



1870: Two of the children from Algeria presented to the Pope by Lavigerie are baptized by Cardinal Bonaparte. The mother of the 3rd had not given her permission for the baptism of her son.

**A Letter to Father Louail, superior in Lille
(1 January 1885)**

Dear Father Louail,

I am in receipt of your accounts, and I thank you, both for the care you take to send them to me, and also for the zeal you show in carrying out a task which is in itself difficult. If, however, it is difficult, this makes it only the more meritorious. This is why, my dear Son, I congratulate you and I give you my blessing, asking the Lord at the beginning of this year to reward you a hundredfold, through his grace, for what you do for love of Him. I thank your dear confreres and all your dear children for the good wishes and, through you, I send them my paternal blessing.

**Letter to Father Viven, Superior of the Novitiate
in Algiers (1 January 1887)**

My dear Father,

I receive with gratitude your best wishes and those of your dear novices, whom I ask you to thank on my behalf. I truly regret having to send them through you from so far away, because I would have liked to add to them my paternal recommendations. In a Congregation, in fact, everything depends on the novitiate and the scholasticate, the first for spiritual and interior formation, the second for the acquisition of the knowledge which is necessary and for the consolidation of the resolutions taken right at the beginning.

How necessary it is then that everyone should show his good will. It is on you in particular, my dear Child, that this terrible responsibility rests. You have read Bishop Livinhac's barely veiled complaints about too many of his collaborators. All this has come about through the masters of novices who preceded you in the Society; they were either not sufficiently perspicacious or not firm enough.

In a responsibility such as yours it is especially important not to delude oneself and not to obey [the impulses of] flesh and blood, the all too natural feelings of indulgence or weakness. I cannot say you more from afar; but I would like to add that a novice master should remember that he must first strive to realize in himself to perfection the virtues of the missionary, and then seek to pass these on. This is what I pray for you to our Lord, begging you to be assured that I am always your devoted and loving Father in our Lord.

