr. Brandimarte, whose family is extremely poor, has determined that I do what I am about to describe in the following words. He is lacking in Mass stipends and that privation causes him hardship. The Institute is not in a position to provide him with any. On the other hand, there is no shortage of Masses in the church there. Charity, therefore, dictates that we should not delay in providing him, with the present change, a place of residence that will be of help to him, in view of the fact that he is one of the original members. He is never to be assigned the task of running the household; that is already understood;¹²¹ but to be a Worker, it cannot be denied, he has gifts. I am hopeful that he will be to your liking. The Missions in the Kingdom are keeping us busy; but there is need of more refinement in all aspects. However, this will be one of the good things that you will also do for the Institute. There must be firmness in the observance of the rule and cleanliness too, and that will always draw more people to the oratory. I believe that, at present, he is 40 years old; he is a *statista*;¹²² therefore, etc. etc. He will be one of the

¹¹⁹ The paper on which this present letter is written is void of an address. The one reported above is found on a "*soprafoglio*" which in the Volume of the originals follows immediately after. With it, the Saint wrapped this letter or perhaps other writings sent to Betti, which he refers to in the text. The Saint's handwritten date at the end of the letter (Rimini 25 of 1829) and that found in the postal marking of Naples which is stamped on the "*soprafoglio*" (Nap...31 Gen) are in agreement, keeping in mind the time that was consumed for the delivery between Rimini and Naples. Furthermore, what the Saint wrote on the inside of the "*soprafoglio*" is closely connected with the content of the letter (cfr. infra).

¹²⁰ Tribulation and hardship have found me [but] from all this the Lord will snatch.

¹²¹ Cfr. biographical section: Brandimarte.

¹²² *Statista*. This was the term that was in use at that time to signify that a person belonged to the Papal States. The people on the other hand who belonged to the Kingdom of Naples were called "*regnicoli*". Brandimarte, a native of S. Elpidio in the province of Ascoli Piceno, was not faced with the difficulty of having to transfer to the "outside", and

two Companions who will be coming there. Canon Aloysi, for a similar reason of poverty among his own, is needful of Mass stipends. In addition to that, any man who is advanced in age, *etiam pro externo*,¹²³ is well-set in that city: so, Aloysi will remain. Let us add also Liparelli: this all strikes me as being a house that will be well-organized.

I assign the duties as follows: President of the House and of the future House of Studies: C. Betti (together with the job of Economist); Superior and Prefect of the Church (with the schooling for the resident students): Fr. Antonio Liparelli, supervised by you, *sicut de reliquis etc., etc.*;¹²⁴ Vice-Superior: Aloysi, as he is at present; Director of the Missions and Retreats: Fr. Raffaele *Brandimarte*. When I, at a much later time, will be needing you, Liparelli will succeed to the Presidency and its obligations (and also Examiner); we shall select a new Superior, and the House will progress well.

So, Fr. Galli will not be coming any more. As for the Brothers, I am calling Marcello into the Province, in view of the fact that the two Missionaries designated for your place are bringing along a Brother of their own, and he will also be included as a replacement. Silvestri and Rosati will depart with the blessing of God and their papers in order, along with Brother Marcello. Have them speed up their arrival in the Province so that the other two can be there on time, before ash Wednesday, or even for the last eight days of Carnival time: I urge that it be done quickly.

As soon as they have arrived, I will see that they are reimbursed for their expenses. You see to it that they use the greatest economy possible, keeping in mind our regulations with regard to travel, etc. If the Missionaries use their own funds, they will claim their reimbursement in the Province. If they do not, you take care of them there in your own diligent way. Later, write to me quickly and let me know whom I am to reimburse.

I am not sending a young man as a model for the resident students, since I notice that the opening of the House of Studies is going to be delayed. In the meantime, Liparelli, along with you, will continue making preparations, and we will review all in our correspondence. I continue to urge you to use all the means possible. By the way, with regard to the House of Studies, I would like to know: 1) what charges for room and board will be necessary; 2) how many can we admit; 3) whether as a matter of policy we should accept extra-diocesan people. The diocesan ones in the Houses of Studies of the State. In Rimini, I have held firmly to this: no one from the diocese: I do not want the interference of visitors, relatives, etc., etc. You understand.

At any rate, at your convenience, you should begin to investigate the idea that we should establish a policy with regard to accepting extra-diocesan individuals: you can state that it was I who have directed you to do this. Since the rooms are so limited, I shall not send a single young man. However, having read the regulations, you do not need to be given directions. It would be a good thing, meanwhile, to make it known that the House of Studies is to be completely separate, etc. *Meliori modo, etc.*¹²⁵ Goodness sakes alive, how anxious I am to have the building set up! Bless it with the relic of S. Xavier, and you will see wonders!

As for retreatants, we shall attempt to find another locale or house, to be converted gradually, or, we shall acquire adjoining places. *Dominus dabit tibi intellectum ut scias, etc., etc.*¹²⁶ In the

hence was able to go and reside in Benevento which was a part of the Pontifical States.

¹²³ Also for the outside.

¹²⁴ Like those of the left-overs.

¹²⁵ In a better way, etc.

¹²⁶ The Lord will give you understanding that you may know, etc..

meantime, I shall have the *directorium* reprinted and I will send it to you as soon as possible.

The negotiations for the House in Naples are progressing. Prayers. This is another reason that prompts me to be excessively importunate with you.

Tell Rosati to prepare to give the Retreat to the Sacconi of Sora. When he has arrived in the Province, he will get further directions from Merlini whom they will contact in my absence. The house where they will set up the headquarters will be in Sermoneta. They will take up residence there along with Marcello and they will find out what their duties and chores will be. I repeat, have Rosati prepare himself for the Retreat to the Sacconi of Sora. Both members will visit the remains of the holy Albertini, in passing through Terracina, and they should pray to our father in common for me.

(Cristaldi is looking into the possibility of the House in Naples.) (Prayers.)

As for what you said to the Vicar General there, you have given a very good reply, and as God would want it. Also, in this matter, one sees verified that saying: "*Dominus dat Verbum evangelizantibus, etc.*"¹²⁷ May the almighty be blessed in all things. "*Exivit de forti dulcedo - fortitudo et decor*".¹²⁸

(Before I forget, both Rosati and Silvestri are to prepare themselves while traveling for the *Tre Ore* and anything else. Oh! how many merits can be gained, have no doubt!)

Let us return to the Association of the Apostles for the Clergy. Its rule has already been printed, reviewed by Albertini. It is to have its own place. Also prescribed, on the one hand, is the Conference to the Clerics, the execution of which is easily handled. (With reference to the scriptural questions, etc., once they are prepared, etc., I shall have Aloysi put in his appearance,¹²⁹ so that selected authors can be treated. Observe what is said in the rule of the association of the apostles, which you probably have in the *Metodo delle Missioni*). Do not be averse, however, to urge among the younger Clergy, a more extensive interest. Giving the moral cases to the older Clergy is not a bad idea; item, you are well-acquainted with everything else.

