

From: Juan Ramirez Orozco

To: [?]

Date: June 4, 1769

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Jesus, Mary and Joseph

A copy of the second letter from the Deputy of the Society in Madrid to the Minister Juan Ramirez de Orozco, Mercenary Monk of the Society and Cloister of the University of Alcala de Henares. This letter written in Madrid is dated the 4th of June of 1769.

Revered Father

I consider that Your Lordship may be impatient with the slow response to my promise when receiving the necessary gratitude, for which an accounting will be offered concerning what happened within our 2nd Junta, which we convened for the purpose of continuing with the reading of your wise and opportune response. I have no doubt that my first letter was gratifying to Your Kingship, wherein you recognized our sincere affection, because of the ingenuity and simplicity of our humble relation. Yet I would not want to bother the religiosity of Your Lordship for a second time, referring the continued praise that is only heard in the extension of the commerce all over Madrid and in all types of outlying locales. As a result, Your Lordship has acquired an eternal name and has made himself famous in other places and among rapacious persons in certain stores, who no longer name Minister Ramirez without praise. Among many of them, I know some who will exercise their patience with simplicity and however many need to humiliate their high and perspicacious understanding in order to communicate their eminent insights of these fathers. Your Lordship seems to miss the charge that we are poor priests who are reduced to the theological dimensions of our businesses, which may be ingenious and useful but our work does not cease to adjust to the Law of God, based on whatever interpretations some theologians may wish to give it. Even though we do not lack friends and valiant ones, because we know how they are made, it is always true that there are emulators in our profession and commerce suffers from persecution, due to simple hypocrites who have not adhered to increasing their earnings, thereby being useless for themselves and for the country. In order to defend ourselves from this caste of people, who may be our enemies, we need to have creditable theologians who will be able to resolve our doubts and who will be able to respond to our questions, because even among ourselves there are some who are so easy and so timid so that they may be deceived by anyone, thus even going to foreign places with a disturbed conscience. I noticed during our first Junta that all of my companions were most satisfied and convinced regarding the wise response from Your Lordship, as though it had come from the oracle in Rome or from an Ecumenical Council. Upon

beginning this second Junta, after uttering congratulatory remarks and repeating the same acclaims for Minister Ramirez, I noticed (not without admiration) that some of the members of the Assembly took out their pieces of papers where they had noted their doubts or [Page 2] scruples, thus signaling that they wanted to ask questions. (Your Lordship should not be astonished at all about this because we know that the other companions have a theological reference or a confessor and they govern themselves in this matter as the nuns and abbesses do, where everything must be known by the Priest.)

With paper in hand and the lecture about to begin, I asked one of them what Mr. Navarro should like to know. "Gentlemen," he said, "I have this trinal contract and I need to be advised regarding two matters in order that my conscience should be clear. The first matter is that I had never heard anything about this even when I had entered into some other contracts. My intention is to have a Bull of composition, as our Minister Father does, because otherwise I shall be lost. The second matter is that I need to know what argument the Minister Father will use so that even though I revere him as a result of all of his circumstances, I should have great consolation in his foundation in the Holy Scriptures in the Church, in the Holy Fathers, in the Councils and in the Decrees of the Popes. This is where he took the demands of our lawyer into his own hands, who has the grace to remove scruples and asking for a moment to speak to the Assembly, he said, "Gentlemen, I have much to say regarding this matter because lately I have spent much time working on this matter and I wish for everyone to become learned in the doctrine of our Church. The first doubt proposed by Mr. Navarro has to do with much consideration and this matter has kept me up many nights. I cannot find an easy way out even though it is not hidden from me so that for our Minister it will not be difficult if he does not completely resolve it. This is the only matter that is necessary in order to deal with any prudent doubt, according to the solid principles of Probabiliorism, which state that it is true that it is repugnant to good sense and to the human offices that it should be voluntary for us, that what I do not know should be free or that which I never thought should also be free. Gentlemen, this is an adorable mystery of Probabiliorism which was only understood by the good Priests as well as those who inalterably follow their footsteps. Due to carelessness, you do not know and you have not seen the great treasure that we have in our archives. Due to providence, we have, because of our miserable friends, those precious formulas from Father Lessio and Gibalino, who are privileged individuals, having written about how to cure these ridiculous problems with scruples or prodigious affections having to do with a good intention, without understanding or knowing anything about the trinal contract, without stopping to speculate about whether it is good or bad, licit or illicit, without any actual intention to fulfill it or without any general intention to gain from it in the best way possible.

With this intention only, I reiterate that this is enlarged like the concave part of the moon and the entire ocean. Anyone can enter into a commercial relationship as anyone wishes and he may baptize his contracts as one wishes or if these are trinal contracts as well, as the principle of our Minister teaches." At this point, the lawyer, a bit overheated, went to the companion who vacillated with these doubts and asked, "Mr. Navarro, did you not have any intention when you celebrated these contracts to carry them out in the best possible manner? "Yes," he responded. With great grace, the lawyer agreed, in the name of Fathers Lessio, Gibalino and Ramirez. By the way, all of you should applaud the dexterity of our lawyer and, having paused for a moment, [Page 3] he proceeded like a torrent of erudition to satisfy the second doubt and he responded that it is true that Minister Ramirez does not bring with him any passages from the scriptures and he does not support his arguments with the traditions of the Holy Fathers or of the councils or the decrees of the Popes but this is not because he ignores them, which would be a grave mistake. In ancient times, it was true that the theologians did not know how to speak, except with scriptural quotes in their mouths, as the consuls of Jurisprudence did with the texts, so that they would arm themselves with the traditions. They had the nerve and the energy of their demonstrations of the authority of the Holy Fathers of the Councils and, with these invincible arms, they defended the Church from the Heretics. They also conserved the sacred morality and the upright customs, which I do not deny and I also know that the Minister, in the method he approves in those of his theological matters makes it possible for near-sighted souls to see that the true theologian must search for his conclusions in those principles and foundations. Additionally, it is not unknown to me that out of these rules of our minister foreigners have deemed themselves worthy and they have made glorious festivities. As I have been advised, this great Minister has the misfortune of being greatly forgotten by his countrymen as a venerated representative of the foreigners. Additionally, gentlemen, I place this in doubt and I ask forgiveness of the Minister after having heard from the theologians of great opinion that he should be the head of a Council in spite of his idiosyncrasies and panache. *Whoever dedicates himself to the study of the scripture, councils and Holy Fathers, may not be a good scholastic theologian.* This was said in secret because if it should be uttered in public, I am afraid that the foreigners would not accept this and I would like to add that the person who said this was no Jesuit, even though based on what I talked about with them, I understand that this is in conformity with their maxims and the principles of Probabiliorism. Yet let us cast aside these theological dogmas that are always being dug up like antiquarian monuments. Going back in time, one may find that, during the first centuries of the Church as well as in the age of the Apostles, it was necessary to execute those customs. For my part, I support the customs of our modern scholastics. It is now precisely necessary to live with

