

Recommendations to Father Burtin after my visit to Rome (April 1887)

1) For his personal conduct - Unnecessary visits should be avoided, whether to Cardinals, prelates or religious communities. Such visits can only lead to a loss of interior spirit, even of esteem, and get our missionaries involved in gossip, and consequently in divisions and hatreds that we must absolutely avoid. Consequently, and in practice I forbid Father Burtin to make any personal visits to Cardinals, bishops, prelates, or communities, except to deal with some matter concerning his office, or to carry out a specific commission given to him by his superiors. In particular, he will refrain from going to see the Bishops of France when they come to Rome, as he has done up to now, and will simply leave his card for them at a time when he can foresee that they will not be at home.

He will go to Propaganda Fide on average once a week, to ask Mgr Zitelli, Mgr Songhi or Mgr Jacobini whether they have any information for me that interests our missions. He will no longer go to Saint-Louis, as he did before, but only once every two months, or at the most every month, with the exception always of definite business or commissions given to him by his superiors. The same applies to the embassy, where he will not make visits without a specific purpose, but where he will always be careful to be very respectful and kind in his way of doing things. He will make it his duty to be absent as little as possible from the spiritual exercises of the community.

2) As regards modifications to be made in the house. I authorize Father Burtin to follow the negotiations with the Embassy for the change of premises, in accordance with the wishes he himself has expressed, i. e. that he may rent the entire house, taking care to obtain the most favourable conditions possible with regard to the price. It is permitted to extend the large staircase, but only up to the second floor, and from there to establish as economically as possible a wooden staircase up to the fifth floor. Furthermore, before having anything done he must send me the plans made by the architect, with the complete and precise estimate, accepted and signed by the same architect and by the contractor. He will take good care never to leave apartments without tenants, and to increase the present rent in as far as possible, as the administration of the Pieux Établissements intended to do.

3) For the development of [apostolic] en-

deavours - Father Burtin will have to consider obtaining resources for the development of [apostolic] endeavours; no change in what is being done today will be permitted unless he is previously assured of having the necessary resources. He will be able to draw these resources from the three devotions centred on the chapel, namely that of Our Lady of Infallibility or the Vatican Council, that of Blessed Peter Fourier, that of Saint Nicholas.

For this to be successful, for each of these devotions he will have to have composed, or prepare himself, three different notices of about eight to ten pages each, like those in our newsletter. For the one on Our Lady of the Vatican, he should ask the parish priest of Haute Kontz; for the composition of the one on Blessed Pierre Fourier, he will be able to consult Mgr Lacroix, and other documents that may exist in Saint-Louis. The same sources can be consulted for the composition of the notice on Saint Nicholas. In the conclusion of these notices, he will take care to mention that, in dependence on this sanctuary, with the approval of the Holy See, there has been established a minor seminary (école apostolique) for the missions in Africa. He will ask for scholarships to the amount of 400 francs, undertaking to have inscribed on a marble slab in the sacristy of the church the names of all those who have founded scholarships in perpetuity, and who will thus have a share in all the prayers [offered] at the altar of their choice, that of Notre-Dame, that of Blessed Pierre Fourier, or that of Saint-Nicolas-des-Lorrains.

