



**Letter to his aunt, his mother's sister (9th December 1882)**

My dear Aunt,

Only now have I learnt from my sister of your suffering and your wish for my prayers. I want to tell you at least, without waiting a day longer, how much I would like to be with you to share in the anxiety and the care of your children and to ask God to give you the courage and the patience which sickness always requires.

For us all, my dear Aunt, but for me in particular, you are like a relic of the past, the living reminder of all that I have loved and respected; of my mother, of yours, of your dear husband, of all those who are no longer with us and whom we shall go to join one day. If only you knew how much I would have liked to go and greet you in Bayonne a few months ago and bring you my scarlet robes to bless, as I would have done for my mother, your dearly beloved sister! I could not do it. I no longer belong to myself, even for a moment today, I belong to the Church and to France. I must serve them to the best of my ability until the end, in return for what they have done for me. It is not without great weariness and bitterness at times, but to have fulfilled my duty makes up for everything through witnessing to my conscience and in the hope of eternal benefits.

I shall not be waiting long for them now no doubt, so much have my health and my strength been worn down by so much work. But I am speaking only about myself and it is about you that I wish to speak most. Please get one of your dear daughters to send me your news. I saw your son in Paris and found him happy and held in high esteem. What consolation God gives you in your children!

Farewell, my dear Aunt. I bless you for far away, as a priest; send me, from far away alas, your blessing as the last representative of that generation now departed to which my mother belonged.

**Letter to Mgr Livinhac concerning finances (18th December 1884)**

Dear Monsignor,

I received your letter, and I am writing this very day to the president of the board of directors of the Propaganda of the Faith to ask him to fix without delay his grant for the three caravans for Nyanza, Tanganyka and Congo and to set that grant at the highest amount possible. I am sure we shall soon have a decision which will let you know exactly how much of it you are going to receive.

However, much is granted, expenses must be kept to a minimum and therefore the number of missionaries must match that figure. To do otherwise would be to tempt God and, for a religious superior and a bishop, it would be a reprehensible act.

Let me add, however, that I would be grieved to see persisting in the spirit of the missionaries of Equatorial Africa the tendency to squander resources and behave more like tourists than apostles. Livingstone travelled for many long years throughout Equatorial Africa on less than twenty thousand francs; Father Bardot and his companion, on their return journey, spent six hundred between Nyanza and Bagamoyo, and you are terrified at having only twenty thousand francs to spend to do the same journey with your five Fathers from Nyanza! Is that really the spirit of an apostle!

Furthermore, it has been firmly decided that the missionaries would not form a separate, independent caravan, which is ruinously expensive, but that they would simply join any Arab caravan, taking with them only what is necessary; their luggage would be taken into the interior at the normal cost of transport.