them because they make us a better party. They also bring their resolutions without fanaticism of the scripture, the councils or the Bulls of the Holy Fathers but they are rather grounded in subtle decisions. They are so precise and delicate as well as metaphysical that their decisions are hair-splitting as well as being most philosophical and natural in tone. Every one of us may understand them and the ancient theologians only used natural reason in order to discuss theology. Our Spanish scholastics, with respect to that which belongs most to the Dogma of the customs, make all arguments will natural reason, which those good Fathers said was necessary in order to consult the scriptures with respect to the Mysteries of Faith. Also, antiquity and tradition were necessary but, in those cases dealing with the conscience, it was only necessary to look for authors of the times as well as modern theologians! I know that Minister Ramirez does not ignore these maxims that I have heard and are extremely useful in school. I declared that, in the 8th Book, the Minister mentions those theological passages where he calls upon our scholastic, dialectics and sophists who are like children because they choose quick arms with which to show their triumphs, discarding the invincible properties of theology. Additionally, we should wish [Page 4] to bury his book in forgetfulness so that we may have a secure victory. I greatly lament that those good priests did not think about burning it during the time when they in charge of governing. In the end, however, they achieved success in escaping responsibility from it, to such a degree that on a certain occasion an impassioned dean told me in a lamenting tone that if the Minister should be resurrected and see the lack of use by the modern theologians of the theological places, he would collect his book and he would take it with him to eternity. No matter what the foreigners say when they call our theologians "Naturalist Aristotelian Theologians," and even if Benedict the 14th calls our theologians "those who know much about *ut quod*," then we will pass everything due to grace, as long as his credit and opinion are not offended and, above all, as long as we are not engaged in disputes, which is his probable method and manner of resolving matters of conscience, only with natural reason, because I know that they will not suffer this. With regard to the other matters, they do not want a lawsuit because they are in charge of this, which means that in order to live among everyone else, it is necessary for them to become accustomed to the Probabilioristic system, not like the manner in which the King of Prussia embraces it, to the point when it becomes a religion but rather in order to remember those times and customs, so that the souls may not be lost, because as our great Tamburino would say, if the law of God is written and followed to the letter very rigorously, then very few will be able to go to heaven. As a result, modern theologians have applied some leniency and they have softened it with the grace of Probabiliorism in such a way that all of us will be saved. The Junta then exclaimed that this is a great blow to the law and that this is only learned in the universities.

Our lawyer had barely ended his noble speech when one of my companions with traces of Mysticism arose and said in a loud voice, "Certainly, You have spoken seemingly with assurance to such an extent that I thought I heard the eloquent speech of our Minister. You have completely imbibed the spirituality of our Minister Ramirez and I understand that you will be his best commentator. Even so, I would desire that this wise Minister in his decision would in place of the other have quoted Mr. Ambrosio, who I have been told wrote a great deal about this matter. In place of exposing his argument, he should have supported it with Mr. Geronimo, in place of the Salmatisenses, Mr Agustin should have spoken and in place of Larragailustrado (it would not be said to be better) a Chrysostom or a Gregory. May God bless my soul to receive counsel if Minister Ramirez had brought some passage from the scriptures even though this should be obscured in support of this blessed trinal contract. "What kind of evidence do you need?" our lawyer asked, in an almost angry mood. Do you not know that the sacred scriptures are dictated by the Holy Spirit? Therefore, I say to you that it would never even occur to the Holy Spirit to make such a trinal contract. "Jesus, what heresy," exclaimed the mystical companion. "This is no heresy," the lawyer responded. "I shall explain myself. Concerning the trinal contract, I say that there is not a shadow in the scripture and it never occurred to the Holy Spirit because this contract is of our own making, we are the ones who have created it and no one will be able to dispute its glory on this trajectory. Friends, without a doubt, this was hidden from Minister Ramirez and this is my conjecture, which is propounded on the view that this is not about praise and being an orator, especially in the area of homage, we would not be deceived in this part when in others he appears to be prodigious. The whole Assembly was almost in a trance and undoubtedly persuaded that this proposition of his was pure arrogance. He did not speak to the air but said to them that what he argued was well-founded and it had the greatest support. "Attention! Attention!" They all declared that this was a blow to the Minister, that this is a great honor for our lawyer who proceeds from the authority and truth of our friend, the great Tamburino. "We do not doubt," all of them responded, "And in our estimation, this collateral for our Minister Ramirez, as this great theologian states, states this in Book 9 Chapter 5. 3rd. 1st. 2nd. [Page 5] *verim ingenio su theol. forte [?] Mercatoribus quonum interese a Moniti*, certain ingenious theologians (speaking of the trinal contract) who are learned in matters dealing with the Mercaderes, the ones who are interested in this, identified the manner in which to compose everything by way of the trinal contract. The conjecture of Father Tamburino is clear, according to what everyone said and they took a good hour to give thanks to our lawyer due to such a glorious discovery. Therefore, being full of satisfaction, he once again took the word and he said, "Gentlemen, let us give thanks to God, and let us not convert to vanity the punctilious advancement of those interests that may be

taught to the theologians and that our [~~crossed-out word~~] profession should be so favored by these as it was pursued by the Most Holy Fathers and let us see with how much reason Minister Ramirez does not cite those scriptural passages in his own writings because he is not a man who is known for giving false testimony to the Holy Fathers.”

