

CHAPTER IV

FIRST YEARS AT FLORISSANT

§ I. THE BISHOP'S FARM

Some fifteen miles north by west of St. Louis in the Common Fields of the historic Franco-Spanish village of St Ferdinand de Florissant lay the property which the Jesuits had come to occupy. The oldest name under which the village appears in history is that of Florizan, a Spanish rendering for Florissant or "flourishing," the apt name found by the first Creole habitants for the fertile valley some twelve miles by three or four which drains into St Ferdinand or Cold Water Creek.¹ Some time about 1786 St Ferdinand de Florissant was organized into a village along Franco-Spanish lines by François Dunegant under commission from the Spanish government as military and civil commandant, a post he held continuously until the American occupation. The first settlers were nearly all directly or indirectly of Canadian origin. The French villages on the left bank of the mid-Mississippi contributed their quota while many came from the near-by and older settlement of St Louis. The easy-going conservatism typical of the Creole population of the Mississippi Valley asserted itself from the earliest days in St Ferdinand de Florissant. The French merchant, M Perrin Du Lac, a visitor in the village as early as 1803, noted that its people would live in abundance, if they could exchange at a fair advantage the products of their farms for clothing, which they procured with difficulty. This they could do especially by raising tobacco, which the traders were obliged to obtain from lower Louisiana or Kentucky. But, comments Du Lac, "like all French peasants, they follow the routine of their forefathers and are the enemies of every innovation."²

The ecclesiastical history of Florissant begins with the grant of a church-lot made about 1788 to the habitants by Dunegant, the com-

¹ A census of Florissant dating from 1787 bears the caption, *Habitaciones del Establecimiento del Florizan*. Cf G J Garraghan, *St Ferdinand de Florissant the Story of an Ancient Parish* (Chicago, 1923), for the available data in regard to Florissant origins.

² Perrin Du Lac, *Voyage dans les Deux Louisianes et Chez les Nations Sauvages, etc* (Lyon, 1805), p 192.

mandant³ The lot was the southeast quarter of the block bounded by the Rues St Charles, St. Ferdinand, St Denis, and St Louis Here, Hyacinthe Deshetres being the builder, were erected in 1789 a church and presbytery of logs Father Bernard de Limpach, a Capuchin, resident pastor at St Louis during the period 1776-1789, very probably organized the parish, which was named for St Ferdinand He was followed in the spiritual care of Florissant by the Benedictine, Father Didier, the Recollect, Father Lusson, the Capuchin, Father Flynn, the diocesan priest Father James Maxwell, the Trappists, Fathers Guillet, Langlois and Dunand, and the diocesan priest Father Charles De La Croix Thus, the four religious orders of Capuchins, Benedictines, Recollects, and Trappists, as also the diocesan clergy, had cultivated this spiritual field before the arrival of the Jesuits⁴

To St. Ferdinand de Florissant in the pioneer stage of its history were drawn not a few of the early residents of its more considerable neighbor, St Louis Here finally settled down many a sturdy pioneer who had been associated with Pierre Laclede and Auguste Chouteau in the founding of St Louis René Kiersereaux, chorister and sexton of the first church in St Louis, who often baptized and assisted at burials in the absence of a priest, died at St. Ferdinand in 1798 Here also, or in its vicinity, died in 1826 Nicholas Beaugenou, Jr., nicknamed in his boyhood Fifi, who with his father came to St Louis in 1764 and from whom Fee-Fee Creek in St. Louis County derives its name⁵ Madame Rigache, who opened the first school for girls in St Louis, later moved to St Ferdinand where she spent her declining years On the occasion of Bishop Flaget's first visit to the place, July 8, 1814, two men of patriarchal age were presented to him to receive his blessing, one of them one hundred and seven, the other one hundred and eight years old The older of the two was Antoine Rivière, who in 1764 drove Madame Chouteau and her children in a French cart from Fort Chartres to Cahokia, whence she crossed the Mississippi to occupy the first house built in St Louis. Two years after Bishop Flaget's visit, Antoine Rivière passed away at the age of one hundred and ten It has been asserted

³ Hunt's *Minutes* (Library of Missouri Historical Society, St Louis, Mo) "Tradition runs to the effect that the church had its beginning in 1763 when Jesuit missionaries established Indian missions at this place" Conard, *Encyclopedia of the History of Missouri*, 5 427 "A Jesuit mission was established there by Father Meurin," *Idem*, 2 476 There is no foundation in fact for the statement that a Jesuit mission was established at Florissant by eighteenth-century Jesuits, nor is there any evidence that Meurin ever visited the locality

⁴ The burial records of St Ferdinand's parish date from 1790, the baptismal records, from 1792

⁵ Billon, *Annals of St Louis in the Early Days under the French and Spanish Dominations* (St Louis, 1886), 416, 419, 423

that the climate in the environs of St. Louis at this period was peculiarly favorable to longevity, as numerous cases of extreme old age occurring in the district seemed to indicate ⁶

Adjoining St. Ferdinand on the west were the Common Fields, laid out, as was the custom in all the early French settlements of the Mississippi Valley, in long rectangular strips. According to the traditional explanation, scarcely, however, the correct one, this arrangement was made with a view to enable the settlers to keep together in groups and thus afford one another mutual protection against possible attacks from Indians. Here, then, in the Common Fields of St. Ferdinand, Bishop Du Bourg had acquired two strips of land, one on June 19, 1818, from Joseph James and Elizabeth, his wife, and the other on January 28, 1819, from the parish-priest of Florissant, Father Dunand.⁷ The two strips formed together a parallelogram, four arpents wide and sixty long, or two hundred and forty square arpents, a tract of land equivalent approximately to two hundred and twelve acres. The parallelogram, the axis of which lay N. W. S. E., ran from Cold Water Creek to a line a few hundred feet beyond Big Branch or Seraphim Creek, the latter a diminutive stream running along the western edge of the Florissant Valley.

In acquiring this property, which came to be known as the Bishop's Farm, Du Bourg had hoped that its cultivation would prove a source of some little revenue to the diocese, though he also seems to have intended it as a place of rest and recreation to which his priests might withdraw on occasion after the fatiguing labors of the ministry. But a use was soon to be found for the farm very different from any the Bishop had first contemplated. In the summer of 1819 the Religious of the Society of the Sacred Heart, who under the direction of Mother Philippine Duchesne had opened their first American house the year before in St. Charles, Missouri, were invited by Du Bourg to establish themselves in Florissant.⁸ Here, under the superintendence of Father

⁶ Spalding, *Flaget*, pp. 133, 134.

⁷ (E) "Fortunately, I have arrived in this country at a most favorable time, when lands are still at a low price and when the immense population moving in here every day from every other part of America is daily increasing their value. I thought it my duty to profit by this circumstance to make some rather considerable acquisitions in land. I have sunk in these acquisitions the little money that remained to me and have even taken part of the land on long-time credit. Among other purchases, I bought a fine farm of 260 acres four leagues from St. Louis, which is already considerably under cultivation and may be still further cultivated by a third. This property alone will yield me, all expenses paid, at least 6000 francs a year." Du Bourg à M. Le Sueur, St. Louis, June 18, 1819. General Archives, Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

⁸ Baunard, *Duchesne*, p. 176.

Dunand, pastor of the village church, a brick house, which was occupied by the Sisters of Loretto as late as 1915 and is still standing, was built to receive them. The crudely made log cabins on the Bishop's Farm were placed by him at the disposal of the nuns until such time as the new convent in the village should be completed. On September 3, 1819, Madame Audé went by steamboat with the baggage of the community from St. Charles to the Charbonniere, the site of an abandoned coal-pit on the right bank of the Missouri about three miles from Florissant. The next day Mother Duchesne, on landing at the Charbonniere, met there Father Charles De La Croix, who had come on horseback to welcome her.⁹

Father De La Croix, a native of Ghent in Belgium, had offered his services to Bishop Du Bourg when that prelate was in Europe seeking recruits for his diocese.¹⁰ Coming to America in 1817, he was, shortly after his arrival in the West, stationed at the Bishop's Farm, where he directed the cultivation of the land, making besides occasional excursions to the Catholic settlements in the interior of Missouri. He remained at the Farm during the stay there of Mother Duchesne and her community. A chapel was fitted up at a trifling expense and here the Blessed Sacrament was reserved to the great happiness of the nuns and of Mother Duchesne in particular, who took occasion to note in her journal that "to possess Our Lord is to have all we can desire."¹¹

Devotional exercises, household tasks, the care of the few little girls that had accompanied the nuns from St. Charles, and various farm duties filled in the days that were spent by the Religious of the Sacred Heart on Bishop Du Bourg's estate. A goodly measure of privations fell to their lot. Food was scarce and to find some wild fruit in the woods was reckoned a piece of good fortune. Fire-wood could be had only in meagre quantities and every visit the nuns received exhausted their stock. "In this country," wrote Mother Duchesne, "people laugh at little fires, such as those we have in Paris, and so after burning their remaining logs in honor of a visitor, the nuns had to go into the forest and by dint of labor renew their store."

On one occasion when Father De La Croix left the Farm for a missionary trip to central Missouri, Father Felix De Andreis, superior of the Lazarists and vicar-general of upper Louisiana, came to supply his place. He was a man of known sanctity of life and a student of the writings of St. Theresa and St. John of the Cross, whom he imitated in his love of prayer and mystical intercourse with God. The saintly

⁹ *Idem*, p. 192

¹⁰ Garraghan, *St. Ferdinand de Florissant*, p. 155

¹¹ Baunard, *op cit*, p. 196

Mother Duchesne recognized in him a kindred spirit. One day at the Farm Bishop Du Bourg requested the nuns to sing a hymn which the Jesuit, Father Barat, had composed in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary "Our good saint was present," relates Mother Duchesne of Father De Andreis, "and he nearly afforded us the repetition of what took place when St. John of the Cross fell into an ecstasy whilst St. Theresa and her Carmelites were singing He so enjoyed the solitude of the woods that he always says that the happiest time he has known in America was here The songs of Sion sung in these deserts enraptured him" ¹²

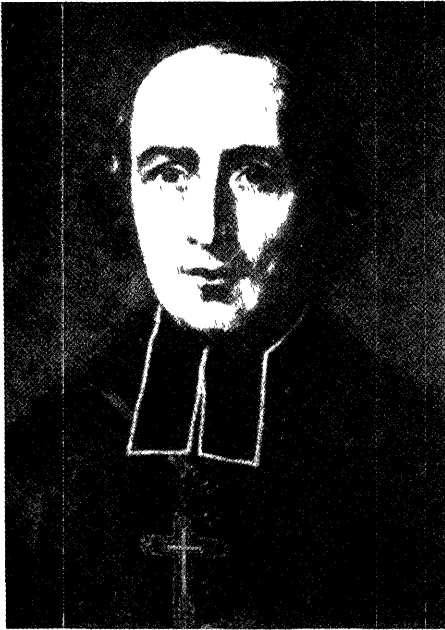
It was this ground, sanctified by the erstwhile presence of the Venerable Mother Duchesne and the Servant of God, Felix de Andreis, that the Jesuits were presently to occupy. The Religious of the Sacred Heart having withdrawn from the Bishop's Farm in December, 1819, to occupy the newly-built convent in Florissant, Father De La Croix followed them some time later to fill the post of pastor in the village church in succession to Father Dunand, who returned to France in 1821. On October 27, 1820, Bishop Du Bourg leased the farm for a period of ten years to Hugh O'Neil, Sr.¹³

On his return from Washington to New Orleans in the spring of 1823 Du Bourg passed through St. Louis, where he made only a brief stay. But he found time for a visit to Florissant, where he administered confirmation in the parish church. To Mother Duchesne he brought the unexpected news of the coming of the Jesuits. It was interesting news beyond doubt and she lost no time in communicating it to the Mother General in Paris, Madeleine Sophie Barat.

The Bishop's hurried departure is followed by that of many of his priests. Even our own priest has an idea of going down there saying it will be enough for us to have the Jesuits. If you are as yet unaware of what went on at Georgetown between the Bishop and the Jesuits, that last remark must surprise you. He did not explain to us the details of this acquisition, an inestimable one for a country such as this, where the motto of the greater glory of God must be one's only riches and support. A priest told me that the Superiors wished to break up the Novitiate because there were foreigners in it, that seven young Flemings full of ardor, zeal and devotion cried out loudly against the proposal and protested that having been called to America they would not leave the house unless they were placed in another house of the Society, whereupon the Superior decided to send

¹² *Idem*, p. 196. Decrees introducing the causes of the beatification and canonization of Mother Duchesne and Father De Andreis were signed respectively by Pius X, December 9, 1909, and Benedict XV, July 25, 1918. The decree *de tuto*, attesting the heroicity of Mother Duchesne's virtues, was issued by Pius XI, March 17, 1935.

¹³ (E).



Louis William Valentine Du Bourg (1766-1833), Bishop of Louisiana and the Floridas and chief agent in the establishment of the Jesuit Mission of Missouri, 1823.

Charles Nerinckx (1761-1824) pioneer Kentucky missionary and founder of the Society of the Sisters of Loretto at the Foot of the Cross Influential in recruiting Belgian countrymen of his for the Jesuit missions of America



Mount Carmel May 6th 1823 -

Very Rev: Dr. Father

The late Superior Father Charles Keale, a few days before his death, called me to his bed-side & directed me to take special care to forward to your Paternity the Concordate or Agreement (herm enclosed) entered into between him & the Rt. Rev: &c: Duboung, Bishop of New-Orleans, & which has been signed by each of the above mentioned Parties, with the view of obtaining your Paternity's approbation, & through your Paternity, the approbation of his Eminence

The principal motives that actuated the late Superior in this arrangement, an arrangement in which all his Consultors unanimously concurred, & which has, since his death, equally received the approbation & sanction of the new Superior, his Brother, of Francis Keale are: as follows

1. The desire of propagating the Gospel in a vast section of this Country, which, if he had not immediately embraced the proposition made him by the Bishop of New-Orleans, or rather by the Government of the United States through the Bishop of New-Orleans, would have been surrendered & given over to Anathematist & other Protestant Missionaries, as has been done in other sections, who would have formed such Establishments & do ferment the minds of those ignorant & simple Savages as would have forever excluded the Society from them, and rendered their conversion to Catholicity very nearly morally impossible. The intention of the Government of the United States to give these Missions over to Protestant Missionaries, if they should not be immediately accepted by the Superior, was communicated to the Bishop of New-Orleans on his late visit to the Seat of Government, through Mr. Calhoun, the Secretary of War, & through him directly to the Superior.

2. The Petition of the Bishop of New-Orleans himself to have the Society firmly established, if possible, in his extensive Diocess, before his death, who expected such conversion of the immense benefits & advantages that would thereby accrue to Religion in that section as seemed to justify his acquiescence, as well as

First page of letter from Benedict Fenwick, S.J., to the Jesuit General, Aloysius Fortis, May 6, 1823, setting forth the reasons for the dispatch of Father Van Quickenborne and the novices to the West. General Archives of the Society of Jesus, Rome



Charles De La Croix (1792-1869), first Catholic missionary to the Osage Indians. As parish priest of St Ferdinand's, Florissant, he welcomed the Jesuits on their arrival in the West in 1823.

Venerable Mother Rose Philippine Duchesne of the Society of the Sacred Heart (1769-1852), benefactress of the pioneer Florissant Jesuits.



them to this state of Missouri with the Master of Novices and his assistants and with some Negroes and brothers. They are coming, so it is said, on no other capital than Providence, but are all the more content for that. By the treaty made between them and the Bishop, the latter has given them his Florissant house, with its horses and cattle, and as the house is too small for the twelve or fourteen persons coming, he told us that several of them would lodge in the rectory. Unfortunately roof and floor are yet unmade and we haven't a penny to help along the work. The curé carries it on slowly, also relying only on Providence. There will be no furniture except what we shall try to give them, not wishing to yield to the good Fathers in trust in Providence. The Bishop gives them the whole of Missouri to visit, St. Charles and two other villages, which is considerable work for two priests, the novices not being in orders. I don't doubt that when they get to be numerous the Bishop will take some of them for a college in New Orleans, which he will establish in the convent of the ladies [Ursulines] there, as soon as they vacate it.¹⁴

§ 2 TAKING POSSESSION OF THE FARM

It has been told on a preceding page how Father Van Quickenborne and his party on their arrival in St. Louis, Saturday, May 31, 1823, were lodged and entertained at the cathedral rectory by the pastor, Father Niel. The following Monday, June 2, the Jesuit superior, accompanied by the parish priest of St. Ferdinand, Father De La Croix, who had come to town to meet him, rode out on horseback to the Bishop's Farm.¹⁵ On the same day, Brother De Meyer, with another coadjutor-brother, journeyed in a horse-cart to their new home, both getting thoroughly drenched with rain on the way. The novices followed in two groups. They made the entire distance on foot, stopping midway to rest, partake of refreshments and quench their thirst with the water of Maligne Creek. On Friday, June 5, they found themselves reassembled in the village of St. Ferdinand, where as the cabins on the farm had not yet been vacated by the tenant, Hugh O'Neil, they shared the hospitality of the Religious of the Sacred Heart. Mother Duchesne and her nuns outdid themselves in charitable attentions to the novices. They furnished the young men board and lodging, placing at their disposal a building of theirs which had been in use as a day-school. While thus the guests of the nuns, the novices walked each morning to the Farm to assist their superior in the task of fitting up the new home and in the evening after supper returned to the village.

