

J.M.J.
Gentlemen and Dear Colleagues
Hail and farewell,

Monsieur and very dear parish priest and relatives and friends

Last May I received your letter of August 22, 1837. I thank you for having sent me the news it contained; I wish it had been longer. If there were any future here for us, I would hope you would make up for the deficit by a long and full of ecclesiastical and adjoining news, but our future seems so shortened that I would not have the pleasure of savoring this news.

Here is what Monsignor writes to me by one of my former catechists who is to take me to the place where His Excellency has taken refuge: "Dear Brother, Mr Chastan arrived at midnight, Deo Gratias, the day before yesterday. Your Yi Joan, that's the name of the aforesaid catechist, came to tell me yesterday that all was lost and that only we were missing to finish the party... The satellites are spreading across the countryside to arrest us. We must give ourselves up and pay with our own person, at least one of us, and the two others leave the kingdom... So come, because the longer we delay, the more dangers there are. Come quickly, come quickly, I'm sending a boat to meet you."

Now, the greater ease that Monseigneur and Mr. Chastan have in speaking the Chinese language, together with the letters that I had had to address to His Excellency, authorize me to believe that the fate has fallen on the first and most miserable among sinners, full of regret for not having worthily corresponded to the benefits of the merciful and Divine Providence. But as it is written, man proposes and God disposes, Divine Providence had ordered otherwise: arriving at His Lordship's on Monday, July 29, after having examined the way out of the kingdom and its consequences, it was resolved that we would all three stay in Korea and await the subsequent provisions of Divine Providence and martyrdom if it granted us the grace. The Cochinchinese, who had deported the European missionaries out of the kingdom of Cochinchina during the persecution, were arrested and perished under cruel beatings redoubled for two to two days until their death. We feared these tortures, or crueler ones still, for the charitable fishermen who would have tried to take two of us 3 to the coast of China or Manchuria.

So we separated on Tuesday evening, July 30, resolving to follow the advice of our Lord Jesus Christ and his divine example "If you are rejected from one city, flee to another" and to hide each of us as best we can. We believed, Mr. Chastan and I, despite the difficulty and the dangers of the times, to have to accede to the ardent desires of three small Christian communities through which we passed. It took us about ten days to administer the sacraments to them.

However, we were often told the most unfortunate news. An apostate traitor, a Korean Judas, is said to have made several named Christians believe that the religion was going to be made public, that all that was needed for that was the arrest of one of us three Europeans, and that while forcing children to apostatize, iron rod in hand. You Christians who see and read this letter, Judas Iscariot, who delivered the Son of God our infinitely beloved and lovable savior Jesus, would he have done more against Christians than the Korean Judas? Pray for him that despair will not reunite him with his master, but that true repentance will make him an imitator of St. Longinus.

A believer too good and too simple, duped by the diabolical enchantments of Kim (this is the Korean name of this Judas), had the misfortune to promise this traitor and five satellites who accompanied him to go and call the bishop. On Saturday, August 10, the day of St. Laurent, patron saint of this dear bishop, this 2 times good man accompanied by the traitor

up to 3 ly, ¼ of a league approximately, from the place where our dear pastor was, left him with pagans and went alone at midnight to bring Monseigneur the sad news.

It was Sunday morning. Monsignor celebrated the Sacred Mysteries for the last time, then wrote us the following letter. "August 11 +J.M.J. My dear colleagues, God be blessed and his most holy will be done. There's no turning back anymore. It is no longer the satellites that are sent for us, but the Christians. André Tchen arrives at one o'clock after midnight... They have told him the most beautiful marvels and poor Tchen has promised to call me... However, hide well until further notice if I can give you any. Pray for me. Laurent Joseph Marie Imbert Episcopus Capsensis." Then he left, first met the perfidious man and some distance away from there the five satellites who took him to prison in the capital Seoul Hanyang. At Monseigneur's request, they sent André Tchen back to his family.

The very day that we left Monseigneur, His Grace had sent Yi Thomas his disciple and servant with my Yi Joan to the capital city to seek money and news. On the 14th Thomas reported to us that he had only learned of the arrest of Monseigneur when he arrived at the home of Andrew Son, with whom His Grace had taken refuge, that Joan had remained in town to take care of the imprisoned confessors and the affairs of the mission in the city jointly with Tcheu Philippe, that there were twelve prisoners who remained of the 32 several times already sentenced to death in the large prison tsieuen ok, the others are martyrs by the sword, about sixty at least in the prison pghô tchang with thieves and other criminals to undergo interrogations before going to the tsieuen ok prison with those sentenced to death. The confessors of the pghô tchang prison received 600 Korean sapecs a day, from 15 to 16 francs, fruit of the sale of our objects hidden in the house of Charles Tchao, one of my three catechist introducers who became a commissioner in Beijing and then was arrested and became a confessor in this jail.

