



**1879:** Arrival of Father Livinhac and his companions in Rubaga (Uganda)

**Letter to Father Deguerry, Vicar General (23rd June 1880)**

They will have only a wavering faith which they will quickly lose. For us, however, the essential point is to train men of faith; without this, they will be useless or even dangerous. How does your Council constantly lose sight of this consideration, which should be a guide to them in all matters, and launch into detailed objections, often of the most scurrilous kind? Providence has afforded you a unique means of giving to your children an invincible faith like that of the Maltese and you go looking for all kinds of reasons to deprive them of this benefit, especially after the appalling experiences we have had! I really do not understand.

With all the present dangers piling up in front of us and the obvious necessity we shall find ourselves in to transfer quite soon to Malta the Motherhouse, the Noviciate, the Scholasticate and the Minor Seminary, where it will consequently be of the utmost importance to prepare minds and resources and win people over, I do not understand how you can bring up just at this moment special difficulties in establishing the young Negroes in the very place where you yourselves will be going.

Leave the matter of Father Bresson with me; we shall deal with it when we have the retreat. But I would ask you to go back over it and base your reasons a little more solidly than you have, if you want me to accept them.

4) I can see that you are in favour of setting up a mission station at Mdabourou and I am of the same opinion. I would need, however, a specific vote of the Council as to whether Mr Guyot should go to set this up or whether we leave it to the Fathers themselves.

Could we not give Mr Guyot the task of going to Gandokoro to study the best way of linking up with Uganda? This matter must be resolved at all costs for the future, and I think Mr Guyot would be the one to do it. Perhaps we could give him the two tasks, that is send him first to Mdabourou and then, on the return, undertake the exploration of the Nile.

There is the summary of my main remarks concerning your recent discussions. I send it to you quite frankly, hoping you will accept it in good faith, in spite of, or more exactly because of, what it contains that might oppose your original ideas.

Before concluding, a word or two about Jerusalem. I had authorized only thirty thousand francs' worth of work. This was the figure Mr Mauss had given me. The Fathers have spent more than eighty thousand francs for the work, due to the excessive luxuriousness that has gone into the building. I had already spent 34,000 francs purchasing land. So that means we have spent more than one hundred and twenty thousand francs, of which about 100,000 are still owed to the diocese of Algiers. This debt must be paid. Ought we not apply the decision taken at the Chapter to Father Roger and send him to collect money to pay off such a huge deficit for the bulk of which he is responsible, since he did not warn you about it. As you know, he has found the means of making extravagant trips and boasting in his public letters that his funds were sufficiently plentiful, whereas he was placing us and himself in such financial straits. This does not really surprise me, for he has never been one to excel in tact or in prudence and if he is not taught a lesson there is no reason why he should stop.