¹⁴ Duchesne à Barat, May 20, 1823. General Archives, Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

¹⁵ *Historia Missionis Missourianae* (Ms.) (A). According to Hill, *Historical Sketch of the St. Louis University*, p. 21, Fathers Van Quickenborne and De La Croix went to Florissant Sunday evening, June 1.

While Father Van Quickenborne was still in the East, Bishop Du Bourg had written to him from Louisville, announcing that he himself in person or instructions from him would await the father on his arrival in St. Louis. Reaching his destination, the superior learned that the Bishop had departed a few days before for New Orleans leaving his instructions with Father Niel. Van Quickenborne had been under the impression from the first that he was to enter on possession of the farm as soon as he arrived and with no stipulations to hamper him beyond those already agreed to by the Jesuit superior in Maryland. To his great surprise he was now, on his arrival in St. Louis, informed by Father Niel that, as a condition for obtaining immediate possession of the farm, he would have to pay four hundred dollars to the tenant who then occupied it and who had a ten-year lease on it, running from 1821. Father Van Quickenborne, in a letter written a few years later to Bishop Du Bourg, says of the incident "I had either to return, which our strength and want of money did not permit or to pay, which was equally impossible." The matter was compromised by Van Quickenborne's paying the tenant one hundred dollars in cash and, in lieu of the rest of the sum demanded, promising him one-half of the crops to be raised. Hugh O'Neil, Sr., the holder of the lease, was a carpenter and builder, the lease having apparently been made in the interest of his son, Hugh O'Neil, Jr., the actual manager of the farm. The senior O'Neil had built Du Bourg's brick cathedral and was later employed on the carpentering of the church erected by Van Quickenborne in St. Charles. According to articles of agreement signed on June 6, 1823, between Father Van Quickenborne and Hugh O'Neil, Sr., and witnessed by Father De La Croix and Josias Miles, the Jesuit superior was to be given "peaceable possession" of the farm on or before June 10.¹⁶

In a letter dated "The Feast of the Sacred Heart," 1823, Van Quickenborne announced to Du Bourg his arrival at Florissant

I feel rather ashamed to write to your Lordship seven days after our arrival at St. Louis, where we were received with the greatest cordiality and affection by Mr. Neil [Niel] and the other gentlemen. The reason why I delayed so long is that I was busy making an arrangement with Mr. O'Neil, the farmer. The arrangement is now made, Mr. O'Neil is very well satisfied and so are we. I pay him one hundred dollars and half the crop of the twenty-five acres which he had begun to cultivate and he is going to vacate the house tomorrow. He leaves us all the live-stock and everything on the farm. The liberality and generosity of your Lordship in our regard has been an agreeable surprise. Four horses, a wagon, a cart, a couple of oxen and several cows, a good number of hogs and some tools

¹⁶ "Articles of Agreement, etc" (E)

put us in a position to work the farm and make it yield something even this year I am hoping that in return for all these favors your Lordship will find in us ministers who will be a source of satisfaction to you and it is to this end and in order that heaven may heap its most precious gifts on our illustrious benefactor that we address our feeble prayers every day to the Most High All our men are in good health and quite well satisfied with their new situation May we have the happiness of soon seeing your Lordship in our midst ¹⁷

The buildings, if such they could be called, which Van Quickenborne found on the premises when he arrived were three in number, a square-shaped cabin of hewn logs and two smaller cabins, also of logs Father Walter Hill, who lived at Florissant as a novice (1847-1848) while these pioneer buildings were still standing, has left an account of them and the uses they were put to after the arrival of the Jesuits

The dwelling given up to them by 'Squire O'Neil was a log cabin containing one room, which was sixteen by eighteen feet in dimensions, and over it was a loft, but not high enough for a man to stand erect in it, except when directly under the comb of the roof This poorly lighted and ill-ventilated loft, or garret, was made the dormitory of the seven novices, their beds consisting of pallets spread upon the floor The room below was divided into two by a curtain, one part being used as a chapel and the other serving as bedroom for Fathers Van Quickenborne and Timmermans This main room of the cabin had a door on the south-east side or front, a large window on the north-west side, without sash or glass, but closed with a heavy board shutter, on the south-west side it had a small window, with a few panes of glass, and finally, on the north-west side was a notable chimney, with a fire-place having a capacity for logs of eight feet in length At a distance of about eighty feet to the north-east of this building were two smaller cabins, some eight feet apart, one of which was made to serve as a study-hall for the novices, and as a common dining-room for the community, the other was used as kitchen, and for lodging the negroes These rude structures were covered with rough boards, held in place by weight poles, the floors were "puncheons" and the doors were riven slabs, and their wooden latches were lifted with strings hanging outside ¹⁸

Shortly after his arrival Van Quickenborne began to lay plans for more ample house-room He decided to add a second story to the principal cabin and to surround the entire house with a gallery, the upper

¹⁷ Van Quickenborne à Du Bourg, Fête de la jour du Sacré Coeur [1823] Archdiocesan Archives of New Orleans On the farm January 1, 1824, were eight horses, thirty horn cattle, ten milk cows, six oxen and eleven sheep *Status Temporalis* (A)

¹⁸ Hill, *op cit*, pp 28, 29 Hugh O'Neil was for a while justice of the peace in Florissant Hence the name "Squire" by which he was known

story of which could be partly made into rooms. Moreover, the house thus arranged was to receive a two-story wing or extension. In making the wing ground had to be excavated for a cellar and foundation. The first earth was turned on St Ignatius day, July 31, 1823, with something of ceremony, as befitted what one of the participants described as "the inauguration of the first novitiate after the suppression of the Society in the great Mississippi Valley, which Marquette had dedicated two centuries before to the ever memorable Immaculate Conception of the ever glorious Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of the Society of Jesus"¹⁹ Each member of the little group, first Father Van Quickenborne, then his assistant, Father Timmermans, and then the seven novices and three coadjutor-brothers, dug a spadeful of earth as the first step in the erection of the new building. The occasion was graced by the presence of the president of St Louis College, Father Niel, who had come from the city to preach the panegyric of the Jesuit founder in the village church and to be the guest of the community at dinner in the refectory, which had formerly done service as a stable. The next day, August 1, work on the proposed addition was begun in real earnest. The cellar area was marked off into four equal sections, the scholastics Verhaegen, Verreydt, De Smet and Van Assche being each assigned a section to excavate. Van Assche, so the report went in later years, proved himself the most skilful of the party with the mattock and shovel, while De Smet, always of great muscular strength, excelled all others with the axe, of which there was constant need in the work of felling trees and chopping logs in the woods.

The cellar having been dug, the next step was to procure timber. This was obtained from an island in the Missouri River a little above the Charbonniere, the bluff on the right bank of the Missouri where Mother Duchesne's community, and before them the Trappists, had landed on their first arrival at Florissant. The work of cutting and hauling the logs was performed by the novices and Negro slaves and was not entirely finished until June, 1824. While engaged in the task, the novices walked to the island in the morning after breakfast and returned home shortly before night-fall. De Smet put in writing in later years some details of this experience.

Every day after breakfast the Rector led his little band, with cross-cut saw, and each one with an ax in his hand, to an island in the Missouri River, three miles distant, containing about a thousand acres of forest trees of all sizes. These were free to all comers, so that we had our choice of chopping and felling. Hundreds of logs were secured and safely landed ashore and hauled to St Stanislaus. These logs were intended for the construction of two large cabins of hewn timbers, for rafters, servant cabins,

¹⁹ De Smet, *Hist. Missouri Mission* (Ms) (A)

stables and barns. This immense forest-island, which was just above the Charboniere, shortly after disappeared in a great rise and freshet of the Missouri River, not leaving a vestige of tree or soil. It stood on a flat, naked bed of lime stone rock, on which it had been forming perhaps for centuries as some of the largest trees seemed to indicate.²⁰

A letter of Van Quickenborne to Dzierozynski under date of July 25, 1823, sketches the situation at Florissant a few weeks after his arrival.

I have the satisfaction to let you know that our baggage has arrived in good order some days ago, the novices have begun the week before last their usual exercises, they have no longer any manual work and will have none any more, we all enjoy very good health. I have written to Rev. F[ather] Superior (f Charles Neale) to have some additional help of a father or two (say Fr. F. Krukowsky or R. F. Du Buisson, or both together). In our present circumstances it is absolutely necessary to have a professor of Divinity and I can assure you that you will render me a great service by procuring for this house a good Superior. We have four parishes to attend now and several congregations of Catholics scattered in the country. We all go in full Jesuitical dress at all times and in all places. It gives great satisfaction and edification to the people. The Brothers are extremely well pleased with their new habit. We find as yet persons that were with our old Fathers here before the Suppression. It is a pleasure to hear of their zeal and exertions in behalf of the Indians. After a short time the novices, I think, will begin to study. I hope your rev. will grant me my petition, if I ask you to send me the distribution of time, the school-hours, repetitions etc. to be asked by [from] our students. Give my love to R[ev.] F[ather] De Theux and tell him that the labours of Maryland are nothing in comparison with those of the Missouri and if you can make for us some other little collections of money, it will be most thankfully received.

Circumstances had made it necessary for Father Van Quickenborne to press the novices into service for a more considerable share of manual labor than otherwise would have been deemed advisable. To Father Neale, the Maryland superior, he made the following explanation:

As for the work the novices have done, these are my reasons,

1. When we came on to this place, no house or cabin was arranged, little was done on the plantation and I had not the means to hire hands.

2. I had just reason to fear that our baggage would not come soon and perhaps would have been lost. We had not a single book to read or study, no table, no chairs, nor anything. It was then for a time impossible to do our ordinary spiritual reading. All the time for meditation, recollection, Flexoria, examen, vocal prayers, beads and office of the B[lessed]

²⁰ *Idem*

V[irgin] M[ary] we spent regularly as in the novitiate I thought that to let the men idle, would be very dangerous I had much to suffer from the tenant and many other difficulties came in the way To have the novices speak of and see all these things, I thought was dangerous Therefore, I endeavored to set before their eyes the prospect of a fine crop, such as, thanks be to God, we have Moreover, I concluded that if I could stand it the first year and, without making any debts, settle here comfortably, I would have obtained an essential point, and I hope I have obtained it There is no doubt we will be able to maintain ourselves here without making any debts at all. Our house will be comfortable and spacious enough to lodge two or three fathers more The novices agreed in all this and did the work willingly and joyfully ²¹

A letter of July 21, 1823, from Van Quickenborne to Father John McElroy, who had entertained the Jesuit party at Frederick in Maryland, touches on the situation at Florissant at that early date. It is reproduced here though the greater part of it deals with the journey from the East:

It would have been a great satisfaction to me to write to your Reverence much sooner. The zeal which your Reverence has shown for the success of our enterprise and the affection which you have always exhibited towards the novices required on my part a particular attention to this duty of mine However, having to write some long letters to the Superior giving an account of everything and the difficulties which ordinarily attend establishments like ours, and in such circumstances as we are, it was out of my power to bring my desires into effect Our journey was prosperous. After we separated from you at the marble quarries we walked easy and continued to do so the whole road At Cumberland, Hancock, Uniontown, Brownsville, Washington and one other place on the road with a Mr Bevens, we found Catholics who received us like Apostles and whose charity often made me shed tears In other places in taverns we were always well received though we spent but very little money I often had reason to repent having taken your reverence's horse. More than once I in vain attempted to sell him Now he does very well, but won't work Mr Thompson at Wheeling received us as well as we could wish We stopped there four days for our wagons that had the baggage in, broke on the road and we arrived at Wheeling two days before them At Wheeling we bought two flat-bottomed boats and having taken our horses and two of the Bishop's and our provisions, we set off without a pilot The site of the river and its banks was truly beautiful and charming. The snags sometimes terrified us and once or twice a sudden storm gave us alarm We floated day and night The 22d of May we landed at Shawneetown Till this time we had Mass every day Shawneetown is situated on the banks of the Ohio in Illinois from which we went overland to St. Louis, a distance of 160 miles Here we entered

²¹ Van Quickenborne to Francis Neale, September 29, 1823 (B) "Flexoria," a half-hour of afternoon meditation or mental prayer practiced by Jesuit novices

on a truly horrid desert Never did we suffer more from the mosquitos and bad lodging Moreover, the water gave us another trial The Missouri at that time discharged its waters so freely into the Mississippi that the oldest people never before witnessed such an inundation. The Bishop had left the city a few days before our arrival The day following we witnessed a procession on the occasion of the solemnity of Corpus Christi such as we had never seen before in America We were received by the Vicar-General of the Bishop with all possible attention, so that we soon forgot our little miseries of the water St Ferdinand is the name of the place where we are, Florissant being its nickname It is extremely healthy Sixteen miles from St Louis Our habitation is one and a half miles from the church, as much from the Missouri I have not as yet received a letter nor a cent from the Bishop The letter I wrote to him announcing our arrival was carried by Mr De La Croix on board of a steamboat for New Orleans The steamboat got fast on a sand-bar and remained there for three weeks Ours all enjoy good health and are coming on as they did before, well The negroes are very well satisfied We have four parishes with church to attend and a good number of Catholics scattered through the country At a distance of 100 miles there are more than thirty families of them

P S We want absolutely a house before winter Without assistance we are unable to do it The building of the church has taken much labor and money from the people so that there are no resources here Will your reverence not find a soul animated with zeal to help us effectively? ²²

On September 8 Van Quickenborne announced the arrival of his party at Florissant to Father Joseph Rosati, superior of the Lazarist community at the Barrens (*Bois Brulé, Sylva Cremata*), Perry County, Missouri Father Rosati was at this time vicar-general for upper Louisiana.

It is a shame for me, Very Reverend Sir, not to give you notice of our arrival until three months after it has occurred I left several opportunities for writing to you pass by, especially the one offered through the Rev Mr Dahmen, only because I hoped to be able in a short while to go and see you in person The very great esteem I have for the Congregation of which you are the Superior and your title of Vicar General urged me strongly to undertake this journey, especially in the absence of the Bishop But however great has been my desire, I see it is impossible for me to realize it now I am quite worn out with fever, while a multiplicity of occupations in connection with the building we have commenced does not allow of my being absent The difficulties we are under are considerable enough, but they begin to grow less and with God's grace I hope we shall be able to settle down here Mr De La Croix has left the affairs of the parish in good order, besides, we have the consolation of having the Ladies of the Sacred Heart who work with tireless zeal and are excellently

²² Van Quickenborne to McElroy, Florissant, July 21, 1823 (B)

equipped for giving a finished education to persons of their sex In fine, the example of piety and holiness which they give and the Sunday school which they conduct give reason to hope that the cause of religion will win and piety take root Wishing you the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ, I beg you to be assured of my very respectful attachment to your person and to believe me

Your very humble and devoted servant,
Cs F. Van Quickenborne ²³

Meantime, at Portobacco in Maryland had occurred the death of Father Charles Neale Attended in his last moments by Father Benedict Fenwick, he passed away on April 27, 1823, having previously signed and placed in the hands of Father Dzierozynski a paper appointing his brother, Francis Neale, superior of the mission pending an official appointment from Rome Two days later Father Dzierozynski in a communication to the Father General penned a brief tribute to the deceased superior "He was a man surely of no ordinary talent, prudence and constancy, and was the last remnant of the old Society, which he had entered in Belgium three years before its suppression He was among the first who worked with such strenuous effort for the recall of the Society to America Two or three times did he fill the post of Superior of the entire Mission The patience and high spirits with which he bore so cheerfully the cross and wholesome purgatory of his affliction give hope that even now he is enjoying eternal peace and joy." ²⁴ Father Francis Neale, the provisional superior, had some time before suffered a paralytic stroke, from which at this juncture he had only partially recovered His tenure of office lasted until the winter, the decree of Father Fortis, the General, naming Dzierozynski superior of the Maryland Mission being dated November 7, 1823 The latter continued in office up to the arrival in 1830 of the Visitor, Father Peter Kenney, during all which period the Mission of Missouri was a dependency of Maryland.

