

painful impatience I await news from him. It is in such circumstances that one would want to travel the long distances that separate us so that a father could be in the midst of his suffering children. I hope the good Lord will sustain your courage and pour into the very depths of your hearts, his consolation and his strength. I pray most ardently that he will grant his grace to you all”.

(To Bro. Arthur, April 2nd. 1843)

6.52 - “I am longing to know what will happen to Brothers Arsene and Donatien, who were not hurt at all, and the two injured Brothers,when they get better. I would love to be at their bedside to take care of them myself”.

(To Bro. Ambroise, April 5th. 1843)

6.53 - “Farewell,my dear Brother. I give thanks to God that he has saved you from yellow fever,but I advise you again to take care of your health,so as to avoid any relapse. Rest assured that we don't forget you in our prayers. Every time I-say Mass, I offer you to God on the paten. Think also of me in your Communions; I am in great need of light,courage and so many graces”.

(To Bro. Ambroise, October 28th. 1843)

6.54 - “I have learnt of the death of our holy Brother Damase with twofold sentiments of sorrow and joy. There is no doubt that such a great loss is painful, but it is also consoling to think that we have in heaven, a brother, a friend, another protector! What saddens me more than I can possibly say, is the thought of the surplus work this gives to the other Brothers and the consequence of these more and more frequent losses is the great decrease in the number of poor children that you can instruct. However, it is neither your fault, nor mine. Let us be resigned to whatever God wills”.

(To Bro. Gérard, June 1st. 1844)

6.55 - “I am sorry to hear that you have no

more hope for our sick Brothers to be cured in the colony. It is God's will, so we must be resigned,and I would not want for anything in the world to be opposed to their return to France, if judged necessary for the recovery of their health. Besides, we will be very pleased to see them again! We will neglect nothing to see that they recover, and if they are able to take up their work again later, they will receive all our encouragement”.

(To Bro. Ambroise, November 24th. 1844)

6.56 - “It will be a great consolation for you to see Brothers Euthyme and Francois de Paule, your good compatriot, arriving back. But after you have embraced, you must be ready to make a sacrifice, for Brother Sigismond's state of health demands that you return to him at Goree. Your presence there will be a great comfort to him,and I want to give him that satisfaction. There is no need for me to ask you to have the greatest consideration for him:he deserves it on so many counts”.

(To Bro. Liguori-Marie,December 8th. 1845)

6.57 - “The good Lord is trying us. We will be pleased to see once again our good Brother Francois Regis, but not without a certain amount of sadness,since his health is in such a deplorable state. But it is in these painful circumstances that we experience once again the great consolation of being able to lavish all our care on those we love and of collecting their last dying words”.

(To Bro. Ambroise, June 5th. 1846)

6.58 - “All our Brothers, as well as Fathers Ruault and Guilloux, send you all their best wishes. You don't go unforgotten at Ploermel; you have a place in all hearts,but especially in mine, my dear child. I ask the good Lord to grant you all the graces you stand in need of to carry out effectively the sublime mission he has given you for his glory”.

(To Bro. Mélite, November 29th. 1846)

6.59 - "In your letters you never give any details about what is happening in your establishment. I would like, however, to have some details, and I am pleased above all to hear that God is blessing your work,

and that you are all very fervent, deeply penetrated with the spirit of your holy state and zealous in the fulfilment of your duties".

(To Bro. Euthyme, July 4th. 1848)

Father de la Mennais challenges me to consider seriously

7) my prayer life

(Const.,Cb.7 - Dir.,Cb.7)

a) General considerations

(C 42 - D 75-78)

"I especially recommend to you great fidelity to all your spiritual exercises"

7.01 - "Interior dryness is a very painful trial. God allows it to purify your virtue more and more, and to help you to acquire greater merit. So you must not let yourself be saddened by them, and especially not be troubled. In those difficult moments, be more than ever faithful to your exercises, even though you find no liking for them. Make them exactly as requested, in a spirit of faith, without hankering after the sensible consolations that God is refusing you, not because he is angry with you, but, because he wants to make you more conformed to his divine Son, whose soul was sorrowful, sorrowful even unto death".
(To Bro. Polycarpe, December 3rd. 1835)

