

**1883:** Lavigerie blesses a school for young girls in the Maltese district of Tunis. The school was entrusted to the Sisters of St. Joseph.

**Letter to Mgr Bracq Bishop of Ghent (Belgium) (1st January 1880).**

My Lord,

Having come to Belgium for only a few days and being obliged to return to France sooner than I thought, I am forced to communicate with your Lordship at a distance, which was not my intention, since I had hoped to meet you in person, as I did yesterday with His Eminence, the Cardinal Archbishop of Malines.

I should like to find among the families living in your still so Catholic Flanders, despite all the impiety being inflicted on them, some young men who might have a vocation to the apostolate and who might be willing to dedicate themselves to the vast mission entrusted to the Missionaries of Algiers in Equatorial Africa. I might add confidentially that this, too, is desired by His Majesty the King of the Belgians for the success of his undertaking. For this, I should be willing to accept poor children whose very poverty might prevent them from receiving a good education in the seminaries and whose board and lodgings I would pay, thanks to the help of generous benefactors of which I am already assured. Most of these children I would place in the minor seminary in Turnhout, in Campine. They would go on to complete their education in Algiers in the noviciates of our Society's missionaries. I have already arranged this with the Superior at Turnhout.

As I mentioned at the beginning, My Lord, I had hoped to come in person and present this plan to Your Lordship. I wanted to ask especially for your agreement and your blessing on those young men from your diocese who might wish to enter the minor seminary with this aim in mind.

I should also like to ask your permission to convey my intentions to some zealous members of the clergy, discreetly, however, and via private correspondence. Not being able to offer this in your presence, I ask Your Lordship to kindly accept herewith my double request, and, in anticipation of a favourable response, I dare to offer you, in addition to my sincere thanks, my devoted and respectful good wishes.

**Letter to Mgr de Courmont, Apostolic Vicar in Zanzibar (19th January 1884)**

Monsignor,

I was delighted to learn that the mission in Zanzibar has been given an apostolic vicar. I personally did all I could at the Propaganda to bring this about, since I could see in this a real advantage for the good of all. Besides, what I know of Your Lordship lets me hope for the great success of your episcopal and apostolic ministry and I ask Our Lord to grant you this success for many years. As I have a few of my missionaries under your jurisdiction, at the procure of our missions in the Great Lakes, which is located on your island, I write to commend them to your kindness. I should be grateful, Monsignor, if you would give them, for use within their community, the necessary faculties like hearing each other's confession. I insist on their not doing any kind of ministry outside and I should be grateful to you if you would refuse them any such permission.