Concerning the Holy Fathers, the lawyer proceeded to state that it is known that the piety of our companion is not polished and that if he were well-versed in matters concerning morality, presented by our scholastic individuals, he would know that commerce in his works is considered contraband and he would deal with the Fathers of the Church. If our friend Diana were to know that in the Index in front of his moral works, which number increases up to 296, not only would there be a Holy Father but not even a more ancient author of over 8 years all our deans and many other unknown ones that even if one were to read the Index one would still have doubts about whether or not they were Christians. If he were to know that this was the ultimate maxim, he would need to ask for assistance from those good priests in order to support our doctrines, so that Probabiliorism would predominate and expand throughout and this was everything that the famous Jesuit Priest Reginando stated, which he said with concision. When they wrote about moral issues, the modern theologians preferred the ancient priests even though these priests lived in the time closest to that of the Apostles. “Oh! What dignified words!” Every member of the Junta exclaimed. “Oh! How full of consolation for those who live in the middle of the world and the businesses! Beloved companions, separate yourselves from scruples, as one repeated and let us leave the holy matters for those who deal with theology and for those miserable Jansenites who wish to follow the letter of morality in the Gospels, according to the tradition of the Priests and of antiquity. Let us maintain our ancient alliance on the offensive and on the defensive with these modern theologians who adapt themselves to our current conditions, as Minister Ramirez has found, who also thinks like them.”

“Gentlemen,” continued our lawyer, “I am ingenious and a lover of truth and, therefore, I shall not permit the unjust incitement of Minister Ramirez due to his having omitted the ancient matters in his response. I have already manifested to Your Lordship that the trinal contract is new and that it has only been around for a few hundred years and it is in turn fertile for us, recently adopted by modern theologians and the great Tamburino will not allow me to lie, for which I must confess in good faith that there cannot be any tests performed on our past. Here, the Mystic jumped up and so to say to us that he descends from the Moors. “That is not the case,” the lawyer said, “If not to say that he did not know their antiquity and that his origin is very close to our time. You must have patience so that I shall here have the confidence to say what I have wanted to produce as a result of much [~~crossed-out word~~] work, according to the conjecture of the great

Tamburino. Our colleagues invented the trinal contract during the 16th century. After having produced this document, without a doubt, they gave it to Juan Mayor of Paris because he also says that he was the first to defend the trinal contract as licit and he calls this defense *opinionem meam particularem*. He proposes that the document was invented as such by our colleagues, the Mercaderes and he gives his resolution by concluding that he does not ignore that such a contract is dangerous, that he would not dare to manifest this doctrine to the society of the Mercaderes. We already had the money here and the origin of the trinal contract but it was in an embryonic and deformed stage. I shall therefore explain myself [Page 6] with a mundane example, so that you may understand this well and so we are told that this is how a caste of animals, whose mothers nurture the most ugly and horrible little ones and yet they themselves are ashamed of these that have been conceived and birthed. In such cases, the mothers lick and polish their little ones in order to remove their ugly and terrifying appearance. This is what Juan Mayor did with the trinal Contract and it later occurred that Thomas Mercado and Domingo Soto became infuriated with him, when he appeared to be a monster. They proceeded to inflict mortal injuries upon him but they then licked him and proceeded to give him some kind of shape to Mr. Navarro. Dressed in the best way possible, he was presented to the Sixth 5, who hated him because he was a stranger born outside of the Church.”

Whoever thinks that after the appearance of this miserable subject, the severe blow and the condemnation from the Vatican, should have so much grace, our Father Lessio, who finding it in this deplorable state, was left alone and 19 years had passed and this repudiated person once again started to make public claims, being unknown and putting such a polished and gracious one before his eyes, who was just given a probable passport so that he would be able to travel throughout the world on his own. Our lawyer notes that this is the time during which the sun of Probabiliorism begins to appear on our horizon, in whose tribunal it may be certain that our trinal contract will win the case. Our friends Laiman, Castropalao, Bonarina and Diana proceeded to extol the benignity of Probabiliorism, which they made so pleasant that Monsignor Gibalino began to view it with the least fear and he not only declares it to be certain but he also canonizes it due to its justice and holiness. In this manner and habit, it appeared to Minister Ramirez.

Our Mystic Companion arose and he seemed a bit inharmonious. Gentlemen, he heard dreams or what Mr. Navarro says are stories that may have been passed down from various groups of people. I confess that in listening to these things I do not find any other recourses made by acts of faith. Upon hearing this, that at one time this was a mortal sin, it was no longer a mortal sin at another time, that which the theologians decided on a unanimous basis during a religious time, that it was not possible to advise, that it may be practiced, even though it is found to be said

by our forefathers. I do not believe this because I know and I believe that the law of God is immutable, that the theologians cannot alter it, that the Catholic Church cannot err, that the Holy Spirit communicates and teaches all truths that belong to the Dogma and Morality and, therefore, I do not want to hear any news or stories.” “Mr. Navarro,” argued the lawyer, “You are very behind on the news. It is well-known that you have neither plumbed the depths of virtue and omnipotence of Probabiliorism, nor the method of those good priests in creating and giving birth to probable opinions. Therefore, you should note that a grave author invents a new opinion, he then shares it with the public and he plants it like a seed, in order to create roots and, in this state, the seed is feeble, without patronage and pursued by everyone. Moreover, time slowly ages the seed and yet this is not something I say but rather this is said by my friend Diana, a loyal ally of those good priests.” “I produce an opinion,” Diana says, “Because it is a new one and I allow time to age it, *reunquo tempori madurandum*. Therefore, in a few years’ time, one may see the sharpening of the idea and, after a long time, it is found to be authorized by a group of theologians, who sell it as probable and this idea ceases to be a sin as it had [Page 7] been before, what was once dangerous, now ceases to be dangerous, as has occurred in the trinal contract; “this confuses me a great deal,” added the mystical deputy, because this in good terms is telling us that Probabiliorism adds and takes away sins according to its whims. I renounce these doctrines because I think that they represent a pact with the Devil. If he should follow this, the lawyer viewed this proposition as most shocking as if he had been raised in a house inhabited by pious women. This has so much virtue that it is able to add and remove sins and even dangers are able to commit sins. We poor ones, if the regalia of Probabiliorism were to be removed, this should be done with respect to that which is practical and which we have already discussed. The trinal contract contained a sinful aspect until Father Lessio stated that the opinion was probable that made it licit. This was a dangerous situation until Tamburino and others determined the certainty of this matter, outside of this. Whosoever ignores that Diana, with her probabilities, removed thousands of sins from the world, Probabiliorism is also a virtuous legislation, undiscovered for its ability to bring sins, as Your Lordship may see. At other times, the theologians stated that even the members of the party who supported the trinal Contract, were able to and should have dissuaded and advised the followers that they should not honor such a trinal contract. Therefore, the animosity and the willingness of Father Esbalino to write that he who should relate this message to request that the trinal contract should not be honored would commit a deadly sin, while also adding that the Confessor who prevented the penitent from entering into this trinal contract would justly remain obligated to the restitution of those earnings that could be gained. What else was said? Additionally, by virtue of Probabiliorism, those good Priests may be