7.02 - "At Plouguernevel, as in all the communities of several Brothers, the spiritual exercises must be made in common. This is an essential point of the Rule".
(To Bro. Laurent, October 4th. 1838)

7.03 - "I recommend great fidelity to your holy Rule, and that you be exact in doing your spiritual exercises together with Brother Polphyre, as I have entered them on your daily time-table, and as is the practice in all our houses. It is besides the Lord's command, so important that he gave it in the holy Gospel, and that he deigned to promise his most abundant blessings to those who are faithful to it".
(To Bro. Ephrem, April 21st. 1843)

7.04 - "I am afraid that you are seeking too many sensible consolations in your exercises of piety. The good Lord does not always nourish us on milk; he sometimes feeds us on dry bread, and we thoroughly deserve it".
(To Bro. Étienne, April 29th. 1843)

7.05 - "I specially recommend to you great fidelity to your exercises, and great reserve in your relations with the world. Several have perished because they were not sufficiently on their guard, forgetting those words of our divine Master: watch and pray lest you enter into temptation".
(To Bro. Anastase, June 6th. 1844)

7.06 - "While in class, often raise your thoughts to Our Lord, and ask him to bless your work".
(To Bro. Alfred-Marie, July 7th. 1844)

7.07 - "Be always very fervent, my dear child, and strive to be pious like the holy bishop, who is your patron".
(To Bro. Liguori-Marie, Dec. 10th. 1844)

7.08 - "Pray for your poor little pupils and recommend them to Our Lady".
(To Bro. Etienne-Marie, November 9th. 1848)

7.09 - "The more times are difficult, the more you should watch and pray. Prayer and vigilance are the two great means of salvation for you.
(To Bro. Euthyme, November 23rd. 1848)

**b) For authentic prayer
(D 79 - 82)**

*"...recollection and continual
attention to God's presence"*

7.10 - "The first of all (the means to avoid falling again into one's faults) is recollection, the continual attention to God's presence. If you are lightheaded, everything will go badly and very badly, whilst if you have the interior spirit, if you remind yourself, so to speak, at every moment, that God sees you, and if you seek only to glorify him by all your actions, there won't be anything unworthy of a religious".

(To Bro. André, October 17th. 1823)

7.11 - "Strive to be more recollected, more attentive to God's presence, more exact in observing silence (...) Lightheadedness is your greatest enemy; you must fight against it every day, with fresh courage and fresh ardour".

(To Bro. André, December 26th. 1823)

7.12 - "Be on your guard against tepidity. It is the most dangerous state to be in. Pray God with all your heart and respond faithfully to his grace, so as to be more

fervent in all your exercises".
(To Bro. Marcel, Nov. 31st. (sic), 1828)

7.13 - "Revive your fervour and be more exact in all your exercises".

(To Bro. Ambroise, March 3rd. 1829)

7.14 - "Strive to overcome your scruples and to follow the advice that I gave you on this subject. It is most important for your spiritual progress".

(To Bro. Yves, January 7th. 1830)

7.15 - "Be exact in doing every one of your exercises at the appointed time. The constraint that you feel in this case is one of the best penances".

(To Bro. Abel, January 2nd. 1839)

7.16 - "All of you should be very fervent in the service of God and in his holy love. Be on your guard against all laxity; you must fear that above everything else".

(To Bro. Euthyme, November 30th. 1846)

**c) Sacraments and
spiritual exercises"
(C 43-47; D 83-94)**

*Receive holy Communion as often
as possible"*

**c-1 Eucharist and reconciliation
(C 43,46; D 34,90)**

7.17 - "One of the most efficacious (means of perseverance) is to receive holy Communion the most often possible. It will be especially when you have the happiness to possess Jesus Christ our Lord in you that you will receive his lights, his consolations, his graces in greater abundance".

