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St. Peter's Seminary  
London, Ontario

27-5

February 13, 1949

My Dear Professor,

Thank you for your little note. Mr. Speaight had called and had given me the latest news of you, describing your plans for a tour of S. America. I was glad to see him if only for the information he brought about you and the family.

You should not send people to me, though, on account of my work. You know very well a ~~new~~ decent idea never entered my head without a good deal of assistance from you. I explained this to Speaight and hope it did not make his visit any less pleasant. I must confess, however, that he puzzled me a little: he stayed only a short time, never replied much more than "Quite, quite" to anything I said and in general gave me the impression that his call was a duty of politeness.

It gives me great pleasure to hear you speak so well of Fr. Wildgen. I had not expected he would turn out so well, although I have always respected him as a hard and honest worker. We shall certainly be glad to have him around here when he is finally formed --- I sometimes feel the need of support, for one thing. There is another good man coming up in a year or two whom I hope to send you, although at present the authorities destine him for sociology.

I am still reading my two articles a day in hell's despite and feel I will have no difficulty in persevering because I have come positively to

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enjoy them and to feel they affect me like a fine little daily dose of intellectual tonic. I cannot help remarking again that the Summa is sometimes great as sheer literature. -- the 1st article of q.16, for example, gives you a magnificent passage, with all the lucidity and ease of the best French prose and a certain massive solidity as well. -- And the ranking of the inclinations of God's creatures in q.59, a.1, is an extraordinary piece of condensation and symmetry (Almost a poem, in the sense that the order of the sentences seems to give one an image of the order of the things described).

My kindest regards to Mrs. DeKoninck, and assure her of my prayers for a happy birth. I do hope that somehow or other you will not be obliged to be absent, although these are matters not entirely within human control.

Sincerely in Christ

*G.D.*  
(Now I must turn to composing a lecture for some university students on faith and reason. Do not think me bold; these things are constantly being thrust upon me. But if you were here, would I ever have some questions to ask you!)

# St. Peter's Seminary

London, Canada



Dear Mr. DeKromick,

April 6, 1919

A kind little note has reached me from the hand of Miss Parent, which I am sure was inspired by yourself, telling me of the birth of Zita and of the grand christening she has received. Surely some high destiny awaits a child who has an imperial godmother. But I will leave all these impressive circumstances for others to comment upon and <sup>will</sup> simply congratulate you on another little girl. Your family was in fact growing little unbalanced, and anyone who had enjoyed the privilege of acquaintance with Goddieve, Marie-Charlotte and Maria, was entitled to complain at the way things were going. I trust Zita will be as different from her sisters as they are from one another, and no less charming. What if I should combine the qualities of all three? Can you imagine someone with Goddieve's soberness, Charlotte's feminine delicacy and Maria's ready independence? But perhaps we shall know an entirely new recipe and an unexpected result. Anyhow, I shall look forward to making the little lady's acquaintance.

One of mine added another little boy lately to the two she already has. I was

# St. Peter's Seminary

London, Canada



The new comer's arrival, the two <sup>older</sup> lads insisted it must be a boy — a girl they would in no wise tolerate; & as they threatened to dump it out of its carriage and abandon it. The little brother arrived at last and gave great satisfaction to all except the mother, but the two older brothers a few days later came to her and stated that next time they would prefer a dog. Kids are the limit.

I am just sincerely glad to learn you are well and had a delivery without complications. That will be comforting news for Professor McKinnon in his absence. No you best not be lonely. I will be easier when you are home again — rather hard to be lonely with ten children. I should think. After all, your husband is not far away. modern conditions go. A couple of days in the air take one half-around the world now a day. He will certainly extend his fame & increase by this great journey and I hope will not find it too fatiguing.

With my sincere good wishes and  
congratulations

Faithfully in Christ  
A. A. Durand

(My kind thanks Mlle. Parent).

R. le 10 mai

St. Peter's Seminary  
London, Canada



May 2, 1989

My dear Professor,

I hope my information is correct and this letter finds you back in Quebec after your southern expedition. I trust the trip was as successful from all other standpoints as I am sure it was academically, and that it has not left you fatigued. — And you will now be examining your newest daughter. Mr. Parent sent me a kind note telling me of his arrival just a day or two after you left.

Will you kindly settle the following little matter for me? — About a week ago I received a kind little message from Mr. Parent and a bill for 75.00, covering the cost of the 50 copies of my thesis which the regulations require to be deposited with the University. I feel awkward in bringing up this matter with you and don't know how to talk about it so as to be sure that you will not misunderstand me. But please believe me when I say that I am only too anxious to pay whatever the University expects of me. Heaven knows the School

# St. Peter's Seminary

London, Canada



owes me nothing. But, in your last letter, you seemed to have intended to get me absolved from this obligation and expressed yourself with such kindly emphases that I was afraid this bill might be no more than a secretarial error, or even that you might be a little offended if I paid it without mentioning the matter to you. Accordingly, upon Wildgen telling me that you were to be back in a day or two, I decided to wait and write this letter. Now, for the love of Heaven, if your representations in my favour were unsuccessful, or if there is any difficulty in the business of any nature, do please let me pay my just debts as promptly as possible. I owe you too much to permit me to feel anything but gratitude towards you, and it is only because our relations have been so friendly that I feel obliged to let you hear of this in any way. Just send me the briefest little message; do not grieve me with apologies or regrets, and I will despatch a cheque to Mrs. Parent with all possible cheerfulness.

I am still ploughing my way through the *Lumina* at the rate of two articles a day

# St. Peter's Seminary

London, Canada



and am astonished at my own sluggishness. Although I understood only a small part of it (the tract on the Trinity is something awful), I become more and more aware of the wisdom of your advice. The mere reading is a fine discipline for the mind, a valuable antidote for the vagueness and sentiment of modern writing, and at the very least one learns caution, and what not to say. Moreover there is a certain knack or skill of interpretation to be picked up as one goes along, one falls in a little with St. Thomas' habit of thought and, in short, I think I am able to get more out of him now than when I began. I might add that, as you promised me, I have found this daily dose of the Summa of some spiritual help as well; it has furnished me more than once with good material for sermons and conferences.

But the past couple of months has not been a favorable time for study in this part of the country. There has been an innumerable wave of sickness through our diocese and our seminary men have been called out a good deal over the weekends. Our rector likes

# St. Peter's Seminary

London, Canada



it no better than we do, but there seems no  
help for it. Fortunately we are ordaining ten  
deacons in June — a large class for us; — and that  
should relieve the shortage for a time.

Reverend Wildgen has been expressing great  
enthusiasm over your course in Mariology,  
and arousing in me feelings of envy. E.g. Septoria  
has set going so many questions in my mind; —  
I wish I had enjoyed this opportunity of putting  
them to you.

Good-bye for the present. Best wishes  
to the whole family

Sincerely in Christ

G. A. Dumas



# St. Peter's Seminary

London, Canada



May 12, 1929

My Dear Professor,

I heard nothing of that review of Father Cantoni's book which you mention, but I am sorry something should have happened to cause you confusion or distress. At any rate think me more of my affairs, I have sent Mr. note to Mr. Parnett this morning to settle my accounts and, since I am feeling a little more of normal than usual lately, it has almost given me pleasure to detach myself from a little cash.

It was a kick to me yesterday to receive a note from Florence Hertzler, informing me she will be in London Saturday at Brasen Hall and would be glad to renew our acquaintance. That acquaintance is so slight that I am at a loss. Probably I shall only have to listen and the pleasant American breeziness of Florence's talk may have a wholesome effect upon me. I am afraid people without the least reserve have the effect of accentuating that overdose of it I was born with.

# St. Peter's Seminary

London, Canada



spec! - You speak of visiting London and I sincerely hope you will. I have made some effort to have you brought here as part of a lecture series but I am too insignificant a person to have much effect on those in charge, who seem to think moreover that you will be over the heads of everyone. It is unfortunate that you are almost unknown in this region. You know I am the first graduate from Taval in our diocese. I will not be the last, but believe that patient unobtrusive methods will best secure the objective I have in view. — But if you ever have occasion to drop off here for a day or two on one of your journeys, or would like to use our hospitality in order to secure a few days rest, please do not hesitate. You will receive the best welcome and entertainment a seminary can provide.