defended as well as those that follow the system outlined by the Confessor, which does not in any case absolve the penitent with respect to a probable opinion concerning his work, against his most probable opinion stating that the penitent commits a mortal sin. Please see if Probabiliorism adds or removes sins.

Additionally, so that You may cease to uproot these scruples, it will be necessary to understand that such is the prepotency and authority of Probabiliorism, which has fought against and vanquished the power of the Popes, the Councils, the Bishops, the most famous Universities. By virtue of Probabiliorism, I shall explain that the trinal contract has resisted and mocked a decree from the Sixth V, another having to do with the 13th Regulation, a Council of Milan, another from Biendo, the Assembly of Meluzo, which may be called the national Council and another Council resulting from the commandments issued by the Bishopric in all parts, which they have condemned and reprovved and, in conclusion, they have resisted the lawsuit and with another one of those Bishops from Spain, considering that the age in which we live in, in the 17th Century, the trinal contract was deemed to be worthy of being condemned and, as a result, it was given to His Holiness Clement II in proposition 157, which states as follows, "*Ex contractu trino aliquid ultra Sortem in pactu deducere, non est letale.*" Even so, after this deluge of anathemas, the trinal contract remains probable, without having lost our loyal followers during this war, this I have referred to Our Lordship so that he may see that I am acting in good faith and I am not running away from the difficulty, whenever it has to do with the power of Probabiliorism.

All of us believe that with this is most clear doctrine, our compatriot would have been convinced but we were ridiculed when we saw that he was more confused than ever and he said, "Friends and companions, if what the gentleman has related is true, I see that this machination is in the air, that our trinal contract is worn out and I am afraid that the time will come when not even our sagacious Prime Minister will be able to support this, because we are clearly of the view that the Bishops from Spain are more valuable than the Minister Ramirez due to the view that at the hour of [Page 8] death, even though I am a simpleton, I still believe that everyone else thinks this way, concerning what the adviser has said about our good Priests. I feel honored and I should like for this not to be divulged until after their good memory and fame are confirmed, due to the significant benefit that has not been gained. If what I have just stated is true, they have inverted the Christian morality with this enemy of the Problem, they have made themselves odious to us and to the impassioned ones that have remained with them (who belong to us at present), whom they will lose unless we implement some sort of remedy."

What remedy or preoccupation! They responded. Cast aside your captious objections and scruples, let us forge ahead as the wind is under our wings and we are enriched. This is a tempest

that will dissipate by itself. No, Gentlemen. The lawyer argued that this is not a subject that should be cast aside, according to the rules of good Prudence. Due to the evidence, I know that our trinal contracts depend on Probabiliorism, I also know that this is going through a decadent stage after those good Priests, because our adherents have been opening their eyes at the same time as the lies that sustained the miserable company are uncovered, which had taken possession of all of the high and low streets. Whoever breathed in opposition to Probabiliorism would offend and infuriate the company. The person that succeeded in leaving Spain and was able to discover its intrigue and machinations would have been shut out. If by misfortune someone happened to enter Spain, the company would place him in a narrow position and, moreover, they easily persuaded their impassioned followers to believe that all of these liberated persons derived from the North, founded in the offices of the Heretics, suffused with thousands of errors, nevertheless, Heresies, wherein the morality that they contained was in fact pure rigorousness, concocted by the Jansenites and the French, who were rebels of the Church and the decisions of the Popes. Admirable politics! This medium was so opportune and efficacious that Probabiliorism has managed to reign through out peaceful efforts and, up to the present, this movement has remained undiscovered, so much so that the impassioned followers of our good Priests maintain their truce. For these men to maintain such machinations, I am of the view that the Heretics will make significant efforts to publicize complete hatred and disgust against the company, which are calumnies and importunities of the Jansenite, in order to discredit them, with which we shall succeed in maintaining the party and so that these free persons will run away from it as though it were the Devil, that they may discover the questionable means and open their eyes.

So that my project should not be perceived as mere speculation, I shall put forth two practical examples, which are good guarantees concerning my discussion at hand. It is well known that, in the last century, those detestable Provincial letters, apart from the most venerable and corrosive that Satire has produced. They provoked the complete orb against the company; they ridiculed Probabiliorism, the opinions of the Priests that sustained it, the doctrines and the places of the free persons being endowed with the defense of these. The good Priests made some unlikely turns in the conferring of the appointments and tracing the verifiable opinions, they found themselves in the greatest confusion and encumbrance. They attempted to shake themselves free from the embarrassing opprobrium, meditating upon a response and calling upon the helpful pen of the erudite Count of Bur, offering to award him nothing less than freedom. More in vain were [Page 9] were these efforts because there is not enough energy to go out in public against the truth, which was aptly shown by that study, which after 40 years, Father Daniel, who greatly displeased the same impassioned ones of the company, and of whom the celebrated Father Matheo

Petitdidier commented that it is better for the Biscayan to be removed. Our Political Fathers changed their method in this state. They used those arms with which they have always overcome their enemies, they began to make claims against the Provincials in the legal realm, in the places of learning and in the extraditions. They proclaimed that these were the others of the enemy Heretics of the company that were full of importune calumnies and they ridiculed the Catholic religion. Quick thinking! This was enough for the Provincial letters should suffer the anathema and the banishment from the State, by the tribunals and by the curia, in such a way that, even today, in some Provinces, they remain unknown or they are spoken of with fear.