Please read the enclosed papers; check to see whether they are reconcilable, whether they are reproducible: = *errata corrige* =.¹³⁰ In the method that I am arranging, there is nothing that clashes with your opinions. *In brachio extento*,¹³¹ you must cooperate, concur, etc. and establish, like another Fr. Pavone in Naples,¹³² the great works of God, who we are serving. Every difficulty is the work of the devil.

One more thing. Once the two previously mentioned people have arrived in the Province, they will send notice of it to Merlini and to me. In giving them their leave, you will remind them of the following points of advice: - observance of the rules -, - humility before God -, - Charity towards all, and especially those in the Community -. Everything dealing with the lodging is already pre-

¹²⁷ The Lord gives the Word to those who preach the gospel, etc..

¹²⁸ Sweetness went out from the strong - fortitude and beauty.

¹²⁹ *Visitare*. A word that recurs in the writings of S. Gaspar with the meaning of "to appear, to show up, to put oneself in view". In this particular meaning the word is unknown in Italian dictionaries.

¹³⁰ Correct the errors.

¹³¹ With extended arm.

¹³² P. Francesco Pavone, a Jesuit, born in Catanzaro in 1569, died February 25, 1637 in Naples, in the odor of sanctity. He wrote many spiritual, philosophical and ascetical works. He established in Naples, where he exercised the sacred ministry for many years, an association of secular priests under the title of "*Assunzione della Beata Vergine*", to teach catechism, to preach missions, to visit the imprisoned and the infirm, to assist the dying. (Cfr. "*Satuti e Regole della Congr. dei Chierici etc.*", Napoli, 1614).

pared in Sermoneta, etc. Once Rosati and Silvestri have arrived, then Merlini will see to the departure of the other two, etc, with the Brother.

Finally, at the earliest possible time, not later than Easter, I shall be in Rome. More information *ad alias*.¹³³ The Bishop of Veroli is waiting for me to give the Retreat to the Clergy. During Lent, cultivate the interior spirit, give the Retreat to the Clergy with the intention of interesting them in joining the association of the apostles. Great blessings on you, whose apostolic hands I kiss, and I sign myself etc. etc.

Suo infimo in X'to Servo,¹³⁴

Gaspere del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rimini, 25 of 1829

P. S. A Canon from Gubbio wants to join the Community. So, at his own expense *juxta regulam etc.*, etc.¹³⁵ Who knows whether I would not send him as a fifth man there as a regular helper, etc.

Betulia assediata.¹³⁶

As they pass through Terracina, our men should get the faculties. Merlini will alert beforehand with a letter, etc. etc.¹³⁷

What are the expenses for Carboneri? A quick response.

Cristaldi is negotiating for the Hospice, your future residence. Prayers. You shall be Secretary, archivist and Procurator of the Institute. *Dilata cor tuum*.¹³⁸

Do quickly what must be done, but not *ultra vires*.¹³⁹

Read the two lines for Naples and stamp it with the seal; append one of your own encouraging remarks, etc.

If Gonnelli should come with Liparelli etc., you will make him Director of the Retreats, leaving for Brandimarte that of the Missions,¹⁴⁰ In that case, I would no longer send the man from Gubbio. *Ora pro me*, etc.

Reminder: establishment of the Community. Copies. Cesena and Faenza await it.

Reminder: resume of the Circulars.

Reminder: the form for credential letters.

¹³³ For another time.

¹³⁴ Being his lowest servant in Christ.

¹³⁵ According to the rule, etc.

¹³⁶ *Betulia Assediata*. This is probably an expression used in a joking fashion. With it, the Saint perhaps wishes to allude to all the many responsibilities that are weighing down upon Betti, for elsewhere he says: "*undequaque circumdatus et ariis distentus curis*" (cfr. Lett. 237, March 23, 1829): he was just like the biblical city of Bethulia besieged. In the manuscript one can observe that this saying is located at the bottom left, in the same place, that is, where the Saint is accustomed to place the name of the addressee, and with the same allowance of spacing, to set it off from the rest of the letter. Very probably Betti himself, in writing to the Saint, had used the expression "*Betulia assediata*", referring to his own situation. In response, the Saint personifies him exactly as that same "Bethulia". That would explain why he would use the expression without any other clarification, as something already known, and why he would substitute the name of his friend with it.

¹³⁷ What follows is found on the inner side of the "*soprafoglio*" with which the Saint had wrapped this letter and the other writings which he mentions in the text. (Cfr. first footnote of this letter.)

¹³⁸ Enlarge your heart.

¹³⁹ Beyond one's strength.

¹⁴⁰ *Quella delle Missioni*: that is to say, the direction of the Missions.

Reminder: anything else, etc. etc. *Ora pro me miserrimo*.¹⁴¹

I must have back immediately the enclosed papers, for I must make copies of them for the other dioceses, etc. I ask you therefore, etc.

As for Aloysi (and you will tell him), I shall take care of him at the reopening of Terracina, which as far as I know, is certain etc. For the time being, have him remain there, *iuxta dicta, etc.*¹⁴²

1885

January 28, 1829
Fr. Innocenzo.Betti
Roma per Benevento

Hail to the Precious Blood of J.C.

Esteemed Canon

I have received another of your letters, written not with gloominess but with a great deal of vivacity. Always be happy, and everything will go along better. But (you will say) I am so, etc., etc.: therefore, I am ... pleased to be mistaken.

I have read the rough draft dealing with the memorandum, and in the future ordinary mail, I shall take it up again. I had already sent a copy of it to his Eminence Cristaldi, last summer; but, he did not think it wise to present it then. We shall try again ... Tomorrow, I shall apply the Mass of the Holy Kings. (It has been applied already, but only God knows how, *propter miseriam Presbyteri celebrantis*.¹⁴³)¹⁴⁴ Rather, I am sending the package by mail directly to the Holy Father. Let us leave the matter just so. Still, in order to get a reaction, I shall ask Cristaldi to put it by itself on the Holy Father's desk. Tomorrow, I shall make up my mind. I have decided to send the packet to Cristaldi, in order to get an answer to it.¹⁴⁵

Now I would like to say something about the change of personnel. Everything was arranged: however, it is all right with me if they classify me as a changeable person, and that is true, rather than give you displeasure. Therefore let us conduct ourselves in this fashion and consider the matter concluded. For the entire period of Lent, each one is to remain at his assignment. After Easter, the House of Studies will be opened. The construction will miraculously be in order. Except for urgent reasons, autumn is not the time that the change from one climate to another should be made. Furthermore, I am worn out by other viewpoints. After Easter, therefore. Hence, do not mention who will come from among the three. We have time; nor who is coming etc. (except Liparelli certainly, most certainly). I shall think about it.

