

Bd. JOSEPH ALLAMANO'S (CIRCULAR) LETTERS TO HIS MISSIONARIES

Translated by Fr. John Bonanomi, IMC

LETTER No. 1

(cf LETTERE, III, 105-107)

To the first members of the Mother-House

Consolata Shrine, 18 July 1901

Hurray for J[esus], M[ary], J[oseph] and St. Peter Claver,

My dearest in O[ur] L[ord] J[esus] C[hrist],

The peace of the Lord be with you!

At this time I cannot satisfy my vivid desire to be among you often, in order to help you lay solid foundations to our little Institute; in fact, I must be away from Torino for a few days. For this reason, I think it is good to open my heart to you through this letter.

First of all, I am happy to tell you that your first beginnings are a true consolation to me. Your goodness, mutual charity, and the spirit of sacrifice that animate you are a good omen for our Institute. Deo gratias! [Thanks be to God!]

O[ur] L[ord] Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament should be happy about your keeping Him company and your frequent visits. The H[oly] Tabernacle is the centre of the house, and everything must be directed there like a ray. How many graces will then flow from there upon you and the future missionaries! He himself, Jesus our master, will form His own apostles.

Hold dear the booklet of the regulations; meditate on some of them every day, striving to practise well, as much as it is possible now, what is prescribed in chapter III, especially the part about using time well, and about silence. Love, therefore, being retired in your rooms, where you may study H[oly] Scripture, languages, and the other subjects you are taught. Avoid useless outings and superfluous visits.

Let it be a special commitment of each one of you not to be out of the house at the time of common practices, especially not to go somewhere else to celebrate the H[oly] Mass, and not to be absent from classes and meals.

For the sake of order and virtue, depend on our dear Fr. Scassa who, *primus inter pares* [first among equal] is responsible before God and to me for everything in the house. The young people should ask permissions from him, especially in order to go out of the house (if he is absent, they should ask the oldest priest in the house), and in everything must depend on his orders and desires.

Later, orally or in writing, I will gradually tell you many other things, which will help you to perfect yourselves and to prepare for the great work of the apostolate. For the time being, I limit myself to establish some rules for our dear young men.

1. The one who acts as a sacristan shall take great care of the Chapel, opening and closing it according to the orders of the Superior, and especially providing everything necessary for H. Mass.

2. He will sweep the Chapel and the sacristy twice a week, once (on Saturday) using sawdust. Every day he will dust the altar, the altar-rail, the pews, etc. and the sacristy; when necessary, he will clean the Chapel's aisles from mud and soil.

3. The same young man, every Saturday will change the Holy Water in its containers in the Chapel and the rooms, re-filling them with newly-blessed water.

4. The young man who acts as a porter shall pay attention to the sound of the entrance bell, welcome visitors in the parlour and, according to the superior's orders, call people to the parlour.

5. He will ring the bell for common actions.

6. The same young man, every morning, will sweep the pavement of the outside railing and those in front of the Chapel, the house and the porch; he will also remove the grass growing among the gravel.

7. Once a week, all the corridors of the house, the community rooms, and the court-yard should be cleaned, as well as the toilets and their small water tanks (even more often if necessary).

8: Every day, the garden at the entrance and the interior one should be cultivated and watered.

9. The Sisters should be helped, by splitting fire-wood, drawing water, etc.

10. In the Dining Hall, a week each, the young men will clean, prepare, and serve.

Very aff[ectionate] in O[ur] L[ord] J[esus] C[hrist],

C(anon) G. Allamano Rector

LETTER No. 2

(cf LETTERE, III, 670-671)

To the missionaries in Kenya

Torino, 30 October 1903

J. M. J.

My dearest ones in O. L. J. C.,

Our dear Fr. Gays, out of excessive humility, has begged me several times in the past to let him free from the office of Superior of our Missions.

After having several times urged and encouraged him to continue, lately I had to yield to his renewed entreaties.

Having consulted H. E. our Archbishop, I have appointed as his successor our dear Fr. Perlo, whom I am now constituting Superior of our missions in regard to both what is spiritual and what is material.

I am more than convinced that all of you, because of your vow, as well as the good spirit that animates you, will lend him, as my representative, full and cordial obedience and, by your submissiveness to his orders and desires, will make lighter his heavy burden; and so all of you in unanimity will accomplish good works according to his directives.

In this sure trust, I heartily bless all of you, and acknowledge myself *in Domino* [in the Lord] and in our Consolata your very aff.

C. G. Allamano S[uperior]

LETTER No. 3
(cf LETTERE, III, 685-690)

To the missionaries in Kenya

Torino, 27 November 1903

Ad majorem Dei gloriam [To the greater glory of God]

My very dear sons in O. L. J. C.,

Thinking about all the good things that Our Lord has granted our Institute in three years since its foundation and little over a year since the beginning of our missions, I feel moved from the depth of my heart to exclaim with the Apostle, "*Benedictus Deus et Pater D. N. J. C., qui benedixit nos in omni benedictione*": blessed be the God and Father of O. L. J. C. who blessed us with all kinds of blessing. Yes, our Lord should be thanked because he gave birth and growth to the little seed; he watered it with his many graces, so that it is promising to become a big tree that will bear many fruits of eternal life.

With your mind, look back at the time when our house was the home of only a few people, and then, like a seed hidden underground, for a year was giving no sign of itself, and to human eyes it seemed that it had to die before coming to birth. A good result, however, could not fail, because the enterprise had been inspired by God and protected by him, to whom alone we are giving glory.

After the first four of you went to Africa in May 1902, trusting uniquely in the Lord who at any time sends his apostles, you had the consolation of seeing the way before you as an open one, of being in an unexpected field that our heavenly Patroness, the Consolata, had reserved for her sons. Being the first and inexperienced, you certainly had to face painful trials, both spiritual and material, but also how many consolations you experienced in the midst of your toils, and with how many graces was your path strewn! You have been writing to me that all your actions and your very mistakes have been turned by the Lord into something good, both for you and for the poor local people, so that it looked to you as if you were living in a supernatural atmosphere. You experienced special kindness from the Very Rev. Apostolic Vicar and the Holy Ghost Fathers; you found well-disposed civil authorities, and especially good-natured local people and a temperate and healthy climate. To these graces which had been granted to you as a group, add the many others which each one of you in particular has been receiving from the day of your departure to the present, and tell me if we do not really have to thank the good Lord for the abundance of his blessings!

As you, there, were toiling for God's glory, and I was worrying with the fear of having to let you remain alone, without helpers for a long time, the Lord looked with special affection at this work of his and, as in the past he sent St. Bernard and his companions to console the Abbot, St. Stephen, and populate the solitude of Citeaux, so he blessed your first sacrifices, calling to our Institute a more numerous group of priests, seminarians, and brothers, who desired to participate in your apostolate and rewards. It is certainly marvellous that, in such a short time and against any human anticipation, it has been possible to organize the departure of three groups: 8 Priests, 2 Seminarians, 4 Brothers, and 8 Sisters in all. And now, while I am writing, another departure is being organized: 3 Priests, 2 Brothers and 12 Sisters; and here we have a greater number of young people who, through prayer, study, and manual work, are forming themselves to the spirit of our Institute, eager to go to Africa soon. I thank the Lord who deigned to be pleased by my humble work and the daily solicitude I undertook for his greater glory and for the salvation of the poor unbelievers. I thank our dear Consolata for the consolations with which she consoled me when, every evening, as I was pouring out my heart that was worried about you and our Institute; she seemed to make me feel that you and

our Institute were under her special protection and, under the mantle of such a good Mother, nothing bad could happen.

As soon as you receive this letter, in every mission station you should sing the “*Te Deum*” [Hymn of Praise], possibly in connection with the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, and then for nine days you will pray seven times the “*Ave Maria*” [Hail Mary] and once the “*Salve Regina*” [Hail Holy Queen].

However, as there is no good work that takes place free from trials, we should also expect them. One has already happened with the death of our dear Sr. Editta, an authentic model of a missionary Sister. But this attempt from Satan will turn out to be a greater damage for him, because we are sure that, having she entered Heaven, we have acquired a special protector.

Some trials soon or later will come: let’s prepare for them by means of solid and apostolic virtues. Sincerely, I don’t have the courage to ask the Lord for persecutions so that you may persevere in the spirit of your vocation, as the great St. Ignatius (Loyola) did for his Company (the Society of Jesus). If trials are necessary for our Institute, the Lord will allow them to come, and will give us the grace to put up with them with fortitude and for our greater good. However if, for God’s glory and our greater good, trials are convenient, I pray that they should come from the world, from outside our Institute, not from within, from its members because of their lack of the virtues that are proper to our state. Let it never happen that in our members there be a lack of *spirit of faith, of charity, of sacrifice, and of humility*, virtues that are indispensable to authentic missionaries.

1) **Spirit of faith.** Everybody should always keep clearly in his mind the *ad quid venisti?* (what did you come for?). You did not go to Africa for human reasons, but only to become holier and, together with you, save many souls, and in this way attain to the heaven reserved to the Apostles. And you shall achieve all this if practically and in all circumstances of your lives you shall strive to aim at *God alone: Deus meus et omnia* [my God and my all]: if every action of yours, every word and thought be guided by the dictates of faith. Let everyone, together with the Apostle, say to himself, “*Mihi vivere Christus est*” [to me, life is Christ].

2) **Spirit of charity.** The last advice I gave the first ones of you who left for Africa, and which I repeated to the second and the third group as well, was this: that you love one another as true brothers in O. L. J. C., that “*sol non occidisset*” [the sun may not set], I don’t say “*super iracundiam vestram*” [over your anger], but not even over the least lack of mutual love. The reports that have reached me so far assure me that you are *cor unum et anima una* [one heart and one soul], and I cannot express how great my consolation is.

A special advice I must now give you is about charity in regard to the people among whom you live. Love those poor people; treat them well, overcoming, out of love for their souls, any difficulty that may arise from their unrefined ways, and not losing your patience when, because of ignorance or stubbornness, they do not correspond to your desires. And, here, let me confess the deep sorrow I experienced in realizing from your diaries and letters, that more than once those poor people have not been treated with charity and that, at times, somebody’s impatience reached the point of raising hands to beat them. I assure you that I was very deeply pained by this and experienced an inexpressible distress. To those who are guilty of such harsh behaviour I say that they do not understand the spirit of Jesus Christ: “*nescitis cuius spiritus estis*” [you do not know of whose spirit you are].

Listen to what our Holy Father, Pius X, wrote in his first Encyclical Letter: “So that from this apostolate and zeal for teaching, the hoped-for fruit may be reaped and *Christ may be formed* in all, each of you, Venerable Brothers, should remember that nothing is more efficient than charity. For *the Lord is not present in commotion*. In vain one hopes to attract souls to God through a bitter zeal: on the contrary, rebuking people for their mistakes, and reproving them sternly for their vices often result in damages more than benefits. It is true that the Apostle exhorted Timothy to ‘*convince, rebuke, exhort*’, but he added, ‘*with all patience*’. Certainly Jesus left us examples of this kind: ‘*Come*’, we read that he said, ‘*Come, all of you who are infirm and oppressed, and I will console*

you'. And by "infirm and oppressed" he meant those who were slaves of sin and error. How great was the meekness of that divine Teacher! What tenderness and compassion for all kinds of distressed people! Isaiah marvellously portrayed his heart with these words: '*I have filled him with my Spirit... He will not shout or raise his voice...He will not break off a bent reed or put out a*

flickering lamp'. This charity, *patient and kind*, should embrace also those who are opposed to us and persecute us. '*We are cursed*', so Paul wrote of himself, '*and we bless; persecuted, and we tolerate it; blasphemed, and we pray*'. People, perhaps, appear worse than they really are. Life with others, prejudices, advice and examples of others, and finally an ill-advised shame had attracted them to side with the irreligious: but their will is not as depraved as they themselves would like to make people believe. Who will prevent us from hoping that the flame of Christian charity may dissipate the darkness of their souls and bring there the light and peace of God? The fruit of our toil may, perhaps, be late in coming, but charity never gets tired of waiting, remembering that God will reward not the results of our toils, but our good will."

For this reason, and for all the serious consequences for our missions, I absolutely forbid you, by virtue of holy obedience, any beating of the local people, that is striking, ill-treating, and even only threatening both adults and boys, dependants and others. Furthermore, I demand that, any time one of you slips into one of these actions, he should humiliate himself, asking forgiveness from the Superior and confreres, and promising to correct himself. In this regard, I will not accept any excuse or any reason to the contrary.

3) **Spirit of sacrifice**, which constitutes the substance of a missionary's life.

When people think of missionaries, they think of people totally sacrificed, and that is what you were thinking when you were aspiring to mission. I know very well how much you have to suffer in your long journeys, uncomfortable rests and, especially because of some kinds of food; but this is the source of your many merits in adapting to being deprived of the comforts you were used to, and to the only foods and drinks that are available where you are.

That is why you took the vow of poverty, whose perfection consists in being satisfied with what is really necessary, accepting and even being happy if sometimes also what is necessary is lacking. Poverty embraces also the taking scrupulous care of what belongs to our Institute as of something sacred, of which the Lord will demand a strict account; not caring for it or consuming it too easily leads to sterility and cessation of Divine Providence on God's part.

4) **Spirit of humility**. This virtue, necessary to all, is much more necessary for you, so that you may be suitable instruments in God's hands for the conversion of unbelievers.

You came here only to serve the Lord in the place and activities assigned to you by obedience.

Every member shares in the merits of the body, and those who serve the Lord in humbler and less attracting positions are happier.

Read the "Imitation of Christ", Book II, Chapter II.

This is the first time I address you as a community; accept my words with the heart of the one who wrote them; keep this letter with you, so that you can re-read it often, especially during your monthly Days of Recollection, and strive to put it into practice exactly. May our very sweet Patroness, the Consolata, bless you, as I implore morning and evening with my whole heart, so that in you and me God's will be done. *In Domino*,

C. G. Allamano Superior

LETTER No. 4

(cf LETTERE, IV, 276-282)

To the missionaries in Kenya

Torino, 6 January, Feast of the Epiphany, 1905

Ad Majorem Dei gloriam

My dearest sons in O. L. J. C.,

The blessed year of our centenary feasts (of the finding of the Consolata Icon) is ended, and my heart is still full of delightful emotions for the homage paid to our Heavenly Patroness. Torino, the Piedmont, indeed very many people from all parts of Italy and also from abroad seemed like one heart and soul in venerating and invoking the Blessed Virgin Consolata. The report published on our magazine ["La Consolata"] gives only a faint idea of the general enthusiasm of those holy days, spent at the feet of the Venerated Icon.

In such an admirable concert, the homage of the Consolata's favourite sons could not be wanting and, indeed, it has not been wanting. Having prepared with a fervent novena and the vigil's fast, you tried to celebrate the blessed anniversary with the best possible solemnity in the poverty of your Chapels. Being so far from our dear Shrine and not being able to admire the Holy Icon adorned by new crowns, has certainly been quite a painful sacrifice for you. But, for the very fact that this sacrifice was so much felt by you, it must have been rewarded by Your Mother with special blessings for each one of you, our Institute, and your beloved people. If your young confreres, our seminarians, were rightly proud to represent you at the feet of the Consolata in those days, I undertook it as a very special duty for myself. I somehow forgot all my other qualities, to remember only that I was the father of this new Family and, as such, I presented all of you together and each one in particular to our good Mother, entreating of her not so much a material growth of our Institute, but the grace that the will and the effort to sanctify yourselves may continue to grow in you, while you work with zeal for the conversion of the poor unbelievers.

The fact that the work for your own sanctification has been on top of all your concerns has been proven to me by the wise conclusions of your conferences of last March [The 1904 Murang'a Conferences]. Your Superior, there, must have told you what a great consolation I experienced in reading your deliberations and in realizing that the Holy Spirit had clearly assisted and enlightened you in reaching them. After re-reading and meditating at my convenience those resolutions, I felt that they were fully worthy of my approval. Through them, you started putting into practice that directive of our Rules which prescribes that, as time goes by, you would be establishing rules of life and apostolic action suggested by experience, as the most suitable for the achievement of your purpose.

The rules, then, have been inspired to you by the Lord. The important thing now is to put them into practice exactly and perseveringly. And also about observing them, up to now I have received consoling news. Allow me, however, to insist on a full and constant executions of the decisions. Experience will certainly suggest to you some variations and additions. These will be discussed in your next conferences of this year; but, for the time being, up to new instructions from your Superior, it is indispensable that each one of you follow strictly what was decided, not allowing himself to introduce changes, neither for the idea of something better, nor with the excuse that what was established is not giving the hoped-for results.

If, in some concrete circumstances, somebody may see some change as useful, it is not convenient for him to introduce it on his own; let him consult your Superior there, and wait for his decision.

A recommendation I also believe useful for you is about using time well. It is the Holy Spirit who says, "*Fili, serva tempus*" [Son, preserve time]. Time may be lost by doing nothing -- and I am sure this will never happen to any of you -- or by not using it in a useful and orderly way. Your way of life, there, is so different from the one you were used to, here in your Country, that you may easily be disconcerted and find it difficult to follow a certain order in your occupations. If this is difficult, however, it is not impossible with some good will and God's grace. First of all, the order to follow is indicated in your daily time-table: commit yourselves to follow it punctually and, I would say, scrupulously, except in case of real hindrances. The observance of the time-table should always be the first object of your particular examination of conscience at noon and in the evening. When hindrances occur in regard to your apostolic activities designated by the time-table, e.g., during rainy days, you should observe a certain order and discernment about what to do. It is not good to just undertake the first work that comes to one's mind; it is better to reflect a moment on what work, among the various ones that may be done, is more important or more urgent in regard to the only purpose for which you are there. "*Quid hoc ad aeternitatem?*" [What bearing does this have in regard to eternity?], a holy monk used to ask himself before every action; so should somehow each one of you say before undertaking any occupation: to what does this serve in regard to the purpose of my apostolate?

I believe that the study of the local language is one of the most important things you have to do; at first sight, it may seem easy enough for the words indicating material things, but it must be quite difficult for abstract ideas, especially for those of a supernatural order. Yet, the full mastery of the language is indispensable in order to succeed in your spiritual ministry; this is why I am ardently urging you to study it seriously and constantly, during all the time that is free from other occupations.