“I shall advance another more recent example,” said the lawyer. This example will give us much light in order to conduct ourselves during these times, which are full of thorns. After putting us in charge of the secret, he said, “You yourselves must know that from some months past up to this point an occult Academy composed of various impassioned literates has been formed and these literates derive from those good Priests to whom, by special grace, I concur, where the greatest precautions have been taken for the secret, which has nothing to do with what is spoken of the arguments and I am not surprised by this because in this new providence, a significant letter from the Mayors of the Neighborhood will later go with the wind to the extraordinary. This is what the wise ones presupposed to read and examine within the Annals of the Jesuits, that have been published in France and that to our great misfortune have had widespread publication here. The wise ones read a dissertation, among other things as well as a proem that did not shock all of them, in which case they all voted noting that such Annals had been vomited by the Inferno and that these should be burned. The reading proceeds and, in order not to disturb the relation of this, there is conversation about these events that are narrated therein and may not be blotted out. Or, if they should be in the least doubtful then the argument that could be made against the Annals could be as a result of the abuse that was made with respect to those of the Scripture, especially regarding the Book of Isaiah of the Apocalypse of John, of that book [~~crossed-out word~~] sealed with seven seals and which Jesus Christ presented to the four animals in a sealed state. These four animals symbolized Suarez, Vasquez, Molina and Valencia in the presence of twenty four Jesuits, who represent the 24 Ancient Ones. Due to this and other frequent abuses of the scripture, they all agreed that the Annals should be discarded, because this abuse was explicitly against the Council of Trent and, for the time being, it was also decided that nothing should be said about the errors to which they referred and were imputed to various Jesuits, among whom may be found Fathers Arduino and Berruier who spoke against the Mystery of the Trinity of the Incarnation as well as against the Authority of the Church and its Councils.

Already being resolved this [Page 10] medium concerning how to make war against the Annals of the Company, I cast aside one from the venerable and prudent Assembly, which as a result of its manner, Gentlemen, I wish that we ourselves should use not our passion but our reason because we shall find little mercy in inserting ourselves among those impassioned Jesuits who, like the Turks do not defend themselves with reason but with the sword. Therefore, I plead with You so that You will reflect on three things: 1) The first matter has to do with the fact that these Annals contain a history in which for years there has been a reference to the events of our friends the Jesuits. We all know that the simple and timely truth about events must prevail in history and, as long as we are not able to determine the falsity of the cited documents while weakening the authority of the historians to whom they refer, this will serve to expose us to the ridicule of good criticism, the disparagement of the foolish ones and the anger of the wise ones. It is not enough to repudiate one story, whoever may be indecorous to the individuals of one Religion and even to the Religion itself, this will be thought unreasonable. The company has not suffered much damage; the Innocenciana Letter from the Venerable Palafox has already received widespread publication due to the approval of the Church. In the sacred histories, we can see that even the letters from the Angels may be discovered and those from our first Priests as well as the defects of the Prophets and the Kings of Judea. Even the defects of Peter and the Apostles may be discovered, with which this part of the Annals is repletè. At present, we are not able to obliterate the false matters concerning that which is well-known and public, which are referenced.

The second matter that is true is that in said Annals, the Holy Scriptures are abused in many places, especially where passages are cited, it is necessary to have in mind the view that this abuse is first of all found in the works that are circulating (without opposition from the Jesuits). I have compared the places and I find for truth that this abuse was committed by Father Orlandino in the image of the first century of the company. Regarding that which touches on the apocalypse, I have noticed in the proem of the works of the priest, it is therefore made known that he brings in all of the allegory of the Closed Book that Jesus Christ gave to the four tender animals Suarez, Vasquez, Molina and Valencia, in the presence of the twenty four elderly persons, who are the 24 Jesuits that he names therein. At this time, as we may reproach this abuse and others to the Annals, which is that we can no more but to recount them, which Father Orlandino and Father Escobar made and these are now in the hands of all and are they not contradicted? Gentlemen, concerning these branches of space, we will not allow our adversaries to laugh inconsequently. It seems to me that from this side in no way will the Annals be denounced because we will be overwhelmed with confusion [Page 11], with respect to the errors that impute to the Priests, I find that it is very difficult or impossible to defend them because only Arduino and Berruechier have

written such things which on first impression it seems that they have twisted the creed. I have read with care the Pastoral instruction from the Bishop of Soysoms and the examination regarding the reflections, where the errors of these poor ones are pointed out very clearly, that in this manner the most refined dialectic for the Logistics, nor the Sophisms with which to defend them outside of this. Whoever ignores the fact that the history of Pueblo de Dios, with its apologies where the most monstrous errors regarding the Catholic religion have been noted. Since the year of '34, I have been pleading. Was this prohibited by the Congregation of the Inquisition? Afterwards, through the Papal Bull from Benedict the 14th, with the most intense expressions and in any language? Recently, in the year of '58, Clement the 13th declared that Berruechier, with this piece, had completed the measure of the scandal and, once again, he prohibited the publication of work in any language? Extinguishing the excommunication that had been reserved for His Holiness against those who would read such a history concerning Pueblo de Dios or the conservation of this in their own power? In view of this, the wise academician concluded that we may not disregard good Catholics in defense of the Priests and of the said abominable ones who are imputed, my challenge is to be silent, just like in matrimonial matters, shouting that this is a fierce persecution of the Jesuits, who dominate the coastal regions of France and Portugal. In the meantime, one must be patient and wait for a better opportunity so that the deck of cards will change hands.