Let me know whether you think that I should send all of the resident Students or not: in that way you are relieved of the pressures, etc. Let us establish the *policies*. Do not keep me *up in the air*,

¹⁴¹ Pray for a most miserable one.

¹⁴² According to what was said.

¹⁴³ Because of the misery of the celebrating priest.

¹⁴⁴ This notation was added by the Saint on the following morning, in the margin of the letter written the night before. We have reproduced it here in parentheses because it interrupts the topic dealing with the memorandum to the Pope for obtaining canonical patrimonies for the newly ordained.

¹⁴⁵ This sentence was evidently added, just as the preceding notation, on the following day. The Saint inserted it into the text of the already-written letter, precisely into the space left vacant at the end of the preceding sentence, so as to fit in. The handwriting is smaller than the other so that the phrase could fit into the available space. Merlini tells us that the Saint consulted with God through prayer with regard to everything that he should do, and he was accustomed to say: "we shall make our decision tomorrow after Mass". We have in this letter an example that is interesting

but on solid ground. Not so many doubts. I would, so to speak, send the Missionaries to live in a Hospice, and I would open the House of Studies: so, do it quickly. It is not a mad escapade. But it is the decided will of God. Puto in hoc spiritum Dei habere.¹⁴⁶

What do I owe for the funeral services?¹⁴⁷

Please explain to me what is meant by *Prosdocimo*. It could be the same as a holy man, but one with confused ideas.

Liparelli then will never be coming as the President. The President of the House and the House of Studies is the S. Canon Cavalier *Betti*: honors that he deserves from now on.

Pray for me, and consider me in J.C. Crucified

Your humble, devoted, obliged servant

G. C. del. Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rimini, 20 of 1829

Do not say anything further to Rosati about Sora, etc.

1886

Januarv 29, 1829

Fr. Venanzio Pierangeli

Gagliole

*Christus dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine Suo*¹⁴⁸

Venerable Father Venenzio

What you have received through the mail was sent to you from Rome upon my directive. There is no charge. Sufficient for me will be that you recommend me often to God and that you promote greatly the devotion to the Divine Blood. I included therein the month dedicated to the adoration of the Divine Blood, and, on the occasion that a Missionary of ours will be passing through that area, you will be receiving a package. Take good care of yourself, and, with esteem and respect I remain

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare Can. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Mission and Retreat House in Rimini, 29th of 1829

P. S. If you were to find 12 churches who would observe our monthly devotion in each successive month, the perpetual cult of the price of our redemption would be achieved. This would hold also for the private devotion of individuals. Try to have the Chaplet recited publicly as often as you can.

1887

January 29, 1829

Fr. Domenico Silvestri

Benevento

¹⁴⁶ In this I think I have the spirit of God.

¹⁴⁷ The sentence is found in the margin without the usual sign of reference. This seemed to us to be the most reasonable place to report it, since it has no bearing on either what precedes or what follows.

¹⁴⁸ Christ loved us and washed us in his blood.

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Most esteemed Father Domenico

With pleasure did I learn of the fruits of the holy Missions. May praise be given to the Lord. I hope that the colony in Albano is totally Catholic, otherwise it would be necessary that the Curia be instructed. Most useful has been the work of the priest who, in both languages, has insisted on the rudiments of Christian doctrine. For this, too, let us give thanks to God. I discovered another of such colonies in a different part of the Kingdom and I noticed some error with regard to basic principles in spite of the fact that, in general, it appeared to be Catholic. Let this be for your information.

I give thanks to almighty God, also, for the increase of fervor for the most important devotion of the Divine Blood, for most holy Mary and for St. Francis Xavier, our spacial advocate. I see that in the Kingdom, Xavier is quite well-known. Oh! to have a Mission House next to the church in Avellino, etc., etc.

Now let us turn to the matter of the bishop of Sora.¹⁴⁹ The method which he is intending to adopt, in planning not to set up another altar opposite the Lenten preacher, is not in keeping with what God wishes, and you are obliged to find a way of getting him to change his mind. It is a general practice that during Lent, in addition to the Lenten preacher, special stimuli are to be provided everywhere in order to encourage people to the exact fulfillment of the Easter duty. In Rome and elsewhere, that is what is being done. Thus, Retreats are put in motion, so to speak, from every angle. The position of the bishop of Sora *nimis probat*,¹⁵⁰ and therefore, *nihil probat*.¹⁵¹ I excuse his intentions, but I cannot give my approval to something that stands in the way of achieving the real good. *Verbigratia*, in Imola, there is a Lenten preacher and the Cardinal¹⁵² has requested a Missionary to direct the Retreat. *Utinam omnes prophetarunt*.¹⁵³

Woe unto us if the principles of the bishop of Sora were to be spread abroad. Preaching at different hours or the day is the right thing to do. I conclude. You are to do all you can in changing the misleading picture. Furthermore, as far as I am concerned and in order to draw this matter to a conclusion, if I do not receive a letter sent from the Curia, I do not intend to send anyone there. When the Curia writes, they will then have a Retreat whenever they see fit. You can readily discern the reasons for my coming to this conclusion. The devil does everything in his power to keep Missionaries of the most Precious Blood far away. *Ipsi (enim specialiter) vicerunt draconem propter Sanguinem Agni*.¹⁵⁴

When I return to Rome, I will see about the *Corpo Santo*.¹⁵⁵ Prayers. With all my love, I remain

*Suo infimo in Christo servo*¹⁵⁶

G. C. d. B.

M. Ap.

P. S. Thank you with all my heart for the charity of the Masses. The need is extreme.

¹⁴⁹ Msgr. Andrea Lucibello.

¹⁵⁰ It proves too much.

¹⁵¹ It proves nothing.

¹⁵² Cardinal Giacomo Giustiniani.

¹⁵³ Would that all would prophesy.

¹⁵⁴ They [even specially] shall conquer the dragon because of the blood of the Lamb.

¹⁵⁵ The Holy Body.

¹⁵⁶ Being his lowest servant in Christ.

1888

January 30, 1829
 Msgr. Antonio Begni
 Bishop of Montefeltro
 Pennabilli

*Christus dilexit nos, et lavit nos in Sanguine Suo*¹⁵⁷

Venerable Monsignor

His Eminence Cardinal Cristaldi, in reference to my latest letter to him about the monastery there, says that he is presently out of that office and consequently it will be necessary to reproduce the petition to the new Treasurer who is a certain Monsignor Mattei¹⁵⁸ with whom I, as a matter of fact, am not acquainted. Furthermore, you are quite aware of my inadequacy in bringing things to a successful outcome. God knows how much I would like to be of influence in this. So, with prayer, seek to find another opportune means for doing this.