Writing in October, 1823, to Father Charles Neale, of whose death in the preceding April he was not aware, Father Van Quickenborne noted that he had not received a single letter from any of his Jesuit brethren since he left the Marsh The first letter to reach him from the East came from Father Benedict Fenwick It was dated September 23, 1823

Your letter from St Ferdinand reached me only yesterday I hasten to acknowledge its receipt and also to felicitate you on your safe arrival and that of your pious and enterprising little troop Your long letter of the 19th

²³ Van Quickenborne à Rosati, Florissant, September 8, 1823 (C)

²⁴ Dzierozynski ad Fortis, April 29, 1823 (B)

June so interesting for its details which was addressed to Father Charles was received by Father Francis Neale, his successor in office and who still continues to be Superior. All your future letters on the subject of affairs should be directed to him at St. Thomas where he still resides. Father Charles lived but a short time after your departure from Maryland. He often spoke of you and your mission during his illness and considered the opening of that new field to the Society as one of the greatest acts of his Superiorship and from which he promised himself the most happy results to religion. The account you have given of the state of things on your arrival, though it seems to indicate that something will have to be suffered and some trials to be undergone for the cause of God in which you have so generously embarked, yet it equally points out the future expectation and leads one to hope that a year or two of prudent economy together with the success Government will afford, will place you above want and insure the most favorable prospects.

Relatively to the funds which the Bishop of New Orleans derives from France, I shall immediately address him a letter and endeavor to prevail on him to allot a portion of the same to your district. He can certainly have no objection to do so, indeed I flatter myself that the very lively interest he takes in the success of your undertaking (of which I have a new evidence in his late letter on the subject of your affairs) will not suffer him to forget the situation in which he leaves you.

The Superior is greatly chagrined that Father Timmermans occasionally experiences a return of his former affliction, and the more so, as it will increase your difficulties if the same should continue. We hope, however, for the best and that the Almighty will continue to protect his work. He will, at the same time that he prays for the continuance of the health of each of you, look about him and see whether he will be able to afford you another priest who shall be every way competent to the discharge of his duty. He thinks he shall be able ere long to spare you one. In short, very dear Father, the eyes of all are turned upon you and expect much from your prudent exertions. We all wish you success and shall not fail, as soon as it is in our power, to give you assistance. Write often and let your letters be well drawn and as copious and particular as possible in all matters. Take great care that the information afforded be extremely exact and correct and that nothing may be said which may have a tendency to mislead the Superior in the measures he is to adopt upon them.²⁵

Twelve days prior to the date of the foregoing, Father Benedict Fenwick had written to Bishop Du Bourg at New Orleans in regard to the missionary expedition which Maryland had sent out to Missouri.

²⁵ Benedict Fenwick to Van Quickenborne, September 10, 1823 (A). Other paragraphs of this letter are cited elsewhere in this history. Father Benedict Fenwick, S. J., cousin of Bishop Edward Fenwick, O. P., first Bishop of Cincinnati, was consecrated Bishop of Boston, November 1, 1825. Van Quickenborne's letter of June 19, 1823, to Charles Neale is missing.

At the same time that I received your Lordship's communication I was presented with a letter from Father Van [Quickenborne] who, as your Lordship observes, is more satisfied with his prospect than with his present situation I am not surprised at this, nor indeed ought he to have expected to find all at once a garden of Eden in the center of a wilderness He is much pleased, however, with the quality of the soil, the healthiness of the adjacent country, the goodness of the water etc He desired the Superior (who is F Francis Neale till the General appoints another) to give him instruction on several points, viz 1st whether he, being a Jesuit, can take charge of the "Dames du S Coeur," hear their confessions and attend to them as his immediate predecessor was accustomed to do The answer of the Superior to this was that he should take the earliest opportunity to acquaint the Father General with the circumstance and learn his pleasure upon it of which he should inform him (F Van) in due time, but ad interim he authorized him to attend to the nuns du Sacré Coeur provided your Lordship gave him the requisite powers to do so, stating that it was very desirable that as far as practicable those who labor in the same mission should be of the same order the better to preserve peace and harmony

3dly Father Van desires to know how he is to act in regard to those churches that have trustees, viz at St Charles, at Portage des Scioux, at Dardenne etc The Superior informs him that his study should be to gain them over by mildness and by proving to them by his zeal and esteem for the salvation of their souls that it is their interest to renounce all interference even in temporals and surrender the same to the Society, that nothing is to be done by denunciations, but all by endeavors at conciliation, that the Faith of the people in those parts was as it were in the incipient state and too weak to be acted upon by strong measures

Father Van, I know not upon what ground, begins to be somewhat solicitous about the stipend (two hundred dollars) the Government is to pay annually I presume your Lordship has already regulated that matter and that no difficulty will be experienced on that head There is likewise another point on which it will be proper to say a word The contributions levied in France towards the support of the Indian missions in your Lordship's diocese, will not a reasonable portion of these be committed to Father Van to enable him to weather the storm and overcome the difficulties he is now struggling with? It is very desirable that as good a face as possible be put on the undertaking, which certainly is a very important one both to your Lordship's diocese and to religion at large, and that the Government should see that we are serious in the business On our part your Lordship may be assured we shall leave no stone unturned to promote it as far as our ability will allow as soon as we get in a condition to do it At present we are too shackled to afford any aid It may be that we shall be able to afford a priest or two in a short time Father De Theux has not petitioned that I know of to go to that mission He may, however, do so hereafter Whatever the case may be, members will not be wanting in a few years after the ship shall have got cleverly under way Hitherto she is only launched Let it be our endeavor to keep her from the present well afloat I entertain

no doubts that a favorable gale will come in time which will waft her even beyond the Rocky Mountains ²⁶

Meantime, the arrival and settlement of the Jesuits in his diocese had brought to Bishop Du Bourg a satisfaction proportionate to the efforts he had made to secure their services. He gave expression to his satisfaction in various letters to Europe.

The acquisition which I have made of Jesuits for the Missouri causes me to feel singularly peaceful about these distant parts. These good fathers are in possession of my farm at Florissant. To reach it they walked more than four hundred miles, of which two hundred miles were through inundated country, where the water was often up to their waists, and far from murmuring, they blessed God for granting them such an Apostolic beginning ²⁷. They were very agreeably surprised, not expecting to find such a pretty place, for it is my policy to speak only of drawbacks to those whom I invite to share my labors. The superintendent of Indian affairs, upon whom depends much of the success of our missions to the savages, received them with an interest both kind and active, and shows himself in an especial way, their protector. Moreover, the fathers, including their novices, are well calculated to inspire confidence. An unlimited devotedness, which is proof against the greatest dangers and privations, is associated in them with rare goodness and talents of a high order. They complain of nothing, they are satisfied with everything. Living in the closest quarters in a little house, sleeping on skins for want of mattresses, living on corn and pork, they are happier than the rich on their downy beds, surrounded by luxury, because they know happiness far more exquisite, and are not hampered by self-indulgence. It is my duty, however, to try to procure for them, at least, the necessaries of life, and also the means of exercising their zeal and extending their field of labor. It is in this that I hope to be seconded by the Association of the Propagation of the Faith ²⁸.

It is to this end that I have worked from the very beginning to secure the help of the order of St. Vincent de Paul, and that I have made every effort to induce the Jesuits to come here, the former order for the Seminary, the latter for the Missouri missions and more especially for work among

²⁶ Benedict Fenwick to Du Bourg, Mount Carmel, Portobacco, Md., September 11, 1823. Archives of the Archdiocese of New Orleans. Jesuits are precluded by their rule from undertaking, unless in exceptional circumstances, the spiritual direction of nuns. The system of lay-trustees had given rise to serious abuses in the early days of the Catholic Church in the United States. Hence there was a tendency to displace them as far as possible and vest the exclusive control of church temporalities in the bishops and parochial clergy. The passage in the letter bearing on the Indian school is omitted. Cf. *infra*, Chap. V, § 1.

²⁷ The distance travelled by the party through the inundated American Bottom is overstated.

²⁸ Du Bourg à son frère, August 6, 1823. The letters from which these extracts are cited are in *Ann. Prop.*, I, II. Tr. in *RACHS*, 14: 153-154.

the Indians The expense of all this has been great, but I am far from regretting it You can see by the letters of Father Van Quickenborne the progress made by the Jesuits in a very short time and with very small means I have been unable to assist them as substantially as I would have liked, having something to pay on the establishment which I have given them As soon as this debt is discharged, if our brothers in Europe continue to help as liberally as heretofore, I intend to spend a quarter, perhaps a third of these donations to aid the fathers in their important work They will also need more subjects, for the field which I have assigned to them is immense, but I believe that all will come in good time ²⁹

§ 3 A PERIOD OF DISTRESS

During the summer of 1823 the seven novices were reduced to six by the withdrawal of Francis de Maillet, whom Father Van Quickenborne thought unsuited for the Jesuit life and for whom he obtained a position as instructor in Bishop Du Bourg's college in St Louis ³⁰

²⁹ Du Bourg à son frère, January 30, 1826 Tr in *RACHS*, 14 161

³⁰ I have had a very fine opportunity of placing Mr De Maillet with the Rev Mr Niel [president of St Louis College] who was glad to have him, for at that time he stood greatly in need of a teacher He will not be dismissed unless your Rev will write me to do so" Van Quickenborne to C Neale, September 23, 1823 (B) De Maillet's dismissal was subsequently authorized or ratified by the Father General Fortis ad Dzierzozynski, March 25, 1824 (B) De Maillet, after ceasing to be a Jesuit, appears to have had some intention of joining the diocesan clergy, but nothing is known of his subsequent career "Wrote to Mr Demallez [De Maillet] that if he has still the desire of receiving Orders, he should come to the Seminary" Diary of Bishop Rosati, November 16, 1825, *SLCHR*, 4 101

Besides Mr De Maillet, the Florissant community lost Brother Strahan, who returned to Maryland in September, 1823 A plate-printer and engraver by profession, he had entered White Marsh from Philadelphia in November, 1819, and there pronounced his vows before Father Van Quickenborne on November 13, 1821 Diary of Father John McElroy (G) He does not seem to have found contentment in his grade of coadjutor-brother owing apparently to the reason that he desired to be a priest The superior found him troublesome both at White Marsh and on the journey to Missouri "He would have me name some of the company and himself too to make a Council by whose decision everything was to be done" Van Quickenborne to Dzierzozynski, September 23, 1823 (B) Brother Strahan left Florissant for the East without the permission or even the knowledge of Father Van Quickenborne, begging in St Louis the money needed for the journey However, he appears to have taken the course he did on advice from his confessor that it was justifiable under the circumstances Arriving in Maryland, he lodged complaints with the superior, Father Francis Neale, against Van Quickenborne, who thereupon was sent a letter of reprimand by Neale The complaints were probably similar to those alleged at the same time against the superior from another quarter—that in money-matters he was parsimonious, that he did not provide properly for the reasonable comfort of his community and that he employed its members unnecessarily in manual-labor Very probably a measure of truth lay behind the com-

Meanwhile, as the young men were rounding out the two years of their noviceship, their superior had before him the question of admitting them to the vows ordinarily taken at the end of the Jesuit novitiate To Father Dzierzynski he wrote July 25, 1823

Y[ou]r rev knows that according to R[ev] F[ather] Charles' last resolution, communicated to me, the novices cannot take their vows, except after having obtained express leave from Right Rev F[ather] General, before the expiration of their two years, which will be on the 4th of October next It will be impossible to have his answer Now should the novices not be permitted to take their vows on the very day of their two years expiration or at least thereabouts, it will cause among them great dissatisfaction, murmuring, diffidence in and aversion to Superiors they are sincerely attached to the Society and great lovers of their holy vocation By the Concordat made with the Bishop, Rev. F[ather] Superior has not only disposed of them for the present, but also for the future and they have known this in Maryland they have obeyed, exposed themselves to a dangerous and difficult journey, the means for comfort being denied by the Society. They have submitted and that with pleasure, to be placed in a most perilous post in missions highly cherished by the Society they do not complain, are not dissatisfied, but at the time of their vows they must expect to be treated like beloved children of the Society and not like adventurers of whom it must as yet be decided whether they can stay in the house or are to be expelled It is needless to mention to yr rev many other reasons and considerations which could be added however, I must say that in my

plaints Father Van Quickenborne was at this juncture but thirty-five years of age, had been a Jesuit only eight years, having entered the Society of Jesus as a diocesan priest, and had still much to learn in regard to the manner of government which it seeks to employ in regard to its members Moreover, severe towards himself, he was liable to show himself such towards others Baunard in his biography of Mother Duchesne gives some curious instances of Father Van Quickenborne's drastic treatment of that holy nun But the real character of the man is revealed in the words he addressed to Father Dzierzynski on occasion of the complaints made against him "Thus I do not exculpate myself, for I acknowledge that I am guilty of many faults and imprudences and that I could have been more charitable towards my brethren and that it is an unhappiness for these young men to be under me I will endeavor to be more charitable and not only give what is necessary but shall also at times not suffer *douceurs* to be wanting and assuredly not put them to any more manualia However, I could ask for the good of the Society [that it] would not let [*sic*] and never put me in any Superiority whatever All my ambition is to be sent to the Indians I hope that to suffer and die with them will make my happiness" Van Quickenborne to Dzierzynski, September 7, 1823 (B) Brother Strahan after his return to Maryland was employed for some time as an instructor in the day-school conducted by the Jesuits on H street in Washington When that institution closed its doors in 1827, he joined Father Jeremias Kiley, another former member of the teaching-staff, in opening a school on Capitol Hill, having obtained his release from the Society some time before

humble opinion, the success of our mission here depends in a great part on granting them leave to take their vows at the usual time

In addressing this letter to Dzierozynski, Van Quickenborne had sought to secure his intercession with the superior of the mission on behalf of the novices. Meanwhile the time for their vows was drawing nearer with no word yet received from the East. On October 8, 1823, Van Quickenborne wrote again to Dzierozynski, whom he apparently thought was at the moment acting-superior of Maryland "As the novices are at the term of the two years' noviceship, I shall let them take the devotional vows, not having power from your Reverence to admit them to the body of the Society. I hope your Reverence will approve it." Two days later, October 10, 1823, in the humble cabin that served as chapel of the first Jesuit novitiate in the Mississippi Valley, Peter Verhaegen, John Baptist Smedts, John Felix Verreydt, Judocus Van Assche, Peter John De Smet and John Anthony Elet bound themselves to the religious life by the three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.³¹

At the beginning of 1824 Van Quickenborne had been a year and a half without receiving any word from general headquarters, as he informed Father Fortis

It must be a subject of great wonder to your Very Reverend Paternity if for a space of eighteen months you have received no letter from me and, if you have received my letters, I must be myself to blame if no answer has been returned. During that time I have written six times to your Paternity, three times from here. But I am not discouraged, though some bit of a letter would cheer us greatly. The day before yesterday a letter from Father Dzierozynski, our worthy Superior, and also one from the Bishop were delivered to me. My soul was filled with joy to learn from them that your Very Reverend Paternity approves of our coming here and has it in mind to send us a Superior. God grant that we may be permitted to see him soon and with a companion. All of us here are doing well. The novices took their vows and are now studying philosophy. A roomy house has been put up as far as the roof and as soon as the weather permits the roof will be added on and the house finished.^{31a}

The first winter at St. Ferdinand's was to be a trying one. "Were St. Ignatius alive," wrote Van Quickenborne to Father McElroy in December, 1823, "from the many sufferings I meet with, I think he would foretell that success is to follow my miseries. Through the grace of God I do not feel them very much, having a most strong confidence

³¹ Van Quickenborne to Dzierozynski, October 8, 1823 (B). Van Assche à De Nef, Florissant, April 29, 1824 (A).