This conclusion was greatly contradicted by our lawyer and the whole session being convened we decided to take the distribution but, when I was about to begin my lecture, the spiritual Deputy jumped up again and asked two questions. The first question was directed to the lawyer, regarding whether or not what was said about the history of Pueblo de Dios was true, the reason why he did not believe that these were books that were so impious and full of errors, as was often said, when his wife had them and read them with the necessary license, so that if they were so evil, then not only women but also the men should have read them. Our lawyer responded to this by saying: "Sir, what has been said about the history of Pueblo de Dios is true, with respect to the other information Bargas will make note of where it came from. We learned that our Mystic gave the answer due to a motive and we persuaded ourselves that, in his veins, he felt that it would be the same whether to arrive at his home or to burn the books. There would be such a party with his wife. Afterwards, he asked the lawyer what might be said, that these Jansenites were a caste of birds that made so much noise that to him they sounded worse than Lutherans and Calvinists. These Jansenites (responded the [Page 12] lawyer) are abominable heretics who have increased the errors of Jansen, the Bishop of Ypres, condemned by the Church in the five proportions attributed to Jansen. These heretics have made themselves more odious

and accursed, as a result of which they have established a particular sect in the morality that they have proposed in accordance with the severity and to narrow the way of the cycle, in such a way that based on this doctrine, very few will be saved. Forgive me (answered the Mystic) because in this case I do not think that they are so mistaken as you think because I have supposed that I have read in the Gospel that the way to heaven is narrow, whereas the one that leads to destruction is wide. Yes (the lawyer replied), this is what the Gospel states but this should be understood before it should be perceived in the world as Probabiliorism, and that our good Priests would begin (let us say) to free this passage that was covered with an overgrowth of weeds and thorns that made it barely possible to walk upon it. Due to the moral benignity, it is now so obvious and easy that one may travel on the way of Heaven, which was once extremely difficult to navigate.

This signaled the birth of the war of those perverse Jansenites against our good Priests. Here the lawyer paused and began to sigh "Ah! Ah! I cannot speak. Speak." (We all replied) that we heard him with pleasure and satisfaction. Gentlemen, since you ask me for details, I shall divulge what my heart has been concealing, in complete confidence and I ask that what I say to you should not be repeated beyond these four walls. I confess that, for many years, I (as all other people) was under the wrong impression that this Jansenite sect was true and real. I also believed that such Jansenites defended the five propositions of Jansen but during my trips to France during these past years and in the time that I spent in Paris, I found out many things, as a result of having been educated here. Additionally, I had often heard our good Priests state that in France everything was plagued by Jansenites and that with certainty no one would be able to make a confession unless this was done with the Jesuits or Capuchins. I remained there for many months without being able to make a confession because I feared that I might fall into the hands of some Jansenite who would want to sequester me. In time, I attempted to communicate to some Bishops who had virtuous opinions and letters something concerning my fears. One of them left me in a very hurt state and this is the greatest evil that may be found in France. Even so, this has caused grave damage so much so that this Kingdom has been in danger of being lost if God had not placed his Hand here. This Jansenism that has resounded and continues to resound even today is purely a [Page 13] Phantasm, a specter, an apparition that was invented by the Jesuits in order for them to preserve their credit and to introduce their new doctrines while fighting against the doctrines of Augustine and St. Thomas, which are contrary to their views. Therefore, I assure that there is no one in France that supports or defends any of these propositions of Jansen, after the condemnation from the Church, so that everyone detests them. Yet these blessed Priests have lied to the world with this embolism, especially with regard to those of us who do not follow their school of thought or their moral coda. In the number of Jansenites, there is no mention concerning

the publications of these and since they have dominated this place through the confessional of the King, many Bishops have resisted them as have many great theologians, who have suffered exile, imprisonment and abusive treatment. It is by luck that I dare to say, without much pondering, that through this means the Church in France has suffered great persecution during the time of Diocletian, which I may say to Your Lordship (added the good Bishop almost in tears), lasted until the time of the venerable Innocencio VI, because it was not favorable to the doctrine of the Priests, who published that Jansenite doctrine and at other times they shouted the same thing about the grave Benedict XIV, and in order to be tired (he told me), once and for all, that Your Lordship should become aware of this fable, what happened to one Bishop from this Kingdom with Cardinal Bona. This Prelate happened by the Piamonte and he determined to erect a mansion in that place where the purported Cardinal lived, that this French Bishop was there and he invited him to eat there. After dining, the two of them were quiet and the Cardinal asked, "Most Illustrious Sir, what is this Jansenism that resounds so much throughout France?" The Prelate then responded that this is the greatest persecution that we are suffering. Whoever lives over there in a desolate place may see the theatrical scenes that are put on for the sake of piety and there may be seen a penitent existence that is filled with mortification and this is what the Jansenites exhibit. Having heard this, the Cardinal exclaimed that for this sacrifice he hoped that all would become Jansenites! Evil is this one who in Rome itself suffers himself, according to an account from Father Lauron, a Dominican who has just returned from there and has forwarded the Note from the Jansenites and, recently, [Page 14] even India has been penetrated by this Diabolical artifice, as the Capuchin Priest notes in his Memoirs, referenced by the Jesuits. This has been the luck of the Jansenites. Jansenites of the Aria or of India are also of Europe. Jansenites of India are those that Missionaries that are observed in the Decrees of the Holy See and which condemn idolatrous practices. The Jansenites from Europe are the ones that are opposed and they neither follow the moral nor the doctrine of the Jesuits. This is the truth (as the good French Bishop concluded); we must discard those vain fears and follow the Gospels.

After hearing this story, all of us felt admiration and we remained silent until the same lawyer broke the silence and said, "Gentlemen, in spite of the aforementioned, for the time being, you must remain close upon the path of the Jansenites because we cannot break free from our opponents by any other means. From this point forward, you will need to consult *Quid Faciendum* by Father Ramirez. All of us approve of the argument contained in this work and I have signed the directive to close this letter in which I have outlined more than what I had expected to do and I leave for the second letter for the Venerable Lordship to make reference to

the remaining matters having to do with the Junta. To Your Venerable Lordship, I reiterate my respect and veneration while also begging God to guard Your Lordship for many more years.

Madrid. 4th of June of 1769. Your Most Impassioned Servant. Signed by Minister Juan Ramirez Orozco.

From: Marquis of Valparaiso

To: [?]

Date: 1769 [but the exact date is unknown]

[Page 1]

Reforms of the Regulars

1) Among the primary points under consideration by the illustrious piety of our Most Religious Sovereign, we have been invited to learn of those that were outlined in the official letter that was addressed to the bishops of Toscana, especially with respect to the badly needed reform of the regulars, which was mentioned in articles 56 and 57 of the same letter. Due to such an important objective, we must attend to it with our utmost care and diligence.