You can be sure, indeed, that I am most regretful in not having achieved very much. However, God will accept the little that has been done. With prayers, let us be hopeful for a successful outcome. If you were to contact his Eminence Castiglioni, who is quite experienced in these matters here in the Province, would this not strengthen your hope for a successful outcome? I kiss your hands, most venerable Monsignor, and, with the fulness of esteem and respect, I am and will constantly be

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Mission and Retreat House in Rimini, 30th of 1829

1889

January 1829
 Fr. Innocenzo Betti
 Benevento

Hail to the Blood of J.C.

Esteemed Canon

Sig. Lelio Rivera, from whom the enclosed material comes, would like his letter taken care of. I have written to tell him that he will have exact, categorical and precise information of everything with regard to his questions from the most worthy, most respectable and most excellent Sig. Canon Innocenzo Saverio Betti. So, be courageous: ... armed with tobacco ... and the desk. Send him also the handwritten rules *quoad substantiam*,¹⁵⁹ so that they will be intelligible to anyone who would want to read them.

God is wonderful! Sig. Rivera is an intimate friend of Falzacappa, brother-in-law of the Bishop of Aquila, who loves the Community; also, an intimate associate of the King, etc.; he was a friend of the deceased Albertini, as well as having been acquainted with the Paolotti Nun ...

¹⁵⁷ Christ loved us and washed us in his blood.

¹⁵⁸ Msgr. Mario Mattei, starting from the December 15, 1p28, had been named the General Treasurer, succeeding Cardinal Bellisario Cristaldi.

¹⁵⁹ As to substance.

*Satis*¹⁶⁰ ... to Rome.

If you have one, send him a booklet of the Month of the Divine Blood, so that it will be practiced in Naples..., promote the perpetual adoration of the Divine Blood, finding wherever you can 12 churches that in turn will make the Month. Item, *in privato. Accende, inflamma, etc. Sum tuus ex corde.*¹⁶¹

*G. X. d. B.*¹⁶²

Rimini, January 1829¹⁶³

In the meantime, write to him that you have taken charge, etc. and that within a short time, etc.

1890

February 1, 1829

Mr. Camillo Possenti

Fabriano

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Dearest Camillo

Here I am sending a reply to your most esteemed and long-awaited letter.

What you tell me about the economy of expenses to be used in the printing of the Chaplets is very, very good.

In Loreto, depending on the hour of day that I arrive there, I usually stay in the hospice of the Capuchins, or possibly will stay in the house that you mentioned to me. I shall keep in mind everything you told me with regard to my trip to the Holy House. I regret that the printer is delaying the printing of the Chaplets. With your effectiveness, it would be good for you to hurry him. The money that you have on hand I will have you use totally for the Chaplets, and thus we will be settled for quite sometime. In these days, we have a very special need for this devotion in which we pray for the graces of the Lord, thanks to the spirit of true compunction that we must have because of our failings.

With no fault on your part, I have come to realize that there is no consideration being given to a worthwhile establishment being set up there. I mentioned this before, in my writing, because of the tender affection which God gives me for that city there, which could become the center for so many organizations for doing good works. Prayers. As de Sales says, God will bring the times to maturity.

I understand what you say to me concerning the petition of Venarotta in Ascoli, if I am not

¹⁶⁰ Enough.

¹⁶¹ In private. Enkindle, set on fire, etc. I am yours from the heart.

¹⁶² One notes here the *strange anomaly in the abbreviated signature of the Saint*: the second letter which is always "C", in this case is an "X" (the abbreviation that in his writings has the signification of "Cristo", or "Christus" often preceded by a "G" - *Gesu* - or by a "J" - *Jesus*). One might consider it a fleeting error due to his haste (the entire letter gives evident signs of it): having already written the "G", this recalled to his mind mechanically the other letter of the monogram "G.X.", instead of that of his own signature "G.C" another possible explanation would be that the Saint had intentionally used the "X" as a graphic sign of cancellation, as though to remove from his signature the qualification of "Canonico", considered to be out of place in the confidential relationship with Betti. But that would be a more unique than rare instance. Furthermore, the "X" is not superimposed on the "C", nor can one detect any uncertainty in the handwriting.

¹⁶³ This letter, written on a half-sheet and devoid of an address, certainly left from Rimini, and according to a notation made by Merlini, it belongs to January 1.829: probably from the latter part.

mistaken about the name. I praise highly the zeal of Ledi. Your reply was dictated by veritable illuminations from the Lord, and for this I must give you my thanks. Furthermore, it is very, very true that if Ledi would get in contact with the excellent Father Giovannelli, a Filippini Father, he will find both support and counsel for this proposed objective. That Filippino Father is located in Ascoli. So, here is what would be required: 1. the bishop must write; 2. no harm must come to other groups, since I am always eager to maintain a firm respect for every sacred institute, all of which I love in God; 3. find out what means of sustenance are available; when the opportunity is right, I will be able also to suggest, because of the experiences which I have had, what will facilitate the handling of temporal needs; 4. finally, discover whether the church is free of parochial duties, which is something very necessary to know, and whether there is sufficient room in the locale. Oh what grand work could be done, especially because of the easy communication there is with the Kingdom. While I am making my way through that area, how delighted I would be to see the shrine of S. Silvestro. That, of course, will depend on the circumstances and time. At any rate, that saint will accept my good intentions. In the meantime, give my greetings to the parish priest Father Baroncini who, I presume, is there, and ask him for prayers.

On second thought, I would say, with regard to the printing, to arrange things as follows: fifteen hundred Chaplets, and, with whatever money is left over, to have a printing of the devout prayer which I am enclosing; some of them as an open leaflet and some in the folded style as the enclosed sample. Once this printing is finished, I will tell you where to send it.

In Matelica, the month of the Divine Blood is observed with quite a bit of grandeur. Could that not be done also in your area? Prayers.

One more thing for your consideration, and I see in this the will of God. I would like (in order to stimulate apostolic activity and to arouse people to prayer etc.) to have a reprinting of the Life of St. Xavier, but, I would like to have it produced in such a way that even a nun would be able to read it. For example, there is one or the other fact that might be printed, but, in a veiled manner, you understand, along with the admirable qualities in the saint which I would like to see made known. Furthermore, I would like to have a more precise narration in the printing. Finally, it would be a good idea also to have printed therein the sayings and the reminders of St. Xavier which, in time, I shall send you on a separate sheet. If one or the other printer were to assume this compilation, he would be blessed by God. So, you will have some desk work to do in preparing this Life, for example, just as was done with the reprint made in Fuligno. Once that work is completed, the printing could be done under the name of our Institute. In prayer, think this over, and you will come to see that it is something that is within your capabilities. The dedication could be made to the saint himself. Dear Camillo, please try to do this good work. As you can realize, I simply would not have the time to do it. We will discuss this again at another time.

As soon as I have completed my work, I will inform you of my trip but with this condition that if I come alone with Bartolomeo, I shall be staying at your house, and, if I have some other companion with me, we will stay with the Capuchins, where I shall leave an alms, and we will stay in their convent.