^{31a} Van Quickenborne ad Fortis, January 6, 1824 (AA).

that the Blessed Virgin and her Divine Son have taken our establishment under their care. I am full of hopes that the Almighty in his goodness will make use of us to promote his greater glory in this part of the world. I began a pretty large building of logs only, though the whole has an under-cellar, having a brick wall one and a half-foot above ground. It is not quite as large as the Seminary in the city. I have all the material ready but the weather prevents me from putting on the roof."³²

The new building was to remain roofless for some months to come and the community had to struggle through their first Missouri winter as best they could in the little cabins they had fitted up on their arrival. In February, 1824, Van Quickenborne informed Dzierozynski, the recently appointed Maryland superior, that it would be impossible to spend another winter in their present lodgings. He was still in doubt as to the future of the colony in view of a mystifying statement he had just received from the Father General to the effect that when the new superior came to St. Louis the colony might be disposed of in another way. What did the General mean? Is the Concordat to be broken? the farm not to be accepted? Are we to go to another place? Yet whatever the future had in store for his community, his mind was made up on one point, the urgent and absolute need of more decent quarters. He fears that his subordinates may lose heart and that, if any of their number fall sick, the distressing conditions under which they live may be made a subject of complaint. Even if the Concordat be not agreed to, it will not be easy to find another place before the coming winter. Moreover, the cost of a new house, stable and barn would be only four hundred dollars. Whatever happens, the Jesuits will remain at Florissant at least two years longer. During that time two hundred dollars will be saved by the better storage for provisions afforded by the new buildings and if it be necessary in the end to move to another place, the improvements can be sold at a fair price. Such was Van Quickenborne's report to his superior of the situation in the West in the beginning of 1824. His representations appear to have had the desired effect and the new building, begun in the summer of 1823, was finished the following year.³³

No news could have been more gratifying to the Jesuit community at St. Ferdinand's than the nomination of the Lazarist superior, Father Joseph Rosati, as Coadjutor-bishop of Louisiana. On receiving the news Van Quickenborne hastened to send Rosati a word of congratulation

³² Van Quickenborne to McFloy, Florissant, December 12, 1823 (B)

³³ Van Quickenborne ad Dzierozynski, Florissant, February 17, 1824 (B)

Allow me to express to you my joy at the news of your nomination as Coadjutor to Bishop Du Bourg. All good souls rejoice at it, particularly those who have the good fortune of being acquainted with your merits. Certainly it is a great consolation to see how the Lord provides his flock with chief pastors according to his heart. We consider ourselves to be henceforth under stricter obligation to pray for your worthy person, and if the Lord deigns to hear our feeble prayers, he will heap upon you the most precious of his graces. All here are doing nicely. The log house which we began is not yet under roof. We hope to finish it next Spring, at which time we expect reinforcements from Europe.³⁴

Rosati was consecrated Bishop of Tenagra *in partibus* by Bishop Du Bourg at New Orleans, March 25, 1824. He continued to reside with the Lazarist community at the Barrrens until the September following his appointment in March, 1827, as Ordinary of the newly erected diocese of St. Louis, when he took up his residence in that city. In December, 1824, Bishop Rosati named Father Van Quickenborne his vicar-general for upper Louisiana, greatly to the surprise of the diffident Jesuit, who protested at once his incapacity for this responsible post.

The reading of your letter filled me with confusion. I know not what could have induced your Lordship to fix your choice on one like me. No doubt lack of priests places you in embarrassing circumstances. But I have every reason to fear the appointment will serve only to put me to shame. I do not know how to express my gratitude to you for the interest you take in our establishment.³⁵

The kindly attentions lavished by Venerable Mother Duchesne on the Jesuits when they arrived in 1823 were continued as long as economic distress made the position of the newcomers a difficult one. In straightened circumstances herself, the devoted superior of the Society of the Sacred Heart still continued to secure substantial aid for her Jesuit neighbors. Kitchen utensils, blankets, linen, food were either begged from St. Louis friends or furnished out of her own meagre store. A gift of fifty dollars which she received was promptly placed in Van Quickenborne's hands. When he went forth on his missionary excursions he found the single horse that the convent could boast placed at his disposal while the chapel outfit he brought along had been pro-

³⁴ Van Quickenborne à Rosati, Florissant, January 6, 1824 (B)

³⁵ Van Quickenborne à Rosati, Florissant, January 9, 1825 (C). Bishop Rosati's appointment of Father Van Quickenborne as vicar-general is dated December 28, 1824 (A). Father De Theux was appointed by Rosati, April 14, 1830, acting vicar-general during Van Quickenborne's absence among the Indians and on March 2, 1831, vicar-general. Rosati's Diary. But De Theux's faculties in this office extended only to his Jesuit confrères.

vided for him by the attentive nuns From a contemporary notice we get an intimate picture of Mother Duchesne pursuing far into the night her self-imposed tasks of making or mending the soutanes and parti-colored stockings of the Jesuit community Meantime, the vicissitudes of the latter and the relations into which they were being brought with the nuns were ever-recurring topics in the letters that Mother Duchesne was sending from Florissant to her superior in distant Paris, Mother Madeleine Sophie Barat, now a canonized saint of the Church

The more we see of the Father Rector, the more we appreciate his direction and recognize [in him] the spirit of his Father, St Ignatius I have found a Father-Master I no longer do what I wish and still he is not content He gave a retreat of three days for our entire house on the occasion of a clothing and a first communion, which took place on the 14th of this month, feast of the Holy Name of Mary One could only wish it had been longer, he has the gift of persuading and touching Seeing your daughters in such good hands, I am quite at ease in regard to their interior guidance. . . They [the Jesuits] are building at the Bishop's place I have done all I could to induce them to build in the neighborhood of the church, but there is no way of bringing them to do so They would not want to be close to us (September 29, 1823)

Our fathers have learned with joy of the success of the [Jesuit] fathers of France and Sardinia. They are in a season of trials These latter are of such a nature that I pray you again to bring the French houses to send them money, but directly to them. The need is so great that I should be afraid of mixing up their interests with those of others The fathers have not been able to build before winter. They are just now exposed to wind and weather and all are turning carpenters and masons to close in at least one room which may serve for dormitory and study-hall (November 27, 1823)

Do you doubt now that God wishes us to be here? By an unhopd for blessing, we have so near us a nursery of Jesuits, fervent as Berchmans, which like our own, is directed by a Father Rodriguez or Alvarez, he is one or the other At present he is keeping at a distance from us his holding aloof does not come from a want of zeal but from fear of acting against his rule There is much in his manner to suggest that of your holy brother . . . It would indeed be ungracious in me to try to pass for one in misery, seeing myself favored and supported by so many friends of God (February 19, 1824)

It pains me among other things to see that our interests are entirely opposed to those of the Fathers Their being at such a distance from the church makes their situation really painful During the week the Father says Mass three times at home and three times here, but on Sundays, when he is obliged to come at an early hour to hear confessions, all the brothers have to come also, whether summer-heat, rain or the rigors of winter The creeks, which become swollen, make the passage difficult, dangerous and on many occasions impossible Our house, which adjoins the church, is, as a

matter of fact, what they need, but such is our poverty, we should lose the fruit of so many hardships [undergone] for the sake of our establishment, for we should have to begin all over again in some other place, and I find myself too slothful for that (September 1, 1824)

If you would use your influence to have him [Father Van Quickenborne] come a little more often or to have the Father General give permission to some of the students here to be ordained, it would be a great boon for religion and for us. One priest cannot suffice for four parishes, two communities and sick people at a great distance. He is constantly risking his life. Recently in crossing a river to come here the horse while swimming threw him into the water. He held on to the bridle until he could touch ground. On returning the water was still higher, and, although on horseback, he found it up to his neck, owing to the horse tossing about in its efforts to get back. The firmness of this holy minister displeases many, especially the French, who say that he does not like them and that they would rather go to another [priest]. This other has not yet appeared. We no longer see any one but him, his children being always in retirement. F[ather] Cloriviere did not compare with him in exactness. I see perfectly that a second [Father] would put hearts at ease. One cannot find greater merit, but sometimes [human] weaknesses need to be indulged (July 4, 1825)

As a postscript to these excerpts from the correspondence of Mother Duchesne, it may be added that the appeals made to Mother Barat by her local representative at Florissant on behalf of the struggling Jesuit community of the vicinity were not fruitless. On April 8, 1824, the saint wrote to Mother Duchesne "Mlle Mathevon, sister of Lucille, has forwarded me nearly 600 francs for your good Fathers. I do not know how to send them to you. We are going to beg in our houses and if anything comes of it, we shall put all the collections together." Evidently Father Van Quickenborne realized that the superior-general of the Society of the Sacred Heart could be relied upon as a sympathetic friend, when he appealed on one occasion to the Father General for the dispatch of some recruits from abroad, it was in the hands of Mother Barat that he proposed to place the travelling-money which he was ready to provide for their journey overseas.^{35a}

Exactly one year had passed since the planting of the Jesuit colony when it suffered an unexpected loss in the death of Father Timmermans. During nearly all his stay in Missouri he was in feeble health. On Ascension Thursday he was particularly indisposed, but was able to take a walk with the scholastics Van Assche and Elet. His condition

^{35a} *Notices sur la vie de Mère Duchesne en Amérique* (Ms) Lettres de Mère Duchesne. General Archives of the Society of the Sacred Heart. "The nuns have offered me a gift of 200 doll. I have accepted." Van Quickenborne to Dzierzynski, September 29, 1823 (B)

improved the following days and on Saturday, May 29, he left the house to attend his mission at St. Charles. The heat and fatiguing duties of the following day prostrated him so that he was barely able to conduct the Sunday services. After Mass he began to preach to the congregation but was unable to proceed. He rejoined his community Sunday evening about 9 o'clock, as Father Van Quickenborne, who planned to go to St. Louis on Monday, had requested him not to remain overnight in St. Charles. Father Timmermans took medicine and retired for the night, not doubting that the indisposition would have vanished by the morning. But the morning found him no better. At half-past four Van Quickenborne celebrated Mass. Timmermans wished to rise and go to the chapel, but was dissuaded from doing so by the infirmarian. He was in a sleep when the superior went to visit him. On being assured by the brother-infirmarian that his colleague's ailment was nothing more serious than an acute attack of malaria, Father Van Quickenborne left the house for St. Louis. When Father Timmermans awoke, he felt himself to be worse rather than better and was thereupon advised by the infirmarian to occupy the superior's room, where it might be easier for him to rest. He did so without any assistance. This was about ten o'clock in the morning. At half-past twelve Mr. Van Assche on passing the window of the superior's room, which was in the same cabin as the chapel, a curtain being used to separate the two apartments, saw the sick priest seated on the bed and engaged in conversation with the infirmarian, who was preparing to bring him a little nourishment. About half an hour later the same scholastic with one of his companions heard the sick priest groan, as though in extreme pain. Hurrying at once to the room where he lay, they found him with his eyes open, gasping for breath and already in his agony. The rest of the community were hastily summoned and while the prayers for the dying were being recited by one of the scholastics, Father Timmermans passed away. It was the thirty-first day of May, 1824.³⁶

In the course of that same day Van Quickenborne, as he approached the house on his return from St. Louis, heard the community bell tolling the customary knell for a departed soul. He had left the house in the morning without particular anxiety for his fellow-priest, who did not appear to be seriously indisposed, and now when he learned that the death-knell was for Father Timmermans, his heart sank under the shock. To the scholastics, whom he found greatly depressed over the event, he could only say that the Lord evidently wished the father to share no longer the misery of which there was so plentiful a store, and

³⁶ Van Assche à De Nef, Florissant, June 5, 1824 (A). The date of Father Timmerman's death is erroneously given in some accounts as June 1.

raising his eyes to heaven, he added, "Lord, it is your work at which we labor. *Fiat voluntas tua*"³⁷

Thus died Father Peter Timmermans, with whose name begins the necrology of the restored Society of Jesus in the Middle United States. He was buried on Tuesday, June 1, in the parish church of St. Ferdinand's under the epistle side of the sanctuary, and, in the words of Mr. Van Assche, "with all the ceremony that we could command." This young Fleming, then only twenty-four years of age, had been deeply impressed by the dead priest's piety "The memory of his virtues, particularly his obedience and humility," he informed his friend, De Nef in Belgium, "will never be effaced from our memory." More than a year had passed since the father's death when Van Assche in a letter to a friend in Belgium again returned to the subject of Timmermans's edifying career. One word from the superior was enough to make him go anywhere without a penny in his pocket Whatever his occupation, he made daily four or five visits to the Blessed Sacrament, apart from those that were made in common by the community, nor did he ever fail on leaving the house for a missionary trip to pay a visit to the chapel. When he returned, it mattered not at what hour, nor whether he was drenched with rain or stiff with cold, he leaped from his horse, saluted the scholastics if they happened to be present and, without saying a word, proceeded at once to the chapel Nothing but the most obvious danger would prevent him from crossing the Missouri to attend to his missions, which, beginning with St Charles and Portage Des Sioux stretched westward across the state as far as Jefferson City.³⁸

Three days after the death of his fellow-priest, Van Quickenborne dispatched to his superior in Maryland this simple note

Painful as it is, I have to announce to your Reverence, the death of our beloved Father Timmermans He died like a soldier with armor in hand on the field of battle in the actual exercise of his truly apostolical zeal The day before his departure out of this life he celebrated Mass (as yet) at St Charles, came home, and was the next day, the thirty-first, a corpse. His loss is deeply felt by all who knew him He has been buried in the church here and his funeral has been attended by a great number of persons His death has produced the effect which is ordinarily produced by the death of a Saint³⁹

On the same day that Van Quickenborne penned these lines he sent a second letter to Dzierzynski asking him to make good the

³⁷ French anonymous account in the Shea Propaganda transcripts, Georgetown University Archives

³⁸ Van Assche à De Nef, Florissant, June 5, 1824 (A).

³⁹ Van Quickenborne to Dzierzynski, Florissant, June 3, 1824 (B).

loss the mission had sustained by sending Father Dubuisson to Missouri. Anxiety over the increasingly difficult position in which he found himself by the death of Timmermans had begun to settle on the spirits of the Florissant superior. "It is a dreadful thought in moments of depression, to think oneself abandoned. Our difficulties must needs increase with the arrival of the Indians. Those that we have are quite sick. If we are to have with the Indians the success we look for, it is imperative that some father be sent to us and would to God that he may come as superior. I ask your Reverence to send us Father Dubuisson."⁴⁰

Two months later, in August, 1824, Van Quickenborne was still waiting for an answer to his appeal for help. "In the great distress in which I am at present," he again addressed Father Dzierzynski, "this is alarming. Has your Reverence not received my letter? I shall put my trust in the Almighty and hope that Father Dubuisson with Brother Mead have by this time started. The Divine Providence is too watchful over us to suffer us to be discouraged by the trials which the Almighty is pleased to send us and therefore I shall supercede [mentioning] the absolute necessity of sending us assistance in persons."⁴¹

The prayer of Father Van Quickenborne for relief was to remain unheeded for more than a year. In January, 1825, he was still pleading with the Maryland superior for assistance from the East. "Under the present circumstances what shall I write to you? Does your Reverence really think that we are entirely abandoned? I hope that your Reverence will show that it is not so. Your fatherly heart, your tenderness of a mother will not have been satisfied until by making some generous sacrifice, it will have found the person to be sent to us, a man of great mortification and resignation, otherwise in less than half a year he will say that the burden is above his strength." The voice of Bishop Du Bourg had already been raised in Father Van Quickenborne's behalf. He wrote September 15, 1824, to Father Dzierzynski. "The premature death of your excellent Father Timmermans has rent my heart with grief. In compassion to him [Van Quickenborne] could you not send him a companion? I earnestly beg you will do it, if you will not expose him to fall a victim to his increased labors. What in that case would be the fate of that infant establishment? Do, for God's sake, send him one."⁴²

⁴⁰ Van Quickenborne to Dzierzynski, Florissant, June 3, 1824 (B). A school for Indian boys was opened at Florissant in the spring of 1824. Cf. *infra*, Chap. V, "St. Regis Seminary."

⁴¹ Van Quickenborne to Dzierzynski, Florissant, August 24, 1824 (B).

⁴² Van Quickenborne to Dzierzynski, January, 1825 (B). Du Bourg to Van Quickenborne, September 15, 1824 (A).

Meanwhile, Van Quickenborne, burdened with the spiritual charge of all the Catholic population of Missouri west of St. Louis, had to resort to various makeshifts to supply the place of his dead companion. There was no Mass at the Seminary on Sundays and festivals and on these days the scholastics were sent trudging through the wet grass to the village church of Florissant, where their superior offered the Holy Sacrifice. St. Charles and Portage Des Sioux were visited once a month, but on a week day, these two parishes remained without Sunday Mass for a year and a half. In the superior's absence, baptism, funerals and catechizing were occasionally attended to by laymen. Moreover, the scholastics Elet and Verhaegen repaired every Sunday to St. Charles, where they took turns in reciting French prayers for the congregation and even addressing it in catechetical instructions. Two other scholastics were assigned to similar duties at Florissant on Sundays and festivals. As to the remote missions, such as Hancock Prairie, Cote-sans-dessein, Franklin, they appear to have been left unvisited altogether, except at rare intervals. It is presumably to these outlying western stations that Van Quickenborne refers when he describes a missionary trip of two hundred and fifty miles, which he finished in the course of a single week in April, 1825. To reach these distant points, which he visited only once a year, he had to swim his horse across the swollen creeks with his own body immersed in water up to the neck. His strenuous zeal did not go without appreciation. As he left a certain parish, the eyes of the people filled with tears at the thought that they were not to see a Catholic priest again for another twelvemonth.

The position, daily becoming more critical, to which Van Quickenborne was now being reduced was reported by him to the Father General in March and again in June, 1825.

Although [it is the time for writing?], I scarcely know how to do so, distressed as I am by the long silence which your Very Rev. Paternity has maintained ever since we came here. Father Neale, the Superior at that time, promised that a priest would be sent from Maryland, for he was firmly convinced that two priests were not enough for doing what had to be done according to the concordat made with Bishop Du Bourg. Then Father Timmermans, my companion, succumbed and since the 31st of May of last year I am the only priest for six parishes distant from our Seminary, one 18, another 90, a third 120 miles. I am the only one to teach theology and govern the Indian Seminary. Numerous circumstances add considerably to the strain of these duties, as the rough, wretched roads, the big rivers, Missouri and Mississippi, which intersect these parishes, and the journeying I have to do for the Indian boys.