With my kindest regards to  
your wife and the rest of the household

Sincerely in Christ

A. A. Durand

May. 20 1949.

Dear Father Durand:

Zoe has been after me for over a week. This letter is written at her command. She wants Tommy to spend a month in a good Catholic family, where he will be obliged to speak English. Besides, the change of milieu would do him much good. Do you know such a family? We will, of course, pay his board. Tommy is now fifteen years old and quite reasonable. The important is that he should be kept busy. He likes reading and sports. Do you know of a family which would be ready to take him in for the month of July?

Then there is Arthur. Perhaps he could go to the same family for the month of August. Arthur is a rather different type -- as you perhaps know. He is mechanically inclined, and likes to do things with his hands. He too must be kept busy. He is a rather interesting little chap but must be wathhed.

It seems to me that I asked you this same favour a year or two ago, and that you knew of no one at the time. But I'm not quite certain, and you may have made new acquaintances.

I will be in Europe for the month of August and most of September. This fairly spoils my vacation, but I simply had to accept the invitation. (One of the things I shall miss and regret most is the herring-catch, but this, I'm afraid, you will not understand.)

With best wishes from us all,

Yours most cordially,

# St. Peter's Seminary

London, Canada



September 22, 1959

My dear Professor.

I am writing to commend to you a new representative of our diocese at Javal. Fr. Mark Wildgen has been recalled, as you perhaps know by now, but with his help I have managed to get someone sent in his place. He is Fr. William Ring. I am afraid he may have a rather hard time of it at first, as he has been at parish work for three years and his French is none too good besides. A more thorough or methodical student it would be hard to find, however, and I am sure you will think well of him in the end. Try to encourage him a little during his first few weeks, if you can, because I know he will find the school bewildering and will not get much consolation in struggling with conversation at the M. Pi XII. With two or three more graduates from Quebec about me here in London, I will have good support, and our connection with your faculty should become permanent and safe.

My letter will wait on your return from Europe, where I hope you had an interesting and pleasant journey. My last news of you, kindly sent me by your wife, mentioned an interview with the Pope. I don't know what to say about

# St. Peter's Seminary

London, Canada



a privilege like that, I am sure it will be a great encouragement to you in your work.

As Mrs. DeHonine will have told you, I had Tom's company for some days during the summer and enjoyed it as much as he could have done. He is a really fine lad. We shot and fished and travelled together, all in the short space of a couple of week-ends, and I found him an intelligent, humorous and charming companion. You can be confident, it seems to me, that he will turn out well.

I am still ploughing along in the Prime Pans, although not always able to take my ration of two articles per day. Although I seem to forget all I read after a very few days. I am yet convinced that this little contact with St Thomas anchors my thinking, as to speak, and makes me a great deal more cautious and humble in my teaching and preaching. Men in a small seminary and a small diocese like ours, cannot escape that clutter of multifarious and often petty tasks which make study practically impossible. But I know this is the life for me and, if I live it well, there will be plenty of time for contemplation in eternity, to be sure. Meanwhile I am saving up questions for my next meeting with you.

Sincerely in Christ

G. Durand

Quebec, May 12, 1950.

Dear Father Paranda, I  
This is a letter about the three beatitudes. We would  
like to see you return to the Grunigants and see how we would  
like nothing better. But then, there are other fel-  
lows. A farm (separate question) would be the place for them  
too. We would like them to be away from the beginning of  
July until about the 15th of August.

You think we take you for an agency. Once you know  
where you are to go for the Summer, perhaps the local pastor  
could suggest a family or two. Zoé and I realize how diffi-  
cult it is to find the right environment for them.

The year has not been too good for me. The trips to  
South America and Europe were more fatiguing than I had anti-  
cipated. I missed the vacation. As a result I saw little  
of the students, and am barely acquainted with the young Fa-  
ther you sent us. He looks bright and asks sensible questions.

According to present plans I will go to Europe after  
the first two weeks of the Summer session, and should remain  
there until mid-August. After spending two or three weeks  
with my family here, I will leave again for Rome to attend  
the Thomistic Congress. It's not a very pleasant life, but  
the demands of the common good are exacting. Perhaps I could  
serve it better by staying home — if I were a writer.

The editor of the weekly "Notre Temps" has asked me  
to write a brief article on "Le rayonnement intellectuel du  
Canada, foyer de thomisme". But I'm not the right person to  
do this. I do not think much of what is going on in Montreal,  
Ottawa or Toronto. On the other hand, I am much too involved  
in the whole matter to say even a few simple things such as:  
"Whereas in many parts of the world it is now fashionable to  
question the timeliness of St. Thomas, we consider him the  
most alive of all philosophers and theologians, perhaps be-  
cause we go to the trouble of studying his text, and take the  
pronouncements of the Church seriously." Could you write a  
short article on the subject? The editor wants no more than  
four double space typewritten pages.

I have always  
 at Paul. I was in St. Paul.  
 found these meetings extremely depressing. There is  
 never an opportunity for serious discussion. The  
 American opposition behaves in a very silly manner.  
 As you may know I have  
 no brains and all appetite.  
 You write me seldom as to what I have  
 to reply to. I never hear from you again.  
 I feel that I am about the last thing they are con-  
 sidering. I am doing extremely well since her  
 operation last year. In fact, I am much better than  
 she had been during the last decade. This includes  
 being more naughty. It is impossible.  
 Every year on my birthday I am faced  
 with a new problem. I am doing all right. Just all right.  
 Too much basket ball (at which he is supposed to be very  
 good) and a great deal of drinking. He and Arthur will spend  
 this Summer in a military camp. I hope it will do them  
 some good, although they both doubt it. Thomas is  
 finishing his rhetoric this year and will start philo-  
 sophy in the Fall. Of course, I am mixed

Marie-Charlotte was in Montreal last week for a swimming competition and came out second - one tenth of a second behind the first. She was the first in her group. There were several groups taking their turn one after the other. The final result was established by a comparison between the first of each group. Marie-Charlotte thought this was not a very good system inasmuch as she did not enjoy the stimulant of seeing how fast she was going with respect to the participants of the other groups. But her father is still very proud of her since she is after all much smaller than her competitors. Godolieve and Maria have also been in the lead at the same game during the whole year.

Of course, I'm very sorry that you will not attend the University convention in June. I would have asked you to revise my paper — I will not have it ready on time to send to you. Kolnai is off to Europe for the Summer. I think that my English instead of improving is slowly deteriorating.

Two years ago I attended what I think will have been my last meeting of the American Catholic Philosophical

May 23, 1925

Association. That was in St. Paul. I have always found these meetings extremely depressing. There is never an opportunity for serious discussion. The American opposition behaves like a bunch of big game — no brains and all appetite. As you may know I have always been contented that people in philosophy are intellectually the most dishonest of mankind. The only truth seems to be about the last thing they are concerned with. But this has always been so and does not bother me except when faced with the concrete circumstances. she had been during the last decade. This includes

your little piece of anatomy. It was most cathartic. Every year on my lecture tour I am faced with the same old situations you describe. Did you ever have a full dinner with a group of students looking on? I had had my meals that way would not this summer in a military camp. I hope I should be some good, although they both doubt it. Thomas is still in the same old place. This summer I hope to do some fishing — herring, of course, with a 60 fathom net.

Shall we see you in July? Maria's last week for a swimming competition and came out second — one tenth of a second behind first. She was the first in her group. There were several groups taking their turn one after the other. The final result was established by a comparison between the first of each group. Maria-Charles had a very good system inasmuch as she did not enjoy the stimulus of seeing how fast she was going with respect to the participants of the other groups. But her father is still very proud of her since she is after all much smaller than her competitors. Godelieve and Maria have also been in the lead at the same time during the whole year.

Of course, I'm very sorry that you will not attend the University convention in June. I would have asked you to revise my paper — I will not have it ready on time to send to you. Koln is off to Europe for the summer. I think that my father instead of improving is slowly deteriorating.

Two years ago I attended what I think will have been my last meeting of the American Catholic Union.



# St. Joseph's Church

Clinton, Ontario

Phone 87

August 19, 1952

Dear Professor,

Your letter of August 6 has reached me only now. I have been out of London since June and can't seem to get my friends to heed my appeals to send on my mail. My present post is 50 miles out, which will handicap me a little in trying to make contact with your fellow-countryman, but I will try to locate his chaplain and see what can be done. The trouble is that the air-station at London -- Crumlin, I suppose -- is (or was) too small to have a resident chaplain and so the boys there have always been a bit neglected, according to report. There is however a chaplain in this town with me and he will doubtless be able to explain to me how the Crumlin place is served.