I am hesitant about my staying alone with you, since I will have Bartolomeo with me. After all, you have your own family. Why should we upset your daily order? A little straw mattress at the Capuchins is not going to bother us, since again I say this that I might have (and maybe not) another companion along with me. Still, according to present arrangements, I will be coming alone. I shall be passing through Fabriano only to be able to stop off and see you again, whom I love in the Lord. I

am not acquainted with the bishop,¹⁶⁴ except by name, nor do I know whether I am numbered among his servants. As far as I am concerned, I would appreciate being regarded as such. So, may God bring about what is to his greater glory. Whether I will be going by way of Fuligno or Pievevitorina, as I would like to do, I cannot say at present. That will depend on our letter correspondence. Pray a lot, a whole lot for me, and, with esteem, respect and affection, I remain

Your humble servant

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rimini, February 1, 1829

1891

February 1, 1829

Mother Maria Eletta Marchionni

Sezze

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Very reverend Mother

In reply to your most appreciated letter, here is what occurs to me to point out to you. It has been quite some time since the upper Provinces and, in particular, this one of Romagna, have been occupied with the ministry. Specifically is this the case here in our new foundation in this city of Rimini where there are 18 of us and where I have remained far removed from Rome for a much longer time than I had imagined it would be. Soon, I shall have to be returning to Rome. The continuous application to the work of the ministry has quite a number of our men traveling about. Indeed, always half of the number of men are in motion and the others take a bit of respite from the hard work, remaining there in our House. I am very content with the number of workers we have available, as well as the Houses of study for our students, whose number is ever increasing. This Society is God's; God will have to take care of it.

The closing of our two Houses in Terracina and Sonnino was not due to my doings nor that of my confreres, but rather to a providential order from God for his own inscrutable reasons. God sees and knows all. The only thing that I must do is pray and suffer. His works are begotten among thorns and this is one of true indications that prove that it is God who requires us to share in his chalice of suffering. If our Institute were not to be entirely for his glory, then I would want to see it terminated at this very moment. But, I repeat, the Society is God's from whatever angle you may look upon it and it will be triumphant through the merits of the Divine Blood. Sufficient for my satisfaction is that all of my confreres be incessantly occupied in doing good work. Everything else lies in the hands of God. Pray for this intention so that the holy name of the Lord will be triumphant. The lives of the saints and the history of our foundations give us many reasons for further meditation. It will always be a true fact that up to now we have not labored in vain. We are, however, living in a time of blindness and darkness. This is it in a nutshell.

Fr. Pietro Pellegrini, who had left our Institute when Monsignor Manassi, of most tender remembrance to me, wished to have him work with him, is now seeking to re-enter. You might write directly to him. I, too, shall not cease writing to him in the upcoming ordinary mail deliveries to S. Felice in Giano, in the diocese of Spoleto, and I have no doubt at all that he will satisfy everything

¹⁶⁴ Msgr. Pietro Balducci

that he owes to you. The delay in this regard was probably caused by inability, for he is usually very exact in the matters that he handles. I will encourage him as much as I can. More than this I cannot do. You might send him some Masses.

With respect to your spiritual director, this is a matter for prayer. The saintly Monsignor Manassi will intercede for you in heaven. Pray for me and have others do so too, and, with the fullness of esteem and respect, in the adorable Heart of Jesus Christ, I remain

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare Can. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

1892

February 6, 1829

Fr. Tommaso Meloni

Pievetorina

Hail to the Precious Blood of J.C.

Fr. Tommaso, dearest in the Lord

I am most obliged to you for your charity in spending Lent in Pievetorina, in order to make full use of our manpower at a time which St. Francis de Sales used to call the spiritual autumn because of the harvest of souls that follows, thanks to the efficacy of the ministry.

Sufficient provision has been made for S. Felice during Lent. I was not able to do anything more about the urgency of that well-known situation, except to send D. Elzeario Senesi there and hence, be able to say: we have exhausted every means possible. Let us pray to God that all will be terminated by the gentleness of his mercy.¹⁶⁵

In your prayers, then, do not ever forget this poor soul of mine as well as our holy Institute, the great Work of the Lord, and the Work that angers Lucifer. To see so many works consecrated to doing good and leading the people to sanctification, how great that is before God, from whom every good thing comes! Withdrawal from the world, silence, scorn for every worldly thing and of our very selves, this is the great pursuit to which the Lord is calling us! Every point in the rule is another avenue heading us in that direction: *et Dominus retribuet in benedictionibus dulcedinis*.¹⁶⁶

With respect to temporalities, then, you, Fr. Tommaso, shall follow my way of doing things. In this matter, too, be blindly obedient. Accept whatever God sends to you: and with those offerings, you are to buy your clothing, get your tobacco, and anything else that a missionary needs. Also, make provisions for the possibility of sickness. Once all that is taken care of, for anything further you will be entirely dependent upon me (but I do not see how there could be anything else),¹⁶⁷ I shall direct you; with such and such a *scudo*, for example, you will do this... this rule of action holds good until after your death, provided I should live longer than you, which only God knows. In my absence, you will deal with Fr. Biagio. In handling things in this way, your spirit can never be troubled or experience contradictions. All rationalization will have been removed and you will do nothing but follow the voice of obedience which ultimately tends to accomplish those things that are basically necessary. Let us, therefore be in agreement on this. You know well enough that we are not

¹⁶⁵ Cf. Additional Biographical Data: Senesi,

¹⁶⁶ And the Lord will repay in sweet blessings.

¹⁶⁷ The phrase reproduced here between hyphens was added by the Saint in the margin of the handwritten page, in order to clarify his own thought to the quibblesome Fr. Tommaso.

pure spirits; we consist of soul and body, and it is not in keeping with prudence to reduce ourselves to the extremes. The others in the Institute regulate themselves thusly. I repeat, be obedient, and you shall attain that peace which I truly desire for you.

You probably learned of the death of the Father General of the Jesuits, Fr. Fortis. Offer suffrages for his soul. This is everyone's duty: "*Omnes sicut aqua dilabimur... cogitanti vilescunt omnia*".¹⁶⁸

I am sending you 20 Masses for which you will send me a receipt at your convenience. Later, I shall send you more.

Likewise, for your own use, that is, for the clothing that you need presently or in the future, for tobacco and, in general, for whatever you may need,

I am sending you six *scudi* (I say, *Sc.* 6) which in the virtue of holy obedience, you will accept for yourself. If you have no need for this money now, hang on to it for future use. Keep in mind the instructions given to you above.

I have just received a very dear letter from you by mail, telling me about Cammerino. "*Signa apostolatus in multa patientia*".¹⁶⁹ above all, a beautiful sacrifice of virtue!