Another thing that is more important than it seems at first sight, and for which I exhort you to find time even in the days you are very busy, is the writing of your diaries, so that they may serve the purpose for which your regulations prescribe it. To achieve this, follow these steps: on the first day of every month, report the order of the actions as it is fixed by your time-table, or as it has been fixed by each one of you for those things that the time-table leaves up to the discretion of each Superior of a mission station. Then, when you follow the time-table, there is no need of reporting it every day; however, when some items of the time-table could not be observed, it should be indicated, mentioning also the reason why, whether for some health problem, bad weather, etc. But what is most necessary to report in your diaries are the habits and the ideas of the local people as you come to know them, and your relationships with them. Then, relate how they accept your words; what impression your words have on them; their conversations, their sayings, their questions and objections in regard to the truths of our faith. For instance, I know that everywhere you take care of sick people and, often, of a good number of them every day. It is impossible that this may take place without some interesting conversations. It may be about the origin of their sickness, the treatments already tried, their trust, or lack of it, in your treatments, and how they receive your words of concern about their diseases, and the religious teaching you offer them. And, how about children's Baptisms? Thanks be to God, they have already been administered in all mission stations, but in none of your diaries there are any minute details on these facts of great importance, which would be very useful to be made known to our Benefactors.

It is impossible for me now to enumerate all you have to say: it is enough to remember the news as ordinarily reported by the newspapers, and the minute descriptions they usually give of the facts that happen. We certainly do not expect this in regard to all that happens in a day, but at least it should be done for what is more original, more interesting. However, talking about your diaries, I do not approve that they should be habitually written, as some people usually do, after supper: this is harmful to your health; therefore, some time should be found for them before supper.

Another important work which you must attend to, even, if necessary, by removing some amount of time from pastoral work, is the kitchen garden (*see "Regol., capo IV, art. 19"*). Every mission station must have, if the locality allows it, a garden of such size that it may abundantly provide vegetables for the station. I would wish that the place and the size of the garden be fixed by your Superior, Fr. Perlo, for each mission station, and that no change should take place without his permission. Then, it will be up to the local Superior to plan the sowings in such a way as to have the various kinds of vegetables (green, beans, etc.) continually, according to the local needs. Be careful, then, to do at the proper time the sowing, transplanting, weeding, watering, protection to defend the garden from animals, etc., and using the remedies suggested by experience against insects and anything else that may damage the crops. I wanted to mention these details because, from some diaries, I realized that they are not always practised, consequently not profiting from a local resource that may bring about a good saving of daily maintenance expenses. Furthermore, it is certain that by eating, at least in part, the vegetables and foods you were used to in your Country, your health will benefit.

I would like to give you two more recommendations which, I believe, are the most useful at present: charity and perseverance. About charity, especially the meekness to be used in dealing with the local people, I have already written to you, insisting a lot about it, so that, I hope, there is no more need to go back to that. I only repeat to you that I have this very much at heart, and I would like this to be one of your resolutions to renew every morning during your meditation. What I want to insist upon now is mutual charity. With an increase in the number of people, also the differences of appreciations increase, because each of us has his own way of seeing things, and especially a good amount of pride, which deceives us without our realizing it. From this comes the temptation to internally disapprove the way of thinking and acting of our confreres and, sometime, also of our Superiors. Be careful and firm against this temptation, because the day when mutual criticisms begin, will mark an early sterility of your works, and will be the beginning of the dissolution of our Institute. If, during your evening examination of conscience, you find that you have failed in this regard, remedy it immediately by a good resolution and, if necessary, also by retracting the words of criticism that may have slipped out of your mouth.

Another cause of temptation against mutual charity could be the appointments to the various duties established by obedience: it may seem that more important or more comfortable ones are given to others, without taking into consideration the deserts of each one. When you left, you promised to totally sacrifice yourselves out of love for souls, undergoing any hardships, being satisfied with any duty, provided you could succeed in sanctifying yourselves and your neighbours.

Never forget such generous resolutions; rather, renew them any time that envy or discontent will tempt you. And do not feel offended because I give you this recommendation: this very temptation was manifested at the beginning of the Church, in spite of the fervour of the first Christians. This is why St. Paul felt it necessary to repeatedly insist against it, and he did it with the gracious comparison of the members of a human body and their respective functions. Consult Rom 12:4 and especially 1Cor 12:12ff. Reflecting on the fact that all of us are one body, and that each member, even the least worthy, concurs to form the admirable harmony of the human body, must be of particular encouragement to our Brothers when they are engaged in material works. They must always remember that also these works of theirs are authentic works of apostolate in favour of the non-believers, and that, if performed with faith and commitment, they will be rewarded by God in the same way as the spiritual works.

The last recommendation I want to give you is about holy perseverance. After a year, two, or even more since you toil in that apostolic field, the fact of not seeing the sprouting of those fruits you have expected could be a strong temptation of discouragement. Card. Lavigerie, who knew a lot about missions, wrote: "This apparent sterility of their apostolate is one of the most painful sufferings for missionaries, especially at the beginning of a Mission. In fact, it is always a long and difficult enterprise to lead a people to change and go from error to truth, from vice to virtue.

Therefore, if a missionary arrives with illusions too common among generous people, if he believes that it is enough to be seen in order to attract those who listen, that words will lead them to conversion, he will soon experience disappointments which will lead to discouragement.” However, it should not be so. First of all, it is not true that the fruits you have gathered are so scarce; thanks to God, a lot has been achieved and, I am telling you sincerely, more than what I have been hoping, considering the hurried preparation of almost all of you. These fruits are not so evident to you; like a mother who always has her child with her almost does not notice his/her growing, you almost do not see the fruits of your work, but they are there: first of all, the confidence and kindness you gained from the local people through the care you have been giving them; then, as it appears from your diaries, an ever more growing interest of theirs for what you do and say, which is not so habitual for them. Also in regard to children’s Baptisms at death’s time, the Lord has consoled you beyond my expectations. Therefore, instead of getting discouraged, start thanking warmly our Mother Consolata who has blessed your work with blessings that we should call truly exceptional, if we consider what I know about other Missions that are just beginning. But, let’s also suppose that the fruit does not correspond to all your toils; should you get discouraged because of this? Always remember that each one will be rewarded *secundum proprium laborem* [according to his own toiling] and not according to the results achieved. In the lives of the Saints we have many examples of extraordinary and persevering toiling, whose fruits they did not have the consolation of gathering in their life. They did the sowing, but they did not have the consolation of harvesting. If this should be the case also with you, which I hope it would not be, “first of all, firmly convince yourselves”, as Card. Lavignerie wrote, “that what is demanded of a missionary are not so much good results, but fidelity to his duties”, and what is essential is that, constantly working, you may fulfil God’s will and be able to say like Our Lord, “*Meus cibus est ut faciam voluntatem Eius qui misit me, ut perficiam opus Eius*” [My food is to obey the will of the One who sent me and to finish the work He gave me to do] (John 4:34). So, keep going ahead always, courageous, zealous, untiring, with your mind continually fixed on the great reward that God reserves for those who *have done and taught others to do*, according to the words of Jesus Christ: “*Qui fecerit et docuerit hic magnus vocabitur in regno coelorum*” [Whoever obeys the Law and teaches others to do the same, will be great in the kingdom of heaven] (Mt 5:19). May the blessing of Our Lady Consolata, which I wholeheartedly bestow upon you, confirm you in your good resolutions and obtain for you the grace to put them into practice with purity of intention, fervour and perseverance.

Your very aff. in Jesus Christ,

C. G. Allamano Rector

LETTER No. 5

(cf LETTERE, IV, 422-423)

To the missionaries in Kenya

Torino, 4 August 1905

J. M. J.

My dearest in J. C.,

Your Superior, Fr. Perlo, has happily arrived in Torino, and was received by H. Em. our Cardinal, our benefactors, and by all, with special appreciation and affection.

He brought me excellent news about our missions and about you, by assuring me that charity, obedience and unwearied zeal for the conversion of the local people are reigning among you.

I thank the Lord who was so good as to bless the many sacrifices undertaken for a good beginning of our missions. Our heavenly Patroness [O. L. Consolata] is visibly protecting you.

You have probably already guessed the reason for which I called back to Italy our dear Fr. Perlo. More than my very vivid desire to see some of my dear sons from Africa after their departure, the coming of your Superior was necessary in order to plead the Holy See for the cause of our missions. To this purpose, he shall have to remain here for some time. I am sure that, during his absence, each of you will continue to work well in his place, according to the established norms. This [should be done] also for deserving the desired grace of stability for our missions. Continue, therefore, to pray, and ask also your unsophisticated neophytes to pray; and, to prayer add the spirit of mortification, to which every major grace is promised.

The Lord, so implored, will grant us what we desire, and we will soon be able to sing to him the *Te Deum* [Hymn of praise] in thanksgiving.

I wholeheartedly bless each one of you in particular, and also the good Sisters.

Believe me very aff. in the Lord,

C. G. Allamano R.

LETTER No. 6

(cf LETTERE, IV, 455-457)

To the missionaries in Kenya

Torino, 25 September 1905

My dearest in J. C.,

With my heart full of the most lively joy, I am telling you the consoling news that that the S. C. of Propaganda Fide has established as an independent mission entrusted to the Consolata Missionaries the whole "Province of Kenya", including our station of Limuru (Decree dated 24 September 1905).

These are a few words, but they are like a summary of a whole story of worries and long negotiations, which ended with a result superior to my own expectation: worries that have been troubling me for these years for fear that the first field of your toiling could be taken away from us, without being able to see the place destined by Divine Providence as a stable area for our missionaries; laborious negotiations which started when we were asked to leave Metumi and lasted until these days; a very happy and un hoped-for result, because all our requests were totally accepted by the S. Congregation of Propaganda, and this rarely happens in similar situations. How can we not see in this a very special protection of O. L. Consolata who, after having led her missionaries in one of the most beautiful and healthy Countries of Africa, now gives it to them permanently, in spite of all difficulties against it?

The story of these difficulties, and of the long negotiations needed to overcome them, will be related to you by your Superior, Fr. Perlo, on his return; he will also be happy to report to you the expressions of great benevolence for all of you and for your dear local people addressed to us by the Holy Father in a long particular audience, by H. Em. Card. Gotti and several other Cardinals.

For the time being, let it be sufficient for you to know that the Holy Father spoke words of high praise for what is going on in our missions and for your work in particular, and to each one of you, missionaries and Sisters, he imparted very wholeheartedly his apostolic blessings, adding that he is expecting great fruits from our Institute.

We also heard many words of praise and great encouragement from many Cardinals whom we had to approach on this occasion; unanimously they praised especially two things: the organization of our missions, and the unity of action of all of you in your work, both spiritual and material. To these two things, besides to God's grace, they said, should be attributed the extraordinary results achieved in such a short time.

For the good organization you must be grateful to your local Superior who was able to fully interpret my intentions and to execute the instructions given him at various times according to needs; this should increase your trust in him and animate you to an ever more perfect obedience. The unity of action, then, is especially a source of praise for you who were able to fully conform to the directions received. This should be an encouragement to obey even more perfectly in the future, with an obedience not only of works, but also of judgement, by renouncing individual views and appreciations, and committing yourselves to put into practice promptly and exactly the directives received and those you will receive in the future.

After having established the Mission of Kenya, H. Em. Card. Gotti nominated Fr. Perlo as its Superior, endowing him with the jurisdiction and all the powers usually granted to Apostolic Vicars, among them the one of administering Confirmation, excluding only those attached to Episcopal Ordination.

As a consequence, from now on, the authority of the Apostolic Vicar of Zanguebar [Zanzibar] over you expires, and all the powers he had granted you for the carrying out of your sacred ministry are now granted by Fr. Perlo.

We, here at the Motherhouse, have already thanked with special functions our Consolata for such a remarkable grace. As far as you are concerned, you will stop using the prayers offered after Mass up to now for this purpose and, on the first Sunday after receiving this letter, in each mission station you will sing a solemn *Te Deum* followed by the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament; then for eight days you shall add to the Collect of the Mass the one *Pro gratiarum actione* [for thanksgiving].

If this eminent grace is, for us, motive for holy exultation, it also a motive for an ever deeper trust, so that the uninterrupted series of blessings of O. L. Consolata may not decrease but increase, as the development, which everybody wishes for your work, increases.

With this hope and wish, I send you wholeheartedly my blessing.

C. G. Allamano R.

LETTER No. 7

(cf LETTERE, IV, 473)

To the missionaries in Kenya

Torino, 27 November 1905

My dearest sons in Our Lord Jesus Christ, I greet you and wish you all kinds of graces.

My heart is with you; our Patroness, the Consolata, is with you, and the Lord is with you through the blessing of his Vicar on earth, the lovable Pius X.

Work at your sanctification and at the conversion of those poor people.

Have a very deep faith in Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, and a very tender devotion to the Most Blessed Virgin. Be obedient and you will become saints; be humble and you will save many souls.

Happy will you be if, always thinking of *ad quid venisti* [what you came for], you live supernaturally, and do not allow the weaknesses of this world to cool you off. *Sursum corda*;

merces vestra copiosa est in coelis [Lift up your hearts; your reward will be plentiful in heaven]. I bless the priests, Brothers, Sisters, the baptized, the catechists, catechumens, etc.

Canon Joseph Allamano
Superior

LETTER No. 8

(cf LETTERE, IV, 609-612)

To the missionaries in Kenya

Torino, 8 December 1906

AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM

My dearest sons in O. L. Jesus Christ,

During the past year I have not written you any circular letter, but I had asked your very dear Superior to inform you, on his return among you, of my thoughts and intentions. He has done it, especially during your Holy Spiritual Exercises [Annual Spiritual Retreat], and I was happy to know that you received them very well, and have been striving up to now to conform to them.

Your work among those poor and dear Agikuyu is now undergoing a critical and decisive moment. You have gained their confidence; you have spread widely religious instruction and, thanks be to God, it was received well; but now it is the practising of the Christian principles that should begin: it is the wills and the hearts that should submit to the observance of God's law. What you have obtained so far is the renunciation of their errors; what remains to be done is the most difficult part: the renunciation of what in their customs is contrary to God's commandments, thus starting to live an authentic Christian life. The protection of our Mother, the Consolata, who has obtained for you from God the first happy results, will not fail to accomplish the work, obtaining for you also this transformation of their souls.

Now, in order to cooperate to this result, what is required of us is the union of all forces and their subordination to the one who has been called by God to direct them; that is, it is necessary that your activity and zeal be constantly conformed to the spirit of obedience. I am not doubting your good dispositions towards the vow of obedience, but I know well how much the devil fights against this great virtue, and how many specious pretexts he suggests to us in order to prevent our obedience from being perfect.

First of all, he strives to divest it from its essential characteristic, which consists in acknowledging God in the one who commands, and believing that the Superior's defects do not diminish at all your duty to obey. Then, our astute enemy convinces us that our merits are not sufficiently recognized by our superiors, so that other people less educated, less experienced and younger are entrusted with more important and conspicuous positions. And, if after the Superiors have put us at the head of others, they put us again under the authority of others, Satan tickles our pride, as if we had been punished, or too harshly and toughly humiliated; in this way, he does not allow us to understand how good is the state of subjection, especially after having had some authority. Yet, this norm of putting back into a state of subjection people who had been in position of authority is constantly followed by the Religious Orders in which observance is more thriving, as among the Jesuits and the religious Sisters founded by St. Francis de Sales. Everyone, therefore, should strive to become holy in the place assigned to him by obedience, without attaching his heart to it, and being always ready to change at an indication from the superiors, remembering what the author of the "Imitation of Christ" says: "*it is much safer to be in subjection than in authority*" (Book I, Ch. 9).

The Rules of the White Fathers, among the means that are indispensable to missionaries in order to remain faithful to their vocation, indicate "*a practical spirit of absolute obedience to the Superiors, without which*", they add, "*there is no common work and, consequently, no apostolate is possible.*" In order to inculcate this great principle even more, Card. Lavignerie inserted into his Constitutions

the admirable letter of St. Ignatius [Loyola] on this virtue: a letter that I am also presenting to you, so that you may meditate on all of it during your Spiritual Exercises [Annual Spiritual Retreat], dividing it in various parts, one for each day; then, you should re-read it privately during the year, especially during your monthly retreats (Days of Recollection), and make of it a constant object of your particular examination of conscience.

In the meantime I invite you to focus your attention on three thoughts expressed in this letter, thoughts that I make my own. Here they are:

At No. 2: *“And, although I desire that in all gifts and in all spiritual graces you be perfect, nonetheless, as you have already heard from me on previous times, it is particularly in obedience more than in any other virtue that God Our Lord gives me a desire to see you excel.”*

At No. 3: *“We may allow that other religious Institutes surpass us in fasting, vigils and other hardships of life, which, according to each Institute are observed in a saintly way; but in authentic and perfect obedience and in the renunciation of one’s own will and judgement I greatly desire, my dearest brothers, that those who serve God in this Company [the Society of Jesus] be excelling, and through this they may be known as true sons of it.”*

At No. 20: *“It is, therefore, for such a reason that in this Congregation, in which God has given me some superintendence, I ardently desire that such an important virtue be so exactly practised and kept with such a vigour as if all the good and the preservation of our Company depended on it.”*

May the Lord deign to grant also to our Institute part of the good that has come and is still coming to the Company of Jesus from this letter; we will certainly obtain this if we have a common and constant commitment to observe what is recommended in it.

May O. L. Consolata, our Patroness, who was a model of perfect obedience, help you in acquiring this great virtue, as I desire and pray from the Lord, and send you my blessing.

C. G. Allamano Superior

LETTER No. 9

(cf LETTERE, IV, 769-772)

To the missionaries in Kenya

24 December 1907

J. M. J.

My dearest sons in O. L. Jesus Christ,

You will soon gather for your Holy Sp. Exercises and I, present with you in spirit, am inviting you to study the means that are most suitable for your sanctification and for the conversion of your people.

First you must think about your sanctification; therefore, I am warmly exhorting you to examine your life, from the last Exercises, or rather from your going to Africa until now. Each one of you should see whether during this time he has been progressing or regressing in the virtues that are proper to a *Priest-Religious-Missionary*. I hope that all of you, penetrating into the innermost parts of your souls, may find the witness of having done all that was possible to keep yourselves to the height of your vocation. However, it may happen that some of you may find out that, as the author of the Imitation [“Imitation of Christ”] says, *“meliores et puriores fuisse in initio, quam post multos annos professionis”* [they were better and purer in the beginning than after many years of profession] or, worse, if *“nunc pro magno videtur si quis fervoris partem posset retinere”* [now he

may see as something great the fact of having kept part of his fervour] (Imit. I, 11). The coming Exercises, undertaken with good will, will serve to shake up these last ones and bring them back to the original fervour, and to help the first ones to ever more sanctify themselves.

To guide you in such an important work, I kindly ask you to reflect with me on the fact that you are *priests, religious, and missionaries*.