(To Bro. Marcel, October 16th. 1823)

7.18 - "As regards your Communions, make sure that they are frequent, and consider it a great misfortune to miss even one. Doing

that, you will have greater vigilance over yourself and fortnightly confession should suffice for this. I ask you to read over your Rule once as a penance".

(To Bro. André, October 17th. 1823)

7.19 - "Awake within your Brothers a great desire for holy Communion without embarrassing them in any way. It is better not to go up to receive rather than to receive unworthily".

(To Bro. Ambroise, November 26th. 1826)

7.20 - "You should do all you can to receive the sacraments. I don't accept as a reason for your staying away that you are suffering some interior trial".
(To Bro. Ambroise, May 3rd. 1831)

7.21 - "I regret that during the journey several Brothers missed going to holy Mass. You must take more precautions next time".
(To Bro. Ambroise, September 15th. 1835)

7.22 - "It is sufficient to go to confession every fortnight. Abstain the least possible from Communion. Our kind Saviour calls to him all those who are in need of consolation and of strength. Go to receive him then with humble confidence".
(To Bro. Arthur, November 24th. 1840)

7.23 - "One Communion should serve as a preparation for the next, and one should take care not to become too familiar with so holy a sacrament".
(To Bro. Polycarpe, December 2nd. 1841)

7.24 - "You should assist every day at holy Mass, if one is said is 6.00 a.m., or between 6.00 and 7.00 a.m. The spiritual exercises, and especially the Mass, are absolutely essential. Serve faithfully the good Lord if you want him to shed his blessings on your work".
(To Bro. Abel, November 2nd. 1842)

c-2 Meditation and evening visit
(C 43;D 85)

7.29 - "You may do your quarter of an hour's visit in your room, when the weather is very bad. Don't dispense yourself generally from going to the church. This is more edifying as well as being more in keeping with the Rule".
(To Bro. Irénée, December 17th. 1824)

7.30 - "When you have taken part in the prayers following on Vespers, there is no need to say them again before retiring for

7.25 - "You will find in your frequent Communion a remedy for your weaknesses, and the strength you need to triumph over the enemy of your salvation".
(To Bro. Urbain, December 27th. 1844)

7.26 - "Manuals of piety and of prayers are the only ones that should be read during any of the church services. To attend Mass without being really united to the sacrifice, is most regrettable".
(To Bro. Irénée, March 30th. 1845)

7.27 - "By days of great feasts, on which the Rule recommends the reception of Communion, I mean not only public holidays, but also liturgical feasts. These are important, even very important, because of the mysteries they recall".
(To Bro. Thadée, February 4th. 1846)

7.28 - "I ask you most insistently not to abstain too easily from holy Communion. You need to receive it all the more since you are exposed to more temptations and dangers. Have great trust in God's goodness, and in his infinite mercy".
(To Bro. Anastase, June 1st. 1846)

"It is there that he speaks to our heart".

the night. Just read the subject of meditation and offer up your sleep to the good Lord".
(To Bro. Lucien, February 30th. (sic) 1830)

7.31 - "As you say it so well, when the imagination suffers in any way, it is difficult to cure it. However, with good will and God's help, this can be done. To achieve this, you need to reject as a temptation all gloomy thoughts, and revive unceasingly within you the spirit of faith, by meditation

and prayer. Apply yourself above all, in meditation, to instil within you a love of the cross, by recalling the examples of Jesus and the promises he made to all those who share here below his humiliations and his sufferings".

(To Bro. Ambroise, April 7th. 1838)

7.32 - "You have been exact in rendering me an account of your interior life, and it is

c - 3 Particular Examen

(C 46; D 91)

7.33 - "Particular Examen should always be made before noon. Don't keep the pupils in detention later than 11.45 a.m."

