

20. LETTER TO FATHER PIERRE LOGIER

Pierre Louis Logier (1826-1859) entered the Congregation in 1848 and left for Guinea in 1850. He was ordained a priest at Dakar in June of the same year. At the time of this letter ill health had forced him to return to France. He died in Senegambia October 20, 1859.

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*Words of consolation to a sick priest. The apostolate of suffering.*

Paris, May 6, 1851      Vol. 13, p. 138

Dear Confreere:

May the peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ fill your soul!

I have, these last days, re-read your letter of February 13th and I take pleasure in answering you with the hope that I shall be able to console you and help you to preserve peace in Jesus and Mary and to live in humble submission to everything that God might wish to do with you.

Jesus chose you, in His goodness, from among many seminarians, in order that you might be sacrificed for His glory and the salvation of the wretched souls of Guinea. Allow Him to choose the manner in which He desires to immolate His victim. You, on your part, ought to keep your soul in peace, and be happy because you've placed yourself at the disposal of the Divine Master to do with you whatever He wants.

What else have you to do but to rest in His hands and to become what He desires? It is always best and most perfect to be fully submissive and abandoned to God's holy will.

[*The Apostolate of Suffering*]

You seem to be sorry because your superiors want you to take care of your health and do not give you much work

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in the service of souls. Remember, dear confrere, that there are two ways of laboring for the salvation of souls: one active, the other passive. The active way consists in giving instructions and exercising actively the other functions of the sacred ministry. The passive way consists in suffering for them according to the order of God's will. Well, I have to tell you in all truth that the second way is infinitely more useful than the first.

Consider the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Recall the sufferings she endured for the salvation of the world. Mary did not set out to preach the Gospel of her Son, but she suffered in her heart, and in this is found the entire apostolate of Our Lady. Yet, wasn't she greater than all the Apostles? Think of Jesus Himself: He left to His Apostles labors and successes that were incomparably greater than what He wanted to do personally, but He suffered for the salvation of the world and laid down His life for it. You see then that the true apostolate consists in suffering. Bear your sufferings therefore with peace and love.

You need not endeavor to find out what you are expected to do for God's glory. Don't say any more that you are less useful than others. For the time being God has given you the apostolate of suffering; at a later date, when it is His pleasure, you will be engaged in active works of zeal. Try above all to preserve peace of soul, gaiety of heart, and calmness of mind. Don't worry about anything,—and I mean about *anything whatsoever*. Be like a small child in the midst of a loving family; he has no worries and lives a joyful life.

May the peace of Jesus and Mary fill your soul.

Entirely yours in their holy charity,

FRANCIS LIBERMANN, Superior