

27. In the midst of mourning

"My daughter, it has pleased the Lord to call to Himself within a few days from each other, your brother and your sister (Jean-Baptiste and Elisabeth de Cicé) who were living together in Haldberstadt. They were ripe fruit for heaven, and which long adversity had well purified. If the blow is hard on nature, faith will give you a glimpse of many motives for consolation. Nature may well be allowed to shed a few tears, but do not delay in making your sacrifice to the Lord. Then think only of procuring for these souls so dear, all the relief that the Church places in our power. You cannot doubt that I, on my side, shall do all I can in this regard. Offer for them the very pain that you feel, and, to sanctify it and make it more meritorious, unite it to that of the Heart of Jesus, overwhelmed with sadness in the Garden of Olives, and with that of Mary at the foot of the Cross. This is our model and our consolation in our afflictions".

Letter 2a355, December 15, 1805.

"Today is the anniversary of my sister's death, two years ago. I cannot feel sorrow in thinking of her; I believe she would be shocked if I did so. I thought less of praying for her than of thanking God for the graces he gave her, especially at her death. Like her, you have been ready to make the sacrifice of your life (*veiled allusion to the imprisonment of A. de Cicé who risked death for not having wanted to reveal the name of Father de Clorivière ...*), a victim of the hatred of the wicked against Jesus Christ and for an act of pure charity. This is a great consolation in the last moments. I believe that my blessed sister is better able to help us than she needs to be helped by our prayers. You have a very good friend in heaven, for she loved you dearly. If the time for consolations had come for your soul, I am sure she would have asked them for you. Let us wait a little; this sadness will be changed into joy".

Letter 2a363, January 3, 1806.

"Good Fr. Engerran is dying if he's not already dead. He had already received the sacraments and there was hardly any hope. He is one of those of whom it is said "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord". I believe it was many years ago that he died to himself, and that he lived only for God. He was the first I spoke to about our Society. Tomorrow will be sixteen years completed, that in 1790, on the day of Saint Vincent de Paul, after having preached the Panegyric of the saint, I found him, to share with him the lights that God had given me that morning on the Society. They appeared to him to come from God and he strongly encouraged me to follow them, telling me that he wanted to join me for the good work. He was therefore the first among us in age and in position. Let us pray much for him, and at the same time, let us regard tomorrow as a precious day for us, and commend the good work to the great Saint Vincent de Paul, so that the Lord will deign to send down upon it His most abundant blessings. Keep well. Much confidence, peace and love. I am very well, and am all yours in the Lord P.J."

Letter 2a423, Friday July 18, 1806.