I have never considered appointing you as an Economist; as a matter of fact, in order to keep you content, I have always said to myself: "for D. Tommaso, our policy is, have him observe the rule and work in the ministry. This should give you peace and quiet, *nunc pro semper*."¹⁷⁰

Let me know how I can help you. Be assured of my most sincere affection for you, to whose prayers I incessantly recommend both myself and the Institute. I thank you again for the assistance you will give during Lent for the good of souls there. In the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, I am and will constantly be, having the desire to receive news concerning your health, for which I shall not fail to pray, etc. etc.

Your humble, devoted, obliged servant

G. C. del. Bufalo

M. Ap.

House of Missions and Retreats in Rimini February 6, 1829

1893

February 7, 1829

Fr. Innocenzo Betti

Roma per Benevento

Hail to the Most Precious Blood of J.C.

Esteemed Canon

Mutatis mutandis,¹⁷¹ promote immediately, in virtue of holy obedience, the printing of the enclosed leaflet,¹⁷² which we shall distribute everywhere. I believe that it would be useful to affix my name to it; the only purpose being to indicate the person to whom one should write should he have need to. (It could probably be done better by using smaller type.) Try to arrange for the most economical printing possible, and at the same time have the most exact proof-reading done. For

¹⁶⁸ We all slip away like water ... to the knowledgeable, all things are worthless.

¹⁶⁹ Signs of the apostolate in much patience.

¹⁷⁰ Now for ever.

¹⁷¹ Having changed what needed changing.

¹⁷² Cf. Gasparian History and Trivia: Work, Printed.

myself, I would like to have two thousand copies. Let me know what the cost will be. The means for getting them to me at the Savelli Palace will be through the Pacca family. You take care of the entire Kingdom ..., Palermo and, making use of outsiders who are located in Naples, take care of the other places. Have Aloysi¹⁷³ look after Parma ..., Corsica ..., *et sic de reliquis*.¹⁷⁴ Realize that in Naples, from the time of S. Gaetano, there has been a Confraternity¹⁷⁵ under the most august title of the Most Precious Blood. Be advised of this. Make changes in the leaflet, arrange it as you see best; make it impressive. I know that it does not cost much to have printing done in Naples. With that in mind, let me know what the cost will be for a hundred little chaplet books, just like those of Fabriano. Please take care of this matter.

Join to the text "*Empti estis, etc.*"¹⁷⁶ the other text (if you agree) "*Ipsi vicerunt draconem propter Sanguinem Agni*"¹⁷⁷ ... "a text from the apocalypse, if I am not mistaken.
Rimini, February, 1829¹⁷⁸

1894

February 11, 1829
Fr. Innocenzo Betti
Roma per Benevento

Hail to the Divine Blood

My dearest Canon

The enclosed letter deals with the spiritual affairs in Ariano: hence, I thought it best not to make the mail too burdensome, according to your very wise advice. I have been told that there are a number of places with the name Ariano in the Kingdom. That is the reason why I have not mailed or registered it, but rather chose to include it here for you. That is all. Ariano is where we went together with the excellent Canon Betti directing the procedures.

A second petition. With respect to Fr. Domenico Silvestri *tantum*,¹⁷⁹ it is urgent that on the last evening of Carnival-time he be with the Capuchins in Gaeta together with Brother Marcello, who, I suppose, is able to handle the kitchen details for the Missionaries. In that case Silvestri will

¹⁷³ Cfr. biographical section.

¹⁷⁴ And likewise for the rest.

¹⁷⁵ This is a reference to a Confraternity with the title "of Christian Doctrine and of the Most Precious Blood", existing in a small church outside of Porta Medina, and established during the lifetime of S. Gaetano of Tiene. The members "belonging to the middle class and artisans" wore a white mantle with a magenta cord and with "a little figurine on the chest representing the Crucified who is shedding his blood into a chalice supported on a pedestal". (Cfr. *Vol d'Archivio "Prez. Sangue", Lettere di Lelio Rivera al Santo*; Naples, September 18, 1829 and October 31, 1829.)

¹⁷⁶ You were bought, etc.

¹⁷⁷ They conquered the dragon because of the blood of the Lamb.

¹⁷⁸ The place of origin and the date for this letter are derived from the postal markings. We should note here, once and for all, that the letters that were sent to Benevento from the locality of the Papal States traveled through Naples and therefore all of them bear a postal marking in red and the stamping of the date (preceded by the abbreviation "NAP", Naples) indicating the time when that piece of mail passed through the city. No other stamps with a date have been noticed. Most of the letters sent by the Saint to Betti come from Rimini: so, in those that have a handwritten date, one can notice a difference of six to eight days from the date that is put there by the writer and the date of the postal stamping of Naples. Such a difference indicates the time used by the mail-delivery in traveling from Rimini to Naples. Hence, for the letters that lack the handwritten date (as the present one) we must have recourse to the postal marking; the true date can be established approximately by subtracting six to eight days from the date of the Neapolitan stamping.

¹⁷⁹ So much.

direct him; ultimately, very little is required. I hope, however, that he will be capable. I need that Missionary because a Mission has to be given at Mola and Castellone. Without being long-winded about it, I simply must have him on hand.

On Ash Wednesday, in the morning, the other Companions will be at the Capuchin's, so that after dinner the Mission will begin. I simply could not say no to the Bishop, for many reasons. Therefore, since Missionaries are sent out to various towns from that House, I believe that you should not deny me the afore-mentioned member, because of the urgency. Perhaps Canon Betti himself would prefer to go instead of Silvestri. Should that be so, I would be very happy about it and you know how much he is loved. But then, how would things be managed there? Think about it. I will be counting on Silvestri or you, and one Brother who is capable in the kitchen, in case it should not be Marcello. If you could leave the place for a while, it would be good for your health. I leave you completely free in this matter.

In Benevento: "during Lent, *lectum*,¹⁸⁰ as far as Missions are concerned". Three workers will stay on duty there. Rosati, because of his age, can perhaps preach at some Monastery. You can divide the work *meliori modo*.¹⁸¹ I am not assigning Aloysi and Rosati to this Mission.

Pray for me and answer me quickly, for my own peace of mind, who am

Your humble servant

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rimini, February 11 (1829)

I have just received your letter. I shall answer it. But this letter still holds its force.

(On the fourth facing of the letter, alongside the address:)

The Companions from the Province will bring the baggage.

God is providing us with three new workers. Prayers. Everything is being taken care of, etc.

1895

February 18, 1829

Mr. Antonio Sarto

Mola di Gaeta

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Most illustrious sir¹⁸²

At the same time that I received your most appreciated letter, the most reverend and worthy bishop¹⁸³ also wrote to me in reference to the Missions to be conducted in his diocese, and has placed at the top of the list, Imola and Castellone. It is only right that this ministry should be begun with the people of those towns that are so very dear to me. Thus, on Ash Wednesday the beginning of the holy Missions will take place (as I shall also assure the most reverend bishop, to whose sacred

¹⁸⁰ *Lectum*. An expression proper to the Roman Curia, aptly signifying that a document has been inspected but not considered ready for any judgment or commitment with regard to its content: in substance, St. Gaspar is saying that they are not to accept any Missions for the period of Lent. In fact, the ministries to be handled in the city of Benevento itself would have kept the three Missionaries who remained in the House there quite busy, not including Fr. Domenico Silvestri, namely: Fr. Innocenzo Betti, Fr. Pasquale Aloysi and Fr. Raffaele Rosati.