You are *priests* and, as such, you must behave *sicut Dei ministri* [as God's ministers]. Have you kept the spirit of Priesthood and the fervour of the beautiful days of your H[oly] Ordination? If the conscience of someone should reproach him for having fallen into lukewarmness or worse, let him shake himself up and go back to *charitatem primam* [the original charity]. Here examine yourselves also on your love for Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, on how you celebrate the H. Mass and pray the Divine Office, etc.

As *religious*, you must strive for perfection. According to the common teaching of Saints and Theologians, this is a strict duty: a religious who is satisfied with an ordinary life and has stopped striving for perfection would be failing in it. Also, essential to the religious state are the three vows of *poverty, chastity, and obedience*.

Because of the *vow of poverty*, a religious is not the owner of what belongs to the Institute or to the missions: such are the Mass offerings and any other offering which, even if given to an individual, are given *intuitu* [in view] of the missions. The use of the goods that belong to the Institute is always subject to a permission from the Superior General, and limited to what is necessary; as a consequence, anyone who wastes or neglects them, and takes of them more than what is needed, is not acting according to the vow of poverty.

In regard to the vow of *chastity*, to which you are doubly bound as religious and as God's ministers, have you always used the means to preserve in you this precious gem, that is great prudence in regard to your eyes, imagination, etc., and in dealing with the local people?

I am not talking to you about the vow of *obedience*, for which I propose to you again the beautiful letter of St. Ignatius, on which you should always model yourselves. Examine yourselves also on the general rules and particular directives established for the individual mission stations. Do you observe the time-table for the various prayers and all the other actions of a day, from promptly getting up in the morning at the fixed time until going to rest in the evening at the fixed time, and observing the silence after 9.30 p.m.? I realized that someone sends and receives letters without going through the Superiors: this is against the rules.

Furthermore you are *missionaries*, which means apostles full of zeal for the salvation of souls. How great was and is your thirst for souls, so as to totally sacrifice yourselves day and night, like St. Paul and St. Francis Xavier? A sign of this zeal is the studying of the local language, not superficially and sporadically, but intensely and perseveringly, in order to come to know well the wrong ideas of your people and correct them, thus catechizing them efficaciously. To this purpose, I insist that your Superior fix some periodical examinations.

Coming to the most suitable means for the conversion of your people, besides what is stated above, I consider very important and indeed necessary the work of the catechists. All of you should be committed to cooperate in their formation, by preparing them with some study and special care in the mission stations before sending them to their School. And, when they come back, you should love them by making them live like a family, instruct them with some daily talks, make them enthusiastic about their work, and make them used to the evening report, so that you may be aware of what is happening in your area, with the children, the sick people, etc.; appreciate and make good use of them, by not neglecting them, or making them waste time with other duties or works. In a word, concentrate your best care on them, so that they may live as sober and pious people, committed to their work. You know how much the catechists cost us, since we have to pay them also during the time they spend in their School; therefore, make the best possible use of them. It is a fact, which I see from your quarterly reports, that the stations that are doing well and *produce* are

those where the catechists are doing well and work; through them the missionaries are like multiplied.

Now it is already time to *initiate* the local people into Christian life; make sure, therefore, that some families, especially those of the catechists, live according to the Christian laws and practices. On feast-days, more than being concerned about the number of people coming to the stations, be concerned about their constancy and willingness to learn; and you satisfy this desire and willingness, making them understand in a practical way that this and nothing else is the purpose of your living among them. Where possible, you should also add some kind of “oratorio” [place for meeting, recreation, prayer, etc.] for young people. All those who participate should always be made to go to the church for some prayer, so that they may understand the meaning of our Feasts, and so that the good Jesus may bless and make fruitful the seed you spread into their souls. I am not talking to you about your regular visits to the villages, which in some reports appear rather rare to me. In order to obtain the best fruit from them, a unity of direction is necessary; therefore, every evening all the members of a station, missionary, Sisters, and catechists, should give an account to the station’s superior of what they have done during the day and, together with him and under his direction, plan what they will do the next day. In this way, the visits will not turn out to be simple walks, and the sick people and the most needy villages will not be neglected.

I am uncertain about insisting once again on the obligation, which our Rules impose on you, to write your diaries well. While some of you continue to do it diligently, most of you neglect it, or write them in such a way that they are totally useless for publication. I am only telling you that, in such a way, we will gradually remain without matter for our magazine and, consequently, see the main source of the people’s offering dry out. Do it also so that I am not compelled to require your dear Superior to be busy so much and only with writing articles. For the time being I am not adding anything, as it seems to me that I have told you what is most necessary at present.

May the Lord grant you that peace which he is coming to bring in these days to people of good will, as I am sure all of you are.

Pray for us and for our benefactors, who entrust themselves so much to our prayers. We continually pray for you to our Heavenly Patroness and beseech her to bless you and your toiling. In the Lord, very aff.

C. G. Allamano S.

LETTER No. 10
(cf LETTERE, V, 64)

To the missionaries in Kenya

Torino, 15 May 1908

My dear Missionaries,

In order to provide you with an ordered and complete set of books that you may be needing in your life as missionaries, I would need to have a general list of all the books that you already have there.

I wish, therefore, that each one of you prepare a complete list of the books which belong to the Institute that are in his possession. I mean all the books that you received, even individually, from me or from somebody else, during your staying here in Torino and at the time of your departure for Africa.

I would also be grateful if each one of you could also send me a list of his own personal books, as this will help me in providing the set of books mentioned above.
May O. L. Consolata bless all of you as I pray for you.
Your very aff.

C. G. Allamano

LETTER No. 11
(cf LETTERE, V, 100-105)

To the missionaries in Kenya

Torino, 7 September 1908

My dearest ones in Jesus Christ,

I was pleased to hear from your beloved Superior that your Spiritual Exercises were directed with very solid doctrine and great piety, and that all of you participated with special commitment and in an edifying way. Thanks be to God, and may His grace see to it that the fruit you drew from the Exercises be long-lasting for your sanctification and the good of your people.

I have reasons to be consoled also by the results of your examinations in S. Ceremonies and in the Kikuyu language. Especially in regard to the language, I want to express my satisfaction to those missionaries and Sisters who obtained the best marks both in theory and practice, and I hope that in the next examinations everybody may imitate them.

From the conclusions of your conferences, I am also pleased to see that you are ever more increasing your knowledge about the beliefs and customs of the local people, and improving the methods to follow in their evangelization. I approve the resolutions adopted at that time, as well as the prayers established for all.

In regard to the explanations you asked of me through your Superior about rule No. 12 of chapter IV, p. 33, I answer as follows:

1. The word *confreres*, as on p. 29 and 35, must be understood as meaning both the priests and the Brothers (this is how all the rules of other religious Institutes use it); therefore, everybody must write to me every three months.
2. The superior of every mission station certainly satisfies in part to the above with his quarterly reports, which are always sent to me promptly. However, this is not enough because, being at the head of a House, he has a very special responsibility for what is going on and, for this reason, must keep in touch at least every three months with the Superior General. Besides, I believe I would do you wrong by insisting on this because, more than an obligation, it should be a need of your heart to open up often to the one who loves you like a father and, on his side, feels the need to share in your joys and sorrows, and to offer you all the advice prompted by his experience and the grace of his office.

The excuse used by someone that, by writing often to me, one may generate in the confreres of the same station the suspicion of being relating things about other people, does not deserve an answer because, thinking that some confreres may be capable of such mean and childish suppositions, would do them wrong. The conclusions, therefore, is that everybody must observe this article of our rules and truly commit oneself to it, more than many have done in the past.

Another article of our rules which needs an explanation is No. 7 in chapter I, concerning the personal goods of each one. On this, I say that are to be considered as such the goods previously owned and those that relatives give, out of their own and for reason of kinship. Therefore, the following *belong to the Institute* and not to the individuals:

1. All the offerings coming from non-relatives, even if given to an individual or with the explicit declaration that he should use them for himself or his mission: this declaration is invalid because it is against your vow of poverty.

2. What relatives give that is not their own, as simple executors of the generosity of other non-related people.

3. What relatives give for the general purpose of supporting missionary work.

These norms are valid for both money offerings and other donations. To this I am adding that the S. Congregation, questioned about the *use* of the goods which belong to individual missionaries, has declared that *for this* the permission of the Superior is still needed, because an authentic vow of poverty cannot be reconciled with the freedom to use goods. Therefore, in order to comply with this, missionaries should request such permission from me or from Fr. F. Perlo, who will grant it only to single individuals and in conformity with the limitations established in this regard for the best good of missionaries, communities and apostolate.

Related to the above is the buying and sending of objects or products from there to relatives or acquaintances; in regard to this, in order to avoid the inconveniences of the past, I decided that from now on no missionary may send such objects either directly or through repatriating confreres or Sisters. I only permit that each missionary coming back to Italy may carry with him, with the approval of Fr. Perlo, a few small things, not bulky and, clearly understood, bought with personal money; from this it is certainly excluded anything forbidden to be exported by the British government, or forbidden to be imported by the Italian government. In this regard, allow me to add that I painfully realized that some people, both in collecting and sending such things, are more concerned with favouring relatives rather than the Institute's Museum, by sending to them the most interesting and rare objects.

In order to avoid confusion and other inconveniences which may take place with the increasing number of missionaries, after serious consideration and advice from competent people, I decided to establish that all missionaries, priests and brothers, when speaking to one another should use the "*lei*" [polite form]. This is what is done in all religious Orders and Congregations in which not even blood brothers and sisters use the "*tu*" [familiar form].

After the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament *sing the "Laudate Dominum omnes gentes"* [Praise the Lord all you peoples] as it is done in the Mother-House, for this Psalm is very appropriate for missionaries. The "*I adore you...*" should be recited only when leaving the Chapel.

I am sure that, in your good will and religious spirit, you will commit yourselves to observe what I have told you, thus assuring God's blessings on you, our Institute, and the dear people entrusted to us by Divine Providence.

In the Most Holy Names of Jesus and Mary I wholeheartedly bless you and am pleased to profess myself always

Your very affectionate Father

C. G. Allamano

Text B (see "Lettere" V, Introduction, p. 100)

Circular Letter

1. There is too much talking; there is criticism; there is an inventing of things, about the Institute, rules, and superiors. Perhaps clandestine letters. All of them must be submitted to the superior, Fr. Perlo.

2. Too much talking and concern about eating, drinking (overseas foods), and clothing . *Habentes ... his contenti sumus* [Having ... we should be satisfied of them] (see book C. Vives). Consequently, grumblings about the store, and those who can take care of themselves. And the vow of poverty?

3. Our vow allows ownership of one's own goods and of those that come from close relatives (father, mother, brothers and sisters), and not from others, which should be regarded as given *intuitu missionis* [in view of mission]. But even the personal ones must be used according to the vow of poverty, which requires the permission of the Superior, Fr. Perlo, who will not give it if it is for a different kind of food, clothing, or dainty things. So, any kind of food and drink received, even from one's family, must be put in common and used only as the Superior will allow; to do otherwise would be a failing in brotherly charity and an incentive to one's pride.

I consulted the S. Congregation about this, and they told me that it cannot be considered a true vow of poverty if there is no obligation of asking permission in order to use what is allowed as personal property; this is the way it is, in fact, with the Vincentian Fathers and the Sisters of Charity; therefore, so that our Rules may be approved by the Holy See, what we have about this (Rules, p. 16) must be explained as above, and they asked us to start observing the above already now.

4. With regard to our Rules, I know that there are rumours about their being changed some day by the Holy See or otherwise. This is not true. The S. Congregation will certainly not change the aim, nature and essence of our Institute; therefore, our missionaries will always and only be dedicated to our missions and with the three religious vows. The revision and approval will be only in regard to accidental things, like prayers, practical matters, etc. If, by any chance, a change in the duration of vows should be introduced, requiring perpetual vows before going to Africa, this will bind only the future missionaries and not those already in the missions; these, as it has happened to the Verona missionaries, will be first consulted and let free to take perpetual vows immediately or at the end of the present five-years commitment. (...)

Anyway, for people of good spirit, and I think all of you are such, the decisions and desires of the Holy See will be pleasant and as of now they will willingly submit to what the divine wisdom of the Holy See will judge convenient for the good of our Institute and missions; that is what we profess in chapter I, article 5 of our Rules. The above is what happened to the Salesians, the religious of St. Joseph, and all those who wanted to submit their Rules, as required and in order to enjoy the many privileges, to the judgement and approval of the Holy See; for all of them there were amendments. But, as I already said, remain peaceful and trustful in God's dispositions, because they will always be for our greater good and the good of our labours.

5. Your superior has asked me on your behalf for an explanation of art. 12, p. 30 of our Rules. It seems clear to me that here all missionaries are included, even the superiors of mission stations, for whom there is greater need and convenience to be more frequently in touch also with the superior of Torino; this was our intention in formulating that rule, even if we could not foresee and express everything in a perfect way. The Rules of all Congregations were not published as perfect at the beginning; they were perfected with time and experience. As you know, I am not speaking as *Cicero pro domo sua* [speaker in favour of his home], because the short time the Lord will still leave me here on earth and the affection of all missionaries toward me do not need this rule in order to write frequently to me, as I vividly desire, in order to participate in their joys and sorrows and, when needed, to offer them the advice that my experience, enhanced by the divine position of being your father-superior, requires. And, in this regard, I wouldn't want that somebody be prevented from writing to me often and at length by the fear that others might think or say that he is reporting to the superiors things about others. This would be bad spirit and also an insinuation against the superiors who receive and judge letters only for the good of the one who writes. Similarly nobody should think that I betray the secrets about what missionaries write; facts prove the opposite to them, and nobody so far could reasonably think of such. You know well that at times I read your letters to your confreres in our Institute, but not all of them, and often only parts of them, and directly those things which, while they edify your confreres and make you and the missions alive to them, do not reveal any secret; you yourselves write letters to this purpose. I have never read, I repeat, anything confidential to them; indeed, I erase everything pertaining to conscience.

Concluding this painful matter, I invite you to greater simplicity in obedience and humility, because holy missionaries write for the good and edification of others, and are not afraid to appear also as people with defects; let St. Francis Xavier be your example with his many letters printed and spread throughout the whole world even when he was still alive.

LETTER No. 12
(cf LETTERE, V, 259-260)

To the missionaries in Africa

Torino, 31 August (July) 1909
Feast of St. Ignatius

J. M. J.

My dearest sons in Jesus Christ,

With a heart full of the most vivid joy I write to announce to you a remarkable grace which O. L. Consolata has obtained for us from Our Lord for the good of our Missions and of our Institute. Our Holy Father, Pius X, with three separate "Briefs", dated 12 and 15 of this month, has elevated our Mission of Kenya to the rank of Apostolic Vicariate, entrusted to our dear Fr. Filippo Perlo, conferring on him the title of Apostolic Vicar and Bishop of Maronia.

With such an act, the highest dignity and importance that a field of apostolate among non-believers may acquire has been conferred upon our Missions. And this only seven years after you entered those wild lands; and on the past 28 June, vigil of the feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, the precise day on which seven years earlier you reached Tuthu. The S. Congregation of Propaganda Fide, in plenary session, on that day unanimously decided to propose the two things to the approval of the Supreme Pontiff, who benignly confirmed the decisions of the Very Eminent Cardinals of Propaganda.

In the common joy of our Institute and of the devotees of O. L. Consolata, my first thought is about you, because your apostolic zeal and your labours have obtained the best possible prize here on earth. In the past years you have been sowing among all kinds of toiling and troubles; but now you see your hands full of sheaves of souls converted or proximate to the Faith.

The saying of the Psalm may, therefore, well be applied to you: "*Euntes ibant et flebant mittentes semina sua. Venientes autem cum exultatione portantes manipulos suos*" ["Those who wept as they went out carrying the seed, will come back singing for joy as they bring in the harvest"]. And it is this good harvest, gathered in a short time, that moved the S. Congregation and the Em. Card. Gotti to skip the rank of Prefecture and grant us so early the one of Vicariate.

Thank Our Lord for this favour and, as it is done in the Mother-House, as soon as you receive this letter sing a solemn *Te Deum* with the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Then, omitting the prayers I had prescribed for you some time ago, for nine days recite in common, three times, the *Salve Regina* with the *Oremus pro gratiarum actione* [prayer in thanksgiving]. After this, you will start again reciting the *Veni Creator* [Come, Creator (Spirit)] with three times the *Ave Maria* [Hail, Mary] to implore the abundance of the episcopal graces upon the new Bishop, until the day of his Consecration, which, since we have already received permission, will take place shortly in our Shrine.

This act of predilection on the part of the Holy See should be most of all an efficacious encouragement to persevere in your holy vocation and to devote yourselves with greater ardour and constancy to the work so manifestly blessed by God. But your work must be performed with the

greatest purity of intention, so that it may be worthy of divine protection, as it is written, *protegam eum, quoniam cognovit Nomen Meum* [I will protect him, because he has known My Name]. At the feet of our dear Patroness, I wholeheartedly bless all of you, and entrust myself to your prayers.

In J. and M. very aff.

C. G. Allamano

LETTER No. 13

(cf LETTERE, V, 407-412)

To the missionaries in Kenya

Torino, 2 October 1910
Feast of the Guardian Angels

J. M. J.

My dearest Sons in J. C.,

It is time for me to answer your dearest joint letter, all full of holy joy and apostolic spirit.

You are right in saying that last year was a *golden year* for our Institute, because of the extraordinary graces the Lord granted us. No matter how much our dearest Mgr. Vicar might have told you, he certainly could not convey to you the whole reality; several times I had wished that all of you could have been with me in Rome and in Torino. You should have seen the Holy Father, all goodness and almost oblivious of his dignity, becoming concerned about the least details of our Institute and missions. You should have heard him exclaiming, with tears in his eyes, that we were consoling the Church which, while losing many ungrateful children in Europe, was recompensed by the many fervent new-Christians in Africa. The Very Em. Cardinals Gotti and Vives spoke in a similar way, as did the many people in Rome who have a special affection for us. In Torino, then, there was an ongoing feast around the new Bishop, beginning on the day of his Consecration until his departure which, for us, took place too soon.

We repeat, therefore, that the year 1909 was and will be the golden year for our Institute, together with the years of its foundation and of the establishment of Kenya as an independent Mission. But the greatest grace received last year is the official approval of our Institute and Constitutions, which established it on solid bases and elevated it to the dignity of a true Congregation, with all the rights proper to the Congregations officially approved by the Holy See.

It is the Lord who, in such a short time, in spite of our littleness, worked so many marvels: *a Domino factum est istud, et est mirabile in oculis nostris* [this was made by the Lord, and it is marvellous to our eyes]. For so many favours, we must be grateful to God from Whom comes *omne datum optimum et omne donum perfectum* [everything given that is best and every perfect gift]. Let us thank our dear Patroness, O. L. Consolata, who deals with us as a true Mother and munificent Queen.

