

*Father Peter Semenenko CR:*

# *Autobiography*



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*Prop. Gen. Cong. a Resur. D. J. Christ.*

**SISTERS OF THE RESURRECTION  
RESURRECTION STUDIES  
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## Introductory Remarks

**Autobiography** is an English translation of the Polish “**Autobiografia**” compiled by Father Jerzy Mrówczyński CR. In the words of Father Mrówczyński:

“This is a real autobiography because the compiled text is based on autobiographical notes from the diary of Father Semenenko and on his many letters written in various languages.” (**Autobiografia**, p.5)

**Autobiografia** was translated from the Polish *as is*, without additions or explanatory notes, with the exception of corrections noted by Father Mrówczyński in his letter to the translator. The compilation is dependent upon the compiler’s selection of biographical materials and, in that sense, may exclude other interesting facets of the life of Semenenko. While it also may be noted that references, usually found in more scholarly works, are absent from the **Autobiografia**, and while the intermingled use by the compiler of both the third person (when the compiler describes facts or events from Semenenko’s life) and the first person (when Semenenko is directly quoted but without the normally accepted punctuation), as well as when quasi-identical or identical statements are repeated may create ambiguity for the reader, the value of **Autobiografia** lies in the fact that it offers to a wider public a more extensive knowledge of the life and actions of Father Peter Semenenko and of the events that shaped him.

The idea for this translation came from Mother Dolores Stępień CR, Superior General of the Sisters of the Resurrection, to whom we are indebted for supporting this project. A special note of recognition is also due to Father Jerzy Mrówczyński CR, who graciously consented to the English translation of his work, protected as it is by copyright. This translation is intended for the internal use of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Resurrection.

- Introduction and translation of text: Sister Jeanne Marie Harla, CR  
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## *Autobiography*

**Childhood of the Servant of God. His Parents.** Peter Semenenko wrote the following about his ancestors: I remember, Lord, whom you gave me as parents. Was there some special design in this choice and a prospect of future mercy?

Now it often seems to me as if I guessed the reason for which you ordained that I should have such parents, both of whom, in spite of their fault because they were born such, represented both sides into which people divided themselves when falling away from your Church. Some, proud with the thought of their heart, sinned with the heart, severing the holy unity of love, and became Schismatics. And others, proud with the thought of their heads, sinned with reason, and severing the unity of understanding /of the faith/ became Heretics. Both the one and the other, withdrawing from the Church, remove themselves further and further away from it and, at the same time, from themselves – And they will never meet again with one another, unless it be on the bosom of what unites everything, the Catholic Church.

My father was a schismatic. And yet it seems that his disposition of soul to your truth, Lord, was a reminder of his childhood years, bearing traces of impressions from early infancy. He was born near the boundary of the old Poland, near Smoleńsk, still before the first partition of Poland.

/Near the end of his life/ in 1835, he was transferred for business reasons to Dinaburg. He died there on September 5, 1837 and was buried there.

His mother was a Pole, but a Calvinist. She died on November 25, 1831 after Peter's departure /from home/ to join the insurrection, and then to emigrate.

Peter Semenenko was born on June 29, 1814 in Dolistowo, not far from Knyszyn, near Tykociny, in the hamlet of Dzienciołów, in the house bearing the number: **466**.

The following was written on his original birth certificate: "To the Honorable Gentleman Michael Semenenko, Director /of the Customs House/, his wife Catherine Zielińska gave birth to a son on June 29. He was baptized on July 5 by the Reverend Francis Turski, pastor, and was named Peter, Adolph, Alexander. The godparents were the Honorable Gentleman Michael Rezonow, captain, and the noble Lady Ewa Mitelska, the treasurer's daughter."

Here are Peter's personal reflections about his birth and baptism:

I was barely born when You brought it about that I received Holy Baptism in your true Church. And as a proof that I should necessarily belong to this Church, I was born exactly on the day of Your Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, princes and heads of Your Church militant on earth; and the very name of Peter, the Head of Your Church, was given to me at Baptism.

Strange indeed are the ways of God especially that, in spite of everything, I was baptized and later brought up and admitted to the Sacraments in the Catholic Church.

My Baptism, which because of distance from the parish church, took place 12 days after I was born, and also fell on the feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul according to the Russian Julian calendar.

**Siblings of Father Peter.** Father Peter's siblings were all younger than he. Alexander, his oldest brother, was born in 1815 and died in 1879. He was married in 1845 and moved to Kreting with his family. He was the father of Vladimir, born in 1844, who died in the fall of 1884 leaving a wife, Olga, and a daughter.

A sister, whose name we do not know, was born in 1816 and died around 1823.

Ann was one of the younger siblings. Born in 1817, she died in the fall of 1867.

Constantine was the third brother, born in 1818. He died on April 21, 1883 as a colonel in the Russian army and inspector of hospitals in the Caucasian province. His wife, Dubieńska, died when giving birth to Maria Tamara.

Andrew was his fourth brother. He was born in 1820 and died in 1877.

**Schools.** Peter wrote about his education and schooling: I attend the first grade of the Missionary Fathers in Tykociny. He received his First Communion on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception in 1823. /After a few months, his grandmother with whom he lived / discovered that he was a Catholic.

His father was notified to come and take him away. The boy trembled but the father listened /very calmly/ to the story of the grandmother about the conversion, and only when Peter got up to sit with his father on the chaise, said: “You did well, Peter.” *“This /was/ the most wonderful memory of my life”* – said Father Peter shortly before his death.

/In/ 1825, I completed the third grade in Tykociny. – Moving to Białystok followed. Then for a year he went to Rosien, and in the end /in/ June, 1829 he completed the gymnasium in Kroże.

/During the next school year, 1829-1830, he remained at home because of poor health.

Studies at the University in Wilno. In 1830 he began to attend the University of Stefan Batory.

**Insurrectionist.** The last time I saw my sister – it was in 1838, I think in May, when the Polish Army from Warsaw came to Żmudź and the Corps of General Szymanowski passed through Rosien. The General stayed in this place for a few days. Then I left the house already for good and when the army was moving

toward Szawel, I said farewell to my father and brothers for the last time – and to my sister then about 12 years old.

After the arrival of the regular army (insurrectionist) from the Kingdom, I joined the foot artillery - barely capable of handling ammunition – I was not yet physically developed. The insurrectionists, after the attack at Szawel and after the unsuccessful late march of General Gielgud to Wilno, were defeated on June 7, 1831 in the Ponarski Mountains and retreated to captivity in Prussia.

He then went with the Corps led by Generals Gielgud and Desideree Chlapowski to Prussia, and Peter was quartered near Krolewiec.

His faith, already not so strong when he was among the students of Wilno, began to waver. Reading German books during winter quarters in Prussia, as well as the entire Protestant-rationalistic environment in which he lived, took deeper hold of him. The revolutionary materialism of France finished him for good.

**Emigrant.** On February 9, 1832, Peter set foot on French soil as a Polish emigrant. In the beginning of 1832, he arrived at Besancon, where there was a large colony of Poles numbering more than 1,000 persons. From Besancon, Semenenko moved to Chateauroux, where he became known for his abilities and impetuosity, while his poetry written at that time was permeated with hate and revenge against those who governed.

Exiled from Chateauroux by the Prefect, he escaped to Paris, where he remained in hiding. He was the chief writer for the revolutionary-Polish publication “Progress” (“Postę”). He joined the Democratic Society, recently organized by Adam Gurowski. He also wrote for the French Tribune and, at the annual November celebration, delivered a violent speech in French against the Polish nobility - which made all more-serious

Poles highly indignant.

Constantly pursued by the French police as an anarchist, he moved from house to house for two years. Deprived of paid employment, he experienced severe poverty and lived most often on a piece of bread and cheese, or an apple.

**At the side of Bogdan Jański.** In the Diary of Jański, we find the first reference to Semenenko on December 27, 1834. We learn from this notation that in the morning Semenenko came to Jański together with Adam Celiński.

On January 7, 1835, Jański wrote about his young guest: that he talks about visions; about the duels of /Leon/ Przecławski; that he is looking through brochures; that he recites from the Bible; he blasphemes. – /This left in the soul of Bogdan a very unpleasant impression of his company/. He was sad that he did not berate the blasphemies. He probably acted in this way being influenced by the hope of his progressive good example on the young man. Jański writes further: I am inviting Semenenko for dinner.../On this new occasion/ I conversed with Semenenko about publications and visions.

Faith awakened in Semenenko under Jański's influence and on January 13, 1835 Jański noted in his Diary: Semenenko came. I drew his attention to a few things. He made a resolution to go to confession. My joy is fearful but sincere. I give thanks to God for the inspirations He gave him – I pray for perseverance for him. God, do not abandon him. Extricate him from the abyss of sin and iniquity. Give me the grace to be able to help him.

Jański does not lose the precious time of grace but immediately sets with Peter the date for confession – the next day.

Then Semenenko came to live with Jański in the so-called “House of Jański”.

**At College Stanislas.** After a year, Peter lived and continued to study at the College Stanislas.

He received the Sacrament of Confirmation from the Archbishop of Paris, Jacques Louis de Quelen, who visited the College Stanislas on June 12, 1836 and confirmed Peter there.

The goodness of God removed obstacles and in Paris we entered the College Stanislas for theological studies and preparation for Holy Orders. There, accepted with paternal goodness, surrounded by kindness that was not merited on our part, we studied and did not think at all about leaving for Rome. That was a matter for future years. In the meantime, we spent vacations in the Benedictine Abbey at Solesmes, a few score miles from Paris.

Count Zamoyski, whom we even knew personally, came to Paris. After his arrival he learned about the existence of our small community of converted Poles. He also met without delay with our Brother Superior Janski to whom he revealed that, while in Rome, he saw the Holy Father, and then Cardinal Ledóchowski and Monsignor Cappadani, as well as other dignitaries. He presented the state of the Church in Poland to them. They all answered that they are well informed about these matters, but they do not have any way of preventing the problems. Then Zamoyski proposed the acceptance of young Poles, who would want to dedicate themselves to the service of the Church, into seminaries /Roman/. All with whom he spoke fully consented to this.

Having thus presented matters, Zamoyski proposed that the Brother Superior send several of us to Rome without delay. He wanted to take advantage of these good dispositions and felt it was the proper moment. Brother Superior saw in this the finger of God, who has mercy on His poor people and desires to help suffering Poland. The choice fell on the two of us. The Director of the College – a venerable elder, esteemed by the clergy in France; the Superior of the Seminary – a person incapable of giving risky advice; our spiritual directors and other persons – in a word, those whom we felt obligated to ask for counsel – all answered: Go, this is the Will of God. Do not seek anything else; do not think about

it too long; this is falling on you as if from heaven. Go. It is the Will of God.

**Journey from Paris to Rome.** The journey to Turin by way of Mont Cenis. I wrote that the cost is reasonable and yes, more expensive than elsewhere: from Lyon to Turin, ninety somewhat miles, 68 franks each, because you cross the Alps and the road is difficult. We rode the entire night not seeing anything until the next day when we awoke on the Sabaudian border. We saw the Alps, a different sky, different vegetation. We rode through the cliffs following the trail of Hannibal that he had chiseled with fire and vinegar. But this is what we wanted. We quickly passed Chambery; we barely had time to eat our dinner there. Rain. Leaving from there, for the first time we saw mountains covered with snow. The next day at noon we got through the highest point (Mont Cenis) right under the clouds, at the base of the snows. We ourselves were covered with snow because going up we got out of the stagecoach. The air, crisp but healthy, invigorated us quickly. From there, after a three-hour quick descent, we arrived in Susa, where first the gorge begins, then the Piedmont Valley. We arrived in Turin at 9 o'clock in the evening.

Settling passport matters in Turin. We had ridden through all of France. Nobody asked us for a passport... until at the border. That is natural. But barely had we arrived for dinner /in Turin/, passports. At breakfast the next day, passports, and always pay those who take them for you because you yourself do not have the time to go. At the Gate of Turin, passports with the order to appear personally at the police the next day. Such is the order of things in Turin for everybody. When we appeared, we were told to go for a visa to the French Embassy, then to the Ministry of External Affairs, where we paid 4 francs apiece for the visa. From there, we returned to the police station, where there was a new visa. In conclusion finally, we were told to go to the Austrian Embassy for

a visa to Parma and Modena. We took them [the passports] there but it was already too late. We were told to leave them and return the next day. What will happen with them we leave to God.

Visiting Bologna. A kind-hearted bishop did not permit us to speak longer but immediately called the coachman. Since he did not care for the first one who came along, and since he was occupied for the rest of the day because he was spending it at the Cardinal Archbishop's of Bologna at dinner, we had to wait one more day (Thursday 28<sup>th</sup>). This helped us to become better acquainted with Bologna. The Church of St. Petronius is truly monumental; the Cathedral of St. Dominic is also nice. In Bologna, you meet a picture of the great master at every step. We also visited the surrounding regions. We also prayed at the tomb of St. Dominic, whose body lies here. We commended all of you to him, but especially this poor country where his tomb is found; this poor Italy that greatly needs heavenly mercy. On the way, we gathered many impressions that moved us very much. It is a different thing to reflect on the state of some country from afar, and another, to see it and touch it with your fingertips. But more about this later.

**Studies in Rome.** After the 40-day journey from Paris to Rome, Semenenko and Kajsiewicz found themselves in the capital of Christianity, where they began their philosophical and theological studies. These would be completed with the attainment of doctorates in theology.

Finding a place in a home for orphans. After a long search, Father Arydini [**sic.**], or rather, /Romuald/ Suszynski, found us such a place: it is an orphanage; the position is that of Prefects, completely answering the description of French educators [study masters]. You have to watch the children all day, while during the 3 hours in the morning and 3 after dinner, when the children are in school, we would be free to attend theological classes. There is still that convenience that the children go to the

Roman College, that famous Jesuit institution, in which are given courses in theology that are the most profound in Rome. For this we would have free room and board and 2 scudos (10 franks) monthly for clothing. We already thanked God, understanding that it is the end of our perplexities (difficulties) and we said the Te Deum by the tomb of our dear St. Stanislaus, even though the place is still not certain. It will be open after November 13 only if the present Prefects are let go, as the Rector wishes. It seems that he cannot implement this by himself and only if the Cardinal Prefect of the Institute consents to our entrance.

### **Employment in the Somaschi Fathers' orphanage.**

Work schedule in the Institute of the Somaschi Fathers. The daily schedule is as follows: we rise at 5:30; dressing and a few moments of prayer. At 6:00, the children are awakened, alternating with us in the recitation of the Psalms: Laudete pueri Dominum /Praise God, you children/ out loud, to which, sitting in bed, they respond. They all sleep in a large dormitory. The beds are on one side, on the other, a table for ironing. After the psalm, they rise energetically, make their beds (the Father Prefect makes his with them); after, they wash, comb their hair. At 6:30, the bell is rung for prayers; after a good quarter of an hour, Mass. Before 7:30 they return to the study hall where they study until 8:15. During this study period, they recite their lessons to the Father Prefect. This lasts until 8:00. At eight, the first free quarter hour. At 8:15, breakfast, that involves distributing bread to the children; then another quarter hour of free time, until 8:45 that lets us review our lessons. We go to the College. At 9:00 moral theology; 10:00 dogmatic; 11:00 history of the Church. This final one lasts only a half-hour. At 11:30 we return /home/. Only then the first hour of free time because the children have a half- hour of recreation after their return and another half hour of study that may be substituted with something else by Father Prefect. At 1:30 study. Then again the children recite their lessons and this takes

up the whole time. At 2:15 to the College. The children go to school. Our class is not until 3:30; therefore, this hour per day of completely free time and it is the only time I can see Jerome. The rest of the time we are glued to the children. Usually we review our lessons. For this we have a separate room in the Roman College that Fr. Aridini (alias Suszyński) singled out for us. At 3:30 a second dogmatic theology, that is, with another professor. At 4:30, the so-called *circulus*, a famous thing and a real Jesuit discovery. It lasts half an hour. During it, all the students in the great hall of theology divide into a few sections. Each one individually sits down in the center of the circle (*circulus*) and all, each one in his own circle, engage in a disputation. – This takes place as follows: during the first quarter of an hour one person presents a thesis. During the second, an adversary gives objections and the presenter defends [the thesis]. This takes place without a professor, only that in each circle there is a Prefect, who is cunning in syllogistic reasoning. Then on Saturday, there is a circle all day, but it is general in nature. Such advance notice in schedules is favorable to those who are studying because it takes away one day of lessons per week. If you add Thursday, which is also a free day, you have two days per week. Otherwise it would be difficult to manage. And with this, 14 hours of lessons a week still remain, when at Stanislas you had enough to do with 7.