Our men were greatly encouraged to hear that your Very Reverend Paternity entertains good hopes of our Seminary. There are six scholastics

and two coadjutor-brothers. Of the scholastics, two almost finished their theology before entering the Society and so repeat their theology privately and are present only at the explanation of cases of conscience. Two others were one full year in the Seminary. The remaining two finished only humanities. All are now in their second year of theology. In a spiritual way they are all doing well, being great lovers of their vocation, although (I say it with sorrow) their ardor has cooled down from the fact that they believe themselves abandoned. This situation weighs upon me heavily. I am greatly alarmed as I look into the future. However, as I have every reason to fear on account of my sins, I trust in the Lord that God, Who in His very great mercy has rescued us from many difficulties, will not abandon us, seeing that for His sake we have become almost exiles among barbarous nations. But how can a weakling like myself carry on their education according to the Institute? In the beginning Rev. Father Dzierozynski tried to prevail upon Rev. Father Neale, the superior at the time, to send three priests. And yet we were only two when we set out from Maryland. However, Father Neale, on learning that the Father who died a year ago was sometimes subject to mental disturbances, wrote soon after that he would send a third Father able for any kind of work. It is now more than a year since I have been the only priest. Further, I have six parishes to attend to, which are cut up by numerous rivers and are widely apart from one another and from our Seminary. I am often called to the sick. In order to deliver my lectures and be at the service of Ours, I have often to swim the smaller rivers on horseback and to keep journeying on in the heat of the day or through the bitterly cold winter-night. These things it is impossible to keep up. There are special and very urgent reasons why I must go to all the sick in each of the parishes, reasons which it would take too long to set down here.⁴³

To Bishop Du Bourg, temperamentally sensitive and apprehensive, the situation at St. Ferdinand's now became a source of grave anxiety. From New Orleans he sent this remonstrance to Van Quickenborne:

I learn with sorrow that you are overworking yourself and to all appearances cannot hold out much longer. What would then become of your establishment, what would become of the hopes built upon it, since your Reverend Father General certainly intends the fulfillment of his promise? What would he say were I to conduct myself in like manner? I believe that under the circumstances you ought to have a couple of young scholastics ordained and thus obtain relief from your crushing labors. It is clearly a case of tempting God, and I beg you, my dear Father, to reflect on this matter and not to expose yourself to the danger of adding a crown-

⁴³ Van Quickenborne ad Fortis, March 22, June 29, 1825 (AA). In his letter (*supra*) of February 17, 1824, to Dzierozynski, Van Quickenborne speaks of a communication already received by him from the General.

ing misery to those which already weigh me down Justice requires you not to treat this matter lightly ⁴⁴

In November, 1825, Du Bourg returned to the same topic From St. Jean Baptiste in Louisiana he announced to the Jesuit superior the arrival at the Barrens of Bishop Rosati, begging the former at the same time to dispatch two of the scholastics to the Seminary at that place, which it would be necessary for them to reach before the December ember-days With characteristic attention to details, he warned the superior not to dally in the matter, for the rainy season was at hand and the two little creeks that run between Ste. Genevieve and the Barrens might overflow their banks and thus make it impossible for the scholastics to reach the Seminary at the proper time ⁴⁵

Some time previous to this juncture of affairs the Bishop in his anxiety to have Van Quickenborne spare himself in the interests of the Jesuit group, had resort to a drastic measure to effect his purpose He forbade the overzealous superior to exercise the sacred ministry beyond the limits of St Ferdinand, unless summoned by the sick, and accordingly withdrew from him the faculties which he had hitherto enjoyed for other parts of the diocese The faculties were to remain thus revoked until two additional priests should have come to share the superior's labors, they were to be restored *ipso facto* by the ordination of two of the scholastics to the priesthood ⁴⁶

The expedient of ordaining some of the young Jesuits with a view to supply the pressing need of priestly laborers was one which Van Quickenborne himself commended to his superior in the East In January, 1825, the names of Smedts and Verreydt were forwarded to Dzierozynski as likely subjects for ordination. They had spent two years and a half in the seminary at Mechlin where they studied "divinity, chiefly the *casus Conscientiae*" They would be ready for orders in September, at which time Bishop Rosati was to be a guest at St. Ferdinand's. In case the Bishop left for Rome, whither he was expected to go in the likely contingency of his being declared titular Bishop of New Orleans, the young men would have to be sent for ordination to

⁴⁴ Du Bourg à Van Quickenborne, May 25, 1825 (A) Dzierozynski had written to Fortis in 1824 for permission to have one or other of the Florissant scholastics ordained Dzierozynski ad Fortis, September 3, 1824 (B) It was seemingly the problematic outlook for the Florissant Jesuits that caused this matter to be referred to the Father General, as had also been done in the case of the novices' vows Permission for such vows as also for promotion to holy orders is ordinarily given by the superior of the Jesuit province or mission

⁴⁵ Du Bourg à Van Quickenborne, St Jean Baptiste, La, November 9, 1825 (A)

⁴⁶ Van Quickenborne to Dzierozynski, November 19, 1825 (B)

New Orleans, a trip that would entail greater expense than the slender funds of the mission could afford. Within little more than a year after this appeal, Messrs Smedts and Verhaegen were to be advanced to the priesthood.

Father Van Quickenborne's delay in presenting the young men for holy orders, was an occasion of chagrin to Bishop Du Bourg, who expressed his mind frankly on the subject in a letter to Father Dzierzynski.

New Orleans, July 10, 1825.

Very Rev and dear Father

By a letter from the Rev F[ather] Van Quickenborne I learn that the F[ather] General declines or indefinitely adjourns the execution of his *solemn promise* to send us a separate Superior for the Mission of Missouri, and that yr Rev[erence] still remains charged with its direction until further orders from Rome. I must therefore apply to your authority to enable F Van Quickenborne to bear the enormous burthen which now rests solely upon his weak shoulders. To this end I repeatedly urged him to get some of his scholastics ordained. He constantly eluded the question and now he writes me that the thing does not depend on him, *without telling me on whom it does depend*—Now, my dear Father, it is evident to all, that this excellent man overstrains his strength by the intent and constancy of his labors. Nothing short of a miracle can make him endure such a fatigue above one or two years. What then would be the fate of that establishment, if he had no Priest to succeed him? Had he now a couple, there would be a great hope to preserve his valuable life for years to come. And yet you know what sacrifices I have made to secure the perpetual cooperation of your Society. Should it fail, would it be just the Diocese should lose the property I have given you for that express purpose? F[ather] Van Q has purchased another property in the rising and neighboring city of St Charles. In the event of his death what will become of it? Would not the Farm of Florissant be in danger of being sold, and probably for a trifle, to pay for the house in St Charles and for other debts?

In such a state of things, I confess to you that I live under continual apprehension, and I cannot comprehend the affected silence kept or the evasive answers given on so natural a demand, as that he should present for ordination two or three of his scholastics, who have already three or four years study of divinity. Were I a stranger to my Diocese, a stricter system of reserve could not be kept with me. It is not thus I proceeded with yr Society, my dear Father, my conduct was and always will be marked with candour and frankness. I have kept whatever I promised and have done even more. So indifferent a return is not calculated to warm my attachment or increase my confidence. Had I better reasons to be pleased with that [*sic*] of yr Fathers, I think I could be of material service to them, I certainly feel disposed to it. But what can I do, when I see myself thrown at such a distance from the secret of their operations, and almost

trifled with, in matters, in which, however, I think that my vote as bishop, should carry some weight

I speak my sentiments as they are and you will make allowances for the natural solicitude of a Pastor, who, after all, has the first responsibility for his flock My devotion to yr Society has been everywhere known, ever since I could form an opinion, but allow me to tell you that I never could approve that system of policy which everywhere shrouds all its steps in an impenetrable veil If I, a steady friend, if ever you had any, feel shocked at it, what must be the feelings of its enemies, and what scope does not this deplorable *appearance* of duplicity give them to justify their inveteracy against it? Surely, it is not the means of prepossessing any one in its favor

For Religion's sake, I adjure you to relieve me from that intolerable conflict between affection and distrust I also request anew, in the name of God, that a peremptory order may be forthwith issued for the immediate ordination of at least *two* or *three* of your scholastics in Missouri, by which F[ather] Van Q[uickenborne] be relieved of part of his oppressive charge and a hope of succession in that establishment be better secured against contingencies

I send a copy of this letter to F Van Q Be pleased to remember me most cordially to yr Rev Fathers and Brothers, and be assured that even what may bear the appearance of severity in the above lines has been dictated by the sincere attachment and respect with which I profess to be, of yr revered Society, and of yr Reverence

The most affectionate & dev servant

L Wm Bp N Or1⁴⁷

[Louis William Bishop of New Orleans]

Father Dzierzynski's reply to this communication from the Bishop of New Orleans is not extant, but from a second letter of the prelate, presently to be cited, it may be gathered that the Maryland superior was not ready to accept as founded on fact the indictment that had been brought against his order At the same time it is intelligible that the air of unnecessary secretiveness which Van Quickenborne contrived at times to throw around his affairs could readily give offense to so sensitive a person as Bishop Du Bourg It was indeed an idiosyncrasy which on more than one occasion elicited complaint from his own associates of the Missouri Mission Du Bourg's letter of October 24, 1825, to Dzierzynski struck a note of regret not unmixed with a little bantering as he recalled his stern language of a few months before

Your kind letter of August 27 last has reached me at this extremity [Natchitoches] of my diocese, where I have been on a mission for a month It would be difficult to express to you the pleasure it has brought me despite the reflections, pretty well deserved, it would appear, which you make on

⁴⁷ Du Bourg to Dzierzynski, New Orleans, July 10, 1825 (B)

my preceding letter Differences of this nature between persons working for the same end and like yourself, my Rev Father, animated by the spirit of God are always easy to bring to an end, and with that in view you have taken a step which, were I capable of being seriously prejudiced against your Society, would have dissipated in an instant all my prejudices But the fact is that I have not ceased to esteem it, to honor it and to desire sincerely its establishment in my diocese, and the very heat with which I complained of the delays that have ensued in consolidating the Mission of St Ferdinand, proceeded (as you yourself have correctly judged) only from the fear of seeing prove abortive in its very germ an enterprise on behalf of which you and I, as well as your brethren of Missouri, have already made so many sacrifices Pardon me these sallies of a zeal perhaps a little too human, but what am I saying? Do you not give me the most convincing proof that you pardon me them, by informing me that you have already forwarded to Father Van Quickenborne an order for the ordination as soon as possible of two of his scholastics and further, that you have sent him a precious reinforcement of two subjects, one of whom is that excellent Father De Theux, for whom I have always felt deep veneration and esteem and for whom, if I mistake not, I particularly asked you Behold, then, your dear Society consolidated in this destitute extremity of my immense diocese I am at ease today in regard to its future, and I feel the weight of my solicitude lightened by a good half I have often had the desire to see your Fathers charged with the parish and town of St Louis Mr De Theux would appear to me a very proper person to undertake this charge, not less than Father Van Quickenborne Possibly, however, until permission comes from Rome to ordain the 4 other scholastics, your Fathers will not find themselves in a position to take over this additional concern I leave the matter to you and them, expressing at the same time my desire to see speedily a consummation which cannot but bring honor to your Society and perhaps procure it new recruits

Despite the pain which I share with you to see you threatened with the loss of Father Fenwick, who fills so worthily the post of President of your College of Georgetown, I cannot but rejoice and bless God for his nomination to the See of Boston and to avow to you, that *on my part*, I had begged it both of God and of Rome with the most earnest entreaties I have done more I have asked for the union of the two Sees of Boston and New York in his person, and I have neglected nothing to have my colleagues, the Bishops, enter into my views, regarding, as I do, Father Benedict Fenwick as the only man who can heal the wounds of our churches of the East and establish the Episcopate in that quarter on a basis stable and honorable for Religion I understand perfectly his repugnances and I praise him for the opposition he is making, but it will have to be that he yield, as so many others, to the will of the Supreme Chief, and devote himself to the good of the church I exhort him as my one-time son and as my Brother to-day to place all his confidence in Him who, on sending his ministers, has promised to be always with them What could we do without Him? But on the

other hand with Him, is there anything of which our weakness is not capable?

To return to our quarrel First, I must tell you that you did well to pardon me without waiting for my *act of contrition*, for, far from repenting of my great anger against you, I am on the contrary very glad of it, since it has led to such happy results I must add, however, that I should not have allowed myself to go to that length, had I known that permission to ordain subjects must come from Rome But whose fault is it that I did not know it? Father Van Quickenborne had only to say one word on the matter, instead of returning vague answers to all my entreaties, I would have waited patiently and refrained carefully from complaining of him or of anybody, for I am very strong for the observance of rules, without it I would not give a penny for a religious Society And so, my dear good Father, we have explained ourselves each to the other and become as good friends as before, greater friends we could not be, for the Society has always been the dream of my soul and the idol of my heart Perhaps on that account I believe I have the right to [protest?] against it, when it is unwilling to listen to me Probably also a little French blood shows there, the warmth of which my sixty years have not yet allayed Greater for all that ought to be your assurance of the liveliness of the respectful affection which I bear you and in the name of which I ask a share in your prayers and sacrifices ⁴⁸

The chronic fears of the Bishop for the health of the man who presided over the only house of Jesuits in his diocese and for the distressing consequences which would follow his collapse had not been groundless The physical condition of Van Quickenborne went from bad to worse Months after the crisis about to be told had passed, Elet, the scholastic, thought that it must be by a sort of miracle that his superior was able to be on his feet at all ⁴⁹ In July, 1825, the intrepid missionary lay stricken anew with fever, awaiting what appeared to be the final summons All along he had reacted with uniform courage to the trials that came one by one to test his fortitude But now his spirits seemed to sink under the strain To his superior, Father Dzierozynski, he wrote

More to comply with duty and the desire of Ours than anything else, I feel obliged to give you the following statement About the beginning of last month I was taken with a bilious fever, proceeding from exceeding fatigue in going to the sick in the heat of the day and the dew of the night, almost without rest The fever has left me I am lingering and consider myself as going with rapid steps to the grave Nothing however, of this, have I spoken to any of Ours or to others I think the time is come for your Reverence to make a sacrifice and send Father Dubuisson without delay . The scholastics now without sacraments, Mass, etc may suffer

⁴⁸ Du Bourg à Dzierozynski, Natchitoches, October 24, 1825 (B)

⁴⁹ "*Et miraculo factum dicere non dubito quod intolerabili oneri necdum succubuerit.*" Elet ad Dzierozynski, December 31, 1825 (B)

considerably and discouragement, yea, despair, thinking themselves abandoned, may disband them. A great odium will be laid upon the Society for treating in this way youths of great talents and just dispositions, after so many sacrifices made, etc. What will the Bishop say? How will you stand before the government? Be sure, Reverend Father, I have committed no excess in labors of my choice. I have gone to the sick when called only and that to such persons as were in extreme necessity. I do not think that our house can be kept up by Ours here. My last will is in order. I leave no debts. The number of Indians amounts to nineteen. I have to write on most important matters but am not able to do so.⁵⁰

Happily Van Quickenborne's illness did not take the fatal turn that he expected. Little by little his strength returned and he was able to resume his round of duties. Four months after his letter to Dzierozynski he received this message from Du Bourg: "I am extremely glad to learn of your recovery and beg of you always to have a care for your health. It is to the uneasiness which it occasioned me that you must attribute the rigorous measures which I have taken and which have caused you a chagrin I should like to have spared you."⁵¹

§ 4. BEGINNINGS OF THE SCHOLASTICATE

The Jesuit novitiate at Florissant closed *de facto* as well as *de jure* on October 10, 1823, when the six scholastics then in residence were admitted to their first vows.⁵² Thereupon for a space of several years there were no scholastic novices at all in training nor was Father Van Quickenborne authorized to receive any without permission of his superior in Maryland. His letters to Dzierozynski at this period disclose repeated plans for the maintenance of "the novitiate to be opened here by your Reverence with the authority of Rev. Father General."⁵³ Instead of presiding over a novitiate the Florissant superior now found himself, though not having made his tertianship or pronounced his final vows, at the head of a Jesuit scholasticate or house of higher studies.⁵⁴ "A few days after our noviceship," the scholastic Van Assche informed his friend, De Nef, in April, 1824, "we began the study of philosophy and after some months we shall take up theology."⁵⁵ Van Quicken-

⁵⁰ Van Quickenborne to Dzierozynski, Florissant, August, 1825 (B)

⁵¹ Du Bourg à Van Quickenborne, New Orleans, November 9 [?], 1825 (B)

⁵² "We had a novitiate here. It closed of itself for lack of novices." De Theux à ———, April, 1831 *Ann Prop*, 5, 573

⁵³ Van Quickenborne to Dzierozynski, December 19, 1825 (B)

⁵⁴ The tertianship is a third year of novitiate spent by the Jesuit shortly after his ordination to the priesthood and before he is permitted to take the final vows which bind him to the order.