I had not seen the article in Maclean's which you mention and am therefore not able to grasp the point of all you say in your charming little letter to the Editor. Apparently you have been accused of launching your speculations on a sea of beer. No great harm in that, I suppose, although I do find the habitual irresponsibility of so much popular journalism hard to take. Those articles in Maclean's never attempt to settle anything, nor explain anything, so that at the least they might try for accuracy.

I have not yet thanked you for the copy of the little work on sobriety. It does not have the value of your other writings, of course, but I can see how badly needed it was and hope that it will exert some influence. It is a queer mad course some of those temperance societies are embarked upon. Indeed, although I had heard something of their rules, I could scarcely believe they were seriously meant until I read your painstaking discussion of them. Where does such puritanism take its origin anyhow? Is it a kind of revival of Jansenism? Nothing seems to me more remote from the normal French-Canadian character, which has a sort of jolliness and vitality about it when you leave it alone.

I am sorry not to have come to Quebec this summer. Nothing would have pleased me more than to have been able to sit in your lecture-hall again for a couple of weeks and to get some questions answered. I would be there every summer if I was up to it. But the fact is that brother Ass has not been worth a hang during the past year. My little infirmities seem to multiply and I don't seem able to face a decent day's work. I have been in such a state of nerves, in fact, that for months I could hardly do any serious reading, and that is the limit. So the only course I could follow this summer was to take things relatively easy in the hope of getting myself into condition to face the coming year at our Seminary. Not that they are hard on me there, nor that the work is of an anxious kind ---- I simply don't seem to have any resistance. Every microbe that comes along seems to find me a choice victim.

So I have passed this summer in looking after country parished in the absence of their pastors, which allows me a good deal of fishing etc. And lately I have recovered enough energy to begin work again on something which I began to write about a year ago -- an article which attempts to see what can be done to have subjects in Catholic schools taught in such a way as to prevent religion from becoming only one such subject among others. This is not very well put, but what I mean is

that it is one thing to put up a building in which to teach Catholic children and quite another to achieve a true Christian school. In our part of the world we find ourselves under such pressure to keep up to the standards of secular institutions that religion is simply relegated to the status of one of the subjects on the curriculum, and not the one which gets the most attention either. The result is that inside the school there is found again the same evil which the school was built to counteract -- the secularisation of culture: religion forced into a compartment, without influence on the rest of life.

It struck me that the remedy lay in a minimum knowledge of philosophy and theology which would enable a teacher to present a subject in such a way that Christian children would come to see where it belonged in a Christian life and why it was asking so much of their time and attention. I began with History and, as you might have been able to warn me, soon found myself well over my head in the philosophy of history. However, I have persevered and have now composed about 30 pages which I re-read with many misgivings. I am afraid it is untrustworthy as speculation and yet too difficult to ~~be~~ have that practical value for teachers which I had hoped for.

Over and over again I find myself, in my preaching, teaching and in the little writing which I do, spinning out the few precious principles which you got into my head during my stay in Quebec. You have a habit of calling them elements, I think, and it is a good word, because they can be separated and re-combined in a hundred different uses. Let me also add that I do not believe a person of my abilities could ever hope to acquire such basic truths except by being taught them. T.S. Eliot has a line which I remember only vaguely about our world having lost wisdom for knowledge, knowledge for information. Well, without doctrine there can be hardly any doctors: the modern professor is rarely doing anything for you that you couldn't do for yourself. But you are one of the last of the race of true teachers, my dear Charles, and long may you reign. It was not until I had been with you for a few months that I began to sense why it was that Plato would never consent -- according to the story -- to write down his lecture on the Good.

But I am being too long-winded. My kindest regards to the family. I have seen Father Crunican lately and he gave me welcome news of your wife and of all the kids.

Sincerely in Christ

*A. Durand*

St. Peter's Seminary

London - Canada



October 1 (1952)

My dear Professor,

I have been intending for some time to report on your young fellow-countryman, Robert van Draege. Upon returning to London I found that he had been transferred to Winnipeg. It appears that the cadets are never longer than 6 weeks here in London. It is a sort of clearing house where they are tested for the various posts held by an air-crew and are then sent on to other stations for special training. Van Draege is to be a navigator and so was shipped to Air Navigation School, RCAF Station, Winnipeg. That is his address, although I suppose you will already have it.

In Winnipied my only close acquaintance is the Archbishop, a former colleague on the staff here and a character definitely sympathique, but yet rendered a little unapproachable by high office, so that the best I can do for your friend now is to pray that he has found friends somehow. The chaplain here tells me that he will probably find "innipeg more satisfying, however, because he will have a great deal more to do. Perhaps their chief occupation in London is just waiting around for the final assignment.

I must not fail to congratulate Marie-Charlotte on her swimming. It is an ability that I envy. What with age and weariness the best I can ~~manage~~ manage now is a slow quarter of mile, with a good deal of splashing and blowing. I had a ten-year old lad with me last ~~year~~ summer at lake Huron on a few afternoons and he was away ahead in speed and distance.

If you can find time to answer this note, will you be so kind as to give a brief opinion on the following question. Two years ago I took charge of our course here in "Cosmology". What I have done so far is to make a pretty close study of the De Principiis Naturae with the addition of a little more material on motion and quantity. Do you approve of that for the absolute beginner? Is there anything better that I could do?

(I tried to make use of Kocourek's translation but found it so perversely wrong that I gave it up. My classs knows almost no Latin and yet seem to find the Latin original no more obscure.)

My kind regards to the whole household

A. Durand

Quebec, October 7, 1952.

Dear Father Durand:

Mr. Van Draege finally wrote to me just a few days ago. He had left London for Summerside, Prince Edward, and received my letter with considerable delay. He didn't mention Winnipeg. I hope you will join me in not trying to understand.

I have not dared to look further into Kocourek's translation ever since I read the first paragraph. So let us forget about that too.

Your practice is an excellent one; the De principiis naturae is by far the best text for your purpose and that is presumably what St. Thomas had in mind when composing it. But you are wise, too, in having some material on motion and quantity. I would recommend Aristotle's own text on the definition of movement, Physica III. You could use St. Thomas' commentary, including Metaphysica XI, chapt. 9, lect 9, to prepare your lecture.

I would advise you to give your students something on time as well. If you want, I could send you a copy of Robert Labrie's thesis on this subject. It is not an original work, but he has cleared up some points on which even the greater commentators, such as John of St. Thomas, have erred — such as the meaning of "number" in the definition of time. If all this is too much, you might confine yourself to Ia Pars, q. 10, which is at the same time on eternity and But if you have any unusually intelligent student around, you may feel obliged to study even John of St. Thomas's Curs. Theol., disp. on eternity — which is the most profound on the subject.

St. Peter's Seminary  
London, Canada

le 5 nov.



October 30 (1952)

My dear Professor,

Thank you for your letter advising me on the course in elementary Natural Philosophy. It is kind of you to take the time to support my fiddling studies.

You offer me a copy of a thesis by Fabri on time. If it was directed by yourself I should be very grateful for it and indeed would have ordered it by now from the faculty bookshop but cannot find it in the list of things available.

I had hoped to have a man sent to Laval this autumn but my string-pulling had no effect. We have a new bishop, and the diocese is very short-handed — so much so that Fr. Wildgen, who did not return to Rome this year by reason of his mother's illness, is now in a parish although needed in the Seminary. Only one man has been sent off to study and he has replaced Wildgen in Rome, but will study Canon Law. He was no great shakes as a student, anyhow, and I am not sure how he would have managed in Quebec.

A young friend of mine, an entomologist, has been on a special mission (sent by the gov't of Canada) to Korea. He took these little photos

St. Peter's Seminary

London, Canada



of a statue standing with some other figures at the entrance to an old royal house. This figure represents the god of War. You are a sort of sculptor-mangler, if I remember rightly, and your penetrating remarks on the nature and scope of that art are still vivid in my mind, so perhaps you will be interested in these little snapshots which he left with me. To my mind they are a fine illustration of the principles you laid down — that stone is the inevitable material, and that there must be a tactile quality to good work. I hope you will also agree that there is more still to this statue, — the artist has managed an effect which I couldn't hope to account for, an effect of energy crouched and gathered in upon itself, biding its time, so to speak, — and yet, at the same time, what massiveness, permanence, and repose!

