

October 20, 1835.

From Rev. Andrew Viszoczky, Grand River Rapids,
To Leopoldine Foundation, Vienna.

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Most Reverend Central Direction
of the Leopoldine Foundation!

A year has already passed by since I have sent no report to the Most Reverend Direction about my situation and circumstances and those of my mission; and even now I would not send any if I were not compelled by necessity to break my long lasting silence. I prefer to be silent rather than that I should perhaps harm the interests of God.

However, as I am fully aware that I do not want to harm the interests of God, and am even more convinced that your Central Direction will harm them even less, but will rather use them to advantage, I have decided to present very frankly my just complaints to you. Last year, in 1834, I had the honor to write three times to the Most Rev. Central Direction without knowing up to this hour if my letters have beheld Europe's light?

But in that same year I received no support at all, and my parishioners did not give me even that what they had promised in writing; I therefore had to live worse than a lawbreaker; among other things, chop and carry the wood myself. As I had no other prospect of improving my hard lot than this: to be sent by my Rt. Rev. Ordinariate, in the beginning of the spring of 1835, to a new mission on Lake Superior, I, therefore, made use of this opportunity of time and I went to Mr. Baraga on Grand River to prepare myself by him for an Indian mission, and to free myself from Cottrellville where I did not want to starve, as is evident from that stated above. But I did not neglect to inform the Rt. Rev. Ordinariate about it.

However, I did not attain my object. Scarcely had I communicated it to Mr. Baraga he himself then decided to leave Grand River, and under the pretext: he could use his coming sister better somewhere else than here, he asked me to remain at Grand River if I wanted to, and if the Rt. Rev. Bishop would permit. I consented, although I knew beforehand that Mr. Baraga did not intend to replace me at Cottrellville, - though he did hold out there for 3 months with great difficulty, - but that he yearned rather for Lake Superior, thinking: it would be even better and easier for me to manage a mission already established, than to establish a new one. But meantime I have deceived myself, thank God, in my calculation.

Immediately after Mr. Baraga's departure, - it was on February 18, - I ascertained that this mission is one of the most difficult; that just because of this Mr. Baraga had written to the Rt. Rev. Bishop: he wanted to free himself.

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from here if it were the will of God and the Bishop's and if another missionary came. And yet Mr. Baraga did not have by far so much to suffer as I have. He had money enough, at least he should have had it because only in 1834 the Most Rev. Central Direction had the grace to grant him over 600 conv. coin for his immediate use. He had a good house, a servant and oxen - of all of this I have nothing. How that can be I must explain somewhat more precisely: I have no money because I never had it, and because no one gives it to me; consequently, without money I cannot have the other things.

As concerns the house, Mr. Baraga, at the founding of the mission, had built a large and good one on this side of the river; it was at the same time a chapel and a school and his residence. But since the few Canadian Catholics on the other side of the river were dissatisfied with it, and did not want to mix with the Indians, he had this house moved over to their side. After a short time, because these people never came to church, he sold this house and made anew a small chapel of boards on the Indian side and a similar house for himself. But since the latter was entirely uninhabitable, he made plans to build another house and to use for it the boards from the uninhabitable house. But in the meantime I came here and he went away. I therefore built according to his plan, but up to now I have not completed it because I have no money, and I live in this unfinished house with 8 constantly, often with 12 to 20 people. Only in these last few days I have wrested 100 dollars from the Rt. Rev. Bishop for its completion and for provisions; 40 of it would have fallen off if I would have travelled to Detroit and back as a human being; and I had to travel since the Rt. Rev. Bishop has neither sent nor brought anything himself as he never has been here. And for 100 dollars one can do here little more than nothing, as, for example, 1000 feet of boards costs 10 dollars, craftsmen 2 dollars a day, and for that the latter must also be fed.

Provisions are just as dear, and I must buy them if I want to live with my people. Up to now I have run up an account to over \$200, and at that I lived poorly. The Rt. Rev. Bishop is terrified about it, and said to me: I should not keep so many bread-eaters.

But what shall I do since Mr. Baraga has accepted them? They are abandoned children of the Indians, who otherwise would perish or become pagans. And, furthermore, the recently converted Indians would be very angry if I were to dismiss these children, seeing that the Protestant preacher does everything possible for their brethren.

Machkigong, about 70 English miles distant from Grand River at this place, is my affiliated mission, and truly the flower of the mission in general. But no chapel is there no

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school, same as here, no residence for the priest.

What I have stated up to here would still be a bearable evil, but there is here another that causes even greater pain.

The Catholic traders on the other side of the river are my chief enemies, yes, persecutors of the mission, because the Catholic Indians do not imbibe and also do not want to sell their lands. One of these traders, threatening with his fist at Baraga's forehead, said to him to his face that he lives communally with his lady interpreter - and he denounced me to the Rt. Rev. Bishop as a drinker; and in his house he called me regue. What should we, what can we do? In this country nothing else but suffer. That this uncatholic Catholic did not accuse me of any other vice but drunkenness, this is the reason: I have banished his whiskey from Mackinac, so drinking, of all others, came to his mind.

On the other hand, the Protestant preacher to the Indians is the trader's friend, since he himself is nothing else but a speculator. He applies all devilish means to mislead the Catholics and the pagans, although with only little result - For the time of about 10 years he numbers not more than 20 proselytes whom he had won only because of the houses he had built for them. On the other hand, since only the last 2 years, we number almost 200 Indian Catholics, for whom I, at least, can build nothing, can give nothing, because I myself have nothing. Despite all persecution and seduction, I myself have already baptized 13 adult Indians.

But what is the use of "multiplying the people and not the joy?" The new converts should be trained, schooled, but how without institutions, without means - how if I should have to run away from here? I would like to try and live in the wilderness, like St. John, but it is written: "there has not risen a greater than John the Baptist." In Asia, in Europe, some one perhaps could be like John but here he would have to be greater, which is contrary to the Scriptures. For John had something to eat, but here there is little food in summer and in winter none at all.

Still another not petty complaint which I would have almost forgotten: Mr. Lichtenberg wrote me last year that he will send me not only my 200 fls., conv. coin, which he retained from the 500 fls. granted me by the Most Rev. Central Direction as travel money, but also 50, if not more, crucifixes, rosaries, and under linen, and if possible some things more. Likewise Major v. Hommer of Kesmark wrote me that in the past year, 1834, he remitted 40 fls., conv. coin, for me to the Most Rev. Central Direction; and I received neither this nor that 200 fls., although I did actually received some crucifixes, rosaries and other trifles.

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