2) It cannot be denied that, in the first centuries, the Regular or Monastic way of life was one of the most beautiful cornerstones of the Church. We cannot create a memory of this without the bright semblance of Christianity of those happy times that the other fervent schools beheld during the prime of Christianity. We almost wanted to forgive the fervor of that age, which resulted in fierce persecution and were the sole cause of these Sacred Institutions. Due to the fervor of the idolatrous tyrants and the obstinate war that lasted over three centuries, our loyal followers were obligated to live in exile in order to fully serve God. They then saw themselves insensibly surrounded by multitudes so that the solitude of the forests became asylums in which to preserve innocence and faith. What a noble impression! Over the spirit of the just appraisers of those great men, it would not have been deemed advisable for them to relinquish their amenities, honors, magistrates or the militia. They found themselves in looking within the forest for that happy liberty as a result of serving Christ, which curbed their insidious preference for idolatry. It was therefore quite natural to foresee that such admirable examples in those early times would have been imitated by those who felt sufficiently zealous about preserving the purity of the faith, thereby unifying them to the first ones and, in desiring to garner an advantageous end due to a reciprocal arrangement with the other institutions and exemplary individuals, they all lived in close proximity. This resulted in the development of monasticism.

3) This admirable situation lasted for a very long time and, in the west, one could see the type of men that were known for their penitence, which was believed to be nothing less than a glorious moment after the end of the martyrs. These men traveled from the west to the east, which also felt the effects of their exemplary penitence. Yet that same admiration that made them so respectable served to increase them too much. Additionally, almost in a necessary manner, the multitude brought about dissipation, relaxation and disorder. The way of virtue is very difficult and it is a

task not to know corruption but it is the inclination of human nature to flatter itself so that it may be deceived by many for a long time.

4) The disorder was seen and reforms were promised in response but repression increased the evil without helping to ameliorate the situation. It would have been wise to limit the number of monks and to terminate those who were less docile as well as to reduce the number of monasteries. The situation was misjudged as new monasteries were built even though the old ones were already dissipated. The purpose of these new monasteries was to establish the new reform but these declined a short time later due to the relaxation resulting from the example set by the first monks. As opposed to its decrease, this in turn led to an increase in the evil result. During the following centuries, the same methodology was used and it was most marvelous that the most eminent men never issued warnings or even offer ineffective counsel concerning this situation. The founders of the regulars that later came under the name of Mendicants also made the same error because they made alterations to the plan. As a result of this, the number of orders proliferated and so did the number of reforms, which did nothing less than to increase widespread evil.

5) It is true that the multitude was not the only one that produced the [Page 2] disorder and the corruption, which is another reason that at this time it would be futile to analyze in a particular manner how these qualities came about. The arrogant increase in riches and the love of leisure as well as the weakness with respect to the most necessary manual labor, a misunderstood and leisurely spirituality, the union of so many communities under one head, the embrace of privileges and the use of exemptions on a regular basis in the name of vanity and acceded to because of political interests, passion, the uneven desire to introduce oneself within the Ecclesiastic hierarchy and, finally, that idea of the small Monastic stronghold established in the heart of the state, without making a capable effort of taking the necessary interest in it. All of this could have contributed to the disconcerted decay of these noble institutions, which in all of their fervor could have served as enclosures for the Church.

We urge very deep reflections that are full of that spirit of pain that must profoundly hurt those who with a Christian heart think of the wounds of so many and so beloved brothers of ours.

6) The libertines that from the negative consequences commonly linked to much weakness as well as the particular disorders of some of them, conceding those of many others, they take or release the brutal motive to insult the Church. Additionally, for a long time now, the sacred institutions fight against the regular orders from whatever cloister they may come. If, on the other hand, they were rational and grateful, they would truthfully confess that in better times the monastic orders flourished with an established doctrine and with sanctity that in turn produced valiant men for society in addition to the Church. Therefore, do we want to condemn all of the

sons because not a few of them were hostages, without forgiving them with respect to any matter due to the gratitude of the parents? Or do we wish to completely remove all of those congregations of regulars that, according to the spirit of antiquity, could come back to giving us those advantages from antiquity?

7) Far from outlawing these Monastic institutions, the Sacred Synod wishes with the greatest anxiety to extend the permanence and durability of such a noble school of perfection and Christian simplicity. The splendor of the Church is very important as is the productivity of the children. In addition, a place should always exist, whether far away or isolated from the dissipations and the cares of the world so that they will be able to attend with fervor to the acquisition of Christian virtues in a holy occupation marked by peace. Yet this same school is needed by those who lack the values to remain on the right path in spite of the insidious corruption present during this century. The school should not increase the obstacles while it promises to remove them. To withdraw from the world and to live alone signify choosing a state in order to learn perfection in the retreat and to violently throw oneself upon the pastoral cares would be dangerous. To live in the system established by society and to aspire to the hierarchy due to vanity are not only contradictory but they increase the stumbling blocks for man, if assistance is not offered at the same time. Let the dangerous consequences increase as a result of a way of life that embraces perpetual vows, without significantly weighing the proper forces in an age in which there was no possibility of presenting them. All of this leads to the result that a true expert on man will become desperate if he should witness the present system of the Regulars and to request permanent reform. During its time, the Council of Trent saw the great wickedness and it made known its desire to make reforms but the circumstances did not allow it to get to the [~~partly crossed out word~~] root of the problem, as it had intended. The Council of Trent made some wise but short-term changes and it set aside the reforms for better days.

8) Thus being of the mindset that that Sacred Council and being driven by the paternal and loving care of our incomparable Sovereign, after a mature examination for the sole consideration of the practicality of the towns and of the same individuals that compose or could compose the [Page 3] regular orders, we believe that we should humbly propose to Your Highness, the plan outlined below in order that You should be pleased to review it and to order its timely execution.

The Sacred Council identifies three fundamental rules through which it would be advisable to establish an advantageous and viable reorganization of the system governing the regulars and they are mentioned below.