(No need to return them to me. I would only lose them anyhow)

Sincerely in Christ

A. Wierand

(Give Boefka a special big kiss for me)

# St. Peter's Seminary

London, Canada

Nov. 7, 1952

My dear Professor,

Thank you for your letter and the promise of Fabrice Thesis. Had I known it was so hard to get at, I would not have troubled you.

Your mention of the possibility of giving a lecture in London obliges me to be frank about a condition of things concerning which I have only allowed myself to utter certain hints in our past conversations and correspondence. My story must not become too long, but it is necessary to glance a rather long way back to the beginnings of our little seminary in order to appreciate present difficulties. This place has lifted itself academically by its own bootstraps, so to speak. It was founded on the spur of the moment and staffed by men who had no university degrees of any sort. The present rector is one of that original group. The result is that 20 years have gone by and we still have no academic traditions - to speak of. A great deal of real progress has been made: the standards have been enormously raised, a dozen men have been trained for the staff, but the mental attitude of the authorities (and not entirely a bad one) is that we exist to form practical parish priests and that we want no frills.

# St. Peter's Seminary

London, Canada

My colleagues here are the finest group of men one could hope to find. In 17 years I cannot recall a single quarrel, a single manifestation of jealousy or resentment. But the simple truth is that there is scarcely a student in the lot, scarcely one who has any great inclination to learn any more than he needs to teach a practical class in his subject. I cannot be critical of men so earnest and so kindly. They are doing a good job, and I have to admit it. And it is my plain duty to be tactful and patient in my private attempts to introduce improvements.

I haven't always been tactful and patient, though. When I was placed in charge of our miserable little library ( $\frac{1}{2}$  shelves of philosophy 18 years ago) my efforts to stock it brought on grave tension with the Bursar. He was too decent to let me know how he felt for a couple of years, and I managed to spend about \$4,000 in spite of him. But everything had to go over his desk, as it still does, and he must have spent many a wretched hour signing cheques for books that he considered to be utterly useless. In those early days, no one dreamed that you needed anything more than Fortie. The library spent perhaps \$350.00 last year for new books and the Bursar still wears an air of silent resignation when he is asked to buy another one.

After my difficulties with the library, I decided that it was my duty to retreat and to be content with what I could accomplish without danger to the



# St. Peter's Seminary

London, Canada

stability and peace of our family life here, since kind and sincere relations among members of the staff are the one thing necessary to our work of forming priests. By patience and persistence I managed to have two more men sent to Laval, although ~~these~~ decisions struck some of us as queer. The thought of having you for a lecture has often come to my mind and I did approach, a few years ago, a Catholic Club in the city, although without success. If I made the request of our Rector, he would consent at once, and so would the Bursar, but it is almost a certainty that the common good and the greater cause would suffer. If there were some way of ensuring that the Staff itself heard you, the risk might be much less, since I could trust you to carry the fort by yourself; but the Staff cannot be relied upon to be present at that sort of lecture.

The state of affairs is more complex than I am representing it, yet I hope I have led you to understand how much I regret missing the chance to have you and how helpless I feel to do anything about it — the more helpless in that it is not a question of hostility or active opposition, but of kind good friends who are patient, unfailingly patient, with their rather queer colleague (myself). Better times, I hope, are slowly coming and I hope that, if we both live long enough, an annual visit from you will one day seem to us a matter of course. My private strategy to this end was to

# St. Peter's Seminary

London, Canada

get enough of your graduates into our ranks to convince the rest of the value of the training <sup>which</sup> they had received. Such strategy will take time, but it is safe and, I think, sure.

There is something I can do even now, though it is not much. Although not well acquainted at Bressi Hall, I can send a note to Mother St. Michael, letting her know when you plan to be in the vicinity. She may find herself in a more favorable environment than this one, and should it turn out that you stop at <sup>Bressi</sup> ~~there~~, a spontaneous request might perhaps come from our own Rector. Providence can surely manage that much for us.

I did not foresee that it would take me so long to explain myself but hope I have not been tedious.

Please assure Zoe of my prayers for her approaching confinement. She is nearing my mother's record (our family numbered 12 children).

Sincerely in Christ  
C. D.

St. Peter's Seminary

London - Canada



November 29 1952

My Dear Professor,

Your little note with its kind offer to speak to our seminarians reached me a couple of days after your phone call but I have delayed replying until your itinerary should bring you to Notre Dame.

I could not help feeling ashamed that such an offer should be necessary and was inclined at first to refuse it; but later and better thoughts have shown me that if I were a better Christian I would neither think it necessary to apologize for the family in which I have been placed, nor to put obstacles in the way of the sympathy and kindness of a friend. So, if it can be worked, we shall have you address our students, and it will be a fine blow in the good cause.

I say if it can be worked because, as you so well taught me, our world is full of contingency and complications. The point is that Mother St. Michael -- with whom every telephone call is an endurance contest -- wanted our boys to go to hear you at the University. She needs their presence both for financial support and ~~for~~ to help guarantee an audience. So I approached the Rector for the necessary permission, which he of course granted, as he would grant almost anything that I might ask of him. It is a rather unusual permission, though, since it entails a mass exodus in the evening, with change in the hour of prayer etc., and an indefinite time for lights out. Now, if he learns that you will speak in the house, he may very naturally suggest that there is no need of this other excursion, thus torpedoing poor Mother St. M's plans. The university, you see, is about a mile and a half outside the city. Once it closes at night and the buses cease to enter its grounds, it becomes rather inaccessible for people who have no car, and sometimes not a pleasant trip in winter even with a car. But Brescia is only a stone's throw away and the Seminary about a mile or so. If follows that, if a hall down-town were hired, the Brescia girls would be practically cut off; while the choice of the University cuts off the people in the city. Her wisest policy is the one she has chosen. To use the University and to draw on her own house and on the Seminary, while hoping for a sprinkling of university people --- although, of course, these last may turn out better than she thinks.

To be brief, my notion is to wait until all the arrangements at the University are complete and it is an ~~accomplished~~ undertaking beyond recall that our lads are going there. I will then insinuate -- as the French say -- your offer to talk here, and hope for the best. If it goes over, it will probably be more beneficial to confine yourself to the theologians and to take a theological subject. Such a choice will appear more practical and will enable you, I think, to make a personal impression. It is hard

St. Peter's Seminary

London - Canada



for us to get used to the idea that a layman can know anything much about theology.

The word layman reminds me to mention that you will be the second in 20 years to spend a night under this roof. A layman at our table is unusual; a layman as guest for a few days is practically unheard of. This does not mean that there was any hesitation over receiving you, nor that you have any reason to expect anything but a kind and sincere welcome. It merely illustrates again what I was trying to convey in my last letter --- that our attitude is that we are conducting a training school for parish-priests, nor primarily an academic institution at all, so that the occasion for guests like yourself simply does not arise.

And in spite of all our limitations I feel sure we shall do you good and lift your spirits. Because this is indeed a seminary with all the essentials present: friends living together like the oil in Abraham's beard; a happy crowd of students, not too big to handle; and the constant tacit assumption on the part of all that the one thing that matters is to be a good, holy, sensible priest. I am glad you are coming, because a couple of days with us will show you as no explanation could do how urgent it is to safeguard what we have, while we try patiently and prudently to achieve what ~~we~~ remains to be done.

The agenda of that curriculum conference has come to hand. Some of it sounds a bit screwy but, since it is to protect them against screwiness that the London Board is sending me to Toronto, I can't very well complain. Anyhow it adjourns Monday noon, so that I will be back in the afternoon at the ~~latest~~ latest, and perhaps even in the morning.

Father Ring is to meet you at the airport.

Sincerely in Christ

G. Durand

# St. Peter's Seminary

London, Canada

February 8, 1953

My Dear Charles,

I have been very long indeed in getting around to this letter but must plead almost constant press of work since the Christmas vacation.

