

1860: Lavigerie meets the Algerian emir Abd el-Kader, exiled in Damascus.

1867: Lavigerie takes in orphans in his episcopal residence. This was his first missionary work in Algeria.

1875: Death of Mgr Callot, Bishop of Oran. Lavigerie is appointed apostolic administrator of the diocese of Oran.

1880: The College of Black Orphans moved to La Marsa, Lavigerie's residence in Tunis.

1880: Solemn sending celebration of the missionaries of the 3rd caravan.

1885: Beginning of the persecution of Christians in Uganda.

Letter to Missionaries concerning a violent dispute between two confrères (1st November 1876)

My Dear Sons,

Today, in your midst, I have to carry out a sad duty. Some weeks ago, in one of the mission posts, a unique (up to now) event occurred and will not, I hope, have any imitators. Two Missionaries, a Father and a Brother, had the misfortune of lacking self-control to the extent of coming to blows with each other in an excess of blind rage. The guiltier of the two, Brother X was immediately expelled from the Society of Missionaries. The less guilty one, Father Y, remains on probation, but in agreement with the Council of your Congregation, I think he should be given a public and exemplary punishment. Consequently, he will take all his meals on his knees during the retreat, which is beginning. At the end of the retreat, he will publicly ask pardon for the scandal he gave. In addition, I must inform all the Missionaries that if a similar event occurs, which God forbid, those who are guilty of it will be immediately and without recourse expelled from the Society. Indeed, it is impossible to tolerate in a Society of apostles such scandalous excesses and if Father Y has been forgiven, it is that on the one hand the Rule had not foreseen such a deplorable case and on the other, on his side there were largely mitigating circumstances. You will all understand my pain, my very dear Sons, and with me will ask pardon from the Lord that such a defect could be committed in a Society of apostles whose charity must be the foremost law.

Meeting with Emir Abd el-Kader (1860)

I shall not easily forget the interview I had with the Emir. His calm, gentle, and modest face, his grave speech, the spirit of justice and firmness which appeared in his speeches, answered the idea which I had formed beforehand of him. I was the first French priest who approached him, the first even who had entered Damascus since the massacres. One of our most illustrious prelates had charged me, on leaving, to recall to him memories of his journey to France, and to tell him that his noble conduct had not surprised him, for he had never known a man who practised natural justice better. I fulfilled this message and others expressing the same thought; and the Emir, beating his chest in the Arab manner, replied: "I have done my duty, and I do not deserve praise for it. I am just happy that in France people are happy with what I have done. I listened with admiration and happiness to him, a sincere Muslim, speak, a language that Christianity would not have disavowed. When I got up to leave, he walked over to me and held out his hand. I remembered that it was the hand that had protected our unfortunate brethren from death, and I wished to raise it to my lips as a sign of gratitude. But this homage, which he accepted from all the others, he would not receive from me, because he saw in me a minister of God. I understood his thought, and said to him, "Emir, the God whom I serve may also be yours: all righteous men must be his children." I expressed a hope. He looked at me fixedly, and I left him more moved than I can say.

