

Apostolic of the Midland District, has arranged for them. I do not much like a pet in a bag—not a pig. I like greatly to see and speak first but this cannot be [a portion of the *autograph* is torn off].

May God bless you and all with you. Tell Miss Reddin I got her letter, and set [got?] a Sister to copy the enclosed lines for her.<sup>56</sup> She admired them greatly.

Your ever affectionate

Sister M. Teresa—for Galway 6 months—Sister Leahy to remain—3 postulants.  
M. C. McAuley

We return to Kingstown in 3 weeks by Dr. Murray's desire on the spot.

Ashamed of my writing I got Sister Mary Teresa to write the other letters—but I know you would rather have this—such as it is, and I owe you all in my power—and I take pleasure in giving you my poor tribute of affection and esteem.

*Autograph: Limerick*

167. To Sister M. Elizabeth Moore [Baggot Street]  
Limerick Thursday [March 19, 1840]

My Dearest Sister M. Elizabeth

No words could describe what I felt—on reading the first line of your letter. Though the accounts from Carlow were as hopeless—yet I fear much in this case.<sup>57</sup> The dear sweet innocent creature—you will indeed have a child in heaven.

<sup>55</sup> The words "a pet ... first" have been supplied from the handcopy in the Baggot Street book labeled "Annals" (see note 52). What Catherine McAuley means is that she does "not much like" accepting the Birmingham postulants sight unseen, without an opportunity to interview them before admitting them, but since Dr. Walsh has selected them, her preference "cannot be." One of the proverbial uses of "pig" is the expression "To buy (or sell) a pig in a poke (or bag)" which means "to buy anything without seeing it or knowing its value" (OED)—an expression that fits Catherine's concern, though she is trying to avoid using the word "pig" for the "ladies from Birmingham"! Probably the large portion of this autograph letter that has been torn off contained more wording than the handcopy has supplied. <sup>56</sup> Neumann (203) and Bolster (125) both read the words "set a Sister" as "got a Sister," but the middle letter of the word is clearly "e". However, the word may be "set" or "get." Catherine McAuley is saying that (or asking that) some lines, presumably of poetry, which she encloses in this letter were (or may be) copied for Joanna Reddan. It seems doubtful, though possible, that she would ask to have the copying done in Limerick when she could as easily have it done at Baggot Street. The intriguing question is, which lines of poetry? Although this is pure speculation, the poem in question is possibly the extant autograph transcription, in Catherine McAuley's handwriting, of selected lines from a long poem by Hannah More (1745-1833), titled "Sensibility: An Epistle to the Honourable Mrs. Boscawen." Catherine's untitled transcription begins with the line, "Since trifles make the sum of human things," and has sometimes been given the title "Trifles." The transcription is included at the end of the present volume (Letter 323), among undated manuscripts in Catherine McAuley's handwriting, with notes describing the use she made of Hannah More's much longer poem. <sup>57</sup> The illness—presumably typhus—of Mary Teresa Vincent Potter in Limerick.

God will support you in this great affliction—His Holy Will be done. If He calls her away it will be to shield her from some impending evil—or to exercise your patience—and to try to do you love Him as much when he takes—as when He gives. Some grand motive must actuate all His visitations.

I will be in great anxiety to hear—though I will be agitated at the sight of the next letter.

May God bless and preserve you—and grant you all—humble, cheerful submission to the Divine Will.

Your ever affectionate

M. C. McAuley

*Autograph: Limerick*

168. To Sister M. Elizabeth Moore [Baggot Street]  
Limerick Saturday morning [March 21, 1840]

My Darling Sister M. Elizabeth

I did not think any event in this world could make me feel so much.<sup>58</sup> I have cried heartily—and implored God to comfort you—I know He will. This has not been done in anger. Some joyful circumstance will soon prove that God is watching over your concerns which are all his own—but without the cross the real crown cannot come. Some great thing which He designs to accomplish—would have been too much—without a little bitter in the cup. Bless and love the Fatherly hand which has hurt you. He will soon come with both hands filled with favors and blessings. My heart is sore—not on my account—nor for the sweet innocent spirit that has returned to her Heavenly Father's Bosom—but for you.

You may be sure I will go see you—if it were much more out of the way—and indeed I will greatly feel the loss that will be visible on entering the convent.

Earnestly & humbly praying God to grant you His Divine consolation—and to comfort and bless all the dear Sisters—I remain

your ever most affectionate

M. C. McAuley

*Autograph: Limerick*

169. To Sister M. Elizabeth Moore [Baggot Street]  
Limerick Tuesday, March 24, 1840

My ever Dear Sister M. Elizabeth

Your last letter was a great comfort to me. When I read it in the Community

<sup>58</sup> The death in Limerick on Friday, March 20, 1840, of Mary Teresa Vincent Potter, in her twenty-eighth year. <sup>59</sup> In Letter 166, Catherine McAuley had indicated that she could not stop in Limerick on her way to or from Galway (see note 54). Now she says she will come to Limerick no matter what the added distance (over 100 extra miles).