Next, our thanksgiving should be for the Holy Father and for our Superiors; and we should not forget the multitude of our friends and benefactors, who helped us so much to achieve these happy results. Let us pray for them and offer for them to the Lord the reward of our apostolic labours. But we should not stop at this. You wrote to me that, conscious of the greatness of the many gifts received from the Holy Church, you felt animated to respond ever better to your sublime vocation. Your resolve is truly right. The missionary vocation is a sublime vocation because it is the continuation of the Mission of O. L. Jesus Christ himself, of that of the Apostles and of the saintly missionaries who preceded you. This vocation elevates you above the Christians, the religious and even the priests of our parishes, to whom it is not given to make God known and loved by many

who otherwise could never have known and loved him. To missionaries are proper in a special way the words of Our Lord: *Vos estis qui permansistis mecum in tentationibus meis; et ego dispono vobis... regnum... ut sedeatis super thronos...* [You are those who persevered with me in my trials; and I dispose for you... a kingdom... so that you may sit on thrones...]. What a consoling promise and what a reward!

How can we respond to such a sublime vocation? Meditate upon and put into practice what is written in the first chapter of our Constitutions: to have as our first goal our own sanctification and, secondly, the evangelization of non-believers. Whoever gives himself entirely to the works of Mission but neglects prayer, the practice of virtues, and the observance of the holy vows and Constitutions is greatly mistaken. Although the Lord did promise to be with the Apostles all days, even to the end of time, he grants special assistance only to those who are united with Him in mind and heart. Only those who live in O. L. Jesus Christ, as St. Paul did, will be able to repeat his words: *Omnia possum in Eo qui me confortat* [I can do everything in Him who gives me strength]. This union with God will make us seek his glory alone and acknowledge in practice that it is God himself who works every good through us; and then the Lord will not set limits to the graces He grants for our sanctification and the conversion of non-believers.

With these dispositions give yourselves *toto corde et omnibus viris* [with all your heart and all your strength] to the work of evangelization. It is for this special goal that, in order to become saints, you chose the missionary way, and chose our Congregation in preference to many other Congregations that attend to other ministries.

But, so that your work may obtain the desired fruit, it must have three characteristic qualities: it must be *persevering, united and enlightened*.

Not one who begins well, but one who perseveres with constancy will receive the fruit of his labours; and only one who perseveres to the very end will receive the prize of the Apostles. May it never happen, therefore, that any of you, after having arduously worked, because of some opposition or malaise, would become cold or lukewarm and, almost regretting the choice of his vocation, would long for what he once generously renounced for the love of God and of souls. You are not among those who seek to return quickly to their Country, but you rather dread receiving the command to return here, in your great desire not to lose any part of the time destined for saving souls. However, I judge it useful to mention what Fr. Joaquim Llevaneras, Procurator of the Capuchins' Missions, wrote in this regard: "Missionaries who are continually devoured by an ardent zeal for the salvation of souls; who are apostolically denying flesh and blood; in other words, missionaries very attached *pro Deo and propter Deum* [for God and because of God] to the Missions, stay willingly in their new Country, nearer to the heavenly Country, and love the local people as new fellow-citizens, new brothers and sisters, indeed as very beloved children. All such missionaries, imitating the apostolic perseverance, never depart, nor desire to depart from their mission places, unless they are compelled to do so by a command of holy obedience; it is pleasant for them to remain there until death and, so, to have, among their fellow-citizens and spiritual children, an apostolic grave: *ex quo defuncti adhuc loquantur* [from which, even if dead, they may still speak].

Another characteristic quality of missionary work is unity. Unity of mind and heart makes light the toil, gives strength and obtains victory. Woe to the missionary who tenaciously adheres to his own judgement and is not capable of renouncing his own view and cordially accepting those of the majority of his companions and, above all, those of his superiors. He will labour in vain and perhaps even destroy the good done by others. A false esteem of self and of his own knowledge leads such a person to believe that he sees matters better and that he has more zeal than his confreres, who, however, having greater knowledge of places and persons, proceed with greater prudence and produce authentic fruit and lasting good. Work united, and God will bless your common labours.

I come now to the third characteristic of your work, which I call enlightened, and which refers to the method to follow. The decree of official approval of our Institute by the Holy See, the

attestations of the S. Propaganda, and the words of the Pope himself proclaim the method of our apostolate. You must make industrious people of the natives, so that you may later make them Christians; (...); they will love a Religion which, besides offering them the promises of a future life, makes them happier on this earth as well.

In the past, some people happened to criticize our method of apostolate, as if we were too involved in material things to the detriment of the spiritual good; it was said that we should preach and baptize and not get involved in anything else. But, after the publication of the decree of official approval and the talks by our Monsignor and Fr. Gabriele, people changed their mind, and many in good faith confessed it. Let our example be the renowned Fr. Ricci, of the Society of Jesus, who, in order to enter China and, there, gain credit for himself and other missionaries so as to open the way of conversion for those people, started teaching mathematical sciences, making geographical globes and sun-dials: this gained him esteem and consideration, and eventually belief in what he was teaching about the Christian faith. To those who, in Europe, were criticizing him as if he were wasting time, he used to say, "*For me this matter is more worth than having ten thousand Christians*". And in fact, even if during his life only two thousand people were baptized, God's word reached millions of non-Christians and, only a few years after his death, there were already forty thousand Christians.

But, why am I telling these things to you who willingly spend months and years in a saw-mill or in a farm, without getting tired of it, indeed being happy and sure that this is your best apostolate? You understand well that, as of now, a real preaching would be useless, that the word of God must be sown in a plainer and almost casual way, during your work and with frequent catechizing. In the meantime, your *Kerera* (catechism) spreads through the villages, and you will find that, slowly-slowly, the truths of our holy Religion will penetrate through all those people and, through God's grace, they will be ready for Baptism. This is the method for the conversion of the whole wonderful Vicariate of Kenya.

I conclude by congratulating you on your excellent willingness to become and remain worthy missionaries. This is the greatest desired reward that I and our dear Vice-Rector are expecting for all our care. May the Lord confirm the good resolutions you made during your Spiritual Exercises and, through His grace, make them efficacious. In so doing, O. L. Consolata will continue to bless your labours and will raise new aspirants for our Mother-House to come to your help, and a continuous number of benefactors to meet the high expenses of our present Mission and of others which Divine Providence will want to entrust to our Institute in the future.

The charity of O. L. Jesus Christ may always be with our worthy Apostolic Vicar, with all of you, priests and brothers, with the good Sisters, the new Christians and neophytes, and with the whole Mission of Kenya.

Very aff. in J. M. J.

C. G. Allamano sup.r

P.S.

While wishing you all kinds of blessings for the year 1911, I propose as our special patron for the year Blessed Antonio Neyrot, through whose intercession we will strive to develop the holy virtue of *Humility*.

LETTER No. 14

(cf LETTERE, V, 634-635)

To the missionaries in Kenya

25 July 1911

(Letter accompanying the "Booklet of Ceremonies")

My dearest Missionaries,

I am presenting to you some notes about S. Ceremonies, which I recommend to your serious consideration. They are fruit of a long experience, excerpts from the Rubrics and from decisions of the S. C. of Rites, and from the best authors.

You are well aware of the importance given by Our Lord in the Old Law to S. Ceremonies, and how much they were recommended. In chapter 8 of Deuteronomy we read, "*Observa, et cave ne negligas mandata Domini et caeremonias, quae precipio tibi*" [Observe and be careful not to neglect the commands of the Lord and the ceremonies, which I am prescribing to you]. And in chapter 11 the observance of ceremonies comes even before the divine commandments themselves: *videte ut impleatis caeremonias atque iudicia* [see that you fulfil the ceremonies and the judgements].

In the New Law, the Holy Church, inspired by God, always took the greatest care of the S. Rites and, to this purpose, it established a Congregation for any decision in regard to them. Meditate the words of the Holy Council of Trent, at Session XXII: "*Quanta cura...*" [How much care...].

One more comment. All Orders and religious Congregations at their beginning and at times of fervour were always observant of the S. Ceremonies. Their practice decreased when they declined, and perhaps they declined for the very reason of having neglected the S. Ceremonies.

All of you, therefore, sacrificing your individual judgement, in common uniformity must perform and teach your new Christians the proposed Ceremonies with precision and a spirit of faith, both internal and external.

So, the Lord will be able to say about us, "*sanctificabor in eis qui appropinquant mihi, et in conspectu omnis populi glorificabor*" [I will be sanctified in those who come close to me, and in the presence of every people I will be glorified].

May the Lord bless you, as I wholeheartedly pray Him to do.

Very aff.

LETTER No. 15

(cf LETTERE, VI, 168-171)

To the missionaries in Kenya

Torino, 21 July 1912

Feast of the Most Holy Redeemer

My dearest in Our Lord,

If the happy and long-desired return of the Vice-Superior was a time of joy for me and all in our Institute, a greater consolation was enjoyed by me at the wonderful news that slowly, slowly, he has been giving me in long conversations about the general state of our missions, and especially about the good spirit by which you are always animated as religious and as missionaries. I was about to write to congratulate you and, at the same time, offer you some exhortations that seemed to me more necessary or at least opportune, when the sorrowful news of the death of our dear Fr. Manzon reached me like a thunderbolt.

You may imagine how dismayed all of us were at the sad news, which represents a really hard trial for our Institute. Our Very Em. Card. Archbishop consoled us with the thought that our good God, having asked of us the youngest of our missionaries as an offering to Him, will certainly repay with more abundant blessings and graces all of us and our African people, for whom the dear Father was called to intercede in Heaven. And we hope that our community prayers may have already obtained

for him the reward of the labours and sacrifices he performed during his short apostolate, and also of the sharp sufferings of his illness and holy death.

I am grateful to Fr. Dal Canton for the full report he sent me about the edifying details of the painful transition, and I am greatly consoled by what he wrote about your non-being discouraged by this but, on the contrary, taking it as a reason for new ardour and zeal in corresponding to your vocation. I think that this is the first fruit of the intercession of the one who generously offered his life for your good and the good of the missions. The same effect it had on the people here, priests, seminarians, and brothers, who unanimously show that they are ever more animated to follow the divine call, especially on the priests who, with the five last-ordained, are now 9, all of them longing to soon depart, to fill the place left empty by the beloved and envied confrere.

Another fruit I would like you to derive from this premature death is a serious reflection on how fleeting is life, even by those who are in better health and more robust than he was, who from the tomb is telling us, "*hodie mihi, cras tibi...*" [today to me, tomorrow to you...], and you must meditate on this seriously, especially during your monthly retreat. You have to focus on the insignificance of all the satisfactions this life can offer us, even the very consolations from your ministry or work..., as well as on the fact that also the inevitable sufferings, privations and sacrifices of your missionary life are nothing if, like the Saints "*aspicientes in remunerationem*" [with eyes fixed on the reward], you keep your minds fixed on the great reward that is prepared for missionaries who are faithful to their vocation.

The news given me by our Vice-Superior about the spirit that animates you and about your work has certainly consoled me, as I have already told you, and I thank the Lord for this. However, from the whole of the reports there is, as I was already surmising out of my experience, a virtue on which I think I must insist, a virtue that is greatly necessary for all of you, priests and brothers, both in works of apostolate as well as in material works: it is the virtue of obedience, the one that our Constitutions define as a fundamental virtue for a missionary Institute (see No. 35), the lack of which is sufficient to lead to dissolution any Religious Community.

From that letter of St. Ignatius, whose reading I have always so much insisted upon, you know how great an importance he gave to the practice of obedience, and how he wanted it to be the distinguishing mark of his Society. Read it again and meditate on it seriously, and let each one of you apply what is written to himself individually. Can you sincerely say, before God, that you are always and in everything obedient in spirit, heart and actions? Matters of obedience are our Constitutions and the rules about community life, apostolate and material work given you in details and with great precision by Monsignor and the Conferences, and also the orders and directives that he gives you according to needs and circumstances. These instructions concerning life in the missions could not be given by me, neither when you were here, nor later by letter, because I did not sufficiently know the different and changing environment in which you live. From the outline of your Conferences, sent to me every year, and especially from the explanations given me now by our Vice-Superior, I realize that those rules were really given with great wisdom and prudence. Well, have you always bent your intellect to them, striving to persuade yourselves that they truly are the expression of God's will in your regard? Have you ever, on the contrary, thought sometimes, perhaps obstinately judged, worse still if you told somebody else, that it would have been better if things had been established in another way? Let's not discuss if and how much of an obligation is there to submit one's judgements to the directions of the Superiors; certainly there is the obligation to follow them in one's actions. Well, when one's judgement is against, it will be quite difficult to act in a simple, sincere, cordial and full way... with that *animo volenti* [willing spirit] which does not let us feel the burden of obedience, and which, after purity of intention, is the greatest qualification for reward of our actions. Our Constitutions state that, without a practical spirit of absolute obedience to the Superiors, a unity of action and the consequent success of apostolate are not possible. This is so because labours and even sacrifices performed according to one's own judgement are not blessed by God: what happens is what happened to those priests of the Ancient

Law who, on their own initiative *sine consilio exeunt in praelium* [went out to fight in a foolish way] and were badly defeated, so that the Book of Maccabees concludes by saying, "*Ipsi autem non erant de semine virorum illorum per quos salus facta est in Israel*" [These were not of the same mold as those people through whom salvation came to Israel].

The spiritual transformation of your people, believe me, will take place sooner or later, will be more or less broad and deep, according to how much the obedience of each one of you will be exemplary in all you do.

I know that the devil will always be able to come up with the excuse that you are in special circumstances in regard to people, place, weather, etc.; that your Superior does not know things the way you do...; that he does not give enough consideration to your observations; that, if I were well informed, I would agree with you...All of these are devil's tricks, my dear, to deprive you of the great merit and fruit of obedience. Your local Superior is reasonable; if there are truly exceptional circumstances, inform him with sincerity, and then accept with humility his decision...; in the meantime, however, before you receive his decision, you continue to follow the previous instructions.

It could also happen that somebody act differently than the directions received either because he forgets them, or at least does not think of them before acting and, consequently, in his conscience he feels excused. This is a mistake. Forgetfulness, inadvertence, or thoughtlessness excuse only when somebody does everything possible to prevent them. See what is usually done when it is a matter of material concern: notes are written on notebooks or diaries; knots are made on handkerchiefs, and many other devices are used in order not to forget a meeting, or some business or another, about which someone is concerned. Is as much done to call to mind the directions of obedience? Going on at random, doing things on the impulse of the moment, making no efforts to remember instructions in due time will certainly lead to violate them often; but, I repeat, do not think that you are totally excused at God's judgement.

Each one of you, therefore, should read again and meditate on what our Constitutions say about obedience, use it as a daily matter for resolutions in your meditation, as well as in your examination of conscience at noon and in the evening. Remember that you will be missionaries of that Jesus *factus obediens usque ad mortem* [who became obedient even unto death] in as much as you will be able to affirm with Him that all you do in mission is directed to the only aim that He had on this earth: *non ut faciam voluntatem meam, sed voluntatem Eius qui misit me* [not to do my will, but to do the will of the One who sent me]. The will of the one who sends you, that is of your Superior, is the only and constant direction of your apostolate.

This is what I wish for you with my whole heart while, together with our dear Vice-Superior, I renew our thanksgiving for the joyful welcome you offered him and for the docility with which you accepted what he felt he had to tell you for your greater good; this docility assures me that you will treasure these recommendations and the ones that our Lord will inspire to me for the achievement of your great aim: the sanctification of yourselves and of others.

May our Heavenly Patroness, Our Lady Consolata, comfort, sustain and bless you always as is always praying

Yours very aff. in J. M. J.,

C. G. Allamano Superior

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

Your joint letters written at the end of your H. Sp. Exercises were quite appreciated and brought me true consolation.

I was already sure of your habitual disposition to preserve yourselves as worthy sons of O. L. Consolata, and suitable instruments in God's hands for the redemption of your local unbelievers; but it is pleasing to the heart of a father to hear these things from his sons. Under the wise guidance of your Very Excellent and very beloved Vicar, and through the living and efficacious words of good preachers, you renewed yourselves in the spirit of your vocation. The spiritual fervour and the grace experienced in those days strengthened your apostolic spirit that had unfortunately been weakened by your continuous and various occupations; you felt stronger: more diligent in your prayer practices, readier for labours, and more zealous for being where obedience sent or will send you to work. At the end, you renewed your oath to faithfully observe the H. Constitutions and the directions of your superiors, especially those given by Monsignor in your Conferences. Deo gratias! On these resolutions, so practical and convenient, I invoke the blessings of God and of our dear Consolata with all my heart. But, so that they may be efficacious and bear the desired fruit, you shall have to recall them often during the year; and you will do that if, as it is done in our Mother-House, you will make some notes to re-read in the days of your monthly Retreat and weekly Confession. As you know, to the individual resolutions I usually add a common one, to be kept by all, and this time I feel inspired to propose the spirit of *economy* and *poverty*.

Do not see as strange and absurd the fact that I recommend poverty to you, missionaries who already have to make many sacrifices. Blessed Gabriel Dufresse, Bishop and martyr in China in the last century, in a Synod recommended to his missionaries, who were just priests, not to accept poverty as people forced to do it, but to be happy with frugal meals, simple foods, intended to preserve people's life and not to procure delights; not to search for anything exquisite, sumptuous, or refined... He added that, following the example of the Saints, they were to be so poor, sober, and moderate that they would not only abstain from superfluous things, but also subtract what was less necessary from food and clothing in order to contribute to the conversion of unbelievers, building of mission schools, and other needs of their missions.

The S. (Congregation of) "Propaganda" on various occasions recommended to missionaries this spirit of economizing; for instance, in a decree of 1869 it said, "*curent expensas pro victu atque itineribus minimas fieri*" [let them see to it that their expenses for food and travelling be reduced to a minimum]; on another occasion the S. Congregation exhorted them to adapt as much as possible to the conditions of the foods of the region where they were living, and only for real needs turn to overseas food: "*experientia constat, pauca vel nulla ultramarina alimenta ut plurimum necessaria fiant*" [it appears from experience that, in most cases, few or no overseas foods are necessary]. In order not to multiply expenses, it also exhorted to have a vegetable garden near each residence, where to cultivate greens and legumes needed for the daily meals, and to cultivate land not only to promote agriculture, but also to lessen the missions' expenses.

What can I add to these authoritative exhortations in order to animate you to a spirit of economy and poverty? I tell you that this duty affects you even more because, besides being missionaries, you are also religious and, as such, you promised poverty and are obliged to practise it. You know well that the evangelical poverty as a *vow* consists in renouncing the right to freely use and administer temporal things without the superior's permission; and as a *virtue* [it consists] in detaching your heart from things, renouncing superfluous things and keeping your heart detached from necessary things.