My main purpose is to tell you how much I enjoyed and profited by your visit. Your lecture here made a great hit, particularly with the rector, although it is hard to say how lasting the effect will be. Anyhow he spoke at once of getting you to address the annual conference of our priests in the fall and you may be sure I will remind him of it in due course. The prospect is not as bright, though, as it would have been before the accession of the present bishop. The latter had prudence and magnanimity enough to confirm our rector as vicar-general, even though their opinions were sometimes at variance during the years in which the former bishop was still alive but hardly able to manage things, but he can hardly be expected to lean upon him as his predecessor used to do, and I am not sure how a suggestion about that conference of ours will be received. But you have struck a good blow in the cause and have made it much easier for me to spread the propaganda here. The great obstacle to be faced, of course, is not one against which any weapons but those of prayer and patience can be expected to prevail. As I have explained before, what has to be worn away or undermined is an habitual attitude of mind, a traditional concept of the good parish-priest, carrying with it a concept of theology, not as a science, but as a sort of course in first-aid for souls. There I am exaggerating a little, but I know you will understand.

Putting all that aspect of the matter aside, let me say again that it was a great joy to see you again and to have your conversation for a couple ~~of~~ <sup>of</sup> days. Whether <sup>or not</sup> I can ever wangle an official invitation to come for a lecture, please do consider yourself always welcome should you want to go to Delhi again, or merely pause to enlighten the mind and warm the spirits of this disciple. Indeed, I will take it as a favour if you will do even this much -- let me know if you are ever passing through London by train in either direction. I will jump in and ride with you as far as Windsor or Toronto and count myself fortunate. (Such a trip could nearly always be made to fit in with some business in either place anyhow). You have more to offer to your friends than intelligence. It is your warm heart and simple ~~faith~~ faith which do me good.

I am sending along a photo of a second Korean statue, one of the same group before the tomb of the 16th Century king. I had hoped ~~to~~ also to have a larger version of the god of War but the fellow who took these pictures has lost the negative temporarily and we must wait until he turns it up again. The present specimen is supposed to be the god of Wisdom. At first I thought it inferior in power to the other one, but now I am not so sure. If one recalls the distinction between the practical and the speculative, particularly as implying a totally different direction of the mind in each case, one begins to see what the sculptor was driving at. The bull-neck and slightly bent head of the god of War, together with the position of the hands on the sword and the sombre eyes, convey the impression of a great brooding intelligence, aimed like a weapon

# St. Peter's Seminary

London, Canada

to dominate the field of action before it. Now, the other figure has an entirely different air. Indeed it is extraordinary and perhaps inexplicable how the artist has conveyed the impression that this figure's spirit is not with us at all, but has withdrawn itself from the body and its transient surroundings to give itself up to some remote contemplation. Again, if the sculptor conceived of all wisdom as partaking of the nature of mathematical science, the marked geometric features of his design might be explained. I am struck by the symmetrical triangles of the sleeves, collar, beard, and lines on the upper lip. And ~~it~~ is it absurd to find an approach to infinity suggested in the parallel lines of the girdle, which are carried on upwards by the parallelogram of the document held in the fingers? That stylised document is very effective, it seems to me, in detaching our eye from the base of the statue, in lifting it upward toward the countenance and in encouraging us to consider what lies behind that forehead ---- whereas, in the case of the god of War, we are more concerned to guess what is to come forth.

I hope also to send you, when I am able to get hold of a second one, a copy of the poems of Dylan Thomas, a modern Welsh poet. I am determined that you shall see his work in the hope that we may meet again at some time or other and that I may hear what you think of him. He is a great favorite of mine, although I rarely understand what he is driving at, because he seems so poetic a poet. The language of metaphor is a native, unsought speech for him; and I have the impression that, however strange and new his work seems now, the day will come when it will appear as lucid and traditional as that of any of the great poets of the past. I will indicate in the copy I send the pieces which seem to me to deserve particular attention, although it will not surprise me if you disagree with my choices.

You are always desperately busy while at home in Quebec, I know, but I hope you can find time to just send me a couple of references for the following problem. When I finish the De Principiis with my beginners in philosophy, I would like to go on, as you advised, with something more thorough on motion, quantity and time. The references you have already supplied on motion and time are quite sufficient for my own abilities as well as those of the class, but I am badly stuck over the problem of quantity. One or two of my lads are sharp enough to put the question: Why must a composite of matter and form be corporeal or have the accident of quantity? and that is something I have never been able to answer. I have a certain passion for coherence and therefore am reluctant to deal with quantity in itself before I show how it is connected with what has gone before. In book VI of the Physics, it is established that every mobile must be divisible, and perhaps this is the proof I am looking for, although it seems to be in a queer place. To be divisible surely means to possess quantity and so I think I could show even my poor babes that quantity is bound to follow upon mobility. But, if that is the right line to take, what in hang does St. Thomas mean by the motion which he says ~~any~~ is consequent only upon quantity and the other accidents? (II, iii, 5) First you have mobility as demanding quantity, then quantity as a necessary preliminary to mobility. If I had to answer the difficulty on my own, my solution would be very simple indeed. Matter, form and privation are the principles which make motion possible; and anything ~~sub~~ constituted by these principles must possess quantity. Actual motion, then, is always of a quantified object, and it is therefore

# St. Peter's Seminary

London, Canada

actual motion which St. Thomas has in mind when he speaks of motion as necessarily consequent upon quantity and the other accidents.

I am sorry now to have written as much as this about the thing and did not intend to go so far when I began. Please resist the temptation to explain it all to me at length --- I am not worth it --- but just indicate some passages I could mull over .

Father Ring told me the news of the happy arrival of your latest and I hope Zoe had an easy time of it. Please offer her my kindest regards. I must end my letter now, or it will be on my desk for days. It is curious how busy life can become, with so little in the way of visible accomplishment.

Best wishes and prayers

*A. Durand*

### AN INTERESTING VARIANT

of your story about the lady who had the misfortune to "dévisser le nombril de son mari". (Do you remember?)

I passed on your yarn to a friend and he at once gave me this curious Americanised version of it.

A young fellow had suffered from birth a curious deformity. In place of his navel he seemed to have the head of a large bolt or screw. His parents had taken him to a number of medical men during his childhood, but they could only marvel at the phenomenon without being able to suggest any remedy. In due course he reached manhood and was drafted into the army. His various postings carried him finally to India. In that country his attention was attracted by the exploits of those queer religious figures, the fakirs and, finally, urged on by his comrades, he brought to the attention of one of them the peculiar object in the centre of his abdomen. The old fakir showed no trace of surprise and observed that there was a very easy treatment for the thing if the victim was annoyed by it. When asked what the treatment was, his reply was "Moonlight". The young American was at first completely baffled, but after further questioning, learned that the fakir simply meant what he said. All the sufferer had to do was to expose his stomach to the full light of the moon and all would be well.

So, upon the next night of full moon, the young soldier decided to give the thing a try and, standing in the full radiance of the planet, he pulled up his shirt and let the light fall upon his singular navel. After about ten minutes, he tried the bolt with his fingers and found to his astonishment that it was now a bit loose. He thereupon sat down, ready now to give these potent rays a chance to do their work properly, and lying back, allowed the light to fall upon him for a full hour. When he tried the bolt again, he could unscrew it easily and eventually, with a little click, it came right out and there he was holding in triumphantly in his fingers.

But when he stood up his ass fell off.



(30 Novembre 1953)

Dear Father Surand,

As soon as the last instalment of my series of articles on "le problème de la mort de Marie" has appeared, I will send you the whole. A Franco-American, Miss Angeline Bruchard, is making an English translation, which is to be published ~~appear~~ in our *Revue théologique et philosophique* in nr. 1 of 1952. <sup>came out</sup> When the first half ~~appeared~~ in the *Revue théologique de Québec* I would like you to see it, and, of course, make the necessary alterations.

Though <sup>it is my own</sup> ~~the author's~~, this is an important piece of work, and I dare believe it solves the problem, without novitates. ~~It is~~ It is the solution I had suggested from the beginning, as you can see in the first part, written June-July 1952. However, it ~~was~~ was more fortune that (a) I lost ~~my~~ <sup>the</sup> notes for the second half in August of that year, and lacked time and courage ~~to~~ to do them all over again, (b) and that the Philosophy of Nature text-book I'm working on obliged me to study in detail the question of the "instant" in books VI and VIII of the Physics. I sent a long study on this precise point to the Roman Acad. of St Thomas, <sup>where</sup> ~~it was~~ <sup>it was</sup> received. They don't suspect, of course, the end ~~of~~ <sup>it serves</sup> the serpent's prudence!