**Plans for the future Congregation in Rome.** Prognosis for the successful existence of the Congregation in Rome. You may remember how the next day after arriving in Rome I showed you this inscription: “Ego vobis Romae propitius ero”. [“I will be propitius to you in Rome”] as a good omen given to us by God.

**Election of Brother Peter as the elder brother.** They have already written to you what they wanted to do with me. It belonged to them to justify their election. As for me, you know Peter. I was told to accept this as a cross for sins. Did I accept it in

this way, I do not know. However, I accepted, waiting this time for what you will say. Give me your honest word and don't let me wait for it. And now ask for me the grace I need for my temporary service, until God mercifully sends something better for us.

Right after the examinations on Saturday, the 7<sup>th</sup> of this month, we began our journey by foot and arrived in Naples on the 13<sup>th</sup>, where the next day we got on a boat for Ischia, hastening to General Joseph Szymanowski and Caesar Plater, who were waiting for us. We arrived at Ischia at 2 during the night. We are here already five days, thanking the merciful God for the rest that He prepared for us, so that refreshed with bodily strength, we would apply ourselves with renewed effort to the studies that await us, and would spend the oncoming year more profitably than the last.

**Major Orders.** Yesterday, Sunday (Nov. 21, 1841), on the Feast of the Presentation of Our Lady, we received the subdiaconate; a day with a happy omen. We received the subdiaconate from the hands of Archbishop Vespignani, vice-regent of the Roman diocese. It was even an emotional moment. In the morning in the quiet and pretty church of the Visitation Sisters, our good friends, French priests studying here came either to say Mass or to be present. After our ordination and Communion, it was the sisters' turn. Before receiving Communion, they renewed their vows. This lasted about a half-hour and when the bishop turned to the altar, the rest of the brothers encircled him to participate in the Holy Sacrifice. Among them was also our dear brother Valerian Wielogłowski.

Next Sunday, November 28, 1841, and the first in Advent, we are to be ordained deacons; and priests on the Second Sunday in Advent, December 5. We are saving our first Mass for December 8, God willing, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of our Lady in the Basilica of Mary Major. Most probably mine will be at 8:30, and Jerome's at 9:30, or later.

**First vows and founding of the Congregation of the Resurrection.** On March 26, 1842, Holy Saturday, Father Semenenko completed the writing of the first Rule that was attentively read and discussed by the rest of the Community. After the prayer to the Holy Spirit, Father Peter was unanimously elected superior with Father Kajsiewicz and Father Duński as his councilors. The hymn “Te Deum” was recited, thanking God for the foundation of the new Congregation, and it was decided that vows would be professed in the Catacombs of St. Sebastian.

During the deliberations, one of the brothers raised the question as to what name the Congregation should give itself. Then, a second one responded that we could see what the society of the faithful would call us. And another added that certainly the very Feast of the Resurrection suggests a name. But in the end it was decided not to take this up at the present time because someone could accuse us of being guided by political concerns and could judge that the Congregation arose for the purpose of the political reconstruction and resurrection of Poland.

At 3 o'clock in the morning, they finally went to sleep. At 4 o'clock they arose. Morning prayers were recited and they left for the catacombs. It was far and the trip lasted over two hours. They left the house, directing themselves along the left side of the Roman Forum, Coliseum, Baths of Caracalla, the street of St. Sebastian. They arrived at the Church of St. Sebastian on Easter Sunday in the morning. It was open and inviting all to go in. Going through the church, they arrived at the underground catacomb chapels.

It was the morning of March 27, 1842. Six religious and an external brother, Valerian Wielogłowski, entered the catacombs of St. Sebastian to celebrate Easter Mass and profess religious vows in their group. They were: Father Peter Semenenko, up till then the elder brother and now the Superior of the entire Community, Father Jerome Kajsiewicz, Brother Charles

Kaczanowski, Brother Joseph Hube, Brother Edward Duński, Brother Ladislaus Godlewski.

Father Semenenko vested for Mass. All the others were to accompany him as servers and participants. After Communion, first the celebrant himself and after him all the others professed their vows. All recited the short formula, handwritten by themselves, which is found toward the end of their approved Rule. After the conclusion of this first Mass, Father Kajsiewicz celebrated a second Holy Sacrifice as a thanksgiving.

**First phase of the Resurrectionists' stay in Rome.** The Brothers of the Resurrection of Our Lord have their main residence in Rome. There, already in 1842, we were given charge of the French church of St. Claude's and the modest apartment next to it for one person – the Rector of the Church. This benefit, received from the French government, was for us a real blessing of Providence and the first step in settling our situation in Rome for a long time and up till now.

**Purpose of Fr. Peter's trip to Poznań and Fr. Jerome's to Paris.** And so my departure, if it be the Will of God, will take place on July 1 or June 30, 1842. I will travel straight to Munich and from there, if I will not encounter difficulties in obtaining a visa for a passport to Poznań - then I will go there.

**On the way to Poznań through Germany in 1842.** In Innsbruck and while continuing the journey. Before yesterday, I spent an entire day in Innsbruck at the Jesuits. I had Mass and I ate there. And yesterday, I rode all day and all night.

Thank God, I am completely well. Since Venice I feel much better, at least for now.

**Passport control at the police station in Poznań.** When I was asked about the purpose of my trip, I said that having

become a priest and speaking Polish, I would naturally try to fulfill my vocation somewhere in Poland. Therefore, I came here to find out if I can be accepted here, or not...Now after this temporary permission to stay, the Archbishop asks the Minister for permission to bring my companions and me here and to give positions to priests in exile.

**Pastoral difficulties in Paris.** Difficulties with celebrating the Easter feast in the rented Church of St. Roche in Paris. We had a somewhat sad Easter. On Palm Sunday, Jerome had a beautiful sermon on the Lord's Passion – about 1 ½ hours. Alas, when hardly a hundred persons, more or less, were there. At St. Roche's we are always like guests. We wanted to have a sermon each day during Holy Week – but we couldn't. For Easter Sunday we announced a general Communion. A little more than 20 persons responded. True that it is during the morning hours. The blessing of the food, etc. caused a great diversion.

**Evaluation of the harmful teaching of Andrew Towiański.** Even though I read the writings of Towianski attentively and reviewed the details afterwards a few more times, it appears to me to be quite clear that they basically contradict the teaching of the Church. There is no doubt, even for a moment, that the opinions and vision of Towiański are basically contrary to Catholic dogma and destroy Catholicism. Further, they destroy all Christianity in any meaning of this word.

A comparison of the teaching of Towiański with Catholic teaching shows that the first is full of Jewish errors. Looking at this comparative picture amazes [me] – how perfectly the illusions of Towiański contradict Christian teaching from beginning to end. Only now do I understand the depth of old Goerres' judgment of this matter when I spoke to him about it. He only said to me that it is Jewish. I do not need to speak about this

any more because we would descend to less meaningful details when here, in this picture, the very basis and foundation of Christianity are in question.

**Organizing a community of sisters.** Yesterday, on Ash Wednesday and the seventh anniversary of our first banding together, our sisters also united themselves in the Lord with a certain rule – Edward will write the details to you because I have no time for my sermon.

The journey of Father Peter to Rome. We sailed from the port of Genoa on November 26, 1843 in the evening. My dearest Jerome, we arrived here safe and sound, all four of us, because Sister Melania caught up to us in Aix. It was Friday, the 24<sup>th</sup> of the month, in the morning. She still spent the entire day under the roof of the Walers and, afterward, we parted with sorrow at the port of Marseilles on the 25<sup>th</sup> at 5 in the evening.

The group of sisters disperses. – The Brothers have reservations about Fr. Peter. After two years of trial, the projected matter was dropped. Mrs. Melania returned from Rome to Poznań and Miss Moszyńska entered Sacre Coeuer. Mrs. Julia alone remained.

**Fr. Peter's research on Gioberti.** From the time I uncovered Gioberti – a real discovery - I did not expect to find so much and now I am sorry that I did not read him before, a real loss. I am thinking of expounding in several articles the thought of Gioberti, as a most perfect expression of today's Catholic philosophy – It is a hammer for all evil and uniquely orthodox.

**Serious illness.** The decision of Father Peter to leave for Paris based on his opinion about himself. I know that I am a sinner, that I am useless, that I am poor, that I am an outcast; so that is why I should not act as if I see things clearly before God, and at evil say that it is good, and look at everything with folded

hands.

Otherwise I certainly would not have endured it: I was so humiliated – and if I was not dismissed from the Congregation, it is only because God did not permit it. But this came out to be a greater humiliation for me: because each day I was given to feel what a great grace I was rendered by being kept in the Congregation. Ah! The brothers were right in this only in a different way and they can chase me out at any moment.

The four year ordeal of Father Peter. This lasted four years (from 1845 to 1849). Ah, these four years are like a hard, heavy and dark dream in my life!

I became deathly sick and for three years was between life and death. This also helped me to bear everything. Ah, how good the Lord is; good in everything. There were moments when I expected to die that same day or tomorrow, the latest. All the more did I surrender myself to my Lord.

My illness in February, 1847. The state of my health did not permit me to complete this letter when I began it (on Feb. 15). But today I can tell you more about my health. My doctor is very satisfied with it and gives me hope. In spite of the inclement weather, I am gaining strength each day. This shows me that I was very sick. Really, during the past November and December I felt so weakened that I thought I had only a few months of life left. – Our merciful God has deigned to keep me alive, graciously giving me time to repent my numerous and serious sins. O that I would use His grace well!

**Fr. Peter's stay in Tunis.** I am here fifteen days (from Nov. 15, 1847). My health, thank God, continues to improve. I lack nothing. Father Bourgade is a real brother to me. Time passes pleasantly. I thank God for this quiet corner that He gave me to cry over my past sins and to await better times.

Today (May 30, 1848). I am leaving Marseilles in an hour for Paris by the stagecoach Messageries Nationales and I will be

with you in three days, Friday therefore, because I am going there directly. If it pleases you, wait for me at the stop, where I have hope that the gracious Lord will take me.

**Scholarly work against the thought of Towiański.** I was asked to write a refutation of the teachings of Towiański and this detained me for so long because it is not an easy thing. Especially since it had to be done quite extensively. I wrote it in Polish, in Latin, and in French, because it is to serve as material with which episcopal authority is to judge this teaching.

**Work on the Second Constitutions of the Congregation.** In 1849, the members of the General Council met in Paris. I arrived from Africa already in 1848 to take a homeopathic cure. This was the extent of almost the entire Congregation. In Rome only 3 or 4 students remained and one priest, the most upright Fr. Alfred Bentkowski, who was dying, and who died during that time.

**The complete rehabilitation of Fr. Peter through his participation in the redaction of the Rule of 1850.** Only then did I open my eyes and feel the greatness of my task and, at the same time, that Our Lord was at work in this. All four years of trials manifested themselves as a preparation for this act; without them and without the understanding and principles formed during that period, I would have been unable to do a similar thing. I immediately understood what I am to write. I had the whole thing in my head beforehand. And it was easy to insert in individual places, here and there, some excerpts from the projects entrusted to me, when they answered or expressed the thought that was to be expressed there – and in this way, to satisfy the authors, yet not abandon the recommendation given to me to form one whole from everything.

When I read my work after three weeks of work, all threw themselves around my neck, saying: Truly, Our Lord has helped

you. This time I was really rehabilitated. But really Jesus did it Himself.

**Roman Pastor.** Finally in 1852, things changed while Father Hube was in Paris. He had mercy on me – as he expressed it, and sent me from Paris to Rome. Here Father Kajsiwicz was the superior. In a short while, I established a good relationship with him that became even better. In this way, Jesus prepared my active entrance into service for Him in the Congregation to which He called me, for fulfilling His thought and the work with which He wanted to entrust me again.

**Second General Chapter.** Our sessions began on July 21 and concluded today, July 30, 1857. Most happily, Father Jerome was elected the main superior for 7 years according to the Rule. I was the president of the meeting. The details are in the minutes.

**Consultor of the Congregation of the Index.** On December 12, 1857, the Holy Father appointed me a consultor of the Holy Congregation of the Index. Today, I received the notice from the Secretariat of State.

**Stay in Ostende.** On August 29, 1858, I had my first sermon. The second – God permitting – I will have after tomorrow. Then again on Sunday and Wednesday.

But for that, I have many conferences with Constantine Górski and some of the young men. This makes me content.

**Journey through Berlin and Poznań to Żmudź.** If I were not dependent, I would feel obligated to go to see my sister Anna because I am certain that one of my talks with her would lead her to the Church, and that she would die peacefully, in God's grace. Since I cannot decide this myself, I am presenting this to you, my dear Father. Should I do this or not?

I last saw my sister on October 12, 1858 in, a Prussian village right on the border, in the home of the customs official who, together with his wife, extended great hospitality to me. When my sister entered, I saw a living picture of my mother before my eyes. O my God, o Jesus! Have mercy on that soul there and on this one here! – My brother, Michael, a Russian customs official, was together with us. – He did not permit my sister to go with me to Memel, fearing that she might enter the Catholic Church, and later he would lose his position. Poor man! He constantly said it's the same: Greek or Catholic.

**Journey through Great Poland and Silesia.** My dear Father [Kajsiewicz], I often see your old father with your mother. Both are well; completely well. The elder recalls his younger years and your mother is constantly in the pantry, in the kitchen; she manages the whole household. She has already taken care of my sewing needs and laundry a few times. Each day, without fail, they are at my Mass. Your mother even went to Confession and received Holy Communion. A noble person and I have great esteem for her.

I do not know if I have written that in Poznań I saw Sister Valerie Kajsiewicz of Gniezno, who was having her retreat there and returning home. A healthy, happy, pleasant, real Sister of Mercy.

On Friday, Christmas Eve, Father Fiecek arrived in Bytom with his carriage and took me to Piekary for the vigil – to Mr. Her, the Administrator – or as they call him here – the Director of the Piekary Properties, an 86 year old elder, the Canon's friend from the heart, who recites the Breviary each day and built a hospital, etc. On Christmas Day – with the exception of dinner – we were in church all day.

**Sisters of the Immaculate Conception.** December 8, 1859, a big feast for our sisters. With the knowledge of the

Cardinal /Vicar of Rome/ they put on the religious habit (white habit with white scapular, blue cincture and blue cloak). Besides this, Mother Josepha Karska and Sister Mary of the Resurrection (the former Emilia Steinhart) professed their vows, while Bernice (the former Natalie de Reully) and the extern Sister Stanislaus (Rose) – only made promises of vows. A year ago, Father Superior J. Kajsiewicz revised their rule based on ours. Mother Josepha has the name: Sister Joseph Mary of the Crucified Jesus.

**Publication of his work.** As to the publication of the “Our Father,” after thinking about it, I really see that it is only good to print it in Paris. I hope that Fr. Alexander Jelowicki will graciously help me with this and will agree to my second proposal, that is, for an honest octavo (printing format) with interlined spacing and good paper. In a word, so that the publication would be like it should.

**Considerable Roman work of Father Peter.** Do not complain about me – I am bogged down with work – unheard of! And I am writing this at night – and I am tired and already can barely see.

(On November 19, 1859) Fr. Peter sends the Biesiady Filozoficzne (Philosophical Banquets) to Kozmian. I am sending Kozmian the second half of the second Banquet. Please send it by tomorrow’s courier to Paris, so that they would send it from there. That will be faster. I addressed it in this way on the envelope.

**Decretum Laudis (Decree of Praise).** The juridical permission for the Congregation to continue its existence. We already have – thanks be to God – the long-awaited first recognition; and with this the favor that it confirms the vows clearly made and permits further ones after a Novitiate. Hence, the Novitiate, too. Thanks be to God!

Praise from the Congregation for the Community and its

rule. May the opinion given about us by the Congregation of Bishops and Religious – in its own time – not requested or asked for, - serve to reassure [us]. It was undoubtedly praise for the Rule itself and the manner in which it was written. Today, I read it as if something completely unfamiliar and I will admit that I could not pull my eyes away from reading it. I read it in one breath from beginning to end – and I was moved, edified, and in many places, as if carried away. I apply this even to the very manner of expression. And please believe that this was completely objective.

**Father Peter as a member of the Academy of the Catholic Religion.** For Father Alexander’s information, I am letting you know that I received a new honor: membership in the Academy of Catholic Religion – but this is not my fault, only that of Father Cirino, who is the Secretary of this Academy.