When, as young people, you were aspiring to missionary life, you imagined many sacrifices to be performed, and even painful martyrdom like the one of Bd. Chanel and Bd. Perboire, and with

fortitude and gusto you embraced it. In these days, with the advance of civilization, the occasions of real martyrdom are rare even in the missions. However, what always remains to undergo is a bloodless martyrdom, one of many and frequent sacrifices, like lacking the comforts you had in your Country and tolerating with patience and joy the privations you experience in the Country where you are, being satisfied with what is only really necessary in matters of food, clothing and housing.

And you have what is really necessary, thanks to the admirable set-up of our missions, in which everything is so well arranged that things are provided in time for all people, and the daily care of individual needs is not entrusted to unable or inexperienced people. Thank the Lord for such wise arrangements, praised also by the S. Propaganda, and do not allow selfishness, or a certain spirit of freedom and comfort to make you desire the possibility of possessing and administering money, so as to spend it your own way, satisfying whims and little comforts, unknown to the Superiors. You would be truly unhappy if, after having made many sacrifices, you allow little trifles to fool you and deprive you of many merits before God and of greater blessings on your zeal. Certain graces of conversion cannot be obtained by means of prayers alone; these must be united to sacrifices. This is what all holy missionaries have done, from St. Paul to the contemporary ones. And, if the task entrusted to you by obedience requires you to administer money, think carefully that your condition of religious and the conditions of our Institute impose on you the obligation to use the greatest moderation in spending, not exceeding what is necessary,, and conforming with mind and heart to the rules already established or to be established by the superiors in regard to arranging works and giving wages to the workers.

Now let me tell you about the pain I felt in the past when I heard that somebody was complaining of not being allowed to spend independently from the account due to the superiors, and also rather big amounts; the foolish reason given was that I am rich and there are abundant offerings from the faithful. My dear people, you must understand that, if there was money in my pockets, this has gone by now, because of the huge expenses needed for the foundation, the setting up of the Mission of Kenya, the building of the large Mother-House, your support and the support, here in Torino, of more than eighty aspirants and fifty Sisters. With regard to the monthly offerings that Divine Providence is sending us, gratefully thank the Lord together with me and, praying well the *Pater noster*, beg that they may continue for a long time to provide for our many needs both in Africa and here; but be also aware that the Consolata, who has been helping us almost miraculously in our beginnings, may stop doing so if we abuse of her help and do not use all possible means to be self-sufficient by means of our toiling. To this purpose, S. Propaganda has greatly recommended agricultural cultivations and other means that may support us in the present and in the future.

Let this be your common commitment, especially of those among you who are entrusted with these kinds of works, Brothers, Sisters and priests, who should not feel that they are less missionaries; let them be convinced that they are involved in real apostolate, like the ones who are involved in more spiritual works. Let them have commitment and solicitude, so that their works may prosper. Read again what our Constitutions are saying in this regard.

To the above motives, another one is being added now. We have to think of the new Prefecture of Kaffa which S. Propaganda had entrusted to us. We shall have to meet once again the huge expenses we did for Kenya: expenses for travelling, provisions, etc. It is up to you to save as much as possible, and with your toiling and savings cooperate to a sound foundation for the Prefecture of Kaffa.

Animated by this spirit of economy and poverty, you will be able to say with St. Paul, "*Habentes alimenta et quibus tegamur, his contenti sumus*" [As long as we have food and clothing, we are content]. Know that the life and prosperity of our Institute depends largely on your observance of this economy and spirit.

Happy for being able, according to your possibilities, to alleviate in this way the daily care of your superiors, you will receive God's blessings on your toiling.

What is written above is the common resolution I propose to you, which you will often examine rigorously. May the Lord bless these words of mine, and give all of you the spirit of intelligence to understand them well and the docility of heart and the constancy to practise them well.

(Canon G. Allamano)

N.B.: This letter, found among our Founder's copies and drafts of letters, was never sent to Kenya.

LETTER No. 17
(cf LETTERE, VI, 638-639)

To the missionaries in Kenya

Torino, 15 September 1914

My dearest in O. L. Jesus Christ,

I have been waiting for the time of your Spiritual Exercises to answer your joint letters of the past year. The Exercises are getting near, and I wish to thank you for the sentiments of affection for me that you have expressed, and to congratulate you for the resolutions of greater perfection in your personal and apostolic life that you made in the last Exercises. With the fervour inspired to you in those days by the good preachers and by the conferences of your Vicar (Bishop Perlo), you renewed in yourselves the spirit of your vocation, resolving to put more diligence in your prayers and to practise a more perfect obedience to your superiors. I thanked the Lord and, as I was reading your names one by one, it seemed to me that you were present in front of me as when you were here in Torino. I placed your names [and resolutions] at the feet of our Patroness so that she could bless them and obtain for you the grace to practise them. But, in order to succeed in so doing, you should make notes of them, as it is done here in the Mother-House, and recall them to your mind every morning during meditation, in the evening during the examination of conscience, for your weekly Confession, and especially in the days of your monthly Retreats.

Now, after a year, as you gather again for your Spiritual Exercises, examine yourselves on the fruits you reaped; if you fulfilled them, thank the Lord; if not, ask for forgiveness and make stronger resolutions, looking for ways and means to be more faithful in the future.

You have already heard of the death of our Holy Father, Pope Pius X, and of the election of the new Pope, Benedict XV. You have prayed and will continue to pray for the holy soul of Pius X, also as our special benefactor. You know how much he loved our Institute; for this reason, his name will be written in golden letters in our history.

The new Pope, a devotee of O. L. Consolata, will also love the missions that bear Her name. Pray that in these difficult times He may be able to accomplish all the good He desires. Let us promise to Him, as Vicar of O. L. J. C., our obedience of mind and heart, and let us console Him by increasing the number of Christians in order to compensate for the many Catholics whom error and vice snatch away from our Holy Church.

May the good Lord bless your oncoming Exercises, so that they may contribute to your greater sanctification. I recommend all of you to our Most Holy Consolata, in Whose name I fatherly bless you, the good Sisters, and your dear people.

In J. M. J. very aff.

C. G. Allamano s.

LETTER No. 18
(cf LETTERE, VII, 302-303)

To the missionaries in the army [in Italy]

Torino, 1 March 1916

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

My sacred duty, as your superior, and the fatherly affection I nourish for you are leading me to remind you of what I told you at your departure and later on orally or by writing. Receive my directives with religious spirit, and practise them faithfully. By so doing, you will preserve intact your high vocation among the dangers of the world.

1. You are always bound by obedience to your Superiors, whom you must contact for direction and advice. Those who are far from Torino "*epistolarum commercium instituant, ac, quantum fieri potest, sedulo prosequantur*" [should establish epistolary correspondence and, as much as possible, persevere with it diligently] (Decree by the S. C. for Religious, 1 January 1911). In your letters you should give an account to your superiors "*de vitae ratione et conditione, de singulis mutationibus suae stationis*" [of your way and condition of life, and of all changes of stations] (Ibid.). Therefore, write frequently and with confidence, and do not take any decision of some importance without first consulting them.

2. Those who are permanently or temporarily in Torino, every time that they are free and are allowed to leave their quarters or hospitals, should go directly to our Mother-House and stay there until the end of their permit, joining their confreres in the community practices.

3. When out of Torino, a good religious should long for his dear Institute as for his own Country and family; he should be happy to obtain temporary permits and spend in our Mother-House all the time granted to him. The Sacred Congregation quoted above, speaking about people with definitive permits, says, "*recto tramite ad suas quisque religiosas domus tenetur*" [each one is bound to return directly to his religious house].

4. In every place you may be, choose a worthy priest as your confessor and director, better if he is one indicated by his Bishop, and go to him every week for confession. You should inform your superiors of his name and address (Ibid.). When you leave the place, you should ask a report on your behaviour and participation in the Holy Sacraments, to present to your superiors.

5. If happily some of you are together or near one another, the superiors will appoint a leader to direct you, and you will listen to him. He will have to give a report about the life and behaviour of his companions.

6. If in the town where you are, there is a Seminary or good religious House, following an arrangement between us and their Rector, you will go there as you would go to our Institute, to participate in their prayers and studies. (Ibid.)

7. According to the advice of the above quoted Congregation, "*ea semper modestia et cautela conversentur, quae decet religiosos viros*" [they should always practice that modesty and caution which is proper to religious men]; therefore, abstain from smoking, public entertainments, dangerous conversations and readings, from every danger of sin (Ibid.), and prefer the company of good priests and seminarians.

8. When time and occupations allow you, take up the studies proper to our Institute. However, each one of you should make a special effort to be faithful to your prayers, make some meditation, never omit your examinations of conscience, possibly celebrate the Holy Mass or participate in it and, when you go out, visit the Blessed Sacrament.

9. Our Institute takes special care of its far-away sons, and makes sure that they have all that is necessary and, possibly, convenient. As far as they are concerned, though, the missionaries,

remembering that they are religious, should be frugal in their expenses, now and then give an account to the House of what they receive and what they spend, and send to the House anything left over.

Finally, it should be a commitment of all of you to sanctify yourselves even while living in the world, so that on the happy day of your return you will not be among those who "*ad secularia remigrabunt, vel quod longe peius, religiosam repetent domum, cum periculo alios contaminandi*" [will go back to a secular life or, even much worse, will return to their religious house, but with the danger of contaminating others] (Ibid.): quod Deus avertat! [let God not allow this to happen!].

At the feet of our Most Holy Consolata, I bless you.

Very aff. in J. C.,

C. G. Allamano sup.r

LETTER No. 19

(cf LETTERE, VII, 499-452)

To the missionaries in Africa

Torino, 8 December 1916

My dearest missionaries,

Your congratulations on the occasion of my having been confirmed as superior of our Institute on the one hand console and encourage me, as a proof of your good spirit and good heart, and for this I thank you; on the other hand, however, they do not prevent me from desiring and praying that the time you will be able to govern yourselves will come soon. This desire is not new; it has been mine for a long time. In fact, two years ago, as it seemed to me that this could take place, I explicitly asked Card. Gotti, may he rest in peace, about it, telling him how our Institute was going on, both in the Mother-House and in Africa, and pointing out my particular reasons for asking to be exempted from my burdensome office. After having patiently and indulgently listened to what I said, he answered, "It is not a praiseworthy praxis for a founder to resign during his life-time... In your case, it would also be seriously detrimental to the Missions, from which the best people would be taken to constitute the governing body here. Would you have the courage to damage the work that has cost you so much?" And he concluded by commanding me to forget that idea and continue, together with our Vice-Superior, as in the past. I had to accept, as I am accepting now, only because God's will seems to be such; but we certainly feel all the burden and responsibility involved in it. For this reason, besides physical energy, we need special help from the Lord, and you should contribute to obtain it with your prayers and especially with your faithful response to your high vocation.

Such a response will consist in your constant and ever more exact observance of our Constitutions and of what is asked of you by obedience; in your growing in zeal and laboriousness as the ambit of your apostolate is broadening, for the good of many souls in need of your work; and in a special way in your careful and almost scrupulous practice of a virtue on which your advancing in perfection depends very much. I am speaking of *poverty*, which I already proposed to you as a special virtue for this year, and which I feel inspired to propose to you again for the coming year.

The sacrifices and privations we all have to face now because of the extraordinary and unprecedented rise in price of what is indispensable in life, somehow force us to practise poverty; but we know that we can gain merits from these privations if we accept them with Christian resignation, and even much more if, going beyond the inevitable privations, we impose others on ourselves, so as to progress ever more in perfection. This is what you will do, both through your exact observance of the vow and your rising to the highest degree of the virtue. This is what I hope and I ask of you as a great collective act of the penances our Holy Father has been inculcating so much to obtain the end of this war, which is becoming ever more unbearable each day.

With regard to the vow and virtue of poverty, which is also one of the three great religious vows, it seems to me that, so far, we have been rather careless and, therefore, there are many things to be corrected and properly arranged. This has certainly not happened because of lack of good will, but

rather because of an imperfect knowledge of your duties in this matter. For this reason, I thought of presenting to you some notes and reflections about it, strictly consistent with the principles of Theology and Canon Law. I desire that you read them in common every time that, during 1917, you will have your monthly Retreat; later, you should read them once a year, during your Spiritual Exercises.

To start well on such an important thing, it is necessary to first make a diligent examination of conscience on your past, to find whatever you may have done that is not in agreement with the demands of poverty. To this purpose, I am inviting you to particularly examine yourselves on the following areas:

1. Whether during your living in our Mother-House, and especially when you were departing for Africa, you took or you were given by confreres, without due permission, things belonging to the Community;

2. Whether you received money or things from people not related to you within the fourth degree, or also from relatives within the fourth degree who made you understand that they were giving them to you for the Institute or for the Missions: if this happened without my knowledge of it and without my permission, it was against poverty;

3. In regard to other things (books, clothing, tools, etc.) that you received from me or from the Vice-Superior, you must take it as a rule that only your personal clothes and your Breviary were given each one of you for exclusive use: all other things, even if given to an individual, in our intention were also given for the use of the Community. For this reason, I used to recommend you -- what unfortunately was not always done -- to put on them the stamp of the Institute and, later, to report to Bishop Perlo the things and the permissions I granted you; and it was also for this reason that, some time ago, I asked you to send me a complete list of the books you had.

Now, in order to definitively define this matter, I establish that

1. If you still have any of the things given you in the various ways mentioned in Nos. 1, 2, and 3 above (except personal clothing and Breviary), each one of you should prepare a detailed and complete list and send it to me within the first semester of 1917. The missionaries who are outside the Vicariate of Kenya, for the time being should send to me, by the same time, only a list of the things mentioned above which they have with themselves; after their return to the Vicariate, they will complete the list and send it to me within the first trimester.

2. All the permissions in matters of poverty which you received from me or from the Vice-Superior should be put in writing specifically by each one of you and sent to me within the first semester of 1917. Whoever, within these six months, does not send to me the above mentioned lists of things and of permissions received, will not be allowed to lawfully keep the things to be listed and make use of the permissions received. Whoever, instead, sends me the two lists mentioned above, will be allowed to keep the things and use the permissions during the second semester of 1917, but not beyond it, unless he receives a confirmation from me.

3. With regard to the money of which you preserve possession according to our Constitutions, I wish to make clear that the very fact that I send it to you, or allow your relatives to send it, does not include the permission to make use of it. For such a permission, considering your difficulty in contacting me, I prefer that, from now on, you ask Bishop Perlo (or Mgr. Barlassina for Kaffa), who are now empowered to grant it to you any time that the Superior's permission is required.

Now, what remains for me to do is to exhort you with all my heart to embark generously on the way of the sacrifices and privations demanded by poverty; I think that you should not find it too difficult if you recall the generosity with which you offered yourselves to God when you committed yourselves to the missionary apostolate. Our very sweet and powerful Patroness will certainly obtain for you the supernatural help required to bear with the bloodless martyrdom of yourselves which consists in a faithful observance of your Vows and Rules. She will console you with an abundance

of spiritual fruits in your apostolic toiling and, above all, She will efficaciously sustain and help you to reach the high degrees of perfection. May She always bless all of you as prays
Yours very aff. in J. and M.

Can. Giuseppe Allamano sup. gen[eral]

LETTER No. 20

(cf LETTERE, VII, 566-567)

To all Consolata missionaries

Torino, 28 June 1917

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

Our Lord wanted to test our Institute, as well as many other Communities, by asking of us a victim from among those who are in the army. Our dear seminarian Eugenio Baldi, who was seriously wounded during a battle on the Vodice on the 14th of this month, has died in a small military hospital. In spite of various attempts of mine, I haven't succeeded in finding out the circumstances of his sufferings and death. O. L. Consolata must have certainly consoled him in his sufferings and, as a good Mother, received his good soul and led it into paradise. In his last letter from the front, he told me, "*I don't know whether, when you receive this letter, I will still be alive; on my knees, I ask your holy blessing*".

And he has certainly been receiving my fatherly blessing every day, even several times each day...

This is not the right time to eulogize our dear confrere, his frank and amiable character, his enthusiasm for his future apostolate, for which the good Lord wanted to reward his desire.

It is, rather, our dear duty to pray for his blessed soul, so that it may soon be united in Heaven with our dear Fr. Manzoni and Fr. Meineri, in order to be our heavenly protectors. To this purpose, our confreres who are priests will offer, as soon as possible, a Holy Mass, and all of us will offer our H. Communion and the H. Rosary for his soul for nine days.

This departing of our dear seminarian should serve to shake up and to inspire with fervour everybody, so as to respond ever better to our holy vocation.

Our good confrere, on 17 February wrote to me: "*I am becoming aware that my being away from our dear Institute, being far from my very dear companions, in continuous contact with the world, everything contributes to diminish, to cool off my spirit! I am afraid that my character, weak and yet quite impulsive, may be bent by the mentality of the world, and that my vocation may be ruined...*". Poor Baldi. Fortunately he recognized in time the dangers that were surrounding him.

This is a serious lesson for all... Woe to the one who abandons his fervour and becomes lukewarm in his spirit of faith and interior life. Anyone who starts failing in his prayers and does not feel repugnance for the world will soon give in to its mentality and then fall miserably... This is what our dear Baldi is telling us: *defunctus adhuc loquitur* [even if dead, he still speaks]. Listen to him.

I bless you and invoke on all of you the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Very aff.

C. G. Allamano sup.

LETTER No. 21
(cf LETTERE, VIII, 26-27)

To the missionaries in Italy (especially those in the army)

Jesus, Mary, Joseph

Torino, 18 January 1918

Circular No. 3

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

A very serious loss has affected our Institute. Our dear and venerated Prefect, Fr. Costa, has departed from us for Paradise on Wednesday at 8.00 o'clock, after a very short illness. Only last Saturday he experienced a neuralgia in his face, which was treated with the normal medicines prescribed by our doctor, and he continued to fulfil his duties. On Tuesday at 9.00 o'clock, he celebrated the Holy Mass, which was destined to be his viaticum towards eternity. He went to rest a little at about 3.00 p.m., fell asleep, and never woke up, never gave any sign of recognition, because of cerebral congestion. Assisted with love and care by some confreres and some Sisters, by Fr. Gunetti and Canon Baravalle of the Consolata Shrine, he died in my arms at 8.00 o'clock last Wednesday, 16 October. He was only 32 years old; his health has never been very good, but because of his strong will-power, with constancy and ardour, he has been directing our Community (in the Mother-House) to which he had totally dedicated himself.