And so I managed to ~~express~~ <sup>express</sup> with exactness what I had suspected, but would have stated vaguely had I worked on the basis of the original notes.

Have you made a translation of the "de principiis naturae"? If so, please send me a copy. If it is available in MS only, I could have it typed here. A translation would be most useful for my book.

I miss you here as much as ever.

P.S. I'm sending you a set of notes. ~~I prepared for the students~~ "Les termes contradictoires..." is a footnote taken from my ~~article~~ Roman Academy article. "Nécessaire existe..." is a paragraph from the same. The other paper <sup>were requested by the students</sup> ~~I prepared for the students~~ who <sup>had</sup> ~~lost~~ lost in the ~~expulsion of~~ <sup>expulsion of</sup> Brault and Estienne <sup>made</sup> and wanted some diagrams. I now wonder if I shouldn't have simplified

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a paragraph from the same. The other paper ~~I prepared for the students~~ who had  
lost in the ~~examination of Aristotle and E. Thomassin~~  
maze and wanted some diagrams. I now wonder if I shouldn't have simplified

Aristotle's clumsy symbolism, by using the modern, ~~which~~ ~~is so much more~~ But then, the students ~~will~~ appreciate how far he could go with how little. Our dependence ~~on~~ on symbols is an extraordinary thing. It reminds me of our little ones who, when they first learn how to count, invariably take the number 5 (all fingers) to stand for what is presumably the infinite. Only the other day I was struck by a passage in St. Thomas. "Nam paucis Christi fuit tantae virtutis, quod sufficit ad expiandum omnia peccata totius mundi, etiam si essent centum millia"! There certainly are, ~~that~~ ~~many~~ and Lord help us!

December begins tomorrow, so it is  
about time that I ~~answer~~ answer your  
letter of some weeks ago, to ~~thank~~ welcome  
you on your visit to Quebec. — assure you of our

I'm still plodding along, covering  
every line and word of Aristotle's  
natural histories, ~~deleting~~ cutting out  
whatever can hold no longer,  
retaining what I consider perennial.

~~By~~ By Christmas I will send  
you a ~~rough~~ detailed plan, as well  
as the chapter on chance and fortune.

The latter being perhaps the most  
difficult of them all, you will be able  
to judge whether or no ~~my~~ my ~~exposition~~ <sup>general mode of</sup>  
is adequate for beginners.

In the course of last Spring's  
extended lecture tour (by the way,  
all outside lectures are out until  
~~my~~ my text is at the press) I talked  
to a considerable number of ~~philosophy~~ College  
teachers in philosophy. To meet their  
requirements, my text should be a  
one semester course at the rate of  
three hours a week. The field to be <sup>and divided</sup> composed <sup>in view of</sup>  
covered is ~~very~~ enormous, but I think  
I can manage to do it. (But we'll  
talk this over when you come to Quebec.)

The only absence I foresee is a week-end  
in Montreal (no lectures!). ~~at my old university.~~

~~My~~

~~I have seen~~ I'm set on reaching the  
limit this side of March 1.

December 1881



December 10 1953

Dear Charles,

It was a great pleasure to hear from you, and it was like old times to be faced with your notes on contradictory terms etc. I have been chewing on them a little, having a sense of duty towards anything that can help me in the course of modern philosophy, which I teach in a fumbling way. But, alas, my time is so taken up with deciding people's vocations, preaching in parishes, lecturing to nuns on the religious life, composing conferences and papers on everything from the Separate School question to sex instruction, that I rarely find time for true study and have made no real advance in philosophy since I left Quebec. Not that I regret my lot. Of course, one does what seems to be most urgent & profitable at the moment in the Cause, and it is surely also what one is best fitted for.

Be sure that I shall be glad to see your article on the problem of the Virgin's death and to suggest any improvements in the English which

St. Peter's Seminary

London - Canada



seem worth making. Our vacation begins on the 19<sup>th</sup> and I will have time to examine it carefully at least by then, if not before.

I am sorry to be obliged to tell you that as yet I have not made an English translation of the De Principiis. The task would not be a difficult one for me now, I think, and, if I had a secretary and a dictating machine, it would not be a long one either. Last summer it occurred to me to go at it, but I lost my time in other things. Anybody I could do to help with that text-book on the philosophy of nature would seem to me very worth-while and, if I can find leisure to translate even some parts of St. Thomas' little treatise, I will send them to you. Meantime I hope you are pushing ahead with the text-book. It is certainly needed and I am confident that sooner or later it should supplant all that multitude of superficial manuals now being used.

Should you ever wish to stop off here in order to pay another visit to

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London - Canada



Well hi, you can always count on a welcome. I have laid in a supply of Scotch against your coming. It is not Citty Sack, but my brother-in-law, who gave it to me, assures me that nobody who drinks Scotch will turn up his nose at it. (Johnny Walker Black Label). Unless some enemy discovers my hiding-place, you may count on finishing it off, no matter how long your visit is deferred. I find no difficulty in practising that sort of abstinence.

Did you notice the death of Dylan Thomas in New York lately? Only 39. A real loss to the literary world. He was a poet of true originality who was truly traditional — no fancy ideas on the nature of art — simply went at it with a will.

Sincerely in Christ

A. Durand

Jan 3 (1954)

Dear Charles,

I have got some of it done and would have been able to do more, hang it all, if I had brought more of it with me. I am spending the week-end here in Wingham with my brother.

I will tackle the rest as soon as possible but must warn you that our Bishop and a few other people have designs on my leisure

Sincerely

A. D. D. D.



# St. Peter's Seminary

London, Canada

?  
(1954)

Jan 18

Dear Charles,

I am sending the rest of the article which you asked me to look over. It has been rather a rough job. I should really go over the whole thing one more, with a sharper eye on the French, but I foresaw that I could do little more with it until the first week in February, and thought it better to send this back to you, since you seem anxious to get it printed.

I would recommend that you take a good look at it yourself, though. The translator seems to have betrayed you in some cases and I am not sure at times whether I myself have been able to recover the meaning.

The problem interested me more than I thought it would and I am anxious to see what you do with it in the second half.

Sincerely in Christ  
A.W.

St. Peter's Seminary  
London - Canada



Jan 12 <sup>?</sup> (1954)

Dear Charles,

I am sending page 10, boldly revised by myself. (I thought I might as well touch it up while typing it) And I will name the first paragraph of p. 22, and the second of p. 34, as especially puzzling. They are not examples of difficult doctrine, but perhaps of Flemish facetiousness. Unless your irony is allowed duty in some form as its nourishment, it tends to become diffuse and vague.

I know you are in a hurry for this Introduction, and I am truly sorry to be so much delayed. The simple fact is that I am so harassed by other jobs and engagements that I can't sit down to it. If Providence should send you another amanuensis, please be sure that I will not be offended to hand over the job to him. Meantime you must control your soul in patience.

I must turn now to a brief article on vocations for a diocesan publication. The printer and the Bishop are waiting for it — and there you are.

St. Peter's Seminary  
London - Canada



I am sorry about Domingue, and hope  
for Zoe's sake that you will soon be in  
regular communication with him at least.

But he is surely old enough to feed for  
himself, and may build himself a good  
life without a top-heavy load of education.  
(If only I had been born with less brains  
I would have escaped the daily wretched  
experience of struggling with problems  
which are too much for me.)

Faithfully yours

A. Danand

# St. Peter's Seminary

London - Canada

Feb. 28, 1954

Dear Charles,

By this time you will doubtless have a letter from A212, giving permission for use of his picture. As I thought, he was quite willing to accept some free advertising. In case he does not mention the S.H. of his picture it was "Nativity — for a chapel dedicated to St Joseph" or something like that, and it is now the altar-piece of the chapel of the Motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Hamilton, Ont. — by Philip A212.

A little note inside your book cover, or below the picture, explaining what A212 was driving at might be a good idea, if the lay-out of the book permits it. He is quite original, it seems to me, and his rather dynamic style of composition and restriction to two dimensions may make his work bewildering to those who do not have much acquaintance with art. Superficially, his picture will be a sharp contrast to your Fra Angelico; but, if understood, an excellent match for it — the good old, wine in a new bottle.