I had to remain here in Rome for a few days because I first have to write the content of my dissertation for the Academy – then talk with Father Chaillot, and still settle a few minor matters.

Work and presentation of the dissertation on Averroes. At the beginning of this month (July 1860), I wrote my dissertation for the Academy of Catholic Religion: “On Averroes according to Ernest Renan and the Value of Averroism.”

**Departure of Fr. Kajsiewicz to Bulgaria.** On July 5, 1862, Father Superior left for Constantinople and Bulgaria – He is to look at the place before we send someone there to the missions. Father Charles Kaczanowski, who is to go to the missions, is growing a beard and is changing his name to Ignatius because of Eastern requirements.

Father left for Constantinople last Sunday. He is to look Bulgaria over; he will be in Adrianople, certainly in Monastira, and in other places – to find the most suitable place to found our mission.

**Beginning of the General Chapter.** On May 22, 1864 in the evening, the beginning of the general meeting. I was called to give the Spiritual Exercises – three days. [First, we had Spiritual Exercises for three days. The Brothers, upon the motion of Father Jerome (who at this moment was no longer superior) chose me to be the preacher of these Exercises.] In 12 conferences I tried to summarize all the principles of the religious and apostolic life, as well as of the interior life – as understood to a perfect degree.

Presence of the Holy Spirit at the General Chapter. When at the first session we said the *Veni Creator*, I experienced a moment of some sort of unusual feeling, or image of the real presence of God the Holy Spirit, and I do not doubt that He surrounded and guided us the whole time with His special graces.

The successful course of the General Chapter of the Congregation in 1864 at Mentorella. With God's grace, our general meeting went very well.

**Through Paris to Galicia for the Polish College.** The difficult proposal to depart in the fall of 1864. There is a mention of my possible departure in Father Superior's letter to me and in the present one to Father Alexander. I admit that this does not suit me because it is already late in the year and I would reluctantly pull myself away from the work that I began here. You have to work individually with each of the new candidates. How many storms in a glass of water! You need vigilance and a certain delicateness in taking care of things. Our Lord clearly helps [me] with this – I would have the duty not to think about departure, if obedience did not obligate me to this.

I left for Paris from Rome the following day in the evening and arrived here Sunday morning. The first day, I was mainly at Eustace's /Jełowicki/ and at Mrs. Sobańska's – which was their due. Yesterday I was at Countess Rose Sapieha's with whom the Countess August Potocka lives. There I fulfilled the recommendation of Princess Sophie Odescalchi. But naturally I

could not get in. Lady Alexandra was not home. Lady Rose even sent word to the Ladislaus Branickis, but she also was not there. One of these days I am leaving for Cracow. Perhaps I will meet her there.

I arrived in Vienna on Thursday, September 8, and had the happiness to say a Mass on this festive day. I went with my things straight to the sacristy of the Polish Church (St. Rupert). After Mass I left the sacristy directly for the country to Mrs. Nowowiejska and I am here from yesterday until today. I rested and am preparing a statement that I want to hand to whom it will be most profitable – a statement about the matter of the Polish College for which I came here.

Mr. Meisenburg is under-secretary of state, in other words, vice-minister of foreign affairs. – I had my last talk with him today. Caesar is informed about the whole matter. – Mr. Meisenburg advised going straight to Lwów and starting the matter right from the top, that is, from Archbishop Francis Wierzhlejski. –

That is how matters fared in Vienna. Consistent with this, not waiting, I left directly for Lwow – the next day in the morning of September 17. Likewise, according to the advice of Mr. Meisenburg – who clarified for me that initiating action from the center of the Regency with the recommendation of the Archbishop and with the assurance that everything was cleared in Vienna – would avoid all difficulties. I have the letter of the Nuncio in my pocket. Therefore, everything is ready and – God willing – on Sunday morning, September 18, I will be in Lwow. A good reception by the Archbishop of Lwów. The next day I went to Obroszyna, the village of the Archbishop where he spends the summer – There I spent some time until evening. I gave the letter from the Nuncio and explained the entire state of affairs. He promised to provide for one at his expense. (We will try so that the Chapter would support the second.) He was very willing.

The most important thing, however, was my visit to

Archbishop Litwinowicz. I became convinced that he is a real bishop and that one can and should have a good and close relationship with him.

**Visit of Fr. Peter in Jazłowiec.** Taking care of the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception. Fr. Peter gives the sisters spiritual exercises insofar as they can be reconciled with their occupations. It is beautiful here in the home, in life, in souls. Our friends the Podhorskis and Nowowiejskis call it a heavenly paradise. It is like that. But I will write about this – God willing – near the end of my stay.

Itinerary through Przemyśl and Tarnów to Kraków. I am thinking of spending three days in Przemyśl; in Tarnów, two. But in Kraków I will probably have to stay longer. Dear Father, you can address my mail there in care of Bishop Letowski, ul. Kanonialna, where I am to live.

**Father Peter's preaching in Kraków.** Success of Father Peter as preacher in Kraków. At this time, as a result of many requests from various persons, Fr. Serwatowski came to invite me to preach at St. Peter's. I accepted the invitation for three sermons until next Sunday, January 8, 1865. I will have the first sermon already on New Year's Day in the evening during Vespers. I chose this hour because there is more free time then and there are no obstacles in the church itself, either with High Mass, or etc. You know, Father, it seems that of all the Kraków churches you can fit the most people into this church because it has the most comfortable arrangement. It is very similar to St. Ignatius in Rome, only a little narrower. It is also nice that Father Skarga preached in this church and that it is the same pulpit. Jesus clearly blessed me here. When dear Valerian was coming out, he called: Victory! May everything praise the Lord.

**Audience of Fr. Peter with the Holy Father after the**

**Journey to Poland.** I saw the Holy Father last Monday. He welcomed me graciously. I told him all about my journey. I added up the present and future promises [of funds]. I also told him that the house here is ready to be taken. And since Father Alexander let us know by telegram that such a sum is available for the asking, therefore, I said that the Bishops of Galicia are waiting only for the summons of the Holy Father in order to send their alumnae. The summons of the Holy Father will also facilitate their relations with the Government since based on this summons – they will only need to notify the Government that they are proceeding according to it – and not asking for permission.

**Nomination of Fr. Peter as liaison between the Papal Commission and the Polish Bishops.** I have already received the appointment that I wrote to you about – as liaison between the Papal Commission created for the founding of the Seminary and the Bishops and other persons. I received it only yesterday. Therefore, I still did not get down to work. But – with God’s help – I will get to work immediately.

**Father Peter, Rector of the Polish College in Rome.** Last Wednesday, the Pope really appointed me as Rector and added the grace that the Rector will always be chosen from our Congregation. Then the Rector will appoint the Vice-Rector and other workers of the Seminary. It is really as if the thing were given to our Congregation, even though *de jure* there is some kind of difference. The difference is in this that the Rector is appointed not by the Superior of the Congregation – (who can only propose him) – but by the Pope himself. This gives the Rector a more serious status, even though from another point of view, it makes him somewhat independent of the Superior. But this inconvenience will be substituted by the good will of the Rector, presupposing – as needed, that he will be a good religious. Thus, if the Superior would want to remove him from his position

(which he could not do juridically), in such a case, he himself would submit his resignation. Furthermore, the Rector himself will appoint the Vice-Rector and others, but will probably take them from nowhere else except the Congregation.

**House of the Polish College.** I was so busy that there was no time. I wrote the last time during the retreat I gave the seminarians. After the retreat, I had to formulate regulations for a daily schedule, and then an important and long work came to the Congregation of the Index and I am working on this already for three weeks. But I have already swum to the surface and in a few days I hope to finish it.

Since the day before yesterday I began working on a philosophy of history and I will now be involved in this one thing only until I finish it. I expect it to be ready around the holidays. Then I will get after the completion of the history of Poland. May Jesus help me to get it done on time. Then I will get after the rest, always with Him and for Him.

**Vacation work.** I am continuously in Genzano with the entire College. Here my work goes well. I wrote a more sublime view of the history of Poland at the request of Mother Marceline and have already sent it. It was quite an extensive work because it comprises 42 pages of minute and exact characters of the writing of Chauland (Br. Constantine). Only now has the magnificence of our history shown itself to me in all its light because I saw in detail the entire thought of God. I tell you that I was enraptured – not by our misery – but by the thought and action of God. We only know what to waste, especially at the end, but this did not harm the mercy of God and will not harm it. All the more is it clearer to me today that there will be a Poland. I now intend to edit more calmly and to prepare the work for printing, which I threw on paper in such a hurry while here in Genzano, because the matter was pressing. It seems to me that there will come a

bright moment when the question of Poland will not only be on the human table, but will be brought back again by God onto the loom of history.

A supernatural evaluation of history by Fr. Peter. Today I have a much lighter heart – or rather, grateful in the Lord that He permitted me to almost finish the entire history of Poland. I did not even expect it to come out so accurately and, I dare say, so beautifully and magnificently, because it is not my work but His. The entire picture came before my eyes only slowly, while I was writing and applying the general testament of history to events. I can even say that I had special light in a few points and, thus, I can say, ever more, that it is not my work but His.

**Work of Fr. Peter as a preacher.** Sermon of Fr. Peter for the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent. Sunday, that is yesterday, it was my turn to preach. Therefore, to be ready ahead of time, I got to work on the sermon that I was to have on Sunday on Thursday, so that I could still review it. And then I saw that I needed to re-do it completely and that took up my time until Saturday, and I even ended with a headache. I am lucky I had time to sleep myself out I over Saturday into Sunday, so I could preach the sermon without effort and exhaustion. That I did such a thorough revision and conclusion of this sermon was caused by the circumstances that it is one of the sermons that enters into the explanation of the Our Father. You know, I have ten sermons explaining the Our Father that I would want to have printed as soon as possible because I hope that God will bless them abundantly. But I do not have the time for their final revision and completion. Two were already printed in the Poznan Review (Przegląd Poznański). Now I am taking advantage of this year's preaching at St Claude's and since I am to preach twice, I resolved to complete two of these sermons, and that is why I occupied myself with the above. The next, that is, the second of these two, I am to have in only two weeks.

**Fr. Peter's and Fr. Kajsiewicz's retreats together in 1867.** I settled with Father Superior for us to give retreats together. He gave them in the college, I at Via Paolina. Everything went well. Thanks be to God,

Father Peter's retreat work. This month I gave four series of retreats. Three retreats in a row for three weeks to gentlemen and then today, to Father Czacki, nephew of Princess Odescalchi, in preparation for his sub-diaconate, diaconate and priesthood. His is a well-formed soul, but he did not know about that deeper interior relationship with Our Lord besides those instinctive movements. And a new world of real life opened up to him. – Thanks be to God. I hope that this retreat will be for dear Vladimir the gateway to enter the Kingdom of God, into the holy family completely dedicated to God that Our Lord formed among us.

**Literary figure.** Fr. Peter corrects poems. Four moments from the life of a Polish woman /Marina Skorzevska/ - a masterpiece and well-done. It is, as the French say, *une oeuvre magistrale*. The whole is, and so are the details. The entirety is elevating, the details beautiful. I corrected the poem somewhat in two or three places. I am speaking mainly about this masterpiece. I was sinking in the second poem, Lord! This could also be printed. I corrected the one that did not come out so well as to form in about ten places, but only as to verse construction.

**Task of reviewing the history of the Congregation.** This week, Father Superior gave me the assignment to review what is like a picture of the history of our Congregation that he wrote at someone's request. It is to be printed in some Journal dedicated to the general public. Since the man from the publisher demanded this from us, Father Superior did not refuse, surmising that maybe this is one of the means sent by the Providence of God that can serve to rectify public opinion about our Congregation.

With the permission of Father Superior, I had to re-do certain parts, and add others in this review, e.g., about the aims of the Congregation about which there was not even one word, while that is the most important thing. Then I had to add the entire history of the founding of the Seminary. The matter was urgent, so I did this putting other things aside. This took up my time until Thursday.

**Theological defense of the Mother of God by Fr. Peter.** Besides this, the big work in honor of the Blessed Mother, that is, in her defense, about which I wrote to you, will come out shortly. I will have to defend her – who would have expected that! – To defend her in her greatest privileges, in her most important mysteries but, by the same token, the most hidden that many theologians do not understand. And defend it, if I may say, before the very authority of the church, before her representatives! I have already written one work. The Blessed Mother helped me. I went down into the depths that were not clear to me before, and this work created an appropriate impression and result. But this is a great and long matter; and the second work weighs heavily on me. It is laborious, longer than the first. Therefore this will absorb me also. Commend this to Jesus and Mary with your whole soul. On the one hand, I thank you and, on the other, I beg and commend myself [to you].

**Fr. Peter's work as a consultor for the Index April 2, 1867.**

Today I finished and printed the big work for the Index that cost me 4 days and 2 nights of continual work (30 pages of print in *folio minore*) – in defense of the Blessed Virgin. Her glory. The whole time /I was/ unusually busy.

**Work of Fr. Peter for Roman Congregations.** Yesterday I finished that big work because it was the final deadline.

**Academic discourse of Fr. Peter about St. Peter in 1867.** In three weeks, that is on the 8<sup>th</sup> of next month, I am to read a paper at the public meeting of the Academy of the Catholic Religion that was imposed on me this year. For three years I have not had a paper at the Academy. This year the Academy designated all its papers in honor of St. Peter. There will be twelve. Eight or more have been read already. Mine is next to the last. But its content is most important because the Academy let me choose from the 12 papers, or rather, from the 12 designated topics. I was able to choose what seemed best to me. I took the subject: St. Peter as an author of civilization. I am to read this paper on August 8. But I have not yet written it; I have barely begun. Eight days ago, I wrote one sheet. From that time, not a word. Therefore I will have to devote all of my time to this.

Father Peter was forced to write his paper in four days. I had to write the dissertation in four days (Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday); I was in Rome on Tuesday. All of Wednesday I ran from Cardinal to Cardinal, etc. Finally on Thursday in the morning before 12, I finished my writing and had Mass at 12:00. But everything was done on time.

Presentation of the paper by Father Peter. Yesterday evening I read my paper. It went well. Thanks be to God!

The tiring days of preparing the paper. If Jesus will permit it, now I want to rest a few days because I am very tired and sleepy.

**Conversation and evaluation of the work of Fr. Maragon.** The conversation with Father John Hyacinth Maragon lasted all day. Father Hyacinth founded a congregation for men and a congregation for women in Constantinople.

**Fr. Semenenko's intention of authorship.** Because of the general council that was announced for the end of next year, a need to write at least one treatise about the relation of reason to

faith (about the Rationalists and Traditionalists). The question is unusually confused and I see that up till now no one has worked it out as it should be, for the lack of a key. What I have sometimes written during congregations found great acceptance and everything tells me that I have the solution in my hand. There would be other questions too. I am under certain pressure. Today, I offered myself to Jesus in a special way, so that He would forgive me for getting down to work so poorly and, in any case, for acting by myself, so that He alone would act in me.

**Audience with our Holy Father Blessed Pius IX.** Recently, I was with the Holy Father again, the second time this month. I introduced the Warsaw envoy from Fr. Zwoliński, administrator of the diocese, who sent a letter with the request to approve his administration. The Holy Father said to write back to him that he knows that he has a delegation from the lawful administrators of the diocese, whom Fr. Feliński, the real archbishop, left behind after he was gone. Because of this the Holy Father has nothing against it for him to continue to fulfill these duties.

**Preparing the report about the Congregation.** On July 29, 1867, I am writing for Father Superior on the state and history of the Congregation for the last two years that is to be submitted to the Congregation of Bishops and Religious. Yesterday, that is July 30, I concluded the report. Father Superior received it in the evening.

**Spiritual conversations of Fr. Peter.** Yesterday, i.e., September 10, 1867, a long talk with Father Superior, who arrived, completely alone, at Villa Cesarini. My Jesus, how long you work, how patiently and lovingly, in order to finally bring the results of Your love to souls. Now it seems to me that we appear to be in complete truth with dear Father Superior but you, Jesus,

remain between us and do everything Yourself.

**New journey of Fr. Peter to France and Galicia.** From January 9 to July 1868, the departure of Semenenko to Paris and Galicia.

The necessity to check correspondence in the Propagation of the Faith in Lyons. The necessity of going to France to obtain help for Adrianople. I am beginning the business of our mission. My Father, God inspired you once when you said to me that this matter demands my departure to France. We would have waited this year and the next and would not have had anything. Neither the Cardinal nor anyone supporting us wrote to the Propagation of the Faith. This was some kind of solemn omission, or misunderstanding, when the Cardinal assured us, or when we understood that he assured us, about recommending our mission to Adrianople and, all the more, about the answer received that they will take this recommendation into account. There was no recommendation or answer about taking this into account.