¹⁸¹ In a better way.

¹⁸² On the second page there is a letter of Fr. Giovanni Merlini dated February 17, 1829 in which a few instructions for the requested Missions are given.

¹⁸³ Msgr. Luigi Parisio.

person, in my name, you will offer my obeisance, while kissing his hands). May this notice serve to set you at peace. As for anything else that pertains to temporal matters, have no doubt that it will be in accordance with what you say. Father Giovanni Merlini will be in charge of continuing any correspondence to determine other particular instructions regarding the lodging of the Missionaries, the entrance ceremonies for the Mission and anything else that will be needed in keeping with our regulations. Pray for me and have others do so too, and, with distinct esteem and respect, I remain

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare Can. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Mission and Retreat House in Rimini, February 11, 1828

1896

February 13, 1829

Mr. Camillo Possenti

Fabriano

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Venerable Camillo

I am writing this letter at a time when we have received the sad news of the death of the Holy Father.¹⁸⁴ Let us now pray for his soul as well as for the selection of his successor, for these are truly critical times.

It will be necessary for you, at the earliest possible moment, to please send the Chaplets to Rome to Vincenzo Severini whom I will forewarn. He will see to the payment for shipping. The reason for haste needed in this matter is that there will be a few Missions that will be begun on Ash Wednesday and I must provide them with this material. So, let us understand each other, *et Dominus retribuet pro me.*¹⁸⁵

I thank you very, very much for your excellent suggestion with regard to the reprinting of the Seven Offerings, instead of the prayer composed by a nun who has died in the odor of sanctity. I, too, recognize that the Seven Offerings have a special efficacy and were composed by our own saintly founder, Monsignor Albertini.

As for my trip, which cannot be delayed much longer, even though I still cannot set it for a definite date, I likewise see that from Loreto it will be necessary to go to Sanseverino and from there to Fabriano and by nightfall in Pievetorina. Tell me: is it possible to go from Sanseverino to Pievetorina in one day, while making a brief stop in Fabriano? This information would be helpful to me and it goes without saying that the roads are able to be covered by carriage.

St. Francis Xavier wishes to have you carry out what I have suggested to you. These thoughts come from God who is all wonderful. *Infirma mundi eligit.*¹⁸⁶

I conclude this letter by requesting the charity of your prayers, the prayers of the Capuchin nuns and of as many other people as you can get. *Gratia Dei nobiscum.*¹⁸⁷ In the meantime, in Jesus Christ crucified, I remain, with esteem, respect, gratitude and particular affection

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

¹⁸⁴ Leo XII died on February 10, 1829

¹⁸⁵ The Lord will repay on my behalf.

¹⁸⁶ He chose the sick of the world.

¹⁸⁷ The grace of God be with us.

M. Ap.
 Rimini, February 23, 1829
 P. S. Has the bishop of Nocera¹⁸⁸ assumed his residence?

1897

February 18, 1829
 Luigi Fuschi
 Norma

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Most esteemed Luigi

What you say to me in reference to the well-known matter for which I do not cease nor will I ever cease praying, always dependent on the will of God whom we serve, is all very good. If this recent test is not fruitful, then it seems to me that God would wish another great spiritual good work both from you and from your wife. So, let us surrender ourselves to the ever lovable dispositions of the Lord. With esteem and respect, consider me to be unchangeably

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Mission and Retreat House in Rimini, February 13, 1829

1898

February 14, 1829
 Fr. Innocenzo Betti
 Roma per Benevento

Hail to the Precious Blood of J.C.

Esteemed Canon

1) I confirm everything that I said in another letter of mine concerning the trip of Fr. Domenico Silvestri with a Brother of the Capuchins of Gaeta, for the latter part of Carnival time. I realize¹⁸⁹ that you will not be able to leave, taking the place of the aforementioned Silvestri.

2) Please return to me in Rome the papers that I have sent to you, using an outer folding, since I do not have a copy of them. After having polished them to a degree, I must send them on to other Bishops. We understand each other. You will continue to advise me in all matters.

3) I hear that the Vicar there is preaching to the nobility. Hence, one less thing for the Institute.

4) Liparelli will not be there before the establishment of the House of Studies. But I have a particular need for knowing just when you are expecting to initiate the House of Studies. Let us decidedly establish the policies, so that I can make use of Liparelli for the ministry, *donec, etc.*,¹⁹⁰ and in time, take my own measures.

5) A thousand thanks to you for the anniversary of our confrere, Can. Carboneri, whose

¹⁸⁸ Msgr. Luigi Piervisani.

¹⁸⁹ At this point the Saint had written: "perhaps"; but then he crossed out that expression of doubt. The letter to which he makes reference here is the one of February 11, 1829.

¹⁹⁰ Until, etc.

painting of S. Xavier is in the Pellegrini house. I would not want it to get lost.¹⁹¹ You, however, will be most cautious about it.

6) I do not know whether the office for the Divine Shepherdess¹⁹² has been composed; that is a title that is quite tender. Still, one might or one could mention in the petition: "such and such a diocese uses it..., here is a copy of it", and the granting it seems to me would be easier. I would look into getting the matter underway. We could also investigate the common office of the Sacred Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

7) At this point, I express my sorrow upon the death of the Holy Father.¹⁹³ I feel deeply the loss. Prayers for the deceased as well as for his successor. *Nunc autem nobis instat dies Domini magna.*¹⁹⁴ Pray, my dearest friend, a very, very great deal for me.

8) Following your suggestions, I am not counting at all on moving Aloysi and Rosati from there. The former, since he is getting along well in the House with full observance; the latter, since he is very much in contact with the diocese of Gaeta. I am changing only Silvestri and Marcello: please be advised of this.

9) I have actually sent the memorandum dealing with the patrimonies to Cardinal Cristaldi, so that he can present it. However, he replied that he was delaying etc. So now it is all pending. I initiated it in my own name in condescension to you ... you can be sure of that.

10) You are to set up your room in the wing of the House of Studies as the President both of the House of Studies and of the House. Liparelli will live outside the House of Studies. The rules are now being copied. So, I am not doubtful of your concern in taking care of the matter. Please be patient with my perhaps overbearing insistence.

11) The obsequies for the deceased Pontiff Will be held there, and you will do so that he might protect us from Heaven.

