



1861: To carry out his duties as auditor, Lavigerie received a doctorate in civil and ecclesiastical law after a conversation with a jury.

1868: 230 orphans come from Ben-Aknoun to Algiers for St Nicholas' Day. They parade before the eyes of the crowd amazed by their transformation and their outfit.

1869: Lavigerie arrives in Rome for the First Vatican Council.

Annual report to the Cardinal of the Congregation of Propaganda Fide (1st December 1869)

While this movement was evolving in France, there was a similar situation in Belgium. Father Jaspers, an excellent priest of the Archdiocese of Malines, wrote to me asking to join the community of Brothers. With him, there would be about a hundred young men who formed a very large workers' association in Antwerp. I put off this application until I could have a meeting with Father Jaspers and the delegates of his young workers before going to the Council. Their entry into the community has been decided. Father Jaspers and his companions are going to the novitiate at Algiers next February. If I can, I hope to obtain the authorisation of the Archbishop of Malines to open a Postulancy to promote missionary vocations in his diocese as well.

While thus receiving these applications from Belgium for the community of Brothers, I was receiving even more extraordinary requests for the community of Sisters. One of the most distinguished young women of this country in nobility and wealth, Mademoiselle de Mortier, put strong pressure on me to join. She told me she wanted to earn bread for the poor by the sweat of her brow. She is now a novice at Algiers with several of her countrywomen.

Translation and publishing of a Catechism and the Gospels in Berber. At the same time as preparing the personnel for the mission, we also had to give them the means of connecting with the people they were to evangelise. Therefore, all the missionaries set themselves to learning Arabic and Berber. This was the first time it had happened. Therefore, we had to plan to provide them with books of religious writings in the local languages, and which non-believers could use.

It was not difficult for books in Arabic; we referred to the excellent publications made under the

direction of Propaganda Fide. For the Berbers, it was more difficult. There were no Catholic books in this ancient language. I immediately set to work and Father Creusat, the Superior of the Mission Seminary, helped by several local neophytes, and composed a Berber translation of the Diocesan Catechism of Algiers and a translation of the Gospels for the Sundays of the Year. At my own expense, I had these first two books published. I will have the pleasure of presenting them to His Eminence the Prefect of Propaganda as the first fruits of a language up to now unknown in Europe, although certainly contemporary with Phoenician and Assyrian. There, in a few words, is the unadorned and concise account of what we have done this first year.

Hopes and problems of the Mission. In line with what has been stated in the first part of the report, we see that the mission in Algeria up to now has eleven institutions, which belong to it, or intended for it. These are: a major seminary or missionary novitiate, a junior seminary for local candidates, five orphanages, three for boys and two for girls, a headquarters for farming Brothers, a headquarters for farming Sisters, a residence for the Jesuit Fathers at Laghouat, a residence for the Sisters of Christian Doctrine, also at Laghouat.

These establishments were bought and paid for by me for about seven hundred thousand francs for the plots and one hundred thousand for the buildings. This sum has been completely paid off, as I insisted on not having any debt on our landed property. However, by doing so, I have spent all my capital. To run properly and purchase the establishment of the mission of the Sahara and the Sudan exclusively, to bring up the orphans, train missionaries, and so on, I need at least three hundred thousand francs a year for three years. Our property already provides us with one hundred thousand, but we need to find two hundred thousand more by appealing to Catholic Charity.