**The lack of appropriate information from the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith.** I spent about two hours with the Secretary of the Propaganda in Lyons. Jesus made him very gracious to me because he is usually rough. Together with other officials called for this, we looked through all the correspondence several times

**The lecture of Fr. Peter concludes his work with the Visitation Sisters in Versailles.** I was at the Visitandines in Versailles for three days and during this time I gave them two conferences daily. My dear Father, this is not a small matter that lacks form; but everything can be done with God's grace. I feel sorry for this beautiful material. Father A. was completely mistaken in guiding them. I am not telling him this, only maybe from afar, because how can it help? Really, he somewhat understands the true spirit, but only from one aspect, and that is,

mechanically —and he does not understand the application nor the going down to the foundations, to spiritual sources, to life-giving causes. He understands everything superficially, as I said, mechanically. Therefore, no lectures or communication will help.

**From a signed letter of the Servant of God Fr. Peter Semenenko.** Before God, before you leave on the road. In going, you have to take money with yourself, not only to arrive in Rome, but if the need arises, that it would be enough to return.

It would be very useful if you, dear Sir, would write beforehand and would send me your resume in which you would describe your entire life, mentioning your parents, upbringing, education, experiences, etc. with special attention to the beginning and development of your vocation to the service of God as a priest or brother. I ask for such a description and am waiting for you to send it.

That you did not pass your examination of maturity is an unpleasant circumstance, but it is not an obstacle.

So much as a response to your letter, my dear Sir; and now I await your response.

The Lord Jesus with us.

In His love, devotedly yours,  
Fr. Peter Semenenko

**Retreat given by Fr. Peter in Jazlowiec.** How good it is here, orderly, beautiful, and God-like. It is hard to express. I am now giving a retreat to eight sisters, who on the Feast of St. Joseph, will profess vows or first promises, or will receive the habit.

**Talks with Governor Goluchowski about establishing the Congregation in Galicia.** The Congregation does not need government approval in Galicia. You do not even have to ask the

government to approve or accept our Congregation into the country, as long as you do not need government funds. Furthermore, not advertising or coming in with noise. If we will be in twos or threes by some church, we do not need any declaration. Where there will be a larger group, [the government] will declare, as for every group of manufacturers, etc. that they live together, let us say, to conduct a school, a boarding school, etc.

**Fr. Peter's pastoral work.** During the first week after my arrival /in Cracow/, I had conferences for the Felicians and the Visitation nuns. There were five or six for the first, as well as the second, which took up very much time.

During the second week, I had public sermons at the Church of Our Lady – for which they begged me. There were four, but since I had to prepare them carefully, the second week was completely taken up.

Finally I used the third week for visits and for collecting alms for the Roman house. This is not going quickly. However, I collected about 500 fl. already. Earlier I had sent 3000 francs. Now I will be able to send the fourth thousand.

Itinerary from Vienna to Wrocław and Poznań. I am leaving for Wrocław and Poznań in a minute and am making use of this moment. I hope to be in Paris before [the feast of] St. Peter and in Rome around July 8.

It is already after 12 and tomorrow morning I am leaving for Berlin and Paris.

**Fr. Peter's audience with the Holy Father after the journey.** August 8, 1868, an audience with the Holy Father. I came for it from Genzano. I presented the result of my journey. My relationship with the Administrator of Galicia (Count Goluchowski). A result of this – assurance in Galicia about the collection for the Seminary and permission from the bishops and

government for the collections. Our settling down in Galicia. – Praise of Goluchowski, At his personal request, presenting him and his entire family to the Holy Father – I also said that he offered Nuncio Faidnelli his house as a residence and that I told the Nuncio about this in Vienna. Then I presented the Peter's Pence collected this winter and spring in Cracow – 2720 fr. – in the name of Mrs. Sophie Wodzicka and the wife of General Skrzynecki – as a memorial and asking for a blessing. The Holy Father signed off and this became the receipt. The Holy Father spoke about Austria and Hungary. Then I had to tell the long history of the marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Becke (he is the Austro-Hungarian minister of finances; she is Miss Chamiec from home). The Holy Father was inclined to introduce this matter before the Inquisition. Finally about accepting Poles into the Zouaves. It appears that he will give instructions to accept them upon our recommendation.

**Conversations with the youth of the Congregation.** My dearest Father, everything here is now going methodically. It is already five days since Father Valerian arrived. I spoke individually and long with several of ours during walks on which I take them; namely, with Zbyszewski, Fr. Stakien, with Kalinka, with Henry (Ochocki). Slowly, God willing, I will speak with all of them.

**Retreat given by Fr. Peter in Genzano in 1868.** This year I am thinking of giving a retreat in Genzano to the College and Novitiate together. This will save me a tremendous amount of work. In Rome, I would have to give two retreats one after another for lack of space. – For this reason, the College will probably stay here until October 15 – and it will be more pleasant for the students themselves – because at least they will have fresh air.

**Foreigners with a vocation maintain a good spirit in the Congregation.** They support others as a duty, not only because of good will. As I wrote to you, dearest Father, one of them is the dean at Via Paolina and the second will be one at Vicolo del Mortaro and I can say that he already is because he spends a half day there. Coming out of the morning class, he does not go to Via Paolina but goes for dinner to St. Claude's. He returns to the novitiate only after the evening lesson. I assure you that they perform their duties with zeal even though there is no need to give assurance.

The members of the Congregation claimed rightly that the Congregation will never be rich. God unfailingly wants us to be in order. We, again, cannot say that we are in order. Therefore, I also admit to an incomplete order, therefore, to disorder, but I maintain only one thing: that material want is not necessarily a punishment for disorder. On the contrary, it may be and is a blessing. Thus, it was very pleasant for me when a few days ago, while speaking in a threesome about the needs of the Congregation (I think we were talking, about arranging the library) one of the two of us, either Father Charles or I, uttered these words: "When the Congregation will be rich," Father Roch Trimarchi interrupted the conversation calling out: I hope that our Congregation will never be like that! I am quoting this for our common edification.

**The work of Father Peter-the educator in philosophy.** Jesus blessed [me]: because I not only expounded to them my key to philosophy separately, but following St. Thomas, using as a handbook as I said the Compendium composed by Roux-Lavergne, went through the whole of logic and even ontology according to the scholastic method, so that they were prepared to attend major theology. But when I conferred with Father Julian, I became convinced that it is better for them to attend philosophy classes for one more year, arranging things, however, so that during this one year they could complete the second and third

year of philosophy, that is: theodicy, psychology and ethics, as well as the Jus Gentium (Law of Nations). According to the class schedule at the Roman College, by leaving out mathematics, you can reconcile the purely philosophical classes of the second and third course. Father Feliński showed me that with their having such capable heads, it would be sad to deprive them at the beginning of that mass of information that these studies will bring them and later, of that proficiency that they would directly and immediately obtain for their theology classes I think it, would permit them to find themselves at an advantage in public disputes, in writing about these things, etc.

**Father Peter's Urgent Work for the Congregation of the Index.** In addition to other very urgent things, work from the Congregation of the Index piled up on me. The session was to be on the 7<sup>th</sup>, that is, yesterday, and it really was held. But I had to sit up all night from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 7<sup>th</sup> working. Only at 5 in the morning could I lay down to rest for a few hours. At 7:30 I had Mass and by 9, I was already at the session. I was amply rewarded for that. Yesterday, the same matter that had not given me peace in Jazłowiec, as you still remember well, and for which I hastened with my return, about which I had so many fears, concluded favorably against all my expectations. The same ones, who previously voted against, today [voted] for. At least, some of them, numerous enough to switch the result! (This change was accomplished by the right hand of the Most High! And for this thanks be to God!

**Eulogy after the death of Capt. Korzeniowski.** There was something similar, and even worse, ten days ago when I wrote the funeral eulogy for our dear Captain Onofrio Korzeniowski. The eulogy, as a eulogy, was colossal. I began to write it only on the vigil because Father Charles Kaczanowski of necessity set the service for the eighth day after the death. Besides, he had a reason

and one could not postpone it. I wrote something during the day but there wasn't a complete fourth part. When I sat down again to work at 5:00 in the evening, I got up from my place only at 6 in the morning, the next day – that is, I worked 13 consecutive hours. After that, I slept until 9, then had Mass, and at 11:00 I began reading the eulogy. Reading it rather quickly I finished at 12:30. In spite of that, even though, naturally, I was tired, the next [day] I felt completely well. This proves how this system of not being usually tired serves in every extraordinary case when, in the meantime, the same case hitting a tired person can be fatal to him. (Attention reader!)

**Father Peter's ventures into journalism.** Articles in defense of the Congregation. On June 7, 1869 we wrote a public act in the name of the Congregation, signed in French by the superior, and sent to the following publications: "L'Univers" and "Le Monde" in Paris; and in Italian to the journals: "L'Unita Cattolica" and "L'Armonia." We sent this same act in Polish on June 9 to "Czas," and to the "Dziennik Poznański," "Gazeta Narodowa" and "Dziennik Lwowski". I also sent a similar copy yesterday to "Czas".

**Father Peter's work on the infallibility of the Pope.** The Bishop of Orleans Dupanloup's work against the infallibility of the Pope was the reason for Father Peter's work. The Bishop of Orleans, a special benefactor of our seminary, recently published a book against the infallibility of the Pope. It contains the strongest thing that could be said and together with this, the dignity of the author gives this pronouncement a special meaning. He sent me copy of his book by mail. This was way before yesterday. Yesterday before Mass the thought came to me that I should respond to the book. During Mass, I commended the whole matter to Our Lord. The whole response came to mind, the entire manner of expounding the matter fully and forcefully, for

that matter, in connection with my early understandings; but I was also inspired to present the entire matter to the unconditional decision of Father Superior. I did this yesterday. Father grasped the matter with a certain zeal and Father Jełowicki and Father Charles Kaczanowski, that is, the Council of the Congregation, also; and I took this as a command rather than as a permission to do it. As a result, I have to put aside all other work for a few weeks, and maybe for more than a few weeks.

On November 22, 1869 the Council decided that I am to respond to Fr. Dupanloup, Bishop of Orleans, in regard to his writing against the infallibility of the pope; i.e., the work: “Quid Papa...”

July 12, 1870. I wrote today’s date on a treatise that I began to print at the Propaganda under the title; “Quid Papa et quid Episcopatus ex aeterna ac divina ratione et quae eorum partes in Ecclesiae infallibili magisterio” – the Pope and Bishop from eternal and divine arguments and their part in the infallible teaching of the church – pertaining to the question that is to be decided these days by the Vatican Council.

**Proposal for Father Peter’s new journey from Rome to France.** Itinerary for Father Peter’s journey to France (in July 1869). My journey to Paris was decided already ten days ago on the Vigil of Saints Peter and Paul, and, in spite of a sincere desire to tell you about it, while in Rome, I did not find even a moment of time to satisfy this need. Yesterday I left Rome in the morning. Today I arrived in Milan in the morning and had Mass. Taking advantage of this occasion, I toured the cathedral that I saw for the first time in my life because I am in Milan for the first time. Today in the evening I am moving onward to Paris where I hope to arrive, God willing, on Sunday at 6 in the morning.

**In La Salette.** In a few hours I am leaving Paris, going straight to Notre Dame de La Salette.

September 19. Yesterday I arrived on the La Salette

mountain, the place of the apparition of the /Weeping/ Blessed Virgin.

The local bishop from Grenoble, Msgr. De Genouilhac, had a sermon in the morning; I had the sermon in the evening.

**Father Peter's return to Rome and conducting two series of retreats.** I barely arrived in Rome on September 30, Father Superior's feast day, when I went to Mentorella to give the Italian retreat to our brothers and, returning from there, I gave the Polish retreat on Via Paolina. These ended on the Vigil of All Saints. It seems to me that Our Lord blessed them very much.

**Father Peter's sermon about the Pope in the church of St. Claude.** On March 6, 1870, the first sermon this year at St. Claude's – about the Pope. I am to have a series of sermons on this topic.

**Concern for the Polish delegation in Rome.** Father Peter was forced during the month of June 1870 to assist the Polish Delegations.

A telegram was received from Galicia that George Lubomirski is coming at the head of the Galician delegation for which we are waiting. It will be a quite imposing delegation. They brought about 290,000 signatures from the area of Posen; they say that from Galicia they will also bring more than 100,000. This is "something" that we can show.

I am actively involved with this delegation because they came to me. I even had to do new Latin translations (ad rem) because those they brought from Posen were not in Latin, even though they were in Latin.

**A new journey abroad** - from Rome through Vienna, Kraków, Tarnów, Lwów, Jazłowiec, Przemyśl, Tarnów, Kraków, Vienna to Rome – from September 15 to December 6, 1871.

Father Superior left me as the Administrator of the Congregation with all the rights and duties belonging to him. All the members of the Congregation should be officially informed. Father Superior left me the appropriate letters prepared by himself. It was left to me to send them out.

He leaves me the governance of the Congregation with full authority. It is a very important moment for me, and even for the Congregation. It seems to me that this happened providentially. If God gives life and health, I see ahead of me about six months when Our Lord places the Congregation in my hands. O that I would take care of it better than in 1865 and 1866!

**Father Peter's participation in protests of the Rectors of Roman Colleges.** Father Peter served as translator during the protests of the rectors. I have much to do with the body of rectors because the rectors formed a body. Almost all the protests printed in the name of the rectors are my redactions. The same with the addresses to the Pope that were not printed. The body of rectors achieved important status in the eyes of the Italian government and diplomatic corps.

Father Peter unexpectedly spoke to the Holy Father on the Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul, 1871. On the Feast of St. Peter, I had the happiness to speak to the Holy Father in the name of all the foreign colleges gathered there in the great Hall of Consistories. There were about 400 students. It was a festive gathering. St. Peter brought me a surprise for my birthday. I spoke because neither the older rectors nor the dean were prepared to speak, while I had a speech in my pocket that I threw down on paper in the morning after Mass before I went for the audience. The audience had been called that morning unexpectedly and there had been no time beforehand to agree upon an address.

**Participation in the Chapter of 1871.** As to this last [chapter], we settled that it will begin on the Feast of St. John,

December 27, and as our Rule tells us, with a three day retreat. I have been invited to give this retreat. I think that tomorrow and after tomorrow I will draw apart completely and have my own retreat as a preparation for the other.

On January 2, the second session of the Chapter. Father Alexander is chosen vice-president and Father Valerian the second secretary.

Then Father Superior read his report of the last 10 years. It was modest and friendly. We have grown in size considerably. Then there were 15 priests; today there are 32. Then there were 36 members; today there are 80. This growth is from God.

**Rectorate of Father Peter.** On February 26, 1873, after the death of Father Kajsiewicz, the Fathers in Rome elected Father Peter as Rector of the Congregation. After Father Alexander's arrival in Rome (Monday, March 3), I was appointed as Rector of the Congregation by the Council until the appointment of the new Father General at the Chapter that, according to the Constitutions, was to gather on Saints Peter and Paul. Father Peter makes new appointments in the Roman house. In the house I removed Fr. Stephen from administration and transferred him to the College as Vice-Rector; I made Father Julian Rector of the house at St. Claude's – leaving the novitiate with him; according to the Constitutions, Father Leon became procurator for temporal matters.

Father Leon Zbyszewski was co-opted as a member of the General Council. Because of the death of Father Charles Kобрzyński, we were to add at least one member to the Council temporarily, as foreseen in the Constitutions, and I am coming to you, Father Alexander, with this matter. I know that you will agree with this and will agree as to the person because in the present state of affairs, there is only one person: Father Leon. Please, for the sake of formality, just write to me about this

I gave Father Julian the entire house at Saint Claude's and

I communicate very often with him. Our most loving Lord gives great graces to this Father to guide young people and, now, he got after the brothers very well.

**General Chapter of 1873.** The introductory retreat before the General Chapter. Today, July 1, 1873, the introductory retreat before the Chapter began.

Today, July 6, 1873, the retreat is ending.

Proceedings of the General Chapter of 1873. July 9, 1873. Feast of the Miracles of the Blessed Virgin Mary. My election as Superior General of the Congregation.