Monseigneur during his stay in the city had taken care of these prisoners until June 3 when he escaped. To date, Divine Providence has provided us with the means to distribute to them the copious alms that we have received these 2 years from our dear faithful brothers in France. I have arranged things with capable Christians not yet arrested so that no confessor perishes of hunger as long as there is something available of these alms and goods of the mission that we can pass on to them after our arrest which must take place within 15 days.

A bishop of Setchuen in China in prison in Beijing found in prison an opportunity to give news of his priests in Setchuen. Monsignor Imbert who had reported this fact to me, had promised us *ut supra videre est* to give us this news if necessary. Accordingly I therefore endeavored to dissuade Thomas from the perilous plan of returning at once to the city, advising him to spend some time with me awaiting the advice of His Grace, if he could give it, and the effect which his arrest would produce. I did not succeed.

It was thought that it was not more dangerous on the one hand and on the other, that it was useful to add my catechist and current servant to him. I was with Monsieur Chastan and his servant seemed to be enough for both of us. My Pierre Tcheu, brother of François Tcheu, a Korean student who died in Macao, therefore left with Thomas.

The twice good man, who fell into illusion and disappointment had had Monsignor Imbert arrested, fell a second time into the same illusion, he says (he is simple, simple enough to be believed) and made them stop at 50 lys, 5 leagues, from the capital. Another perfidious apostate displayed a multitude of false marvels to him and asked him where we were. Our twice good man: "I don't know, but there are here at Pak sapang, dominus master, Tcheu Petro and Y Thomas who know it." To the sound of Tcheu Petro and Yi Thomas, known by the satellites to be at our service, twenty pôkio assault Pak's house seize my Peter and Thomas.

The master of the Pak house crossed the hedge in one bound and slipped away. Peter was kept as surety and Thomas sent for us, with instructions to tell us that our arrest would

have, of three main good effects, at least one; either martyrdom and the non-disruption of Christians or the publicity of religion. On August 18, Thomas Y and Tchen Andrew came to bring us this news. It was decided that regardless of these fine words from the pôkio (this is how these satellites are called) we had to hide. Thomas had told them he would do as we told him and might not come back. So I kept him with me in place of Peter, and I urged Andrew Tchen both strongly and gently not to believe any longer in the words of the pôkio nor of the Christians who accompanied them; as regards the publicity of the Christian religion in Korea, not to believe anyone unless it was one of our servants released from prison as well as Monseigneur and all the confessors, if he was provided with an authentic document, temporary to go and hide where he could, he obeyed. He only has half of what it takes to make a good and useful Christian in these countries, the simplicity of the dove.

So we left Monsieur Chastan and I together, because the circumstances demanded it, so that we could hide towards the south. On Friday, August 23 in the morning, a Christian from Kienlato met us at Tarecol and told us that he had found places to hide us on the outskirts of the province. He left Friday evening with Mr. Chastan promising to come back for me in a few days.

Interim I received at 40 lys, 4 leagues, from Hong tchou the advice that Monsignor had promised us, formulated in these terms: “Bonus pastor ponit animam suam pro ovibus suis. Si nondum estis profecti, per cymbam venite cum misso Son xiê tchong, name of the satellite, leader of more than a hundred, perhaps sent to find us.” Attached to this letter from Monseigneur was a letter from my Peter Tcheu, who was annoyed at not seeing Thomas again and at not receiving any news either from him or from me. He knows that Monseigneur is calling us to prison, he asks us to go to where he is, on the road from here to Seoul, and not to take another road. As soon as I received this letter from Monseigneur I sent it to Monsieur Chastan inviting him to come as soon as possible. I also on the same day sent to the chief of all the satellites in search of us, a letter roughly framed in these terms adapted to the Korean style. Son xiê tchong reads: Lo sin pou, pater spiritualis Lo, my Chinese name that has been preserved and has become Korean, “we cannot go immediately to Tal kei mori (name of the place where he is with Peter Tcheu on the shore of a bay of the Yellow Sea) because Father Tchen, Mr Chastan, is far from here. We will be there in ten days. I want your heart to change and find happiness after your death, with my signature. During the time that passes waiting for the arrival of Mr. Chastan, I devote my free time to telling you the story of this persecution, a copy of that of 1801. It will perhaps reach you one day. I will also try to answer the other charitable people who have written to me.