⁵⁵ Van Assche à De Nef, Florissant, April 29, 1824 (A).

borne, now charged with the direction of the young men's studies, had no end of questions to propose to Dzierzozynski. How much time is to be given to logic and metaphysics? May the scholastics be easily dispensed from fasting *ratione studii* (by reason of studies)? How long should the Easter holidays last? Since fish is scarce in these parts, may the customary diocesan dispensation from the Lenten abstinence be taken advantage of by the community? May the scholastics be presented to the bishop for tonsure? ⁵⁶ Hard put to it as he was to provide for the material support of his community, the superior was determined that no stress of poverty or hardship should prevent the Jesuit youths from enjoying the full round of study to which according to the Institute of the Society of Jesus they were entitled. "The period of their education," he wrote to Dzierzozynski, "ought not to be shortened for the sake of temporal things" ⁵⁷

The first session of the new scholasticate came to an end in August, 1824, with a public disputation in philosophy, for which invitations were sent to Father Niel, president of St. Louis College, and General William Clark ⁵⁸ With the following session, to begin October, 1824, the study of theology was introduced. The lack of priests now created a curious situation by placing some of the scholastics in professors' chairs. Messrs. Elet and Verhaegen lectured three times a week for hour periods on dogmatic theology with Sardagna as a text. Scripture was taught by Mr. Verhaegen twice a week while a "circle" or defense of theological theses was conducted twice a week under Elet's direction. Father Van Quickenborne himself took the classes in moral theology, lecturing four times a week to the scholastics, each of whom was provided with a copy of Busenbaum's *Medulla Theologiae* and Ligouri's *Homo Apostolicus* ⁵⁹

It was scarcely to be expected that the expedient of thus raising young men, themselves in need of training and instruction, to the dignity of professors of divinity, would prove a success. Elet's conduct of the class was not without embarrassment to himself, while Verhaegen in spite of obvious ability and scholarship did not dispose of theological difficulties to the satisfaction of all. Elet on his part protested to Father Dzierzozynski his unfitness for the task. "But who am I?" he exclaims. "I was scarcely a pupil and now I am become a professor." "However, we shall go on," he continues, "but with what results? I will tell you. A little of everything but nothing thoroughly" ⁶⁰ As to Van Quicken-

⁵⁶ Van Quickenborne to Dzierzozynski, Florissant, January 1, 1824 (B)

⁵⁷ Van Quickenborne ad Dzierzozynski, Florissant, February 17, 1824 (B)

⁵⁸ Van Quickenborne to Dzierzozynski, Florissant, August 24, 1824 (B)

⁵⁹ Van Quickenborne ad Dzierzozynski, Florissant, January 10, 1825 (B)

⁶⁰ Elet ad Dzierzozynski, December 31, 1825 (B)

borne, ill-health and the pressure of temporal concerns forced him to relinquish his class in moral theology. He was not only the superior of the little community, but its only priest. When forced to take to bed with illness, which was often, or when parochial duties called him away to Florissant, St. Charles or Portage des Sioux, the scholastics were left without Mass, sometimes for a week at a time. The situation which developed became so distressing that one of the young men made bold to petition the superior in Maryland for another priest. In a letter to Father Dzierozynski Mr. Elet expressed himself with feeling: "Would that you could send us Father De Theux, a man remarkable alike for piety and learning. Then we would forget the past and make light of the discomforts created here by an oppressive climate, incessant rains and an unfinished house. We should gladly take upon ourselves the work of the house and even spend our recreation days outdoors in manual labor." And he concluded with the appeal, "*da nobis patrem et sufficit*" ("give us a father and it is enough"). Urgent also was the appeal made by Mr. Verhaegen to the Maryland superior and by the latter forwarded to the General.

Doubtless, you are not unaware how weak is the health of our Rev. Father Superior. But it seems to me I have just reason to suspect that you do not know of his frequent spells of sickness, which will probably not diminish but rather increase in number in the summer time unless the cause of them be stopped in due time. To my mind he is unfit to discharge for any length of time the laborious duties incumbent on him, especially in this country of America, where not only the unsettled and suddenly shifting weather but also the hardships of the roads render a missionary's functions very trying. The care not only of one village but of all the Catholics in the neighboring places devolves on him alone. When the last hour comes, they call for the priest. He satisfies this desire of theirs and indeed burns to satisfy it worthily. He is therefore necessarily led into truly difficult situations, but these his weak constitution could probably bear were not other difficulties added on. For, besides, he teaches moral theology, has the management of our farm and is Spiritual Father, which duties seem to me to demand a man's entire attention. Nay, some of them scarcely seem compatible with the functions of a missionary. For there are frequent interruptions in the lectures in moral theology and whole weeks pass by without our being given a spiritual instruction. Allow me also to remark that he has to be absent from the house repeatedly, so that we can hear Mass scarcely three or four times a week. In view of these circumstances, I have thought it expedient, Rev. Father, to ask you in all earnestness to deign to send us a Father as soon as possible, who may at once relieve our Father Superior and, if it so please your Paternity, be a master and guide to us in our studies. I feel convinced that all my confrères confidently expect to receive this favor and I am not afraid of doing anything to their displeasure.

if I say that this petition of mine expresses the common desire of them all. If therefore you deign to accede to my request, you will put us all under the greatest obligation and if the new year which we begin entitles us to ask for any special token of your love in our regard, this one thing we ask and beg for. For the rest we continue to be well and, as far as I may conjecture, all my companions are content in their vocation.⁶¹

The circumstances that had thus made it expedient, if not necessary, for the scholastics to report the true situation at Florissant to the superior of the mission were indeed abnormal. There was no priest, other than the local superior himself, to discharge this duty and it was to be feared that he, in his excess of zeal, might picture things as much less serious than they really were. Only two Jesuit officials were authorized to send the needed help to Missouri, the Father General and the Maryland superior. Both had been made acquainted with the situation, but it was some time before anything could be done by either to relieve it. Van Quickenborne, so Dzierozynski wrote to the General in September, 1824, "is the only priest at Florissant, he asks me for aid, which I cannot give unless I am ready to make a big hole in Maryland (*ingens foramen in Marylandia facere*). And yet I see that he cannot be left alone. . . . I should not consider it rash in the least to say to your Paternity that now is the very time to staff that seminary of ours at Florissant with competent Fathers and missionaries." The Maryland superior, on his part, was not to be left at rest as regarded the crisis that had developed in the West. This latter was the burden of repeated letters from Van Quickenborne and Bishop Du Bourg. Moreover, the scholastics had joined in the appeal for help, while even Mother Duchesne made an attempt to interest St. Madeleine Sophie Barat in the affair and induce her to take up with the Father General the question of having some of the scholastics promoted to the priesthood. But what proved decisive in all this correspondence was the letter of July, 1825, written by Van Quickenborne to his superior in the East under what he believed to be the shadow of approaching death. This letter Dzierozynski transmitted to the Father General to give him an idea of how things stood at Florissant while he wrote at once to Van Quickenborne "How I felt on receiving your letter, you must keenly realize." Relief was no longer to be delayed and, accordingly, Father John Theodore De Theux and Brother John O'Connor were dispatched from Georgetown to join the somewhat disheartened colony in the West.

Father De Theux was a native son of Liège, in Belgium, where he was born January 25, 1789. His parents were of the nobility and distinguished no less for Christian piety than social standing. After divinity

⁶¹ Verhaegen ad Dzierozynski, 1825 (B)

studies in Namur he was raised to the priesthood June 21, 1812, and then immediately named vicar of the parish of St. Nicholas in Liège. Belgium lay prostrate at this juncture under the Napoleonic régime. The prisons and hospitals of Liège were full to overflowing with Spanish prisoners of war. In his eagerness to bring them spiritual relief the young priest set himself the task of learning Spanish. The horrors of pestilence were soon added to those of captivity. Nothing daunted, De Theux went in among the prisoners, breathed the disease-laden air of their forbidding quarters, and in the end paid the penalty of his zeal by contracting the plague. He was nursed back to health under the roof of his parents, but not until the infection had passed to several members of his family, among them a brother, whose sickness terminated in death. In 1815 he was appointed administrator of the diocese of Liège and in this capacity presided at the opening of the episcopal seminary, in which he discharged the duties of professor of dogmatic theology and holy scripture.⁶²

But the scene of Father De Theux's life-work was not to be his native Belgium. That indefatigable missionary of Kentucky, Father Nerinckx, crossed his path. Moved to the quick by the missionary's pathetic recital of the Church's needs in America, the young clergyman of Liège determined to follow his fellow-countryman overseas. He promptly communicated this design to his family, renounced the right of succession to his father's title in favor of his brother Bartholomew, later Count De Theux de Meylandt, minister of state of Belgium, and in March, 1816, left Antwerp for America with a single companion, Father Lekeu. The two sought and obtained admission into the Jesuit Mission of Maryland.⁶³ On August 7 the doors of the novitiate at White Marsh opened to receive them and two years later, August 18, 1818, De Theux was admitted to his first vows.⁶⁴ Six years of parochial service, chiefly at Holy Trinity Church in Georgetown, was the outstanding feature of his career in the eastern United States. Visible success attended his ministry. Mutual esteem and affection developed between the congregation of Holy Trinity and its zealous pastor and the

⁶² *Le Père Theodore de Theux de la Compagnie de Jesus et la Mission Belge du Missouri* (Roulers, 1913). The only printed English account of De Theux is in De Smet, *Western Missions and Missionaries*. A French ms. life containing transcripts of numerous letters written by De Theux to his family is in the Missouri Province Archives.

⁶³ "*Spretis mundi illecebris et titulis abdicatis*," "The allurements of the world having been spurned and his titles renounced." Inscription on De Theux's tombstone, St. Stanislaus Seminary, Florissant, Mo.

⁶⁴ According to the French life, *Le Père Theodore De Theux, etc.*, p. 40, the father arrived with his companion at White Marsh on September 6.

circumstance made the relinquishment of his charge a trial keenly felt by both

Early in September, 1825, Father De Theux set out for the West accompanied by Brother John O'Connor, a native of Tullamore in Ireland, and now in his forty-fifth year. The two travellers followed in the path of Van Quickenborne's expedition of two years previous, taking the Cumberland Road, the usual highway of emigrant travel to the West. They journeyed by stage as far as Wheeling, where they took passage on a flat-boat for Cincinnati, the low-water stage of the Ohio putting steamboats out of commission. Particulars of his overland trip to the Ohio are contained in a letter of De Theux's to Dzierozynski, dated "near Wheeling," September 24, 1825.

We arrived in Wheeling last Thursday evening. Father McElroy will have told your Reverence that we were detained at Frederickstown two days for want of room in the stage. From fatigue and a kind of sickness at the stomach we stopped one and a half days with Rev. Mr. Ryan in Cumberland, thence proceeded to Wheeling, whence, as there was no conveyance to Cincinnati, we walked yesterday afternoon to good Mr. Thompson's, seven and a half miles from Wheeling. Here I said Mass this morning, and will, *Deo dante*, tomorrow. He will then take us in his carryall back to Wheeling, whence we will immediately sail in a flat-boat for Cincinnati. We hope to be there tomorrow week. The waters are too low as yet for steamboats. Besides these little trials our journey has hitherto been very prosperous. People have everywhere been kind and good to us. Our stage-companions, though not of the household of the faith, were decent and in every way well-behaved people.⁶⁵

Early in the journey to Wheeling, Father De Theux, while staying in a Jesuit residence on the way, probably Frederick, learned of the death of his father, Count De Theux. The superior of the residence, who had received the news some time before, withheld it from the priest till the morning after his arrival. Going to the latter's room, where he was engaged in prayer in preparation for Mass, the superior quietly said to him, "you had better say Mass this morning for your father's soul." De Theux received the news with characteristic equanimity. That same day he wrote to Father Dzierozynski and to friends at Georgetown, including the Visitation nuns, petitioning prayers for his father's soul. Nor did he forget his pious mother, to whom he wrote immediately on his arrival at Florissant to lend her what consolation he could in her bereavement.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ De Theux to Dzierozynski, near Wheeling, September 24, 1825 (B)

⁶⁶ *Le Père Theodore De Theux, etc.*, p. 82

§ 5 THE MARYLAND SUPERIOR AT FLORISSANT

With the arrival of Father De Theux at Florissant on October 10, 1825, the strain of the unpleasant situation there was palpably relieved. Van Quickenborne, now fairly recovered from his recent illness, wrote October 29 to the Maryland superior, thanking him for the dispatch of the two Jesuits from the East "I have always had the highest esteem for Father De Theux and I expect much from him for our little mission."⁶⁷ Bishop Du Bourg likewise expressed his thanks to Dzierozynski for sending to Florissant "that excellent Father De Theux, for whom I have always entertained the deepest sentiments of veneration and esteem and for whom, if I mistake not, I asked you in particular"⁶⁸ And Mr Van de Velde, Jesuit scholastic at Georgetown College, in a letter to his Flemish friends at Florissant of which De Theux was the bearer, wrote

The news which we have lately received respecting the impaired state of health of your worthy Superior has greatly afflicted us. Whatever may be the result of his sickness, Providence will not abandon you, you have left much to enlist under the standard of Jesus Christ and he will not leave you destitute of the means necessary to enable you to fight his battles. Father De Theux, the bearer of the present, is a man of exemplary piety and indefatigable zeal and the only one that could heal the wound which the death of Father Van Q would inflict on your heart. I do not praise him because he is a Belgian. The tears that have been shed by almost all the members of his congregation that were present at his farewell address and that have not been dried since the moment that he announced his departure are the best testimony of his zeal and virtue. You will find in him a father and a protector. Everyone now looks upon St Ferdinand with as interested an eye as they formerly looked upon the missions of Chile and Paraguay. We all expect great things from you. I hope that you will not disappoint us in our expectations.⁶⁹

Father De Theux was quick to acquaint himself with the conditions that prevailed in his new home and three weeks after his arrival sent off to Father Dzierozynski a letter packed with informing details. There was the same drink for all, in the morning, coffee with sugar and milk, at noon, cider mixed with water, in the evening, tea with milk. In this part of the country, De Theux observes, drink is never taken unmixed, not even at the best tables. Two hundred chickens furnish eggs for the community, an indispensable article of diet here, as fish is scarce, the Missouri River, so the report goes, furnishing none

⁶⁷ Van Quickenborne ad Dzierozynski, Florissant, October 29, 1825 (B)

⁶⁸ Du Bourg à Dzierozynski, October 24, 1825 (B)

⁶⁹ Van de Velde to Verhaegen, Van Assche *et al*, April 25, 1825 (A)

at all. Clothing and linen are made and repaired by the Ladies of the Sacred Heart.⁷⁰ De Theux took up at once his duties as professor of dogmatic theology. But the long years he spent in the sacred ministry had withdrawn him too entirely from scholastic pursuits to enable him to score a new success in the lecture-hall. Two months after De Theux's arrival at Florissant, Van Quickenborne reported frankly to the Maryland superior that the new professor was slow of thought (*tardae conceptionis est*), adding a request that Mr Verhaegen be retained as teacher of theology, since Father De Theux distrusted his ability to give all the lectures and, as a matter of fact, covered very little ground in an hour's class.⁷¹

The year 1825 was to run its course without seeing any of the scholastics raised to the priesthood, though permission to this effect had now been obtained. The reasons for Van Quickenborne's delay in presenting the young men for orders are set forth by him in a communication to Bishop Rosati:

I have received your letter written on board the steamboat. It has relieved us from much uneasiness with the good news it brings concerning your health. I must thank you also, Monseigneur, for your kindness in sending us directions concerning the journey from our place to your seminary. I cannot express the pleasure it would have been to me to go and see you in company with two of our scholastics. I was looking forward to this happiness even before winter, but the severe weather and the improbability of getting across the streams have deprived me of all hope for this year.

The two young men would not have come with me, because in the case of one, I wish to obtain a decision from our Superior on an important point, and in the case of the other, I believe that a postponement will be to his advantage in regard to studies. I do not need them just now as I feel myself strong enough with Father De Theux's assistance to manage my affairs, moreover, not having any Mass intentions to discharge and being determined not to station any of Ours in a place where his support will not be virtually guaranteed, I hope that the ordination of the young men at another time will lead to better results.⁷²

Within a few weeks of the date of this letter, Messrs Smedts and Verhaegen received major orders. Verreydt was one of the two whom the superior had first intended to present for orders, but the choice was subsequently altered and Verhaegen substituted in his place. Bishop Rosati was the ordaining prelate, the ceremonies taking place partly in

⁷⁰ De Theux à Dzierzozynski, November 13, 1825 (B). Fish, though not in quantities, is found in the lower Missouri.