(To Bro . Adolphe, September 20th .1841)

7.34 - "Tell Brother Polyclet on my behalf not to neglect his particular examen. It is one of the most essential exercises. He must then finish his lesson of drawing a quarter of an hour so on er "

(To Bro . Laurent, December 4th . 1840)

c - 4 Spiritual Direction

(D 91)

7.37 - "The trouble you have been in for the last few months will bring you merit, since during all that time, you have not neglected in any way your exercises. However, you were wrong to have waited so long before telling me about your inward trials . If they do recommence, you must once again ask for advice . I think that they are caused through lack of resignation to God ' s holy will, and through too great a desire to have your own way. You will have peace only inasmuch as you abandon yourself unreservedly to God ' s good pleasure , which is manifested through your superiors. Pay great attention to all this and never neglect such a point of the Rule".

(To Bro . Étienne-Mar ie, Feb . 13th . 1842)

7.38 - "I am delighted with what you tell me about your spiritual health. Try to maintain

something you must never neglect, because considerable graces are attached to this holy exercise. If I were nearer to you, I would be able to give you more detailed advice, but the good Lord will make up for all I don't say, provided you are careful to listen to him in meditation, for it is then that he speaks to the heart. Gather into a docile and humble heart all the inspirations of his grace".

(To Bro. Liguori-Marie, December 1st. 1846)

"Never miss your particular examen".

7.35 - "I don't see any reason to change the time of your examen. The slight distractions that the pupils could cause you should not prevent you from doing it well".

(To Bro . Urbain, December 6th . 1846)

7.36 - "Don't neglect any of your exercises, and above all never miss your particular examen. You should finish your second class of the morning at 11. 45" .

(To Bro. Edmond-Marie, November 15th .1852)

"A son can always speak freely to his father".

and develop it more and more. I ask the good Lord to give you this grace".

(To Bro . Cyprien, October 7th .1842)

7.39 - "I will go to see you in the course of the year . You need have no fear that I will be angry by all you say: a son can always speak freely to his father of his troubles, of his temptations, provided that he also receives with a docile spirit the advice and reprimands of the one that God has appointed to enlighten him and lead him along the way that leads to heaven".

(To Bro. Césaire, November 28th. 1845)

7.40 - "Write to me often and don't be afraid to give me some details about yourself. They all interest me especially when they are personal to you and relate to your conscience. Confiding your troubles,

your doubts and even your faults to me, is most proper to renew within you—the spirit and love of your holy Rule. Be faithful in observing all its points; if you keep it, it will keep you. If, on the contrary, you transgress it without any scruple you will soon finish up in a very sad state”.

(To Bro. Liguori-Marie, December 8th. 1845)

**c - 5 Annual Retreat
(C 47; D 92)**

7.42 - “Prepare yourself carefully for the retreat, and beginning now, ask God for all the graces you need to profit by it”.

(To Bro. Laurent, July 6th. 1823)

7.43 - “I intend to give you only encouragement at the retreat; haven’t I sufficiently reprimanded you? The reason being that I love you so much, my dear child, and that I greatly desire to contribute to your sanctification and your happiness”.

(To Bro. Andre, May 25th. 1824)

7.44 - “I hope that the retreat will do you a lot of good, but try to be in the right dispositions, carrying out most fervently all that is suggested in the “Book of the Rules”.

(To Bro. Ambroise, July 10th. 1840)

7.45 - “Come to the retreat since you are obliged to, and come not only to be bodily present, but come with the sincere desire of receiving God’s guidance, of examining your conscience in the light of faith, and of profiting by all the new graces that will be offered you and which you need so badly in order to avoid going astray and being lost altogether”.

(To a Brother, June 15th. 1844)

7.46 - “It is impossible for me to give you permission to go and visit your parents in Burgundy. Since the beginning of the Congregation, I have never given a Brother permission to be absent from the retreat”.

(To Bro. Laurent, July 24th. 1846)

7.41 - “When you write to me, you should tell me something about your spiritual state, so that I can give you some specific advice to help you progress in virtue. That is essential: be a model to your Brothers by your fidelity to the Rule and by your piety”.

(To Bro. Euthyme, November 30th. 1846)

“Make it well, that is to say, with a sincere desire to profit by it to advance in virtue”.