Confirmation of the election of the new general of the Congregation at an audience with the Holy Father. We had just concluded the election at about 10:00 in the morning. We said to ourselves: Let us go to the Pope immediately; everything turned out so well that this will also come out well. This, was the argument, especially, of Father Valerian Przewłocki. And besides, today in Rome we celebrate the Feast of the Miracles of the BVM (la fete des prodiges de la S.V.). She will help us even in this. And everything went even better than if we had had a set audience.

When the Holy Father appeared, all 9 of us were kneeling in a row (there were only 7 that had the right to vote but in addition, there were still 2 delegates without a vote – Father Valerian Kalinka from the Roman house and Father Adolph Bakanowski from the American). The Holy Father came directly to me and, with great goodness, said a few words with blessings. Holding his hand and kissing it, I began to speak and first asked for a blessing for the Congregation that it would be entirely for the Church, entirely for the glory of God; next, for a blessing for myself that I would be faithful to the grace of God until death. The Holy Father grasped the meaning of my request immediately and praised it and blessed it not once, but several times. When the Holy Father was walking away from me to the others, I rose and

walking with him, introduced all of the Fathers to him, and he had a kind word for each one. Father Valerian's face was all lit up as in ecstasy. And we all felt comforted.

After the audience with the Holy Father we went to Saint Peter's to offer him our homage. After our return, when recreation ended, there was an announcement of the [election] of the General (about whom no one knew up till then) and of the confirmation by the Pope. The „Te Deum” in church.

July 20, 1873, the closing of the Chapter with today's 12<sup>th</sup> session.

### **Father Peter, liaison for the Holy See in Polish matters.**

A visit to Cardinal Antonelli at 10:00 in the morning on August 10, 1873 and handing him a very important document received from Petersburg. It is a proposal to completely destroy the Catholic Church through a progressive separation from Rome. It was given to the Government already several years ago (1868-69) by a few evil Catholics of the nobility in the Minsk province.

I found out a few days later that this document made a very great impression on the cardinal.

**Father Peter's nomination as a consultor of the Holy Office.** Today, December 29, 1873, I was appointed by the Holy Father as a consultor of the Holy Office (or Inquisition, and the present Congregation for the Teaching of the Faith).

**Pedagogical Meetings in Subiaco in 1874.** A few weeks ago, Father Wronowski came from Adrianople. A week ago, when I was going to Subiaco, I took him with me together with Father Julian Feliński. Father Stephen Pawlicki was there; and I brought Father Paul Smolikowski from Mentorella. And the five of us had a pedagogical meeting that lasted four whole days – mornings and evenings – and we came to a complete understanding as to the manner of conducting the school and

seminary. I am grateful to God for that because it is a foundation for the future. We understand each other well, especially as to the content and method of education. Father Stephen was a big help. God gave him the grace to be moved to the depths with the need for Christian education, as well as an excellent understanding of in what it consists. I see clearly that God sent him to our Congregation for this purpose. This is something for which we can thank God.

**Father Peter's work for the Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith.** One of the reasons, and the main one why I did not write immediately, is the same as the reason which brought me here to Subiaco. I am involvrd in an important matter, work entrusted to me by Propaganda that has already taken up about a month of time. I had to put aside almost everything else in order to do it. First, it is important because it was entrusted to me by all the Cardinals, who assembled for the meeting of the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda, even though I am not a consultor of this Congregation. Hence, all the more is it extraordinary and all the more must I respond to this. This is an external reason. The internal reason is the weight of the matter itself. It is a review by the Council of Romanian Bishops (Uniate) in Transylvania, held two years ago, and which is about twice as large as the Council of Zamość. This Council is to be considered as the completion of the Zamość Council and is to constitute a quasi-dogmatic rule and code of church law for the Uniates. Almost all of theology and canon law enter into it. You can imagine the work and how difficult it is to pull oneself away from it once you sit down to it. Thank God, I have already overcome the greatest difficulties, even though I have concluded only half of the work. But God willing, the second half that remains will progress more easily.

It was almost as if church legislation did not exist in the East. There is none that is legitimate, approved – this will be as if

the first Code, I say Code in this sense. I had to do separate studies; I especially examined the great work of Cardinal Pitra, a work that is striking for its learning and accuracy in presenting the matter. I had to create a new world around myself and for myself and, thank God, I have already gotten out of the introduction. Now I have to enter into the very body of the thing. You can imagine how this work occupied me and, all the more, occupies me now because they are rushing me so that I would complete it, even though, from another point of view, they are very understanding. I also commend this to your prayer.

**Father Peter, defender of the Polish Uniates.** On April 1, 1874, the audience with the Pope – with Father Bojarski, a Greek Uniate from the Chełmno Diocese. We presented three points:

- 1) That the Holy See would issue a decree clarifying that the Synod of Zamość is confirmed.
- 2) That it would issue some encouragement and give some comfort to the Uniates from the diocese of Chełmno, who are suffering for the faith.
- 3) That the Archbishop of Lwów (Greek Uniate) would provide the means of subsistence for priests exiled from there.

**Father Peter, member of the Arcadian Academy.** The Arcadian Academy, which made me a member not too long ago, will celebrate on March 26, 1874 the solemn public proceeding in honor of St. Thomas (600 years since his death), as well as the opening of its library.

**Father Peter on a pilgrimage to Lourdes.** There was no set date by which I had to be in Rome; the first meeting of the Holy Office isn't until November 14, after St. Martin's Day. However, it would be good and appropriate if I would be there

before the 7<sup>th</sup>. It is opportune for me to leave Hyeres on the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> of November, the latest. Here in Lourdes I feel very well and the weather is nice. Today I spent the entire morning in church and in the grotto. I am praying especially for the Congregation because it is already time for the Blessed Virgin to put us on our feet. I hope for the best.

Lourdes works miracles in hearts and has an effect on the soul. In addition, the Blessed Virgin was gracious enough throughout the entire week to give [me] the most beautiful weather, which added to the attraction of my stay. Today it rained but it was light, nice, spring-like, so it does not interfere. Today I bathed in the pool for the first time. I am sorry I did not have the courage to do it from the beginning, but now I intend to repeat this more than once.

**Retreat in Rome in October 1875 directed by Father Peter.** This evening, with the help of God, I am beginning a retreat in Polish for ours at Saint Claude's.

**Audience with the Holy Father on November 19, 1875.** The audience with the Holy Father together with all the generals of orders.

**Diligence of Father Peter.** I have not felt so capable of work for a long time and I have not worked so much [as now]. And what is more, I now have a schedule. I rise regularly at 6:00. Rarely do I prolong going to bed beyond 10:30, sometimes by 11:00. But I hope that I will come to order with this also. I work all day. Ah, God grant that I may already arrive at complete order in my work.

Regular house conferences of Father Peter. At home things remained somewhat as of old with this difference – that I have begun to give weekly conferences, but twice a week: once in Polish, the other time, in German.

Father Peter's pastoral activity. On January 10, 1876, I preached the Great Sermon for the Feast of the Three Kings that is held annually in the Church of S. Andrea della Valle.

Devotions in the Church of St. Claude. On February 13, 1876, Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament during which the Tantum ergo, composed by Father Ruchniewicz, was sung.

**Father Peter's journey through Belgium in 1876.** I arrived here in Brussels yesterday, which was Friday afternoon. I left Paris on Tuesday and spent the night in Amiens with Father De Brandt. Wednesday, I went with him to Mr. and Mrs. Du Liege at Chateau Conde, where I was given 300 francs. Thursday in Lille, where I met with the rector of the University. I arrived here yesterday in the afternoon. I saw the Nuncio this morning and had a long conversation, very enlightening, and making me hopeful. He invited me for dinner tomorrow. And in the meantime, I wrote to Count de Robiano, who is to be the head of the Committee, and I am waiting for an answer where I am to see him (because he is out in the country) in order to arrange with him how I am to begin and how I am to conduct this matter.

**Father Peter's dangerous accident.** July 21, 1876. The visit with Count de Robiano in Rumillies.

Coming down from the first floor at 12:30 for dinner on very slippery stairs (as usual in Belgium), I almost slipped and fell on my face at the very top of the stairs and it could have been, without doubt, a fatal accident. But by the grace of God I kept my balance. I proceeded down the stairs with great caution but about 4 or 5 steps before the end (it seems like without any reason) I fell backwards with my whole weight. It is good that I fell evenly and was able to pull out my hand in time from the banister. Therefore, even though I slipped to the very bottom, I did not fracture anything; only I banged myself up severely. While falling, I was wondering why I was falling, since I was walking so carefully –

and I could not help but see the business of the devil in this.

**Fundraising for the Polish Seminary in Rome.** The state of the collected funds and the daily difficulty. Thanks be to God, I already have more than 13,000 francs, and more than 16,000 francs has been promised. But that is still too little with which to appear before the Pope. Besides, the source is inexhaustible; only drawing from it is difficult. I will tell you about it when I see you. If only this [collecting] could somehow take the place of purgatory.

The continual movement of Father Peter as he solicited funds in Belgium. During the last 10 days I went from Brussels to Liege, then to Louvain, again to Brussels, then to Boussu, later again to Brussels, and finally to Burges. By the grace of God, I leave here tomorrow. I am in continual motion.

The fundraising is going slowly, but I have not yet begun in earnest in Brussels. With God's help, I am beginning the visits tomorrow. I made preparations for a week. I had to send out about 300 letters, so I had to prepare them. Please pray that this last attempt will turn out well.

The Catholic Circle of the city is inviting me to Coutray to have a conference about the Church in Poland and for fundraising. So I have to go there one of these days. And maybe elsewhere.

That is why I will have to stay in Belgium for about 15 days yet.

Today I began soliciting in Brussels and collected five francs during the entire morning! And what is stranger, this one offering came from Count L. and his wife.

**Father Peter's small accident.** Today I conducted the First Friday Devotions in church (1877). An accident happened because the bottom of my alb caught fire while I was holding the Blessed Sacrament in my hands to carry it in procession. I was enveloped in fire and smoke. I was saved without suffering harm,

outside of the lace on the alb. Deo gratias!

**Father Peter's second journey in France.** Since I was unable to leave before the first, now I cannot leave Rome before the Polish audience on June 6, and so I will be able to leave on the 7<sup>th</sup>, the earliest. Mrs. Obniska invited me to her home in Milan where I will be, with the help of God, around the 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup>. Maybe I will also stop in to see the Visitation Sisters in Turin. From there my trip to Paris will still take a few days. From here I will probably be journeying to Paris for at least a week. It will be hard to arrive in Paris before the 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup>.

I had a very good trip. Here in Paris I found more business to take care of than I expected. Here I still found Father Leon Zbyszewski, who shared his observations with me. The day before yesterday he left directly for Algiers, where he should quickly settle matters and return to Rome. Everyone says that he accomplished much good here, but that he gave no sermons. But he did not want to stay here in Paris and does not want it.

**Father Peter in Holland, in Utrecht.** July 13. Departure from the Hague at 10:00 in the morning. Arrival in Utrecht at 11:25.

I went immediately to the archbishop, who received me very well. After reading the letter from Cardinal Monaco, he immediately gave me a letter of recommendation for soliciting funds. He himself gave me 200 Dutch florins (420 francs), also invited me for dinner when I will be returning.

The failure of fund-raising in Holland. On the other hand, my fundraising in Holland was not successful because here the conditions are such that it is impossible for me to fulfill them. Almost everybody gives 1 florin (2 francs); seldom does anyone give 2.5 florin (5 francs), and that by way of exception; and those who are the richest (the ones who would give from 100 to 500 francs in Belgium), here give 10 florins (20 fr.). Really, they all

give. At this rate I would collect something in the end, but in Amsterdam alone I would have to walk 6 weeks, six or more hours per day, to collect a few thousand florins. So it does not seem likely. I am returning to Belgium and there, as well as in northern France with the help of Catholic Circles, I expect to collect something more respectable in the same 6 weeks that I would have spent in Amsterdam. I would hope to finish with this drudgery before returning to Paris in the middle of September,

**Participation in religious celebrations in Boussu, Belgium on September 5.** Giving the first habits to two sisters whose intention it is to be called Sisters of the Resurrection of Our Lord.. – The first was Francoise Bel in the world, who in the Congregation of St. Joseph of the Apparition bore the name Sister Marie of the Heart of Jesus. The second, Jeanne Moy, who in the Congregation mentioned above, was Sister Sidonie, and now Marie of the Immaculate Conception.

**Father Peter's preaching.** On January 9, 1878, the annual sermon on the Feast of the Three Kings – in Polish – in the Church of San Andrea della Valle in Rome.

**Father Peter's philosophical conversations.** January 15, 1878. A day at the vineyard. A philosophical banquet for four with Fathers: Valerian Przewłocki, Leon Zbyszewski and Stefan Pawlicki.

**Participation of Father Peter in the funeral ceremonies of Pius IX.** February 9, 1878, in the morning, I was in the Vatican and with heartfelt feelings I kissed both feet of Pius IX, who was lying in one of the Vatican rooms. His body was already embalmed. I prayed by the body for several minutes with the words of the prayer in my soul that you gave me, Lord! You alone truly move souls! Blessed is he who feels in You! May it not be

for short moments but always and constantly!

**First audience of Father Peter with Leo XIII.** On April 6, 1878, my first audience with Leo XIII. – I presented a picture of our Congregation – a picture of the Polish College – quite extensively; and finally, I handed him a supplication concerning St. Josaphat Kuncewicz that he be placed on the universal calendar. I was delighted with this first meeting.

**Preparation for the Canonization of St. Josephat.** – Father Peter Semenko hands in the acts concerning the canonization of St. Josephat. You already know that I myself handed to the Holy Father the petition for the cause of St. Josephat. I gave to the Secretary of Rites the entire bulk of petitions, the book you left me, and a copy of my petition to the Pope.

**Audience of the Polish Delegation with Leo XIII.** On April 7, 1878, there was a general audience of the Polish Delegation with Leo XIII. Our Congregation and the College were also present.

**Father Peter's occupation with the Grace of God in Subiaco.** As for me, my stay in Subiaco serves me well, thank God. I began my work on the day of Pentecost because before that I did not have any books, or my papers, or even paper [to write on]. By a strange coincidence, I did not begin with my philosophical work, but with the question of Grace. It seems to me that during these four or five days, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, I solved a question of Grace in a scholarly manner, in a way that was adequate and successful. Up until now, I had not done this in a scholarly way, *ex professo*, and I did this, as you can already surmise with the help of my same Key to all human knowledge. On the one hand, a definition of grace as a power

(power according to my academic understanding) and, on the other, a real distinction in human beings between nature and person, put everything in their place and satisfied all difficulties, whether of the Thomists against the Congruists, or Congruists against the Thomists. At least that is how it appears to me, and to Father John Hempel also.

I continue to be in Subiaco and, thanks be to God, am involved with my big treatise that is moving forward but not as voluminously as I would wish. Please pray for this intention, and may the children also pray. I send kind greetings to the children and affectionately bless them. I wish them well!

**Father Peter's extensive work.** I returned from Subiaco at the beginning of last month and had (and have up until now) so much to do after returning to the city (Rome) that I can barely keep up with everything. That is why I did not write and today I barely have a few moments of time to write to you a few words that are most needed.

**Father Peter gives a retreat to two candidates.** Quite simply, I did not have a moment of time because I now have a special assignment. It is enough to say that for these two weeks, in addition to my usual duties, I had to give retreats, one after the other, to two candidates, who are entering our Congregation.

**The Rule of the Sisters from Boussu.** This summer, I was also busy writing the Rule and Constitutions for the Sisters in Boussu, or rather for adapting our Rule for them, and I have almost finished half of the work. It seems to me that God blessed me in no small way in this work and the Sisters from Boussu also thank me for it. Father Laidslaus Witkowski goes there and everything, thank God, is going well. They are asking me to come to them for the purpose of finally establishing themselves and I would desire this very much. But winter is already at hand

especially in those parts. This tells me to be careful. On the other hand, I have much to do in Rome at the moment and will have much to do in the winter. If God gives me life and health, who knows if I will not set out for Belgium in the spring! Everything is in God's hands and I hope that in His time He will clearly show me what I ought to do. As for you, so for me, the same advice in everything.

**Taking care of the Roman novitiate.** In addition, I will also tell you that by the grace of God we have a large novitiate (there are eight novices and we are expecting two or three more). I am very concerned about personally keeping an personal eye on them, and, besides this, God is clearly blessing me in my influence on all the Fathers. I feel an obligation to make use of this and, by God's grace, to bring our Congregation to that order and unity and real religious life that Jesus demands from us, and ever more perfectly. – My dearest, all of this speaks to my conscience, so that, even if my health would permit it, I would not venture to leave Rome at this time, since I feel that at the moment my place is here.