You certainly understand our sorrow...! After so many trials that the Lord allowed our Institute to undergo in these last years, especially your being taken away from us, we were not expecting such a very painful one. However, *Justus es, Domine, et rectum judicium tuum!* [You are just, Lord, and your judgement is right!]. All our Institute belongs to the Lord, from its beginnings and always, and the Lord favoured it with many graces, even special ones. Has he, perhaps, wanted to punish us, with such a serious loss, for our lack of response? I do not think so, and I am convinced of this; because, in spite of human weaknesses, all of you are behaving with religious spirit, even among greater dangers, and you are striving to live as worthy aspirants for the H. Missions. The good Lord must have found him ripe for Paradise, and wanted to reward one who has been his faithful and prudent servant who in a few years *explevit tempora multa* [fulfilled a long time]. He was taken to Heaven, so that, together with our dear Fathers Manzoni and Meineri and the seminarian Baldi, we would have another powerful protector. He knew very well the many needs of our Family and, therefore, will intercede at God's throne and obtain for us the comfort and the graces that are necessary to our Institute in order to continue journeying in a holy way to the perfection to which it is called. Aware of how weak I and our Vice-Rector are in bearing our heavy burden, he will obtain from the Most Holy Virgin Mary the strength and grace needed in order not to succumb, and will

give all of you a docile heart to help us carry out our tasks, and will console us with your perfect obedience to our desires.

At the moment, I cannot go on speaking to you about the virtues of our well-beloved confrere which, on the other hand, you also have known and appreciated. What I want to do is to invite you to pray for him, according to our Constitutions, remembering him in your H. Masses and Communion, and offering for his eternal rest the H. Rosary for nine days.

May our dear Consolata console you, as I implore at the feet of her altar.

Very aff. in O. L. J. C.

C. G. Allamano sup.

LETTER No. 22

(cf LETTERE, VIII, 29-31)

This letter, the same as the previous one with a few little adaptations, was sent on the same day to all Consolata missionaries in Africa (Fathers, Brothers, and Sisters).

N.B.: The following series of short letters were originally published on the first 16 issues of "*Da Casa Madre*" [a new news-sheet for communications and information] as the column "*La parola del Padre*" [The word of the Father].

LETTER No. 23

(cf LETTERE, VIII, 137)

To the missionaries in the army

Torino, [end of May] 1918

My very beloved sons in the Lord,

May the affectionate greetings of your Father and Rector be pleasing to you, beloved missionaries in the army, and may it be an encouragement and comfort in the toils and hardships of military life. I recommend all and each one of you in particular to our Most Holy Consolata, so that, well aware of your vocation, you may preserve entire your apostolic spirit, even while you generously fulfil your duty to our Country.

Be sure to keep always in mind what our Ven. Cafasso used to say about priests: "Every apostle in his behaviour and in his habits must be totally different from the common ways of the other people, because his vocation and his status are so different."

May O. L. Consolata bless and protect you.

Very aff. in the Lord,

Can. G. Allamano, Superior

LETTER No. 24

(cf LETTERE, VIII, 138-139)

To the missionaries in the army

Torino, [end of May] 1918

My dearest missionaries in the army,

Benedictus Deus, qui consolatur nos in omni tribulatione nostra [Blessed be God who consoles us in all our sorrows]. Due to the repeated departures of many of our dear confreres for the military service, our Institute and our Missions had to suffer a lot. The Lord, who had consoled us by the permission to keep some members for the needs of the Mother-House, grants us the return of four older missionaries destined to help our confreres in Kenya and in the Kaffa region.

While we thank the civil and military authorities for this special favour, we offer very heartfelt thanks to God who consoles us with this pleasant return, and we pray our dear Consolata that the yearned day may soon come when She will bring back all our brothers to the Institute and to the heart of

Rector

Your

LETTER No. 25

(cf LETTERE, VIII, 147)

To the missionaries in the army

Torino, 16 June 1918

My very beloved sons in the Lord,

Our dear Mother, the Consolata, on the beautiful day of Her feast, as She blesses and consoles all those who pray to Her, will in a special way look at Her dear sons who are striving to bear Her name with honour.

"*Ave spes, consolatio, refugium nostrum, o Maria: Beata tu fidei nostrae: Beata tu animae nostrae: Beata dilectioni nostrae: Beata preconii et benedictionibus nostris*" [Hail Mary, our hope, our consolation, and our refuge: You are Blessed for our trust, our thoughts, our affections, our praises and our blessings].

Your Rector

LETTER No. 26

(cf LETTERE, VIII, 159)

To the missionaries in the army

Torino, 7 July 1918

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

We are in July: a month that the devotion of the faithful consecrates to the Most Precious Blood of O. L. Jesus Christ. This Divine Blood *emundat nos ab omni peccato* [purifies us from all sins]; the world needs it, as well as each one of us in particular. It strengthen us in the struggles and pains of our life, and for the merits of His Blood we shall save many souls and attain to a blessed Paradise.

Have devotion to It, and recite often the following short prayer:

"Eternal Father, I offer you the most precious Blood of Jesus Christ in reparation for my sins and for the needs of our H. Church."

Your Rector

LETTER No. 27
(cf LETTERE, VIII, 168)

To the missionaries in the army

Torino, [before the 26th of July] 1918

My dearest in O. L. Jesus Christ,

You certainly remember the beautiful days spent at the Shrine of St. Ignatius: days of rest for your soul as well as for your body.

Far as you are, know that your brothers, now at the Shrine, remember you and pray for you. You recall the majestic statue of the Saint and the words written under it: *ad majorem Dei gloriam*. You, too, say, "Yes, everything for the glory, the greater glory of God: your thoughts, affections, words, actions, and especially your many sacrifices should be offered to God, so that the Lord may be glorified in your present life and, as a reward of your sufferings, many souls of unbelievers in Africa may be saved.

I bless you.

Your Rector

LETTER No. 28
(cf LETTERE, VIII, 173)

To the missionaries in the army

St. Ignatius, [end of July - beginning of August] 1918

The month of August could be called the second month of Mary. On the 15th of this month, we celebrate the *Assumption*, the greatest feast of the M. H. Virgin: *Inter festivitates eius habet quandam excellentiam* [Among her feasts, it has a certain excellence] (Suarez).

It would be convenient to spend the first fifteen days of the month in preparation, and the other fifteen in thanksgiving. It is a pious practice to pray the Hail Mary 12 times every day to honour the 12 stars with which the M. H. Virgin was crowned in Paradise. They mean the 12 virtues that mostly shone in the B. V. Mary, and in which, as worthy sons, we must imitate Her.

Your Rector

LETTER No. 29
(cf LETTERE, VIII, 193)

To the missionaries in the army

Torino, 18 September 1918

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

The novena and the month dedicated to the Holy Guardian Angels is approaching; together with St. Bernard, I am exhorting you to cultivate reverence, devotion and confidence for them: "*reverentiam pro praesentia, devotionem pro benevolentia, fiduciam pro custodia*" [reverence for their presence, devotion for their benevolence, confidence in their protection]. Pray often to your Guardian Angel; He will sustain you in your temptations and tribulations, and he will bring you back safe and sound to your dear Institute.

Your Rector

LETTER No. 30
(cf LETTERE, VIII, 196-197)

To the missionaries perpetually professed in 1918

Torino, 27 September 1918

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

Being unable to write to each one of you in particular, I rejoice with all of you who have taken or will take perpetual vows this year. Your good number makes this an exceptional year for our Institute, and serves admirably for its consolidation. I rejoice for your good and for the good of all our Missions.

On the solemn day of your Profession you have renewed your firm will to live as holy missionaries through the observance of the three vows and of the H. Rules. By doing so, you will live happy in this short life, and will deserve the Paradise proper to Religious-Missionaries.

I place your promises at the feet of our dear Consolata, and I beg Her to bless them.

Once again, together with my spiritual embrace, receive the fatherly blessing of

Your very aff. in J. C.

Can. G. Allamano sup.

LETTER No. 31
(cf LETTERE, VIII, 206-207)

To all missionaries

Torino, 5 October 1918

Requiescite pusillum... [Rest a little...]

My very dear sons in O. L. J. C.,

Our family is again in mourning for the premature and almost sudden death of the youngest among its members in the army, our very dear seminarian Costanzo Leinardi.

On Thursday, 19 September, toward evening we received a telegram from La Morra informing us of the very serious condition of our beloved confrere. This news, totally unexpected, filled us with

worry, and we hurried to send him a telegram promising our prayers and sending to him my fatherly blessing.

But, unfortunately, our response did not reach him on time: on that very evening, the soul of your dear confrere took off for Paradise, strengthened by the grace of the Holy Sacraments and purified by the sacrifice of his apostolic vocation. In fact, the priest who assisted him and prepared him for death informed me that, during his short illness, he has been speaking about missions often and with fervour, thus showing that he was aspiring to them with all his youthful heart. This transpired also from his pleasant letters, as when he wrote, "*My heart and my thoughts are always yearning to reach and go through the door of our Institute*", and another time, "*Thanks to God, I have remained strong throughout, and my purpose is always firm, my vocation steadfast*". And we, even if deeply suffering for this new loss, have to submit ourselves even more deeply to the holy and fatherly hand of God that is testing us.

However, my very great concern is that all of you may learn well that, in the supreme instant of death, nothing can console and animate you to hope except the thought of having faithfully responded to the great and high vocation that God gave you: accept, dear sons, this lesson that will serve you a lot in the serious material and moral dangers you have to go through each day.

In the meantime, I recommend to your prayers the soul of our mourned deceased, for whom here in the Mother-House we have already celebrated the prescribed Masses, especially the one on the seventh day. You, too, offer the holy Rosary for nine consecutive days, as well as your holy Communion for the eternal rest of our dear confrere.

May our Lord and O. L. Consolata continue to protect and bless all of you, as with all his heart blesses you

Your very aff. in Domino,

C. G. Allamano Rector

LETTER No. 32

(cf LETTERE, VIII, 211)

To the missionaries in the army

Torino, 20 October 1918

J. M. J.

My dearest sons in Domino,

During the novena and feast of All Saints let us lift up our hearts to Heaven in a special way: *Ingens multitudo carorum nos expectat* [A great multitude of dear people is expecting us!].

Let us rejoice with them and pray that they might help us to become saints: even if they are already happy, nonetheless they are anxious that we, too, may join them.

In the meantime let us not forget our deceased people, especially those whom the Lord called to Himself in the last year and, as far as we are concerned, let us make use of all the trials that the Lord sends us in this life to purify ourselves, as St. Catherine of Genova wrote: "The Lord purifies me from my slag by means of sufferings in this world, so that, after my death, I may immediately enjoy eternal happiness".

With fatherly affection I bless you.

Your Rector

LETTER No. 33
(cf LETTERE, VIII, 233))

To the missionaries in the army

Torino, 15 November 1918

My dearest in O. L. Jesus Christ,

Let us say with the whole of our heart "DEO GRATIAS" to our Protector of the year, Blessed Cottolengo. The recent events made everybody rejoice, but in a special way they made us rejoice, because we could foresee that soon you may return to your dear Community. Continue to fulfil your duties well until the end, and in the meantime prepare yourselves through a detachment of your heart from the world and its mentality, in order to take up again the whole spirit of our Institute. On that beautiful day when I may be able to definitively embrace you again, may I see you truly eager for holy discipline and well disposed to a full formation for your apostolate.

I bless you.

Your Rector

LETTER No. 34
(cf LETTERE, VIII, 254)

To the missionaries in the army

Torino, [after 9 December] 1918

J. M. J.

My dearest sons in the Lord,

In the succession of feasts so dear to our hearts, because they remind us of all the sweetness that always characterized them since we were children, let us strive to live the spirit that animates the H. Church, our Mother. Every day she presents new spiritual nourishment to us, first on the holy day of Christmas and then on the feasts of the great saints that follow it. Let us also try to be reborn in spirit, *resuscita gratiam quae est in te* [resuscitate the grace that is in you]; let us try to really renew ourselves in the perfume of the virtues that emanates from the cradle of Jesus, so that we may start with new ardour and renewed good will the new year, at the feet of Jesus.

Affectionately I bless you.

Of all in Domino,

Your Rector

LETTER No. 35
(cf LETTERE, VIII, 273)

To the missionaries in the army

1 January 1919

J. M. J.

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

We are at the beginning of a new year. Looking back at the past one, let us thank the Lord for the benefits received and the graces he granted us, even in the midst of the trials He allowed us to undergo. From now on, let our life be one of hope, of always new and more abundant blessings on each one of us and in particular on our Institute.

May soon come the beautiful day on which all of us, *cor unum et anima una* [one in heart and mind], start again to run on the way of our sanctification under the gaze of our Consolata.

Bd. M. Mary Alacoque, whose canonization is approaching, will be our Patron Saint for the new year, during which we shall strive to imitate the meekness of the S. Heart of Jesus.

Short prayer: *Jesu, mitis et humilis corde, fac cor nostrum secundum cor tuum* [Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make our heart similar to yours].

Your Rector

LETTERA No. 36
(cf LETTERE, VIII, 297)

To the missionaries in Italy

Torino, 17 February 1919

My dearest in O. L. Jesus Christ,

With deep sorrow, I am again informing you of a departure for Paradise, of our dear confrere, the Rev. Br. Giacomo Gaidano, a professed member and missionary in Kenya for the last seven years. The best eulogy is the one of Bishop Perlo which I invite you to meditate upon and to copy in your life.

In the meantime, I remind you of the month dedicated to St. Joseph, our special Protector.

Honour this great Saint with some daily devotions.

I bless you.

Very aff.

C. G. Allamano Sup.

LETTER No. 37
(cf LETTERE, VIII, 310-311)

To the missionaries in Kenya

Torino, 3 March 1919

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

Ten years have quickly past since the *Decretum Laudis* was granted by the Holy See to our Institute. Since that time Our Lord has always continued to bless our Mother-House and our Missions. Now it seems convenient that, for our stability, we should apply for the definitive approval of our Institute and Constitutions. I am inviting, therefore, each one of you to examine well our Constitutions, and to send me in writing the observations you think may contribute to your greater sanctification and to the future prosperity of our Missions.

After making a novena to the Holy Spirit and to O. L. Consolata, each one of you, without consulting others, should put in writing whatever his conscience tells him, whatever at the time of his death he may wish he had written. It is not a matter of substantial changes, but of what the new Code (of Canon Law) and your experience require.

What you write should be given in a sealed envelope to H. E. the Vicar [Bishop Perlo] who will send them to me.

May the Lord bless all of you, as I ask Him to do.

Very aff. in J. C.,

C. G. Allamano sup.

LETTER No. 38

(cf LETTERE, VIII, 314-315)

To the missionaries in Africa

Glorietur frater humilis in exaltatione sua

[Let the humble brother glory in his exaltation] (Jam 1:9)

IN MEMORY

of our

PROFESSED BROTHER

GIACOMO GAIDANO

born at Lingotto (Torino) on 24 March 1889

died at the mission station of Our Lady of Graces

of Nyeri (B. E. A.) on 19 December 1918

R. I. P.

Fuit homo simplex rectus ac timens Deum

(There was a simple man, righteous and God-fearing) (Job 1:8)

Torino, 4 March 1919

My dearest in the Lord,

The good Lord wanted again a victim from us: this time he chose our dear Brother Giacomo Gaidano. He was a fruit ripe for Paradise, as rightly wrote to me H. E. the Vicar, and as you may confirm as witnesses of his virtues. For your common edification, I am quoting parts of some of his letters, written to me, which show his spirit of faith in his life and work.

On 29 September 1915, he wrote, "In the morning I begin one work and, before it is night, I end up having done ten other ones of different kinds; however, when one works for the Lord, even if he had to do twenty different works, it is always all right; provided that his holy will be done and for his greater glory".

On 28 March 1916, telling me that on the occasion of Karoli's Baptism, he had been left alone at Gaturi mission, he added, "I said I was alone, but that was a terrible blunder; because in our church there was the Blessed Sacrament and, therefore, I was anything but alone! I was with no less than

the King of kings, and I alone to honour Him. During the day, as I was doing some carpentry work, I was staying willingly near the church so as to be nearer to Our Lord and be able to think of Him, making acts of adoration and of love, in order to supply for those of my Confreres who had gone to Tuthu".

Let us pray for his beautiful soul that we trust may have already received the crown of the apostles.
Your very aff.

C. G. Allamano Superior

LETTER No. 39
(cf LETTERE, IX/1, 135)

To the Mother-House community on holidays at St. Ignatius'

Torino, 7 September 1921

J. M. J.

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

Also on this beautiful Feast of the Nativity of the B. V. Mary I cannot come to St. Ignatius. From Torino I will be assisting to your Congress or "Crocicata", and I bless you with the whole of my heart. *Energy* in everything is a sign of vocation to the Apostolate, and you give a proof of it in such meetings, to which everyone strives to give his best contribution, no matter how small it may be. Courage...

Well, your long holidays are approaching their end. In the last week remaining, be ever more fervent and obedient. St. Ignatius must have been happy about you; anyhow, in the remaining days make up for any defects, so that you will be returning to Torino with your hands full of St. Ignatius' graces.

Desiring to see you soon, I bless you.

Very aff. in J. C.,

C. G. Allamano r.

LETTER No. 40
(cf LETTERE, IX/1, 148-150)

To the Consolata missionaries

Torino, 15 October 1921

J. M. J.

My dearest in O. L. Jesus Christ,

Another great trial has affected our Institute and our Missions. The Rev. Brother Michele Cavigliasso has left us for Paradise. But what mostly grieves us is the fact that his unexpected death took place without any assistance from any of his Confreres could be given him. A telegram,

followed by a long letter from Fr. Fassino, informed me that our dear brother died on 21 August, drowned after falling into a large pond. I am not telling you any detail of this accident, because you probably already know them better than I.

After having already lost two Brothers, Giacomo and Umberto, we were not expecting this so soon, while our good Michele, in the strength of his 42 years, was all dedicated to the great work of the Farm.

All we can do is to bend our head to God's Holy Will, whose judgement is unfathomable but always full of mercy. The good Lord wanted to reward in Heaven the 14 years of work in the Missions of our blessed Brother, and offer us a lesson on the uncertainty about the time and way of our death.

"Estote parati, quia qua hora non putatis, Filius hominis veniet" [Stand ready, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect]. Our dear Michele, when in obedience to his Superior left the house at about 10 o'clock, certainly did not expect to be back only two days later as a cold corpse... Good for him that he always lived as a fervent religious and zealous missionary, so that death was not unexpected for him, as it found him ready for God's call!

