



**1871:** Lavigerie established at Our Lady of Africa the headquarters of the Society of St. Augustine for the Resurrection of the Faith in Ancient Christian Africa, which took the name of "Work of St. Monica and St. Augustine" after the transfer to this sanctuary of a relic of the Saint on May 4, 1872.

**1876:** Lavigerie approves, after having retouched it, the prayer to Our Lady of Africa and imposes its recitation.

**1877:** Catholic worship is inaugurated in the church of St. Monica in the Attafs.

### **Circular Letter recommending the recitation of a prayer in common to Our Lady of Africa (25th December 1876)**

Dear Brothers,

Among the obligations of apostolic life, prayer has to take pride of place. If it is indeed the Missionary who works, it is God alone, according to the words of St. Paul, who gives the increase and the blessing. For this reason, we have gladly welcomed the proposal made to us by the Members of the Council of Missionaries to approve a prayer that all the Fathers, Brothers and Sisters could recite daily at the end of their Evening Prayer. In this way, it would serve as a shared weapon to reach and sway the Heart of Our Lord in favour of their apostolate. This same prayer could also serve as a format, each time that the Superiors would order a novena for any particular need of the Mission.

Finally, it would be recited after Sunday High Mass in the shrine of Our Lady of Africa, to which it is especially dedicated. The celebrant would recite it aloud himself on behalf of all his Brothers, before leaving the sanctuary. We have approved and have made these various arrangements obligatory. To further encourage such pious devotions even more, we have granted an indulgence of forty days to all those who would recite the enclosed prayer, each time it is recited.

We trust that the maternal goodness of the Most Holy Virgin will receive these unceasing supplications and obtain for our Works the fruitfulness that can only come from God. The present Circular and the

accompanying prayer will be read at Spiritual Reading in each house of the Missionaries and Sisters of the Mission, from the day they receive it. We sincerely bless you, and we remain your humble and devoted servant in fatherly affection in Our Lord.

### **The Importance of the Service of Professor in an Apostolic School (1874)**

The aim is to form Apostles, by inspiring the pupils received here with a more ardent love for Our Lord, for his glory, the salvation of souls, primarily the most abandoned souls, such as those of the African missions. For this, they are taught to know, love and practice with greater perfection the Holy Laws of God and of his Church and they are to be inspired in generous eagerness to make them known and practised by the poor people who do not know them.

Directors and professors have to be apostles to fire up these young men, to whom they are entrusted, with thoughts of the apostolate. They have to transform them to rise above themselves, to bring them to the height where God calls them. They have to establish in them a solid basis for all the priestly virtues. They have to inspire them above all with a burning love for their vocation, a devouring zeal for the Mission and for the salvation of the non-Christians of Africa.

They will do so themselves by their example, constantly bearing open witness to their esteem and love for their vocation, not allowing a single act or word that shows distaste or scorn. They will light up their speech, by their preaching in the chapel, by their direction in the confessional, by their conversations in recreation, by spiritual reading. In this way they will show forth the great flame, with which Our Lord commands us to set Africa ablaze. What greater than this for a Mission! What more apostolic? The directors and professors in charge of the conduct of this new Cenacle must never think that they are lesser Missionaries than their confreres. They are even more so, in the real sense, since the future of the entire Mission is in their hands.