⁷¹ Van Quickenborne ad Dzierzozynski, Florissant, December 19, 1825 (B).

⁷² Van Quickenborne à Rosati, Florissant, December 13, 1825 (C).

the seminary chapel at the Barrens, and partly in the parish church at the same place Mr Smedts was the first of the two to be ordained. On January 22, 25, and 29, 1826, he received in succession the subdiaconate, diaconate and priesthood, while on February 26, and March 5 and 11, Mr. Verhaegen received the same orders in like succession.⁷³

The promotion of the two young Jesuits to the priesthood, though it doubled the number of fathers at St. Ferdinand's, did not dispel the fears which Van Quickenborne entertained for the future of his community. The farm, the chief means of material support on which he could rely, gave him much concern. In October, 1826, he protested to the Maryland head of the mission that, if a stop were put to the improvements which were being made on the farm, the mission would soon decline into ruin. "Who will pay," he asks, "for the expenses at St. Charles? Who will provide us with books? As it is, we have not even breviaries. Before long we shall have six newly ordained priests. As no fixed revenue is provided for them, they will have nothing to begin on. We began here in the greatest poverty and endured all things patiently. Now they look for better things." Then follow details about the Seminary farm, which throw light on agricultural methods in Missouri in the early nineteenth century. The farm is not like those in Maryland, it is *in fieri*. Something has been done on it but much remains to be done. The land is not even cleared.⁷⁴ Income is derived from many small things which in Maryland would be scorned, for instance, wood is gathered in the Commons and sold to the nuns. The

⁷³ Memorandum (B) "At 10 45, in the church, solemn pontifical mass, during which, after a short talk to the people on the nature, offices and obligations of the subdiaconate, I promoted to that Order J. B. Smedts, acolyte of the Society of Jesus, presented by his Superior, *titulo paupertatis*." Diary of Bishop Rosati, January 22, 1826. "At half past ten celebrated solemn pontifical mass in the church, during which, after explaining to the people the nature and power of the order of the priesthood, and the ceremonies and rites of ordination, I promoted to that same order of the priesthood J. B. Smedts of the Society of Jesus." *Idem*, January 29, 1826. *SLCHR*, 4: 169, 170. "I delayed ordaining Fr. Verhaegen a little more than you [Father Van Quickenborne] anticipated because I like to hold ordinations on the days appointed by the Church, we had, moreover, some candidates of our own. Fr. Verhaegen has edified us very much, as has done Fr. Smedts. I congratulate you on getting this addition, and pray God to continue to give you increase." Rosati à Van Quickenborne, March 11, 1826. *SLCHR*, 4: 181.

⁷⁴ "In front of the house was an orchard of good fruit, beyond the orchard was a field containing about thirty acres of cultivated land, and at the distance of half a mile still further on was a second field of fertile land, bordering on Cold Water Creek. The portion of farm to the rear, or northwest of the house, was still covered with primeval forest extending back to the Missouri River, and the rest of the land was overrun with hazel thickets, interspersed with clumps of stunted oak, and here and there with lawns or small meadows of wild prairie-grass." Hill, *History of the St. Louis University*, p. 29.

farm is situated in the Common Fields of St. Ferdinand's, i.e. for one field containing the farms of eighteen individuals, there is but one fence kept up in common by all.⁷⁵ This is a wretched system, for the fields being open very often until May, it is impossible to raise any grain. It is true that this year we have raised upwards of two hundred bushels of wheat, but if the hogs had not destroyed the wheat in the common field, the crop would have been double that quantity. If the farm therefore is to pay, it must be fenced in at once. Besides a fence around the farm, two other things are needed, a tobacco-house and a mill. Here there are no water-mills, but horse-mills. These cost very little. An outlay of one hundred and fifty dollars will cover the expense. But without these three things, namely, a good wheat-crop, a tobacco-house, and a mill, the farm will do little towards supporting the community.⁷⁶

The letter which contains the foregoing report of Van Quickenborne concerning the Seminary farm and the difficulties which its management entailed concludes with a pressing invitation to the Maryland superior to pay an official visit to his subjects in far-off Missouri. "If there is anything that I should urge upon you to do, it is to pay us a visit in the spring. This trip from Georgetown to St. Louis can be made in twelve days . . . believe me, Your Reverence does not know Missouri."⁷⁷ Father Dzierozynski, who for three years had followed with sympathy the vicissitudes of the little Jesuit group on the western frontier, as portrayed with graphic pen in Van Quickenborne's frequent reports to the East, felt with the latter that nothing less than a personal visit would enable him to see the situation there in its true light. Moreover, and this was his principal reason for making the visit, he wished to preside at the examinations of the scholastics, who were now about to finish their theological studies. Dzierozynski's broad sympathies and deep religious piety endeared him greatly to his subordinates. One gets an impression of the reverence felt for him from the request made by the coadjutor-brother, Henry Reisman, to a Jesuit correspondent: "My respects, if you please, to our holy Father Dzierozynski. Try to get some relic of him, be it only some of his hair and send it. I am much mistaken if he will not perform miracles before or after his death."⁷⁸ Again, there are the words of Father Benedict Fenwick written to Bishop Du Bourg: "This much, however, I know, that however

⁷⁵ As late as May 14, 1832, twelve of the "land-holders of the big field," signed a ten-year agreement to pay annually to Father De Theux sums aggregating \$17 87½ "for the use of his fence" (A)

⁷⁶ Van Quickenborne ad Dzierozynski, Florissant, October 11, 1826 (B)

⁷⁷ *Ibid*

⁷⁸ Henry Reisman to George Fenwick, St. Charles, Mo., August 23, 1830 (B)

indulgent I may be deemed I act now at least under obedience, which is one long step towards the summit of that perfection which is recommended [by] and which is so completely exemplified in Father Dzierzynski”⁷⁹

On July 18, 1827, Father Dzierzynski arrived at Florissant, then the only Jesuit establishment in the United States west of the Alleghanies⁸⁰ He was present at the examination in dogmatic theology which the young men without exception were required to undergo, now that they had completed their scholastic studies⁸¹ De Theux and the visiting superior constituted the board of examiners, Van Quickenborne having petitioned earnestly not to be required to share this duty with them The records of the day make but a passing mention of Dzierzynski's stay in Missouri “Our father superior arrived the 18th of this month [July],” Van Quickenborne informed Bishop Rosati, “and has to leave towards the beginning of August He intends to go and present his respects to your Lordship before the end of this month I fear very much that he will take away some of our subjects, of whom he says he has a great need in Maryland”⁸² Van Quickenborne's fears were not realized, the Maryland superior left the slender personnel of the Florissant establishment as he found it “Rev. father superior speaks of leaving us the day after the feast of St Ignatius [July 31],” Mr. Van Assche wrote in a letter to the East “We are hoping that he misses his chance of getting away, as in that case he shall have to remain with us a few days longer We will hold him here by main force unless he promises to return in two or three years He has given us every possible satisfaction” Father Dzierzynski left Florissant behind him on August 2, arriving on the 30th of the same month at Georgetown, whence he wrote in December to the Father General

I shall not stop to tell of the charity and joy with which I was received at Florissant by the brethren, with whom on reaching there I had much talk to the accompaniment of mutual embraces and tears, nor shall I speak of the aid I brought them in the shape of various offerings from Belgium and France forwarded to me for this mission and amounting in all to eighteen hundred dollars I should like, as far as I can do it, to picture this choice little farm to your Paternity's eyes Not in vain is the place called Florissant, though it is still in the wilderness and close to the Indians, for

⁷⁹ B Fenwick to Du Bourg, September 11, 1823 New Orleans Archdiocesan Archives Father Francis Dzierzynski, born at Orza in Russia January 3, 1779, became a Jesuit August 13, 1794, died at Frederick, Maryland, September 22, 1850

⁸⁰ Van Quickenborne à Rosati, July 21, 1827 (C)

⁸¹ Van Assche à De Nef, January 3, 1828 (A)

⁸² Van Quickenborne à Rosati, Florissant, July 21, 1827 (C)

it glistens prettily upon a hillock like a flower setting off the fertile fields and far-flung meadows. The Missouri and Mississippi Rivers water its environs. It is only fifteen miles from St. Louis, the metropolis of Missouri and but two from the famous Spanish village named St. Ferdinand. Owing to the fertility of the soil and the abundance of live stock the Florissant farm, though not more than two hundred and forty acres in extent, is amply sufficient to support Ours, twelve in number, as also the thirteen Indian boys and the few slaves we brought with us from Maryland. It was a special joy to me to find flourishing there religious discipline among Ours, piety and modesty among the Indian boys, diligence, sober and praiseworthy morals among the negro slaves.⁸³

Immediately after the departure of Father Dzierozynski from Florissant the four scholastics who had not received major orders began to prepare themselves for that important step. The ceremonies of ordination took place towards the end of September in the parish church of St. Ferdinand, the dates having been advanced so as to enable Bishop Rosati, the ordaining prelate, to leave in season for New Orleans, of which see he had been named administrator. The Bishop spent three weeks on this occasion as a guest of the Jesuit community. In St. Ferdinand's Church at Florissant Peter John De Smet, Judocus Francis Van Assche, John Anthony Elet and John Felix Livinus Verreydt received the subdiaconate on the seventeenth, the diaconate on the twenty-second and the priesthood on the twenty-third of September, 1827. The ceremonies over, Rosati departed for New Orleans. As an incident of his voyage to the South, the steamboat on which he had taken passage sank some miles below St. Louis, the Bishop barely escaping with his life.⁸⁴

During the three months that followed their reception of holy orders, the young priests reviewed their moral theology, an examination in which they underwent at the end of December, 1827.⁸⁵ This was the last stage in the process of scholastic training, such as it was, to which they had been submitted. After the examination in moral theology came the Christmas holidays and with their passing all the priests at St. Ferdinand's, including Van Quickenborne and De Theux, entered upon what St. Ignatius meant to be the final process in the spiritual formation of the Jesuit, the tertianship or third year of probation or noviceship. "On the 9th of last January," wrote De Theux to his mother, "I began with my six pupils the third year of probation under the direction of Rev. Father Van Quickenborne."⁸⁶

⁸³ Van Assche à ———, Florissant, July 30, 1827 (A). Dzierozynski ad Fortis, December 15, 1827 (AA).

⁸⁴ Van Assche à De Nef, Florissant, January 3, 1828 (A).

⁸⁵ Van Assche à De Nef, Florissant, January 3, 1828 (A).

⁸⁶ De Theux à sa mère, Florissant, May 29, 1828 (A).

From a scholasticate or house of studies the establishment at St. Ferdinand's now became what is known in Jesuit parlance as a "house of third probation." At its head still remained the indefatigable Van Quickenborne, now bearing on his shoulders the additional duties of master of tertians. He not only guided the priests under his charge through the last year of their spiritual training, but, as the unusual circumstances permitted of no other arrangement, he simultaneously discharged his own as yet unfulfilled obligation of "making the tertianship." He directed the "long retreat" of thirty days, at the same time going through the exercises himself as an essential feature of the spiritual probation through which he was passing in company with his subordinates. The retreat began on January 9 and closed February 7, 1828. A few days after its termination the tertians were assigned for a period to various missionary and ministerial duties. Elet was dispatched on a missionary trip to the Salt River district in northeastern Missouri. De Smet gave the Spiritual Exercises to the Religious of the Sacred Heart in Florissant, while Van Assche gave them to the coadjutor-brothers at the Seminary. Verhaegen and Smedts were sent, the one to St. Charles and the other to Portage des Sioux, to prepare the children of these parishes for first communion. De Theux was assigned to parochial duties at Florissant, while Van Quickenborne himself, taking advantage of the momentary dispersal of his community, undertook a second missionary journey to the Osage Indians.⁸⁷

With the reassembling of the young priests some time in March, the round of duties and exercises customary in the Jesuit tertianship was begun. There were instructions from Father Van Quickenborne a half-hour in length three times a week on the virtues necessary to a Jesuit, material for the instructions being drawn from the Constitutions, the decrees of general congregations and the letters of the Generals. There were, besides, half-hour lectures four times a week on the approved method of conducting the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. Two hours a day went to manual labor, an experience which the masters of ascetical training are generally at pains to enter on their programs. Readings in Thomas à Kempis and Rodriguez had their appointed times and every day at half-past five P. M. there was a review, lasting half an hour, of the morning meditation.⁸⁸

Numerous difficulties presented themselves to Father Van Quickenborne as he thus discharged the important duties of master of tertians. But he was not above seeking counsel, and to the patient Dzierozynski

⁸⁷ Van Quickenborne ad Dzierozynski, Florissant, February 12, 1828 (B)

⁸⁸ Van Quickenborne ad Dzierozynski, Florissant, March 4, 1828 (B) *The Practice of Christian Perfection* by Alphonsus Rodriguez, S. J., is the traditional text for spiritual reading in Jesuit novitiates.

he proposed his difficulties with simple candor. He asks for certain instructions of Father Plowden, they would be of great assistance to him. He asks, too, for more copies of the Constitutions, he and his pupils have been worrying along with a single copy. He asks whether in place of a certain test or trial prescribed in the Institute, he could appoint one of the priests to take charge of the refectory and another to sweep the house for an entire month. He would learn, too, whether the bulls of Julius III, Gregory XIII, Gregory XIV, and Pius V confirmatory of the Society of Jesus have the same authority now that they had before the Suppression. He sees clearly that the bull of Julius III should be read, but he is not so sure of the others. He has no copy of the brief of Pius VII and would be pleased to receive one from Father Dzierozynski.⁸⁹

In compliance with an order of the Maryland superior, the tertianship at St. Ferdinand's, with three months of its normal course yet to run, came to an abrupt end on St. Ignatius day, July 31, 1828.⁹⁰ Van Quickenborne interpreted the order as signifying his superior's approval of the plans he had been maturing for some time for a college in St. Louis, since, with the tertianship closed he was now in a position to make the necessary arrangements for that important undertaking.⁹¹

§ 6 THE CONCORDAT

The Concordat entered into between Bishop Du Bourg and Father Charles Neale played or was meant to play a highly important part in the affairs of the Missouri Mission. The temporal status of the new establishment, the missionary activities of its members, the extent of spiritual jurisdiction to be conceded to them, and in general the scope, purpose and methods of the Jesuit enterprise centered at St. Ferdinand's were defined with more or less of precision in that remarkable document. But the contract was to become operative and its provisions binding on both parties only on condition of its formal approbation and acceptance by the Holy See and the Jesuit General.⁹² The approval of Father Fortis, the General, was promptly given, but that of the Holy See for some reason or other was never obtained. Yet the parties to the Concordat seem to have entertained from the first no doubt of its eventual ratification by the Roman authorities, since without waiting for notice of such ratification, they at once inaugurated the Missouri Mission, the Mission of Maryland, by sending out twelve of its mem-

⁸⁹ Van Quickenborne to Dzierozynski, Florissant, March 4, 1828 (B)

⁹⁰ Same to same, September, 1828 (B)

⁹¹ *Infra*, Chap. IX, § 3

⁹² *Supra*, Chap. II, § 4

bers, and Bishop Du Bourg by giving the twelve possession of the promised farm. And yet, even after the expedition had started for the West, Van Quickenborne expressed himself as though the enterprise he headed was merely provisional and tentative in character. From Frederick in Maryland on his way out, he reminds Father Dzierozynski that, "if the general accepts the Mission," it must be given an efficient superior and a professor of theology.⁹³

Father Fortis lost no time in signifying to Bishop Du Bourg his approval of the Concordat and of the negotiations which had been carried on under its provisions. In a letter written from Rome July 25, 1823, he acknowledges the receipt of the prelate's communication, which he transmitted at once to Cardinal Gonsalvi, Prefect *ad interim* of the Propaganda. He is confident that the approbation of the Sacred Congregation will be given in due time. He approves of all the articles of the Concordat, but on one point wishes a more explicit statement, which no doubt the Bishop really intended. "It is stipulated," says Father Fortis, "that when the Bishop shall demand the withdrawal of an individual from the mission, the religious Superior must recall him immediately, without the Bishop being required to give his reasons for recalling one of his missionaries. This is only just, but there ought to be a reciprocal right. That is to say, if the religious superior has reasons for recalling one of his missionaries, he ought to be able to do it without hindrance. He shall have to advise the Bishop of such step, but he ought not be obliged to disclose his reasons, of which he remains the sole judge. This reciprocity is evidently founded on justice and on reason." Father Fortis then goes on to observe that Benedict XIV formulated the same principles in his bull relative to the English missions. He concludes by promising to send Father Barat to America, as the Bishop had requested, and by thanking the latter warmly for opening up to the Society the Indian missions of western America.⁹⁴

Bishop Du Bourg was gratified with this communication from Father Fortis and at once acquainted Francis Neale, the Maryland superior, with its contents. He was ready to meet the General's wishes by making more explicit the point relative to the removal of subjects from the mission. "The difficulty arising, I suppose, from the extent of jurisdiction I was willing to abandon to the Society will be adjusted between your superiors in Rome and the holy Congregation of Propaganda. The moment we receive conclusive information from that quarter, I will execute the deed for the farm of Florissant in conformity to our agreement."⁹⁵ But the Bishop did not wait for the ratification of

⁹³ Van Quickenborne ad Dzierozynski, April 22, 1823 (B)

⁹⁴ Hughes, *op cit*, Doc, 2 1025

⁹⁵ *Idem*, Doc, 2 1026

the Concordat before sending Van Quickenborne the title-deed of the Florissant farm. The property had been burdened with a mortgage of two thousand dollars held by John Mullanphy, whose insistence on its payment at the stipulated time caused Father Van Quickenborne no little anxiety⁹⁶ Fortunately a timely contribution from the Association of the Propagation of the Faith enabled Bishop Du Bourg to pay off the mortgage before the end of 1824. We find him in January of the following year promising to send Van Quickenborne the deed of the farm without delay.