You used to see him always peaceful and happy, dedicated to the works assigned to him by obedience. When advised or corrected, he did not look for excuses; in his humility he used to say, "I know that I am poor and good for nothing: *in peccatis concepit me mater mea!* [a sinner from the moment of conception!]" He drew this religious virtue from his devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. He spent in church all the time he had at his disposal. Two days before dying, somebody wrote to me, he said that if he had a full day at his disposal, he would have spent the whole of it in front of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. And he added, "If a time comes when I am not able to work any longer, I will spend all my time in adoring the Blessed Sacrament".

Here it is where Holy missionaries like St. Francis Xavier are formed! Somebody complains about not finding in the Missions all the aids to perfection that are available in the Mother-House. Go often full of trust to Jesus, and He will supply everything. He will enlighten and comfort you: *"accedite et illuminamini; venite ad me omnes qui laboratis"* [every face turned to him grows brighter; come to me all you who labour].

The sudden death of our dear Brother should make us think of our death. When and how shall we die? At that time will we be well prepared, or will we yearn for some more time to better prepare ourselves for God's judgement? *"Oh, si daretur hora!"* [Oh, that we could be given an hour!]. Truly a religious missionary should always be ready for the great passage. Unfortunately it is not always so. After having performed the great sacrifices of detaching themselves from everybody and everything when they left for the Missions, some people allow their hearts to get attached to little things which prevent a greater perfection and will bother them at the time of death. Examine yourselves every day to see whether you live in perfect agreement with your holy vows, as well as on the virtues of charity and humility.

Let us live, my dear sons, in perfection, in order to always be ready to die. And this not only in order not to go to hell, a terrible thing for a missionary even if still possible, but also in order to avoid as much as possible the sufferings of Purgatory. And this is not enough. We should live in perfection in order to enjoy greater glory in Paradise; and, if for nothing else, in order to live in peace and to enjoy peace of soul at the moment of death.

The plenary indulgence of our Venerable [Cafasso] will apply also in the case of sudden death, but will our dispositions allow us to acquire it? You know that no sin, even the smallest, is pardoned if there is no sorrow and purpose of amendment. Shall we satisfy these conditions at that time, if we never amend ourselves of our many weaknesses and habitual small failings?

Sometimes in religious Communities you can hear somebody complaining that there is no longer the spirit of the foundation... Instead of these useless complaints and instead of asking perfection from the others, each one should seriously strive to achieve perfection himself. If everybody did that, there would be the spirit in the whole Community.

By way of conclusion, I recommend that you strive for your own sanctification. Each one must give an account of himself, and not of others. I must give an account of my duty to offer you the means of becoming holy missionaries, and you of the way you use these means. All of you, thinking of the "*ad quid venisti*", should not get lost in useless questions that will make you waste time and prevent you from achieving your aim, which is your sanctification and the conversion of non-believers.

Our Lady Consolata will assist you so that you will deserve good rewards. From here, I continue to pray our dear Mother for you, and I ask for you the spirit of fortitude and the heroism of the martyrs. Entrust yourselves to the arms of the B. V. Mary; She will console you and will change your sorrows into joys. Think of me as being near you, and comfort yourselves. Courage, then, sustained by our prayers; *avanti in Domino* [go ahead in the Lord], day by day, hour by hour.

At the feet of Our Lady Consolata I wholeheartedly bless you, and am happy to call myself
Your very aff. in O. L. Jesus Christ,

C. G. Allamano superior

LETTER No. 41
(cf LETTERE, IX/1, 295-297)

[This letter, without date and signature, but handwritten by our Founder, was never sent to Kenya. In its place the more concise letter dated 31 March 1922 (see below) was sent.]

To the missionary priests in Kenya

[before 11 March 1922]

Our Missionary Institute had its official beginning on 29 January 1901, with the Archbishop of Turin's approval. You know well how much it has been blessed by our Lord and by our dear Consolata; your growth in number and the many works you accomplished in 20 years for the salvation of many non-Christians who embraced the Faith are a proof of such blessings. Through the benevolent backing of the Supreme Pontiffs Pius X and Benedict XV, and the guidance of the Cardinals Gotti and Van Rossum, we obtained the *Decretum Laudis* which made us directly subject to the S. Propaganda and an Institute *Juris Pontificii* (of pontifical right). Through decisions of the H. See, Kenya became first a Mission and then a Vicariate; later the Prefecture of Kaffa was assigned to us, and soon Iringa will also be. For all this, we give glory and honour to God alone who sustained the Superiors through all their cares and toils; we give thanks also to our Patroness, O. L. Consolata, who maternally protected us, and we praise all our dear missionaries (Fathers, Brothers and Sisters) who with true apostolic spirit worked and are still working, toiling and sweating.

I believe that, being things as they are now, the time has come to properly arrange a regular government of our Congregation and to provide it with all that is necessary for consolidating it spiritually and materially.

The Very Rev. V. Rector and I are already elderly and rather worn out by taking care of a Community that continues to grow in personnel and apostolic works.

You know that we already tried twice to offer our resignations to Propaganda, but by obedience we were asked to continue our work. At present, however, as you have grown in number, some younger members can take the place of the older ones who may have to leave their work and come to the Mother-House to direct the Institute by forming the Council.

We do not intend to abandon you before our death; we will continue to help you with advice and material means.

We are very concerned, for the greater glory of God and the salvation of unbelievers, that this Institute may not decrease its process of growth, but continue in ever better ways, preserving that spirit which we have been striving to instil into you throughout many years.

The occurrence of the 3rd Centenary of the foundation of Propaganda will animate clergy and faithful to missionary cooperation, and will increase in us the zeal for the salvation of souls of unbelievers. This year we hope to obtain the definitive approval of our Institute and Constitutions for its perennial stability.

As soon as this is done, I will call from Africa the members of our Chapter for its first General meeting. Those who must participate are the following: the Ordinary or his representative, the local delegate Superior, and two missionary priests in perpetual vows to be elected by all the professed priests, including those in Iringa.

I believe you have already been informed that I have appointed our dear Fr. Cagliari as delegate Superior for the Vicariate of Kenya. As soon as he receives this letter, he will send it to all those who have to vote. Then he will receive in confidential letters the names of the two missionary priests elected, and will inform you of the results, so that everyone may suggest to the two elected priests the matters he feels should be considered at the General Chapter for the good of our Institute and Missions.

I would like to remind you that in the past elections for our Constitutions the greater number of votes went to Fathers Rolfo and Gillio. Leaving to each of you full freedom, I cannot refrain from saying that I think it would be convenient to elect the same two Fathers, also because they are older and have never returned to Italy since their departure for Africa.

Once the people elected are informed by telegram to depart for Italy, prayers should be offered in all mission stations to invoke on our Chapter the light of the Holy Spirit and the blessing of O. L. Consolata. To this purpose, you shall pray in common the *Veni Creator* [Come, Creator (Spirit)] and three times the Hail Mary.

Trusting that everything will turn out to be for God's glory and the good of our Institute, I bless you.

LETTER No. 42

(cf LETTERE, IX/1, 311-312)

To the missionary priests in Iringa

Torino, 25 March 1922

My dearest Fathers

Panelatti, Vignoli, Ciravegna, Albertone, Spinello,

I would have liked to answer your various letters before now, but I have always been waiting for the so-often-promised and never-done official establishment of the Prefecture of Iringa. The Decree has not yet arrived, but I recently heard that it could come fairly soon.

In the meantime, I am ever more desiring that our Institute may begin to stand on its own, with the regime and organization described by our Constitutions at Nos. 52 and 74. To this purpose I intend to convoke a General Chapter as soon as possible, with the participation of the people indicated by No. 54 of our Constitutions. Among these, there are "two perpetually professed missionaries from each Mission, elected by all the Missionary priests residing in that particular Mission".

For the time being, your Mission is still the one of Kenya. It will then be up to the Superior General elected by the General Chapter to designate the missionaries who will remain in Iringa, or go to Kenya, or to Kaffa. Therefore, I am inviting you to designate as soon as possible two older missionaries who will come as your delegates to the General Chapter, when I will inform them. Having chosen them according to the Lord's inspiration, each one of you will send the two names, in a sealed envelope, to Fr. Cagliero, who has been appointed by me as *Superior of Mission* for the Kenya Vicariate and, as such, shall have to participate in the Chapter.

The choice of the two names is totally free; however, I dare suggesting to prefer older missionaries who have never returned to Italy. At the last year's elections, the majority of votes went to Fathers Rolfo and Gillio, who have never returned to Italy. But, I repeat, you are free to choose; just do it *coram Deo* [in God's presence] and only for the greater good of our Institute.

May O. L. Consolata confirm you in the work you are doing for the good of souls; and I bless you with all my heart.

Very aff. in J. C.,

C. G. Allamano sup.

N.B.: Copies of this letter should be made and sent to each missionary in Iringa.

LETTER No. 43

(cf LETTERE, IX/1, 321-322)

To the missionary priests in Kenya

Torino, 31 March 1922

Dear Father.....,

As the Lord in his goodness willed to keep me alive so that I could see the present consoling development of our Institute and its missionary work, I feel that the time has come to provide for a greater stability of our Institute by establishing its regime and organization according to what is indicated in the second part of our Constitutions. To this purpose I intend to convoke as soon as possible a General Chapter, according to No. 54 of our Constitutions.

This article prescribes that "two perpetually professed missionaries for each Mission, elected by all the missionary priests residing in that Mission" should participate. Therefore, with this letter I invite you to designate as soon as possible two older missionaries from Kenya, so that they may participate as your delegates, together with Fr. Cagliero, who has to come as Superior of Mission.

They will take part in the election of the Superior General and the four Councillors, because I and Can. Camisassa do not intend to accept to be elected to any of these positions. Your election of the two delegates is totally free; however, I dare mention that it would be convenient to prefer two older missionaries who have never returned from the Missions, as you did last year when you elected with a great majority the Fathers Rolfo and Gillio.

Once you have made your choice as the Lord inspires you and with the intent of our Institute's greater good, you will send the two names in a sealed envelope to Fr. Cagliero who, after counting the votes, will inform you of the two names that obtained the highest number of votes; if two missionaries receive the same number of votes, the older one will remain elected.

May O. L. Consolata confirm you in your work for the good of souls; and I bless you with all my heart.

Very aff. in J. and M.,

C. G. Allamano, sup. general

LETTER No. 44
(cf LETTERE, IX/1, 322-323)

To the missionary priests in Kaffa

Torino, 31 March 1922

Dear Father.....,

As the Lord in his goodness willed to keep me alive so that I could see the present consoling development of our Institute and its missionary work, I feel that the time has come to provide for a greater stability of our Institute by establishing its regime and organization according to what is indicated by the second part of our Constitutions. To this purpose I intend to convoke as soon as possible a General Chapter, according to No. 54 of our Constitutions.

This article prescribes that "two perpetually professed missionaries for each Mission, elected by all the missionary priests residing in that Mission" should participate. Therefore, with this letter I invite you to designate as soon as possible two older missionaries from Kaffa, so that they may participate in the Chapter as your delegates.

They will take part in the election of the Superior General and the four Councillors, because I and Can. Camisassa do not intend to accept to be elected to any of these positions. Your election of the two delegates is totally free; however, I dare mention that it would be convenient to give a preference to Fr. Olivero, who has just returned from your Mission.

Once you have made your choice as the Lord inspires you and with the only intent of our Institute's greater good, you will send the two names in a sealed envelope to Mgr. Barlassina who, after counting the votes, will inform you of the two names that obtained the highest number of votes; if two missionaries receive the same number of votes, the older one will remain elected.

May O. L. Consolata confirm you in your work for the good of souls; and I bless you with all my heart.

Very aff. in J. and M.,

C. G. Allamano sup. general

LETTER No. 45
(cf LETTERE, IX/1, 344-345)

To the fathers in the Ap. Prefecture of Iringa

Torino, 29 April 1922

My dearest Fathers in Iringa,

Finally the case of Iringa has come to an end. After years of waiting, our Holy Father Pius XI, in one of first Acts of his Pontificate, with a "Brief" dated 3 March 1922, has constituted the Apostolic Prefecture of Iringa and has entrusted it to our Institute. In the past few days I received from Rome the news of it and the relevant Documents.

As we are doing here in the Mother-House, you too rejoice and thank the Lord for it. Now you may truly say that you have from God the vocation to work with fruit in that region.

You might desire to know who will be your Apostolic Prefect. I do not yet know myself. I have not yet been told from Rome who will be appointed. As soon as I know, I will write to you. In the

meantime you prepare your mind and heart to receive him as sent by God for your good and the good of your people there.

May the Lord bless you and confirm you in mutual charity and unity of spirit.

Believe me as your very aff. in Domino,

C. G. Allamano sup.r

LETTER No. 46

(cf LETTERE, IX/1, 367-368)

To the Fathers in the Apostolic Prefecture of Iringa

18 May 1922

I have been waiting some days to send you this letter in the hope of being able to give you the good news. Now I have received the official news that the S. Propaganda has appointed Fr. Francesco Cagliero as your Apostolic Prefect. Deo gratias! You know him and appreciate him because of his special talents, true piety and pastoral zeal. He will first come to Italy and then to you. Rejoice with him and promise to help him in the burdensome office that God has entrusted to him.

I bless you and pray for courage from the Lord.

Very aff. in J. C.,

C. G. Allamano Sup.

LETTER No. 47

(cf LETTERE, IX/1, 418-419)

To the community at St. Ignatius'

J. M. J.

Torino, Feast of St. Ignatius

[31 July 1922]

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

Even if your Rev. Superior writes to me good things about you and your observance, my duty and the affection I have for you compel me to have some doubts, not in general about all of you, but about some professed and novices, whose character I know well.

I have been hoping that, after the many means used to make you advance in perfection, all of you would have made a greater profit in Holy obedience and spirit of sacrifice, especially in order to obtain the miracle of healing for our venerated V. Rector. Everybody should be committed to make many daily sacrifices without grumbling and complaining. Remember the fact of Moses' sister.

I regret the fact that, since some time, a very bad spirit of judging everything, and especially the Superiors, has entered into our House. Woe, if the murmurings, that were not present in the past, do not cease. Let the guilty ones confess them and, at the feet of St. Ignatius, make a firm purpose of amendment and of fraternal correction.

I desire that the letter of St. Ignatius on obedience be read in common; I am sending you a copy of it.

Certain of your good will, I paternally bless you.

I am in Domino your very aff. in J. C.,

Rector

LETTER No. 48
(cf LETTERE, IX/1, 434)

To the seminarians on holidays at St. Ignatius'

Torino, [before 15 August 1922]

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

I have read rather quickly your compositions. I found some good material in it, but not as much as I expected. Many of you did not remain within the theme, and most of you did not deal with it completely. You were supposed to compose a little talk about Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Learn to write plainly, like Pellico in "Le Mie Prigioni" and Fr. Cesari in all his classical writings: no bombastic style, nor inopportune profane quotes. It is clear that you need frequent exercises during the year; it will be convenient to do it.

Celebrate well the Solemnity of the Assumption; I will be with you in spirit.

I bless you.

Rector

LETTER No. 49
(cf LETTERE, IX/1 448-449)

To all missionaries (Fathers, Brothers and Sisters)

J. M. J.

Torino, 26 August 1922

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

My hand is shaking, my heart aching, and my eyes shedding bitter tears as I am writing this short letter to you.

Our dear Vice-Rector and Vice-Superior is no longer among us, and we will see him again only in Paradise. He died peacefully in the Lord on the evening of the 18th of this month, having received all religious comforts and most loving cares. What a loss for our Shrine and even more for our Institute and Missions! We felt his presence was necessary, and prayed O. L. Consolata to prolong his life for some more time. Many, including me, have offered their life so that the one who was so dear to us would be preserved. O. L. Consolata did not think she should grant our common prayer. He was ripe for Heaven... He had completed his holy and laborious life; he could say with St. Paul: *Cursum consummavi...; in reliquo reposita est mihi corona justitiae* [I have run the race to the finish...; all there is to come now is the crown of righteousness]. Say with me *fiat* to the inscrutable will of God; and let it be for the eternal rest of his beautiful soul.

In the midst of our great sorrow, the expressions of appreciation and affection that the whole of Torino offered to him, so humble and unknown to many, consoled us. His burial was a triumph.

He was living for you and for our Missions; he spent his last day thinking and speaking about our Institute. His last words, which he called his last will and testament, were about unity between the men and women Consolata Missionaries.

Pray for him, and also for me, who am very distressed, and who in the name of O. L. Consolata bless you.

Very aff. in J. C.,

C. G. Allamano Superior

LETTER No. 50

(cf LETTERE, IX/2, 119-122)

To the missionaries

Torino, 20 June 1923

Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam

My dearest sons in O. L. J. C.,

I am presenting to you the book of our Constitutions, revised and corrected according to the new Code of Canon Law, and approved by the Sacred Congregation *de Propaganda Fide ad experimentum* for a period of ten years; after this -- or even in a much shorter time -- they will be definitively approved.

I am inviting you above all to lift up with me fervent actions of thanksgiving to our Lord and to O. L. Consolata for all the favours granted to our Institute from its beginnings until the present time.

You know well that I undertook this work (the foundation of the Institute), moved only by God's will, and only for His greater glory, the sanctification of the members of the Institute, and the salvation of unbelievers.

You also know that our beginnings were humble and subjected to various trials. The plan for the foundation, presented since 1891 to Cardinal Simeoni, Prefect of the S. C. *de Propaganda Fide* and approved by him, could not be put into effect at that time because of many difficulties; and for ten years nothing more was done. Only in 1900, when such difficulties ceased to exist and more favourable circumstances arose, we submitted to the Bishops of the Sub -Alpine Region, gathered for an Inter-Provincial Council at the Consolata Shrine, the old plan which obtained the unanimous approval of the Very Ecc. Prelates. After this, we immediately went ahead with the work; and on 29 January 1901 the Consolata Institute for Foreign Missions was canonically established by a Decree from the Very Em. Cardinal A. Richelmy, our very beloved Archbishop. In the history of our Institute, this is the official date of its birth, to be remembered every year with heartfelt gratitude to God.

