

1870: Lavigerie presents the Pope with three children from Algeria, the first fruits of the mission.

1877: Lavigerie asked to be released from the diocese of Algiers to devote himself entirely to the mission in Africa as a Missionary of Africa. To this end, he represented himself as a White Father.

1886: The Fathers of Zanzibar were visited by the French Consul, who invited them to dine with members of the French colony. The Fathers refused, as it was a Friday.

1890: Foundation of Bugoma, abandoned in April 1890, resumed on September 8, 1891, then abandoned again (January-October 1892). The station was transferred to Bumangi on November 21, 1893.

1892: Serious violence broke out between Catholics and Protestants in Uganda.

Letter to the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda (1 January 1877)

Your Eminence,

Your Eminence is aware that I founded two Congregations, one of men and the other of women, for the service of this Mission. In order to focus one's attention correctly, I am honoured to enclose with the present letter a copy of the Rule of these two Congregations. They have both received such an outstanding blessing from God that they already number nearly three hundred members, i.e., the Missionaries almost one hundred and fifty and the Sisters, over one hundred. The number of Stations has also multiplied in proportion, and we are soon to be obliged, with your authorisation, to open two procure, one at St Louis de Carthage and the other at Tripoli. This will serve us for the caravans that no longer leave from Algeria, in order to deliver Missionaries and the provisions they need into the Mission.

However, I must tell your Eminence that all the increasingly numerous daily details is enough to occupy a single person, especially considering the care to give to the formative content for two Congregations in their infancy. With my health severely undermined, I am no longer up to the task of administering the Archdiocese of Algiers and the Works of the Mission at the same time. In my letter to His Holiness, I give my reasons that lead me to relinquish, by preference, the Archdiocese of Algiers. They are absolutely irrefutable, and I hope that your Eminence will approve them.

Nevertheless, the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda has the right to know how I will manage to run the Mission when I have given up my Archdiocese. Here it is in a few words. Foreseeing what is happening today, I have gradually prepared everything for several years to make of the Vicar Apostolic or the Delegate who will be placed in charge of the Mission of the Sahara with its dependencies, as constituted by the Sacred Congregation in its Decree, what would be required for it to live independently. Since it is absolutely required for the Apostolic Delegate ordinarily to reside at the coast, I began by separating the Mother House of the Missionaries and that of the Sisters from the Archdiocese of Algiers and declare them exempt by a Rescript of His Holiness. I have equipped these two houses with considerable properties, bringing the normal annual rental income achievable to nearly one hundred thousand francs.

In addition, on the exempted land of the Missionaries, I have had a very comfortable house built and have endowed it as the home of the Delegate in perpetuity. Finally, from the property income of the Mission, I have also allocated an annual sum of ten thousand francs for the upkeep of the same Prelate. Moreover, he has the reserved power, if he were of the Society of Missionaries, to dwell in any house of this Society that he chooses, outside Algeria, according to the needs of the Mission.

As far as I am concerned personally, as a former bishop, I have the additional right to a pension of ten thousand francs from the French Government and I have privately owned property providing me with a private income of twenty thousand francs. The present and the future therefore appear guaranteed on the material side. From the spiritual side, my resignation as Archbishop of Algiers will undoubtedly foster it, calling upon God's blessing and enabling me to devote myself with greater freedom, follow-up and zeal to the duties of the apostolate alone.

