



1890: Train derailment 3 km from St Cyprian village. The White Sisters of the hospital leave urgently to treat the wounded.

Annual Report to the Congregation de Propaganda Fide (11th December 1872)

Your Eminence,

As the Blessed Festivities of Christmas approach, I am fulfilling a joyful duty in offering Your Eminence my sincere best wishes of respect and devoted affection. I pray to God that he will grant Your Eminence long life for the good of his Church and restore your health that has been lacking for some months.

Here, Your Eminence, our activities continue to progress. I have just had built a very comfortable residence for future Apostolic Delegates of the Sahara and thus to put the final touch to the creation of this mission. There are 53 Missionaries. Those who are in the Sahara are very satisfied with the unexpected welcome they have received. The others who run the Seminary for local inhabitants, numbering sixty-nine Arab and Kabyle children intended for the priesthood, are also full of confidence in their enterprise.

From the material point of view, everything continues to make good progress. We have never been in debt and our income, due to the charity of France and the produce of our lands, is in excess of three hundred thousand francs. In these unfortunate times, it is a kind of miracle, for which we readily give thanks to Divine Providence.

I noted with sadness in the newspapers the death of Bishop Valerga. It is a huge loss for the Church and the Holy See. He will never be equalled in the Near East.

In this respect, Your Eminence, if I were allowed to voice an opinion, I believe the appointment of a Frenchman to Jerusalem would rapidly and favourably advance the progress of Catholicism in the Near East. France has huge resources in money and men and a Frenchman can turn them to account, if required, for the benefit of the Holy Land. Moreover, the real crux of all the Eastern issues is in Paris. An able French Bishop could manage these matters for the best, in the present and the future, for the benefit of the Church in the Near East.

I know it is hard to find the right man, but I see the undertaking and the means to make it succeed as so important that I would not hesitate personally, if the Holy Father asked me, to make the sacrifice of my situation to take it on. Here, today, my mission is founded. It is only a matter of maintaining it and a Bishop can easily be found to do so. In the Near East, it is another matter. The problems are countless and almost everything is still to be done or prepared.

However, Your Eminence is a better judge than I in this matter. I ask you to excuse my boldness and to see me, in this as in all matters, your very humble, respectful, and affectionate servant.

Letter to Father Charmetant in Canada to raise funds (29th December 1874)

My dear Son, I received your welcome letter from so far away and through so many storms. The good Lord will bless and reward you, as well as good Father Delattre, for what you do and suffer for the Mission. For what to wear, we leave you free to do as you see fit, only obliging you to dress, as do the Jesuits, according to this Rule: *sicut honesti sacerdotes loci in quo degunt*. I regret the cold in Canada that must be severe for you in this season. Perhaps it would have been better to go in summer, from the health point of view. Nevertheless, I understand the motives you give me. I hope you will have received from Archbishop Fabre the welcome full of charity that he had already given to the priests of the Diocese of Algiers who went to Canada. Please give him my affectionate and respectful greetings with my gratitude. Here, everything continues to make progress. One thing is lacking: money. It is on you above all that everyone is counting, knowing your dauntless skills. Here we are in 1875! My dear son, may it be for us all a holy year.