**Retreat in Subiaco.** Thank God, my health is better. With God's help, on October 12 in the evening, I am beginning a retreat for the collegiates here in Subiaco.

**Festive dinner in Rome in Matejko's honor.** On December 15 there was a dinner for Jan Matejko at the Polish College in Rome. Peter Dobrzański was with him. During the toast, I had a long address in his honor; I am enclosing a written copy. Besides the College, Father Leon Zbyszewski and Father Eustachius Skrochowski were at the dinner. Everything went very well.

**Father Peter's return to health.** Thanks be to God, this

proves to you that my health is much better at the moment. But a month ago I would not have been able to give such a retreat. In general, I was sick this whole year and only now, by the grace of God, my strength is coming back. The main cause of discomfort was that I could not sleep. Now, thank God, I can sleep again.

**Plans for founding a house of the Congregation in Dźwiniaczka in Eastern Galicia in 1879.** Things arranged themselves in such a fashion that, in principle, everything is already completed for our settling in Galicia. We are taking Dźwiniaczka and, in the beginning, two of us will go there, one of whom will be you, my dear Father Leon Zbyszewski, if nothing happens contrary to this. There we will have a public church, capable of holding about 300 persons and we will, in agreement with the good pastor three miles away from us, take care of parish services in the part of the parish surrounding us – and, in addition, as a seed for a future boarding school, we will take care of educating the young 9 year old son of Mrs. Koziebrodzka. For this we will receive 500 Rhenish and, not only living quarters, but also, upkeep from the mother of Mrs. Kozieradzka, who lives there in Dźwiniaczka permanently, and by upkeep, it is understood that it will be separate for us. It seems to me that all of this is unusually to our advantage.

**Audience with the Austrian Emperor on Nov. 17, 1879.** I am enclosing a copy of the description of my audience with the Austrian Emperor that I wrote up after the audience during a few days of rest that I spent at the Charles Raczyńskis in Beregenz and sent from there to our Fathers in Rome. It is only a short summary of the audience.

**Father Peter's audience with Leo XIII.** I will still add that on December 20, 1879 I had a very important audience with the Holy Father. It lasted half an hour. As a result of this

audience, Cardinal Nina (with whom I also discussed everything) was to immediately send a telegram the next day to Cardinal Jacobini in Vienna to convey to the Austrian Emperor in the name of the Holy Father that it would be a real pleasure for His Holiness (*un vero piacere*) if the Emperor would accept our Congregation into his domain. Thus Jesus Himself is guiding everything in this matter.

**Introductory Spiritual Exercises before the General Chapter.** On May 18, 1880 in the evening, I began with the Fathers, in the name of the Lord, the spiritual exercises that introduced the Chapter. The following [Fathers] are participating: Fr. Thomas Brzeska, Fr. Julian Feliński, Fr. Eugene Funcken, Fr. Valerian Przewłocki, Fr. Leon Zbyszewski and Fr. Charles Grabowski; Fr. John Hempel is participating as the secretary of the future chapter.

I give three conferences a day: at 10:00 in the morning, 3:00 and 6:00 in the afternoon. They last an hour.

**Acquiring a house for the Congregation.** The purchase of the house in Lwów was providential. Even as I told Father Kalinka to rent rather than buy a house, once he bought it, however, I consider this providential. As if to confirm that it is providential, 3 days later, I received 9,000 Rhenish gold pieces for the purpose of paying the purchase price (but only for that and nothing else)

**Work for the Slavic pilgrimage in Rome.** Work on a panegyric to honor Saints Cyril and Methodius. On June 10, 1881, I worked all day at home. In the evening I began the panegyric in honor of Saints Cyril and Methodius.

The Slavic pilgrimage cannot be postponed in any way for the simple reason that July 5 is the day designated in the calendar for the future annual celebration of Saints Cyril and Methodius.

All the more, we cannot pass over this day this year since it is the first time this feast will be celebrated in the Universal Church. Therefore, all your reasons supporting postponement, even the most eloquent, hit against a merciless barrier placed once and for all by liturgical purpose.

**Father Peter's insomnia in July, 1881 in Rome.** I received your letter of August 1 today, here in Loretto. The really extraordinary effort I had to make to study the matter – for more than a month - and then to write it up, and even to say it, tired me much in the given circumstances, so that I will already not say anything about the elaborations and preparations for printing that followed. This resulted in that I could not sleep at all from the beginning of July and I became progressively weaker. I arrived here in Loretto on July 22 and was good for nothing. Only after 5 or 6 days do I feel better and I was already getting ready to write to you when your letter arrived.

I came to Loretto very, very exhausted, so for the entire first week here, like during the last days in Rome, I was absolutely good for nothing. Now, thank God, I am physically better, but I have responsibilities to the Congregation that are overdue. They are both urgent and important so I do not have too much time.

You know that while I was in Rome – beginning with the Slavic Feasts – I began to be bothered with insomnia that became worse. The trip to Loretto did not help and the two week stay there. I was almost completely without sleep and because of that, progressively weaker and I could barely stand on my feet. I left Italy (August 6 to 8) when it was 32 degrees. The next day in Moscow it was 14-15; in Paris there were days when the temperature fell to 10. The first and second night I slept for 7 to 8 hours in a row and endured the changes in temperature quite well, and my strength returned in a few days. Not until the day of my departure for Belgium – I caught a cold and when I arrived here, I

had to go to bed. From the next day on I did not leave my bed and lay in it for five days. The last few [days] were for the sake of caution. Now I feel well again. But the main thing is that sleep has returned. Thanks be to God

**Information from the trip to Paris.** I am writing as long as I have time. I arrived here (in Paris) on August 7. Today I am here two weeks. I had so much to do that I had to stay here for a long time.

I am leaving from here for Amiens on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of the month and I will surely be in Boussu on the 26<sup>th</sup>. There I will probably stay at least until September 15. It came out this way and I place everything in the hands of our dearest Lord. Whatever happens depends on him.

**From Brussels to Kraków.** At 3:00, departure from Brussels. A very beautiful day. Mrs. Celine Borzęcka with her daughter Hedwig and Father Leon Zbyszewski took me to the train.

September 27, 1880. From Brussels at 6:15 in the morning. At night at 11:00 – I rode through Berlin.

September 28. In the morning I rode through Wrocław. At 3:00 in Kraków. There was no one at the train station. I went to the Carmelites on Łobzowska, and obtaining some information, I proceeded to Mrs. Felicia Bogusz on Sławkowska 263 and stopped in. Later, the whole evening at Father Kalinka's – I talked with him about all our matters.

**Father Peter gives a retreat during the fall of 1881 in Rome.** Next week I will be giving a retreat to those entering the Novitiate – there are four of them – and to those who are ending their Novitiate and entering the Alumniate – there are also four of them. Up until now the novitiate is at Saint Claude's – until the alumni return.

**Improvement in Father Peter's health.** Thank God, my health is better every day. What weakened me was that I exerted myself too much in writing that address. I did not sleep too well for a few nights and once sleep was interrupted, it did not return. Now it is beginning to come back.

**Member of the Society of Political Economy.** On January 12, 1882, the first meeting that I attended of the Academy of Political Economy under the presidency of Msgr. Dominic Jacobini, Archbishop of Idea (in partibus infidelium). In addition to the president, the following were present: Bishop Mermilod, Bishop La Fleche from Canada, young Count Soderini, Fr. Corneli SJ. (A second Jesuit, Father Quirini, professor of moral theology, was missing. Father Corneli is a professor of Sacred Scripture), finally our Father Pawlicki and I. The discussion was serious and proceeded in an orderly fashion.

**Conviction about the miracle of the existence of the Bulgarian mission.** Here I am beginning to look at the matter of missions and I am becoming more and more convinced that it is a divine miracle if that mission has not fallen apart up till now. – And maybe what will surprise you more, this mission is not threatened so much financially, even though this is not so great, as from a moral and spiritual aspect, especially spiritual. It seems that spiritually it is like the houses which surround it, without a foundation and without cement. But in spite of this, a real wonder! It appears that there is some invisible cement and that a hidden foundation exists somewhere. I see the great grace of God but, at the same time, a great need to take care of the evil. Therefore I pray for grace and divine assistance and ask you to pray.

**My audience with the Holy Father Leo XIII, on**

**Tuesday evening, May 23, 1882.** Feast of the Protection of Saint Joseph; Vigil of Our Lady Help of Christians. Directly through Msgr. Cretoni, I asked the Holy Father for a private audience to say farewell before my departure for Austria and Turkey. The Holy Father asked me to come on one of the next evenings of my choice, when he will be going for a walk in the Vatican Gardens.

A week before my departure from Rome – i.e., on May 23 – I had an audience with the Holy Father but it was a very extraordinary audience. The Holy Father took me with himself to the Vatican Gardens and there he walked with me alone for about an hour. I wrote down the conversation scrupulously. I will give it to you to read.

**Father Peter's journey eastward.** I arrived so late in Vienna because I stayed 14 days in Agram and 2 days with Bishop Strassmayer in Djakovar. I am very satisfied with that stay. A national center, scholarly and purely and deeply Catholic, that was founded in Agram – is for us an exceptionally important phenomenon, both for Poland (because they deeply sympathize with us) and for the Congregation.

The arrival of Father Peter in Vienna. I arrived here before yesterday – on Tuesday. Not until Monday am I to have an audience with the Emperor. I have been authorized by the Holy Father to thank the Emperor in the Holy Father's name for the help promised from the lottery fund and to convey assurance that the Holy Father was pleased with this. With such a commission from the Holy Father there is no need to prepare a memorandum.

I saw the emperor the day before yesterday and had a good audience. I was even given a certain distinction because although I came last, sixtieth something, I was called and let in first. – How things have changed here! The Lord rules over all things. May he be praised in everything!

The cordial meeting of Father Peter with Nuncio Vannutelli. I saw the Nuncio for a few hours right after my

arrival. I knew – about his position here. Even the Pope spoke to me about him. I know Vannutelli for several years and I know who he is. But he received me very cordially. He threw himself into my arms because he is an old acquaintance – and he certainly did it sincerely.

Itinerary of Father Peter to Adrianople. July 26. I left Kraków the day before yesterday – Monday, July 24, in order to sail this morning down the Danube to Constantinople. This journey – first to Turkey, and only later to Lwów on the return from there - was decided after consulting with Father Kalinka, who came to me in Kraków and stayed with me three days. The main reason for the change was that my visit to Lwów will be more appropriate and profitable if it takes place in the month of September – because of local circumstances.

**Need of the Bulgarian house.** Extreme poverty in the Bulgarian house. On the way I collected 1200 francs for them, which I gave them upon arrival and which went into immediate needs in a flash. Next I gave them 500francs – from my travel money – restricting my resources to what was absolutely necessary – and that was disbursed almost like nothing. Because the bank does not make loans to them anymore (for which I am pleased) for the beginning of the new school year they had to borrow money here in Constantinople because there it is impossible. And after they made efforts for a long time, the Delegate had mercy on them and lent them 2000 francs. But even these were disbursed without fail because the supplies were already waiting for them. It won't be long before they have no money and no way to borrow.

Retreat conferences of Father Peter. I thought I would .make it but, in the meantime, I was unable to because I had to give two conferences.

I began to give the conferences, that is, the Spiritual Exercises, that will last a week. I am happy that I could get started

on this. This will prove to you that my strength has again returned.

**Translation of the rule of the sisters from Boussu.** This morning I arrived safely in Mohacz and am notifying you of this in my first free moment. – Leaving Vienna it was cloudy; bad weather and cold. It soon also began to rain. Once on the great Danube, after finishing my breviary, I immediately got to work on translating into Polish the Rule of the Sisters and yesterday I successfully translated four pages. Today I have not yet translated anything, even though it is already eight in the evening. I hope that I will still be able to translate a few pages. I am eager to finish this translation as quickly as possible.

By the grace of God, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> (i.e.. three days ago in the morning), I arrived safely in Constantinople. The entire journey went favorably: I lost only one Mass. I had a private cabin for the night everywhere, except on the sea from Warna. Besides, the sea was calm. In a few words, a good trip. Here, however, I met with such heat that I could not already sleep the first night, and up till now, still cannot. I hope that sleep will come this night because the air is somewhat cooler.

**Constantine Semenenko's stay in Constantinople.** The next day, after sending out the letter which I spoke about, i.e., the one dated September 16, my brother, who arrived a week earlier than I had calculated, stood before me unexpectedly in San Stefano. We both erred in giving dates to one another – In the beginning, he was late with his departure; and then I calculated his arrival for a still later date. He arrived on the 16<sup>th</sup>. He came alone. And he left on September 26. We spent 10 days together. What can I tell you about him and his stay; to you who were interested in our meeting to such a high degree? Just a few words, because the rest I will tell you, God willing, when I see you - Therefore, in a few words I will say: that my brother, the most

upright of people, a real phenomenon of decency in the world in which he lives, but as to the faith, alas! He even lost the sense of it; he does not have a true, living faith. He even carried over his uprightness to the domain of faith, or rather to the lack of faith. He does not deny anything and, in this way, accepts God and Christ and even the sacraments. And if you take the infallibility of the Pope, he does not deny it – but he also does not believe in any of this. And if we go logically to the very bottom of things, he does not believe in God because he does not pray to Him. – With God he stands as if God did not exist for him. In a few words, this is all.

Father Peter accompanied his brother to Constantinople. I accompanied my brother from S. Stefano. After 51 years of not seeing him, he had come to me from the Caucasus and remained 10 days. An hour ago, at 8:00 in the morning, I took him to the ship.

**Continuation of the journey to Lwow.** I left Adrianople on the 8<sup>th</sup> of this month, and on the 10<sup>th</sup> in the evening to Warna by boat. The last days of very beautiful weather. The Black Sea was bright and smooth like a mirror. The rest of the journey was also excellent and I arrived in Lwów on the 13<sup>th</sup> in the evening.

The state of the Lwów house as found by Father Peter. I found the house here in an excellent state and in truly religious order. There are a considerable number of good brothers here.

**Father Peter's illness near the end of the journey.** On the very day of my arrival in Rome, I caught a cold that morning in Florence and my throat hurt. It was no big thing, but during the first few days, I would get tired while talking and walking (then among other things I wrote a letter to Jerzmanowska giving a sign about myself and asking for news from you) and all of this harmed me and I had to stay in bed for a few days. I got up before yesterday. As these things transpired so quickly, one after the

other; my time and my head and the rest of me were very busy. In addition, I was restrained in writing by the uncertainty as to where I should write.

Father Peter's return to Rome, November 20, 1882. Deo gratias! By the grace of God, I returned to Rome today, on the vigil of the Presentation of the Blessed Mother after a journey lasting a half year. I brought a postulant with me.

**Father Peter's four conferences.** November 7, 1883. Today I had four conferences. The first at 10:30 in the morning in the Novitiate. The second at 11:30 in the morning for the students in the College. The third at the Sisters of the Resurrection, more or less from 3:30 to 5:30. The fourth, in our Alumniat at St. Claude's – an exposition of the Rule from 6:15 to 7:00. Thanks be to God!

**Conferences on the Passion in 1883.** November 16, 1883. I spent all day working on the continuation of the sermons on the Passion that I wanted to begin preaching this coming Sunday.

**Father Peter's academic lectures about Renan.** The Academy instructed Father Peter to give a cycle of lectures on Renan. The Academy of the Catholic Religion unanimously, and with them the Holy Father with his word, desired and pressured me to have a series of conferences against Renan, as a continuation of what Father Pawlicki had begun last year. It seemed that I could not refuse in any way. I took on myself the least number possible, only four conferences. The first is to be on April 29. The others during May. That is why I am here: and every week I move away for three days to the vineyard.

**Coeducation of Poles and White Russians in the boarding school.** I will begin from the most important matter:

the idea of educating Poles and White Russians together. This thought is truly a „light from heaven.” Even when reflecting on this more deeply you have to say: „the finger of God is in this,” because that will be a real instrument of God and most effective for a spiritual and moral fusion and union of both groups that comprise Poland.

**Father Peter reviews the literary work of Father Paul Smolikowski.** I read his last writings about Authority, the East, etc. I felt this was my obligation, just like I consider reading yours an obligation. Let this convince Father Paul that if I did not read his manuscripts before, now I changed my system, or rule. If I read what is printed, I can read what is written by hand, because I would have to read them anyway after they were printed. So let him not be afraid to send them to me; and I prefer, in case of need, to give him advice or a warning earlier than correcting after the printing or admonishing him at an inopportune time. Ask him to send me „About the merits of our Holy Fathers in psychology.” I am concerned about this. And as soon as possible. And I hope that his first attempt will encourage him to others.