1) That the Regular or Monastic state is, by its very nature, incompatible with the healing of souls as well as the activities of pastoral life. As a result of this, this institution is prevented from

joining the Ecclesiastic hierarchy without also indirectly contradicting the principles of monastic life. A monk is one who withdraws from the rest of the world for the purpose of living only alone in a spirit of penitence and solitude. The other orders that came later and were called Mendicants or were established by their founders were or should have been based on the same principles. The petitions and the dissents that arose out of these orders from their inception as well as the eminent men that have been their leaders convince us of the contradiction and the irregularity of these false institutions. Saint Thomas and Saint Buenaventura, as well as others, set out to defend themselves against these institutions but it would have been better if they had used more precision and less fire in defending themselves. On the other hand, what some of them have said, especially Buenaventura, indicates that they are least satisfied with the conduct and organization of their adherents.

2) The second rule dictates that the multitude of the orders and their diversity will naturally bring about chaos and confusion, due to the various gazes and interests, which are contrary to the regular, thus preventing the establishment of harmony and peace. Without reflecting too deeply, a glance at the history throughout the centuries reveals that this has been the situation ever since the establishment of the numerous systems of regulars. Who could not know about the discord, the chimera, the jealousy and the hatred as well as the persecution that have increased as a result of this diversity! As these orders were greatly increased and empowered, they transferred the wars over the private houses belonging to the regulars to society and to the Church. This situation further gave rise to sedition, discord and heresies as well as the small controversy of a scholastic term and a private enterprise became an enterprise of the state that causes grave and widespread inconvenience.

3) Finally, the third rule is that a small body that lives in a society without seeing anything but part of it while also establishing a small Monastic stronghold in the state is a dangerous proposition. Each individual extracts a number of other connections from the society in which he lives, however many are attached to the community which he joins. Such a community's interests are opposed to those of the state. Since it pleases the Sovereigns' inalienable and sacred authority, these small bodies separated themselves from the [Page 4] common center that constituted the regulars in a most extended and diffuse manner, which is the least negative situation. Still, the wickedness will not be extinguished as long as the particular Monasteries are not joined together. In a particular condition, these monasteries constituted a monastic body.

Out of these three proposals, we believe ourselves to have the right and the obligation to conclude that it is not only advantageous to the welfare of the state but also for its private citizens as well

whose way of life may be of a religious nature or who may, in the future, embrace such a way of life. Therefore, the following plan is enlarged with respect to various articles:

1) In the Church, there should be only one religious order. Additionally, for the gratitude as well as solidity of this plan, it would be advantageous to adopt the rule of Sir Benito. The way of life of the individuals in Puerto Real would furnish great ~~[erossed-out-word]~~ clarity in order to increase the removal of whatever may not be convenient in light of the present circumstances. Once the diversity of the orders is removed, then jealousy, envy, confusion as well as all political and doctrinal systems that have disturbed the Church will also be removed forever.

2) The individuals that are part of this system will not in any way insert themselves into the Ecclesiastic hierarchy because they will not possess public churches and they will not be promoted to the sacred orders. At the most, only one or two of these individuals will be ordained as priests or chaplains of the Monastery, whereas the others will simply remain lay-friars. Our diocese has already experienced the evident advantages of this providence due to our most zealous and illustrious pastor having prohibited all of the regulars from opening their churches during the festive days thus forcing them to attend mass in the respective parish. With this action, one may begin to see a glimpse of antiquity, when it was deemed a felony if one excluded oneself from the church during those festive days. Yet this is what is manifested by the present impracticality of these orders that have been left to indulge in idleness as opposed to remaining active. The members of these orders who are employed in various areas could serve the Religion as well as themselves in a more advantageous manner.

3) Each city will have no more than one monastery but such monastery will need to be situated outside of the city, in a quiet and distant place in order to prevent a dangerous situation from developing, which could cause dissipation as well as a scandal. As a consequence of this, it will be necessary to provide the members of the monastery with an honest living arrangement as well as possession of a residence where such individuals will be able to spend leisurely time in a holy manner while also making an honest living by using their hands.

4) This task, which the first founders of the regular orders loved so much, should indispensably become part [Page 5] of their occupations, setting aside a convenient time for the Psalmody as well as for study, depending on whoever may want to undertake these. The Psalmody may need to be moderated because its extended length could lead to ruin, disappointment and dissipation. Whenever the singing, the prayers and the hours are increased, the fervor and holiness of the regular clergy will be diminished at the same time.

5) There should not be any distinction with respect to monks in the choir or in the service. This inequality has often caused grave arguments and discord as well as a violation of the spirit of kindness among the religious communities.

6) There will never be any toleration concerning the permanent vow as the ancient monks had no knowledge of this even though they were the comfort of the Church and the ornament of Christianity. The vows of chastity, poverty and obedience will not be admissible as part of the ordinary rules that may be cited and anyone who wishes to embrace these measures will need to ask for guidance. Such individuals will also need to request a license from the bishop, who, without a doubt, will not allow these vows to take effect permanently or even for more than a year, except in cases where these measures would be meant to renew such individuals.

7) The bishop will have thorough access to an inspection of his conduct and his studies as well as his state of progression through Christian perfection. The bishop will have the right to reject or admit candidates but he will also remain open to the advice of those who are already living in that monastery.

8) The individuals belonging to the orders that still exist may still be admitted even though some of them may be priests, whenever they should wish for their own satisfaction to attend in silence and while they are in retreat. In this case, it may be possible to implement the general Rule stated

9) under no. two but, on the other hand, it would be advisable to observe immutably that, even though the priests do not have a different lifestyle compared to the others, they would not even be allowed to celebrate without consequence to the aforementioned Rule. This would be case if no more than one or two masses are held on a daily basis, in which case, the other priests will need to satisfy themselves by celebrating mass with the community.

10) The same providence will need to be taken in a proportionate manner with respect to the nuns. There will not be an acceptance of permanent vows until the age of forty or forty five and, with respect to other matters, they will be commanded to attend to grave affairs, especially those having to do with work. Above all, these nuns will be separated from carnal matters, whereas they will concentrate on the spiritual aspect as it comprises a prevalent occupation among most of the nuns. It would only be necessary to determine whether or not it would be advisable for them to leave the Monastery in the City.

12) If our Religious Lordship and [Page 6] Sovereign should wish to dignify this plan by ratifying it, which we request at this moment, as we are persuaded by the necessity to put this strategy into action thereby urging the aforementioned individuals as well as those that are zealous, for the purpose of stabilizing the religious way of life for those that feel called upon to embrace it.

Document is unsigned