7.47 - “You may leave Eauze on the 8th. or 9th. of August, and pass by Saint-Nazaire on your way to the retreat here, which will begin on the 17th. as is usual. Organise your journey in such a way that you don’t arrive late, and that you are not travelling on the 15th., the feast of the Assumption of Our Lady. It seems to me if you want to avoid that, you must leave Eauze a bit sooner. You won’t find any Brothers at Saint-Nazaire or at Guerande, as they will have arrived at Ploermel on the evening of the 7th.

(To Bro. Melite, July 10th. 1847)

7.48 - “You will have certainly made a retreat during the holidays. It is absolutely essential to strengthen you in your vocation and to renew your fervour. Tell me who gave you the exercises, and what fruit you derived from them”.

(To Bro. Euthyme, November 23rd. 1848)

7.49 - “Your retreat will take place during the month of September, that is during your holidays. Make a good one, that is to say, with profound recollection, and with a sincere desire to profit by it so as to advance in virtue. I allow you to make the vow for five years, and I ask God to grant you the graces necessary to be faithful to it”.

(To a Brother in the Midi, July 29th. 1851)

c - 6 Marian Devotion
(C 44;D 93)

7.50 - "You should always say the rosary of Our Lady. That is the Rule, and the Rule doesn't change".

(To Bro. Iréné, October 28th. 1826)

7.51 - "I authorize you to join the Confraternity of the Holy Rosary".

(To Bro. Lucien, February 13th. 1830)

7.52 - "I give my full consent to you and your pupils joining the Archconfraternity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and to your reciting every day in class the Hail Mary, which is a condition necessary to gain the indulgences".

(To Bro. Ambroise, January 30th. 1840)

7.53 - "You are not obliged to say every day the Little Office of Our Lady, but say it as often as possible, because you will never honour Our Lady too much".

(To Bro. Arthur, November 24th. 1840)

7.54 - "The rosary that you recite in class does not replace the one that you are obliged to recite in community in the afternoon. You must not be so miserly towards Our Lady".

(To Bro. Adolphel September 20th. 1841)

7.55 - "You may keep Our Lady's month in your class, and if the parish priest is agreeable, don't suppress the afternoon catechism lesson completely, but shorten it during that month".

(To Bro. Abel, April 29th. 1843)

7.56 - "I willingly approve of your keeping Our Lady's month in your class, provided the parish priest gives his consent".

(To Bro. Etienne, April 29th. 1843)

7.57 - "I approve of the small association you have established in honour of Our Lady, and I hope that the good Lord will

*"You must not be so miserly with
Our Lady".*

derive great glory from it. Continue to look after it with great zeal, and Our Lord will certainly bless all that you do to increase the number of faithful servants of his Mother".

(To Bro. Hyacinthe, June 8th. 1843)

7.58 - "If you haven't been sent the formulas of Consecration to Our Lady by those of our Brothers who left for the Antilles last autumn, it is because we had none at that time. But we will not fail to get you some for next autumn. I understand all the good that such a pious association, that you have established, can do and is doing, and I give great thanks to God. May he shed his blessings more and more upon your work; that's what I desire most ardently".

(To Bro. Hyacinthe, May 31st. 1843)

7.59 - "My accident could have been very serious; it was not so, and I hardly felt its effects. Before jumping out of the carriage, I recommended myself to Our Lady's protection, and she saved me".

(To Bro. André, May 29th. 1844)

7.60 - "I authorize you to recite the Little Office of Our Lady every day, and to make your spiritual reading during Our Lady's month in the book you mentioned: "Elevations, etc ..."

(To Bro. Mérite, April 26th. 1847)

7.61 - "I am delighted that you managed to find a statue of "Our Lady of Good News", and that you have placed it over the doorway of your school. I am very touched by the signs of confidence and gratitude shown by your pupils to Our Lady on such an occasion. Do all you can to increase their devotion towards her"

(To Bro. Lucien, July 4th. 1849)