



1849: Lavigerie prepares a doctorate at the Faculté des Lettres in Paris.

1856: The Jansenists in Paris react to Lavigerie's lecture at the Sorbonne. Lavigerie abandoned the course on Jansenism in 1857.

1879: Attempt of missionary journey by the Nile route.

Note to prepare steps to be taken before approaching the French Ambassador in Rome (1st December 1883)

His Eminence cardinal Lavigerie asks Count Lefebvre de Béhaine, Ambassador of France to the Holy See, to grant through les Pieux Établissements in Rome to the authorised Society of the Missionaries of Africa, who would set up its seminary there:

- 1) The church of Saint Nicolas-des-Lorrains,
- 2) The three-storey house located next to this church,
- 3) The same grant the French government awards to the four missionaries of Africa who have settled in Jerusalem to serve the French church of Saint Anne, namely 1,000 francs per month or 12,000 francs per year. At Saint Nicolas', the personnel would number about forty missionaries.

His Eminence accepts that his missionaries must assist, when necessary, the chaplains to the church of Saint-Louis-des-Français whenever the ambassador attends a ceremony there. The appointment of the superior of Saint Nicolas must always be approved by the ambassador of France, who will benefit at Saint Nicolas from the same prerogatives as he enjoys at Saint-Louis-des-Français.

Letter addressed to the Holy Father Pope Pius IX (December 1877)

Most Holy Father,

Prostrate at the feet of Your Holiness, the undersigned Missionary Priest members of the Society of Missionaries of Africa of Algiers beg you to grant them your paternal blessing. Most Holy Father, they have learned that the regions of Equatorial Africa, up

to now closed to the Catholic apostolate, were to be opened to Europeans. At the same time, they have learned that Protestant Missions, already so powerful at several points of the coast, were set to invade these new regions, up to now barbarous and fetishist.

Most Holy Father, they, the apostles of truth, come to beseech Your Holiness to prevent these emissaries of heresy from going in advance of them into the interior of our vast continent. They all come to offer you their hearts, their sufferings, their accomplishments and their lives, if necessary, to clear the way to this immense field, no doubt fearsome to nature, but where, with the help of God, grace will be able to gather an abundant harvest.

Most Holy Father, they all share one desire: to advance on a sign from Your Holiness to dedicate themselves to the salvation of these poor non-believing peoples, bring them the Word of Life that they have not yet heard and die in serving them, knowing that those who give up everything they possess on earth for Our Lord will receive the hundredfold even here below in consolations and graces and then life eternal.

Most Holy Father, it is with these sentiments that we beseech Your Holiness to accept the entire sacrifice we make of our will, of our persons, of our lives, for the salvation of poor Equatorial Africa in declaring ourselves at your consecrated feet, Most Holy Father, your very humble and most obedient sons, and servants.