**Intention of an Italian Retreat.** I would wish to give a retreat in Italian for our young men who are gathered here.

**Monsignor Żyliński's retreat in the Roman house.** Here everything is going well. Monsignor Żylinski from Wilno made a retreat at our place. He was accepted back into the Church, and he wet his return with copious tears. Only he already has a weak head and, God grant, that he does not do something stupid, but something stupid of the eccentric kind.

**Welcoming in Rome the hikers from Kraków.** I was so busy all day that I did not have even a moment of free time. Among other things I was at the train station at 4:00 to welcome

Jan Matejko, Stanisław Tarnowski, and Potocki.

**The printing of „To the Desert with the Lord” by Father Peter.** Gratitude of Father Peter for the printing of his „To the Desert with the Lord”. I correct the rest with silence and I thank You for the publication, as well as for the wishes for my feast day. Who proofread the print? It is corrected very well; I was even surprised. The only misfortune is that a whole poem is omitted; it is clear that it was missing also in the text from which it was printed.

**Communal life of the Sisters of the Resurrection in Rome.** ... Mrs. Celine Borzęcka with her sisters (seven in all) rented the second floor of the Polish College.– By a strange coincidence, and as if especially for them– the Marquis Guiccioli who had the right to the lease until death – gave it up.

**The many tasks of Father Peter in Rome.** The three days of Easter were so busy for me that I had to stay up until 12 o’clock and even later in order to catch up with what I could not finish during the day,

And today 12 o’clock is approaching, and it is only now that I am able to write a few words to you.

**Father Peter’s new Sermons on the Passion.** March 16, 1884. My first sermon this year is on the Scourging.

March 21, 1884. I locked myself in for today and tomorrow to write the sermon for the day after tomorrow.

**Father Peter’s chronic lack of time for correspondence.** I do not have the heart to be even able to say: mea culpa! I feel so guilty. Maybe this will appease you and quiet you down for the future that, in spite of so many appearances and even proofs of my incorrigibility, I have a strong hope that I will

improve. And I say nothing about the sincere resolution on which this hope rests. However, I would prefer to consider it weak and only count on the grace of God and I will try harder to depend on this resolution.

**Father Peter's Projects concerning the Bulgarian mission in Malko Tirnovo.** As to Malko Tirnovo – this step seems to me to be an undertaking straight from God because I am of the opinion that there we can found a beautiful and rich center of faith, a place to disseminate it, where we will be able to act freely, and no one will interfere with our business. This makes me happy and I praise it once more, and I hope that we will not lack people now. God will send them to us.

**Situation of the Congregation as to personnel.** The paternal justice of Father Peter in managing the personnel of the Congregation. And in the meantime, be convinced that I desire to do whatever is possible with purpose and heart so that the Bulgarian Mission would achieve a flourishing state as much as possible. Only I also wish the same for Lwow. And – as a Father, or rather, as a Mother – I must truly balance in my hand the scale on both sides. Trust in the Lord that He will give me the appropriate grace and beg Him for this.

**July 8, 1884.** More than a half hour audience with the Holy Father before my departure for France. There was a long conversation about Mrs. De Gerard. He gave me all faculties henceforth for her, as well as a blessing. There was talk about our institute of sisters in Bordeaux under the direction of Father Manceau. He gave me a blessing and faculties for him.

There was talk about establishing a new novitiate for us in Kraków and about our institute in Lwów also. In response to my question, the Holy Father declared that he considers it a good thing that Poles would mingle with Ruthenians in this institute. I

asked the question because of Ruthenian voices that were clamoring for something similar.

**Father Peter's departure from Rome for France.** Tasks assigned to Father Peter by the Holy Father. I left Rome on July 10 and rode straight to Toulouse where I had one matter to take care of – at the request of the Holy Father.

This matter held me up near Toulouse for two weeks, and then still a few more days to complete business in Bordeaux.

**Sojourn in Toulouse.** By the grace of God I arrived yesterday, that is, three days after leaving Rome, healthy and whole; even without great fatigue, only that I cannot sleep too well these last few days. God grant that this may pass. I spent today with the Carmelites and tomorrow, God willing, I am going to the Fathers in Mondonville, where I am to remain for at least one week.

I left from Notre Dame d'Alet on Monday, July 28, after having taken care of everything with God's grace in the best way. There, divine grace was with me in everything. The parting was very cordial.

**Father Peter's conferences for the sisters at rue d'Ulm in Paris.** I could not write even a word for 5 days. I went there 4 days in a row and had 4 conferences. I cannot say if the conferences took the convent by storm. They are a very beautiful group of souls and these souls seemed to be prepared to hear these truths. Mother General who had heard much from me while still in Rome is enraptured and began to pressure me to open a French branch of our Congregation. Please pray – I responded – that if Jesus would send us French candidates; and if one happens to come along, please send him to us.

**Sojourn in Bossu, Belgium at the sisters'.** I arrived here

on Monday, September 1. Dear Father Ladislaus Witkowski accompanied me here and stayed 24 hours and was very happy with the reception we received. It was really cordial; and 11 days have already passed and after several clarifications, the relationship is mutually growing stronger.

**Father Peter's fall in the Ghlin castle.** I was leaving here before yesterday for Ghlin through Mons to visit Mr. Charles Perin, a former professor of law in Louvain, my great friend. I bade Mother Marie farewell and was coming down the stairs when I don't know how, I slipped and, as if thrown, fell on my head from the height of 5 or 6 stairs. I could have stayed there in that position. But meanwhile, I stood up healthy and whole, even without bruises, with barely a scratch on my left hand and even without blood. I walked to the station, arrived healthy in Ghlin. There, after having pleasantly spent 24 hours well, the next day, that is before yesterday, I returned to Boussu. Today, nothing would remind me of this accident if I had not purposely, because of this letter, reminded myself of it. Such strange behavior did not damage my bones. On the one hand it shows Divine Providence, yet on the other, not being a natural thing, it seems to be a clear proof of the fury of our enemy. May he be shamed in all things!

**Father Peter's plans for further travel.** My travel plans appear as follows: God willing, I am leaving from here tomorrow, Wednesday morning at 9:40, that is, on September 24. I am to be in Vienna on Friday at 10:00 in the morning and will remain there for Saturday and Sunday; and on Monday, September 29, I have the intention to leave for Kraków. I think I will be there more or less to October 10, and from this day until the 20<sup>th</sup> or 25<sup>th</sup> of this month I will live in our house in Lwów. I wish to be in Rome on around November 1.

I myself marvel at my health and I thank God for this grace which is not small. I ride during the night, I walk in the rain

and in cooler weather and nothing is harming me. True, there is one thing that I do watch, that is, not to take away time from sleep. But I clearly feel that Our Lord is watching over me in everything. May He be glorified because of this and with this!

I am still here in Lwów. During these last days I had retreat conferences for the Fathers – and besides this, I already had two Sunday sermons in our chapel and I still have two more: for All Saints Day and for the following Sunday. After this last sermon, i.e., on Sunday, I am leaving for Kraków, God willing, on the night train. And please, don't be surprised that by night train – because it is the most comfortable – and I also rode on this train two years ago.

Sojourn in Kraków. Already two weeks since I arrived in Kraków. I rested for three days because the night journey in an over-heated car did not help me, and coming here I caught a cold. It passed quickly, with God's help, in three days. Then for a week I gave a retreat to the novices. And besides that I made and returned many visits.

**Volume of Father Peter's work.** I can say that I do not know if I ever worked so much in my life in such a short time as here this winter. There were weeks when I did not leave the house; there were days when I sat at my work for fourteen hours in a row (from 11:00 before noon until 1:00 after midnight) – The merciful Lord Himself watched carefully over my health. Throughout the winter I did not have even the slightest cold or headache. And today, thank God, I do not feel any greater fatigue. May this glorify God.

**Conversations at the Roman printer about future publications.** I announced myself and made arrangements with the printer that is beginning to work on our Constitutions right after the New Year (1885). In the meantime, I will write a report and hope to let you know before the end of January that both

things will be presented to the Congregation. It happened, by a decree of Providence, that Msgr. Schiaffino, my good acquaintance and friend from the Holy Office, became the Secretary of the Congregation of Bishops and Religious in place of Msgr. Masolti (today a Cardinal). This will facilitate our matter tremendously.

The work of Father Peter on the printing of the Constitutions of the Congregation and on the Votum for the Holy Office. March 31, 1885. The second correction of our Constitutions.

April 2, 1885. The correction of my Votum for the Holy Office sent to the Vatican printer.

**Purchase of a generalate in Rome.** On January 19, 1885 in the evening, a meeting of the council during which we reviewed the plan of the house on Via San Sebastianello. Unanimous opinion that it is worthwhile buying this house and that the appropriate steps should be taken.

Money sent for the Roman house permit us to acquire ownership by purchase. Mr. Hebert, a Frenchman, is sending the money for the first installment of the purchase price and I expect that we will assume ownership of it during the first days of November.

**Promise of an offering for the Church next to the new generalate in Rome.** Here in Lwów something else happened. Mrs. Sobańska is here. Our Lord disposed her very well toward us and continues to do so. Yesterday, on the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Easter, after Mass in our chapel, we had a conversation during which she told me that if we buy the house in Rome on Monte Pincio, then she is giving us right away, when we need it, 35,000 rubles, that is, about 90,000 francs for the building of the church. She is designating the funds for that exclusive purpose. For me, this is the first indication of the Will of God, that we should buy this

house using the loan offered by Mr. Hebert. That loan without the amount for the Church would be like a torso without a head. But since God is sending us the head, then we certainly have to hope that He will attach the torso to it later

**Purchase of property for the novitiate in Kraków.** The main part of the day passed in setting with Father Leon the conditions for the purchase of two very beautiful properties that we obtained for the novitiate, because we have become convinced that it is far more profitable to build anew.

The matter was brought up and taken care of on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Easter, the Feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph. I felt his care in a special way. One thought makes me happy. It is that we will build a church in this place, and this church, the first to be our own, we will dedicate to the Resurrection of Our Lord.

**Plan of Father Peter's return to Lwów in 1885.** Father Peter was invited with sermons for the month of May 1885 to the cathedral in Lwów. You may know that I am to preach in the cathedral in Lwów during the month of May. The Canons invited me. I have to be there already at the end of April.

Preparation of sermons for Lwów by Father Peter. During Lent of 1885, he „conscientiously prepared” sermons that he was to have in May in Lwów and they „took up all his time.” This pertained to his „Credo.”

I arrived safely on April 27. I already began my sermons on the 30<sup>th</sup>. Yesterday I gave my 6<sup>th</sup> sermon; I have to give 10 in all. I have a great and exceptional audience because the entire cathedral, capable of fitting 5 to 6 thousand people, is filled, with men and the local intelligentsia especially, and many priests and university students come. The sermons are going well; my voice is sufficient; I feel the explicit help of God and His blessing.

The plan to print the Lwów sermons. It was nothing to preach a sermon; it is a greater job to prepare it for printing. I

worked on this all month and I did not even finish a half. Yet I am beginning the printing. Today I gave the publisher the first issue of sermons.

Printing of the Sermons on the Creed in Kraków. I have to say that I had to sit until 3 in the morning to be able to send the manuscripts to the printer and even so, I was not always successful because the printing went too fast for me.

**Proposal of a trip to the Holy Land.** Ignatius Domejko is in Rome and he is coaxing me to go with him to the Holy Land this year. I would also stop at Adrianople; it is understood that not until summer because I must be in Lwów for all of May.

Departure from Lwów of Father Peter with Domejko and Brother Bernard. I left with Mr. Domejko and Brother Bernard who had completed his novitiate in Kraków and is returning to Adrianople to study theology, and with Father Evaristus Gajewski from Poznań, who once thought of entering our Community, later entered the Jesuits and left, and for almost 30 years is a secular priest and always our friend. We left as a foursome from Lwów on September 1 at 6 in the morning.

The next day we were at Bucharest at 5 in the morning, at 4 in the evening at Warna, and after 48 hours of traveling, also at 5 A.M., we sailed with our ship into the Bosphorus Strait. We had to cast anchor at its beginning because the Turkish government placed a 4 day quarantine on ships entering this way.

**Father Peter in Adrianople.** On the 10<sup>th</sup> we arrived in Adrianople where I remained until the 16<sup>th</sup>. This visit was specially blessed by God. I found the mission in quite good order and, what is most important, that there is an uplifting movement in the entire mission: on the one hand, evil is diminishing; on the other, good is multiplying. There is less of what is negative – the positive is clearer.

**Continuing trip to Palestine.** One cannot ever experience more beautiful, magnificent and pleasant sailing than the navigation we are experiencing at the moment. We embarked at Constantinople last Thursday and, by God's grace, are sailing amidst an unchangeable harmony of all the elements.

Father Peter celebrated Mass in Bethlehem and on the Garden of Olives. I will add that I was in Bethlehem and had Mass there and that it was one of the most beautiful days of my life.

Father Peter's description of Calvary and the Holy Sepulcher. I am in Jerusalem already for four days and have celebrated four Masses in the Basilica of the Passion, Death, Sepulcher and Resurrection of Our Lord – because these are all found in one church.

The first Mass was at the altar closest to the opening into which the Holy Cross was driven. The altar is dedicated to the Sorrowful Mother. On one side is the opening, the place on which the Cross stood; on the other side of the altar is the marked spot on which the Cross lay when Our Lord was nailed to it, and further on, the spot from which the Blessed Mother observed the terrible nailing.

The second Mass was in the very cave of the tomb to which there is an opening, not higher than half the height of a person and into which not more than three people can fit. The tomb takes up half of the cave, the second [half] is free for those entering. A scaffolding that is in the form of an altar is placed for the duration of the Mass. It is removed right after the celebration. Father Raphael served at my Mass. In this way the Congregation of the Resurrection was totally represented near the altar of the Resurrection by a priest and a deacon. On the wall over the tomb is a vividly painted picture of the Savior in silver and gold in the Greek manner, but creating a great impression.

Today, the third Mass was again on Calvary. Calvary is about 50 steps from the tomb and is much higher (from 40 to 50

feet). Today after Mass I lay for the first time over the opening into which the Holy Cross was driven – here the Savior was dying; here the Blessed Mother in suffering gave birth to us; here Saint John, and in his person and with him all of us, became children of Jesus and Mary. This place draws me and bends me to itself. I will add that behind the opening in which the Cross was placed, there is a dark background that is the wall of the church. There raised on high and also in rich silver and gold, are first, the cross with the figure of the Savior on it in the middle, and then on each side, the appropriate figures of Mary and John. The body of the Savior and faces of the Blessed Mother and Beloved Disciple are in very vivid colors and pleasantly colored.

**Father Peter's prayer at the place of the Holy Cross.**

The access to the opening into which the cross was nailed is free and that is why I could pray while bending over it. I can tell you in all truth before the Lord that I prayed long and in a special manner for you. I had your entire life before me and, at the same time, before the Lord, and I commended everything to Him, yes everything. All the needs of your soul presented themselves to me and it seems to me that I presented them to God with a good heart and, at the same time, with trust. O my God! How infinite are our needs, especially when God calls you to unending graces. The Lord also gave me great compassion for you and great love, your love.

**Postponement of the general chapter to 1887.** I am notifying you before all that at council we decided that there can be no Chapter this year because of the purchase and founding of a new house and the necessary moving that will take a few months. The obstacles are such that one can make judgments about them except here on location. Next year, with God's help, everything will be in good order and the chapter will take place in better conditions.

To this it must be added that I will have to leave Rome in 1886 as soon as possible precisely for the business of paying off the house. I hope that God will help me.

**Father Peter's plans for the future general chapter.** The matter of uniting with the priests from Notre Dame d'Alet was to be discussed at the general chapter. This would have been and it seems to be really a providential way of forming the French branch of the Congregation. We will decide this matter, God willing, at the Chapter and, in the meantime, thanking we pray and praying we thank with good hope that this is the work of God.

We were also to decide at the general chapter about the spiritual union with the Reparatrix Sisters. And our relationship with the Congregation of the Sisters of l'Adoration Reparatrix (their spiritual union with us) with whom I am living in Paris, and who as if felt us out, searched and found us, also seems to be the work of God. This does not hinder our relationships with other Congregations, and which ones will come closest to us is God's matter. And we will be deciding at the chapter about all of this.