## St. Peter's Seminary

London - Canada

I am anxious to see G. 212 succeed, as I think he can do real service to the Church. So far he has had only two important commissions and, with none now on hand, his future looks a bit dark. It would be sad if such a talent were forced to turn aside from liturgical work and take to portraits, landscape, or brewery-sponsored city-scenes as a means of earning his living. He is planning a trip east soon, to see if he can get anything to do for churches in Ottawa, Montreal etc. Would there be anything for him in Quebec, I wonder? There is to be a new chapel on the University campus, is there not? Anyhow, I am sure you will not mind if I send him to you, should he reach Quebec. Perhaps you could present him to M<sup>rs</sup> Parent, or M<sup>rs</sup> Vandry?

---

I do a page or two of your M.S. when I am able, but life is a terrible rush here until the end of May. It is even worse for me than usual just now, since the Bishop has assigned me a special job. As part of the Manxian history contest organized by

# St. Peter's Seminary

London - Canada

The Oblates of N. W. du Cap, I am to write a "research essay with documentation and bibliography" on the Rosary Crusade which was launched in this diocese in 1948. I told him (by letter) what I thought of the project, and he thanked me for my "honest expression of opinion" but signified that I was to get on with it. So now I am studying old newspaper files, letters, and so forth and wondering how I can avoid naming all the prelates and big moguls without getting into trouble. A hell of a thing.

I am enclosing one of G212's folders — not entirely a credit to him — for much blurb — but it gives you his address.

Sincerely in Christ  
A Durand

St. Peter's Seminary

London - Canada



April 20, 1954

Dear Charles,

Thank you for the copy of your book. I have begun to read the chapter on St. Joseph at once, since you are going to rescue me in a difficulty I was in to compose a lecture or two on him for the Sisters of St. Joseph here.

I must express again my regret that I cannot get on with the task of revising the English version. There is no choice for me but to satisfy the Bishop's demands on my time before I tackle anything else. It is a pity, since I do not believe it would take me very long to finish your job.

Your book is a beautiful example of printing and production and I am sure Aziz will be gratified at the place assigned to his picture. It is certainly an appropriate image for a great deal of what you are teaching, not only about St. Joseph, but also about the relationship between our Lady and her Son.

Faithfully in Christ

*G. Durand*

Quebec, May 5th, 1954.

Reverend Father Anthony Durand,  
St. Peter's Seminary,  
LONDON,  
Ontario.

Dear Father Durand,

Here are the last pages of Miss Angeline Bouchard's translation. Take a look at the last section of the third Appendix of my book, beginning page 214, ending page 222, and see if it is worth including in the English edition. If you do, I will have Miss Bouchard translated as well.

Don't worry if you do not have the time to revise these pages now. We are all subjected to contingency, and most of our life is spent waiting for the things we want to do or want done.

Spring has finally got me down. I must say that in Canada it is the season I like least of all. I spend it in a state of fatigue and insomnia, not to mention how silly I feel and want to act. If I had someone near me as fundamentally irrational as myself, the custodian of the "bier public" would take us straight off to Saint Michel Archange -- the local institution for such people.

Philip Aziz's painting on the jacket of my book is a great success, from what I hear. Everyone thinks that the combination of Fra Angelico and Aziz is a very felicitous one. So you may tell him that. Unlike philosophers, who shouldn't give a damn, artists must be successful and must know it too. It all helps the kind of madness they need to be good artist.

It is getting time I see you again. In late June I am to attend a Symposium at Notre-Dame University. If you are around at that time, I intend to make a stop over at London, preferably on my way back, which means the very last days of June or the first of July. But, don't postpone any fishing trip for that.

Cordially yours,

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Charles De Koninck.



# St. Peter's Seminary

London, Canada

May 18, 1954

Dear Charles,

I am delighted to hear of the prospect of a visit from you. You are not very precise about dates, so that I have waited before answering until I was able to predict just what I would be doing towards the end of the month. I will describe what lies ahead of me and will then make you an invitation which I hope you will be able to accept.

On June 13 I have a sermon to give in Windeer, at the first Mass of one of our young men. On the following day our annual retreat begins. And, on the 21st a second retreat, for the other half of the clergy. Hence, for the last two full weeks of June, that is, until the 25th, the Seminary is packed with priests on retreat, and I will be either making one myself or seeking hospitality myself (since all rooms are commandeered). On June 26th I have undertaken to help my brother in his parish of Wingham, and every week-end thereafter until September. But now I come to the important date. On June 27 or early on the 28th, I move into a little cottage on the shore of Lake Huron near Goderich, which I have rented for the summer. That is 60 miles from London -- about an hour and a half by car. There will be no one with me during the first week that I am to be there and what I am hoping is that you may be able to stop off during that time. It is a humble little abode; but there are two beds, and the other necessities of existence.

I am sure that you would enjoy the locality, and I will be glad to come down to London to fetch you and also bring you back to your train or plane. There is only this difficulty: that a visit to Delhi would be rather ~~difficult~~ hard to work in, because Delhi lies south at about the same distance as Goderich to the north. If you will get out a map, you will see what I mean.

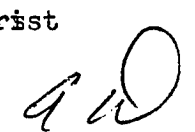
If, as you say, you are to pass through London during the very last days of June or the first days of July, it should be possible for us to realise this little plan. Indeed, it looks like a providential coincidence since, as I mentioned above, there is to be no one at all with me in the cottage during the time you mentioned.

(Lake Huron can be still quite cold at that season; but you have plenty of insulation and will bear it better than I can).

When you are able, please let me know whether you can make it. Meantime, as you say, we are inextricably mired in contingency, and must resign ourselves to constant changes in our prospects.

I have finished the job I was doing for the Bishop and am now rushing through exam papers, which must all be marked for Friday. After that date, I hope to go back at your own MS. Meantime, please give me a little time to answer your inquiry about the value of the last chapter. I must take another careful look at it.

Sincerely in Christ



Quebec, May 25th, 1954.

Reverend Anthony Durand,  
St. Peter's Seminary,  
London, Canada.

Dear Father Durand,

It is now certain that I shall not join you at your modest cottage, since the Symposium will end only on July 2nd, and I will need all the last days of June to fit my mind to the subject I promised to speak on. Yet I would have enjoyed spending a couple of days with you in a primitive camp, showing off my gift for cooking -- the one that disciplined Boepka until she could fry the best steak you ever ate. We also could have taken up again the subject of fishing with fly, net, or dynamite and discussed the unexcelled taste ~~of~~ fresh herring and fresh cod (especially of the milt and the liver). Now this will have to wait.

But something that I am really worrying is my book on Philosophy of Nature. I want to submit it to you before forwarding it to the publisher. Without further delay I will send you a few lessons of Book II of the Physics, with a résumé of what precedes. What I want is your opinion on my mode of exposition, I haven't bothered about the English, so far, and I'm not sending this first draft for corrections of style. I want to know whether you, as a teacher of beginners in Philosophy of Nature, believe it may be useful, as a first approach, and fit to be put into the hands of BA students as a text-book.

For a final revision -- I can't finish it until the beginning of September -- I would like to have you around, paying your trip and board here until your Seminary opens, as well as a reasonable honorarium. I'm afraid this will be difficult for you. But I'm just trying. If you remember, we can do a lot together in a very short time.

Most cordially yours,

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Charles De Koninck.

R

June 6

(1954)

Dear Charles,

I'm a good notion to drink up that bottle of Scotch all by myself. Doubtless it is slowly evaporating through the cork anyway. Don't be too disappointed, when you do make a stop in London, to find that I have consoled myself for the long delay and that you get nothing but Coca Cola.

I presume that, after July 2, you will be busy with summer school. Well, it is a hard schedule you are setting yourself, and I envy you the energy which carries you through all this lecturing, traveling and writing.

With regard to your proposal to have me lend a hand in the final revision of your book on Natural Phil, I am indeed obliged to admit that it would not be convenient for me to come to Quebec at that time. But I am keen to see that book appear, and, if you are in genuine earnest, and do sincerely believe that the help I could offer is worth the trouble, I am quite ready to begin manœuvring to make a visit possible.