12) I shall not come for the opening of the House of Studies. It now remains for me to prepare myself for death. Let the burdens pass on to others; for me, a special life of prayer. We shall, therefore, do what God wills: that is all. If God wants me there, I am ready. God, however, does not have need of my wretchedness.

13) I have written several times: "I would like to know how many resident students can be admitted -- what cost for room and board should be set up - how many should I send - and finally that I would not want them admitted *e loco, etc. etc.*"¹⁹⁵

14) I am still awaiting the resumé of the Circulars,¹⁹⁶ and this is something that is retarding the welfare of the Institute.

15) I am awaiting the prospectus of the Institute,¹⁹⁷ for it has been requested by several Bishops; not having it is also hurting our cause.

16) I am waiting for a copy of the credential letters,¹⁹⁸ this should be the last of your present duties.

¹⁹¹ With reference to the painting of S. Francis Xavier, formerly the property of Carboneri, and later loaned to the Pellegrini family (cfr. Letter (n. 1708) of March 5, 1828).

¹⁹² Cf. Gasparian History and Trivia: Divine Shepherdess.

¹⁹³ Cf. Additional Biographical Data: Leo XII, Pope

¹⁹⁴ Now, however, the great day of the Lord is upon us.

¹⁹⁵ From the place, etc.

¹⁹⁶ Cf. Gasparian History and Trivia: Circulars, Resume of

¹⁹⁷ Cf. Gasparian History and Trivia: Prospectus of the Institute.

¹⁹⁸ Cf. Gasparian History and Trivia: Letters, Credential.

17) Do not forget the Chronicles. At least determine the materials. Later, we can look into the development. I am not urging this *ultra vires*:¹⁹⁹ but, *gradatim aliquid*,²⁰⁰ as well as with a certain amount of energy etc.

18) Am I forgetting anything? Here is a little reminder. a sick man sometimes yearns for so many things; but his human weakness cannot hold up. Is he therefore lacking something? No. Behold the state of a soul known to you. It nourishes the best and holiest desires. The assault on fragile human nature, however, is similar to an organ that is out of tune, so that it appears that it no longer corresponds to its internal make-up, etc. God, however, is wonderful! Suffering will do good for the soul, and suffering arises from desire, etc. The attack of the devil increases the suffering: and, before we even realize it, we are participating in the mysteries of the Sorrowful Life. Courage, therefore. We shall feed incessantly on this mystical bread.

Consider me, etc.

Your humble servant

G. C. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Rimini, February 14, 1829

1899

February 15, 1829

Fr. Giovanni Battista Pedini

Albano

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Dear Father Giovanni Battista, beloved in the Lord

In these sorrowful moments following the death of the Holy Father, I am sending a reply to your letter of the 3rd of this month. With pleasure did I learn of the status of your soul which I note is progressing along well. However, our souls are subject to spiritual seasons, namely, of winter, summer, spring and autumn. So, at times, and perhaps often, it is wintertime. But what of that? In the spring, we observe the work that has taken place in the bowels of the earth during that rigid season; and the same can be said with regard to the soul. Spiritual dying to all things, mortification, our inseparable compassion, is what prepares the soul for its springtime. You can make an appropriate application of this to yourself. Thus, in order to reap a new harvest, there is need for that methodical period which God has established for the production of a variety of things in the soul, leading to an ever new harvesting of merits that will be acceptable for blessed eternity. From this, we can clearly see that in every circumstance, God works wonders in us, and directs us to nothing else than the true production of good works. So, we are to accept the bitter as sweet, and thus always remain in peace.

For the time being, at least, I cannot approve of your using particular acts of penance. There is already the Oratory of penance that is exercised with its members, which you ordinarily take care of. That will be sufficient, as you offer to God this special work to which our apostolic life beckons us. For now, that is all.

I am exceedingly consoled by your special occupation in assisting the men by urging them to the doing of good works, the frequent reception of the sacraments and attendance at the Oratory etc.,

¹⁹⁹ Beyond one's strength.

²⁰⁰ Step by step something.

etc.; likewise, by building up in them in a special way an affection for the devotion to the most Precious Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Holiness is the objective for everyone. However, it is necessary that it be inculcated gently into souls.

With regard to Canon Moscatelli from whom I received a letter before getting yours, I point out that I was unable to tell him that you had written to me about him; so, now I will have the occasion for writing to him again. However, you might remind him of how much I love and esteem him and that I am aware of how much more fit he has become for taking on a sacred assignment in Rome, namely, that of being a Missionary. You might say to him that this move to Rome will not impede him from being of assistance to our Institute in many ways and that after having been with us he can always remain as a Missionary *in subsidium*.²⁰¹ Life in a community was simply not feasible for this priest. But that will not in any way alter reciprocal charity. If I were asked why I have not said anything about this previously, I would reply: because I was never asked about it. These are the reasons upon which one must proceed to act, in keeping with the patterns of the saints. So, if the Lord and his spiritual director advise him to remain, then let him remain; however, (except for reasons of illness), he is to adapt himself to community living which does not fail to provide whatever is needed for governing himself. On days of solemnity, you notice that there is also a third course: "*morituro satis*".²⁰² *Ora pro me, ego pro te semper orabo. Sum tuus ex corde in Corde Jesu Christi crucifixi*.²⁰³

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

G. C. del Bufalo

M. Ap.

Rimini, February 15, 1829

1900

February 17, 1829

Domenico Antonio Gagliardi

Castelforte

Hail to the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Most illustrious sir

Here I am sending a reply to your most esteemed letter, asking you to return my distinct greetings to Father Antonio Sarto and to anyone else who remembers me, recommending that they always keep me in their prayers in common which I so desperately need. We are already drawing closer to the time for the Novena in March, so, let us pray both for the deceased Pontiff as well as for the election of the new one, besides keeping in mind, likewise, the general needs of holy Church. Indeed, with pleasure did I learn of your election as mayor, and I would say that your renunciation must not be admissible. With regard to the Mission, whenever it is to be held, you will have to discuss that with the most worthy bishop of Gaeta, to whom you will extend my warm greetings, even though I have not as yet had the good fortune of meeting him in person. Also, if you have the opportunity, give my best wishes to the Archpriest of Lenola, a priest of great merit and a very close friend of mine, and I say this without intending to underestimate others.

In your kindness, you remarked: "I was not aware of your dignity". Well, I want you to

²⁰¹ For support.

²⁰² Enough for one about to die.

²⁰³ Pray for me, I always pro for you. I am yours from the heart in the heart of Jesus Christ crucified.

know that I have none at all. I am not worthy of exercising the ministry and I feel quite fortunate when God offers me those occasions. I shall extend your greetings to Father Pietro who is presently evangelizing in the Marca. Thank you for so many favors shown to me, and, with esteem and respect, I remain

Your humble, devoted and obliged servant

Gaspare Can. del Bufalo

Mis. Ap.

Rimini, February 17, 1829

P. S. Bartolomeo sends you his greetings.