At last, my dear Father, I have just received a letter from you after having had to wait so long. This protracted silence has been a source of pain to me, as I wished to know whether you had secured the cancellation of the mortgage on the residence, as also to know what became of the two little negroes whom I asked you to claim from Madame Haeffner. Happily I learned that Msgr. Rosati had taken them though he did not say a word to me about it. You would have received the title to the property much sooner, had you only advised me that the property was disencumbered. I shall forward you the title by the first steamboat, together with the deed for the Dardenne lands and an interest-bearing mortgage on 800 arpents situated on the Salt River, which I fully make over to you⁹⁷. The Rev. Father Dzierozynski in a letter recently come to hand appears to be under the impression that your General's delay in executing his promise is due to the circumstance that I have not delivered to you the deed for the property. I declare to you, my dear Father, that this insinuation gives me some offense, as though there were reasons to fear that I am not ready to stand by my engagements. If I have not done so sooner, your own delay in the matter or that of Mr. Mullanphy is alone to blame. But even if I were the most knavish of men or were to die before the execution of the title, have you not a complete guarantee in the bond of conveyance which I drew up at Georgetown in March, 1822 [1823] and which I transmitted to your Father

⁹⁶ Van Quickenborne to Du Bourg, Florissant, September 4, 1825 (B). Du Bourg had written the year before to Dzierozynski: "I begin to grow rather impatient to see the accomplishment of yr. Father General's promise to send us a Superior for the organization of our Missouriian Mission. Until then things will never take any consistency. Perhaps indeed his Rev[erence] is detained by the delay of Propaganda in approving our Concordat. I wish at least you would urge with him the necessity of pressing an explanation, the terms of which now entirely depend on the Court of Rome and Head of yr. Society— You know that the title of the Florissant property is yet in me. I long to make it over, but I know not to whom and on what conditions. Matters ought not to be suffered to remain thus in suspense, even in the interest of yr. Brethren." Du Bourg to Dzierozynski, September 15, 1824 (B).

⁹⁷ Van Quickenborne later (Sept. 4, 1825), informed Bishop Du Bourg that the eight hundred acres were of little value: "Could the eight hundred acres be found they are not worth 40 dollars to me. Mr. Mullanphy bought last week 1500 acres of unconfirmed land, situated 6 miles from St. Louis for 85 dollars" (B).

Procurator?⁹⁸ For my own part, I cannot believe that it is this circumstance which prevents your father-general from acting I believe it is rather the delay of the Propaganda in sanctioning the Concordat which I have made with the late Father Charles Neale and which has been submitted to the approbation of the Pope and the Father General According to stipulation, I was to await this double approbation before delivering the title, but not doubting the approbation of the Pope, except perhaps on some incidental points, and having already secured that of your General, I do not hesitate to gratify your wish, relying implicitly on the good faith of the Society [to see to it] that if ever it finds itself reduced to the necessity of abandoning Missouri, it will leave the lands or the value thereof at the disposition of the Bishop⁹⁹

In accordance with his engagement Bishop Du Bourg signed at New Orleans on May 25, 1825, and transmitted to Father Van Quickenborne an indenture forever alienating and transferring "unto Charles Felix Van Quickenborne, his heirs and assigns forever, for the sum of five thousand dollars, the payment of which in full is hereby acknowledged, all that parcel situated in the St. Ferdinand's Common Fields, County of St. Louis, State of Missouri, it being four arpen[t]s wide and about sixty in length, containing two hundred and fifty [*sic*] arpen[t]s or thereabouts."¹⁰⁰ The Bishop, in thus transferring the Florissant property to the Society of Jesus, had fulfilled an important stipulation of the Concordat But the financial aid, which according to article 3 of the same compact he had pledged himself to extend to the new venture, he could not render because of his own pecuniary embarrassments. The Rev. Mr. Inglesi, whom the Bishop had taken into his confidence and raised to the priesthood, and from whose financial enterprise he expected, so the report was current, fifty thousand dollars

⁹⁸ Hughes, *op cit*, Doc, 2 1024 In Du Bourg's letter 1822 is obviously a mistake for 1823 The consideration of four thousand dollars specified in Du Bourg's bond of conveyance of March 25, 1825, is declared by him in a supplementary document of the same date, (Hughes, *op cit*, Doc, 2 1024, C) to be merely nominal, "the true consideration being the articles of the aforesaid Concordat, which, if executed here by Neale and approved by Rome, must be considered full equivalent for the farm"

⁹⁹ Du Bourg à Van Quickenborne, New Orleans, January 18, 1825 (A)

¹⁰⁰ (D) The size of the farm was overstated in Du Bourg's original conveyance ("three hundred and fifty acres, more or less") It actually measured about 212.6 acres Subsequent additions to the farm as originally conveyed by Du Bourg were chiefly as follows (1) May 26, 1827, Lachasse tract of about 25 acres, adjoining the Du Bourg farm on the SW, (2) May 29, 1854, Creely tract of 144½ acres adjoining the Lachasse tract on the SW, (3) August 20, 1868, "St Joseph's Woods", 231 acres, running from near the west limits of the Du Bourg farm to the Missouri River, (4) October 4, 1871, Marechal tract of about 46 acres, adjoining Du Bourg farm on NE

for the needs of his diocese, finally showed himself in his true colors as an adventurer and impostor. The Bishop's connection with Inglesi, to whom, curiously enough, is due some of the credit for setting on foot the Association of the Propagation of the Faith, left him in serious financial straits "The Bishop," Van Quickenborne remarks in a letter of December, 1823, to the superior in Maryland, "writes to Mr. Neil, who is constantly after him for money, that he is without a cent" ¹⁰¹ In St. Louis the Bishop's college and house and some nearby lots were sold in the autumn of 1823 by the trustees to pay the debts of the cathedral. There was a debt of four thousand, five hundred dollars on the brick cathedral which Bishop Du Bourg had built on Second Street. This money had been advanced by the trustees, Bernard Pratte and the two Chouteaus, Auguste and Pierre, who now demanded their money back, going so far as to secure from the state legislature a permit to sell as much of the cathedral block as would enable them to recoup their losses. Four lots of the block, all fronting on Walnut Street, were accordingly sold by the trustees, but brought only \$1204. The purchaser was the pastor of the cathedral, Father Niel, who now deeded the lots back to Pratte and the Chouteaus. But the cathedral debt was not yet extinguished and Du Bourg, unable to secure financial aid from the Catholics of St. Louis, dispatched Niel to France in 1825 to collect the needed funds. Niel was enabled to forward considerable sums of money to relieve the Bishop's embarrassment, but never afterwards returned to America. In view of these circumstances, it is not surprising that Bishop Du Bourg was unable to lend to the struggling community at St. Ferdinand the pecuniary assistance stipulated for in the Concordat ¹⁰²

The failure of the Jesuits, on the other hand, to send out missionaries to the remote Indian tribes gave rise to protest on the part of Bishop Du Bourg. According to article 5 of the Concordat, Father Charles Neale, "Superior of the Society of Jesus in North America," had "engaged that at the expiration of two years counting from the time of their arrival, four or five at least, missionaries duly qualified shall proceed to the remote missions, (1 e) to the Indian settlements in the vicinity of Council Bluffs, and shall there labor towards the attainment of the great object specified above for the greater glory of God." In the summer of 1825 Bishop Du Bourg wrote to Father Van Quickenborne urging upon him the fulfillment of this obligation, now that the two years of grace had expired. To the Jesuit superior, it seemed unfair, under existing conditions, that he be held to this onerous obligation

¹⁰¹ Van Quickenborne to Francis Neale, Florissant, December 12, 1823 (B)

¹⁰² Holweck, "Vater Saulnier und Seine Zeit", in *Pastoral Blatt* (St. Louis), April, 1918

and he wrote in this sense to the Bishop It was only by the strictest economy and at the price of numerous privations that means of support could be found for the community at Florissant How, then, would it be possible to pay the expenses of missionaries among the Indians? "Can it then be expected that with these means the Society shall have ordained four scholastics, have them sent on the mission or rather have them thrown out of the house without resource or means of subsistence? When the Superior agreed to send three or four missionaries to the Indians, two years after our arrival at this place, it was on condition that the Government should pay the two hundred dollars yearly to each as promised and granted at first by the President"¹⁰³

The Concordat, therefore, by sheer force of circumstances remained inoperative in many of its provisions With regard to its subsequent status Van Quickenborne observed in 1830 to the General, Father Roothaan, that he never heard whether it had been approved or not by the Sovereign Pontiff

A Concordat was made by Bishop Du Bourg with the Superior of the American Mission, Rev. Father Charles Neale of happy memory, I doubt not that your Very Rev. Paternity has a copy of this document The Concordat was accepted by the General, I have never heard that it was accepted by the Sovereign Pontiff Bishop Du Bourg, when he was here, told me he thought the Propaganda stood in the way The present Bishop, Msgr. Rosati, a man eminent for learning, prudence and virtue and highly thought of at Rome, as is evident from the issue of his affairs, adheres to the Concordat and would like religious communities to have their own districts where they can labor according to their own Institute in the vineyard of the Lord He offered to obtain for me from the Sovereign Pontiff a confirmation of the Concordat (Be pleased therefore, Very Reverend Father, to intimate what you wish me to do in this matter) Bishop Du Bourg observed the conditions well enough, the present Bishop observes them perfectly, not so ourselves although with the approval of Bishops Du Bourg and Rosati I say Bishop Du Bourg observed them well enough He failed in one point, but he made amends as quickly as he could The matter was this By the terms of the Concordat he should have given us at once the title to the farm where we are now living, but he had given a mortgage on the farm, and this [mortgage], since he had been imposed upon by the pseudo-priest Anglesi [Inglesi], he could not redeem until two years later, during which interval we were in continual danger of being evicted The money which he received from the Association of the Faith in France and with which he was under obligation to assist us in virtue of the Concordat, he used for redeeming the

¹⁰³ Van Quickenborne to Du Bourg, September 4, 1825 Copy (B) The annual subsidy of two hundred dollars granted by the government to each of four or five missionaries was subsequently applied by it to the support of the Indian school at Florissant Cf. *infra*, Chap. V

mortgage Meantime, as a matter of sheer necessity, we had to till the ground several hours almost every day for a whole year But he made abundant compensation for all this by giving us whatever he possessed, so that on leaving for France he spent his last 300 dollars for us in making perfectly secure the property which he gave us at that time in St. Louis and on which the college has been built

We have not, [as Bishop Du Bourg] lived up to [the Concordat] since the four missionaries who were to have gone out to the Indians to live among them two years after our arrival in Florissant did not go I am hoping that your Very Reverend Paternity will so assist us that we shall find it in our power to supply one or other missionary and so do what we have been unable to do so far The Bishop was very anxious that some one of Ours should go to the Indians But our men were not yet priests at the time, besides, they were very young and not used to that exceedingly sharp manner of warfare, in fine, we were destitute of almost all necessaries and, in the last place, had never received from Superiors any order or encouragement to take up this work Your Very Reverend Paternity knows of course that Bishop Du Bourg when he was in France and Italy before his consecration and afterwards in Belgium made [ms ?] begging for aid which he received and in ample enough measure As a consequence he was extremely anxious for us to be in a position to go, but we could not The above mentioned reasons (for not going) when they were set before him, he approved, all except the last Whether we fulfill that condition at all depends on Father General, for without help from him in personnel, two men at least, we shall be able to accomplish only very little ¹⁰⁴

Nine years after the signing of the Concordat Father Peter Kenney, Visitor for the second time of the Jesuit missions in North America, was in St. Louis, where the important document was at once placed in his hands From a study of its contents and from inquiries made as to its practical working out he was led to conclude that Bishop Du Bourg had carried out everything that he promised even at serious inconvenience to himself. This judgment he reported to the Father General, at the same time sending him a Latin translation of the Concordat. Father Kenney was apparently of the opinion that the covenant was to be adhered to even pending its formal approval by the Holy See, which was understood by both the contracting parties to be an essential requisite for its validity. He noted, not with approval, it would seem, that the Jesuits had opened a college in St. Louis, "which is not in the district assigned [to them] since it is on the banks of the Mississippi", and for the same reason, namely, that it lay outside the territory assigned to the Society, which was the Missouri Valley, he ordered the little mission temporarily opened on Salt Creek in northeastern Missouri to be de-

¹⁰⁴ Van Quickenborne ad Roothaan, September 9, 1830 (AA) Hughes, *op cit*, Doc, 2 1028

livered up to the Bishop of St. Louis¹⁰⁵ While the Visitor was thus demonstrating his faith in the working character of the Concordat, at least in certain of its provisions, Father Roothaan, the General, was expressing his fears that the Society in Missouri, in not taking up resident missionary work among the Indians, was falling short of the serious obligation assumed by it in the Concordat "The matter causes me no little anxiety," he informed Father Kenney, "since the Society seems to be bound in justice to lend its services to the Indians in that quarter."¹⁰⁶ In the event this consideration, as urged by the Father General, was to have its influence on the actual beginning a few years later of resident missionary work among the Indians.

As to the ultimate fate of the Concordat, it does not appear that the question of its approbation was ever again submitted to the Propaganda after the Congregation had examined it in the time of Father Fortis. The last we hear of it is in connection with an inquiry made by Archbishop Kenrick of St. Louis in May, 1848, as to whether the compact had at any time received the approbation of the Holy See. The prelate was led to make this inquiry by the circumstance that the Jesuits, so it was alleged, were leaving the Missouri River stations, or most of them, unsupplied with missionaries. The answer returned on this occasion by Cardinal Fransoni, Prefect of the Propaganda, was that no certain evidence of any past ratification of the Concordat by the Congregation could be brought to light, but that, should circumstances seem to require it, some new adjustment of the situation that had given rise to the complaint might be attempted. There the matter rested nor did Archbishop Kenrick concern himself further with the Concordat, which thereupon lapsed into final obscurity, no subsequent attempt, as far as known, being made by either of the interested parties to bring it forward as a practical issue.¹⁰⁷

That the grandiose pact, conceived as it was, should have proved abortive as regarded certain of its provisions was inevitable. An arrangement that guaranteed to a single religious order at once the privilege and the burden of the exclusive spiritual care of the entire Missouri Valley necessarily fell to pieces with the rapid and unexpected growth of Catholicism in that vast inland empire, nor could any sanction, how-

¹⁰⁵ Kenney ad Roothaan, February 22, 1832 (AA)

¹⁰⁶ Roothaan ad Kenney, October 23, 1832 (AA)

¹⁰⁷ "Mons Kenrick de St. Louis a été formalisé parceque nos missions tout le long du Missouri a l'exception de quelques unes restaient sans missionnaires. Il parait qu'il est resolu de ne plus respecter le contrat fait par le Père Ch. Neale avec Msgr Du Bourg. Que faire?" Elet à Roothaan, St. Louis, October 24, 1848 (AA) Fransoni ad Kenrick, July 27, 1848 "Certainly the practice of both parties for the last twenty-five years, affords a solid basis for prescription, even though no approbation were given" Dzierozynski ad Brocard (?), October 18, 1848 (A)

ever solemn, extended to it by the Holy See, have made the arrangement a permanent one. No amount of good will on the part either of the Society of Jesus or the prelates of the St. Louis diocese could have made the result other than it was. Both sides lent themselves with earnestness as also with naive miscalculation of the future to a program which no hostile influence or unkindly fate but the very development itself of western Catholicism promptly rendered impracticable. And yet, when all is said, the Concordat of 1823, initiating as it did the work of the restored Society of Jesus in mid-America, was an instrument of far-reaching results and may be counted among the historic factors which have shaped in a significant way the course of the Catholic Church in the United States.