

will. "Be just & fear not." Acquit yourself with justice towards God—let no temporal consideration influence your words or actions, when the duty of your state is in question. I could not think any person with very cautious worldly views—worthy to be admitted to holy Profession. It is not a disposition to bestow gifts, like benevolent persons in the world, that bespeaks generosity of mind for the religious state. It is bestowing ourselves most freely and relying with unhesitating confidence on the Providence of God.²⁴

When our innocent—yet very sensible, Sister Chantell [de Chantall] (McCann) was about to hand over all she possessed, making it impossible to ever command one shilling, her Mother told her she ought to have some security, as many persons were of the opinion this House would not be established—and said to her, What would you do then? She answered—"Won't I have my sweet Lord?"—and sweet He was to her indeed to the very last moment.²⁵ Tho' we may not often have the consolation to meet such noble universal disengagement as hers—yet a spirit directly opposite, I humbly hope will never make its abode amongst us.

Do not fear offending any one. Speak as your mind directs and always act with more courage when the "mammon of unrighteousness" is in question. Let me know when you are closely pressed, and I will divide with you, be it ever so little.²⁶

I wish I could hear of your getting up a lottery or raffle occasionally. Sr. M. Teresa has made £80 in Galway at different times. If you had two good prizes—and all the rest trifles, you would sell £25 worth of tickets between this and Christmas at 1 s[hilling] per ticket—by giving 10 to every [one] you know to sell them. The drawing could be in the school room—3 blanks to a prize. We have just had one—and did not expend more than £1-10.

Write soon. Most earnestly praying God to direct and strengthen you—
I remain with great affection etc., etc.

M. C. McAuley

Give my best love to all.

Autograph: Bermondsey

²⁴ Evidently a novice preparing for profession of vows in Tullamore wished to set aside some of her own money for her future personal use, before she professed the vow of poverty by which she would forever renounce all right to administer any assets legally held in her name. Mary Ann Doyle, realizing that the Tullamore community was in need of professed members, may have been tempted to accede to the novice's wish, which Catherine McAuley calls a "very cautious worldly" view. Catherine then gives an important definition of the generosity of mind distinctive of vowed religious life. The next profession ceremony in Tullamore was held on October 18, 1841. ²⁵ Mary de Chantal McCann, the widow of Dr. John McCann, a Dublin physician, had entered the Baggot Street community in October 1832 and professed her vows on July 1, 1835. She died of typhus fever on October 27, 1837. See Letters 27 and 56. ²⁶ Catherine may be thinking of Matt. 6.24 and 1 Tim. 6.9-10. When the Tullamore community is in financial straits, she will divide with it whatever money the Baggot Street community has.

284. To Sister M. Frances Warde
Carlow

[Baggot Street]
[c. July 26-27, 1841]²⁷

My Dearest Sister M. Frances

Your letter this morning gratified me very much. The arrangement you propose seems very desirable, and if we could all start together,²⁸ I have no doubt that Sister Gibson would join at once. I have been speaking with her—she is a treasure to religion, a sweet docile animated creature, all alive—and delighted with her duties.

Sister M. Cecilia you know is a general favorite. Perhaps there never was a more beloved Mistress of Novices. They call the novaship—Paradise—tho' the best discipline is kept up. Her going away will make it easier for any novice or postulant to be moved.²⁹ Indeed it will be another great blow to poor Baggot Street—which has passed through many sorrows. The sweet little Scotch Sr. said to me—"What shall I do when Mother Cecilia is gone." I am so much confined to one room that they seldom see me before evening.³⁰

Do all you can to forward the Liverpool foundation. Sr. Fanny³¹ thinks she knows 2 who would join immediately—if Dr. Youens gets Beds, etc. Other matters could be got when you arrive. He says the House is very large. There is no time to spare.

Your ever affectionate

M. C. McAuley

Having heard from a Priest some unfavorable reports of Bermondsey, I wrote to Mr. Butler, begging him to tell me the real state. I this moment rec'd the enclosed—read it and send it again to me when you are writing. 2 left under angry circumstances, I believe they are enemies—Sr. Agnew is fond of *extremes* in piety, that is her greatest error. She wrote to me in the greatest alarm—about a most trifling matter—if you and I were to write on such subjects—we would never be done.³²

Autograph: Silver Spring

²⁷ Neumann dates this letter "[July 26, 1841]" (354); Bolster dates it "28 January 1841" (195), which cannot be correct, given the content of the letter (a response to Frances's response to Letter 282). ²⁸ For Liverpool and Birmingham, sailing from Kingstown in mid August. ²⁹ Catherine McAuley had already decided that Mary Cecilia Marmion would remain with the new Birmingham community for the first two or three months, until they got settled—taking over Catherine's own role of helper after she departed from Birmingham. ³⁰ Catherine's acknowledging that she is currently confined to one room, with its windows closed, during the day—probably the parlor on the street floor of the house—is her first extant indication that she is now forced to make some accommodation to ease her persistent cough. ³¹ Frances ("Fanny") Gibson.