**Consecration of Bishop John Puzyna.** On March 25, 1886 in the church of the Polish college, the consecration of Father Puzyna as bishop. Cardinal Ledóchowski consecrated him; assistants – Father Sembratowicz, the senior, former metropolitan of Lwów, and Father Schonborn, archbishop of Prague (Lech, Czech and Rus). I could not be at this ceremony because I was in bed and received Holy Communion in bed today.

**Transferring the mortgage of the Roman generalate to the Congregation.** Bureaucratic difficulties with the transferring of the new property to the Congregation. There were many difficulties with the purchase, especially with the prerequisites needed, documents, etc., and then with writing the contract. But thank God everything is already taken care of, the contract only a

few weeks ago, but finally it is signed and the legal matter of ownership is safeguarded. There was a small outer building of 6 or 7 rooms; now it will be quickly rebuilt for the novitiate with about 30 rooms, with a separate chapel and a sufficiently large common (recreation) room. All of this on three floors of which one can serve for the brothers because the rooms or cells are not big.

We could not yet proceed to build the church, but now all the difficulties were also removed. – Today we took care of the disputed point of the apse of the church leaning against the wall of the adjoining house of the Brothers of Christian Schools and, in a few days, God willing, the construction of the church will begin. I do not doubt that God will bless everything a hundredfold and without measure.

My health, thank God, is not too bad and completely adequate. Please thank God.

**Father Peter takes up residence in the new generalate of the Congregation.** The general of the Congregation transfers to the new generalate. May 12, 1886. A few days ago, I transferred my residence to the new house on San Sebastianello.

I am already living in the new house and in addition to a few brothers have with me Father Ladislaus from Paris as a companion. He will remain in Rome for a few more days. Here everything is smiling nicely with light, spring and life. Our house is a beautiful acquisition. I am celebrating Mass in the chapel of the generalate for a week already and when the church, that has a beautiful plan, is standing, then everything will be marvelous. I carried the plan for the church in my head for a long time and the architectural designs were prepared by Mr. Pio Piacentini, one of the best Roman architects, a pious person and a good friend. When Mrs. Sobanska sees it, she will have reason to rejoice and the architect is promising that it will not go over budgeted costs. Mr. Piacentini is a pious and conscientious person.

**Direction of the Greek College in Rome in the hands of the Congregation.** On the vigil of Saints Peter and Paul I had a farewell audience with the Holy Father during which he himself began to speak about his intention to give us the Greek College, only – and here he began to speak about the obstacles that – as I later became convinced – all came out of the head of Cardinal Ledóchowski. Since the Pope began the conversation, I had the right to answer. Therefore, with a modesty that was proper, I gave an appropriate response to all the objections, and also shared from myself new information about which the Pope could not know. To the objection that we do not have people, I answered that maybe we have something better: because we have a person and often everything depends on this; and I mentioned Father Anthony Lechert. He asked me to write about him and to write his name on a card on his desk. He asked me about Msgr. Ladislaus Zaleski and later I found out that Cardinal Ledóchowski is pushing him with all his might to be rector of the Greek College to such a degree that the Pope was to have said that the Cardinal is pushing Zaleski as rector of the Greek College more than anyone ever pushed for the Archbishop of Poznan. I, not knowing anything, spoke well of Msgr. Zaleski and of his friendship, and even discretely acknowledged that he is thinking of entering our Community (because that is what Father Grabowski said).

**Father Peter again prepares Lenten sermons.** My health, thank God, is good. I am preparing the Lenten sermons and commend them to your prayers.

**State of the novitiates of the Congregation in 1886.** The large Roman novitiate of the Congregation. From other news, I am informing you that the novitiate here, by the grace of God, is full. There are 12 at the moment; and many very promising young men.

In Kraków also there are six novices.

**Father Peter's itinerary in 1886.** Now I am vehemently thinking of leaving Rome as soon as possible.

First I am to go to the Grande Chartreuse, where maybe, God willing, I will be happier than you. From there to Toulouse where Father Blancal and his companions are waiting for me during the first half of August. From there a few visits along the way, mainly to Mr. Hebert Penoire in Laval with whom I must settle our financial obligations. And only in the end to Paris because that is coming out to be the best for me.

I would want to go to Kraków and see your novitiate. – Maybe, God willing, this will take place at the end of September or in October.

I am ending because the heat here is disturbing me and, by the grace of God, I wrote what was necessary.

**Father Peter in Paris.** On September 12 our Father arrived in Paris at the Sisters Adoration Reparatrice, not on rue d'Ulm 36, his mailing address; - Here a great field awaited me and God blesses it up until now. I gave them more than 10 conferences. A very good understanding with the Mother General.

**Death of Father Semenenko in Paris in 1886.** Our Father took up residence at rue d'Ulm 36 on September 12 with the Sisters l'Adoration Reparatrice who knew and esteemed him from long ago and desired to become imbued with his teaching on the spiritual life, and whom he had instructed in Christian mysticism for a long time. On October 29, Father caught a cold while coming home in the evening. The day was windy, cold, and he was riding in an open carriage. The next day, Saturday, which was the vigil of All Saints, he desired to celebrate the Conventual Mass at the big altar on which the Blessed Sacrament was always exposed, and which he did not ordinarily do till then because he

celebrated Mass daily at the side altar at 9:00. It was Father's last Mass, probably a Votive Mass of the Immaculate Conception, and it lasted a good hour and a half because he distributed Holy Communion to all the nuns. He later acknowledged that he felt extremely weak by the altar and that he raised his hands with difficulty.

A homeopathic doctor was called because Father did not wish any other kind, in spite of coaxing. Dr. Hermann diagnosed bronchitis. After the last Mass, Father stayed at rue d'Ulm for 11 days; once lying in bed, then resting in an easy chair. One of the sisters from Bon Secours, located specially by the Mother General de la Reparatrice because she was known in Paris for her extraordinary care of the sick, looked after him. The local nuns also did not skimp on care and concern for their spiritual benefactor.

Father Ladislaus Witkowski visited him several times a day. On November 10 on Wednesday, not paying attention to the requests of all that he remain on rue d'Ulm until he got better and not letting Father Ladislaus know ahead of time, he got up from bed in the morning, dressed, and rode to l'Assomption. The Mother General, though saddened, did not go against his wishes; she was solicitous about his departure, and personally accompanied him with a few of the sisters to the very place.

Father came to Assomption not with a feeling of a quick end, but rather from the need to be among his own. To understand what they are saying, while suffering greatly with insomnia, he often prayed, repeating the words: „My God! My God!”[in Polish]- The French not understand this and were anxious – which again made Father unpeaceful. When Father Ladislaus, upon returning home unexpectedly, found Father General lying in the parlor on the couch, he called out in surprise: Is this, Father, how you take care of your health!” „Do not scold me; I ask you not to scold me,” – Father said to him – „You will not believe how happy I am and how good I feel here. Then he described how the

French made something strange of the Polish „Boze moj” and he laughed heartily. And really the Lord permitted that he was soon surrounded by his own.

Fathers from all parts of the Congregation unknowingly congregated at the small Paris mission, because no one thought that he was arriving for the death of his general, and representatives of all the works of the Congregation were there. Besides Father Ladislaus who one can say represented the Polish institutions of the Fathers in Europe, Father Raphael Ferrigno came from Bulgaria, Father Eugene Funcken, Provincial, and Father David Fennessy from America. The finger of God was visible in all of this and brought comfort to the dying Father, who saw three generations of Fathers around his bed. As at the voice of the Holy Spirit, they rushed together like eaglets to their nest to witness to the truth and to hum together for their Father: „Let us praise the glorious men and our fathers in their nation.” (Eccl. 44)

Father did not want to accept another more comfortable room that Father Witkowski offered, rather than the small one upstairs in which he had lived 3 years during the life of Father Alexander Jełowicki and where 40 years ago he had written the Rule for the Congregation of the Resurrection. The condition of his health until his death was almost always the same; one time complete hope; another, a slight fear. When asked if he were suffering physically, he answered: „But this is nothing important.’ One day, having learned from Father Ladislaus that the Church of the Assumption that the government intended from long ago to take for the old Catholics, was finally assured for the Poles, he tearfully rejoiced and called out: „I see that you have special graces with Our Lord.’

He had a good appetite because on the vigil of his death in the evening he still dined on cutlets and grapes and on the day of his death, he drank milk in the morning. The nights were torture. He suffered very much from terrible insomnia and interior fears. Six days before his death, he wrote a letter in which he declared:

„I spent 11 nights of a veritable purgatory on rue d’Ulm.” The same repeated itself at l’Assomption.

Feeling the need for a confession from his whole life, as well as of an unbosoming of the graces which Jesus offered him so copiously to the end, he constantly called Father Ladislaus during the night. (One night he called Father Ladislaus 15 times.) He said among other things: „Jesus gave me the great grace to see my entire life accurately.” He said to Father Ladislaus: „You were my child; you became my Father.” Taking him [Ladislaus] by the hands with great strength, he decided to kiss them; and he, who knelt by the bed, begged for his blessing.

The final act of our Father was an act of love that reflected an entire life so filled with mercy and delicate feelings. He heard that Father Ladislaus was complaining about rheumatism in the shoulder which bothered him at night. Seeing that his bed stood in a place not fully protected from drafts, he did not say anything to him about it but saw to it that material was purchased to sew curtains. These were hung up to protect the bed from drafts.

At l’Assomption a certain upright widow, Mrs. Pasierbska – whose whole life was one cross - watched over him. She describes how he was grateful for every smallest service, rather taking care of his own needs to his last moment. One can marvel how a dying person could take care of all his personal needs so as not to transgress against modesty. He could not move his hands because of weakness. When the doctor ordered that his face be washed with a sponge for refreshment, he thanked for this service saying: „I would like to do this myself, but I am already a worthless fool.”

The same Mrs. Pasierbska told how Father prayed continuously, that his prayers, so uplifting and full of love for God, were so beautiful that she could not restrain her tears. He often repeated: „...Jesus, Mary, my dearest ones, come for me quickly.” While praying, with his hand he often blessed the intentions and the people, whom he commended to God. Most

often at night, at 2 or 3 in the morning, he desired to receive Holy Communion. Father Ladislaus would bring him Jesus and then, radiating happiness, he received Holy Communion. Because of his great emotion, the doctor demanded that he be denied Communion but Father was denied this great happiness only once, and it was probably on that last day when he received the Viaticum.

Father felt peaceful inside and hopeful so that all who surrounded him trusted that he would get better to such a degree that Father Raphael left for Belgium on the day of Father's death. There was no talk about danger.

On November 18, when all were gathered as usual around noon for breakfast, the sound of the bell echoed. The danger was closer. Father coughed a few times after which there was a significant weakening. Father Ladislaus hastened for the doctor, while Father Eugene, not waiting, gave Extreme Unction and the Viaticum.

He was fully conscious and mentally alert until the end, and his feeling of happiness after receiving the last Sacraments was strong. An hour later, i.e., around one, he made his confession once more to Father Ladislaus and received a final blessing. And at the question does he have any recommendations, he raised his hands up as a sign that he gives his spirit to God.

There was a brief agony before three o'clock in the afternoon on November 18. He closed his eyes with a candle in his hand – burning out rather than dying – He only sighed and died peacefully. And this peace remained on his face for a long time. It was the day of the feast of the dedication of Saint Peter's Basilica.

What appeared strange was that the heart of our dearest Father was so hot thirty hours after his death that the doctor was called to confirm if he had really died.

After death, Father lay on his bed, dressed by Father Ladislaus in a most beautiful chasuble. Many came to view the

remains. Rosaries were brought to touch his body as a sign of blessing.

Because of the small room and narrow stairs, the body of our Father was carried down to the sacristy where it was placed in an oak coffin, then in two others of zinc and oak. The remains were thus prepared to be taken to Rome. It was asked if he could be buried in Paris so that that would contribute to energizing piety and to the sanctification of the emigrants.

One of the religious des l'Adoration Reparatrice, not knowing about the death of Father, wrote the following words to her Mother Superior: „At this moment our Father was brought before Jesus by the Blessed Mother and Saint John. I felt that He would do more in heaven for those remaining here on earth.”The Mother Superior immediately sent the letter to Father Ladislaus. The time was checked and it was shown that this pious religious had the vision described above at the exact moment when Father was dying.

After the services on Saturday, November 20, the remains, so dear to us, were taken to the train station in Lyons. After many difficulties - passing through Macon, Modena, Turin and Genoa - they finally arrived in Rome on November 27 and were buried in the tomb at San Lawrence outside the Walls.

Memorial services were held on November 25, feast of Saint Catherine, in the Church of the Polish College. They were organized by Father Charles Grabowski, the rector, with great respect and gratitude for his most beloved Father. The service was celebrated by Archbishop Graselli, a friend of the Congregation, and Father's colleague at the Holy Office.

The following were present: Cardinal (Menceslaus) Ledóchowski, Archbishop Joseph Sembratowicz, the Princes Baltazar and Ladislaus Odescalchi, Count Kueffstein, the Messrs. and Counts Sigismund Malatesta, Professor Smolka, the general of the Theatines Father Cirino, the general of the Jesuits Fr.

Beckx, the general of the Franciscans Soldaci and many other Roman prelates and friends that found themselves in Rome.

The long service in the Eastern Rite will take place in the church of the Greek College on December 16.

Right after receiving the telegram by which we became certain of the death of our Father General, Father Grabowski went to the Vatican to give this sad news first to the Holy Father. He immediately received an answer that the Pope was deeply saddened by it and promised an audience on December 2 for which the following Fathers were called: the Vicar General and Grabowski. David Fennessy from America joined them.

All three awaited the Pope in the Throne Room. As soon as he came in and sat down on the throne, he began to listen to Father Thomas asking for a blessing for the chapter that was to take place for the purpose of seeking a successor for the deceased Father Semenenko. The Holy Father, after hearing the surname, - as if he were waiting for it, - interrupted the Father Vicar and said these words: "I am deeply moved, very saddened by the sad news of the death of Father Peter Semenenko and do not cease to ardently commend his soul to the Lord at Mass. Father Semenenko had such universal respect in Rome because of his virtue. He was the Soul of your Congregation and dedicated his life to new works of the Church and to his own work he also dedicated his long journeys to raise funds for the purpose for which his spirit lived, as he dedicated himself in your Congregation, and that is why I placed the Greek College in your hands."

The Fathers, hearing this expression of full recognition for the virtue of their deceased Father General pronounced by the lips of the Vicar of Christ, were deeply moved and kissed the Pope's feet and hands. They asked for a blessing for the entire Congregation and a special one for Father Valerian Kalinka, who

was seriously ill at the moment. With great kindness, the Pope deigned to grant this, as well as the indulgence for the hour of death.

**Father Charles Grabowski to Leon Zbyszewski, Rome, November 16, 1887.** “Our Lord gave me a great occasion as to the matter of changes that took place in our Congregation after the death of Father Peter.... Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament as a lever of our interior life. I hope that it will come sooner or later and it must develop. For this is the last chapter of our Rule, written by the same one who composed it in its entirety (Father Semenenko), written during the last moments of his life. And even though there is no mention of it in the report presented to the Congregation, this will not harm it. For us, it is enough to talk about it. And dear Father, you who had the happiness not only to read but also to speak about this project with Father Semenenko himself during the final moments of his life, I think that you have nothing against what I am writing today. The need for this devotion will come out of the Rule – and after it, of a life that draws strength from it, (the life of the rule is quiet but deep), that will then strengthen apostolic works.”

**Significance of the Servant of God.** Father Peter was the co-Founder of the Congregation of the Resurrectionists. At the same time, he was a great and genial thinker, a creator of a new philosophical system and an exceptional theologian; a person who was capable of working out the analyses of theoretical questions, and exerting himself to create a great synthesis of learning, especially philosophical and theological. He also became involved in the practical formation of entire generations of priests and religious.

This great thinker, who was known in the Catholic world and was considered the glory of the Catholic priesthood, was highly esteemed especially in Rome in the circles of the Vatican

Congregations. He asserted that you can not do philosophy without applying it into one's own practical life and without a deep knowledge of theology.

Father Semenenko died as a faithful “follower of Jesus, his love, and a son of Blessed Mary,” as well as a “light of our country” (these were the words of Mother Celine Borzęcka, foundress of the Sisters of the Resurrection).

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*The Informational Process of Father Peter Semenenko, was begun on May 8, 1950. His remains were exhumed from Campo Verano and taken to the Church of the Resurrection at the Roman Generalate of the Congregation.*