The Seminary opens with a retreat on Sept. 13<sup>th</sup>. In a good cause the Pastor will not object if I show up on the 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup>. At present I am committed to a couple of lectures on Sept 2., which I don't like to cancel; and to replacing my brother here in Wingham, who takes his vacation in the first 2 weeks of September. I will have to try to get him a substitute — and that may not be easy.

Let's say that you can probably count on me from Sept 3-19 approximately. I will let you know definitely as soon as I can. Meanwhile, should anything happen to lead you to revise your plan (perhaps the appearance of someone as useful as I, and more accessible) please let me know.

I am with my brother for this week-end. and hope he will agree with us on the primacy of the speculative, but haven't mentioned the matter yet.

Best wishes for your symposium at Notre Dame

Sincerely in Christ  
A. A. Demand

Should we manage to clear the decks  
for the first couple of weeks in September,  
why not come here for the job? I could  
hold my cottage for a while longer. —

— And it is a cottage, not a "primitive  
camp". — a cottage; two bedrooms (of a sort)  
electric frig., stove (tiny), hot & cold water,  
and a lovely view. Two miles from a hotel  
where they dine you pretty well. (It was never  
my intention to rely on your cooking.)

Someone is always interrupting you in  
Quebec, as you know very well; and I can't  
work through the night to escape disturbances,  
as you do. — But I suppose you will need  
to have your bookshelves and your typist at  
hand, and would hardly be able to carry  
on a job like this book 700 miles from your  
base.

St. Peter's Seminary

London - Canada



Aug 4 (1954)

Dear Charles,

We have managed finally to work out an arrangement which should make it possible for me to come to Quebec about Sept. 4.

It may perhaps have come about that your book is not going on as rapidly as you expected (all my work is like that). If this is so, and you foresee that your final revision must be postponed, you have only to let me know. I could perhaps come during the Christmas vacation, although that is a busy time for the clergy in these parts. What has led me to fear that your work may have been interrupted is the fact that the chapters you were to send me have never come. Perhaps they have gone astray in our seminary, where some of my mail often gets temporarily lost.

Your offer to pay my expenses, I am afraid I must accept, if you are to have me at all. But there is no need of anything above expenses. Should you make some real money out of the book, perhaps I may be willing to accept a small slice; otherwise I am quite ready to work for

St. Peter's Seminary

London - Canada



and, through them, the spread of philosophy  
and theology as living forces.

When life is so crowded, and we have to  
make such drastic selections of tasks for the  
time available, it does not seem to me that  
you are using your great gifts to best advantage  
by taking up these blessed controversies.  
Any how, you could get me to Quebec for a  
project like a beginner's text in Nat. Phil.  
I would not budge for all the arguments over  
the death of the Virgin that will ever be proposed.

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Let me assure you again, that it will  
cause me no trouble at all if your work is  
not at a stage when my help is worth while,  
— quite the contrary, indeed. So don't  
hesitate to let me know. I will wait for  
a letter from you before making any more  
arrangements.

(I would like to stay, if possible,  
with the Franciscan sisters on Clair  
Fontaine. Can you let me know the number?

I think it was 144. Or perhaps you  
could arrange this for me, if you have any  
influence there. It used to be quite  
cheap and much quieter than the Maison  
Pi X II).

Sincerely in Christ  
A. Desmedt

August 20th, 1954.

Reverend Father Anthony Durand,  
St. Peter's Seminary, 144, Claire-Fontaine St.,  
London, Canada. I am very glad to hear of your success,  
and I am sure you will be able to do more and more for  
the Church in the future.

Dear Father Durand,

I presume that you received the sample of the work I'm doing. I don't know whether anything had been sent to you before. At any rate, I have decided to use still another method. I'm translating St. Thomas's Commentary, which I will quote, in toto, together with Aristotle's text. Nothing else will satisfy me -- not after having used this method for twenty years.

But those pages will give you a general idea of the kind of enucleation I want to make, and of the kind of thing that I believe should be added in view of our time and milieu. What you have, there, is in no way final. I hope send you, before you get here, a copy of the very first lesson -- which, in my mind, is the most difficult inasmuch as I don't know too well where to stop explaining certain general points made by St. Thomas in the first four numbers.

I will be far from finished when you come, but that does not matter. The whole thing is that I will not be able to find my bearings until I have gone through a few lessons with you, arranging them to your satisfaction. I need you for the English, but I need you even more inasmuch as you are about the only person who appreciates, in actu signato, going from the magis notum to the minus notum. Only until I can satisfy you on this count will I feel sure that I'm doing things right. Once I am reassured I can continue by myself and then send you the rest as I go on. If, in the end, we have to get together again, and you can't come to Quebec, I'll go to London. I now hope to finish by mid-October but I would like to send in Book I before the end of September.

Your room will be ready at 144, Claire-Fontaine St., for the fourth of September and on. All your conditions are accepted with gratitude. I'm afraid -- and I'm



not telling Boepka -- that the new method I decided upon may not be as popular as a brief exposé might have been; but then no matter how badly I need to make money, I can't make it my first aim -- not when one has Aristotle (who had plenty of dough) and St. Thomas (who had no need of it) as masters, to be kept alive.

So, I'm expecting you on the fourth.

Most cordially,

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Charles De Koninck.

August 30, 1954

Dear Charles,

As I passed through London on my way to Windsor, where I must give the pair of lectures which is delaying my arrival in Quebec, I found your letter.

So far as I can make out, you are abandoning the project of a simple introduction to Natural Philosophy, and I am so distressed by this decision that I feel compelled to write down my reasons. It is true that we are to meet very soon, but I am often inarticulate in conversation, and you would interrupt me with counter-objections anyway.

To me it is terrible that you should turn away from the idea of a simple text-book for beginners, since it is the thing the Church most needs and which no one but you can give us. Philosophy, as you know only too well, is in a parlous state in most of our schools. Its two great and closely related weaknesses are incoherence and miscellaneousness. All our text-books and teachers are in the same plight: they have some hold on a handful of notions, but they do not see what connexion there is between them and so never produce anything that is in order. The cause of this condition has often been stated by you. These men are simply unaware of the mystery and depth in the simple principles, and they don't know where to start -- can't find the beginning. As a consequence ~~there~~ there is a fatal cleavage between the learned heads of the post-grad. schools, and the ordinary fellows like me, who are trying to prepare people for theology, or to give them the essentials of philosophy. The men who should be leading the field are wasting their time in vague foundationless speculations, or in meaningless research. The men who are training the rank and file have no tools and can never hope for any from the intellectuals. Our manuals are not the work of our post-graduate schools, where the big-shots could not possibly make a thing simple, and would consider such an enterprise beneath them; they are the work of fifth-raters, for the most part, and are little better than strings of lecture-notes.

There is no hope of changing the post-graduate schools by direct attack. Our only hope, it seems to me, is in a revolt from below. What we need is a simple, brief introduction to philosophy, and no one can do it but you. What we need is a book from which a student can get a taste of what real philosophy is like, a book even he can understand, a book in which he will be able to sense the power of simple ideas. The result would be that he would be able to judge for himself when he heard or read the important nonsense or directionless observations of the men of reputation, a book which will make him rebel against the post-graduate school which he is likely to attend. Before the big-shots get hold of him, he will know that you have to pay close attention to simple things, that order is everything, that it IS possible to put deep thoughts into plain language.

Now a formal full-length treatise, such as you now appear to have in mind, will never do it: it will simply leave us where we were. A beginner can't use it, nor can his teacher. The learned figures in the post-g. schools will dismiss it as little better than a translation, and will assure themselves that true scholars like themselves always consult the original documents, which they do not know how to read. In order to learn philosophy a teacher is necessary. It can't be seized otherwise. The nearest thing to a teacher is a good simple text book.

I am sure you have already prayed over this piece of work and, if your decision is the result of much thought and prayer, it is the only one to follow, and I must accept it too. But, if you have not prayed or prayed much, I hereby command you as a priest to get down on your knees and beg Him to lead you to produce what His Church most needs, and what will do most good for the cause of simple truth. Meanwhile please be sure of the help of my own poor prayers.

Well, this will be matter for argument between us when we meet, but it is because I am so sure that I will be no match for you, that I get in this first ~~xxxx~~ broadside.

Sincerely in Christ

A handwritten signature, possibly 'G.D.', in dark ink, located below the typed signature.