³² Peter Butler's letter about the Bermondsey community is, unfortunately, not extant. In March 1841, according to the Bermondsey Annals, two novices in the community—Mary Bernard Murray and Mary Angela Browne—were dismissed for reasons of health and deficiency "in the requisite qualities and dispositions" (1:24), but Catherine McAuley would have heard about this at least by June when Clare Moore returned to Ireland. Of Clare Agnew's conduct as superior, the Bermondsey

Professed and 3 received—one for Liverpool. Doctor Pusie [Pusey] invited himself if quite agreeable.

Pray well for your ever affectionate
M. C. McAuley

Take care of my last born—Birr.

Present my respects to Doctor Spain and remember me to Mrs. Egan.

Autograph: Dublin, Mercy

281. To Dr. Thomas Youens¹⁹

Liverpool

[Baggot Street]
[c. July 24, 1841]

Respected Revd. Father

I this day received a letter from my dear Sister Warde of Carlow, speaking of your intended Institute. She tells me all the arrangements she intended to make—if she should be called upon—and they seem to me exceedingly good.

She makes me perfectly understand what Sisters she designed to give—who are truly desirable. Some of them would, I think, bring the usual portion. Indeed all she proposes, Revd. Father, far exceeds what we could do—and I am now as ardent as my youthful Sister, praying & trusting that nothing may retard the good work.

Very little preparation would be necessary on your part, Revd. Father, and we might sail together for Birmingham & Liverpool. I have been speaking with Sister Fanny G[ibson]—& find she would go at once with the Liverpool foundation.²⁰ Recommending myself, etc., etc., to your charitable remembrance.

I remain, etc., etc.
[M. C. McAuley]

Autograph: Silver Spring

¹⁹ This unsigned autograph is the draft of the letter Catherine McAuley sent to Thomas Youens, pastor of St. Nicholas Church, Copperas Hill, Liverpool, in the Lancashire District, where Dr. George Hilary Brown was vicar apostolic. The actual autograph letter sent to Dr. Youens has not been located. ²⁰ Catherine McAuley is now fully aware that she does not have the personnel at Baggot Street to send a foundation to Liverpool, except the postulant Jane Frances Gibson. She is doing her best to encourage Dr. Youens to seek a founding community from Carlow, with the hope that the two parties might travel together to Liverpool and Birmingham in August. Apparently Father James Maher and Dr. Youens were friends and had already had a conversation along these lines, which has occasioned Frances Warde's intended "arrangements." In Letter 250, written to Frances on March 29, 1841, Catherine had said: "I have been told two or three times that you are going to Liverpool ... Matters with you are not closed—or you would tell me." Catherine may have initially intended to send a foundation to Liverpool from Dublin, and she certainly wished to be informed of plans made in the various convents outside of Dublin, but it is probably exaggerated to say that she is simply "showing tolerance" of the arrangements Frances Warde is making (see Bolster, ed. 240).

282. To Sister M. Frances Warde
Carlow

[Baggot Street]
Saturday, July 24, 1841

My Dear Sr. M. Frances

A few days before Dr. Youens came to Dublin, our Sister Gibson had a letter from Doctor Brown, her Bishop, who seemed to wish to make arrangements here for Liverpool.²¹ If he has had any consultation with Dr. Griffiths of London, or Dr. Walshe [*sic*] of Birmingham they would endeavour to impress him with the feeling that establishments in England ought to be made from the chief or Mother House, as they term it, in Ireland, as they attribute whatever little difficulty has been found in Bermondsey to that want. And certainly in that instance more experience was required, to take down some of Sr. Agnew's self importance as to opinion and bring her well through a noviciate, but the case in question is a very different one.²² The Sister you offer as superior—is to remain—and her dispositions are well suited. Dr. Youens is so anxious, it is a pity to have any impediment, and if our little plans could be formed, perhaps we might sail together—after our ceremony. I think you would do well to send the enclosed note to Dr. Youens—(with Mr. Maher's approbation).²³ He would shew it to the Bishop who, I am told, is endeavouring to get more persons to come here for preparation—do it without delay.

Pray for your affectionate
M. C. McAuley

Autograph: Silver Spring

283. To Sister Mary Ann Doyle

Tullamore

Baggot Street
July 24, 1841

My Dear Sister Mary Ann

You are on the secure high road of the Cross—have the most strong and lively confidence that your Convent will be firmly established, for it certainly

²¹ Dr. Brown's letter (Letter 278) must have reached Dublin by July 17 or 18; evidently Dr. Thomas Youens visited Dublin, and presumably Carlow, around July 20. The present letter may imply that, while in Dublin, he came to see Catherine McAuley at Baggot Street. ²² At this point Catherine was well aware of some "difficulty" in Bermondsey, though not, I believe, of its severity. What she knew would have come from Clare Moore or Peter Butler during their visit in June. Clare Moore was twenty-four years old when Elizabeth Agnew, about forty, entered the Cork community in April 1838. ²³ The "enclosed note" was either a note from Catherine McAuley herself to Dr. Youens which she thought Frances Warde could forward, or a note from Catherine to Frances which, again, could be forwarded to Dr. Youens in support of Frances's proposal. If it was the former, it may actually be the fair copy of Letter 281 in which Catherine encourages Dr. Youens and Dr. Brown to seek the foundation from Carlow; if it was the latter, it was a note from Catherine to Frances in which she commends Frances's plans—in this case, perhaps it was the enclosed "note written by you to Mrs. Warde" to which Dr. Youens refers in Letter 286.