

[December 3, 1838] [Received March 2, 1840]

M.M. The procurators of the French Missions in Macau

Gentlemen and Dear Colleagues,

I received and read with great pleasure the letter sent to me by Monsieur Barentin. I bless Divine Providence for the choice it makes of our directors in Paris and their intermediaries. Thank you for all the news you have kindly written to me. Please continue in the future. Do not take example of the letter which you read, I could not empty my soul of all the news I wanted to send you. There will be nothing lost: I will keep them all and put them on paper when I have the chance and I will not fail to send them to you next year, unless Monsignor Imbert anticipates me, because when it comes to old Korean things we draw on the same source.

Summary of Church News from Korea.

I had the honor and the ineffable pleasure of receiving Monsignor Imbert on 31 Dec. 1837 in Sehoul or Haniang, capital of Korea. With no less activity than zeal and ardor he had several books revised and a course of daily and Sunday prayers composed. He also wanted to take care of his share, almost third, of the Christians. If Divine Providence preserves for us the peace which we enjoy, we will easily multiply Christians, it seems. The Koreans embrace the true doctrine quite easily, but unfortunately they also abandon it. Simon would have had proselytes here. he

There have been six persecutions this year. Out of a hundred Christians arrested, I dare not say the number of the faithful. It is said that there is more than one man seized with a frenzied fear who threw himself into the water and drowned in a river that was being made to pass on the way to prison. And we, the late Monseigneur de Capse and yours truly, were led to believe, that there were no apostates in Korea! Be ashamed of it with us, gentlemen and very dear colleagues, and take advantage, I beg you, of this note to redouble your prayers for them and for us; but do not speak of it to any who do not need to know. However, not all of them are of this caliber: one recently died in prison, and there are still about twenty left.

The devil, not content with the disasters he makes by the pagans his ministers, attempted this year to seize all the Korean souls some time after Easter, at the risk of seeing some of them save themselves sooner than they would. He appeared very frequently to about forty or fifty Christians, sometimes under the figure of two children and a dove who called themselves the Holy Trinity, sometimes under the figure of your servant. See the rest in the letter which I suppose you will receive from Monsignor.

Pray for the wretched Mission of Korea and for me who have the honor to be,  
Gentlemen and very dear confreres, in union of prayers and Holy Sacrifices.

Yangchy Nopsil

3 Dec. 1838.

Your most humble and obedient servant

Fart. Ph. Maubant miss. in Korea

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J.M.J.

Mr. Verrolles

Sir and dear colleague,

I thank you for your memory and for the signs you have sent me of it. You ask where I am and what I am doing, and there you have your whole letter already, roughly and in detail.

I am in Korea and I should be doing here what you did in Sutchuen before being in the college. I beg you, since the good Lord has inspired you with the thought of beginning to write to me, to write to me at greater length in the future; you have material enough for it to be well worthwhile.

– I suppose that Monsignor will send you long details on his entry into Korea and on the partial persecutions which have afflicted our unfortunate Christians in six regions principally.

We had been given to believe or think, the late Monsignor Bruguière and your humble servant, that there there were almost no apostates in Korea. Now we must say of martyrdom in Korea as our good old compatriots used to say of miracles: the time of martyrs is over! Of about sixty or more who were arrested, all but one or two got out of the way of heaven through the gate of cowardly apostasy. Except for one seized with extreme fear who threw himself into the water crossing a river on his way to prison in the capital. God make his suicide a martyrdom! It is said that only one woman did not deny her faith.

The devil, not content with chaining the wretched Koreans by fear under his infernal tyrannical slavery, tried to take control of everything and save what would have been saved in a general persecution. He appeared many times to about fifty Christians, usually under the image of two children and a dove who called themselves the three persons of the Holy Trinity one God and sometimes under the figure of your humble servant, exhorting them to the exact observance of morality and of all the Gospel precepts. In the appearances of the Trinity, it was the child who claimed to be the person of the Son who spoke, preached in a particular apparition to a young man over 20 years old during the night, and this child, the second person, the two others having disappeared, entered into communion with 10 of these Christians. He said that it was because of five of them that the Christian religion was in Korea and that it was preserved there. He promised them soon the public acceptance of the Christian religion. He told them that their bishop and their priests kept praying for public acceptance of religion, but that they were not seconded. He commanded them to keep a day of fasting and ordered them to go that day to a nearby mountain to pray and be there witnesses of his glory. They obeyed and were, they say, actually witnesses of a dazzling splendor. Finally he told them to come and report these apparitions to us. They came to report to your servant. I told them after having heard them and questioned them, that it was not the Lord God who had appeared to them, but the devil who wanted to extinguish religion in their country. After having then conferred with Monsignor we gave them an instruction and a rule of conduct about it. Since that time, he reappeared only to a young man who had not yet satisfied the precept of communion, although he had the opportunity to do so many times.

Now these poor Christian tobacco growers have resumed their ordinary way of life and are quiet. During the time of these apparitions they had lost the taste for work, they had no more appetite for anything. They only dreamed of religious publicity and apparitions.

Please tell me what is the basis for saying in your catechism that the precept of abstinence does not apply to children under 7 years old or that one begins to be held to this

precept at 7 years old and not before. This teaching would be new in the diocese of Bayeux. Would there be some new indult, or some privilege for this country? Please let me know.

Item. I had always heard that to gain the indulgences of the Holy Rosary, the confreres were only required to recite a rosary during the week cum meditationibus competentibus. I read the rule to also recite one on Sunday. Quid iuris and debiti of scapulario?

Item, qui pro causâ loco abstinentiae feriae IV bis recitat 7 Pater et 7 Ave cum meditationibus super 7 dolores fruitur omnibus iisdem beneficii ac si abstinentiam notâ die sevet. Porro contrarium adhuc legi. Quid iuris et veri? If you know, please answer me clearly.

Interim, I recommend our Christians and myself to your prayers and Holy Sacrifices and I have the honor to be

Your most humble and obedient servant

Petrus Ph. Maubant

Yangchy Nopsil

1838 December

To M. Verrolles of Bayeux  
at Sutchuen College