Five months later, on 18 June 1901, the small house in “Corso Duca di Genova” opened its doors to the first small group of Consolata Missionaries. They were only a few; and when, on 8 May 1902, the first departure for Kenya took place, our small Mother-House remained without sons and deserted. In humility, obscurity, and among contradictions, the Institute was laying its solid foundations, so that, at the proper time, it could come into light and grow to be a giant. Since that time, every new year marked a step forward in its organization and development. In a very consoling way, the missionary vocations among priests, seminarians, and lay people multiplied, not only in the Dioceses of Piedmont, but also outside, so that we had to renounce our original project to open the Institute only to Clergy from Piedmont; new and ever more numerous departures of people for the Missions took place, while many others were preparing themselves in our Mother-House. In 1905 (14 September), our first apostolic field of Kenya, already flourishing, was established as an Independent Mission; four years later, on 28 June 1909, it was raised to the rank of Apostolic Vicariate. In 1909, after an unusual short time since its foundation, our Institute was granted the *Decretum Laudis* which, among other things, approved -- and I am pleased to remind you of this now -- our method of evangelization with the following words: "A characteristic of these Missions is the fact that the Missionaries do not confine themselves to introduce our religion... but, together with the splendour of our faith, they take to those people the light of development, teaching them new methods of agriculture, breeding of cattle and other animals, the most usual arts and crafts...". In 1910 we inaugurated the grand new building of our Mother-House, which had become necessary because of the always increasing number of aspirants, and in the same year there was the foundation of our sibling Institute of the Consolata Missionary Sisters. In 1913 a second field of apostolic work was entrusted to our Institute: the Prefecture of Kaffa; and in 1922 a third one: the Prefecture of Iringa.

Therefore, twenty years after its foundation, our Institute could rightly be considered adult. It was time to give it a definitive organization. Our very beloved Vice-Rector, Can. Giacomo Camisassa, and myself, thinking that we were no longer needed and also because old and tired, felt that we could no longer bear the responsibility and the heavy burden of the Institute's government, and decided to resign from our positions of Superior and Vice-Superior, even if continuing to be your protectors and benefactors. To this purpose we convoked the first General Chapter and, in the meantime, our Constitutions started being examined in order to improve them according to our experience and the requirements of the new Canon Law.

Our Lord, in the inscrutable designs of his Will, which is always good and holy even when it affects us harshly, at the very eve of our Chapter, on 18 August 1922, called to himself our very mourned Vice-Rector, depriving our Institute of its most valid support, and leaving me and you in dismay. Even if weeping, we pronounced our fiat to God's Will, but we still feel, even at the present, a sense of great loss; we certainly cannot forget him and all that he did for our Institute, for which he sacrificed the whole of his precious and holy life up to his last breath. However, if our dear Vice-Rector could not participate in our First Chapter here on earth, he could certainly assist from Heaven, guiding the steps of the Chapter's members who, in various meetings, considered all articles of our Constitutions, formulated a first outline of Directory, and elected the Superior General and Council, thus providing our Institute with an organization that will certainly lead to its consolidation and development.

Then the S. C. de Propaganda Fide, with a Decree dated 27 February of this year, approved our Constitutions, as I already mentioned; they are the ones I am now presenting to you.

Receive them, my dearest, not from my hands but, with lively faith, from the hands of Our Lord and O. L. Consolata who called you to this Institute. I can assure you that every single rule, and I do not hesitate to say every single word was an object of serious study, long consideration, and especially much prayer. Receive them with simplicity, not daring any unfavourable judgement on any point; not distinguishing between one rule and another because of greater or lesser importance: this would be harmful and would damage the whole book of the Constitutions and the spirit that must animate

you in observing them. Receive them with a firm will to observe them until death with the greatest possible perfection, remembering that the more perfectly you observe them, the more peaceful and happy you will be at the moment of death. Remember that they constitute a second Gospel, whose every word is sacred, and on which you will be judged, no longer as simple Christians but as religious and Consolata Missionaries; remember that on their observance will infallibly depend all the spiritual profit of each one of you, the persevering of the good spirit in our Institute, and God's blessings on your work.

Your very aff. in O. L. J. C.,

Can. Giuseppe Allamano
Superior

LETTER No. 51

(cf LETTERE, IX/2, 653-654)

To all Consolata missionaries (Fathers, Brothers, Sisters)

Torino, 1 October 1923

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

With a heart full of inner consolation, I celebrated the Fiftieth Anniversary of my Sacred Ordination to Priesthood. This was for me a singular grace which, humanly speaking, I could not expect; only God's goodness deigned to grant it to me. My usually weak health, the many solitudes in the many situations of my life often wore me out; yet, the Lord kept me alive to this day in preference to other companions of mine who were more robust and better than I.

As I prepared to the Feast with the H. Spiritual Exercises, I had time to remember the many graces that the good Lord has granted me in the past fifty years. First of all the practically continuous celebration of the H. Mass with all the graces they bestow upon those who celebrate them well.

Then many other spiritual and temporal graces that cannot be counted: *Enumera stellas, si potes* [Count the stars if you can].

How many responsibilities burdened me! But it was God who so willed, and his grace was with me: *Gratia Dei mecum* [God's grace with me]. He wanted me Spiritual Director in the Seminary, then Rector of the "Convitto Ecclesiastico" [Pastoral Institute] and, later on, an instrument for your sanctification and, through you, for the salvation of many souls of unbelievers.

If in my place there were a saint, how much more good he would have done and more merits gained!

What consoles me, however, is the fact that I always strove to do God's will, expressed by my Superiors. If the Lord blessed many works I undertook, so much as to arise admiration at times, my secret was to look for God alone and His Holy Will, manifested to me by my Superiors. This was and is my consolation in life, and will be my confidence at God's Tribunal. I do not think it is pride

to propose myself to you as an example and model of obedience. Believe me: *Vir obediens loquetur victoriam* [An obedient man will speak of victory].

Having finished with common satisfaction the Feasts, and having thanked the Lord and our dear Mother, I must thank all those who wanted to participate. I have already sent my humble thanksgiving to the Supreme Pontiff, Pius XI, for the "Brief" he sent me, in which he praised my person too much. I am thanking the Very Em. Cardinals who sent me very kind letters. In a particular way I thanked Card. Van Rossum, Prefect of Propaganda and our direct Superior. He, not only wanted to congratulate me and you, but with a very gentle thought he took this occasion to grant us the definitive approval of our Constitutions: a great grace which sealed the stability of our Institute.

To you, my dear sons and daughters, who have showed me so much affection in these days, I say *Deo gratias* and I beg for you from O. L. Consolata a total response to your high vocation.

What shall I say to all of you who are in our three African Missions? Missionary Fathers, Brothers, and Sisters, Seminarians, local Sisters and Catechumens, you have cooperated to my feast with public celebrations and prayers for me, and sent me many common and personal letters to express your best wishes.

I thank all of you: I remembered all of you in my Golden Jubilee Mass.

I attribute to you the fact that I did not die during last winter and I reached the beautiful day with sufficient health. Your prayers and your apostolic sacrifices obtained this grace for me. Continue to pray, so that in me and in you God's H. Will be done. I am sorry I will not be able to answer all your lovely letters; nonetheless you write to me: if I am not able to write, I will recommend your needs to the Lord. I will make use of your Guardian Angels to carry to you my thoughts and desires. On the other hand, take courage in your difficulties; never forget the purpose for which you are there, and the *magna nimis* [very great] reward that is awaiting for you, after a few years, in the beautiful Paradise.

I paternally bless you at the feet of our Patroness.

Very aff. in J. C.,

Can. Giuseppe Allamano
Superior

LETTER No. 52

(cf LETTERE, IX/2, 702-703)

To the missionaries

Torino, [after 30 November] 1923

Our Institute, like any other Religious Institute, is governed by its own Constitutions, and a Directory or a set of Regulations.

The Constitutions, after a needed time of experiment, are definitively approved by the Holy See; this grace was benignly granted also to us by the Sacred Congregation of *Propaganda Fide* on 7 September 1923. Here is the "magna carta" (Charter) according to which, like a second Gospel, we have to form our religious missionary life. God will bless us and our works in as much as we study and cordially put them into practice.

Away, therefore, with those doubts that a few of you raised, especially in regard to the vow of poverty. The question was relevant only for those who took perpetual vows before the *Decretum Laudis*, i. e., before 28 December 1909.

In granting us that provisional approval, the Holy see compelled us to add the condition of asking permission in order to use personal goods, as the Vincentian Fathers had to do. I then immediately informed the people in our Mother-House, and wrote about it to the missionaries in Africa. I can state this with all certainty before God; later on I confirmed this to you, especially with the visit of our mourned Vice-Rector.

This should have been sufficient; but in order to absolutely remove any doubt, I consulted in this regard the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda and I received the answer given at the end of this letter (as an attachment).

Our Directory then, prescribed after our Constitutions, was compiled by our General Chapter, and I am proposing it to you in experiment. Receive it with a good spirit, and help your Superiors to complete it according to the needs of each Mission. It is like a complement and explanation of the Constitutions, and it must be observed as a second means for your sanctification and the one of the souls of unbelievers.

United in good spirit, I bless you.

Can. Giuseppe Allamano
Superior

LETTER No. 53
(cf LETTERE, X, 114-116)

To the delegate superiors of Kenya, Kaffa, and Iringa

Torino, Mother-House, 5 August 1924

With this letter we are authorizing you to admit to perpetual profession on the oncoming feast of the Immaculate Conception -- 8 December 1924 -- the Consolata Sisters listed below and we delegate you also to assist to the profession provided you comply with the following:

- a) At the beginning of the month of October of this year, i.e., two months before the above-mentioned date, you should give the Ordinary of the Vicariate (.....) the list of the Reverend Sisters to be admitted to perpetual profession, for the required canonical examination: only those approved by the Ordinary may be admitted to the profession.
- b) Provide for previous Spiritual Exercises of ten days, grouping the Sisters according to convenience, and possibly with suitable preachers, and definitely with special confessors.
- c) The Profession Formula must be the one here attached, pronounced in front of the Blessed Sacrament exposed, holding a candle in the left hand, and the right hand on the Holy Gospels.
- d) If you feel in conscience that for some of these Sisters there are serious difficulties with regard to perpetual profession, inform immediately the Superiors, specifying and amply giving the reasons. However, while waiting for instructions, the procedure given above should be followed, especially for what concern the Ordinary's examination.
- e) The difficulties should really be very serious, because any Sister who is not admitted to perpetual profession now, must be immediately dismissed from the Institute: the Code (of Canon Law) does not allow any other temporary profession besides those already made, which definitively expire on 8 December 1924.

LETTER No. 54
(cf LETTERE, X, 125)

To the Mother-House community on holidays at St. Ignatius'

Rivoli, 26 August 1924

Let your little Congress at St. Ignatius be welcomed, and may it bring an increase of apostolic spirit to our dear missionaries.

Everybody should take a lively and cordial part in it.

I bless you.

Superior

LETTER No. 55
(cf LETTERE, X, 176)

To all the novices (men and women) at Pianezza

Torino, 29 November 1924

My dear Novices,

Not being able to be with you physically, I am coming to you in spirit. We will do together our beautiful Novena.

We shall praise our dear Mother and strive to imitate her virtues. The Angels and the Saints proclaim her all holy and immaculate; and we shall repeat often in these days, *Blessed be*, etc...., *Oh, Mary, conceived*, etc.... We shall study the preciousness of God's grace, of which, more than any other favour, God wanted to fill his Mother: "*Gratia plena*" [full of grace].

Following Her example, we shall treasure divine Grace, striving to preserve and increase it in us, by avoiding all sins, even venial ones, and possibly our daily failings, and again by doing our actions with the greatest possible perfection, both external and internal. In this way we shall make this dear Novena well, and shall deserve Our Lady's Blessings.

I bless you.

Your very aff. in O. L. J. C.,

Superior

LETTER No. 56
(cf LETTERE, X, 208)

To all the novices (men and women) at Pianezza

Torino, [before 6 January] 1925

CAN. GIUSEPPE ALLAMANO

blesses all his dear Novices and prays for many divine stars, i.e., many holy inspirations, on their heads.

LETTER No. 57

(cf LETTERE, X, 284-285)

To all missionaries (Fathers, Brothers and Sisters)

Torino, 11 May 1925

My dear sons and daughters in O. L. J. C.,

I feel the need to open my heart to you, full as it is of deep consolation for the solemn Beatification of our Fr. Cafasso. You know how much I have longed for this day, and how much I have done to make it possible. At last, after thirty years of cares and work, I could see it, and in the fullness of my joy I must manifest my feelings to you who are my crown and have always shared all my sorrows and my joys.

On the 3rd May I had the privilege of going to Rome and, there, I could enjoy some truly heavenly Feasts as only in St. Peter's and in our H. Church may be relished. The H. Father, as well as all the Cardinals and Prelates were very good to me.

There is no need of telling you that I remembered all of you in that solemn moment when the Papal Decree was proclaimed and the large painting of our new Blessed was unveiled. I heartily recommended to him our Institute and implored for all of you the graces that you need and are useful for your greater sanctification and for the conversion of unbelievers.

Blessed Joseph Cafasso is the Patron of the "Convitto" [Pastoral Institute], of which he was a Co-founder, and is the model of all pious people, especially of the clergy; but he is also our special Protector and, as you say, "your uncle". As such, you must honour him and imitate his virtues. In Heaven, he will act as a powerful intercessor for all your needs and, as zealous for the salvation of souls as he was, he will help you with your work in the Holy Missions.

I will send you some Sacred Pictures which you will place in your little churches; you shall celebrate his Feasts and his Office, and you will offer him homage often during the year. With his Beatification, I believe I have provided you with a great means of perfection, and that I have partially fulfilled my Mission in your regard.

Pray also for me, so that he may obtain for me the grace to finish well my career and, when the time comes, to reach him in the beautiful Paradise.

I wholeheartedly bless you.

Very aff. in J. C.,

Can. G. Allamano
Superior

LETTER No. 58
(cf LETTERE, X, 305-307)

To the missionaries

Torino, 31 May 1925

My dearest Sons in O. L. J. C.,

As each one of you could see with his own eyes, the Lord deigned to bless in a very special way this Institute, which he had inspired, strengthening it and extending it beyond any human expectation. For this let us raise up our humble thanksgiving and be grateful to him by making ourselves ever more worthy of the high vocation which, in his goodness, he wanted to grant us.

Our Institute, however, like any other organism, had to go through various stages, determined and characterized by the environment in which it was born and developed; by its primary aims: at first more limited but then broadened by the will of the Supreme Authority itself; and also by the common desire to make it become a moral body more perfect for our sanctification, more suitable for evangelization, and more appropriate for missionary life. Having so gradually developed and strengthened itself, it seems to us that now, through God's grace, it has achieved the best and definitive form.

We reached this point with great benefit for our Institute; and this is an evident proof of Divine Providence's predilection. However, because of various changes, a situation resulted in which doubts arouse in some people, uncertainties in others, and even some inevitable irregularities in our common life. It was absolutely convenient to eliminate all these things for our tranquillity about the past, constitutionality and certainty in the future, and so as to avoid the possibility of repetition. To this purpose, having discussed this broadly and at length with our Council, and having consulted a number of older missionaries and learned specialists, following the directives and norms of the Supreme Authority, we decided to present to it an ample memorandum in this regard, copy of which is attached to this letter. Benevolently received and examined, and then summarized in the form here attached, what we petitioned was "*benigne et pro gratia*" [benignly and as a grace] fully granted by H. H. Pope Pius XI, gloriously reigning, on 5 February of this year.

As I communicate this consoling news to you, which marks a new blessing of God on our Institute and a happy date in its history, and as a consequence of it, in agreement with the Supreme Authority, I am addressing each and all members of our Institute. After having fervently prayed our Patroness, the Consolata, and having implored the special assistance of the Holy Spirit, each one should communicate to me what follows:

a) Whether, not having taken any vow (first group of the memorandum to Propaganda), he would like to take them; or, having taken the vows, they are doubtful or somehow incomplete (second group of the above mentioned memorandum), and he intends to renew them; in both of these cases the vows have to be taken or renewed according to the form, purport and modalities of the present Constitutions. There is no need to undergo any previous novitiate, and the present seniority remains, as from clause 3 of the Summary of the Sacred Congregation de Propaganda Fide 296/25. In this way, one becomes fully and formally a member of our Institute in its present form of a Congregation of Pontifical Rights with simple vows (third group of the above mentioned memorandum).

b) Whether, instead, he would like to remain a member of our Institute, in his present form, without taking or renewing the vows, making use of the benign concession of the Supreme Pontiff. In this case, he would enjoy the privileges "*pro gratia*" accorded; however, he remains fully and firmly obliged to observe that form of oath or vows he had taken in his time, as from clause 3 of the above mentioned Summary of Propaganda. It must be noted that this particular existing situation has a provisional character, i.e., is limited to the length of life of the members who are in these

particular conditions and want to remain in them. Furthermore, for people who, besides aspiring to religious perfection because of their vocation, for quite a number of years have been striving for it with persevering sacrifice, it does not evidently constitute a perfect dedication to God, neither it can be so rich in merit and sublime graces as the Lord usually grants to a "joyful giver" who intends to totally consecrate himself to His service.

In order to leave to each member of our Institute the greatest freedom in choosing what to do, each one should answer in a separate letter, sent to me personally, or to any member of our Council, as a Registered Letter. If somebody has any doubt or desires more explanations before making any decision in this regard, let him with all confidence and freedom ask me or anyone of the Major Superiors, keeping in mind, in making his decision, exclusively what is good for his souls and for his personal sanctification. From this, on the other hand, our Institute will receive sure benefits, and the people for whose salvation we consecrated ourselves to our Institute, will receive a greater abundance of divine grace.

Imploring on each of you, in this Holy Year, Heaven's choicest blessings and the special protection of our new Blessed, to whose imitation I vividly encourage you, I greet you with all my heart.

C. G. Allamano
SUPERIOR GENERAL

LETTER No. 59
(cf LETTERE, X, 377)

To the community of missionaries on holidays at St. Ignatius'

Rivoli, [before 29 August] 1925

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

I can see how vividly you desire that I be with you for the solemnity of the B. V. Mary. This would also be all my delight. I have been doing it for many years!... And I am really *lost* without you... But, my dear people, the years are going by and the weaknesses are increasing... and one cannot do any longer as he would want. Let all of us, you and I, make this sacrifice in honour of our dear Mother. However, I will be with you in spirit since Saturday, in order to honour St. John the Baptist; and then I will be living there with my heart, and you will feel my presence.

I have been hoping to send Monsignor in my place but, because of serious commitments undertaken previously, he cannot come. What can you do? Have great Feasts on your own, and pray for us. I know that you are putting into practice all my advice, and are living in a holy way: this is the dearest reward for all my love for you.

I bless you.

Your very aff. in J. C.,

Rector.

LETTER No. 60
(cf LETTERE, X, 406)

To the missionaries in the house at Pederobba

Torino, 15 September 1925

My dearest in O. L. J. C.,

I received your letters and the sentiments of the dear young men whom I hope to know sometime.

Beginning now, I bless you and them and I recommend all of you to our Consolata. Continue vigorously your work; The Lord will bless you, and you will not miss anything in your mission.

I welcome your adhesion to our Regulations; you will be happy because of it.

Thank the Rev. Parish Priest, and obey him in everything; in this way God's Blessing will be with you.

I bless you with all my heart.

Very aff. in J. C.,

C. G. Allamano S.